What is Early Literacy?

Early literacy is what children know about reading and writing before they actually learn to read and write. Helping your child develop early literacy skills will build a foundation for reading so that when they are taught to read they are ready. You can start at birth!

Reading with your little ones every day and teaching them about the world around them are practices that help prepare children to learn to read. This monthly newsletter will help you become more familiar with early literacy skills, and contains tips and activities you can try at home with your child. The Bookworm is published monthly for three age groups: Birth to 2; Preschool (3-5); and Kindergarten. You can find more Bookworms, as well as versions in Spanish, at http://libraries.idaho.gov/page/bookworm.

Book of the Month

Read to Your Bunny, by Rosemary Wells

With short rhyming text and beautiful illustrations, this is a perfect book to cuddle up and read with your little bunny.

Award-winning author and illustrator Rosemary Wells has published over 100 books, and has created lovable characters such as Max and Ruby. Look for Rosemary Wells' board books at your local library:

10 good reasons to read to babies:

1. Baby associates your voice with warmth, comfort, and security.
2. Reading has a calming effect on a restless baby.
3. Baby is entertained by nursery rhymes and songs.
4. Holding the baby while reading to him/her creates a close, loving bond between parent and baby.
5. Baby makes an association between reading and being held.
6. The pleasure of being held transfers to the desire to be read to.
7. Baby will learn to listen and will grow up ready to read.
8. Baby will begin imitating sounds and words.
9. Baby must hear English (or French, Spanish or other languages) in order to learn that language.
10. It's fun to read to a baby!
More fun with 
Read to Your Bunny

Talk and point... Talk about some objects in the story and ask your child to find them on the page. “Where is the airplane? That’s right! The bunnies are reading a book together in the airplane. Now can you find the teddy bear?”

A Word About Board Books

Board books have pages that are heavy, sturdy and laminated. They are perfect for little hands. The pictures are simple and clear and the designs are bright and fun.

Babies explore their world by putting things into their mouths, including books! This is normal and board books are made for little hands and mouths because they are harder to damage than other books.

Clean board books by wiping with 1/2 cup bleach per gallon of water. You can also just wipe with a little soap and water and wipe them dry. Store books where your baby or toddler can easily reach them on his or her own, such as a basket or low shelf.

Fingerplay for Toddlers

“Storytime”
When the sun lights up the sky,
(wave arms above head)
I sit right up and rub my eyes.
(rub eyes)
I dress myself with greatest care,
(pretend to step into pants)
I brush my teeth and comb my hair.
(pretend to brush teeth and comb hair)
Then off to story hour I go,
(march in place)
To hear the stories
that I love so.
(open hands like a book)

Song for Baby

Sharing songs, fingerplays, and rhymes with your baby/toddler helps develop important early literacy skills. Try this favorite song at home:

Hush, little baby, don’t say a word, 
Papa’s gonna buy you a mockingbird.

And if that mockingbird don’t sing, 
Papa’s gonna buy you a diamond ring.

And if that diamond ring turn brass, 
Papa’s gonna buy you a looking glass.

And if that looking glass gets broke, 
Papa’s gonna buy you a billy goat.

And if that billy goat don’t pull, 
Papa’s gonna buy you a cart and bull.

And if that cart and bull turn over, 
Papa’s gonna buy you a dog named Rover.

And if that dog named Rover won’t bark, 
Papa’s gonna buy you and horse and cart.

And if that horse and cart fall down, 
Well you’ll still be the sweetest little baby in town.

What your library can do for you...

Your library offers many free resources to help you build your child’s early literacy skills: age-appropriate books, music CDs, storytimes, parent workshops, booklists, take-home information, and events for the whole family!

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