

# Early Literacy Matters

Use these tips now to help prepare your child for a lifetime of learning success.



## TALK

“Research tells us that what determines future academic success is the amount of words per hour babies hear before the age of two.”

– from *Baby Read-Aloud Basics* by Caroline J. Blakemore and Barbara Weston Ramirez

Use these books to TALK with your child:

*The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle

*Hurry! Hurry!* by Eve Bunting

*The Lion and the Mouse* by Jerry Pinkney

Let children help you create your grocery list or cook a meal. Talk about letters and words as you write them.  
Help children read labels as you shop. Let them help you follow a recipe.

In the car, pick sounds out of signs or letters out of license plates. Talk about words that start with the sounds or letters you find.

## SING

“Sing favorite songs and introduce new songs that incorporate simple actions and movements that correspond (e.g., ‘I’m a little teapot’ or ‘The itsy bitsy spider’).”

– from *Bright From the Start* by Jill Stamm, Ph.D.

Use these books to SING with your child:

*The Babies on the Bus* by Karen Katz

*Pete the Cat* by Eric Litwin

*Wiggle!* by Doreen Cronin

Sing the alphabet song to learn about letters. Sing nursery rhymes so children hear the different sounds in words. Clap along to the rhythms in songs so children hear the syllables in words.

Singing slows down language so children can hear the different sounds that make up words.  
This helps when children begin to read printed language.

## READ

Children should hear 1,000 stories read aloud before they begin to learn to read.

– from *Reading Magic* by Mem Fox

Use these books to READ with your child:

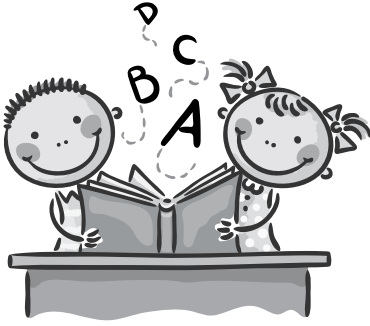
*Clip-Clop* by Nicola Smee

*Owl Babies* by Martin Waddell

*Freight Train* by Donald Crews

Read aloud every day. Talk about the stories you read, and tell children we read words rather than pictures.  
Help children understand that we read from left to right and front to back.

Notice words and letters around you. Read cereal boxes or other packages.  
Post your child’s name in his or her room. Point out words and letters on signs and billboards around town.



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## WRITE

“Giving your children paper and crayons, markers, or pencils even when they can only scribble is the beginning of early writing.”

– from *The Early Literacy Kit* by Betsy Diamant-Cohen and Saroj Nadkarni Ghoting

Use these books to WRITE with your child:

*Click, Clack, Moo: Cows that Type* by Doreen Cronin

*Diary of a Worm* by Doreen Cronin

*The Everything Book* by Denise Fleming

Ask a relative to be your child's pen pal. Help children compose “letters” of pictures and simple words. Children enjoy drawing and writing when they know they will get a letter in return.

Write notes for your children to find in their lunch boxes or book bags. Help them make cards for holidays or family events. Communicate that words are fun and can make someone smile.

## PLAY

“Scientific studies of the brain suggest that a child's natural approach to learning is through play.”

– from *The Early Literacy Kit* by Betsy Diamant-Cohen and Saroj Nadkarni Ghoting

Use these books to PLAY with your child:

*The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats

*Bark, George* by Jules Feiffer

*Pete's a Pizza* by William Steig

Play with language to help your child learn. How many rhyming words can you think of together?  
How many words that start with the same letter or sound?

In addition to books, provide print materials such as menus, tickets, maps, and catalogs for children to use in pretend play.