

Did you know...



Research shows that children who know and understand lots of different words become better readers. Building a strong “vocabulary” helps children recognize and read written words, and later use them in their writing.

Children are very curious about the world around them. They want to know about the weather, how things work, facts about animals, etc. Nonfiction, or information books, help children learn about the things that interest them. They also have a lot of new vocabulary in them. Don't skip over the scientific or big vocabulary words. Your child needs to hear new words multiple times before they're able to use them with confidence.

There are some high-quality children's nature magazines that can be another source of information for your child.

Here's how...

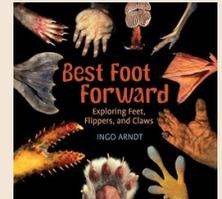


- ❖ Talk to your child about what is going on around them. Talk about how things work, feelings and ideas. Listen when your child talks to you.
- ❖ Speak in the language most comfortable to you.
- ❖ Take field trips to parks, museums, zoos, aquariums, or other natural settings. Create opportunities for your child to explore nature.
- ❖ Check out nonfiction books from the library. They are full of great photos or art that will engage your child's curiosity and teach them new words.

Read



Best Foot Forward, **by Ingo Arndt**



This nonfiction book has photos of a variety of animal feet, and poses the question, “Whose foot is this?” Different categories of feet are described:

Feet that Walk

Feet that Climb

Feet that Swim

Feet that Dig

Feet that Jump

Extraordinary Feet

The colorful photos and simple text are helpful in introducing how feet help animals survive.

Choose Books



More information books...

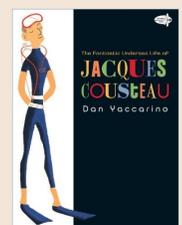
Icky Bug Shapes, by Jerry Pallotta

What Do You Do with a Tail Like This? by Steve Jenkins

What If You had Animal Feet? by Sandra Markle

Feathers: Not Just for Flying, by Melissa Stewart

The Fantastic Undersea Life of Jacques Cousteau, by Dan Yaccarino



Why Kids Need Nonfiction

- Information books and magazines can play an important part in motivating children to read.
- There are some great, high-quality information books available for children of all ages.
- Many kids enjoy information books as much as story books.
- Nonfiction can be a way for parents to share their interests with their children.
- Information books expose children to special vocabulary and concepts, which helps build language.
- Reading nonfiction now can help children prepare for reading these types of books later in life.

Write and Talk



Provide your child with things she can use to explore and describe objects around the house, then draw and write about them. Example: use a magnifying glass to study coins, beans, leaves, etc. Help your child find words to describe how those things look close up. Then help her draw them in a journal or notebook. Or use binoculars to study a bird from far away.

Sing



I'm a Little Raccoon

(to the tune of I'm a Little Teapot)

I'm a little raccoon, prowling around,
I hunt for food without a sound.
A mask on my face and a bushy tail,
Let's see if you can spot my trail!

From DLTK Kids: www.dltk-kids.com/animals/songs/raccoonsong.htm

Play



Go on a scavenger hunt around your neighborhood. Can you find the following?

- ♦ A sign left by an animal, such as a chewed leaf or animal track
- ♦ An animal that is eating
- ♦ A creature that is furry
- ♦ A creature with feathers
- ♦ An animal that is quiet?
- ♦ An animal that is loud?



Website:

Mother Natured is a website with lots of ideas for children to interact with nature. This link will take you to several activities using animal tracks.

<http://mothernatured.com/2012/02/13/footprint-fun-in-five-ways/>

At your library...



Libraries are helping young children develop science, technology, engineering, and mathematics skills. Contact your library to learn more about STEM programs, and be sure to visit

www.stemgame.lili.org for a fun online game to play with your child!