Children who know the shapes and names of the letters of the alphabet and how to write them have a much easier time learning to read. This early literacy skill is called “letter knowledge.”

Children learn to recognize letters more easily if they can identify shapes and have had experience sorting objects into same and different. Once children can name the upper and lowercase letters, they begin learning the sounds that go with them. At this age they also begin learning how to write the letters. This takes a lot of practice, but it can be done in fun ways throughout daily routines.

**Choose Books**

**More books that teach Letter Knowledge...**

*LMNO Peas* and *LMNO Pea-quel*, by Keith Baker

*Bugs A to Z*, by Caroline Lawton

*Almost an Animal Alphabet*, by Katie Viggers

*Discovering Nature’s Alphabet*, by Krystina Castella and Brian Boyl

*P Is for Potato: An Idaho Alphabet*, by Joy and Stan Steiner

*The Hidden Alphabet*, by Laura Vaccaro Seeger
Talk

Play “I Spy” with the first letter of your child’s name. “I spy with my little eye a “B” on that sign!” “Can you spy other letter B’s?” You can also play the game with letter sounds. “I spy with my little eye something that begins with a ‘buh’ sound, just like your name.” If your child knows the beginning sounds pretty well, play the game with ending sounds.

Write

If holding or writing with a pencil is challenging for your child, try some of these activities to help practice a “tripod” hold (thumb on one side, second two fingers on other side):

- Pick up small objects with tweezers
- Tear strips of paper into tiny squares
- Clip clothespins onto cardboard
- Use scissors to cut shapes from scrap

Play

The Alphabet Beat

First clap your hands. Then stomp your feet.
   Everybody do the alphabet beat.
   Apple, Apple, Apple– a-a-a
   Apple, Apple, Apple– a-a-a

   Wave your arms high. Swing your arms low.
   The alphabet beat is the way to go.
   Blue, Blue, Blue—b-b-b Blue,
   Blue, Blue—b-b-b

   Move to the left. Move to the right.
   The alphabet beat is way out of sight.
   Car, Car, Car—c-c-c Car,
   Car, Car—c-c-c

   Now give a high five to a nearby friend.
   The alphabet beat has come to the end!

   Repeat, continuing on through the alphabet…

Sing

A word about the ABC song...

ABCDEFG, HIJK, ElemenoPea
QRS, TUV, W, X, Y and Z

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.

Sing

Instead of singing to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,” try singing to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb.”

   ABCDEFG
   HIJ
   KLM
   NOPQRST

At your library...

Don’t have a library card? You can still visit your library for storytimes or to read with your child. Ask your librarian about how to apply for your own card today!

~from mrsjonesroom.com

Find more “Bookworms” at https://libraries.idaho.gov/publications/bookworm/. Funding for this project is made possible by the Idaho Commission for Libraries’ Read to Me program, and the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under a provision of the Library Services and Technology Act. Printed 2019