



# *A LETTER TO PARENTS:* Come Join the *East Baton Rouge Parish Library's* **1,000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM!**

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The concept is simple, and the rewards are priceless!

Read a book (any book) to your child or children -- infant, toddler and/or preschooler -- as part of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library's 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten Program. If your child asks for you to read the same book more than once, please do -- over and over!

The goal is to have read 1,000 books to your child before he or she starts kindergarten. If you read just one book a night, you will have read about 365 books in a year. That is 730 books in two years and 1,095 books in three years. If you consider that most children start kindergarten at around age 5, you have more time than you think.

So let's get started! The keys to success are to have perseverance, be creative and make reading exciting.

Parents can enroll in the program at your local East Baton Rouge Parish Library branch's Children's Room. Any of our 14 branches' Children's Room Library staff can even offer book title suggestions, too. And when your child reaches the goals of 250, 500, 750 and 1,000 books, your East Baton Rouge Parish Library will have special reading incentive gifts just for them. They include:

- 250 books – A special sticker and a book bag
- 500 books – A special sticker and a decal of *Off We Go!* by Will Hillenbrand
- 750 books – A special sticker and a poster of *Off We Go!*
- 1,000 books – A special sticker and a certificate of merit, a copy of *Off We Go!* by Will Hillenbrand and an invitation to a special party to be held every August at the Main Library at Goodwood for those who complete the program.

The program ends when your child reaches 1,000 book OR starts Kindergarten. But the gift of reading lasts a lifetime!

If you have questions, please call or email me! Happy reading! (*Just flip this letter over for more instructions and program information.*)

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# *Have You Read to Your Child Today?*

## More Information about the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten Program

It is never too early to start reading to your children! If your child learns early to associate reading with pleasure, he or she is more likely to enjoy reading on his or her own in later years. Here are some tips to help make that happen:

1. Keep It Fun and Enjoyable -- Children like to participate in fun activities, so you should make reading enjoyable. Stories should rarely be read in a monotone voice, so make sure you bring out the inner actor in yourself while reading. Change your voice, make sounds and laugh.
2. Hold Your Child While You Read -- If your child hasn't grown "too big" yet, hold your child while you read. Does he or she have a favorite blanket or toy? If so, use the blanket or toy in your reading. For example, try using the blanket to create a fort. Also, children love when you read to their favorite toy.
3. Interact with Your Child -- When reading, make sure you give your child an opportunity to read along and ask them or let them ask a lot of questions. Although most books can probably be read in less than 5 minutes, it's always helpful to lengthen the reading process by making it fun and interactive.
4. Read Books about What Interests Your Child -- Is your child excited about "Dora the Explorer"? What about "Goldilicious" or "Curious George"? If so, make sure you read books centered on these characters. In addition, try reading non-fiction books about a favorite topic, too! Find books about things that interest your child. When your child gets older, take him or her to the Library, and he or she can choose his or her own books.
5. Incorporate Reading into a Daily Routine -- Does your child like to be read to in the morning, after lunch, after dinner or at bedtime? Make reading something that your child looks forward to at a specific time of day. And ... if your child wants to skip the daily reading routine once in awhile, that's okay, too.
6. Repetition -- Does your child like to be read the same story over and over? That's fine with us, as long as books and reading are part of their routines. Go ahead and read the same stories again and again. Your child will start enjoying the repetition and become familiar with the way stories are organized.
7. Keep Track of Your Child's Success -- The Library will provide a Reading Log you can use to keep track of a child's reading progress. Give your child praise after he or she listens to a certain amount of books. Soon, your child will be asking you to "write down" the books in the Reading Log after he or she hears them. Ask which books are being read at your child's daycare site, pre-kindergarten center, Head Start program or during the Library's story times. These count, too, and continue the lessons they learn during the day at home in the evening.

## Getting Started

1. Sign up at any of the Library's 14 branches' Children's Rooms and obtain your Reading Log.
2. If your child doesn't have a Library card, sign up for one while you're there and check out a few books to start the reading process. Our Children's librarians can assist you with suggested book titles.
3. The Reading Logs will be:
  - Books 1 – 250 Green
  - Books 251- 500 Red
  - Books 501-750 Purple
  - Books 751 – 1,000 Blue
4. You MAY repeat reading the same book. Remember to have fun!
5. When you and your child complete one Reading Log, take it to the Children's Room of your local Library to receive your child's incentive and the next Reading Log. Make sure to document every book you read in these Logs.
6. If you have questions, contact Pabby Arnold at (225) 231-3761 or [parnold@ebrpl.com](mailto:parnold@ebrpl.com).