Letter Knowledge

Children who know the shapes and names of the letters of the alphabet, have a much easier time learning to read. For babies, learning about shapes is the first stage of recognizing letters. Talking about and playing with shapes with your young child is part of their learning experience. You might say, “Feel this big ball. It is round!” Later, talking about letters and the sounds they make will help them recognize individual letters.

There are some ways to help your young child learn about letters:

- Young children usually learn the letters in their name first. They are their favorite letters! Point out letters in their names while looking at books.
- Sing the alphabet song together and play with rhymes.
- Let your child play with magnet letters and blocks that have letters on them.
- Read alphabet books together.
- Match shapes that have been cut out of paper with objects around the house.

More great books to read with your child:

- *My Shapes*, by Rebecca Emberley
- *Black and White*, by Tana Hoban
- *Dr. Seuss's ABC*, by Dr. Seuss
- *Eating the Alphabet*, by Lois Ehlert
- *ABC, Baby Me!* by Susan B. Katz
- *Chicka Chicka ABC*, by Bill Martin Jr.
- *Letter Birds*, by Pam Spremulli
- *A to Z*, by Sandra Boynton
- *Alphabet Under Construction*, by Denise Fleming
- *A Circle Here, A Square There- My Shapes Book*, by David Diehl
- *The Shape of Things*, by Dayle Ann Dodds

Featured Book

Do You See Shapes?
by Scholastic, Inc.

Circles, squares, and triangles are introduced in this colorful board book. Children are encouraged to clap their hands when they see the shape on each page. This activity will encourage your child to pay attention to the shapes that he sees around him at home and in the community. This book is part of a series of concept books from Scholastic.
**More fun with *Do You See Shapes?***

Never too early... Teach your child to recognize his name, from the shapes of the letters to the sounds in his name.

- Put her name on her bedroom door, toys, cup, drawings, blanket, coat, hook etc.
- Write his name in upper and lower case letters, like they will see it at school.

**Around the house**... Encourage your child to make letters with clay, wet spaghetti noodles and yarn, or form the shapes with their bodies or fingers. Trace letters in salt, sugar, sand, shaving cream, or on a steamy mirror.

**Talk about it**... Encourage your child to touch the pages of the book. Talk to her about the shapes and colors on the pages." Can you pat the circle? Look, a circle goes around and around, like a ball!"

**Write on**... Encourage your older toddler to make scribbles using non-toxic crayons or chalk. Choose larger crayons and thick sidewalk chalk, as these are easier for little hands to grasp. See if your toddler can copy you as you draw lines that go across, and lines that go up and down.

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**Sing to learn...**

**ABC Song**

Sing the ABC song to different tunes, such as "London Bridge," "This Old Man," or "Mary Had a Little Lamb." Your child will be able to hear 'LMNOP' more clearly.

Sing the song to the regular tune, but sing it fast and slow, loud and soft.

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**Song to sing with your child...**

**Shape Song**

(to the tune of: "The Farmer in the Dell")

A circle’s like a ball,
A circle’s like a ball,
Round and round
It never stops.
A circle’s like a ball!
A square is like a box,
A square is like a box,
It has four sides,
They are the same.
A square is like a box!
A triangle has three sides,
A triangle has three sides,
Up the mountain,
Down, and back.
A triangle has three sides!

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**What your library can do for you...**

Your librarian can help you find more books and activities to help your child learn about shapes and letters!

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