



EARLY CHILDHOOD LITERACY

GET YOUR CHILD READY TO READ



WHAT ARE EARLY LITERACY SKILLS?

Before a child starts learning to read, they need to develop certain skills to lay the foundation for their literacy. With the help of an adult, children can prepare for school and develop their reading skills through various activities and practices.

Six early literacy skills children need before learning to read

Narrative Skills

describing and telling stories

Phonological Awareness

knowing word sounds

Letter Knowledge

recognizing letters

Print Awareness

noticing words and letters, following words on a page and knowing how to hold a book

Vocabulary

knowing the correct words for things

Print Motivation

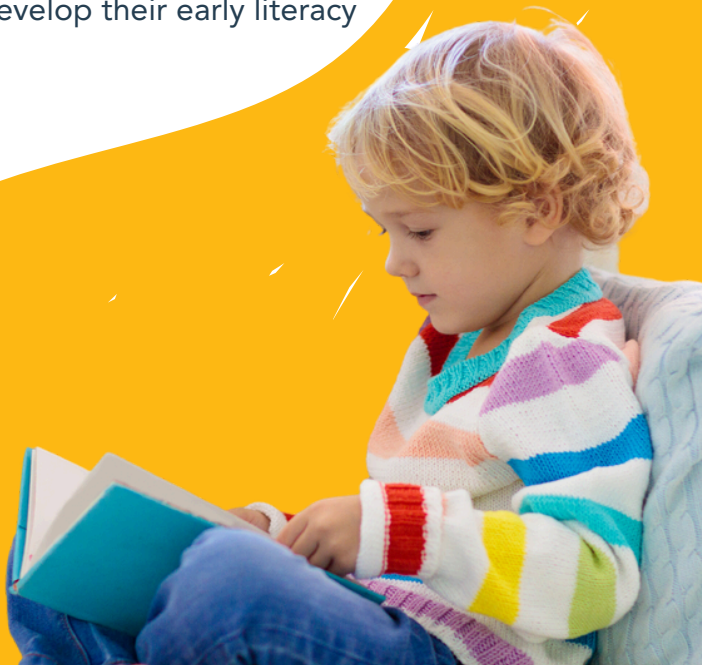
interested in books and reading

Five ways to help your child develop these skills

According to the American Library Association Every Child Ready to Read program, incorporating these five practices will support the development of the six early literacy skills.

1. Talk - oral language and communication
2. Sing - includes rhyming
3. Read - the most important practice
4. Write - develops fine motor skills
5. Play - is the primary way children learn

In this booklet, you will find activities, tips, and recommended books to support these practices and help your child develop their early literacy skills.



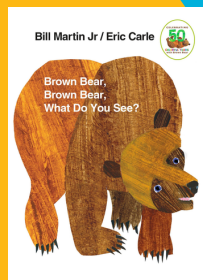
TALK

Develops narrative skills, vocabulary, and phonological awareness.

Talking helps infants and toddlers learn and develop their own language.

TIPS AND TRICKS

1. Ask your child what they think will happen next in a book you are reading.
2. Read stories with repeated words and phrases and let the child finish the sentence (once they are familiar with the story).
3. Talk through the steps of daily activities like preparing meals, cleaning, and getting ready.
4. Read wordless books and let your child tell you what is happening based on the pictures.
5. Read books over and over. This helps children understand stories and allows them to predict what happens.



TALK

Books & Interactions

Baby's first words

by Stella Blackstone

Point out objects in the book and ask your child what they are.

Brown Bear Brown Bear What Do You See

by Bill Martin Jr.

Once your child hears the repetition of the book, let them finish the sentences. If they need help, turn the page to show the next animal. Let them tell you what the animal is.

Du Iz Tak

by Carson Ellis

This book uses a made-up language. As you read with your child, ask them what they think is happening. Most of the sentences sound like English (Du iz tak = what is that).

Elephant and Piggie

by Mo Willems

This shows a child how a conversation moves along. Use different voices for the characters so your child can tell the characters apart.

Wolf in the Snow

by Matthew Cordell

Ask your child what is happening in this wordless story. Let them read the pictures and figure out the action.

Keep reading

Wordless books

Lion and Mouse by Jerry Pinkney

Another by Christian Robinson

Fly by Mark Teague

Repetition books

One Day in the Eucalyptus,

Eucalyptus Tree by Daniel

Bernstrom

Old MacDonald Had a Farm by Jane Cabrera

Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed by Eileen Christelow



Scan for the
full booklist

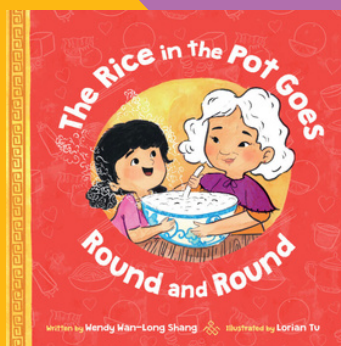
SING

Develops phonological awareness and vocabulary.

Singing slows language down for kids to hear the sounds of words.

TIPS AND TRICKS

1. Clap along to songs and rhymes so your child can develop a sense of rhythm.
2. Sing and dance during the day.
3. Make your own instruments – use a spoon to drum, fill a plastic bottle with rice or cereal.
4. Makeup songs about the activities you do throughout the day.
5. Use songs to motivate your child during chores (clean up song, this is the way we wash our hair).



SING

Books & Interactions

The Rice in the Pot Goes Round & Round

by Wendy Wan Long Shang

Make up movements to go with each verse.

Pete the Cat: Five Little Ducks

by James Dean

Let your child make the quacking noises.

Row row row your boat

by Yu-Hsuan Huang

Can you make up your own verse with different animals?

Honey for You, Honey For Me

by Michael Rosen

Point out rhyming words to your child as you read.

We're Going on a Bear Hunt

by Michael Rosen

Get up and move with the characters.



Scan for the full booklist

Keep reading

Rhyming books

Little Blue Truck by Alice Schertle

Llama Llama Red Pajama by Anna Dewdney

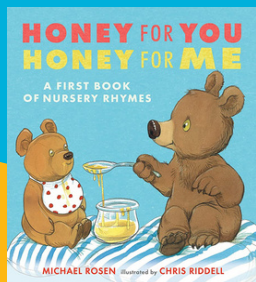
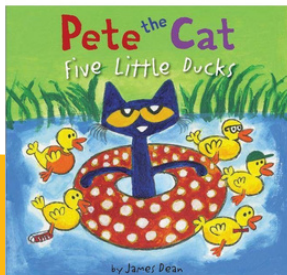
Pout Pout Fish by Deborah Diesen

Nursery rhymes

Mother Goose Goes to India by Kabir Sehgal

My Very First Mother Goose by Iona Opie and Rosemary Wells

Eric Carle's Twinkle Twinkle Little Star and Other Nursery Rhymes



READ

Develops print awareness, narrative skills, phonological awareness, vocabulary, print motivation, and letter knowledge.

Sharing and reading books with your child is one of the most essential activities to prepare a child for reading.

TIPS AND TRICKS

1. Read with expression and theatrics. Create voices and sounds for the characters and their actions.
2. Let the child hold the book and turn the pages.
3. Keep books always in reach - have some in every room and the car.
4. Let your child choose what books you read, either from the library or from your home.
5. Point to the words in books as you read them to bring attention to how your eyes should move across the page.



READ

Books & Interactions

Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!

by Mo Willems

Let your child answer the Pigeon's questions.

Chez Bob

by Bob Shea

Ask your child what they think is going to happen in the story.

Mel Fell

by Corey Tabor

Let your child hold the book and move it when Mel falls and flies.

Press Here

by Herve Tullet

Allow the child to do all the instructions.

Tap the Magic Tree

by Christie Matheson

Allow the child to do all the instructions.



Keep reading

Interactive Books

Bunny Slopes by Claudia Rueda

Play This Book by Jessica Young

Don't Push the Button! by Bill Cotter

Fun Read Alouds

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin Jr.

I Want My Hat Back by Jon Klassen

The Book With No Pictures by BJ Novak



Scan for the
full booklist

WRITE

Develops letter knowledge and narrative skills.

Reading and writing go together to develop spoken language. Scribbling and drawing help with fine motor skills and connect written language to oral language.

TIPS AND TRICKS

1. Make letters with playdough, clay, or draw in sandbox.
2. Let the child draw a picture and then describe it to you.
3. Have the child help you write a letter to a grandparent or other family member.
4. Point out letters on signs and in books. Letters are everywhere!
5. Color a picture. Even if your child just scribbles, this is the first step to learning how to hold a pencil.



WRITE

Books & Interactions

The Panda Problem

by Deborah Underwood

Shows the parts of a story – plot, conflict, character.

Fingertrail Mazes

by Felicity Brooks

This finger trail book allows kids to use fine motor skills while following the trail in the book.

Eating the Alphabet

by Lois Ehlert

This alphabet book is a great introduction to letters. Ask the child to find certain letters throughout the book. Let them point out an object and tell them what letter it starts with (example: a is for apple).

The Day the Crayons Quit

by Drew Daywalt

Let your child write a letter to their toy after reading the book.

I Don't Draw, I Color

by Adam Lehrhaupt

Scribble a picture – you don't have to draw well to make art.

Keep reading

ABC books

A to Z by Sandra Boynton

The Little Red Cat Who Ran Away and Learned His ABCs

by Patrick McDonnell

LMNO Peas by Keith Baker

Stories & Writing

Also an Octopus

by Maggie Tokuda-Hall

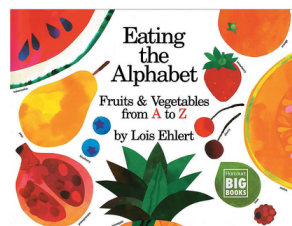
Drawn Together by Minh Le

Tell Me a Lion Story

by Kara Kramer



Scan for the
full booklist



PLAY

Develops vocabulary and narrative skills.

Play develops language by having children think symbolically.

TIPS AND TRICKS

1. Follow your child's lead. Let them instruct you on how to play.
2. Encourage dramatic play - use puppets and costumes.
3. Act out your child's favorite book.
4. Build with blocks and shapes. As you build, explain what you are doing and ask your child to explain their creations.
5. Use sensory play – sort toys of specific colors into bins, look for different shapes around the house, explore the textures of items outside (a leaf vs a pinecone) and make sounds by tapping on surfaces with different objects.



PLAY

Books & Interactions

Cookies!

by Lotta Nieminen

Pretend to cook by following the directions in this book.



We All Play

by Julie Flett

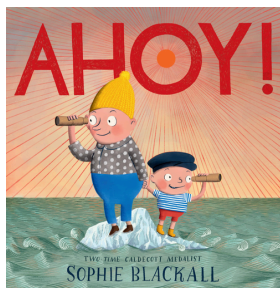
Mimic the animals and kids in this book.



Ahoy

by Sophie Blackall

Make up games like the parent and child in the story



Not a Box

by Antoinette Portis

What can you make with a box?

Keep reading

I'm the Digger Driver by David Semple

Can You Make a Scary Face by Jan Thomas

Journey by Aaron Becker

On a Magical Do-Nothing Day

by Beatrice Alemagna

Stanley's Toy Box by William Bee



Scan for the
full booklist

MORE TIPS TO MAKE READING FUN

1. Start early – even infants can enjoy reading
2. Let babies manipulate and handle sturdy board books.
3. Use books during tummy time
4. Read together every day
5. Let your child see you reading – this sets a good example
6. Read the same books over and over again
7. As you read, choose short words and spell them out
(example: this word is FUN. F-U-N. FUN.)
8. Show emotions when you read and tell your child what you think and feel about the story you read. (example: pretend to be scared during scary parts)
9. Make mistakes – once your child is familiar with a story or song, change a word and let them correct you (example: say the wrong animal sound in Old MacDonald)
10. Feel free to stop if your child is distracted or uninterested.
Reading should be a fun activity, don't force it!



More resources at KCPL

- Check out kentonlibrary.org/early-literacy for more resources and book lists.
- Participate in 1000 Books Before Kindergarten at kentonlibrary.beanstack.org
- Attend storytimes (see schedule at kentonlibrary.org/events)
- Play games at abcmouse.com (use at home with your library card)
- Sign up for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to receive a free monthly book for ages 0-5

More information on early literacy

- Getreadytoread.org
- Everychildreadytoread.org
- Readingrockets.org



Branch Locations

Covington Branch

502 Scott Blvd. Covington, KY 41011

Erlanger Branch

401 Kenton Lands Rd. Erlanger, KY 41018

Independence Branch

1992 Walton-Nicholson Rd. Independence, KY 41051

Latonia Branch

3911 Winston Ave., Latonia, KY 41015

859.962.4000

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