

Activities to Support Literacy



Reading aloud to your child every day increases his/her brain's capacity for language and literacy skills and is the most important thing you can do to prepare him for learning to read.

Children prepare to read long before they enter school - early literacy is everything children know about reading and writing before they can actually read and write.

Early literacy skills begin to develop in the first 5 years of life. Your child's early experiences with books and language lay the foundation for success in learning to read.

The most important thing you can do to foster early literacy is provide an atmosphere that's fun, verbal and stimulating .

The focus should not be on teaching, but on the fun you're having with your child - offer your child plenty of opportunities to talk and be listened to, to read and be read to, and to sing and be sung to.

You are the key to your child's success in learning to read. When you read, talk or play with your child, you're stimulating the growth of your child's brain and building the connections that will become the building blocks for reading. Brain development research shows that reading aloud to your child every day increases his brain's capacity for language and literacy skills and is the most important thing you can do to prepare him for learning to read.



Rhymes

Making up your own rhymes with your children is so much fun. Try silly rhymes to match people's names e.g. Lippy Poppy or Sam Jam. As your child begins to hear rhyming words encourage them to fill in the missing gaps. Here is a song that you can sing together.

There's a fox in a box in my little house
My little house
My little house.
There's a fox in a box in my little house
And there isn't any room for me.

There's a on a in my little house
My little house
My little house.
There's a on a in my little house
And there isn't any room for me.

Make up your own animals or silly things to make it as fun as possible.

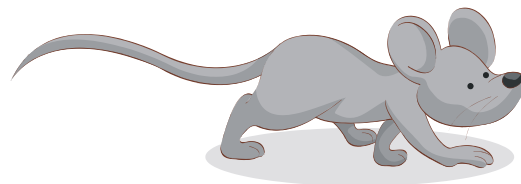
Draw a Story

Using a long roll of wallpaper on the floor begin by asking what kind of creature the story should be about. Draw the creature as your child describes it. Then ask what happens next. Keep building on the story by adding extra bits to it as and when your child describes it. The next day go back to it and see if your child can retell you the story.



And then....

Start by putting a hat on your head and start the story with 'Once upon a time there was a.....' Begin by setting the scene. Put the hat on your child's head and say 'And then'. Your child will come up with the next part of the story. Keep passing the hat back and forth until the story is complete. Write the story down as you could illustrate it together and then read it back to them. This can then be used for a bedtime story from time to time. Don't forget to tell them who the author is.



Environmental Print

How many of our children recognise the sign for Morrison's, Asda or the Metro? This early recognition of print helps to support your child with reading as they begin to realise that print has meaning. Try making a snap game with signs which you can easily download from the internet. Use signs that your child is familiar with and some that they may not be.



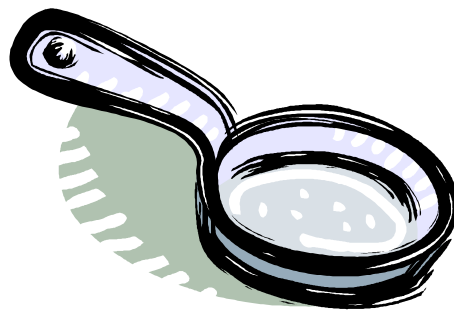
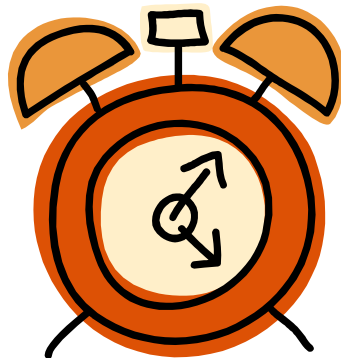
What could it be?

This is a fun game to play at the weekends. Show your child something that has magically appeared on your doorstep. Try and find things that they might not know it's use for. Ask your child what it could be? where it came from? how it got there? who it belongs to? etc. You could also do this with a single sparkly shoe that appears on your doorstep or what could be a tail of a wolf. You could also find something that is wrapped up. Talk about what it could be and who it was from. Then after a lot of discussions about what it could be open it together.



Sound Effects

Try adding sound effects to a favourite story. Go around the house to find things that you can use together to make the sounds for the story. The Bear Hunt is a really good one for. Trying to find something in the house that makes a 'squelch' sound should be good fun. Try it and put the story together with your child making the sounds.



Writing

Every child develops writing ability at different times. Some take to holding a pencil from a really young age and some flatly refuse. This can be because of a number of reasons including not wanting to fail that once they have made a mark it is permanent and they may get it wrong, because they are not interested in pencils and paper or because they have not yet developed the muscle control and skill to hold a pencil. In order for us to support every child we have put some ideas together that you might like to try at home.



Shaving Foam

Try using shaving foam on a table or a window. Your child will love drawing on it, rubbing over what they have done, making swirls and may even try to write their own name.



Chocolate Spread

Try spreading chocolate spread onto a silver tray or a plate. Your child will love drawing on it, rubbing over what they have done, making marks may even try to write their own name. They will enjoy licking it too!



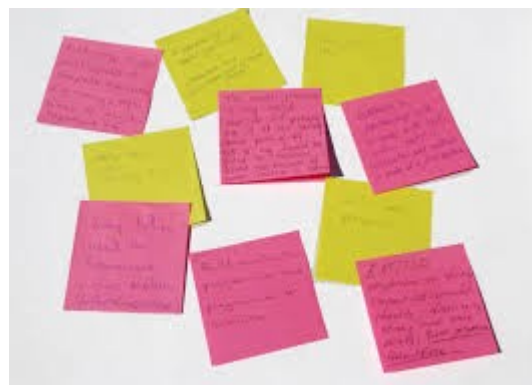
Paper Under a Table

Try sticking paper under the table. Your child will have to lie on their backs in order to write and draw. This will be something completely different.



Post it Notes

Children see staff at school using post it notes all of the time and love to use them to follow other children around, writing about them and making marks on the paper. Try making labels for the house.



Make your own Road

Try covering a table with paper and ask your child to draw roads for their cars. They could add their own road signs and buildings to it. They can then drive their favourite vehicles around the road map.



Train Track

The above can be adjusted to making a train track.

