It’s a Small, Small World

The world has become a smaller place as television, movies, and computer programs introduce us to the people and places that span the globe. Knowing how to speak another language is a valuable skill to have in today’s world. Children learn languages easier than adults do, so now is the time to try some new words.

If your native language is not English, it is important to speak, read, and sing to your child in the language you speak at home. If children learn the basics of speech in the language of their home, it makes it easier to learn English as they grow older. It is important that the culture of your native country is maintained in your home. Children may switch words from both languages for a while, but they will soon sort it out.

Here is how to say “Hello” in other languages:

Hola (Spanish)
Bonjour (French)
Jambo (Swahili)
Shalom (Hebrew)
Ciao (chow) (Italian)
Namaste (Nepali)
Kaixo (kai-show) (Basque)

More Bilingual Books...

- Tenemos un bebe/We Have a Baby, by Cathryn Falwell
- A is for Airplane/A es para avion, by Theresa Howell
- Where Is the Green Sheep?/Donde esta la oveja verde? by Mem Fox
- I Love You Sun/I Love You Moon: Te amo Sol/Te amo Luna, by Karen Pandell
- Spring Is Here/Llego La Primavera, by Taro Gomi
- My Clothes/Mi Ropa, by Rebecca Emberley (a series of bilingual books)
More fun with The Birthday Box

Fun and games... Make a tunnel from a large cardboard box by opening both ends. Place the child at one end of the tunnel. You sit at the opposite end. Peek your face in the tunnel and say, “Hi!” Then lean away from the tunnel (so the child can’t see you) and say, “Bye!” This is a good game for teaching social greetings and how hiding is done.

Arts and crafts... Have boxes sitting around? See how to make a box town, a guitar, a tiny puppet theater, and more! www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/box/

Supporting playtime...

😊 Back and Forth. Coo and talk to your baby. Imitate her sounds and wait for her response. Encourage her to copy you, too.

😊 Peek-a-Boo. Try hiding behind your hands, a diaper, or pajamas as you dress Baby.

😊 Action Games. Games like “Ring Around the Rosie” and “London Bridge” encourage toddlers to move, sing, listen, and take turns.

😊 Do it again... and again. Doing things over and over helps toddlers learn how things work. This helps them master new skills, which boosts their self-confidence.

😊 Name That Tune. Toddlers enjoy singing songs and having you read books with rhyming words. See if toddlers know the next word in the song by pausing before you sing it.

😊 Busy Hands. Young toddlers love to make things work. They use their hands and fingers for pushing buttons, opening boxes, and turning pages. Many toddlers also like to finger paint, color, play with play dough, or squeeze water out of a sponge.

From Zero to Three, www.zerotothree.org

Song to sing...

Brilla, Brilla Estrellita
Brilla, brilla estrellita.
Me pregunto donde estas?
Observando al mundo desde allá,
Como un diamante haz de estar.

Coro:
Brilla, brilla estrellita.
Me pregunto donde estas!

Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star
Twinkle, twinkle, little star, How I wonder what you are!
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

Chorus:
Twinkle, twinkle, little star, How I wonder what you are .

What your library can do for you...

Some libraries have bilingual storytimes on a regular basis. Attending them is a fun way for your child to be exposed to different languages or learn new words.

Books to Go From Your Library

This project is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services. Brought to you by the Idaho Commission for Libraries’ Read to Me program and your local library.