



2026 Childcan's DPIL Reading Guidelines for Children born in 2022

Before Reading With Your Child:

Reading a good book multiple times with different questions encourages a deeper understanding of language and stronger comprehension. By reading a good book over and over and over, it will quickly become a favourite book. This repetition is important and it helps to establish comfort with language and learning, supports bonding and encourages deep learning. As you read through the book before sharing it with your child, think about what the book is about and share any personal experience that relates to it, or share some background information about the topic in the book so your child has more of a connection to the story.

During Reading:

There are six important concepts to practice. Choose one or two each time you read.

Book Awareness: *Point out the title and author and ask what they think the book will be about.*

Word Awareness: *Find rhyming words, names of people or animals, words connected to the topic of the book.*

Knowledge: *Each book has a topic. Help your child to understand the topic by discussing the book's message or by sharing extra information about the topic.*

Math Skills: *Counting is one of the easiest ways to bring math to a story. Count items on the page. Some stories bring in math topics by using a clock, measuring something, talking about shapes, etc.*

Story Line: *As you go through the story, stop and ask questions about what just happened or why it happened.*

Relating to the Storyline: *Children need to relate to a story to remember it better. Ask them how they would have felt in the same situation or if they have ever done anything like that.*

After Reading:

Think of activities that repeat what was done in the story or increase their knowledge of the topic by sharing information, or give them a chance to express what they learned or felt by drawing something. Many of the books stress colours, shapes and directional words. Find more examples around your home.

2026 DPIL Books for Children Born in 2022 - have more complex stories, with a hero, a complication, and a resolution. Diversity is shown often to help children understand that people are different and it's okay to be different. Nursery rhymes and poetry add to the play, humour and fun.

Below are some helpful guidelines to use when reading stories.

The Three Little Mittens by Linda Bailey

Dotty and Other Dotty are a matching set of mittens. When another mitten, Stripes, loses her partner and becomes a single mitten, they don't feel the need to include her. She doesn't "match" them, so she is banished to the dark, lonely pocket of the Little Girl who owns them. Before long, however, Dotty loses *her* partner, and now *she* doesn't match the reunited pair of Stripes and Other Stripes, who in turn banish *her* to the pocket. "YOU don't match!" they tell her. When the Little Girl, who has been listening to their conversations, weighs in with a huge question ("Why do you have to match?"), the mittens are shocked. Then comes their realization that "matching" often means leaving someone out. This prompts the Little Girl to break a fundamental rule of fashion so that individual mittens (and maybe even socks! or shoes!) can be themselves — and everyone can belong. Talk to your child about how it feels to be excluded and/or included and how we celebrate one of a kind.

The Care and Keeping of Grandmas by Jennifer Mook-Sang

Talk about grandparents and memories they have when they were all together. Point out in the book all the ways the child helped the grandmother. Talk about the feelings the grandmother may have had. Have your child look for clues that the family lives in a high rise apartment. Count the number of plants they see on each page. Count the people who now live together as a family.

On the Trap Line by David A. Robertson

-Find Native words, e.g., Mosham = grandpa

Topics, such as the life of Swampy Cree in northern Manitoba along the Hudson Bay coast as well as in Ontario along the coast of Hudson Bay and James Bay, can be explored with each reading.

-A boy and his grandpa travel by plane to where the grandpa grew up. The first pictures are what the boy would see when looking out the plane window, looking down on the land. What are the things the boy sees? What do you think of the perspective from the plane's window?

-Who meets them when the plane lands?

-What comparison about space did the boy notice? (In the city houses are very close, but not here. Grandpa still feels the houses are close to each other.)

-How were houses heated when Grandpa was a boy?

-What difference did the boy see between the beach near his home and the beach where his Grandpa played with his brothers and sisters?

-What language did Grandpa have to learn at the school he had to attend? (English). What did he and his friends do so they wouldn't forget their Swampy Cree language? (They hid in the forest to talk in their native language.)

-What were some of the things the boy noticed when they were on the boat ride to the trapline?

-Where did Grandpa and his family stay when he was little on the trapline?

-Grandpa said everyone in the family had chores to do. What kind of chores did they have?

-The fish they caught is shared with everyone. What did the community do with the fish they shared?

-Have you ever looked out the window from a second story in your home or from a window in a very tall building? What perspective did you have when you looked out the window?

-The boy makes many comparisons between his life and his grandpa's life as a young boy. What did you find interesting about grandpa's life as a young boy?

-What did you learn about the Swampy Cree life back in grandpa's day as a young boy?

-Explain that there are three groups of Aboriginal peoples: First Nations, Inuit and Metis. There are 634 First Nations tribes in Canada, with the Swampy Cree being one of them. They speak different languages. There are three First Nations communities close to London: Chippewa of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames and Musee-Delaware Nation.

Visit Ska-Nah-Doht, a recreated longhouse village located at the Longwoods Road Conservation Area.

The Darkest Dark by Chris Hadfield

- Talk about Chris Hadfield, Canada's first astronaut who went to the moon.
- Find words about space and travel in space.
- Topics such as space exploration and astronauts can be explored with each reading. Just as important, the topic of being afraid of the dark can be explored as parents look at ways to help their child see that they are safe in the dark.
- This story takes place on a small private island on the St. Clair River in Southern Ontario. Talk to your child that small islands don't have street lights and the trees around the houses don't allow the lights in each house to shine very far. When it gets dark on an island, it's very dark and different from the dark you experience in a city life. The very first page shows the dark trees around the house which sits close to the lake.
- Talk about make believe play and what Chris liked to make believe when he was playing with his dog. Point out the items like a globe of the Earth, a toy rocket ship, a toy robot, the alien headband on the dog and his toy laser gun.
- Why do you think he is crossing off the dates on the calendar?
- When it was time to leave the bath tub, why didn't Chris want to leave?
- When Chris is in his bed, what kinds of things does he do to keep from worrying about the dark?
- What does Chris imagine he sees?
- Where does Chris go when he's afraid?
- What kinds of things do his parents try to help him know he is safe?
- Check out the headline in the Toronto Daily Star newspaper by the night light. What special event was happening?
- When Chris falls asleep, what is his favourite dream?
- The calendars in the story tells us this story takes place in July 1969, which is over 50 years ago. Not everyone had a television set, especially if you lived on a small island. All the neighbours came to watch this tiny television set. What were they watching?
- What did Chris realize when he saw the astronauts on TV?
- When Chris went to bed that night, he turned off all the lights, even his night light. How did he change?
- What kind of make believe do you like to play?
- Have you seen a full moon in the sky before? What did you think of it?
- What are your favourite dreams?
- Have your child gaze at the moon in its different stages, from full moon to new moon.

My Day with Gong Gong by Sennah Yes

When children speak a different language than a grandparent, it becomes a challenge to understand what each other wants. This story shows that a grandfather and granddaughter figured out what each other wanted and enjoyed many different experiences as they walked in the market area. By the end of the story, the grandfather is learning some English words, like home, and the granddaughter is learning to say hello in Cantonese. She asked what Ngo oi new means and when was told it meant I love you, the granddaughter repeated that to her grandfather. The back page lists the words in Cantonese and their English translations.

Hello Baby it's me Alfie by Maggie Hutchings

Join Alfie as he waits impatiently for his new sibling to arrive in this charming and funny picture book about the baby growth process — which includes an illustrated baby growth chart on the back of the book jacket! Alfie has a new sibling on the way, and he can't wait to meet them!

Follow Alfie and his enthusiastic narration all the way from six weeks, when his sibling is just a tiny lemon pip, to their highly anticipated welcome to the world at forty weeks when they're a big pumpkin! This funny and informative picture book follows the growth stages of a baby (with helpful fruit and vegetable comparisons!) and teaches how to be a good big sibling to a new baby.

Dinos That Drive by Suzy Levinson

This picture book poetry collection will test your knowledge of dinosaur names - so check out the pronunciation guide for every poem. Have your child identify all of the vehicles used in this book. You've never seen a dinosaur that's into driving cars? Well, buckle up! Brontosaurus, Triceratops, Pterodactyl and T. rex are all here to show off their driving, flying and diving skills in this riotous, fully illustrated book of poems about dinosaurs and their favourite things-that-go! From flighty Bambiraptor's traffic chopper to hardheaded Pachycephalosaurus's garbage truck to mama Maiasaura's kid-carting minivan, and even to the stars beyond — these dinos on the go have no time to slow down. Each spread is full of fun details for young readers to pore over, but with our intrepid dino guides providing helpful dino facts on each page, you'll never need a GPS again! You will never tire of reading this book repeatedly as the details are amazing and there's so much to learn from every page. There are colours for your child to point out, a variety of vehicles on the road, on the farmland, in the air and in the water, words to read on signs, clothing and vehicles. Children will enjoy finding all of the features of a large city: parking meters, tall buildings, parks, highways, bridges, trolley car, taxi cabs, water fronts. There will also be farms, camping, race tracks and so very much more.

Mama's Sleeping Scarf by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

A tender story about a little girl's love for her mother's scarf, and the adventures she shares with it and her whole family. Chino loves the scarf that her mama ties around her hair at night. But when Mama leaves for the day, what happens to her scarf? Chino takes it on endless adventures! Peeking through the colourful haze of the silky scarf, Chino and her toy bunny can look at her whole family as they go through their routines. Mama's Sleeping Scarf is a celebration of family, and a touching story about the everyday objects that remind us of the ones we love. Have your child pick something that reminds them of a family member.

Broken by X. Fang

In this story, you have a chance to talk about what happens when someone has broken something and the strong feelings need to be talked about to bring out the best solution on how to deal with the accident. In repeated readings, have your child trace over the route Mei Mei took to sneak up on the cat. Talk to your child about all the things Mei Mei was worried about when Ama, her grandmother, found the broken cup. Have your child notice the clothing that Ama was wearing and tell them it's a hint about how the problem can be solved. Have your child look carefully at the pages when Mei Mei is in the closet and talk to them about how they feel when they have to tell the truth about something they have done wrong. Have your child talk about all the possible feelings people might have. Have your child notice the back cover and what the cat is up to and have them suggest what might happen next.

Fly in the Chai by Zenai Wadhwani

Have a chance to look at a busy market in a big city where a grandfather and granddaughter go shopping. Look at all the things for sale and what the people in the story like to eat and drink. Who loves chai more? Nanu . . . or the pesky fly that lands in his fresh cup? On a trip to the market, Nanu gets a cup of chai. But before he can take a drink, his granddaughter stops him just in time. STOP! There's a FLY in that chai! Thus begins an epic battle between Nanu and the fly: who loves chai more??

Stella Queen of the Snow by Marie-Louise Gay

As each page is read, ask your child if they have done the activity on each page and how they felt about it. What is something new that they have never done yet with snow? What do they like to do best outside in the winter? What were some of the things that Stella did that her little brother didn't want to do?

Coat of Many Colors by Dolly Parton Country music legend Dolly Parton's rural upbringing in the Smoky Mountains of Tennessee provides the backdrop for this special picture book. Using lyrics from her classic song "Coat of Many Colors," the book tells the story of a young girl in need of a warm winter coat. When her mother sews her a coat made of rags, the girl is mocked by classmates for being poor. But Parton's trademark positivity carries through to the end as the girl realizes that her coat was made with love "in every stitch."