

Literacy Development at Home



The development of literacy, like all language learning, begins at birth. It's a continuous process starting at home with parents playing a key role along the road to literacy. The following are some things parents typically do to promote development of beginning literacy skills.

1. Children are given opportunities to observe others reading and writing every day.

Your child might see you reading:

- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Recipe books
- Novels
- A dictionary

Your child might see you writing:

- Letters
- Grocery lists
- "To Do" lists
- Checks
- notes

Parents tell us that they leave notes for their child(ren) in strategic places to remind him/her that they are thinking of them.

2. Parents provide opportunities for children to enjoy a variety of types of books.

- Stories
- Nursery rhymes
- Information books
- Fairy tales
- Alphabet books
- Audio stories with books

3. Parents read to their children every day. They ask questions to develop understanding.

- What's that?
- What's he doing?
- Why did they do that?
- Who's that?
- Where's she going?
- What do you think is going to happen next?

Parents use comments to help their children react to stories, to understand the character's feelings, and to **relate the story to the real world**.

If you know that your family has had an experience like the one found in the story ask, **"Does this remind you of anything?"** or **"Do you remember the time we . . . "**

4. Parents encourage their children to chime in and read the parts of the story they know. The parent leaves out a word, a sentence, or a repetitive part of the story, like “and the big bad wolf said . . . “

5. Parents watch educational programs with their children and discuss interesting parts of the show.

- Sesame Street
- Barney
- Reading Rainbow
- Dora

6. Parents sing songs and say familiar rhymes with their children to develop awareness of rhythm, rhyme, words, and sounds.

- Pat-a-Cake
- Baa, Baa, Black Sheep
- Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star
- One, Two, Buckle My Shoe
- Mary Had a Little Lamb
- ABC Song

7. Parents encourage exploration of books featuring sound play, like rhymes or words starting with the same sound. Parents draw attentions to the sounds in words.

- House-mouse
 - Big bumblebee
 - Tyrannosaurus
 - Jack and Jill
- These words rhyme.
These words start with *buh*.
This is a big, long word.
These words start with the letter *j*.

Do not under estimate the importance of this item. Your child will need to eventually understand that sounds make up words and later on that letters represent those sounds.

8. Parents point out letters and words in their child’s environment.

- Child’s name on bedroom door (This is _____’s room)
- Posters with printed captions
- Labels on cans, cereal boxes, shampoo, toothpaste
- Logos on clothes
- Alphabet noodles, alphabet cereal
- Mail
- Notes (See number one.)
- Road signs, billboards, restaurant signs

9. Parents help their children learn the alphabet letters and their sounds by sharing alphabet books. Parents provide repeated opportunities for their children to hear the letter names and words that start with each letter.