Print Awareness

Being familiar with printed language helps children feel comfortable with books and understand that print is useful.

To help develop print awareness:

- Show children that print is all around them. Point it out in signs, on menus, and in books and newspapers.
- Occasionally run your finger along the bottom of words while reading. This helps children understand that print runs from left to right and that you are reading text rather than looking at pictures.
- Point to some words as you say them, especially words that are repeated.
- Label objects around your home, such as "bed," "window," "door," and "toys."
- Let your child turn the pages. When you are done reading, let her hold the book and tell you the story.
- Talk about and play with punctuation marks. Show your child what an exclamation mark (!) and a question mark (?) are, and how you read those sentences differently.
- Encourage children to play with print every day. Help them make lists, write notes, make signs, etc.

Children with print awareness understand that print has different functions; for example menus list food choices, a book tells a story, a sign can show a favorite restaurant or warn of danger.

Books to help develop print awareness:

(Birth to 2 years)

First Words, by Anna Harrison
Daddy, Do You Love Me? and Mommy Do You Love Me? by Ron Berry
Global Babies, by Global Fund for Children

(3 to 5 years)

Smash! Crash! by Jon Scieszka
I Read Signs, by Tana Hoban
First the Egg, by Laura Vaccaro Seeger
Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale, by Mo Willems

(Grades K-1)

Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type, by Doreen Cronin
Tops and Bottoms, by Janet Stevens
Dear Peter Rabbit, by Alma Flor Ada
Put It On the List, by Kristen Darbyshire
More fun with
Goodnight Gorilla...

Math Connections...Animal Cookie Math!
Take a box of animal cookies and have your
child sort and count the cookies. You can also
have them choose a cookie and make the
sound the animal makes.

Out and About...Take a trip
to the zoo or just look for
animals around you next time
you are out and about with
your child. Talk with him
about the animals: where do
they live, what do they eat?

Movin’ and Groovin’...Collect pictures of
baby animals and their mommas.
Use these pictures to talk about
each animal. Have your child get
up and show you how each animal
walks or moves.

Role play...Gather any stuffed animals that
your child has and put them in a basket or
box. Have them pull them out one at a time
and say, “Goodnight dog,” or “Goodnight cow.”
It will help them with animal names and
remembering the story.

Poem
Swinging Monkey
Look up there
And you will see
The monkeys swinging
From the tree
I like the way
They jump and flee -
Now, do they want
Some nuts from me?
By Swapna Dutta

What your library can do for you...
Your librarian can suggest books and activities
that help you support your child’s learning at
home.

Nursery Rhyme
Star Light Star Bright

Star light,
Star bright,
First star
I see tonight,
I wish I may,
I wish I might,
Have the wish
I wish tonight.