

language & literacy

Support your child's development in the area of Language & Literacy!

Language & Literacy involves:

- Speaking clearly.
- Asking and answering questions.
- Paying attention to and listening to people and stories.
- Following directions.
- Showing an interest in books.
- Learning about sounds in letters and words.
- Recognizing letters and numbers.
- Drawing pictures and trying to write and copy letters.

When your child starts school, he will be more likely to do well if he is able to do these things.

You can support the development of your child's language and literacy skills by doing the activities listed on the back of this card.

language & literacy

Activity Name	Age	Purpose	Things You Will Need
Read with Me	3-4	To introduce your child to books and help her comprehend (understand and talk about) them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The book: <i>The Three Bears</i> ■ The book: <i>The Little Red Hen</i> ■ The book: <i>The Three Billy Goats Gruff</i> ■ Arts and crafts materials (paper, crayons, yarn, glue, scissors, pipe cleaners, beads, Popsicle sticks, paper bags, and other materials)
Fun with Sounds	3-4	To help your child understand the sounds that letters make.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The book: <i>My Very First Mother Goose</i> by Iona Archibald Opie
Playing with Letters	3-4	To introduce your child to letters and give him an awareness of print.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Box of letters (foam or magnetic) ■ The book: <i>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</i> by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault
We Can Write	3-4	To help your child understand the purpose for writing and practice her writing skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Dry erase board ■ Dry erase marker ■ Paper ■ Pens and pencils ■ Sidewalk chalk
Reading Time	0-2	To introduce your child to language by reading and looking at books.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The book: <i>Pat the Bunny</i> by Dorothy Kunhardt

The School Readiness Activity Box Series, developed by Ready At Five, will help you build your child's skills in the seven Domains of Learning:

- Social & emotional development
- Physical development
- Language & literacy
- Mathematical thinking
- Scientific thinking
- Social studies
- The arts

To get activities in each of the above areas, visit www.readyatfive.org.



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Introduce your child to books and help her comprehend (understand and talk about) them!

For preschoolers (3- and 4-year-olds)

read with me!

you will need

- The book: *Little Red Hen Makes a Pizza* by Philemon Sturges
- The book: *The Wolf's Chicken Stew* by Keiko Kasza
- The book: *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* by Jan Brett
- Arts & crafts materials bag (including paper, crayons, yarn, glue, scissors, pipe cleaners, beads, Popsicle sticks, paper bags, and other materials)

Instructions

1. Show your child the three books and ask her to choose one to read with you.
2. Once she has chosen a book, pick it up and show her the right way to hold the book.
3. Talk with your child about the picture on the cover. Ask your child what she thinks the book will be about. Next, tell her who wrote the story (the author) and who drew the pictures (the illustrator).
4. Begin reading the story to your child. It is not necessary to read the book straight through. Instead, stop and talk about the pictures as you read each page. For example, as you read ask:
 - What do you think will happen next?
 - Do you like of the pictures? Why?
 - Do you like the story so far?
5. As you read, use your finger to follow the words of the story. This will show your child that there are words on the page and that you are reading them to tell the story.

Continued on back...

read **with me!**

6. When you finish the book, show your child the arts and crafts materials. Ask your child to use these materials to make a picture of one of the characters (a person or animal) from the book. For example, you may say to your child, "Why don't we draw Goldilocks?" (or the little red hen or the troll).

Other Activities to Try

- Act out your child's favorite part of the story (or the entire story). Pretend to be the characters.
- Make simple puppets using the paper bags and other art materials. Put on a puppet show of the story.
- Have your child retell the story, asking her to recall details such as:
 - What happened in the beginning? The middle? The end?
 - Who was in the story? What did they do?
 - What do you think would happen next if the book were to continue?
- Tell familiar stories to your child and let her tell stories to you!
- Read and enjoy other books with your child.

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Help your child understand the sounds that letters and words make.

For preschoolers (3- and 4-year-olds)

fun with sounds

you will need

- The book: *My Very First Mother Goose*
by Iona Archibald Opie

Instructions

1. Show your child the book and explain that it is a storybook of rhymes. Explain that rhyming words have a different beginning, but they sound the same at the end. Tell your child that the words "Wig" and "Pig" rhyme. Ask your child, "Can you think of more words that rhyme with wig?" (Your child may say dig, big, or fig.)
2. Let your child look through the book. While he is looking, talk about the pictures.
3. Ask your child to choose one rhyme to read. Once your child has chosen, read the rhyme.
4. When finished, say, "Let's make up different words for this rhyme." For example, if you've just read *To Market, To Market* you might change the words to: "To market, to market to buy a fat dog, home again, home again, jiggety-jog."
5. Continue reading the book in this way, making up more rhyming words with your child.

fun with sounds

Other Activities to Try

- Sing or tell your child nursery rhymes, such as “Jack and Jill” or “Humpty Dumpty.” Once your child knows the rhyme, pause and let your child finish the line. (For example, start singing, “Jack and Jill went up the ____.” Pause, and let your child answer “hill.”)
- Play a rhyming game called “I Say, You Say.” In this game, have your child finish the phrase you started with a word that rhymes. For example, “I say cat, you say ____ (your child may say hat, bat or mat).”
- Make up silly names for people that your child knows, using the same beginning sound. For example, dancing dinosaur daddy, messy marshmallow mommy, etc.
- Help your child think of words with the same beginning. Say, “Let’s see how many words we can think of that start with the “P” sound.” (Your child may say pancake, pencil or plate.)
- Sing the Name Game song with your child. (For example, if your child’s name is Sam, sing “Sam, Sam, Bo-Bam, Banana Fana Fo Fam, Me mi mo Mam, Sam.”) Try other names.

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Introduce your child to letters and give him an awareness of print.

For preschoolers (3- and 4-year-olds)

playing with letters

you will need

- The book: *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault
- Box of letters (magnetic or foam)

Instructions

1. Take out the letters and let your child play with them. He may sort them, look at them, line them up or talk about them. Help your child notice that some of the letters have rounded parts, some have straight edges, and some have holes in them.
2. Ask him if he knows the names of any of the letters. Help him find the ones he knows.
3. Use the letters to spell your child's name. Hold his hand and use his finger to point to each letter as you spell his name aloud.
4. Tell your child, "We are going to read a book that has all of these letters in it. Let's see if you and I can find the letters in our pile to match the ones on each page!"
5. Read *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* to your child, talking about the letters as you read. Help him find some of the letters as you read about them in the book. Have him try to match them to the letters on the page.

playing with **letters**

Other Activities to Try

- Point out letters and print in your child's world. Look for letters at the grocery store, on the bus, on street signs and building signs and on food packages.
- Point out letters that are important to your child. (For example: "Look, there is an S on the Stop sign, just like the S in your name Sally!")
- Put letters in alphabetical order and sing the alphabet song (the "ABC's"), pointing to each letter as you sing.
- Give your child the newspaper or a magazine and let him look for letters that he knows.
- Help your child use the letters to "spell out" the names of people in his family, pets, toys or favorite characters.

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Help your child understand the purpose for writing and practice her writing skills.

For preschoolers (3- and 4-year-olds)

We can **write**

you will need

- Dry Erase Board
- Dry Erase Marker
- Paper
- Pens and Pencils
- Sidewalk chalk

Instructions

1. Let your child play with the various tools used for writing (pens, pencils, marker, sidewalk chalk, the dry erase board, and paper). Allow your child to figure out how each item is used. Tell your child that these are tools we can use for writing.
2. Once she is comfortable with the tools, talk about the times she has seen you or other people writing.
3. Help her think of things that she could write. (For example, a birthday wish list, guest list to a party, a letter to grandma, a favorite recipe, an "order" for dinner, or a grocery list).
4. Now ask her to "write" it using any of the materials. For example, say, "Let's make a grocery list of your favorite foods!" Remember, it is ok for your child to scribble! Any type of writing (scribbling or random letters) that your child does gives her a strong foundation for writing. Praise all attempts at writing.

We can **write**

Other Activities to Try

- Make an alphabet book with your child. Encourage her to write or draw pictures for every letter of the alphabet.
- During pretend play, encourage your child to write. Offer your child crayons, pencils, and paper to take your order while playing waitress or write down a recipe while playing baker.
- Keep writing materials available for him to use whenever he's interested.
- Help your child write a letter to a special friend or relative. Always allow him to sign his own name to cards or letters, even if it is only a scribble.
- Let your child practice writing letters with a stick in the sand box or in the dirt.

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Introduce your child to language by reading and looking at books.

For infants and toddlers (under age 2)

reading time

you will need

- The book: *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown

Instructions

1. Hold your child on your lap. Hold the book in front of your child and read the title to him.
2. Using simple words, tell your child about the picture on the cover of the book. You might say, "Look, there is the moon," while pointing to the moon. If your child is old enough, encourage him to say "moon" with you. Help your child find the moon, the bunny or the mouse in the pictures of the book.
3. Read the book to your child, pointing to the pictures and telling your child about them.
4. Let your child turn the pages of the book, and read at his own pace. If he is turning pages quickly, just talk about the pictures. If he is turning them slowly, read the words and talk about the pictures.

reading time

Other Activities to Try

- Read to your child as often as possible. Develop a routine of reading. For example, read to your child each night before bed.
- Show your child all the times you read. For example, if you are shopping, you might say, "Let's read our grocery list and see what we need to buy".

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Introduce your child to sounds and words by singing silly songs!

Infants and Toddlers (under age 2)

sing **with me!**

you will need

- The book: *Wheels on the Bus* by Jerry Smath

Instructions

1. Hold your child on your lap and show him the book. Let him look through it. Talk about the pictures.
2. Tell your child that this is a sing-a-long book. Begin reading/singing the book.
3. Next, tell him: "We are going to sing the Wheels on the Bus song again. This time we are going to be silly as we sing."
4. As you sing about how the wheels go round and round, gently move your baby's arms in small circles. Be sure to smile and look at your baby as you sing. Be silly and make him laugh!
5. Continue reading the book and singing the song. Changing the movements as you sing. Make up new verses. For example:
 - Gently raise your child up in the air when you sing that the windows go up and down.
 - Gently open and close his arms when you sing that the doors open and close.
 - Gently touch his nose when you sing that the horn beeps.

Continued on back...

sing **with me!**

6. Repeat the song many times so your child can learn the words and the movements.
7. As your child gets older, pause while you sing (leave out one of the words) and allow your child to sing them.

Other Activities to Try

- Sing to your baby everyday. Sing lots of different songs to your baby. Make up silly songs to familiar tunes. Help your baby clap his hands or let him shake a rattle as you sing.
- Help your toddler to sing songs during the day. For example, help her sing the "A-B-C Song" every time she washes her hands. On a walk, help her sing "Old MacDonald." At bedtime, help her sing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."
- Play "Song Games" with your toddler. Try singing "Ring around the Rosy" and help him go around in a circle and fall down at the right time.

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Talk with your child and help her ask and answer questions!

Infants and Toddlers (under age 2)

what does baby **hear?**

you will need

- A rattle

Instructions

1. Sit on the floor with your child facing you (either lying down or sitting up).
2. Show your child the rattle. Shake it in front of her or at her side. Ask: "What do you hear?" Don't feel silly about asking your baby questions! It will help her learn.
3. Tell her: "It is a rattle and it makes noise. Do you want to see it?"
4. Give the rattle to your child and let her look at and use it.
5. Talk with your child about what she hears everyday. Whenever you hear a sound, ask: "What do you hear?" Be sure to pause before you say the answer. For example:
 - When the telephone rings, say: "What do you hear? I hear the telephone ringing. Let me go answer the phone and say 'Hello'."
 - When the dog barks, say: "What do you hear? WOOF! WOOF! The doggy is barking."
 - When the radio is turned on, say: "What do you hear? The radio is playing pretty music? Doesn't it sound nice? Do you want to dance?" *Continued on back...*

what does baby **hear?**

6. Soon your child will tell you what she hears! When this happens repeat the word and add more. For example, if your child says “door” you might say, “Your right! Someone’s knocking at the door.” If your child is having trouble with a word, help her say the word correctly. For example if your child said “daar” instead of “door” say: “Yes! It is the door.”
7. Once your child is talking, help her name everything she hears. Ask: “What do you hear?” at home, outside, at the store, or riding on the bus.

Other Activities to Try

- Read books that help your child talk about what she hears. The local library has lots of books. Try: *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What do you hear?* by Bill Martin, Jr.
- Ask lots of questions: “Are you hungry? Do you want your bottle?” at lunchtime. When your baby needs to get dressed, ask: “Do you want to wear the red shirt or the blue shirt.” Let your baby point to his choice. Repeat his selection: “Oh! You want to wear the red shirt! It is my favorite!”
- Tell familiar stories to your child and let her tell stories to you!

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