

# Early literacy

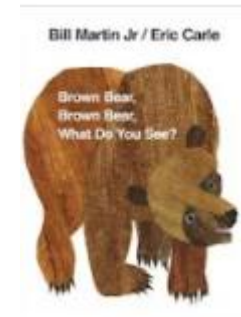
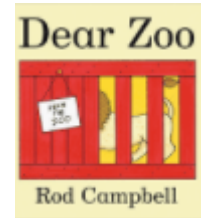
What do we need to know and do before we start reading and writing?

# ► Communication and Language

- Talk
- Listening and attention
- Vocab
- Interest

# Activities to help language development

- ▶ Repetitive books- all our key texts are repetitive.
- ▶ Imaginative play
- ▶ Messy play.



# Listening and attention

- ▶ Listening to CDs

Your child's listening and attention skills are crucial for learning language. You can use listening to CDs to help build on these, and add information to what they are listening to. For example, if they hear a cockerel crowing, talk to them about farms where you might see a cockerel, the other animals that you might see etc.

- ▶ Board games for turn-taking

Taking turns is an essential communication skill and playing any simple board games that involve taking turns not only helps children to develop this skill, it also helps them to listen and attend to an activity for longer periods of time.

# Reading

## ▶ Word reading

- Understand the five key concepts about print:
  - print has meaning
  - the names of different parts of a book
  - print can have different purposes
  - page sequencing
  - we read English text from left to right and from top to bottom

- Repeat words and phrases from familiar stories.
- Recognise words with the same initial sound, such as money and mother
- Find own name using picture

## ▶ Comprehension

- Ask questions about the book. Make comments and shares their own ideas
- Have favourite books and seek them out, to share with an adult, with another child, or to look at alone.
- Enjoy listening to longer stories and can remember much of what happens.
- Engage in extended conversations about stories, learning new vocabulary.
- Listen to and talk about selected non-fiction to develop a deep familiarity with new knowledge and vocabulary.

# Top tips- Reading

## ► Make Reading Fun!

Reading aloud can be a lot of fun, not just for parents but for all family members. Here are some ways to get the most out of reading to your young child:

- Read with drama and excitement! Use different voices for different characters in the story. Use your child's name instead of a character's name. Make puppets and use them to act out a story.
- Re-read your child's favourite stories as many times as your child wants to hear them, and choose books and authors that your child enjoys.
- Read stories that have repetitive parts and encourage your child to join in.
- Point to words as you read them. This will help your child make a connection between the words he or she hears you say and the words on the page.

(Print has meaning)

- Read all kinds of material - stories, poems, information books, magazine and newspaper articles, and comics.
- Encourage relatives and friends to give your child books as gifts.
- Take your child to the library and look at interactive CD-ROMs and the Internet, as well as books.
  - Subscribe to a magazine for your child. He or she will love receiving mail!

# Phonics

- ▶ Aspect 1: General sound discrimination - environmental sounds

Learning about environmental sounds helps children tune listening skills, as they listen for specific sounds around them. These skills will develop in later phases of phonics as they listen to words and pick out the specific sounds within them.

- ▶ Aspect 2: General sound discrimination - instrumental sounds

This aspect aims to develop children's awareness of sounds made by various instruments and noise makers. Activities include comparing and matching sound makers, playing instruments alongside a story and making loud and quiet sounds.

- ▶ Aspect 3: General sound discrimination - body percussion

Similar to instrumental sounds, body percussion is another way of exploring sounds and how they differ. An example of this is telling a story such as 'We're going on a Bear Hunt' and using different ways of making sounds with our bodies- clapping, tiptoeing, brushing our hands, etc.

► Aspect 4: Rhythm and rhyme

This aspect aims to develop children's appreciation and experiences of rhythm and rhyme in speech. Activities include nursery rhymes, poems, rhyming stories and rhyming bingo. Playing with rhyming words is great fun and is essential to early reading.

► Aspect 5: Alliteration

The focus is on initial sounds of words, with activities including I-Spy type games and matching objects which begin with the same sound.

► Aspect 6: Voice sounds

This aspect is all about playing with the sounds our voices can make. This includes exploring mouth shapes we make when talking and making sounds.

► Aspect 7: Oral blending and segmenting

This aspect is all about hearing and playing with sounds in words verbally. Children learn to unpick the phonemes they can hear in words in order of how they sound e.g. the sounds in the word cat are c-a-t. And then to be able to say that the sounds c-a-t make cat.



# Soft sounds

Please take care with how you say your sounds with your children. We use soft sounds to support children in being able to blend sounds together to make words.

<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>

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Please no 'hard' sounds!

## Mark Making

What is mark making and why is it important?  
Children begin their journey towards writing,  
not by producing letters and words, but by  
simply making marks.  
Mark making is the first step towards writing.

# How to encourage mark making

- ▶ Start by providing lots of different types of writing tool, crayons, felt tips, pencils, chalks, and - if you can bear it - paint! Inside and outside- water painting?
- ▶ Don't worry about buying paper, your child will be happy using the back of junk mail, scrap paper or leftover wallpaper rolls or even the pavement.
- ▶ Once your child has begun to show an interest in writing and begins to acquire the necessary skills, there are other ways in which you can support them in development these even further.
- ▶ For example, show them how.
- ▶ Let children watch as you write for a variety of reasons- you are their role model.
- ▶ **Model writing by using capital and lower case letters in the correct context, for example James rather than JAMES.\*\*\***
- ▶ Add their name to any pictures or artwork, starting in the upper left hand corner, to reflect that reading/writing in English is from left to right.
- ▶ Sequencing games and puzzles can help support left - right coordination.

# Physical development before writing

The image below shows a 3 year old's hand development compared to a 7 year old. The 3 year old is not as well formed as the 7 year old, especially in the wrist joint! For this reason it is important that we focus on building up strength in the hands and arm joints to be ready to write.



How can I help my child to be physically ready to write?

Gross motor

- Start big and exercise their shoulder and arm muscles.

Some great ideas are: pulling on arms when climbing, twirling ribbons in the wind, sweeping with a garden brooms, filling and emptying wheelbarrows, drawing giant chalk circles, 'painting' with water, and in fact anything that gets your child stretching up or across their body!

- Fine motor

Then working the fingers are essential for comfortable writing and there are lots of games and activities which are idea for developing these muscles – for example, threading and sewing games, fusible beads, Play-doh, tweezer games, posting and stacking games. However, there are just as many things that can be found around the home that will work just as well!

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# My child is just scribbling!

