



Growing readers!

Brought to you by Reading Rockets, Colorín Colorado and LD OnLine

Riding and Reading

Travel is just the thing to get young minds moving. Turn travel time during a family trip into a great bonding and learning adventure with activities that build language for literacy and boost kids' brain development. Don't forget to pack your imagination!

What to bring

Music. Before your trip, take time to make a sing-along playlist of family favorites. (Remember to bring whatever you need to connect your mobile device to the car stereo and keep it charged.) On the road, get kids listening by asking them to keep an ear out for certain words or sounds and clapping when they hear them. Then get them singing along!

With the car stereo off, try teaching each other classic kids' songs, folk songs, Sesame Street and Disney tunes, the national anthem, or Broadway hits. You'll find lyrics online or you can show kids how they can make their own music by inventing new verses to songs like "If You're Happy and You Know It."

Books. Invest some time before your trip in choosing some audio books the whole family can listen to. Search for recommendations in Reading Rockets list of Favorite Audio Books (<http://www.readingrockets.org/articles/books/audiobooks>) or ask your librarian for ideas. Your public library may have books on CD that you can borrow or lend electronic audio books you can download to your device. Choose audio books that will stimulate discussion, like classics or books on topics of interest to everyone in your family.

Look too for audio books of stories you've shared with your child, and plan to talk about how the reader's interpretation is similar or different from yours, especially if the audio book reader is the author! If you are listening to picture books, bring along a copy so kids can look at the illustrations while listening.

Let kids pack some favorite titles to look at, to read to you, or have read aloud to them while you're on the road. And bring along some new books, too. A new release by a favorite author or a new book in a beloved series will add excitement to your trip.

Stories. Family stories, tales of road trips past, adventures of your youth stories, and stories and facts about your destination do more than pass the time on the road. As kids hear and learn from the successes, mistakes, values, and ideas in your stories, their understanding of how to have their own adventures — and their own stories — will grow.

As you share stories, give your child a chance to ask questions and offer his perspective. Storytelling is more fun if everyone gets a chance to tell a story! Try telling a memorable family story with everyone taking turns or turn family photos into family stories. Have photos on your mobile device or bring along copies of pictures and share stories about the people and the places important to your family.