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How do I teach my child to read?


Find out more...



Learning to read doesn't start with matching letters to their sounds. Focusing on key communication and language skills will give your child the best foundation for future Literacy success.



Find out more...

Environmental Sounds

Encourage your child to listen for sounds around them. You can model describing them too. "I can hear the sticks snapping under my feet", "I can hear the train going clickety-clack".

Sound Bingo

Draw objects that make a sound on a bingo card. Make the noise and your child crosses off the matching picture.

Sound Hunt

Hide an object that makes a continuous noise like an alarm or the ringtone of a mobile phone. Children listen carefully and hunt for and find the object.

Sound Maps

Using an A4 sheet draw a dot in the middle to represent your child. They now draw all the things they can hear around them at that moment.



Rhythm and Rhyme

Encourage your child to practise listening for and joining in with rhymes including rhyming stories and nursery rhymes.

Popular Rhyming Stories

The Gingerbread Man
The Gruffalo
Aliens Love Underpants
Each Peach Pear Plum
Where's My Teddy?
Brown Bear, Brown Bear
Green Eggs and Ham

Create a kitchen band with pots, pans and wooden spoons. Tap out a rhythm and see if your child can repeat it.

Create a Nursery Rhyme Bag with an object to represent each nursery rhyme. Pull out the object and sing the rhyme.

You could include:

Plastic spider - Incy Wincy
Toy Bus - wheels on the Bus
Rubber Duck - 5 Little Ducks
Sheep - Baa Baa Black Sheep
Toy Tractor - Old Macdonald
Clock - Hickory Dickory
Building Block - Humpty Dumpty
Toy Cat - Hey Diddle Diddle
Star - Twinkle Twinkle

Alliteration

Encourage your child to listen for the initial sound of objects and then find and match all objects that begin with the same sound.

"sock, scissors, soap, sticker, sausage"



Create a Silly Soup

Place out objects that begin with the same initial sound along with a bowl and a spoon. Sing the rhyme below and then each time add an object to the soup emphasising the initial sound.

"We're making Silly Soup,
We'll make it nice and silly,
put the bowl in the fridge
and make it nice and chilly!"

Body Percussion



Encourage your child to create sounds using parts of their bodies and their voice. Stomping, clapping, clicking, tapping, whistling all are ways to create music with your body.

Clapping the syllables of familiar words like their name.

Thomas - Thom/as

Christopher - Chris/to/pher

Create a pattern of body percussion (clap, tap your head, tap your knees) and see if your child can repeat it. Make it harder by adding more actions to follow.

Create actions and sound effects to a familiar story. 'A mouse took a stroll through the deep, dark wood'. Walk around for stroll and then create a sound effect for a deep, dark wood.

Try getting your child to make sound effects whilst looking in a mirror. Look at the shape and movement of their mouths.



Speaking and Listening

Model good speaking and listening with your child. Talking and interacting with young children act as an important foundation for later Literacy skills.

Create a running dialogue as you do everyday tasks such as cooking or driving. All of these interactions will significantly expand your child's vocabulary.

Show children how to be good listeners too by encouraging eye contact, not interrupting when someone is speaking and asking appropriate questions and commenting on what the other person has said.



Sharing Stories

Sharing stories together will encourage a love of reading and teaches your child how to hold a book, turn the pages, know that print runs from left to right and expands their vocabulary.

"Here's how many words kids would have heard by the time they were 5 years old: Never read to, 4662 words; 1-2 times per week, 63570 words; 3-5 times per week, 169520 words; daily, 296,66p words; and five books a day, 1,483,300 words"

The Reading Framework, DfE



Repeat favourite stories over and over again. Repetition deepens children's familiarity and engagement, more chance to explore the language, characters and emotions and they are therefore more likely to join in and retell the story independently.

Oral Blending

Encourage your child to listen for the sounds within a word and push them together to form the whole word.

Play I Spy



Play the game but you say the sounds within the word rather than the whole word.

"I spy a d/o/g" and your child merges the sounds to say 'dog'.

Using the pure sounds makes it easier for children to merge them together. Avoid adding an 'uh' to the end of the sound, so not 'muh' but 'mmmm'.

Simon Says

"Put your hand on your
l/e/g"
"h/o/p on one leg"
"s/i/t down"

Model Blending Sounds

"I am putting on my
c/oa/t - coat"
"I'm getting in the c/ar
- car"

Oral Segmenting

Encourage your child to break up a word into its sounds. For example you say the word 'hat' and they can tell you the sounds they hear - h/a/t.

Clap out the sounds in words

- cat - 3 claps
- fish - 3 claps
- chair - 2 claps
- bus - 3 claps
- toy - 2 claps
- train - 4 claps
- tree - 3 claps
- house - 3 claps
- step - 4 claps

Use counters or coins to represent each sound in a word. Say a word and then your child moves a counter forward for each sound within a word.

Create a cardboard robot who speaks only using their robot voice to model segmenting words.
"I n-ee-d a h-u-g"

