

What is early literacy?

Research shows that children get ready to read years before they start school. Early literacy is what children know about reading and writing before they actually read and write. There are six pre-reading skills children must know in order to learn to read successfully. You can help your child learn these skills starting at birth!



Print Motivation:

A child's interest and enjoyment of books. Children who enjoy books will want to learn how to read.

- Make book-sharing time special; a time just for you and your child.
- Begin reading books early- even when your child is a newborn.
- Take a break from reading if your child becomes tired, loses interest, or gets upset.

Vocabulary:

Knowing the names of things, feelings, concepts, and ideas.

- Talk about what is going on around you. Name objects and colors you see.
- Read fiction and non-fiction books with your child. Children's books contain more "rare" words than television programs.
- Expand on what your child says. She says "bug." You can say, "Yes, a little red bug. It's called a ladybug."

Phonological Awareness:

Ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words.

- Sing with your child.
- Say nursery rhymes.
- Read rhyming books.
- Ask if two words rhyme: "Do 'cat' and 'hat' rhyme? Yes, they sound the same. How about 'cat' and 'dog'? Let's think of other words that rhyme with 'cat'."
- Clap out the syllables in your child's name.

Narrative Skills:

Describing things and events, telling and re-telling stories.

- Talk with your child, a lot. Ask him open-ended questions, those that cannot be answered with 'yes' or 'no'.
- Ask your child to tell you about her drawing.
- Help your child re-tell a story using puppets or props.
- Play pretend games with your child.

Print Awareness:

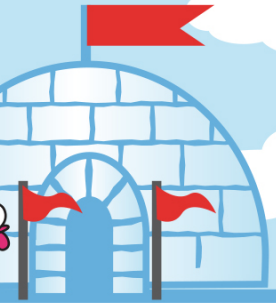
Print has meaning and is all around; knowing how to handle a book and follow text on a page.

- Hold a book upside down; see if your child corrects you.
- Point out signs and their meaning (stop, exit, street name).
- Write your child's name on her things, and use labels around her room (toys, books, socks).
- Encourage your child to scribble or draw.

Letter Knowledge:

Letters are different from each other, have names, and are related to sounds.

- Play with blocks and talk about shapes.
- Help your child recognize the letters in her name. Look for those letters in signs, on box labels, in books.
- Encourage your child to make letters out of playdoh or wet noodles, or trace on steamy mirrors, with water, in the sand.





Sing a song together

Share a number or shape book

Read a nonfiction book

Sing the Alphabet Song

Read a rhyming book together

Read or say some nursery rhymes together

Point out letters and words on signs

Have your child hold the book and turn the pages as you read

Play a rhyming game together, think up words that rhyme

Read a book about your child's favorite interest

Talk about unfamiliar words you find in a book you read together

Retell a favorite story after you read it together

Find 3 things that start with the first letter of your child's name

Name the items in the grocery store as you shop

Point to the title of a book as you read

Teach your child how to properly hold a book

Let your child choose a book to share

Share a story about your childhood

Have your child tell you about their favorite drawing

Read an alphabet book together

START Your Journey

Read to Me