

Created by Multnomah County Library for
all communities

Every Child. Every Day.
Read, Talk, Sing, Write, Play



Dear Parent or Caregiver,

We now know more about how children learn to read than ever before.

The good news is that the best way for you to help your child is fun and easy and something you're probably doing already—reading, talking, singing, writing and playing together every day. These five simple activities help your child develop brain connections for learning to read.

Children are learning all the time. That's why you can teach your child so much by simply talking about what you see and do together. The more language your child hears and uses before school, the more easily he will learn to read.

YOU are the most important part of your child's success in learning to read.

Have fun while you read, talk, sing, write and play with the fun activities in this booklet!

Early Learning Multnomah would like to thank the Multnomah County Library for creating this booklet.





Read

WHY IS READING IMPORTANT?

Reading helps children learn new words, learn how language works, and learn about the world. Children who know lots of words and enjoy listening to books become better readers.

WHAT YOU CAN DO...

Read with excitement in your voice. Moo, quack, bark, and be silly. When you enjoy sharing books together, your child will enjoy it, and will get the message that reading is important, too.

Have a conversation while reading. Talk about the pictures together and ask your child open-ended questions. . "What do you think will happen next?" Relate the book to your child's life. "What would you do?"

Read it again! Reading favorite books over and over strengthens brain connections and helps your child get ready to read.

Read words everywhere. Read words on street signs, in the grocery store, on the side of a bus. Reading words all around shows your child that words are important and fun to read!

Did you know?

When children are involved in the book they learn so much more. Sharing books with your child is about having a conversation and having FUN. *You* make books come alive. *You* are the magic.





Read: Let's do it now!

Read a funny poem together.

Be Glad Your Nose Is On Your Face, by Jack Prelutsky

Be glad your nose is on your face,
not pasted on some other place,
for if it were where it is not,
you might dislike your nose a lot.

Imagine if your precious nose
were sandwiched in between your toes,
that clearly would not be a treat,
for you'd be forced to smell your feet.

Your nose would be a source of dread
were it attached atop your head,
it soon would drive you to despair,
forever tickled by your hair.

Within your ear, your nose would be
an absolute catastrophe,
for when you were obliged to sneeze,
your brain would rattle from the breeze.

Your nose, instead, through thick and thin,
remains between your eyes and chin,
not pasted on some other place--
be glad your nose is on your face!



Talk

WHY IS TALKING IMPORTANT?

Children listen to and learn the language they hear around them, and they often repeat it! The more you talk with your child using interesting words, and encourage your child to talk by asking her questions, the more easily she will learn to read.

WHAT YOU CAN DO...

Talk to your child about things she enjoys and things she is doing. Use new words. Before long, she will use them, too. "I see that you're trying to tie your shoes. Way to go! Sometimes it's a challenge, but it will get easier with practice."

Tell stories. Talk about where you live, and the people you care about. Tell your child about what

happened on the bus, what you heard on the radio, or what you saw on the news. Encourage her to tell stories, too.

Play a listening game. Go outside. Pretend to be rabbits by cupping your hands around your ears to make bunny ears. Listen carefully. What do you hear? Are they natural sounds like rain or birds chirping? Or are they people sounds like laughing? Do you hear machine sounds, like cars or a lawn mower? Try this inside too.

Play two-step and three-step games.
"Hop to the closet and grab your shoes."
"Put the book on your head and walk to me."
"Run to the mailbox, jump up three times and then whistle." Switch roles so you follow your child's directions.

Did you know?

Children who grow up in homes with the TV on as background noise have fewer conversations with adults. They know fewer words and have a harder time learning to read.





Talk: Let's do it now!

Build a story together. Begin, "Once upon a time there was a family..."
Ask your child what happens next. Take turns creating the story. Write it here.

Play favorites. Ask each other:

- What is your favorite food?
- What is your favorite animal?
- What is your favorite ice cream?
- What is your favorite holiday?
- What is your favorite game?
- What is your favorite book?



Sing

WHY IS SINGING IMPORTANT?

Songs slow down language and help children hear the smaller sounds that make up words. We sing, “Twink –le, twink-le, lit-tle star,” but when we talk, we say “twinkle” or little” much faster.

WHAT YOU CAN DO...

Sing even if you can’t carry a tune. Your child won’t care. Singing with your child helps him feel safe and loved, and that helps his brain grow!

Play different kinds of music and dance!

“How does this music make you want to move?” Dance together. Clap your hands to help your child feel the rhythm and beat.

Sing to pass the time or to help with transitions. Sing in the car, while picking up toys, or whenever you want. Singing makes it fun for your child to join in with you. “This is the way Sam puts on his coat, puts on his coat, puts on his coat. This is the way Sam puts on his coat so early in the morning.”

Did you know?

Putting words to music helps children remember them.
Do you still remember the words to songs you learned as a child?





Sing: Let's do it now!

Did you sing to your child when he was a baby? Sing it again! Write the words here.

Down By the Bay

Down by the bay
Where the watermelons grow
Back to my home
I dare not go
For if I do
My mother will say
Did you ever see a fly
Wearing a tie?
Down by the bay.

Down by the bay
Where the watermelons grow
Back to my home
I dare not go
For if I do
My mother will say
Did you ever see a whale
With a polka dot tail?
Did you ever see a moose
Kissing a goose?

Continue by making up new rhymes.



Write

WHY IS WRITING IMPORTANT?

Writing helps children understand that the words they speak can be written down, and then read and spoken by someone else. They begin to understand that those squiggles on the page have meaning.

WHAT YOU CAN DO...

Provide writing materials like crayons, chalk, markers, pencils, pens, and paper in a box your child can use anytime he wishes. Encourage him to draw and scribble anytime. Scribbling is the beginning of writing.

Find ways to include writing in your child's activities. Play restaurant. Decide what kind of food you'll serve and write the menu. Draw pictures of the food or cut out pictures from magazines and newspapers. Place your order and enjoy your lunch. Make paper money and pay for lunch!

Teach your child to write his first name.

Be patient, this takes time and practice. Look for fun ways to write your child's name, too—in salt or sand and with play dough or yarn.

Write for a reason. Make birthday and holiday cards together. Draw pictures or cut up junk mail or magazines. Be sure to follow through by addressing, stamping, and mailing these important messages to friends and relatives!





Write: Let's do it now!

Together trace your hands. Which one is bigger?

Did you know?

Everything that helps your child build hand strength and coordination—like playing with play dough and cutting with scissors, helps him get ready to write.



Play

WHY IS PLAYING IMPORTANT?

Playing is how children learn best. They are active learners who gain knowledge by “doing.” They push, touch, taste, shake and test how things work. Sometimes play is messy—that’s ok.

WHAT YOU CAN DO...

Give your child unscheduled free time to play.

Open-ended playtime means she decides what she wants to do and how she wants to do it. Provide simple, everyday items such as big boxes, paper tubes, masking tape, cereal boxes, string, markers, blocks—things that inspire her imagination and creativity. Many toys sold today have only one way to use them.

Make time for whole-body play. Create an obstacle course by setting up furniture and safe household items to move around. Suggest fun movements like “Wiggle under the chair, tiptoe around the table, crawl through the tent (made of chairs and blanket).” Go outside and try, “Jump over the crack in the sidewalk, skip to the corner, and hop in each square.”

Play games that encourage conversations.

Put 3-5 small items on a tray; ask your child to look at the objects; then cover them. Ask him to name what was there. Next, take one item away without your child seeing. Ask which item is missing. Switch roles.

Limit screen time to encourage play. TV, computer games and other screen time stifles creative play. Children learn much more from being engaged in the real world (and it helps them sleep better, too!).





Play: Let's do it now!

Five Little Monkeys

Color the monkeys and cut them along the dotted line. Tape the tabs together.

Say the rhyme.

**Five little monkeys jumping on the bed,
One fell off and bumped his head.
Mama called the Doctor and
the Doctor said,
"No more monkeys jumping on the bed!"**

REPEAT

