

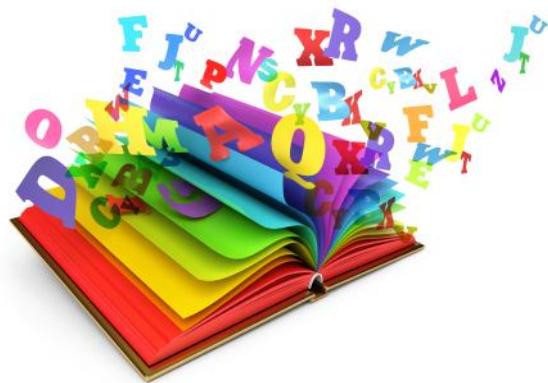
Help your child get ready to read with these simple activities.

TALKING



Early literacy begins with talking. Children learn language by listening to their parents and others talk. Talking stimulates brain development and learning.

- 📖 Encourage your children to talk often; listen and respond.
- 📖 Have conversations with your child and use complete sentences.
- 📖 Ask questions to extend the exchange and add to your child's vocabulary and knowledge.
- 📖 If English is your second language, speak in the language most familiar to you. Your child will learn more if you communicate fluently.



SINGING

Singing together makes learning fun. The notes and rhythm of a song break down words into smaller sounds preparing your child to read. Songs can help your child learn new words, counting, and concepts such as size, shapes and opposites.

- 📖 Sing songs like the *ABC Song* or *B-I-N-G-O* for letter awareness.
- 📖 Share songs that tell a story like *Mary had a Little Lamb* or *Baa-Baa Black Sheep* to expand vocabulary.
- 📖 Sing songs that play with sound like *Old MacDonald Had a Farm* or *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*.

READING



What is the best way to help children get ready to read? Reading together! Children who think reading is fun are more likely to want to read themselves.

- 📖 Interact with your child as you read. Ask questions and try to predict together what will happen next. Listen to what your child says.
- 📖 If you encounter an unfamiliar word, stop and talk about what it means.
- 📖 Read often! Have a special place for books in your house. Supplement your home collection with a variety of stories, poems and 'true' books from your local public library.

WRITING



Words that we read and write represent spoken language. Through writing activities children can make the connection between written and spoken language.

- 📖 Encourage drawing and writing by providing materials and lots of opportunities.
- 📖 Scribbles and marks are how writing begins. When children "sign" their name, they are learning that print represents words. Later, as their hand muscles and hand-eye coordination develop, they can begin to form actual letters. Children are most interested in the letters in their own name.
- 📖 Create a story together! Write captions for your child's pictures and talk about their drawings.



PLAYING

Children need playtime! Playing is how children learn about many things including language. When they pretend, they put their thoughts into words. As they express themselves, they begin to understand that spoken and written words represent real objects and experiences.

- 📖 When allowed unstructured playtime, children begin to use their imaginations. They might create stories about what they are doing, developing narrative skills. They come to understand that stories have a beginning, middle, and end.
- 📖 Stories are even more fun when you encourage dramatic play with puppets or stuffed animals. Have a "prop box" with inexpensive items for imaginative play.
- 📖 Include books in playtime. If you have read a book many times, let your child be the "reader" and tell you the story. Look at the pictures and create new stories together.

You are helping your child get ready to read.

The best way to teach early literacy skills to your child is to interact with them:

TALKING
SINGING
READING
WRITING
PLAYING

From the beginning you have been your child's role model and teacher, helping them learn language and other skills. You know them best and you are the best judge of their attention spans. Children learn by doing, and they love doing things with you!



Why is it important for children to get ready to read *before* they start school?

Children who enter kindergarten with pre-literacy skills can focus on learning to read. They are more likely to succeed in school, not only in kindergarten, but throughout their school years.



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OC Public Libraries has many resources to help you talk, sing, read, write and play with your child.

- 📖 Reading picture books is a great way to interact with your child. We have thousands to choose from! Browse our book collection or ask a librarian for help.
- 📖 Check out read-along kits, audiobooks, music CDs, and eBooks, too.
- 📖 Participate in preschool and family storytimes. Your child will listen to stories, sing songs, and make crafts.
- 📖 For videos and other resources, visit our partner PBS SoCal at www.pbssocal.org/Libraries.
- 📖 Visit OC Public Libraries' website for reading lists, a schedule of events, library locations, information on how to get a library card, and more!

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Early Literacy Begins With You

