
How to Introduce Your Children to Science Fiction

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As a mother and a science fiction fan, I really hope my children will grow to enjoy it as well. So far they're too young to read novels, but that doesn't mean I can't get them started.

1. Science Fiction Movies

Some science fiction movies appeal to children even at a very young age. Think about the first Star Wars movie, for example. It's still a generally good movie, and many 5 year olds I know are utterly nuts about it.

2. Comic Books

Whether or not you're into them yourself, many comic books contain elements of science fiction, especially with many of the super heroes. The vivid illustrations and fast plot lines can be quite entertaining for children not prepared for more challenging stories... and of course the interest can continue for a lifetime.

3. Television

A variety of children's shows also have elements of science fiction. What you can find will vary tremendously by age, and you may have to search constantly for shows you hope your kids will enjoy. But there are some great choices out there.

And as they get old enough you can show them your own favorite

4. Science Fiction Novels

Ahh, my personal favorite! Even though my kids are too young to read these by themselves, my husband and I are working on building their interest already.

First of all, they of course see us reading them all the time. That's a great way to build interest in reading in general. If they see you read, children will read.

You can pick children's books with elements of science fiction in them. Most kids love stories with rocket ships and aliens in them. You don't have to worry about scientific accuracy much in the early years, of course.

We've also always allowed them to look at the books we own. I tried hard one time to get video of my daughter "reading" Riverworld. She was reciting Cinderella, actually, but I still thought it was cute that she picked a science fiction novel to pretend with.

As she learns to read, we've encouraged her to realize just how much she can read by picking up a science fiction novel and showing her that she already knows most of the words. Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, for those who are wondering.

And of course, once they're old enough, pick appropriate books. I remember starting in third grade with Heinlein's The Star Beast.

Picking appropriate books can be challenging. Fortunately I still own pretty much ever science fiction novel I've ever read, so there's a good selection of juveniles in there. But if you know whether your child likes lots of action, or dislikes violence, or is more into fantasy, you can pick out appropriate titles.

And, I must admit, there's a certain delight in teaching my kids to enjoy the books my inlaws so disapprove of. They strongly approve of reading, but only of the right sort. Ignoring that is just fun.