

Created by NAYA Family Center, with and for the
Native American community

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



Dear Parent or Caregiver,

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

When you read, talk, sing, write, and play with your child from birth to six, you are providing the experiences that build brain connections your child needs for reading. These skills lay the foundation for what your child needs to know to be ready for kindergarten.

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 experiences, learns, and uses before school, the more easily she or he will learn to read.

This booklet provides fun activities to do together. Have fun!

Early Learning Multnomah would like to thank NAYA Family Center for developing this booklet.





Read

Creation Story

Long ago, before the Earth was here, all was water. Many creatures lived in the water, swimming about.

Far above the clouds, there was, however, a land where lived a powerful chief. His wife was going to have a baby. In that Sky land was a great tree with four large roots, stretching out to each of the four scared directions and bearing many kinds of fruits and flowers. One night the chief's wife dreamed that the great tree had been uprooted. The chief perceived that this was a dream of great power, and thus must be fulfilled. With great effort, the tree was uprooted, leaving a large hole in the sky. The chief's wife leaned to look through the hole, but lost her balance and fell. Grasping at the tree as she fell, she only managed to hold onto a handful of seeds. The water creatures saw her falling. They realized that she was not a water creature and

tried desperately to think of a way to help her. "I have heard," said one, "that there is earth far below the waters. Perhaps we should try to get one for her to stand up on." One by one the animals tried to dive down far enough to retrieve land, but one by one they failed. Finally brave little muskrat tried one last time.

Deeper and deeper she dove until her little lungs almost burst. Suddenly she found a bit of land. Scooping it up, she frantically swam to the surface. But alas, where to put the land?

Turtle said, "Put it on my back. I will hold up the Land and Sky Woman."

And so they did. Sky woman landed safely on Turtle's back and was very thankful. She cast the seeds about. The Land became ever so beautiful. Some people call that land "America."





Talk

TALK ABOUT FOOD

How do different foods taste, smell and feel? Ask your child what his or her favorite food is. Talk about where foods come from. Talk about traditional foods like salmon, wasna, bannock, and wojapi. How they are made and when do we eat them?

TALK ABOUT SOUNDS

Find a comfortable spot to sit together outside. Explain that you are going to practice listening to sounds around you like a rabbit. Cup your hands around your ears to make rabbit ears. Listen carefully. Talk about the sounds you hear. Are they natural sounds like rain or birds chirping? Or people sounds like laughing? Or machine sounds, like cars or a lawn mower. Try this activity at different locations.

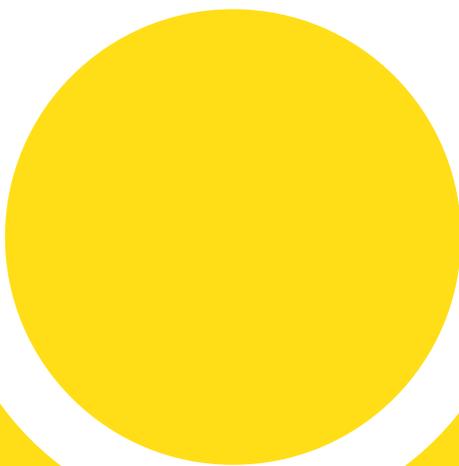




Sing

LET'S DANCE

Anything can become a drum! Show your child different drum beats—a round dance beat (like a heartbeat) or a single, steady beat. Have your child dance in a way that imitates different animals—birds, snakes, bears, anything they can imagine! If you know traditional dances styles like grass dance, jingle, or fancy, show your children how and do it along with them. When children move to music, they begin to feel the rhythm and beat.





Write

MAKE SOME STORY STONES

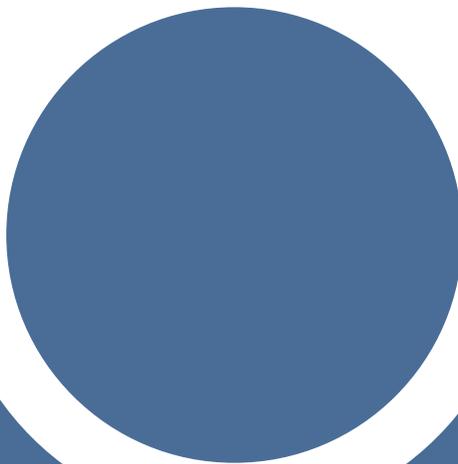
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Collect some nice smooth stones on your next nature walk. Take them home and with permanent markers, draw different animals, plants, and symbols on the rocks. Place them in a bag and draw a few stones at random. With your child, create a story using the story stones that you picked!

WRITE A STORY ABOUT WHAT SOMETHING FUN YOU DID AS A FAMILY

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Did you and your family go to a pow wow? Document what you and your child felt when you went. What was the weather like? Did you see your family—your aunties, uncles, grandparents or cousins? What sounds did the drums and dancers make? Did you dance? How did going to pow wow make you feel?





Play

PLAY "I SPY..."

Describe an object that is visible. "I spy with my little eye something that is cold." After each clue, your child guesses. Give more clues until he or she guesses correctly. Switch roles. Allow your child to describe something he or she sees. Ask for hints.

PLAY "ROCK AND FIST"

Rock and Fist is a traditional Native game usually played in the winter months when it is cold. Go outside and find three small sticks and a nice smooth pebble. Sit across from one another and place all three sticks between you. The first person hides the pebble in one of their hands behind their back. The other person must now guess which hand the rock is in. If you guess correctly, take a stick from the middle. Take turns hiding the pebble. If you guess correctly, take another stick. If you guess incorrectly, you must give one of your sticks to the other player. Play until one person has all the sticks!

