

Did you know...



Children who go to kindergarten knowing the shapes and names of the letters of the alphabet have a much easier time learning to read.

By the time your child begins kindergarten he or she should know most of the letters of the alphabet, especially those in his or her name. Your child should be able to identify letters in *any* order, not just in order from A, B, C, D, E...

There are many ways to learn and practice letter recognition, and they should be more play-based than drills. When children can make a connection with the letter because of what it represents, they are able to keep and use that information in a meaningful way.

Here's how...

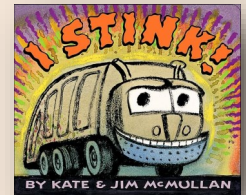


- ✦ Learning shapes is one of the basic skills children need to know before they learn letters of the alphabet. Point out shapes in books and as you're out and about.
- ✦ Young children usually learn the letters in their name first. They are their favorite letters! Write your child's name where he or she can see it often, and have your child write his or her name in their own way.
- ✦ Point out and name letters when reading books, signs, or labels. There are many signs out in the community which have letters that children recognize and relate to.
- ✦ Read alphabet and shape books with your child.

Read

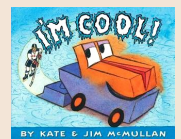
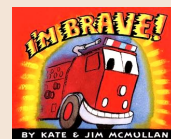
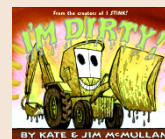
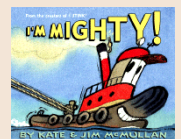
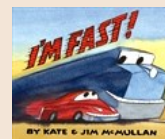


I Stink! by Kate and Jim McMullan



Ever wonder what it's like to be a garbage truck? What fun it is to keep the city clean by eating a special recipe of alphabet soup containing everything from apple cores and banana peels to ziti and zucchini!

If your child likes this book, check out some others by the McMullans:



Choosing Books



More alphabet books:

ABCs on Wheels, by Ramon Olivera

Alphabetime, by Susanna Leonard Hill

Animal ABC, by Marcus Pfister

B Is for Bulldozer, by June Sobel

Bear Is Awake! by Hannah E. Harrison

Dig Dig Digging ABC, by Margaret Mayo

Oops, Pounce, Quick, Run!: An Alphabet Caper, by Mike Twohy

"R" Is for Rocket: An ABC Book, by Tad Hills

Talk



A word about the ABC song ...

Parents often think their child "knows" the alphabet because they can sing the ABC song and/or recite the alphabet, or because the child can point to the letters in order while singing or saying the alphabet.

Being able to do those things can show that a child has some knowledge about the alphabet, but children with good letter knowledge can identify letters in any order.

Read alphabet books together and find letters on the pages, and try singing the ABC song to different tunes (see **Sing** below).

Write



All Idaho children are given a short test called the Idaho Reading Indicator when they start kindergarten. Your child should be able to point out upper and lowercase letters in the alphabet when they hear them said aloud and also know some sounds letters make. Begin working on these things now while your child is in preschool.

Magnet letters that stick to your refrigerator are a fun way to play with letters. If you don't own a set, ask your local library if they have some that can be checked out.



Play



Play "I Spy" with the first letter of your child's name. If your child's name starts with "B" say, "I spy with my little eye a 'B' on that sign! Can you spy other letter B's?"



At your library...





Electronic books and audio books: Screen time for preschoolers should be limited; however, reading an occasional picture book with your child on your device is one way to enjoy more great stories together. Or skip the screen—listening to audio books develops important early literacy skills. Ask your library about e-books and audio books available for checkout.

Sing



The ABC Song

 **A B C D E F G, H I J K ElemenPea**
Q R S, T U V, W, X, Y and Z 

The Alphabet Song is sung to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." Instead, try singing to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb" to break the words up differently.

ABCDEFG

HIJ

KLM

NOPQRST

UVWXY and Z.

Hear tune at www.thelearninggroove.com/mary-had-a-little-lamb