

What is Early Literacy?

Early Literacy does not mean learning to read early.
It means helping our children be READY to LEARN by:



- ▶ Singing
- ▶ Rhyming
- ▶ Pretending
- ▶ Playing with Sounds
- ▶ Scribbling & Drawing
- ▶ Reading Aloud
- ▶ Having Stimulating

Conversations:

“What do you See?”

“What do you Think?”

“What do you Wonder?”



Reading Tips in Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Hmong, Korean, Diné, Russian, Tagalog, and Vietnamese: <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/reading-tips-parents->

Go to www.simcoecommunityservices.ca

(click on EarlyON Child and Family Centre then click on Literacy link)

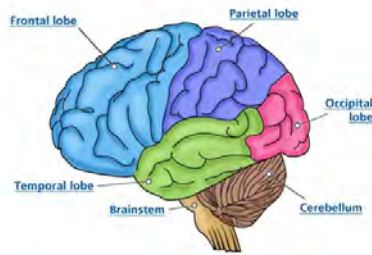
For Preschool, Toddler, and Infant Early Literacy Booklets, activity calendars, videos, & more!

Stages of Play, Language, and Literacy Development

	Pretend Play Development	Language Development	Literacy Development
Junior Kindergarten (3-5 years)	Planned Pretend Play: (4 & 5 year olds) -dramatic play in groups -person-oriented, not object-oriented -role playing using make believe objects -lots of language to create actions or situations "Let's pretend that____" -will "act" for at least 10 minutes -very creative and inventive	-understands directions involving "if...then" - "if you're wearing runners then line up for gym" - is understood by strangers most of the time -speaks in complete sentences (using some details), & links two sentences with "and" -grammar becomes complex (<i>not</i> "me do it") - describes past, present and future events in detail -uses new, and more interesting words every day (when speaking)	-books that play with silly sounds & words (like Dr. Seuss' 'There's a Wocket in my Pocket') -reads a book by memorization or by making up the story (pretending) -recites & can make up rhymes -tells beginning, middle, & end of story when book is over using pictures for help - holds a pencil and uses it to print first name and letters (at random)
Senior Kindergarten (4-6 years)	Planned Pretend Play: (5-6 year olds) -acts out stories that have a beginning, middle, and end for long periods of time -plays in roles of characters who come together to solve a problem -enjoys using objects that are abstract and open-ended -learns to coordinate with others -learns to solve problems so that play can continue -learns to follow the rules of conversation -begins to see things from another person's (the role they are playing) point of view -children whose parents take them to stores, parks, museums, workplaces, and other outings are able to play more creatively, and for longer periods of time	-uses complete sentences (with details, and interesting words) that sound almost like an adult because grammar dramatically improves - tells very long stories complete with endings -increase in vocabulary shown by using new, and more interesting words every day (when speaking) - says the beginning & ending sounds in words (orally - not in print - e.g., can answer the question: I hear with my little ear, the very first (or last) sound in "cake"! (Answer: /k/, <i>not the name of the letter</i>) - blends three individual sounds into a word orally - not in print (e.g. can tell you what the word is when the sounds "p/ar/k" are given). - segments words into individual sounds orally - not in print (e.g., can break down the 3 sounds in the word 'star' like this: "s/t/ar").	- loves listening to longer, make-believe stories with interesting plots (where characters solve a good problem with imagination) -tells the beginning, middle, & end of a story when book is over/closed - points to all letters & says their sounds - points to all letters & says their names -can point to the words in a simple story, matching the adult's spoken words - prints letters (in their full name, when trying to spell, & when copying) - sings the alphabet song and points to matching letters when sung - reads very simple pattern books (with memorization for simple "wild words"*, & sounding out - <i>with help</i> - for simple "pattern words"**) - understands what they read & what is read to them (by answering who, what, where, when, & why questions, & making good comments)

*Wild Words are words that must be memorized because their letters do not match the sounds (i.e.: of, the, was, very, could, etc...)

Pattern Words are words that can be sounded out because the letter (or two letters together) matches the sound (i.e.: cat, sit, **feet, shop)



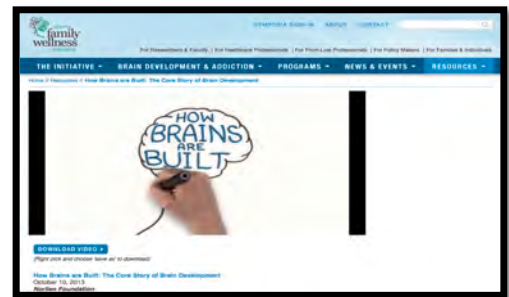
To Help Preschoolers Be
Ready to Learn...

We Need to Help them Build Healthy Brains!

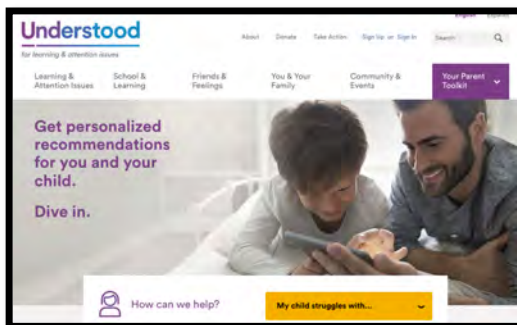


Go to **YouTube**, and search **"Alberta Family Wellness"** for a group of **17 different 3-4 minute video clips**. The following videos will help you understand and **reduce later learning problems**.

- **How Brains are Built:** The Core Story of Brain Development
- Executive Function
- Toxic Stress
- Serve & Return
- Brain Architecture



Do you have a **family history** (mom, dad, siblings, grandparents, aunts/uncles/cousins) of **ADHD** and/or **learning to read problems** (back in grade one)?



The **simulations** at www.understood.org are a good way to help you understand what it feels like to have learning and/or attention issues (click on **Your Parent Toolkit**, then **Through your Child's Eyes**), and what to do about it.

At understood.org, 15 non-profit organizations have joined forces to support parents of the one in five children with learning and attention issues throughout their journey.

Did your child **struggle** (or are they struggling) **with listening and/or speaking**? Is there a **family history** of **dyslexia** or **learning to read problems**? Go to www.readingrockets.org, and www.elda.org (click on **Families**, then **Fact Sheets**) to help your children start off on the right foot towards later reading success!



Go to the Library!



- If you want to stay motivated to read aloud with your children, be sure to go to the library regularly!
- Choose ten books that **you** want to read with your children, and let them pick out their own ten books.
- Keep all of your library books in a special bin.
- Come bedtime, you will be MUCH more enthusiastic about reading aloud because you will have some NEW and interesting books to choose from!
- **Children's books have 50% more rare or unique words in them than does the regular conversation of two university graduates.** Stop often to explain and describe new words, and your children will develop a vocabulary to last a lifetime!
- It's not just the book you read, **it's the conversations you have while reading that really make a difference!**
- The library has many wonderful story times and programs. They have a terrific program called *Every Child Ready to Read*.



10 Best Ways to get Preschoolers Ready to Read!



- 1** Take time to **pay attention** to what your preschoolers are doing before saying anything or before joining in. Then join them and **let them lead the play**. This helps you develop a **warm and engaging connection** which is the best way to get them to *listen & learn* with you.
- 2** Sing **songs & nursery rhymes** often. Do **actions** for the songs and rhymes. **Leave off last words**.
- 3** **Pretend with your Preschoolers!** If they are struggling to get dressed, make the clothes talk! (e.g., “Pick me! Pick me! I want to play with you today!”) Or have conversations with their stuffies.
- 4** Look at books and **point to the pictures, and words** that stand out. **Name, describe & explain**.
- 5** Read aloud with **enthusiasm** in your **voice & facial expressions**. Make your voice go **high-low, fast-slow, loud-quiet**.
- 6** Get excited about learning about the people, places, & things in our world! Wherever you go (places you visit, what you see on TV or online, and in stories), **TALK** about what you see and read. **Talk about rare and interesting words!**
- 7** Be direct with rhyming. Say, “**Hey! Those words rhyme!** Those words sound the same at the end! Cat – at, Hat- at. They both have the sound “at” at the end!”
- 8** Ask questions & make comments about what the characters in books are **feeling**, or about what may happen **next** before turning the page. Help them **relate stories to their own lives**.
- 9** Make regular trips to the Library. Let your children pick out lots of books, pick out some that **you** think would be fun to read to them, & books you want to read to yourself too!



- Is there a family history of problems with learning to read back in grade one?
- Did your preschooler struggle with learning to TALK or listen?
- These are two RED FLAGS.
- Your preschooler may also struggle with learning to read.

Go to the end of this booklet for more information about **early signs of reading problems**. Use all of the activities in this booklet to help your children start off on the right foot!



How IS Your Child Developing?

Early Screening Matters is a **developmental screening initiative** for infants, toddlers and preschoolers in Simcoe County.



Early Screening Matters encourages **regular conversations** about a **child's development** with Early Years Professionals including:

- Ontario Early Years Centre (OEYC) Program Facilitators
- Early Childhood Educators in Licensed Child Care Centres
- Community Action Program for Children (CAP-C) Program Facilitators
- Health Care Providers and Public Health Nurses.

Early Screening Matters urges parents to **keep track of their child's milestones** right from infancy. Milestones are things most children can do by a certain age. Screening helps all parents see if their child's **development is on track**.

Free services are available to **support parents** with their child's development. Together with parents, screening can help identify services that may be **helpful**.

If you have questions/concerns about your child's development, speak with one of the above professionals. Alternatively, you can access a free **telephone developmental screening** of your infant, toddler or preschooler by calling Children's Developmental Services **705-739-5696** or **1-800-657-1979**.

The earlier we work together the better.





Parents and Caregivers Matter



- Respond to and comfort your child.
- Sing, play and read with your child.
- Listen to and talk with your child.
- Have regular conversations about your child's development with your Ontario Early Years Centre Staff, Child Care Centre Staff, CAP-C Program Facilitator, Health Care Provider or Public Health Nurse.

Early Development Matters

- Your child's brain develops quickly. What happens early matters.
- What children experience during pregnancy & from the day they are born affects how they learn, make friends & feel.
- Warm and engaging relationships build healthy brains.
- Safe & interesting environments have a positive impact on children's development.



Early Screening Matters

- Keep track of your child's milestones right from infancy.
- Screening helps all parents see if their child's development is on track.
- Free services are available to help support you with your child's development.
- The earlier we work together the better.



Songs for Switching Sounds

I've Been Working on the Railroad

(Someone's in the Kitchen with Dinah)



I've been working
on the railroad,
(pretend to hammer)
All the livelong day.
I've been working on
the railroad,
Just to pass the
time away.

Can't you hear the whistle blowing, (put hand up to ear)
Rise up so early in the morn, (push hands up)
Can't you hear the whistle blowing, (put hand up to ear)
Dinah, blow your horn.

Dinah won't you blow, (clap, or slap thighs)
Dinah won't you blow,
Dinah won't you blow your hor-or-orn!
Dinah won't you blow,
Dinah won't you blow,
Dinah won't you blow your horn.

Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah,
Someone's in the kitchen, I know-ow-ow-ow
Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah!
Strumming on the old Banjo! (pretend to strum)
And it went.... (continue strumming)

Fee-fi-fiddley-i-o (change to **me-my-middley-i-o**)
Fee-fi-fiddley-i-o (or...**see-sigh-siddley-i-so**)
Fee-fi-fiddley-i-o (or...**bee-by-biddley-i-bo**)
Strumming on the old Banjo!

Zip-a-Dee Doo Da!

Zip-a-dee-do-da, Zip-a-dee-day!
My, oh my, what a wonderful day!
Plenty of sunshine,
Coming our way,
Zip-a-dee-do-da, Zip-a-dee-day!
(change to pip-a-dee-poo-
pa...kids love this one!
Or, kip-a-dee-koo-ka...they
love this one too!)



Old MacDonald Had a Farm

Old MacDonald had a Farm, ee-i-ee-i-o
And on that farm he had a (cow),
Kee-i-kee-i-ko,
With a /k/ /k/ here, and a /k/ /k/ there,
Here a /k/, There a /k/, Everywhere a /k/k/,
Old MacDonald had a Farm,
Kee-i-kee-i-ko!

(Or, you could just pick the first sound in a child's
name and only switch the sounds in ee-i-ee-i-o)



La-La-La!

La La La La
La-la-la- La,la.
La-la-la La-la-la,
La

La La!
(pick another sound and sing: e.g., "ta-ta-ta-ta...")



Apples and Bananas

I like to eat, eat, eat, apples and bananas.

I like to eat, eat, eat, apples and bananas.

I like to ate, ate, ate, ay-ples and ba-nay-nays.

I like to ate, ate, ate, ay-ples and ba-nay-nays.

I like to eat, eat, eat, ee-ples and ba-nee-nees.

I like to eat, eat, eat, ee-ples and ba-nee-nees.

I like to ight, ight, ight, igh-ples and ba-nigh-nighs.

I like to ight, ight, ight, igh-ples and ba-nigh-nighs.

I like to oat, oat, oat, oa-ples and ba-no-nose.

I like to oat, oat, oat, oa-ples and ba-no-nose.

I like to oot, oot, oot, oo-ples and ba-noo-noos.

I like to oot, oot, oot, oo-ples and ba-noo-noos.



If all the Raindrops were Lemondrops and Gumdrops

If all the raindrops were lemondrops and gumdrops,
Oh, what a rain it would be.

Standing outside with my mouth open wide,
Ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah.

If all the raindrops were lemondrops and gumdrops,
Oh, what a rain it would be.

Repeat, but add a new sound to "ah-ah-ah-ah..."
(e.g., pa,pa,pa,pa,pa,pa,pa,pa,pa,pa)



Jingle at the Window

Pass 1 window, Ti-dee-o (hold up one finger)

Pass 2 windows, Ti-dee-o (hold up two fingers)

Pass 3 windows, Ti-dee-o (hold up three fingers)

Jingle at the window, Ti-dee-o

Jingle, Jingle, Jingle, Jo

Jingle at the window, Ti-dee-o

Jingle, Jingle, Jingle, Jo

Jingle at the window, Ti-dee-o

Repeat, but switch "j" in jingle" to a new sound

Rig-a-Jig-Jig (stand in circle & walk on the spot)



As I was walking down the street,
Down the street, down the street,
A very good friend I chanced to meet,
Hi-Ho, Hi-Ho, Hi-Ho!

(now everyone hold hands and walk in a circle)

Rig-a-Jig-Jig and away we go,

Away we go, away we go,

Rig-a-Jig-Jig and away we go,

Hi-Ho, Hi-Ho, Hi-Ho!

(change Rig-a-Jig-Jig to the first sound in
someone's name...i.e.: **Melanie** would sound like:

Mig-a-Mig-Mig, and **Sharon** would sound like:
Shig-a-Shig-Shig...)

We clapped our hands and stomped our feet,
Stomped our feet, stomped our feet...

We clapped our hands and stomped our feet,
Hi-Ho, Hi-Ho, Hi-Ho!

We jumped up high and way down low....

We kissed my ma, and hugged my pa...



John Jacob Jingle

Heimer Schmidt

John Jacob Jingle Heimer Schmidt

His name is my name too.

Whenever we go out,

The people always shout,

There goes John Jacob Jingle Heimer Schmidt.

Da da da da da da!

Repeat, but switch the first sound in "da-da-da..."

*This song is traditionally sung more quietly each time, and then the "da-da-da" part is sung LOUDLY.

Happy Birthday!



Gappy Girthday Goo Gew

Gappy Girthday Goo Gew

Gappy Girthday Geer

Gennifer

Gappy Girthday Goo Gew

(Choose any song and switch the first sound for *all* of the words)

Kookaburra

Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree,

Merry, merry king of the bush is he-e.

Laugh, kookaburra, Laugh, kookaburra,

Gay your life must be, Ha-ha-ha!



Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree,

Eating all the gumdrops he can see-e.

Stop, kookaburra, Stop, kookaburra,

Leave some there for me, Ha-ha-ha!

Change "ha-ha-ha" to another sound.

Perhaps a vowel sound:

i.e.: "he-he-he", or "hi-hi-hi", "ho-ho-ho", or "hoo-hoo-hoo")

Oh, Do You Know the Muffin Man?

(One child leaves the room while the others cover their eyes)

Oh do you know the muffin man,

The muffin man, the muffin man.

Oh do you know the muffin man,

Who lives on Drury Lane?



Oh, yes I know the muffin man,

The muffin man, the muffin man,

Oh yes I know the muffin man

The muffin man is _____. (children guess who's gone)

B-A-Bay

B-A-Bay

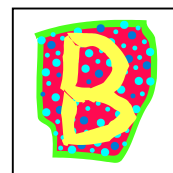
B-E-Bee

B-I-Bickie-Bye

B-O-Bo

Bickie Bye Bo Bee U Boo

Bickie Bye Bo Boo



(Change first sound like this:)

S-A-Say

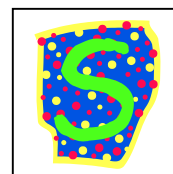
S-E-See

S-I-Sickie-Sye

S-O-So

Sickie Sye So See U Soo

Sickie Sye So Soo



I Love the Flowers

I love the flowers,

I love the daffodils,

I love the mountains,

I love the rolling hills,

Boom-dee-ah-dah,

Boom-dee-ah-dah,

Boom-dee-ah-dah,

Boom-dee-ah-dah, Boom!

(change first sound in "Boom-dee-ah-dah...i.e.: soom-see-sah-sa...)





Segmenting Songs

The Wheels on the Bus (tune):

"The sounds in the word go: /s/o/ck, /s/o/ck/, /s/o/ck/.

The sounds in the word go: /s/o/ck/.

Who knows the word?"



Blending Songs

If You're Happy and You Know It

If you think you know this word, shout it out!

If you think you know this word, shout it out!

If you think you know this word, then tell me what you've heard,

If you think you know this word, shout it out!

Then break down a word into its syllables or sounds: (i.e.: "/ap/ple/sauce/", "/um/brel/a/", "/la/dy/bug") (i.e.: "/sn/a/p/", "/s/t/ar/", "/t/ee/th"/) and see if they can guess the word before you are done.

Or:

"If your name begins with __, stand up tall! (or "turn around")

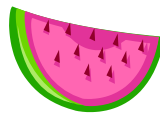
If your name begins with __, stand up tall!

If your name begins with __, then stand up by the wall, (or, "turn & touch the ground")

If your name begins with ____, stand up tall!"



Rhyming Songs



Down By the Bay (Raffi)

Down by the Bay...Where the watermelons grow....

Back to my home...I dare not go...

For if I do...My mother will say....

Have you ever seen a:

-Goose, kissing a Moose

(can your children fill in the rhyming word?)

-Whale, with a Polka-dot Tail

-Fly, wearing a Tie

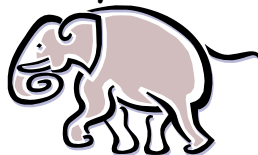
-Bear, combing his Hair

-_____ (have children make up their own)

Down by the Bay! Hey!



Willoby, Walloby



Willoby, Walloby W(erry),

An elephant sat on Sherry

Willoby, Walloby W(all)

An elephant sat on Paul

Willoby, Walloby W(acky),

An elephant sat on Jackie

Willoby, Walloby W(onathan)

An elephant sat on Jonathan!



Songs for Counting

One, Two, Buckle My Shoe



One, two, buckle my shoe,
Three, four, knock on the door.

Five, six, pick up sticks,
Seven, eight, lay them straight.
Nine, ten, a big fat hen!



Five Little Ducks

Five little ducks went out to play,
Over the hills and far away,
Mother duck said, "quack, quack, quack, quack"
But only **four** little ducks came back.
Four little ducks went out to play,
Etc.,,

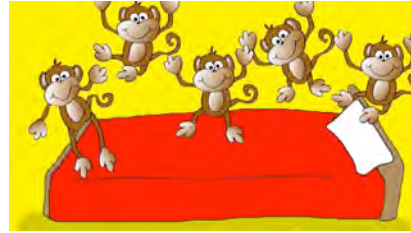


Once I Caught a Fish Alive

One, two, three, four, five,
Once I caught a fish alive,
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten...
Then I let him go again!

Why did you let him go?
Because he bit my finger so!
Which little finger did he bite?
This little finger on the right!

Five Little Monkeys



Five little monkeys jumping on the bed,
One fell off and bumped his head.
Mother called the doctor,
And the doctor said,
No more monkeys jumping on the bed!

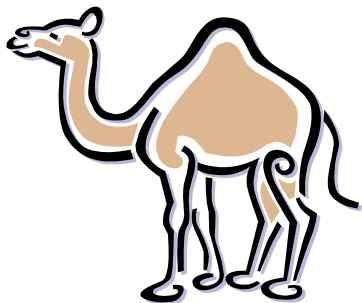
Four little monkeys...



The Ants Go Marching

The ants go marching **one by one**, Hoorah! Hoorah!
The ants go marching **one by one**, Hoorah! Hoorah!
The ants go marching **one by one**,
The little one stopped to suck his thumb,
And they all went marching down, around, the town,
Boom, boom, boom!

The ants go marching **two by two**...tie his shoe
The ants go marching **three by three**...climb a tree
The ants go marching **four by four**...shut the door
The ants go marching **five by five**...take a dive
The ants go marching **six by six**...pick up sticks
The ants go marching **seven by seven**...look up to heaven
The ants go marching **eight by eight**...lock the gate
The ants go marching **nine by nine**...pick up a dime
The ants go marching **ten by ten**...write with a pen,
And they all went marching down, around the town
Boom, boom, boom!



Alice the Camel

Alice the camel has (pause) five humps.
 Alice the camel has (pause) five humps.
 Alice the camel has (pause) five humps,
 So go, Alice go,
 Boom, boom, boom!
 Alice the camel has (pause) four humps...etc...

When You're One

USE TAPPING STICKS

When you're one, one, one,
 Tap on your bum, bum, bum!
 When you're two, two, two,
 Tap on your shoe, shoe, shoe!
 When you're three, three, three,
 Tap on your knee, knee, knee!
 When you're four, four, four,
 Tap on the floor, floor, floor!
 When you're five - do the jive.
 When you're six - tap on your sticks.
 When you're seven - tap up to heaven.
 When you're eight - you have to wait!
 When you're nine - tap on your spine.
 When your ten - begin again!



Fish and Chips and Vinegar



Fish and chips and vinegar, vinegar, vinegar,
 Fish and chips and vinegar,
 Pepper, pepper, pepper, salt.

Don't throw your junk in my backyard, my backyard,
 my backyard.

Don't throw your junk in my backyard,
 My backyard's full!

One bottle of pop, **two** bottles of pop, **three** bottles
 of pop, **four** bottles of pop, **five** bottles of pop, **six**
 bottles of pop, **seven** bottles of pop POP!

This Old Man



This old man, he played **one**,
 He played knick-knack on my thumb,
 With a knick-knack paddy whack,
 Give the dog a bone,
 This old man came rolling home.

This old man, he played **two**,
 He played knick-knack on my shoe,
 With a knick-knack paddy whack,
 Give the dog a bone,
 This old man came rolling home.

This old man, he played **three**...on my knee
 This old man, he played **four**...on the door
 This old man, he played **five**...on the hive
 This old man, he played **six**...on some sticks
 This old man, he played **seven**...up to heaven
 This old man, he played **eight**...on the gate
 This old man, he played **nine**...all the time
 This old man, he played **ten**...all over again



Songs for Clapping and Skipping

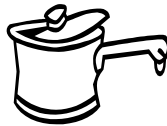
Pat-a-cake



Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, Baker's Man.
Bake me a cake as fast as you can.
Pat it. And roll it. And mark it with a
/k/ (say first **sound** in child's name)
And put it in the oven for (Christopher)
and me.

Peas Porridge Hot

Peas porridge hot. Peas porridge cold.
Peas porridge in the pot, nine days old.
Some like it hot. Some like it cold.
And some like it in the pot, nine days old.



Miss Polly had a Dolly

Miss Polly had a dolly who was sick, sick, sick.
So she called for the doctor to come quick,
quick, quick.
The doctor came with a bag and a hat,
And knocked on the door with a rat-tat-tat.

Looked at the dolly and shook his head.
And said, "Miss Polly, put her straight to bed".
He wrote out a paper for a pill, pill, pill,
Said, "that'll make her better yes it will, will, will!"



Three Sailors went to Sea, Sea, Sea

Three sailors went to sea, sea, sea,
To see what they could see, see, see.
But all that they could see, see, see,
Was the bottom of the deep blue sea, sea, sea!

Miss Mary Mack

Miss Mary mack, mack, mack,
All dressed in black, black, black,
With silver buttons, buttons, buttons,
All down her back, back, back.



She asked her mother, mother, mother
For 50 cents, cents, cents,
To see the elephant, elephant, elephant
Jump over the fence, fence, fence.

He jumped so high, high, high,
He reached the sky, sky, sky,
And didn't come back, back, back,
Till the FIRST of July-ly-ly-ly-ly!

See-See my Playmate

See-see my playmate,
Come out and play with me.
And bring your dollies three,
Climb up my apple tree.



Shout down my rain barrel,
Slide down my cellar door.
And we'll be jolly friends,
Forever more...more...more...more...more!

See-see my playmate,
I cannot play with you,
My dolly's got the flu,
Boo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo.

Ain't got no rain barrel,
Ain't got no cellar door,
But we'll be jolly friends,
Forever more, more, more, more, more!

Stella Stella Ola

Stella Ella Ola, clap clap clap!
Singing es Chico Chico, Chico Chico Chap!



Say Es Chico Chico, below,
below, The toilet overflowed!
Say 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10!

Why Make Play Dough for Me?

- ▶ Because I LOVE it! It's so much fun!
- ▶ It's a great way to **pretend** so that I learn to use symbols, my imagination, and speak in longer and more **complex sentences**.
- ▶ It stimulates my **imagination**.
- ▶ It develops all of the **small muscles** in my little hands.
- ▶ It stimulates all of my **senses** at the same time, **making it easy to learn** concepts like colours, textures, shapes, **above, below, beside, between**.



Put the Cookie Cutters Away!



- ▶ Use your imagination to create **snakes that talk, snowmen that walk**, and parks and islands that rock! **Help me grow my imagination!**
- ▶ **Limit use of cookie cutters** so that I focus on imaginative play.
- ▶ **Build nursery rhyme settings and characters** and sing or say nursery rhymes!



What is a Good Play Dough Recipe?



- Mix:** 2½ cups flour
½ cup salt
3 tbsp. Cream of Tarter
- Then Mix:** 2 cups boiling water
3 tbsp. oil
food colouring
- Then:** Gradually pour the liquid into the dry ingredients.
Mix and knead.

Pretend with Me!

Pretend with Me!

Pretending helps me develop my imagination **so that I will be confident in my ability to solve problems** later on.

Einstein said, "**Imagination is more important than Knowledge**".



What Happens to Books after Grade 2?



Why would pretending and having a good imagination & a strong **mind's eye** help your child read later on (past grade 3)? **RIGHT!** No pictures. They will eventually have to read "chapter" books later on, so **PRETEND** with your children & help them develop a strong mind's eye!

Pretending Helps us use Symbols!



Can your children use simple objects to stand for real objects when playing?

Like using a broom for a horse, or a paper towel roll as a fire hose? This helps them learn to use things as symbols for other things – the same thing they will need when learning to

read! They need to understand that **letters are symbols that represent sounds** we make when we speak!

Pretend for Me!



Get down at your child's eye level and talk to your child as if you were talking to their "character"... (e.g., Oh Doctor! My baby isn't feeling well. Maybe you should check her ears and throat?)

Blocks are a GREAT place to pretend play!



Bring in other things like three little pigs and build houses.

Or, bring little plastic people in and act out a familiar story or event (like The Three Bears).

Follow your child's lead. Go with what they want.



Figure out what "Pretend Play" stage your children are at!

Role model the next stage for them. It's fun to look closely at how they play – take your time observing what they're doing. Watching them first makes it easier to join in!

(see "**Stages of Play, Language & Literacy**" page at the beginning of this booklet.)

Play Dough is a GREAT way to pretend play!

Put away the cookie cutters and make a Jack and a Jill and a Hill, or the Three Bears, or the Three Billy Goat's Gruff.



PRETEND with the play dough – at the very least, have a conversation with the snakes you make!

At the Beginning:

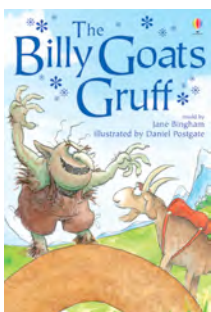


When pretending with your children, begin with realistic props – like a farm set, or a set of pretend dishes. But once they get older, encourage them to substitute other objects to stand for the real thing (like using **BLOCKS** to build the farm).

Act out the Three Billy Goat's Gruff!

The basic pattern is:

Trip-Trap. Trip-Trap. Ooooooover the Bridge!
"WHO'S THAT TRIPPING OVER MY BRIDGE?" roared the Troll. "**It's I**, the littlest billy goat gruff. I'm going up to the hillside to make myself fat!" I'm coming to gobble you up!" "Oh no! Wait for the next billy goat gruff – he's much bigger!"



Take your Children Places!



Every time you take your children to the store, doctor, dentist, hairdresser, restaurant, library, or zoo (for example), **PRETEND** this experience with them when you get home. They will **LOVE** you for doing this!

How Can I Help?

Getting 3-6 year olds Ready to Read

How can you help in your Child's Room?

- ▶ Put a masking tape letter on the floor & have your child trace over it with first 2 fingers while saying the sound of the letter at the EXACT same time (jump on it if it's a "j", fly over it if it's an "f", etc.)
- ▶ Get baskets or bins or shelves for books
- ▶ Go to the **library** & **keep library books in a special bin**
- ▶ Make a name plate together for the door - talk about the letters & sounds in their name often
- ▶ Put up a small white board on the door & print pictures and short words or messages together
- ▶ **Read bedtime stories every night** and talk about the characters (and how they feel), what might happen next, and explain meanings of words (it's not all about WHAT you read, it's the conversation you have WHILE YOU READ that matters).



What can you do in the Kitchen?

- ▶ Say "Let's make a sssssssssandwich!" then point to the letter "s" fridge magnet and say /sssss/. "We call this the letter "s"! /sssssss/ sssssandwich!"
- ▶ Using letters on the fridge, make your child's name
- ▶ Put a **calendar** on the fridge and talk about upcoming events - print the first sound of a word (e.g. "S" on the day you are going swimming, or "G" for the day you are going to Grandma's)
- ▶ Put letters in alphabetical order and sing the song (have THEM point while you sing – only sing what they point to!)
- ▶ Separate the vowels and make up a song to learn them (e.g. to the tune of BINGO) -talk about their "short" sounds (a-a-a apple, e - like e-e-e-elbow, i-i-i-itchy, o like o-o-o-octopus, and u like u-u-up)
- ▶ **Fill the sink with water and dish soap and let them play!**
(add measuring/plastic cups for pouring, a strainer, wooden spoons, etc..., use descriptive words like submerge, transfer, drift, above/below, beside, etc...)
- ▶ Play "I Hear with my Little Ear, something that sounds like... ba/na/na, spa/get/ti, po/ta/toes (see if they can tell you the word)
- ▶ Play "**I Hear with My Little Ear, the very 1st sound in...** (sssssoup, etc...)". Start with letters that are continuous like ssssss, fffffff, mmmmm, then move on to letters that have 'stop' sounds (e.g., b, d, g, k).



How Can I Help?

Getting 3-6 year olds Ready to Read

How Can you Help at the Kitchen Table?

- ▶ Make their names using little alphabet stickers at their place at the table
- ▶ Hang up a **white board** and draw pictures (draw what **THEY** want), then stretch out the 1st sound in the word (sssssssssun), and print it
- ▶ Print **grocery lists** on the white board together (ask what **THEY** want)
- ▶ Let them cut out pictures from **flyers** and glue them on paper (then label the picture for them stretching out the sounds as you print -mmmmilllk)
- ▶ Clap out the **syllables** for food on the table during mealtimes (or, during playtime using pretend food)
- ▶ Put some salt in the bottom of a pie plate and show them how to print letters starting at the top or middle (use cue words like "around and up and down" for "a" "g", "d", and "straight line down" for "l" "h" & "b", etc.). Have them **say the SOUND at the exact same time that they print!**
- ▶ While you read the paper, give them a page and a highlighter to search for & circle the letters in their names (they can pretend to be a



detective)

What can you do in the Bathroom?



- ▶ Say nursery rhymes! Sing the counting songs, clapping songs, & songs for switching sounds in this booklet.
- ▶ Put **foam soap** or **tub crayons** on the walls and draw pictures (try to get happy faces to start at the top and circle to the left, and make lots of straight lines from top to bottom)
- ▶ **Read books** to them while they are playing in the water
- ▶ **Write words or letters on a steamy shower door or mirror**
- ▶ **Stick up foam letters** on the walls and build little words with short a, e, i, o, & u (e.g., **cat**, **pet**, **fish**, **dog**, **sun**). Make up **nonsense words** too (e.g., **lat**, **ret**, **pish**, **sog**, **zun**)
- ▶ Show your children that **sh**, **th**, **ch**, and **qu** have TWO letters but they make only ONE sound)
- ▶ **Pretend** with little rubber ducks/frogs (or even your toothbrushes!). Keep the conversation going for at least **5 turns** on the same topic
- ▶ **Blow bubbles** and use **descriptive** words for how they look and what they do (e.g., shimmering, iridescent, translucent, collapsing, disintegrating, exploding, above/below/beside/between, etc.)

How Can I Help?

Getting 3-6 year olds Ready to Read

How can you help in the Living Room?

- ▶ Print their names (or pictures & first sound of picture) on a frosty window
- ▶ Keep lots of books on shelves/baskets/bins and **read OFTEN!**
- ▶ Go to the **library** REGULARLY and put library books in a special bin
- ▶ Use **Scrabble** tiles to make their names and build little words
- ▶ **Turn off the screens (except for Skype/Facetime – these are great)!!** Instead, sit down at the computer and **help them create a story while you type it for them.**
- ▶ Play: **"I Hear with My Little Ear, something that sounds like..."** (e.g., "el-e-phant" – divide up words into syllables and see if they can guess the toy/object)
- ▶ Play **"I Hear with my Little Ear, the very first SOUND in...."** (e.g., blocks! -use what they're playing with - can they hear & say /b/?)
- ▶ Show them how to **print letters on the carpet** - the more senses they use when printing, the easier it will be to remember
- ▶ Give them helpful hints: for "b" you could say: "start at the TOP, straight line down, back up the same road and circle around", or for "a" you could say "around and up and down")
- ▶ Show them how to **SAY THE SOUND** and print the letter at the **EXACT SAME TIME**



What can you do in the Car?

- ▶ Sing! Say nursery rhymes! Sing the counting songs & clapping songs and songs for switching sounds in this booklet!
- ▶ Play "My name is (**P**eter), my friend's name is (**P**at), and we love to eat (**P**izza)"
- ▶ Print on a frosty or a dirty car window – show them how to print starting always at the TOP and coming DOWN.
- ▶ Play "I Hear with My Little Ear, something that rhymes with (sun)!" (grun, zun..)
- ▶ When putting them in the car seat, sing: "This is the way we...", or say "uppa-day! puppa-pay!, muppa-may!" and have them make up rhymes)
- ▶ Play: "kip, kiddly, koop"! (everyone takes turns changing the 1st sound: pip, piddly, poop!, jip, jiddly, joop! Zip, ziddly, zoop! etc.)
- ▶ **Play stories on CD** (you can find these at the **library**)
- ▶ Have a **bin full of drawing/writing** things (aqua-doodle, magna-doodle, Leap-Frog Scribble & Write, chalk/chalkboard, etc.)
- ▶ Point out and read **road signs** and **store signs**
- ▶ **Go on a letter hunt** for letters in **their names** (on license plates and signs)
- ▶ The car is a great place to engage your children in **quality conversations**



Rhyme with Me!



Can Your Child Rhyme?

The great thing about rhyming is that if your children can make up a rhyme for any word, then they've got it – it's like riding a bike. You can be sure that once your children can make up rhyming words all by themselves (after about age three), then they are well on their way to reading success. Sing **Down by the Bay** tonight!



Be Direct!

After about age 3, **be direct** when talking about rhyming words. Say, "Hey! Star, Car...those words **RHyme**! They both have the **AR** sound at the end!"



Say Nursery Rhymes

Singing Nursery Rhymes is a great way to help children learn to rhyme. **Leave off the last word**, or change it up a bit and add a different rhyming word at the end (e.g., Humpty Dumpty sat on a Wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great **DOLL**!)



Dr. Seuss was a genius.

He knew that rhyming was a critical early literacy skill, and that children needed to figure out that **words can be thought of in terms of how they SOUND, not just what they mean**. Read some Dr. Seuss books this weekend!



Check out these Rhyming Games online!

<http://www.teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bl/reggie/index.htm>

<http://www.professorgarfield.org/Phonemics/introCharacters.html>

<http://pbskids.org/sesame/games/super-grover-nick-rhyme/>



Did you ever see a Moose... Drinking some Juice? Down by the Bay!



Eventually, **children must be able to make up their OWN rhyming words** in order to really understand the concept of rhyme.

Play: "I Hear with My Little Ear..."

Something that rhymes with... "BAT" (etc...)



Make Up Silly Rhymes!

At about 3 years of age, when playing in the bathtub, make up silly rhyming words for the toys in the tub. Say, "boat, tote, coat, note, soat, poat, croat, droat, bloat, float, etc...". Make up sentences like "This *boat* like to *float*!" Then say, "Hey! Boat-Float! Those words **RHyme**! They both sound like OAT at the end!"



Draw some pictures!

Make two of the pictures rhyme (like a house and a mouse). Point out that these words **RHyme** – that they both have **OUSE** at the end.

Say "MOUSE – OUSE...HOUSE-OUSE... They both have the sound **OUSE** at the end!" Then move on to something else.



A little each day keeps the FUN in the play!

Make up Silly Stories with Me!

I saw a great big BEAR, who had no clothes to WEAR, except his own brown HAIR, but he really didn't CARE!

I saw an old gray GOOSE who said her tooth was LOOSE, until a friendly MOOSE gave her watermelon JUICE!



Help Your Child Start Off on the Right Foot by...

Playing with Syllables



(la-dy-bug)

In order to be good readers and spellers, children must learn that words are made up of small sounds (e.g., **bat** = /b/a/t/). In order to get to this level, however, children must **first** be able to hear bigger 'chunks' in words (e.g., baseball = base-ball, butterfly = but-ter-fly).

A child's ability to hear and clap out parts in words is usually well developed by the end of Junior Kindergarten. To help children hear & play with syllables in **spoken words (not written)**, try some of the following activities:

- While bathing your children, talk to them about the objects around them: "Bubbles! Let's clap out the parts in bubbles - bub-bles", or, "Water! wa-ter."
- At dinner, look at what is on the table & hold out fingers for each part heard in different foods (e.g., po-ta-to, ham-bur-ger, spa-ghe-tti).
- When getting dressed in the morning, jump once for each part in the clothing words you select (e.g., pants -1 jump, swea-ter -2 jumps, socks -1 jump).
- When driving in the car, clap out the parts in the words for things you see (e.g., flow-ers -2 claps, tree -1 clap).

Once your children are really good at clapping out the parts they hear in words, ask them to "take away" some of the parts (e.g., "Say baseball. Now say it again, but don't say, "base". Say "ice-cream." Say it again but don't say 'ice.')

Syllables

Have Children Drop Cheerios in Cups - one cheerio per syllable:

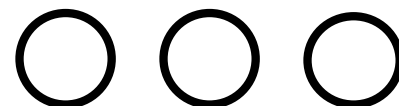
Have Children Hop into Hoops - one hoop per syllable:



- Break down the **sounds** in some of the words below orally (e.g.,: Sep....tem....ber). Leave silence between each syllable. **DO NOT SHOW YOUR CHILDREN THE WORDS.**



- Say: "I Hear with My Little Ear, something that sounds like....":



(*words have 3 sounds)

*Sep-tem-ber

*yes-ter-day

*el-e-phant

*app-le-sauce

*al-pha-bet

*por-cu-pine

ta-ble

*but-ter-fly

par-ty

Tues-day

mon-ster

ma-gic

spi-der

sha-dow

*Hal-low-eeen

*um-brel-la

*pop-si-cle

gar-den

*cho-co-late

*won-der-ful

sum-mer

*la-dy-bug

pic-ture

*marsh-mel-low

mu-sic

tur-tle

ra-coon

*lol-li-pop

*bro-cco-li

san-dy

rai-sin

*buf-fa-lo

prin-cess

hel-i-cop-ter

swim-ming

*di-no-saur

king-dom

birth-day

can-dy

tea-cher

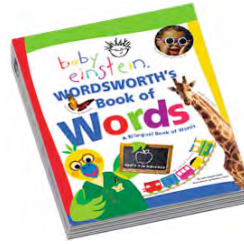
It is also fun to play this game by **using the children's names**, or the names of familiar people, places, or animals. Ask them to tell you who have **the longest and shortest names**. After blending, ask the children to *segment* these words by tapping or beating out the syllables (i.e.: clapping, snapping, jumping, etc.). In other words, let them have a turn!

Use More Interesting Words!



High Five!

Children who learn at least **5 new words per day** have an easier time understanding what they read later on in grade 3 and beyond. **Strive to help your children learn five new words per day!** Use words from children's books. **Repeat the words over & over**, and try to get your children to say them too!



Did you know?

Children's books have **50% more unique words** in them than does the conversation of two university graduates? Pay attention to words that may be new for your child when reading aloud, & explain what they mean **before you turn the page!**



Resist using "this", "that", & "thing"!

Resist saying, "Wow! Look at **THIS!**" or "Hey! Look at **THAT!**" or "**IT'S** over there."

Instead, **use descriptive words, action words (verbs), and location words:** "Wow! Look at the **tiny striped caterpillar**". Or, "Hey! The **caterpillar** is **wriggling** his way up the **stem!**" Or, "The cocoon is **UNDER** the **pointy leaf.**"

Explain things!

STOP when reading a book that has an interesting word or phrase in it (like "delicate", or "tip of the iceberg") and explain it using your voice, your hands, or by just describing what it means.



Talk about all of the interesting people, places, and things in our world!

THIS is what helps children be enthusiastic about learning!

Children's books bring the whole world to your children! Get to the **library!** Your enthusiasm will be inspiring!

Label things that your children are looking at!

Say: "We call this a "wrench".
Note: Pay attention to what is interesting to *your child* (not just to what is interesting to you ;) & label *these* things.



Be specific when explaining and describing things for your children!

Instead of saying 'milk comes

from cows', you could say that the cow has an *udder*, and we squeeze the milk from the udder into a pail so we can drink it!

Focus on Your Child's Interests

Help your children learn new words by noticing what grabs their attention! Once you figure out what is sparking your children's curiosity, look up in a book or online, and explain and describe new words that you read!



Use "Juicy" Words!

Don't shy away from using words you think are over your child's head! Instead, use them **as part of your natural conversation** and children will gradually pick up on their meanings. Before you know it, they'll be saying that their pasta is "*scrumptious!*"

Use more Interesting Words!

What do we all normally say to our children when we see a picture of a lion? Right! **LION!** The lion goes "**ROAR!**" **Think about 10 OTHER things that you could say about a lion!** (he has a "**mane**", he lives in Africa, he has sharp "**FANGS**")



Help Your Child Start Off on the Right Foot by...

Oral Storytelling



Research tells us that **preschool children like to tell stories about what has happened to them**. Preschool children will tell their best stories about getting hurt, being scared or other emotional topics. Depending on your child's age, storytelling could be:

- Relaying details about something that happened to them (e.g., getting stung by a bee, or taking a sick dog to a vet).
- Talking about a sequence of events (e.g., how they made a craft).
- Retelling a familiar story, or telling an imaginary story.



How can you help?

- Find the time to **talk to your child one on one**. Storytelling requires us to explore or elaborate on each event rather than jump from one topic to another.
- Talk with your child about things that happened in the **past** (e.g., something that happened yesterday, last week or in their recent memory).
- Tell stories that have a sequence of events so that there is a clear beginning, middle and end. Talk about the sequence of special events or even daily routines. Use words like: **first, then and after** (e.g., First: pour in the Kool-Aid powder, and then, add water, and then, stir the Kool-Aid, and after, pour a drink!)
- **Read aloud stories** with simple plots with your child.
- Talk about the things **your child** wants to talk about.



Help your child to tell stories:

- Model telling a story about something that happened in your life, such as losing your car keys. **The best way to get a story is to tell a story.**
- Encourage your child to tell you about something that happened to him/her. **Help your child to elaborate and stay on track by using comments** (e.g., "You went to the zoo! I bet you saw lots of animals!").



- Make neutral comments like, **"Really?" "And then?"** and **"Yeah?"**
- **Repeat back exactly what your child has just said** (e.g., Oh no, you dropped your ice cream cone!)
- Extend your child's topic by **describing** ("Did you see the giraffe's looong neck?"), **explaining** (the giraffe needs a long neck to reach the leaves), and **predicting** (I wonder what the giraffe eats in the *winter*?).
- Relate your discussion to the **past/future** (Remember the giraffe in the movie ____?).
- When a child's story doesn't make sense, don't pretend you understand. **Help your child clarify by asking questions** ("Did you go to the *park* or the *circus*?").
- **Summarize a story for your child after s/he has finished telling it.** This helps you check your understanding, & lets your child hear a better-organized version.
- **Talk about a familiar movie** with your child. Have your child tell you his/her **favourite part**. Help provide the structure and organization while your child provides the details.
- After reading a book many times, pause to see if your child can tell some of the story.

The Joy of Printing Letters!

Here are some tips to help make *learning how to print* easier.



1. **Get the whole arm moving!** Use your first two fingers to make big circles on the carpet (that start at the top and circle to the left), and to make lines that go from the top to the bottom of the space.
2. **Use the first two fingers** to trace (there is more sensory input this way).
3. Trace letters on a **rough surface** (e.g., in sand/salt in a pie plate, on a carpet).
4. Put a thin layer of **salt**, or **sand** or chocolate pudding from a pudding cup in the bottom of a pie plate or **flat** plastic food container and draw letters (always start at the top, and come down – make lowercase letters).
5. Say the **letter SOUND** while printing it.
6. Say the **letter NAME** while printing it.
7. Say a **“key word”** (e.g., for “s”, this might be “sun”) while printing it.
8. **Trace in multisensory places** like on a steamy mirror or shower door after a shower, a dirty car window, a frosty car window or door, chalk on sidewalk, on each other’s backs, on each other’s hands, in the air, in shaving cream or foam soap in the bathtub.
9. **Print FOR your child** to help them understand how much fun it is to print:
 - ▶ Print a ‘title’ on what they draw (ask them what their picture is ‘called’).
 - ▶ Say the sounds of the letters that you are printing while you print.
 - ▶ Make notes/lists for *yourself* (a white board in the kitchen works well) and say the sounds as you print.
 - ▶ Print a story **FOR** your children (or type it on the computer) while they make it up. Help them create a beginning, middle, & end.
 - ▶ Make up a **Scavenger Hunt** with little notes around the house or yard (Look under the _____, Look in the _____, and then leave a little treat at the end).



Building Blocks for Reading Success:



Singing

Babies sing to themselves when they are happy.

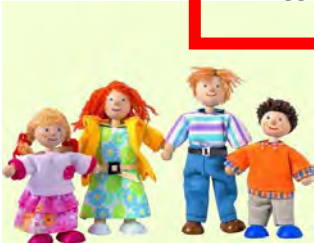
Singing releases endorphins & makes you feel energized & uplifted (unless someone teases you about your voice!).

Singing makes it easier to remember, and easier to pay attention.



Rhyming

Being able to rhyme is the **first skill children will need to be able to sound out words later on.** It's the first step in learning that words are made up of individual sounds. Be direct when explaining... "**Hey! Cat...Hat! Those words rhyme! They both sound like 'at' at the end!**"



Pretending

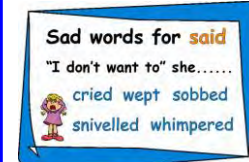
Pretending helps your children develop their **mind's eye** – something that they will need to use when reading books without pictures later on.

Too much screen time gets in the way of a good imagination!



Building Vocabulary

Children must know a LOT of words to be able to understand what they read later on. **Children's books have 50% more rare or unique words in them than does the conversation of most university graduates.**



Drawing & Scribbling

This is the first step toward printing letters. If you print words (or even **just the 1st letter of the word**) for your children's pictures (and for your own pictures too!), **they'll** begin to learn that putting our thoughts down on paper makes them permanent! And **then they'll want to know more about letters!**

Reading Aloud

Reading aloud brings the whole world to your children! It's not just about reading the books – it's about the **conversations** you have about the people (and why they feel or behave the way they do), places and things in the books. **It's great quality time too** – time your children will remember forever.

Building Speaking Skills

Having good **conversations** helps children learn to speak in complete sentences, use more complex grammar, and use more interesting words. **All of this makes reading easier later on.**



Playing with Syllables, Sounds, & Letters

Children must be able to hear all of the individual sounds in words to be able to sound out words later on. Play sound games like:

"I hear with my little ear... the very first sound in __."

Or, "...something that sounds like: /um/brel/la", & eventually, (by the end of SK), "something that sounds like: /s//t//ar/."

Authored by M. Kovack,

Go to: www.simcoecommunityservices.ca, click on EarlyON Child and Family Centre then click Early Literacy link



April 2017

Early Signs of Reading Problems



1. Red Flags in the Language System

(see also *Preschool Speech and Language Red Flags* document at the end of this booklet)

- **The age at which a child starts to speak can indicate that child's comfort with language.** Some children catch on to words early. For others, language is a hard game or a difficult system. These children are sending a warning signal. **If spoken language is difficult or unappealing, usually written language (reading & writing, letters & numbers) will be too.**



Receptive language is what the child takes in, first through listening and later through listening and reading. Does your child enjoy listening to stories? Can your child tell you what happened in the story? Can your child remember the details of yesterday's story? Children who absorb such information comfortably are demonstrating good receptive language skills. Children who do not follow or remember a story line, or pick up news from conversation are flying a **red flag**. They could be missing news, explanations, questions, and concepts.

Expressive language is the vehicle for giving out ideas, questions, emotions, or facts.

- Does your child use plurals and verb tenses correctly?
- Does your child use the word "thing" a lot?
The child who says "Here are the thingies I branged for Tom and I" is telling us a lot.
- Does your child say, "**umm, umm**" a lot, and strain when trying to name things using the most familiar word? (e.g., "Mom! The 'bell' is ringing!", rather than using the most familiar word "phone")?
- **Does your child keep sounds in correct sequence or do individual sounds or syllables slide around?**
Is it an "elephant" or an "ephelant"? A "hamburger" or a "hanga-burger"? A "birthday party" or a "birthparty day"? Children who often tangle their sound sequences in spontaneous speech (not just occasionally) are warning us they will probably have trouble stringing sounds together when trying to read words, or breaking sounds apart when trying to spell. These are warning signals. Also, children who have trouble getting to the point, who clutter their speech with distracting, unnecessary information, are telling us their thought processes don't go straight to the target. This difficulty will hamper their reading, classroom discussion and, above all, their writing.
- **These are some of the warning signs that parents of struggling readers saw in their children as early as the preschool years.**
Parents can often look back and notice that just before their children's third birthday, they weren't speaking at the level of their peers. They sometimes notice that their children experienced repeated ear infections and later had tubes inserted. They also remember that their children's speech improved somewhat, but that they eventually had reading problems.

2. Difficulty with Phonemic Awareness

Difficulty manipulating sounds in words orally (not in print) is one of the hallmark characteristics of reading difficulties and can be seen at a young age. Some early warning signs are:

- Difficulty reciting/learning popular nursery rhymes.
- Difficulty making up words that rhyme (e.g., jop, flop, blop).
- Difficulty learning the sounds and names of the letters of the alphabet.
- Difficulty clapping out syllables or telling you what the word is when given just syllables (*I Hear with My Little Ear, something that sounds like: "/la/dy/bug"*).
- Difficulties telling you what the first sounds in words are (e.g., *I hear with my little ear, the very first sound in... "sssssun"*). (by end of Kindergarten)
- Difficulty **breaking words apart into sounds** (e.g., "What are all of the little sounds in the word star?" – answer "/s/t/ar/").
- Difficulty **blending** sounds together to make words (e.g., "I hear with my little ear, a word that sounds like... /m/a/p/" answer: "map") (end of Kindergarten)



3. Difficulty linking (and remembering) sounds and letters.

One parent first noticed her daughter couldn't learn letter or number symbols when she was a preschooler. Despite her extensive efforts to teach her daughter the letters, her child entered kindergarten knowing only 2 of the 26 letters.

A child with weak phonemic awareness skills (see above) often prefers to guess at unknown words while reading because he is not very good at figuring out the sounds or blending them together. Being able to sound out unknown words is an important skill your child needs in order to read text. Beyond third grade, the text contains more difficult words that often cannot be predicted from context clues or limited pictures.

4. Family History

Decades of research suggest that children whose parents, grandparents, siblings or other family members have exhibited reading problems are at greater risk for reading difficulties than are other children of otherwise similar backgrounds.

(Retrieved June 29, 2017 from <http://www.ldonline.org/article/293/>).

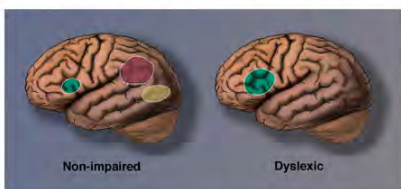
However, just because your child shows warning signs doesn't necessarily mean there is a serious problem. Learning to read is a complex process that doesn't occur overnight for most children; it takes time and plenty of direct, systematic instruction. It's important not to panic if you see some of these warning signs in your child. There is no precise list of surefire signs of a reading difficulty. Each child is unique and may exhibit only some of the signs. Knowing what to look for can help you decide whether you need to investigate further.



Adapted LD OnLine.org - the world's leading website on learning disabilities and ADHD
(Hall, S. Early Signs of a Reading Difficulty. Retrieved June 29, 2017, from <http://www.ldonline.org/article/33170/>)

Questions About Dyslexia?

Neural Signature for Dyslexia: Disruption of Posterior Reading Systems



© Sally Shaywitz, Overcoming Dyslexia, 2003

► Dyslexia is the most common learning disability. Eighty percent of students with learning disabilities have dyslexia. (Retrieved June 29, 2017 from <http://www.med.umich.edu/yourchild/topics/dyslexia.htm>)

► Dyslexia is a specific learning disability due to a difference in the brain's processing of sound-symbol connections. It is characterized by difficulties in word recognition, spelling and decoding (sounding out words). **Dyslexia is often genetic.**

► International Dyslexia Association website: <http://www.eida.org/>

► Understood.org - search the word: "Dyslexia"

Play with Sounds and Letters!

"I Hear with My Little Ear, the very first sound in..."



At first, use words that have sounds that can be drawn out like /mmmmop/ and /nnnnnnnap/. If this is easy, then move on to sounds that are cut off, like /k/ and /b/. Get **face-to-face** so they can see how you are making the sounds.

When hanging out in the Kitchen...

Start whispering slowly, 'p-p-p-p-pickles!' "p-p-p-p-pizza", 'p-p-p-p-p-pancakes!'

Can your child take a turn?
Resist adding 'uh' onto the end of the sound: For example, say /t/ rather than /tuh/, and /mmm/ rather than /muh/.



Get a white board!



Put it in your kitchen. Make notes for your children. Draw simple pictures (whatever your child asks for), & then model listening for the **first sound** in the word. Print the first sound & say the sound at the same time that you print it. Then keep drawing! Make it fun, not work!

Put Magnetic Letters on your Fridge



Put the letters **in order & point to them while you sing** the song.

Make it a game by stopping at a sound & tricking the person who is singing into continuing to sing. Have your child point while YOU sing, and when they stop on a letter, keep singing by mistake!

Play with Syllables!



Play, "I hear with my little ear, something that sounds like: /um/brel/la/".

Or, "/por/cu/pine/".

Can your child hear what the word is just by listening to each syllable separately?

If this is difficult at first, then blend the sounds together a bit like this:

"ummmmbrelll-a".

Blend Individual Sounds!

After your children can blend syllables into a word (e.g.,

/ap/ple/sauce/ = applesauce!), and **after** they can easily tell you the first sound in any word, then play with individual sounds like this: "I hear with my little ear, something that sounds like: /s/t/ar/. Or, /p/ea/ch/. Leave silence between the sounds. If this is too difficult, then blend some of the sounds together for them.



Draw Lots of Pictures!

Draw whatever they ask you to draw.

They don't care how the picture turns out, they just LOVE seeing you draw! Then print a word beside the picture. Resist making this about trying to teach them how to spell.

This is just about having fun. So draw, and print the word, & draw again!



Go to www.e3.ca (click on Early Literacy)

Click on **YouTube Video Clips**.

Scroll down and watch the video clips about:

- Syllables
- Sounds
- Multisensory Writing
- And, go to **YouTube** and search:

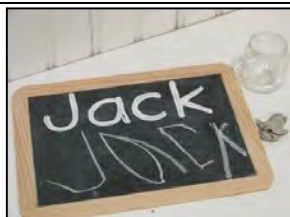


"Phonemic Awareness Game Hop the Hoops"

Print your child's name often!

The secret here is to do it IN FRONT OF THEM. This is how you **role model** the alphabetic principle that the

words we say have sounds, and that these sounds can be put on paper by using little squiggly lines (letters!). So say the sounds in their name as you print the letters, then say, "We call this the letter 'em'". (for /m/).



Use Sticker Letters!

Put them at their place at the dinner table. Say the names of the letters often. Make up a song for their names to help them remember the letter names. Say their name one sound at a time & show them which letters make which sound. For the name Mark, for example, say /mmmm/. We call this the letter "em"! Then say /ar/ /ar/ /maaaarrrrk/. We need **2 letters** to make this sound: "a-r together say/ar/" Etc...



Red Flags for Speech and Language

Speech and language development is one of the most critical school readiness skills. **Early identification is key: don't wait!**

If a child is missing one or more of these expected age outcomes, consider this a red flag.



By 6 months

- ☐ Turns eyes or head toward a sound
- ☐ Watches your face when you speak
- ☐ Smiles & laughs in response to your smiles & laughs
- ☐ Has different cries for different needs
- ☐ Makes sounds &/or moves body in response to you

By 9 months

- ☐ Responds to his/her name
- ☐ Babbles e.g., bababa, dadada
- ☐ Plays social games with you e.g., peek-a-boo



By 18 months

- ☐ Identifies several body parts when asked
- ☐ Understands the concepts of "in /out , off/on"
- ☐ Points to pictures using one finger
- ☐ Says about 20 words consistently
- ☐ Uses at least 4 consonant sounds e.g., p, b, m, n, d, g, w, h
- ☐ Pretends to feed a doll/teddy or pretends a bowl is a hat

By 2 years

- ☐ Follows 2 step directions e.g., "go find your teddy & show it to grandma"
- ☐ Uses at least 100 words including action words e.g., fall, eat, go
- ☐ Combines at least 2 words e.g., daddy sleep
- ☐ Enjoys being with other children
- ☐ Puts 2 pretend play actions together e.g., stirring food and feeding a doll

By 4 years

- ☐ Follows 3 part directions e.g., "get some paper, draw a picture, & give it to mommy"
- ☐ Uses sentences with adult-type grammar e.g., "he's going to the park now"
- ☐ Tells a story
- ☐ Speech is understood by strangers most of the time
- ☐ Can act out different roles with their friends e.g., going to a restaurant



By 12 months

- ☐ Follows simple 1 step directions e.g., "sit down"
- ☐ Gives familiar items on verbal request
- ☐ Points to things he/she wants
- ☐ Uses gestures e.g., waving "bye-bye"
- ☐ Brings toys to show you
- ☐ Looks across the room to something you point to
- ☐ Gets your attention using sounds, and gestures while looking at your eyes



By 3 years

- ☐ Understands who, what, where, & why questions
- ☐ Can create long sentences combining at least 5 words
- ☐ Uses some adult grammar e.g., cookies, mommy's coat, I jumped
- ☐ Can have a short conversation
- ☐ Speech is understood at least 75% of the time
- ☐ Pretends with friends using many actions e.g., having a tea party



If a child is experiencing any of the following, consider this a red flag:

- ☐ Limited interest in toys &/or plays with them in an unusual way
- ☐ Has lost words he/she used to say
- ☐ Stuttering
- ☐ Ongoing hoarse voice
- ☐ Problems with chewing or swallowing

Where there are concerns, the parent should contact: the Preschool Speech and Language Program **(705) 739-5696 or 1-800-675-1979**

Adapted from Ontario Ministry of Children & Youth Services, 2007

How Does Learning

Parents and teachers are no longer considered simply the “keepers of the knowledge that must be imparted on children”.

Instead, we plan, join in, and make a **connection** with children (which is far more fun!), taking a curious approach to what they think and do, rather than acting as the “experts” who must “correct” and “direct” all of their learning and behaviour.

Happen?

BELONGING

We all learn best when we feel seen, heard, safe, and connected to others, when we are valued as

Effective programs are planned intentionally to nurture language and literacy through play and thoughtful questions that search for, build on, value, and respect the unique perspectives and experiences of children and

WELL-BEING

We learn better when we feel physically healthy, safe, able to take care of ourselves, and able to deal with stress and recover.

ENGAGEMENT

We learn best when we are given environments & experiences that captivate our attention -through relationships with people who help us explore ideas, investigate our theories, and interact with others in play.

Not only do we need to pay attention to children's development socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually, but we must also consider the **creative**, **aesthetic**, and **spiritual** sides of their experience.

EXPRESSION

We all learn best when we can express ourselves effectively in different ways...through our bodies, with materials, and/or with words.



Adapted from: Government of Ontario, Ministry of Education. (2014). *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*. Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario.