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Seven Links to Literacy

To all the adults who teach the young children they love:

These seven links will help you remember activities which lead to your child learning to read and write, joyfully and independently:

Point to signs and print: Understanding print in the world around us

Label your world with words: Writing signs to make our mark in the world around us

Read, sing and talk: Thinking about songs and books as we hear and join in

Learn how books work: Learning how books work (pages, print, which direction to go)

Collect and connect words and letters: Using sounds, letters and words in the search for meaning

Write it down: Starting to put everything together and write

Ready, set, read: Starting to put everything together and read

You are your child's first and most important teacher.

“You do not need a teaching degree to teach a young child to read. What you do require is:

- i) the ability to read yourself
- ii) the belief that a preschool child can begin to master some literacy skills
- iii) practical ideas and knowledge of your child
- iv) patience.

But above all, there must be a genuine love for your child that expresses itself in a commitment to supporting his/her growth as a human being.”

Lucy Robinson

“There is no formula that tells us how quickly a particular child can or should progress through a sequence of activities. The key should be that the child is enjoying your reading together—so back off for a while if he shows any signs of discomfort or unease. Fifteen minutes a day will be ample reading development time for four year olds, with adjustments down and up for younger and older children.”

Lucy Robinson

Read and write and sing with your child in joyful ways.

Seven Links for teaching your child to read and write



1. Point to signs and print: Understanding print in the world around us
Point to print in the world around e.g. labels, signs, magazines or newspaper. Your child will focus on what you point to. Read it and comment what you see. Be delighted when your child notices signs and reads them or asks about them.



2. Label your world with words: Writing signs to make our mark in the world around us
Write your child's name and other favorite words on cards and put them up around the house. Point to them and read them often. Be delighted with the writing attempts your child makes.



3. Read, sing and talk: Thinking about songs and books as we hear and join in
Enjoy children's books with your child. Read and talk about books, pointing to pictures and words. Sing songs from books and read them time and time again as you sing. Retell book stories, ask questions about books. Be delighted when your child is interested in books.



4. Learn how books work; Learning how books work (pages, print, which direction to go)
As you read books and signs with your child, point to words and letters. Show how the print goes from left to right. Later you will both notice punctuation and the layout of different books.



5. Collect and connect words and letters: Using sounds, letters and words in the search for meaning
Say words slowly; listen to sounds at the beginning and end of the words as you say them together. Collect favorite words on word cards. Play with them. Point to letters and name them as you read and write. Make a little dictionary with a letter on each page and add pictures and words that begin with that letter. Play with letters and sort them in many ways. Write the letters. Write the words.



6. Write it down: Starting to put everything together and write
Show your child how you write. Be delighted when your child does some writing (even scribbles) and reads it. Start a book or diary with your child. Show your child letters. Help your child write them. Share the pencil with your child; he or she writes known letters and words and you write the rest. Help your child with spelling one or two words each time, but don't get caught up in correct spelling. Joyfully read and reread your child's writing attempts.



7. Ready, set, read: Starting to put everything together and read
Read **to** your child, then read **with** your child (your child reads what is remembered and you read the rest) and then with an easy book, it might be read **by** your child. When your child knows some words and letters, introduce a set of leveled books. Look through a book (or one story) together, then support your child in reading it. A book is a good one for independent reading if your child can read most of it, but still requires a little reading work.

Learning to Read and Write in the Early Years

Learning to read and write is critical to a child's success in school and later in life.

- The most important period for literacy development is in the early childhood years from birth to five, a time to set the firm foundation for literacy skills to continue to develop smoothly in later years.
- When one young child and an interested adult enjoy their time together as they read and write at the child's level, the child learns easily and values literacy.
- When a child watches the daily language activity of an adult and listens to explanations of what the adult is doing, the child comes to value the many purposes and uses of reading and writing.
- When an adult teaches a child to concentrate on a valued literacy activity (ie. working through interesting puzzles), the child learns to learn.
- When a child enters school with a literacy background, the child has a great advantage for learning in all school academic subjects.

Two quotes from the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) stress the importance of an early start to literacy:

- **It is essential and urgent to teach children to read and write competently, enabling them to achieve today's high standard of literacy.**
- **Experiences throughout the early childhood years, birth through age eight, affect the development of literacy. A maturationist view of young children's development persists despite much evidence to the contrary. Failing to give children literacy experiences until they are school age can severely limit the reading and writing levels they ultimately attain.**

(Overview of Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children. Joint position statement of the IRA and NAEYC, Adopted May 1998)

The following pages contain a range of activities which are fun for children, parents and caregivers, and which promote literacy growth as each child develops.

We describe literacy activities for reading and writing in the daily environment, learning to use sounds and letters, and learning concepts of print. We describe activities in reading and singing with children, writing in the real world, beginning writing skills and beginning to read books.

These activities may be useful to parents, grandparents, older siblings, big sisters and big brothers, day care providers and other interested adults.

Literacy Ladders: Literacy Growth in the Seven Links

As children learn to read and write they can do different things independently at different stages. The following charts show growth in the seven links, starting with things the very young child can do. Proceeding up the ladder for each link, children learn the more complicated stages.

We know that children learn best with joyful teaching, a few minutes every day at times when children are ready to learn.

It is possible that a child will be at different stages on each of the linked literacy ladders.

Children learn a lot about reading and writing from working with an adult on one link (and its ladder).

However, the child will make better progress with ideas from all the seven links.



1. ***Point to signs and print:*** Understanding print in the world around us



2. ***Label your world with words:*** Writing signs to make our mark in the world around us



3. ***Read, sing and talk:*** Thinking about songs and books as we hear and join in



4. ***Learn how books work;*** Learning how books work (pages, print, which direction to go)



5. ***Collect and connect words and letters:*** Using sounds, letters and words in the search for meaning



6. ***Write it down:*** Starting to put everything together and write



7. ***Ready, set, read:*** Starting to put everything together and read

Overview of steps in literacy development

Where is your child on these ladders?








read and use the information in many signs and labels	write and draw so others can understand their signs and labels	visualize ideas in a non-picture book, keep track of the ideas, find out what new words mean, learn songs and poems	explore use of voice and punctuation (question marks, quotation marks and lettering)	continue to learn combinations of letters for reading and writing	write for many purposes, write more correctly and reread their own writing	read beginning books independently
read and write simple signs and wordy labels	put words and pictures together to make signs, labels and instructions	retell familiar stories and make up new stories, talk about interesting words, learn songs and poems	explore periods	match chunks of words with their sounds e.g. rhymes	write own message intentionally in their own way showing interest in sounds and letters	read some sentences fluently and attempt to problem-solve unfamiliar words
notice and use features of signs and labels e.g. letters, words, icons	make up labels for the world around with drawings and scribble writing and some letters	ask questions and make guesses about picture books, use words and phrases from books, continue to learn new songs	identify a word, identify letters	match beginning sounds with letters	show interest in what and how adults are writing, try their own early writing	read short sentences with familiar words
recognize and read familiar signs	recognize and read familiar signs and watch as adults write familiar signs and scribble own signs	retell a familiar picture book in own words while looking at the pictures, use sound effects and special voices and songs	follow the direction of print	recognize and point out letters in familiar names and labels	notice different reasons for writing and kinds of writing, dictate and read their dictated messages	read some words and know a few letters
look around and start to notice and understand signs and labels	look around start to notice signs and labels	point to pictures and talk about the action in a story book, join in with choruses and songs	point, talk about the book, identify parts of a book	do some sound matching with rhymes and beginning sounds	start to notice adults doing some writing and imitate writing acts	read some names turn pages and look at the print
point to objects and pictures and name some of them with adult help. look around and pay attention to the world	point to objects and pictures, name them with adult help and do some scribbles	label pictures, listen as adult reads simple picture books, make sounds to go with pictures and songs	listen to adults reading and watch them, feel a book and play with a book	play with sounds in words and songs with an adult	scribble; touch and talk about the scribbles	choose from a variety of books point to pictures and name them
Point to signs and print Understanding print in the world around us	Label your world with words Writing signs to make our mark in the world around	Read, sing and talk Hearing songs and books, thinking about them and joining in	Learn how books work Learning how books work (pages, print, direction)	Collect and connect words and letters Using sounds, letters and words in the search for meaning	Write It down Starting to put everything together and write	Ready, set, read. Starting to put everything together and read



Activities Chart: Ladders to Literacy

When you have noticed where your child is on each of the literacy ladders, choose the activities to do which will help your child grow.

<p>read and use the information in many signs and labels * <i>Living in a reading world</i></p>	<p>write and draw so others can understand their signs and labels * <i>Writing "how to" directions</i></p>	<p>visualize ideas in a non-picture book, keep track of the ideas, find out what new words mean, learn songs and poems * <i>Making pictures in your head</i> * <i>Finding out about interesting words</i></p>	<p>explore the use of voice and punctuation (question marks, quotation marks and lettering) * <i>Noticing question marks, quotation marks and lettering styles</i></p>	<p>continue to learn combinations of letters for reading and writing * <i>Reading root word</i> * <i>Sorting and spelling</i> * <i>Sharing the pencil and writing</i></p>	<p>write for many purposes, write more correctly and reread their own writing * <i>Writing, writing, writing for many reasons</i> * <i>Writing on lines</i></p>	<p>read beginning books independently * <i>Shared reading of longer books</i> * <i>Prompts for words</i> * <i>Sentence puzzles</i></p>
<p>read and write simple signs and wordy labels * <i>Reading signs or simple instructions</i></p>	<p>put words and pictures together to make signs, labels and instructions * <i>Using a calendar for planning</i></p>	<p>retell familiar stories and make up new stories, talk about interesting words, learn songs and poems * <i>Retelling and changing the story</i> * <i>Talking about interesting words</i></p>	<p>explore periods * <i>Noticing periods and sentences</i></p>	<p>match chunks of words with their sounds e.g. rhymes * <i>Rhyming word families</i> * <i>Saying words slowly for writing</i></p>	<p>write own message intentionally in their own way showing interest in sounds and letters * <i>Writing own messages hearing the sounds</i> * <i>Rainbow letters, printing the letters correctly</i></p>	<p>read some sentences fluently and attempt to problem-solve unfamiliar words * <i>Sharing the pencil</i> * <i>Sharing the reading of the book</i></p>
<p>notice and use features of signs and labels e.g. letters, words, icons * <i>Reading simple messages</i></p>	<p>make up labels for the world around with drawings and scribble writing and some letters * <i>Making signs to play with</i></p>	<p>ask questions and make guesses about picture books, use words and phrases from books, continue to learn new songs * <i>Asking questions</i> * <i>Using words and phrases from the book</i></p>	<p>identify a word, identify a letter * <i>What is a word?</i> * <i>What is a letter?</i></p>	<p>match beginning sounds with letters * <i>Reading beginning sounds and letters</i> * <i>Writing beginning sounds and letters</i></p>	<p>show interest in what and how adults are writing, try their own early writing * <i>Sharing the pencil</i> * <i>Forming letters in names</i></p>	<p>read short sentences with familiar words * <i>Hug a word, hug a letter</i> * <i>Read pattern books</i></p>

<p>recognize and read familiar signs * <i>Making name and word tags</i></p>	<p>recognize and read familiar signs, watch as adults write familiar signs and scribble own signs * <i>Making name and word tags</i> * <i>Making word labels</i></p>	<p>retell a familiar picture book in own words while looking at the pictures, use sound effects and special voices, learn new songs * <i>Retelling with a picture walk</i> * <i>Retelling with sound effects</i></p>	<p>find print on a page and follow the direction of print * <i>Following print on a page</i></p>	<p>recognize and point out letters in familiar names and labels * <i>Learning the alphabet</i> * <i>Using the alphabet chart</i> * <i>Noticing letters in books</i></p>	<p>notice different reasons for writing and kinds of writing, dictate and read their dictated messages * <i>Dictating little books</i> * <i>Holding the pencil properly</i></p>	<p>read some words and know a few letters * <i>Making name and word tags</i> * <i>Making pattern books</i></p>
<p>look around and start to notice and understand signs and labels * <i>Finding pictures and words on signs around us</i></p>	<p>look around, start to notice signs and labels * <i>Finding labels and signs around us</i> * <i>Drawing and scribble writing</i></p>	<p>point to pictures and talk about the action in a story book, join in with choruses and songs * <i>Reading and talking about personal connections</i> * <i>Joining in word patterns and choruses</i></p>	<p>point, talk about the book, identify parts of the book * <i>Handling pages, noticing pictures and print</i></p>	<p>do some sound matching with rhymes and beginning sounds * <i>Silly songs for rhymes</i> * <i>I spy for sounds</i></p>	<p>start to notice adults doing some writing and imitate writing acts * <i>Inventing writing</i> * <i>Controlling the pencil</i></p>	<p>read some names, turn pages and look at the print * <i>Handling the pages, noticing print and pictures</i></p>
<p>point to objects and pictures and name some of them with adult help. look around and pay attention to the world * <i>Pointing and saying</i></p>	<p>point to objects and pictures, name them with adult help and do some scribbles * <i>Pointing and saying</i> * <i>Scribbling</i></p>	<p>label pictures, listen as adult reads simple picture books, make sounds to go with pictures and songs * <i>Pointing and saying</i> * <i>Nursery rhymes and songs</i></p>	<p>listen to adults reading and watch them, feel a book and play with it * <i>Watching adults read</i> * <i>Playing with pages</i></p>	<p>play with sounds in words and songs with an adult * <i>Noticing sounds all around</i></p>	<p>scribble; touch and talk about the scribbles * <i>Playing at writing</i> * <i>Developing hand strength in grasping</i></p>	<p>choose from a variety of books, point to pictures and name them * <i>Pick a book, point to pictures</i></p>
<p>Point to signs and print Understanding print in the world around us </p>	<p>Label your world with words Writing signs to make our mark in the world around </p>	<p>Read, sing and talk Hearing songs and books, thinking about them and joining in </p>	<p>Learn how books work Learning how books work (pages, print, direction) </p>	<p>Collect and connect words and letters Using sounds, letters and words in the search for meaning </p>	<p>Write it down Starting to put everything together and write </p>	<p>Ready, set, read. Starting to put everything together and read </p>

Point to signs and print: Understanding print in the world around us

Pointing and saying



read and use the information in many signs and labels

read and write simple signs and labels

notice and use features of signs and labels e.g. letters, words, icons

recognize and read familiar signs

look around and start to notice and understand signs and labels

point to objects and pictures and name some of them with adult help.
look around and pay attention to the world

Activity: Pointing and saying

People: infant and adult

Time: several times a day for a minute or two

Materials: well known objects and people in the child's world

Plan

The adult picks up the child and looks around the room or area.

Let's look around. What can we see?

The adult notices what the child is most interested in and is looking at.

Let's go over here because I can see you looking at something interesting.

Do

The adult goes up to the thing (or person), touches it and says the name while the child is paying attention.

This is a ball. Ball.

The adult encourages the child to touch it and say the name the best way possible.

You touch it. Say "ball".

The adult and child do this with several other things.

Reflect

The adult and child play the name game. *"Where is the ball?" "Where is Auntie Ros?"*

The adult expects the child to point with a glance or a finger, or touch and maybe say the word.

They repeat the names as often as is joyful.

You pushed the ball! The ball hit the wall. Oh no! The ball hit Mummy.

The child points to other pictures or objects, touches them, wants the adult to say the name and tries to say the name.

Point to signs and print: Understanding print in the world around us



Finding pictures and words on signs and labels around us

read and use the information in many signs and labels

read and write simple signs and labels

notice and use features of signs and labels e.g. letters, words, icons

recognize and read familiar signs

look around and start to notice and understand signs and labels

point to objects and pictures and name some of them with adult help.
look around and pay attention to the world

Activity: Finding pictures and words on signs and labels around us

Time: 2 or 3 minutes

Materials: 2 or 3 cereal boxes or 2 or 3 drink boxes or 2 or 3 boxes with labels

Plan

The adult puts two or three food boxes in front of the child (a collection of drink boxes, a collection of toy labels, any collection of things which have words and pictures which interest the child). The adult notices one the child is interested in first.

Do

The adult touches the main picture on one box and names it. The child imitates.

It is aIt's your turn. Can you say...?

The child imitates.

Do this with more of the boxes.

Reflect

The adult asks the child to choose one box and tell about it (and maybe eat or play with it!)

Together adult and child notice signs and labels in many places e.g. around the home, grocery store, magazines, computer screens.



Point to signs and print: Understanding print in the world around us

Making name and word tags

read and use the information in many signs and labels

read and write simple signs and labels

notice and use features of signs and labels e.g. letters, words, icons

recognize and read familiar signs

look around and start to notice and understand signs and labels

point to objects and pictures and name some of them with adult help. look around and pay attention to the world

Activity: Making name and word tags.

Time: about five minutes at a time

Materials: slips of paper, tape, markers or dark pencils in a place the child can reach, empty box for collecting the child's words

Plan

The adult sits beside the child and talks about writing a name tag for the child.

Let's write your name (or another important word) so that we know...we can remember... daddy will see ...?

Do

The adult writes the child's name (or another label word), commenting all the time.

I'm starting here and I'm going to write your name. I'll put the first letter. It's an O. It's round and tall. The next letter is a...Now I have finished and I'm going to read the word. It is... the word says ...

Sometimes the adult could say: *I can draw a little picture of you too.*

The adult reads the name and asks the child to read the name, and puts up the name or word where the child can see it.

Reflect

The adult and child keep the name tags in a word collection box or WORD BOX (empty shoeboxes are a good size).

They take two or three out at a time and spread them out and play the game of "Where is the word..?"

Where is the word that says Bella? I can find it. This word says Bella. I'll mix them up. Let's see if you can find the word that says Bella.

The adult makes word tags for family members, toys, food, any objects or things which are of great interest to the child.

Point to signs and print: Understanding print in the world around us



Reading simple messages

read and use the information in many signs and labels	<p><u>Activity: Reading simple messages</u> Time: about 10 minutes Materials: child's word collection in a word box, paper strips, tape, marker or dark pencil</p>
read and write simple signs and labels	<p><u>Plan</u> Adult and child read some favorite words from the word box (see activity "Making name and word tags") Using one or two words, they plan to make a message for the home. <i>What did you build? Let's put a sign on it.</i> <i>Or</i> <i>Let's use your words to make a sign for daddy to read. What shall we say?</i> <i>Or</i> <i>Let's write a sign about the train. We can say, "This is Sandy's train". Have we got any words we need in our word box? Yes we have "Sandy" and "train".</i></p>
<p><u>notice and use features of signs and labels e.g. letters, words, icons</u></p>	<p><u>Do</u> The adult shows the child how to put the word cards in order and supplies the missing words or parts of words by writing them on pieces of paper as they come up in the message. <i>Let's work on the table. What is the whole message? "This is Sandy's train".</i> <i>What is the first word we need? "This". I'll write it for you. Read it and tell me what comes next. Child reads "This" then says "is". Adult writes "is" and child puts it after "This" on the table.</i> <i>Read it from the beginning. What comes next? "this is ...Sandy's. Have you got the word Sandy? Please put it in line. What does the message say now? Child reads "This is Sandy".</i> <i>What do we need now? Can you find the word "train"? Child places the word train in the sentence. Adult quietly adds the "s" to Sandy.</i> <i>Let's read the whole message.</i></p>
recognize and read familiar signs	<p>The message can be copied over by the adult and reread. It can be put in the appropriate place in the home and reread. <i>I'll write it on one long piece of paper now. Let's read it again to see if it says the same message.</i> <i>Let's tape it up near your train so Daddy can see it. Now you have put it in a good place let's read it again.</i></p>
look around and start to notice and understand signs and labels	<p><u>Reflect</u> Adult and child read the message often and talk about who notices and reads the message and what they do when they have read it. <i>Who read your message? How did it work?</i></p>
point to objects and pictures and name some of them with adult help. look around and pay attention to the world	



Point to signs and print: Understanding print in the world around us

Reading signs and simple instructions

read and use the information in many signs and labels

read and write simple signs and labels

notice and use features of signs and labels e.g. letters, words, icons

recognize and read familiar signs

look around and start to notice and understand signs and labels

point to objects and pictures and name some of them with adult help.
look around and pay attention to the world

Main Activity: Reading signs and simple instructions

Time: about 10 minutes to read, then time to create a project

Materials: Simple 2 or 3 step recipes (good ones are on the back of cake mixes). Simple 2 or 3 step instructions for crafts. Safety pamphlet or coloring book with simple warnings. Some restaurant place mats for kids.

Plan

The child and adult plan to do an activity which involves reading signs and instructions e.g. following one or more stages of a simple recipe, reading one or more stages of instructions for a new craft, reading some of the simple rules for a game, reading a warning of danger.

Let's read how to make a cake. You read some and I'll read some and then we'll start to make it.

Do

The child reads as much of the instruction as he or she can with the adult supplying unknown words or giving the child hints about how to solve unknown words.

Adult and child may need to reread, saying the words together faster, to understand what the instruction means.
Who's going to start? You point to the words and I'll help if you get a tricky word.

Check the picture.

What word could it be?

Say the sounds slowly.

Read on to the end of the sentence, then guess.

I'll tell you the word.

Now we have read it, what do we do first...next...last to make the cake?

Reflect

Child and adult do the action, make the craft or the recipe.

Did we understand everything we read? Do we need to read how to do it again? If your friend wants to make a cake would you give her these instructions?

Point to signs and print: Understanding print in the world around us



Living in a reading world

read and use the information in many signs and labels

read and write simple signs and labels

notice and use features of signs and labels e.g. letters, words, icons

recognize and read familiar signs

look around and start to notice and understand signs and labels

point to objects and pictures and name some of them with adult help.
look around and pay attention to the world

Activity: Living in a reading world

Time: any time, all the time

Materials: the vast volume of print in the world around

The adult continues to encourage the child to follow signs and instructions in many situations, more and more independently. He will cook from a cookbook. She will put a model airplane together. They will read the rules for board games and explain and negotiate with their friends. As the reading material gets harder the child will continue to need adults' help:

- reading words
- learning what new words mean
- thinking about the message
- understanding what the message means in life
- learning about titles, headings, charts
- finding out about kinds of texts e.g. toy advertisements, information from the museum, admission tickets to the show and fliers for a circus are all set up in different ways for different purposes

Label your world with words: Writing signs to make our mark in the world around us

Pointing and saying Scribbling



write and draw so others can understand their signs and labels

put words and pictures together to make signs, labels and instructions

make up labels for the world around with drawings and scribble writing and some letters

recognize and read familiar signs, watch as adults write familiar signs and scribble own signs

look around, start to notice signs and labels

point to objects and pictures, name them with adult help and do some scribbles

Activity: Pointing and saying

People: infant and adult

Time: several times a day for a minute or two

Materials: well known objects and people in the child's world

Plan

The adult picks up the child and looks around the space.

Let's look around. What can we see?

The adult notices what the child is most interested in and is looking at.

Let's go over here because I can see you looking at something interesting.

Do

The adult goes up to the thing (or person), touches it and says the name while the child is paying attention.

This is a ball. Ball.

The adult encourages the child to touch it and say the name the best way possible.

You touch it. Say "ball".

The adult and child do this with several things.

Reflect

The adult and child play the name game.

"Where is the ball?" "Where is Auntie Ros?"

The adult expects the child to point with a glance or a finger, or touch and maybe say the word.

They repeat the names as often as is joyful.

You pushed the ball! The ball hit the wall. Oh no! The ball hit Daddy.

The child points to other pictures or labels, touches them, wants the adult to say the name and tries to say the name.

Activity: Scribbling

Time: a few brief moments

Materials: scrap paper and pencil/crayon/marker

Plan

The child holds a writing tool and the adult holds paper so it does not slip.

Do

The child scribbles in a delightful way.

Reflect

The adult shows pleasure in the child's scribble and "reads" it or talks about it.

Label your world with words: Writing signs to make our mark in the world around us

Finding labels and signs around us

Drawing and scribble writing



write and draw so others can understand their signs and labels

put words and pictures together to make signs, labels and instructions

make up labels for the world around with drawings and scribble writing and some letters

recognize and read familiar signs, watch as adults write familiar signs and scribble own signs

look around, start to notice signs and labels

point to objects and pictures, name them with adult help and do some scribbles

Activity: Finding labels and signs around us

Time: 2 or 3 minutes

Materials: 2 to 3 cereal boxes or 2 to 3 drink boxes or 2 to 3 toy boxes

Plan

The adult puts two or three food boxes in front of the child (a collection of drink boxes, a collection of toy labels, any collection of things which have words and pictures which interest the child). The adult notices one the child is interested in first.

Do

The adult touches the main picture on one box and names it. The child imitates.

It is aIt's your turn. Can you say...?

Do this with more of the boxes.

Reflect

The adult asks the child to choose one box and tell about it (and maybe eat or play with it!)

Together adult and child notice signs and labels in many places e.g. around the home, grocery store, magazines, computer screens.

Activity: Drawing and Scribble Writing

Time: a few minutes

Materials: pieces of scrap paper, pencil/marker/crayon

Plan

The child watches the adult do some writing e.g. a shopping list, a greeting card message. The adult encourages the child to do some writing too.

Do

Child writes or draws a picture at his/her level of ability and does some "writing" scribble.

Reflect

Child and adult talk about the picture and the "writing" and display it.

Label your world with words: Writing signs to make our mark in the world around us

Making name and word tags

Making word labels



<p>write and draw so others can understand their signs and labels</p>	<p><u>Activity: Making name and word tags.</u> Time: about five minutes at a time Materials: slips of paper, tape, markers or dark pencils in a place the child can reach, empty box for collecting the child's words</p>
<p>put words and pictures together to make signs, labels and instructions</p>	<p><u>Plan</u> The adult sits beside the child and talks about writing a name tag for the child. <i>Let's write your name (or another important word) so that we know...we can remember... daddy will see ...?</i></p> <p><u>Do</u> The adult writes the child's name (or another label word), commenting all the time. <i>I'm starting here and I'm going to write your name. I'll put the first letter. It's an O. It's round and tall. The next letter is a...Now I have finished and I'm going to read the word. It is... the word says ...</i> Sometimes the adult could say: <i>I can draw a little picture of you too.</i> The adult reads the name and asks the child to read the name, and puts up the name or word where the child can see it.</p>
<p>make up labels for the world around with drawings and scribble writing and some letters</p>	<p><u>Reflect</u> The adult and child keep the name tags in a word collection box (empty shoeboxes are a good size). They take two or three out at a time and spread them out and play the game of "Where is the word..?" <i>Where is the word that says Bella? I can find it. This word says Bella. I'll mix them up. Let's see if you can find the word that says Bella.</i> The adult makes word tags for family members, toys, food, any things which are of great interest to the child.</p>
<p><u>recognize and read familiar signs, watch as adults write familiar signs and scribble own signs</u></p>	<p><u>Activity: Making word labels</u> Time: a couple of hours over several days, about 15 minutes at a time depending on the child's concentration Materials: large piece of paper</p>
<p>look around, start to notice signs and labels</p>	<p><u>Plan</u> Adult brings out the large paper and asks the child if they can draw a picture together. The picture will be about a familiar place in the child's life e.g. neighborhood or backyard.</p> <p><u>Do</u> Child and adult sit together and draw the place including pictures and signs. <i>Let's draw our house; I'll write the house number. Let's draw the grocery store. It's called.... (adult writes the label). What things can you put in? Oh, the golden Ms for that restaurant, Yes, a stop sign there is a great idea. That's a cute cat you drew. Let's write the word "cat"?</i></p>
<p>point to objects and pictures, name them with adult help and do some scribbles</p>	<p><u>Reflect</u> The child shows the masterpiece to another adult later and tells all about it, including reading the signs. On another day the child and adult could make a road map and use it for toy cars or they could make up pretend places.</p>

Label your world with words: Writing signs to make our mark in the world around us

Making signs to play with



write and draw so others can understand their signs and labels

put words and pictures together to make signs, labels and instructions

make up labels for the world around with drawings and scribble writing and some letters

recognize and read familiar signs, watch as adults write familiar signs and scribble own signs

look around, start to notice signs and labels

point to objects and pictures, name them with adult help and do some scribbles

Activity: Making signs to play with

Time: a few minutes during make-believe play

Materials: play materials for an imaginary setting e.g. blankets to make a tent or fire-station or dollhouse/castle/garage/train, or a set of commercial toys, or a set of books to make a library, or some boxes and coins to make a grocery store and slips of paper, pencils, tape, empty cereal boxes and scissors

Plan

The child starts to set up a play area. As the child starts to play the adult suggests some signs which might go in the setting. *Oops, your little man fell down the cliff. Shall we put a "Danger" sign for him?*

Adult prints a danger sign and child sticks it on. The child may illustrate the sign.

Do

The child and adult talk and think of a couple more signs which are needed. The adult encourages the child to write the signs and put them up.

The child's signs may have some letters in them or they may consist of symbols which look like letters. Cereal boxes make great signs and can be cut out and folded to stand up e.g. stop sign

Reflect

As the child cleans up after playing, the adult and child reread the signs and store them in the word box or with the toys.

The adult encourages the child to add signs to the play on many occasions. Children playing together may use the signs.

Label your world with words: Writing signs to make our mark in the world around us



Using a calendar for planning

write and draw so others can understand their signs and labels

put words and pictures together to make signs, labels and instructions

make up labels for the world around with drawings and scribble writing and some letters

recognize and read familiar signs, watch as adults write familiar signs and scribble own signs

look around, start to notice signs and labels

point to objects and pictures, name them with adult help and do some scribbles

Activity: Using a calendar for planning

Time: a few minutes each day

Materials: commercial calendar which shows a month at a time and has large spaces to write in for each day, or a homemade version on a large sheet of paper

Plan

The child and adult look together at the calendar, point to the box for the day and plan what they are going to do.

Do

The child draws a symbol for one important activity and/or prints the words for it the best way he or she can.

The child might ask the adult to help with spacing and spelling. Over several days there may be repetitions of words; the adult needs to give correct spellings for these words. The adult writes common words to put into the word collection box for other writing.

Reflect

When the calendar is used next time, the child and adult read what they have done in the past.

A variation on this activity is for the adult and child to make a check list of activities they are going to do in the day, and check them off as each activity is completed. This way the child can plan when to do less desirable activities and when to do more valued activities. It's a good way to plan limits on television viewing.

Another variation is to have a pad to make grocery lists and to reread old grocery lists.

Label your world with words: Writing signs to make our mark in the world around us

Writing “how to” directions



write and draw so others can understand their signs and labels

put words and pictures together to make signs, labels and instructions

make up labels for the world around with drawings and scribble writing and some letters

recognize and read familiar signs, watch as adults write familiar signs and scribble own signs

look around, start to notice signs and labels

point to objects and pictures, name them with adult help and do some scribbles

Activity: Writing “how to” directions

Time: about 30 minutes

Materials: paper and pencil

Plan

The child and adult plan to create some project e.g. make a spaceship, make a pop-up card, decorate a birthday cake, rearrange the toys, cut up a large cardboard box to make a house, etc

Do

The child draws the plan for the project on paper and the adult helps the child to add labels and sentences to tell what must be done.

I see you have drawn a plan to decorate a birthday cake for your dad. Please write the color of the icing here. I see you have a pattern of Smarties on the cake. Let's write the word Smarties so we don't forget.

What are the other decorations?

Expect the child to write a few familiar words correctly; encourage the child to say unfamiliar words slowly and print the letters he or she hears.

Reflect

The child and adult use the plan to do the project. Later the plan is used again to show someone else how to make the project.

Read, sing and talk: Thinking about songs and books as we hear and join in
Pointing and saying
Nursery rhymes and songs



visualize ideas in a non-picture book, keep track of the ideas, find out what new words mean, learn songs and poems

retell familiar stories and make up new stories, talk about interesting words, learn songs and poems

ask questions and make guesses about picture books, use words and phrases from books, continue to learn new songs

retell a familiar picture book in own words while looking at the pictures, use sound effects and special voices, learn new songs

point to pictures and talk about the action in a story book, join in with choruses and songs

label pictures, listen as adult reads simple picture books, make sounds to go with pictures and songs

Activity: Nursery rhymes and songs

Time: a few minutes

Materials: books with nursery rhymes or songs, or the songs, rhymes and finger plays the adult knows

Plan

The child listens as the adult sings the song. The child shows interest by moving to the music or humming along.

Do

The adult repeats the song, clapping or moving to the music, exaggerating the sounds in the song.

The wheels on the bus go UUP and DOOWN.

The child joins in. The adult may substitute familiar things in the song.

Ben, I'm going to use your name in the song. "Ben in the bus goes UUP and DOOWN."

Reflect

The adult repeats the same songs many times enjoying the rhythm and words. Child and adult play with these songs in the child's daily activities e.g. getting dressed, having a bath etc.

Activity: Pointing and saying

Time: a few minutes

Materials: books with simple text, colorful pictures, some wordless books, some song books.

Plan

The child sits on the adult's knee or close beside the adult. The child or adult deliberately chooses a book.

Let's read this book about dogs today. Then we can read the truck book we have read fifty times before.

Do

Adult reads the book to the child, pointing to the pictures and commenting on things in the child's life which are like the pictures or text in the book. *Dog. This is a dog. It is eating a bone like Sheba.*

Adult invites the child to point and join in by saying the names of the pictures.

Reflect

On the same day or another day, the adult encourages the child to take the lead and point to pictures in the same book and say words about them.

Read, sing and talk: Thinking about songs and books as we hear and join in

Joining in word patterns and choruses

Reading and talking about personal connections



visualize ideas in a non-picture book, keep track of the ideas, find out what new words mean, learn songs and poems

retell familiar stories and make up new stories, talk about interesting words, learn songs and poems

ask questions and make guesses about picture books, use words and phrases from books, continue to learn new songs

retell a familiar picture book in own words while looking at the pictures, use sound effects and special voices, learn new songs

point to pictures and talk about the action in a story book, join in with choruses and songs

label pictures, listen as adult reads simple picture books, make sounds to go with pictures and songs

Activity: Joining in word patterns and choruses

Time: a few minutes

Materials: familiar picture books with simple information or story, and some repetitive language; books of songs and nursery rhymes

Plan

Adult and child choose a familiar book. The adult invites the child to join in when he or she can.

You help me read this. Let's read it together.

Do

As the adult reads the child chimes in with the "choruses". Little Red Riding Hood always says "Oh, Grandmother, what big ...you have!" When you "catch a fox and put him in a box" it is always after "A-hunting we will go." The adult pauses slightly before these "chorus" words so the child can join in.

Reflect

The adult tries to get the child to use these word patterns from books at other times in the day e.g. singing on a car journey, in the bath.

"Oh, Ben, what a big foot you have. All the better to splash you with, my dear."

Do this with many familiar books and with nursery rhymes, over and over, rhythmically and as joyfully as possible.

Activity: Reading and talking about personal connections

Time: a few minutes

Materials: picture books with simple information or story and some patterned language

Plan

Adult or child chooses a book, based on the pictures on the cover and the words the adult reads aloud from the title.

Which book do you want me to read to you today? Look at the picture on the cover (touch the picture), this is what it is called (adult runs his or her finger under the title). This rabbit is talking to a little girl like you. (Or other thought which connects to the child's experience.)

Do

Adult reads the book to the child, all the way through in a lively way. After the reading (or sometimes during the reading if the book is familiar), they talk about what the child is interested in and make comments about the child's own life.

What does this remind you about?

Remember when...

This ...looks like...

How do you feel about...?

Let's pretend to be ... (a man painting, a dog licking his feet...)

Reflect

Adult and child retell something from the book.

We thought this book was going to be about....We read about...

The adult shows pleasure if the child can recall one or two things, facts if it is a non-fiction book, part of the action if it is a story. The ideas the child recalls will often have some personal connection.

Adult and child decide if they will read this book again.

Read, sing and talk: Thinking about songs and books as we hear and join in

Retelling with a picture walk

Retelling with sound effects



visualize ideas in a non-picture book, keep track of the ideas, find out what new words mean, learn songs and poems

retell familiar stories and make up new stories, talk about interesting words, learn songs and poems

ask questions and make guesses about picture books, use words and phrases from books, continue to learn new songs

retell a familiar picture book in own words while looking at the pictures, use sound effects and special voices, learn new songs

point to pictures and talk about the action in a story book, join in with choruses and songs

label pictures, listen as adult reads simple picture books, make sounds to go with pictures and songs

Activity: Retelling with a picture walk

Time: about 15 minutes

Materials: picture book with simple story or with clearly presented facts

Plan

Adult or child chooses a book based on the pictures on the cover and the words the adult reads aloud from the title.

Which book do you want me to read to you today? Look at the picture on the cover (touch the picture), this is what it is called (adult runs his or her finger under the title). This rabbit is talking to a little girl like you. (Or other thought which connects to the child's experience.)

The adult reads to the child, encouraging the child to chime in with repeated parts and with ideas of what the book reminds the child about.

Do (Occasionally, please not with every book)

The adult asks the child to retell the story by taking a picture walk.

The child looks at the pictures and tells what he or she remembers about the story. If the child needs help, the adult can use questions and give hints.

Then what did ??? (a character) do? And then? How did it end?

Can you tell anything else about the tractor?

The adult might use a story line with the child and ask the child to tell what happens along the line.

1-----2-----3-----4

If it is a book of facts the child could tell two or three important things.

Reflect

Adult and child decide if they will read this book again.

Shall we read this book again another time? What did we like about it? What was not interesting?

Activity: Retelling with sound effects

People: young child and adult

Time: about 15 minutes

Materials: familiar picture book, with a story, song or chant

Plan

The child picks a favorite familiar book. The adult reads the book to the child again in a very dramatic voice asking the child to make sound effects where appropriate.

Do

The child retells the book with a picture walk, using some drama in the voices or sound effects.

The adult enjoys and appreciates

Reflect

The adult encourages the child to pick up this book and reread it to himself or herself.

Read, sing and talk: Thinking about songs and books as we hear and join in

Asking questions

Using words and phrases from the book



visualize ideas in a non-picture book, keep track of the ideas, find out what new words mean, learn songs and poems

retell familiar stories and make up new stories, talk about interesting words, learn songs and poems

ask questions and make guesses about picture books, use words and phrases from books, continue to learn new songs

retell a familiar picture book in own words while looking at the pictures, use sound effects and special voices, learn new songs

point to pictures and talk about the action in a story book, join in with choruses and songs

label pictures, listen as adult reads simple picture books, make sounds to go with pictures and songs

Activity: Asking questions

Time: 15 to 20 minutes

Materials: picture book, story or non-fiction

Plan

The adult looks at the cover of the book and starts asking questions or wondering aloud.

I wonder if this wolf is a bad wolf. Who lives in this house?

Adult encourages child to ask questions aloud.

Do

Child and adult may be able to guess the answers to the questions or they may need to read the book to answer them. Some answers can be found in the book, some answers can be found in life experiences, some questions do not have book answers.

Start with a few questions, don't overwhelm the child. If it is not tiresome for the child, questions can be asked throughout the book.

Reflect

The adult and child come up with a question at the end of the book. *What else would we like to know about mighty machines?*

I wonder if...?

How do I feel about...?

Activity: Using words and phrases from the book

Time: a few minutes

Materials: familiar book

Plan

The adult and child reread a familiar book. As they are reading the adult emphasizes and comments on some interesting ways of saying ideas.

I think it is neat when the prince says "Rapunzel, Rapunzel, Let down your hair."

Do

As the child retells after the reading, the adult shows great interest when the child uses words and phrases from the book e.g. "the mighty steam engine", "the goose that laid the golden egg".

If there is a phrase the child really likes in the story, the adult can point to it in the book and reread it when the child needs it.

Reflect

The adult tries to find times in the child's day to repeat these interesting phrases, or asks the child to repeat them when the book is read again, and again and again.

Read, sing and talk: Thinking about songs and books as we hear and join in

Retelling and changing the story

Talking about interesting words



visualize ideas in a non-picture book, keep track of the ideas, find out what new words mean, learn songs and poems

retell familiar stories and make up new stories, talk about interesting words, learn songs and poems

ask questions and make guesses about picture books, use words and phrases from books, continue to learn new songs

retell a familiar picture book in own words while looking at the pictures, use sound effects and special voices, learn new songs

point to pictures and talk about the action in a story book, join in with choruses and songs

label pictures, listen as adult reads simple picture books, make sounds to go with pictures and songs

Activity: Retelling and changing

Time: 15 to 20 minutes

Materials: picture books from a series e.g. two “Franklin books”, two “Clifford” books, two “Curious George” books

Plan

Adult reads the two books to the child at two different sessions.

Do

Adult and child look at the covers of the two books and talk about the main character in the book.

Franklin is a cute little turtle and he gets into difficulties doesn't he?

Adult makes up another little story about Franklin often using events and people the child knows.

One day Franklin went to the mall. He tried to have a ride on the toy airplane but it didn't work. He tried to push it but it didn't work. He put some pretend gas in but it didn't work. He couldn't think of anything else to do, so he ran to his Mum. What do you think happened at the end?

The adult asks the child to make up another story.

Let's pretend Franklin goes to Auntie Lina's house. What trouble could he get into there? What do you think happens then? How does the story end?

Reflect

The child decides which story he or she likes and may want to act it out with a toy, or draw a picture about it or tell it again.

Activity: Talking about interesting words

Time: 15 to 20 minutes

Materials: picture book

Plan

The adult reads a familiar book to the child.

Do

When the adult comes to a word he or she thinks might be unfamiliar to the child, the adult reads to the end of the sentence or page, then stops and asks the child to tell what the word means.

“It's time for bed little foal, little foal,

I'll whisper a secret but don't tell a soul.”

Foal? What is a foal? Yes it's the little horse in the picture.

Soul? What is “Don't tell a soul?” It means don't tell anybody at all.

Reflect

The adult and child reread the book many times and find new words to talk about. Reading a book several times leads to more word learning than reading several books once each. The adult is delighted when the child says “What does that word mean?”

Read, sing and talk: Thinking about songs and books as we hear and join in

Making pictures in your head

Finding out about interesting words



visualize ideas in a non-picture book, keep track of the ideas, find out what new words mean, learn songs and poems

retell familiar stories and make up new stories, talk about interesting words, learn songs and poems

ask questions and make guesses about picture books, use words and phrases from books, continue to learn new songs

retell a familiar picture book in own words while looking at the pictures, use sound effects and special voices, learn new songs

point to pictures and talk about the action in a story book, join in with choruses and songs

label pictures, listen as adult reads simple picture books, make sounds to go with pictures and songs

Activity: Making pictures in your head

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: chapter book with very few pictures

Plan

Child chooses a chapter book for the adult to read aloud. Child guesses from the title and cover and opening sentence what the book is going to be about.

I wonder if...

Do

As the adult is reading, he or she stops every once in a while, especially after a description, and asks the child if he or she has pictured part of the book.

Do you have a picture of the dog in your head? What does your dog look like?

The adult reads a little more and asks the child if the picture is changing.

Can you see in your head what the dog is doing now? How loudly is he barking? How fast is he running? Can you smell the chicken dinner?

Reflect

The adult and child stop at the end of a chapter and rethink what happened in the chapter.

Make the chapter into a movie in your head. What happened?

The next time the adult prepares to read another chapter, the adult and child recall in a few words what happened in the previous reading.

Activity: Finding out about interesting words

Time: a few minutes while reading

Materials: familiar book

Plan and Do

The adult reads the book aloud, pausing at unfamiliar words, and asking the child what the words mean. If the child does not know, the adult reads on a little way to see if the word is explained in the text, then asks the child to retell.

I'm going to read on to see if "moccasin" is explained in the book.

See here it says "a soft leather shoe". Let's check the picture.

Or Let's check the glossary or dictionary.

Or I'll just tell you.

Or I don't know. Let's see if we'll hear this word later.

The adult encourages the child to ask, "What does that word mean?"

Reflect

After the reading is finished the adult and child recall several words they talked about.



Learning how books work (pages, print, which direction to go)

Watching adults read

Playing with pages

explore the use of voice and punctuation (question marks, quotation marks and lettering)	<p><u>Activity: Watching adults read</u></p> <p>Time: a few seconds or minutes in the day</p> <p>Materials: adults' reading materials</p> <p>Plan</p> <p>Child sits on adult's lap and shows a little curiosity. Adult shows the child whatever the adult is reading (book, magazine, bill, catalogue, recipe, letter, email)</p> <p><i>I am reading abecause I want to find out.....</i></p>
explore periods	<p>Do</p> <p>Adult reads a little bit out loud and points to where he or she is reading.</p> <p><i>See there it says....</i></p>
identify a word, identify letters	<p>Reflect</p> <p>This occurs very quickly before the child moves on to something else.</p>
find print on a page and follow the direction of print	<p><u>Activity: Playing with pages</u></p> <p>Materials: a familiar book, often a cloth book or a board book</p> <p>(Familiar book is one that the adult has read to the child before, often many times, a book the child enjoys)</p> <p>Time: many times over the weeks</p> <p>Plan</p> <p>Adult and child sit close together (or child sits on adult's lap) and get out the familiar book to read again.</p> <p><i>You chose this book for me to read to you, or, I know you love it when I read this book to you. Where do we start reading the book?</i></p>
point, talk about the book, identify parts of a book	<p>Do</p> <p>Adult and child read the pictures.</p> <p><i>What do you see in the picture?</i></p> <p>Adult reads the text. Adult turns the pages in order. Child is invited to turn the pages</p>
<u>listen to adults reading and watch them, feel a book and play with it</u>	<p>Reflect</p> <p>Adult hands the book to the child. Adult shows pleasure when the child turns pages with care.</p> <p>Children also play with books as toys e.g. balance them, stack them, turn them over and sit on them and even chew on them. This is also how the child discovers the physical properties of books.</p>



Learning how books work (pages, print, which direction to go)

Handling the pages, noticing print and pictures

explore the use of voice and punctuation (question marks, quotation marks and lettering)	<p><u>Activity: Handling the pages, noticing pictures and print</u></p>
explore periods	<p>Time: a few minutes</p>
identify a word, identify letters	<p>Materials: a familiar book that is easy to handle e.g. a board book or one with thick paper pages</p>
find print on a page and follow the direction of print	<p>Plan</p>
<u>point, talk about the book, identify parts of a book</u>	<p>Adult asks the child to choose a favorite book. Adult and child look at the cover of a book and talk about what it is about.</p>
listen to adults reading and watch them, feel a book and play with it	<p><i>Look at the cover (point at the cover). Do you remember what it is about?</i></p>
	<p>Child uses pictures as a reminder of what it is about. <i>I'll read the title (point to the title) Can you remember anything else about it?</i></p>
	<p><i>The author is the person who wrote the book. The author's name is... (point to the author's name).</i></p>
	<p>Do</p>
	<p>Adult reads the book to the child, pointing to the pages. The focus as always is enjoying the book but the adult asks occasional questions about page order.</p>
	<p><i>Where do I start to read (top of left hand page)? Where do I read now (right hand page)?</i></p>
	<p>Adult and child talk about the book.</p>
	<p>After many experiences pointing to the pages, it is time to move on to looking at the print. Children often think the meaning is in the pictures, and need to notice print.</p>
	<p>Adult reads a book to the child and helps the child notice the print.</p>
	<p><i>I'm reading these words here.</i></p>
	<p>Adult reads and runs finger under the print.</p>
	<p><i>This is where the words are.</i></p>
	<p>Reflect</p>
	<p>Adult asks the child's help occasionally as they read books.</p>
	<p><i>Where do I start to read? Point to the words.</i></p>
	<p><i>I finished that page. Where do I go now?</i></p>

Learning how books work (pages, print, which direction to go)

Following print on a page



explore the use of voice and punctuation (question marks, quotation marks and lettering)	Activity: Following print on a page
explore periods	Time: a few minutes
identify a word, identify letters	Materials: a familiar book with two or more lines of print on a page
<u>find print on a page and follow the direction of print</u>	Plan Child chooses a familiar book for the adult to read. Adult suggests they notice the print. <i>Point to the title. I'll run my finger under it while I read it.</i> Adult runs a finger under it from left to right.
point, talk about the book, identify parts of a book	Do Child listens and chimes in as the adult reads. When it does not interfere with the child's enjoyment, on several pages the adult draws the child's attention to the print by running a finger smoothly under the print while reading. Adult must be sure to move left to right, then do the "return sweep" from left to right on the next line, then the return sweep again moving smoothly left to right on the next line. After showing the child how to do this in several books, the adult takes the child's hand and gently guides him or her to run a finger smoothly under the print as the adult reads. After several times guiding the child, the adult asks him or her to point to the directionality of the print independently. <i>Please help me read. You point while I read. Run your finger under the words.</i>
listen to adults reading and watch them, feel a book and play with it	Reflect If the adult wants to know if the child knows how to move along the print, the adult can ask the child to show in another book. <i>Where do I start to read?</i> Top left hand corner. <i>Where do I go then?</i> Move along the line left to right. <i>Where do I go then?</i> Down one line on the left hand side. Adult and child may do this activity with other reading materials in the home or community e.g. read signs, read toy instructions etc.

Learning how books work (pages, print, which direction to go)

What is a word? What is a letter?



<p>explore the use of voice and punctuation (question marks, quotation marks and lettering)</p>	<p><u>Activity: What is a word?</u> Time: a few minutes Materials: a familiar book Plan Child chooses a familiar book for the adult to read aloud Adult plans to show the child some words.</p>
<p>explore periods</p>	<p>Do As the adult reads, he or she notices a word which might be interesting for the child, e.g. child's name, favorite toy. The adult points to that word. Adult frames the word by putting two small pieces of blank paper, one on each side of the word, or putting the first finger of each hand on either side of the word (without covering any of it from the child's sight). <i>My fingers are "hugging" this word.</i> <i>Now you can just see the word "Gabrielle."</i></p>
<p><u>identify a word,</u> <u>identify letters</u></p>	<p>Do this many times with many different words. Occasionally when a story is dramatic, the adult slows the reading right down and points a finger under each word as it is read. <i>"Grandma, what big eyes you have!"</i> <i>"All the better to see you with, my dear."</i></p>
<p>find print on a page and follow the direction of print</p>	<p><u>Reflect</u> The child may separate a word from all the other print by putting his or her forefingers one on each side of the word. This takes practice so the child develops the control to put the fingers down without covering up any part of the word. Ask the child to find separate words in other reading materials e.g. signs. The child may occasionally point to each word in a dramatic story. <i>The father bear said, "Who's been eating my porridge?"</i> This is matching spoken to printed words.</p>
<p>point, talk about the book, identify parts of a book</p>	
<p>listen to adults reading and watch them, feel a book and play with it</p>	<p><u>Activity: What is a letter?</u> As above, but frame a letter the child can name. As the child learns more letter names, play at matching and identifying capital and lower case letters in books.</p>

Learning how books work (pages, print, which direction to go)

Noticing periods and sentences



explore the use of voice and punctuation (question marks, quotation marks and lettering)

explore periods

identify a word, identify letters

find print on a page and follow the direction of print

point, talk about the book, identify parts of a book

listen to adults reading and watch them, feel a book and play with it

Activity: Noticing periods and sentences

People: Child who is beginning to read, adult

Time: a few minutes

Materials: beginning books, homemade or published, which the child can read.

Plan

As the adult reads a book to the child, the adult points out periods, and how they make the voice stop, so the book makes sense.

Do

Child chooses to reread a familiar book.

After the child has read a page, the adult comments on how well he or she used the period.

I noticed your voice stopped at the period at the end of this sentence. That is what good readers do. They always notice periods at the end of sentences. Please point to the period.

Reflect

Adult praises child's use of periods in other books and in his or her own writing.

As the child reads new books, the adult draws his or her attention to periods as an aid to making sense of the reading.

Learning how books work (pages, print, which direction to go)

Noticing question marks, quotation marks and lettering styles



explore the use of voice and punctuation (question marks, quotation marks and lettering)

explore periods

identify a word,
identify letters

find print on a page
and follow the
direction of print

point, talk about the
book, identify parts
of a book

listen to adults
reading and watch
them,
feel a book and play
with it

Activity: Noticing question marks, quotation marks and lettering

People: Child who is beginning to read, adult

Time: a few minutes

Materials: beginning books, homemade or published, which the child can read.

Plan

As the adult reads a book to the child, the adult points out question marks at the end of sentences and reads with a questioning voice.

Do

Child chooses to reread a familiar book.

After the child has read a page, the adult comments on how well he or she used question marks.

I noticed your voice went up when you saw the question mark at the end of the question sentence. It sounded just like asking a question. That's what good readers do. Please point to the question mark.

Reflect

Adult praises child's use of question marks in other books and in his or her own writing.

Activity: Noticing quotation marks for speech around sentences

As above, but the adult catches the child using characters' voices while reading familiar books.

You made your voice sound just like the Billy Goat Gruff. I think you noticed the quotation marks that show where he was speaking.

Activity: Lettering (fonts)

As above, but the adult demonstrates how different lettering styles make a difference to the way a book is read e.g. bold print means emphasis and drama.

Collect and connect words and letters: Using sounds, letters and words in the search for meaning



Noticing sounds all around

continue to learn combinations of letters for reading and writing	<p><u>Activity: Noticing sounds all around</u> Time: a few minutes several times a day when the child is interested Materials: sounds the adult or child can make with their voices</p>
match chunks of words with their sounds e.g. rhymes	<p><u>Plan</u> Adult holds the child and imitates the sound of something in the environment e.g. a bus passing, the washing machine going, a baby crying. <i>Listen to the sound of the baby...Waa, Waa, Waa. You say it too.</i> Adult and child plan to make some good noises. <i>Let's read the book about Thomas the tank engine and make his noises...Let's sing Old Macdonald had a farm and make the noises.</i></p>
match beginning sounds with letters	<p><u>Do</u> Adult and child have a fun time exaggerating the sounds in the book or song. <i>What did the cow say? MOOoooOOO.</i></p>
recognize and point out letters in familiar names and label	<p>Child watches how the adult holds her mouth when making the sound. Child may feel the sound as the adult is making it by touching the adult's face or chest, or having the adult breathe the sound into the child's skin like a teasing game. <i>Feel my mouth when I say sssssss like a snake. Let's see if it tickles when I say sss like a snake into the palm of your hand.</i></p>
do some sound matching with rhymes and beginning sounds	<p><u>Reflect</u> When the child makes interesting noises, the adult imitates them; when they hear other interesting noises together they enjoy imitating them. <i>Let's make a little popping noise like your fish when it is feeding.</i> <i>You heard the bulldozer. What sound does it make?</i></p>
<p><u>play with sounds in words and songs with an adult</u></p>	

Collect and connect words and letters: Using sounds, letters and words in the search for meaning

Silly songs for rhyme

I spy for sounds



continue to learn combinations of letters for reading and writing	<p>Activity: Silly songs for rhymes Time: a few minutes in the day when the house is quiet Materials: Knowledge of own name and a rhyming song e.g.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">A-hunting we will go, a-hunting we will go, We'll catch a fox and put him in a box And then we'll let him go. A-hunting we will go, a-hunting we will go, Well catch a whale and put him in a pail And then we'll let him go.</p> <p>Plan Adult and child learn the song. Adult and child decide to change the song. <i>Let's put the names into the song.</i></p>
match chunks of words with their sounds e.g. rhymes	<p>Do Adult and child sing the song with familiar names <i>A-hunting we will go, a-hunting we will go We'll catch a Ben and put him in a pen (or fen, hen, ren ten etc) And then we'll let him go.</i> Sense does not matter; silly rhyme matters.</p> <p>Reflect Adult and child thoughtfully repeat the rhyming words slowly with an emphasis on the last sounds. <i>Ben, hen</i></p>
match beginning sounds with letters	<p>Activity: I spy for sounds Time: a few minutes in the day Materials: knowledge of own name and lots of names</p> <p>Plan Adult and child decide to play an "I spy for sounds" game. <i>Let's find things that start like your name. I spy some thing that begins like Ben. BBBBBen. I can see your ball.</i></p> <p>Do Adult involves child as much as possible in finding other things that begin like child's name, then like other familiar names. <i>I'm putting a car and a doll and Barney on the table. I spy something that begins like BBBBen.</i></p> <p>Reflect Adult and child quietly and softly say the two words lightly emphasizing the beginning sound. <i>Ben, Barney or Janet, jello</i></p>
recognize and point out letters in familiar names and label	
<u>do some sound matching with rhymes and beginning sounds</u>	
play with sounds in words and songs with an adult	

Collect and connect words and letters: Using sounds, letters and words in the search for meaning

Learning the alphabet, Using the alphabet chart

Finding letters in books



continue to learn combinations of letters for reading and writing	<p>Activity: Learning the alphabet Time: a few minutes Materials: child's name written on slip of paper, sets of alphabet letters in capitals and lower case (each letter on a separate card) or magnetic letters, Plan Adult and child plan to talk playfully about letters. <i>Let's say the letters in your name. I'll write them on your back. You find your first letter on this cereal box. Let's sing the alphabet song</i> <i>... abcdefg, hijklmnop, qrs, tuv, wx, y and z,</i> <i>Now I know my ABCs, next time won't you sing with me?</i> Do Adult and child name and match some capital and lower case letters. Work with a few letters at a time. <i>Let's play with some letters in your name. Here is a letter B for Ben (show B). We have the letter b that looks like this too (show b). If I mix them up, can you put them side by side? (Adult turns them around on the table or floor then helps the child match them, making sure they are the right way up.)</i> <i>Let's try with the E and e. Mix them up and match them.</i> Reflect Adult and child quietly and thoughtfully say the names of the matched letters. <i>I can see a capital B and lowercase b. I can see a capital E and a lower case e. I can see a capital N and a lower case n.</i></p>
match chunks of words with their sounds e.g. rhymes	
match beginning sounds with letters	
<p><u>recognize and point out letters in familiar names and labels</u></p>	<p>Activity: Using the alphabet chart Time: a few minutes Materials, a homemade or bought chart with all the letters of the alphabet Plan Adult and child go to the chart and look at the letters. Do Child points to letters and says the ones he knows. Adult teaches another letter and the picture which goes with it. Reflect Adult and child stick words beginning with those letters on the chart. Here is a B and here is your name, Ben. Eventually add or fill in words or pictures for all letters.</p>
do some sound matching with rhymes and beginning sounds	<p>Activity: Finding letters in books Time: a few minutes after reading Materials: a familiar book Plan After reading and enjoying a book the adult and child plan to do a letter search. Do Adult and child look through the book naming letters. Reflect Adult and child look for letters in many places: On vertical and horizontal surfaces, on signs and objects in the house and the stores, on the computer and on television. They look for big letters and little letters, letters in different fonts and letters in different colors.</p>
play with sounds in words and songs with an adult	

Collect and connect words and letters: Using sounds, letters and words in the search for meaning

Reading beginning sounds and letters

Writing beginning sounds and letters



continue to learn combinations of letters for reading and writing	<p>Activity: <u>Reading beginning sounds and letters</u> Time: Few minutes, many sessions Materials: Familiar signs, familiar books, blank book to make an alphabet book (letter written at the top of each page)</p>
match chunks of words with their sounds e.g. rhymes	<p>Plan Adult and child get words they know from the word collection box. <i>Let's see if we can find things which begin like your name (or the name of a favorite toy.) I'll write the word. What is the first letter?</i></p>
<u>match beginning sounds with letters</u>	<p>Do Adult writes the word again on the correct page of the alphabet book and child draws a little picture to remind them of the word. Adult and child come up with one or two other words with the same first letter. Adult writes them further down the page and child draws a little picture for each of them. <i>Let's think of words which start like BBen. How about bbball? I'll write it here. You are good at drawing the picture..... let's read what we have written on the page. ...Ben, ball...Let's do another. How about bbbb.... (Child makes a suggestion or adult points to an object such as a boat).</i></p> <p>Reflect Adult and child read the page thoughtfully saying the words with the emphasis on the beginning sound. <i>BBen, BBall, BBoat.</i></p>
recognize and point out letters in familiar names and label	<p>Activity: <u>Writing beginning sounds and letters</u> Time: Few minutes, many sessions Materials: pencils (crayons, pens, markers) and sheets of paper (scraps, old envelopes, little stapled books)</p>
do some sound matching with rhymes and beginning sounds	<p>Plan Adult and child plan to do some writing. <i>What message shall we write today? We could write a list for shopping, or a note to your babysitter about lunch, or a sign for the fridge or something that granny would like. You tell me your message.</i> Adult repeats and remembers a SHORT message the child would like to write. E.g. I love my uncle Steve.</p>
play with sounds in words and songs with an adult	<p>Do Child says the words slowly and writes the letters he or she can match to the sounds. The child shares the pencil with the adult who writes the other letters and words Typically children may write one sound for each word or each syllable. I l m l s might be I (I) l (love) m (my) l (uncle) s (Steve).</p> <p>Reflect Adult and child read over the message emphasizing the sounds as they say the whole words.</p>



Collect and connect words and letters: Using sounds, letters and words in the search for meaning

Rhyming word families for reading, Saying words slowly for writing, Sharing the pencil and writing

continue to learn combinations of letters for reading and writing	<p>Activity: Rhyming word families (reading) Time: few minutes Materials: paper and pencils (or crayons or markers), magnetic letters Plan After reading a rhyming book or saying a rhyming song, adult and child decide to play a rhyming reading game. <i>Let's see if we can find all the rhyming words for Ben. Here is the word "Ben".</i> Do Adult writes several rhyming words suggested by the child. Ben, hen, men, pen. They read them together. Reflect Adult makes the word Ben with magnetic letters and shows the child how to remove the first sound and put another one. <i>Ben, remove the first letter and put a t. It is ten. You try to make it Ben again.</i></p>
<u>match chunks of words with their sounds e.g. rhymes</u>	<p>Activity: Saying words slowly for writing Time: few minutes Materials: Paper for writing, pencil (or crayon or marker), linking cubes Plan Adult and child play with the sounds in a word. <i>Let's say the word cat together so slowly that we can hear all the sounds.</i> Do Adult says the word slowly and clearly and touches linking cubes left to right. c-a-t.. Adult says the word again, child touches the linking cubes. Reflect Child says the word and touches the boxes. Do this with many other words. (A-nn is two sounds, b-oa-t is three sounds, t-r-a-c-t-or is six sounds and probably too long for young children, S-ea-n is 3 sounds, c-o-me is three sounds, p-ar-t-y is four sounds.) Do this when the adult is writing for the child or when the adult is doing some real-life writing.</p>
match beginning sounds with letters	<p>Activity: Sharing the pencil and writing People: child and adult Materials: blank paper and pencil Time: several minutes Plan As the child and adult are writing a message together, the child says the word slowly to hear the sounds are in it. <i>I'm going to write park. P-ar-k.</i> Do Adult and child share the pencil. Child writes the sounds he or she knows. <i>I know it is a p like Paul at the beginning. P-ar-k. I can hear a k sound. Is it a c or a k? It's at the end.</i> Adult writes the letters the child does not know as the child watches. <i>I'll write ar for you.</i> Reflect Child reads the word in his or her message and may practice it a couple of times to help with remembering it.</p>
recognize and point out letters in familiar names and label	
do some sound matching with rhymes and beginning sounds	
play with sounds in words and songs with an adult	

Collect and connect words and letters: Using sounds, letters and words in the search for meaning

Reading root words Sorting and spelling



continue to learn combinations of letters for reading and writing

match chunks of words with their sounds e.g. rhymes

match beginning sounds with letters

recognize and point out letters in familiar names and label

do some sound matching with rhymes and beginning sounds

play with sounds in words and songs with an adult

Activity: Reading root words

Time: a few minutes

Material: a familiar book, blank slips of paper, pencil, action words the child can read written on cards e.g. jump, read, love, play, eat

Plan

Child is in the mood to play with words. Adult suggests making long words out of little ones. Adult makes the endings “ing”, “ed” and “s” close to the left hand side of cards.

Do

Child chooses an action word. Adult adds an ending and reads the combined word. Child reads the word.

Let's take “read” and add “s”. What do we have? “read-s, reads.”

Do the same with ing and ed. Some words will need extra letters e.g. sitting. Adult adds them.

Reflect

As adult and child read together they notice words with these endings. Adult may read a sentence with “sitting” in it and leave the “ing” part for the child to say.

There are many other chunks of words which can be noticed and which are described well in school spelling series books e.g. “-tion”, “un-“

Activity: Sorting and spelling

Time: ten minutes

Materials: spelling list from a school speller, slips of paper, pencils

Plan

Child and adult decide to learn to spell the words.

Do

The child or adult writes each word on a separate piece of paper and mixes them up on a smooth surface. Child reads the words one at a time then puts words in groups (classifies) according to a rule. The child says what the rule is. All rules which link more than one word are good rules. The child finds as many rules as possible. E.g. From these words “say, and, day, can, come, had” possible rules are: say and day have the rhyming part “ay”; can, come start with the same letter; and, can have the little word an in them; had, and have a letter d at the end.

Reflect

Child writes the groups of words as fluently as possible when the adult dictates. He or she is encouraged to check for correct spelling at any time.

Children are expected to use the words correctly in their writing.

Write it down: Starting to put everything together and write

Playing at writing

Developing hand strength in grasping



write for many purposes, write more correctly and reread their own writing

write own message intentionally in their own way showing interest in sounds and letters

show interest in what and how adults are writing, try their own early writing

notice different reasons for writing and kinds of writing, dictate and read their dictated messages

start to notice adults doing some writing and imitate writing acts

scribble; touch and talk about the scribbles

Activity: Developing hand strength in grasping

Time: a few satisfying seconds many times throughout the day

Materials: different materials the child wants to grasp around the home e.g. dry cereal, small toys, small writing tools, rattle.

Plan

As child plays, the adult encourages the child to be as independent as possible in picking up the things he or she wants.

You want a snack. Have some Cheerios.

Adult spreads the cheerios out on a tray so the child will pick up one at a time.

Do

Adult encourages the child to pick up writing tools and make marks on a paper.

Reflect

The adult shows satisfaction when the child grasps something firmly and manipulates it.

You did a good job of putting the paper in the garbage.

Activity: Playing at writing

Time: a few satisfying seconds

Materials: any blank scrap paper, large nontoxic crayon

Plan

Adult does some writing while the child is sitting close or on the lap.

I'm writing a birthday card for Jacob.

Adult encourages the child to pick up a pencil or other writing implement and make marks on a paper. Adult gently guides the writing tool, if necessary, to see that it does not go into the child's mouth or poke into the child's eyes.

Do

Child makes marks on the paper, finding out the pressure needed.

The adult and child touch the marks and talk about them.

Tell me what this is? Oh, its about a little dog.

Reflect

After the adult and child read a book together, they can also look at the child's writing and drawing marks and talk about them as if they were another book.

I remember you did this lovely sun.

The scribble writing can be taped on toys etc, if the child says the scribble is a label about something.

Write it down: Starting to put everything together and write



Inventing writing

Controlling the pencil

write for many purposes, write more correctly and reread their own writing

write own message intentionally in their own way showing interest in sounds and letters

show interest in what and how adults are writing, try their own early writing

notice different reasons for writing and kinds of writing, dictate and read their dictated messages

start to notice adults doing some writing and imitate writing acts

scribble; touch and talk about the scribbles

Activity: Inventing writing

Time: about ten minutes

Materials: blank paper scraps, writing tools e.g. crayon

Plan

The adult shows the child some writing he or she is doing e.g. a recipe or a note. The adult comments on how he or she is writing.

I'm going to put a B like your name in the word bacon. We mustn't forget the bacon at the grocery store.

The adult asks the child if he or she would like to "do some writing."

Do

The adult encourages the child to make marks on the paper which are like writing and to read these marks as if they were also a recipe or a note.

Oh lovely, this is a good note. What does it say?

The adult may comment on parts of the note which look like mature writing.

I see your writing is going across the page in lines. You have a letter here which looks just like an "f". You have some marks here which are like a word, see lots of little marks all together with white space around them.

As the child sees many words in the home and sees his or her name written many times, the child will start to use more letter-like marks in writing and will start to copy favorite words.

Reflect

As the child becomes more aware of written letters through reading and through word work, his or her writing will start to show more letters.

Encourage the child to do this playful writing often. It strengthens small muscles, it is enjoyable, it gives a forum for experimenting with new letter learning and develops an "I can write attitude".

Activity: Controlling the pencil, making letters

Time: a few minutes, quite often over a few weeks

Materials: blank paper and a writing tool

Plan

Adult invites the child to "do some writing".

Do

As the child scribbles, the adult gently puts his or her hand over the child's and encourages the child to make a variety of movements, circular clockwise and anti-clockwise, straight lines from side to side and up and down.

Reflect

Child and adult touch the marks on the paper and comment on them.

That is a lovely circle pattern; it looks a bit like the G at the beginning of your name. That is a great bunch of lines.

Write it down: Starting to put everything together and write



Dictating little books

Holding the pencil properly

write for many purposes, write more correctly and reread their own writing

write own message intentionally in their own way showing interest in sounds and letters

show interest in what and how adults are writing, try their own early writing

notice different reasons for writing and kinds of writing, dictate and read their dictated messages

start to notice adults doing some writing and imitate writing acts

scribble; touch and talk about the scribbles

Activity: Dictating little books

Time: about ten minutes

Materials: 2-4 pieces of paper stapled or taped together

Plan

The adult does some of his or her own writing (please use printing) in front of the child e.g. shopping list, note to an older child. The adult talks about what they are doing.

I am writing the names of all the things we need at the grocery store so we won't forget anything. See I'm putting "Cheerios" c, h, e, e, r, i, o, s it says cheerios. We'll read it again on the box and in the store.

Adult asks the child if he or she would like their own little book about going to the store.

Do

Adult prints the first page of the book.

Let's write "Ben is going to the store". I'll draw the picture for you too. What shall we put on the next page? I'll write what you said.

"Ben wants Cheerios." What shall we write on the last page?

The adult accepts anything the child says and insist that the child watches. The adult invites the child to add a picture, or to join in writing.

Reflect

Adult and child reread the book together many times over several days, the adult comments on the way the child drew the pictures.

Pages can be added to the book anytime, at the end at the beginning or anywhere in the middle by tearing the book apart and re-stapling it.

Many, many books can be made at the child's dictation with the adult choosing very short sentences from what the child says.

Activity: Holding the pencil properly

People: young child, perhaps three years old, and adult

Time: a few seconds

Materials: blank paper and a pencil

Plan

This is the adult's plan. It is to foster a comfortable pencil grip which the child will use to write efficiently for years and years.

Do

Gently place the child's fingers correctly round the pencil as he or she is doing some writing. The pencil is held between the thumb and fore-finger with the knuckle of the second finger underneath for support.

The pencil rests in the "hammock" between the thumb and first finger with the end pointing over the shoulder. For lefties the paper is turned so the left hand does not cover the writing and the pencil grip remains relaxed.

Reflect

The adult may have to help the child to do this many, many times until the pencil grip is established.

Write it down: Starting to put everything together and write



Sharing the pencil

Forming letters in names

write for many purposes, write more correctly and reread their own writing

write own message intentionally in their own way showing interest in sounds and letters

show interest in what and how adults are writing, try their own early writing

notice different reasons for writing and kinds of writing, dictate and read their dictated messages

start to notice adults doing some writing and imitate writing acts

scribble; touch and talk about the scribbles

Activity: Sharing the pencil

Time: about 15 minutes

Materials: Blank paper sheets or several stapled sheets and pencil

Plan

The adult invites the child to do some writing or the child wants to do some writing. The child at this stage is more aware of correct forms of letters.

Together the adult and child decide what the message will be.

What shall we write in a note to your dad today?That's a lot of things to tell him. What shall we write first? "Dear Dad..."

Do

The child and adult write together. The child prints what he or she can and the adult prints the rest.

I'll start. I'll write Dear. Can you write "dad"? The next word is "we" for "we are going to the park". Can you write any of it? I'll write the "w". Can you do the 'e' part?

At first the adult may have to print most of the note, but gradually encourages the child to take over more and more. It will not be completely accurate.

Reflect

The child and the adult read over the message and point with pleasure to the writing done by the child many times. The child may want to draw a picture.

Activity: Forming the letters in names

Time: a few minutes

Materials: blank paper and writing tools (crayons, paint, chalk etc)

Plan

The adult tells the child that he or she is going to learn how to write his or her name the way children do in school. The adult has previously checked how to form the capital letter at the beginning of the name and the lower case letters in ways which lead to efficient printing in later life. (See appendix 6)

Do

The adult shows the child how to make a letter, guides the child by placing adult's hand gently over the child's hand, and praises independent formation of the letter. Occasionally the adult may ask the child to copy over a letter the adult has already written.

It will take many short sessions to learn all the letters in the name correctly.

Reflect

The child and adult show pleasure in the child's accomplishment. The child shows off to relatives and friends. The child traces over popular letters with a pencil or a finger, makes the letters in soap suds or sand.

Write it down: Starting to put everything together and write



Writing own messages, hearing the sounds Rainbow letters, printing all letters correctly

write for many purposes, write more correctly and reread their own writing

write own message intentionally in their own way showing interest in sounds and letters

show interest in what and how adults are writing, try their own early writing

notice different reasons for writing and kinds of writing, dictate and read their dictated messages

start to notice adults doing some writing and imitate writing acts

scribble; touch and talk about the scribbles

Activity: Writing own messages, hearing the sounds

Time: about 15 minutes

Materials: blank paper and pencil

Plan

The child wants the adult's help to write something, a note, a sign, a letter. Adult asks child to tell what he or she is going to write and adult remembers the first sentence.

Do

The child writes as independently as possible, printing all the words in the sentence that he or she knows. If the child does not know how to write a word the adult helps by:

- Asking the child to say the word very slowly so all the sounds can be heard. *Say it slowly and write down what you hear.*
- Printing the letters the child has missed
- Writing a word on a scrap of paper and asking the child to write the newly completed word in his or her message.
- Helping the child reread the message to focus on the next word.

Reflect

The child and adult reread the whole message and show it to someone else. The child can be very proud of all the hard work which went into writing the message. The child may want to draw a picture.

Activity: Rainbow letters, printing letters correctly

Time: a few minutes over many, many days

Materials: blank paper and crayons

Plan

The adult plans to teach the child how to form all the letters in a sequence which helps the child write them most efficiently (see appendix 6).

Do

Adult demonstrates the letter written quite large. Child traces adult's letter on the page several times with different colored crayons.

You have a rainbow of letter a. You did a good job writing them.

Reflect

Find the same letters in books, alphabet books and alphabet charts.

Write it down: Starting to put everything together and write



Writing, writing, writing for many reasons

Writing on lines

write for many purposes, write more correctly and reread their own writing

write own message intentionally in their own way showing interest in sounds and letters

show interest in what and how adults are writing, try their own early writing

notice different reasons for writing and kinds of writing, dictate and read their dictated messages

start to notice adults doing some writing and imitate writing acts

scribble; touch and talk about the scribbles

Activity: Writing, writing, writing for many reasons

Time: up to 30 minutes

Materials: paper (may be lined or unlined) and pencil

Plan

The adult continues to show the child examples of the adult's own writing, or suggests reasons for writing and also audiences the child might write for.

Please write a list of the things we have to do before we go on our trip. Mommy will need to check things off on a list.

Do

The child writes as independently and fluently as possible; the child comes up with ideas and sentences. The adult helps with spelling tricky words or teaching the child how to put things in correct forms e.g. list, letter form.

Reflect

The child rereads the writing to see if it makes sense or if something needs to be added. The child may pick out a word to edit and spell more correctly. Some children love writing long stories; some children write lots of little books called "Everything about dogs (or dinosaurs, or cars)"; some children really love writing diaries of what they have done; some children continue to need lots of encouragement and real reasons to do any writing such as birthday cards and letters to Santa. Some children write about facts.

Activity: Writing on lines

Time: a few minutes

Materials: lined paper and pencil

Plan

The adult plans to teach the child to write on lines after the child knows about letter formation and has developed the muscles to write small letters. This is a late development for boys especially.

Let's make your writing neat by writing on lines.

Do

Adults demonstrate to children how to write on lines using tall letters, short letters and letters which hang below the line.

- Fold a piece of paper so it has two widely spaced horizontal lines. Practice on these many times.
- Choose special paper which has widely spaced lines. Practice on these many times.
- Choose paper which has ordinary spacing on lines and teach the child to write on every other line by putting a little dot where the child has to start each time.

Reflect

The child can pick out his most beautiful printing to show to a valued family member.

Ready, set, read: Starting to put everything together and read joyfully and independently

Pick a book, point to pictures



read beginning books independently

read some sentences fluently and attempt to problem-solve unfamiliar words

read short sentences with familiar words

read some words and know a few letters

read some names, turn pages and look at the print

choose from a variety of books, point to pictures and name them

Activity: Pick a book, point to pictures

Time: a few minutes, quiet environment, when a child is interested, several times a day

Materials: colorful, simple picture books including board books, plastic books, touch and feel books and parent's magazines

Plan

The adult gets a new book for the child or child chooses a favorite familiar book. As the child is sitting in the adult's lap, the adult opens the book and reads the book to the child.

Do

As the adult reads he or she points under a picture and names it distinctly.

Baby. Here is a baby like you. Baby.

Choosing pictures the child is interested in, the adult names more of them.

Nissan, Chevrolet, Ford.

Reflect

The adult and small child play the naming game.

Show the ball. Ball.

You find the baby. Baby.

The adult guides the child's hand to touch the picture.

Ready, set, read: Starting to put everything together and read

Handling the pages, noticing print and pictures



read beginning books independently	<p><u>Activity: Handling the pages, noticing pictures and print</u></p>
read some sentences fluently and attempt to problem-solve unfamiliar words	<p>Time: a few minutes</p>
read short sentences with familiar words	<p>Materials: a familiar book that is easy to handle e.g. a board book or one with thick paper pages</p>
read some words and know a few letters	<p>Plan</p>
<p><u>read some names, turn pages and look at the print</u></p>	<p>Adult asks the child to choose a favorite book. Adult and child look at the cover of a book and talk about what it is about.</p>
choose from a variety of books, point to pictures and name them	<p><i>Look at the cover (point at the cover). Do you remember what it is about?</i></p>
	<p>Child uses pictures to remind him or her what it is about. <i>I'll read the title (point to the title) Can you remember anything else about the book?</i></p>
	<p><i>The author (the person who wrote the book) is called... (point to the author's name).</i></p>
	<p>Do</p>
	<p>Adult reads the book to the child, pointing to the pages. The focus as always is enjoying the book but the adult asks occasional questions about page order.</p>
	<p><i>Where do I start to read (left hand page)? Where do I read now (right hand page)?</i></p>
	<p>Adult and child talk about the book.</p>
	<p>After many experiences pointing to the pages it is time to move on to looking at the print.</p>
	<p>Adult reads a book to the child and helps the child notice the print.</p>
	<p><i>I'm reading these words here.</i></p>
	<p>Adult reads and runs finger under the print.</p>
	<p><i>This is what the words are.</i></p>
	<p>Reflect</p>
	<p>Adult asks the child's help occasionally as they read books together.</p>
	<p><i>Where do I start to read? Point to the words.</i></p>
	<p><i>I finished that page. Where do I go now?</i></p>

Ready, set, read: Starting to put everything together and read

Making word and name tags

Making pattern books



read beginning books independently	<p>Activity: Making name and word tags Time: about five minutes at a time Materials: slips of paper, tape, markers or dark pencils in a place the child can reach, empty box for collecting the child's words</p> <p>Plan The adult sits beside the child and talks about writing a name tag for the child. <i>Let's write your name (or another important word) so that we know...we can remember... daddy will see ...?</i></p>
read some sentences fluently and attempt to problem-solve unfamiliar words	<p>Do The adult writes the child's name (or another label word), commenting all the time. <i>I'm starting here and I'm going to write your name. I'll put the first letter. It's an O. It's round and tall. The next letter is a...Now I have finished and I'm going to read the word. It is... the word says ...</i> Sometimes the adult could say: <i>I can draw a little picture of you too.</i> The adult reads the name and asks the child to read the name, and puts up the name or word where the child can see it.</p>
read short sentences with familiar words	<p>Reflect The adult and child keep the name tags in a word collection box (empty shoeboxes are a good size). They take two or three out at a time and spread them out and play the game of "Where is the word..?" <i>Where is the word that says Bella? I can find it. This word says Bella. I'll mix them up. Let's see if you can find the word that says Bella.</i> The adult makes word tags for family members, toys, food, any things which are of great interest to the child.</p>
<u>read some words and know a few letters</u>	<p>Activity: Making pattern books Time: a few minutes Materials: several pieces of paper stapled together</p> <p>Plan The adult plans to involve the child in making a book. Together the adult and child look at the word collection from the above activity and choose a word.</p>
read some names, turn pages and look at the print	<p>Do The adult thinks of a "sentence stem" for the child. This is a phrase which can start a sentence and can be changed at the end. The adult writes this stem on a paper and adds a short ending. The adult writes the same stem on two other pages and adult and child think of endings. <i>You chose the word Ben. I'll write, "Ben can run". Now I'll print "Ben can eat". Now I'll write "Ben can"...what? Oh "jump"(or play ball etc)</i> Adult and child put this book together with tape or stapler.</p>
choose from a variety of books, point to pictures and name them	<p>Reflect Adult and child reread this book and may draw pictures. Many, many more books can be made this way. Sentence stems use very common words as part of them (see appendix 5 "100 most common words" with highlights of the 15 most common words in Kindergarten reading.) Here are some other stems: The car is (red, blue, green etc). I see a big (house, dog, tree etc) Come and play with (Gabrielle, Jessica, Jacob etc) Let's go to the... Mommy likes to smell a.... Read these books over and over again along with other picture books. The child can chime in.</p>

Ready, set, read: Starting to put everything together and read

Hug a word, hug a letter

Read published pattern books



read beginning books independently	<p>Activity: Hug a word, hug a letter Time: A few minutes while the child is interested. Materials: familiar picture book Plan Using a familiar book, the adult asks the child to find words letters he or she knows. <i>Find the letter B for Ben.</i> Look for capitals and lower case letters if the child knows them</p>
read some sentences fluently and attempt to problem-solve unfamiliar words	<p>Do Child identifies the letters by “hugging” them i.e. putting one finger from each hand on each side of the letter. The adult asks the child to name the letter. The adult asks the child to find a word he knows. <i>Here is the word “is”.</i> Child “hugs” the word with his fingers on either side or uses a small piece of paper on each side. The child finds the word in another place. The adult teaches another common word which occurs often in the book. The child identifies and reads that word each time it comes up.</p>
<u>read short sentences with familiar words</u>	<p>Reflect Adult and child continue to read the book, pausing each time the known word is in the text for the child to read it. See Appendix 5 for suggestions of common sight words. The words the child knows can be put in the word collection.</p>
read some words and know a few letters	<p>Activity: Read published pattern books Time: A few minutes Materials: Very beginning commercial picture books made with patterned language. Many of these can be printed from www.readinga-z.com for \$49.95 a year; some can be borrowed at your local library. They are also available in school catalogues from companies such as Nelson Publishing. Early books in a controlled vocabulary reading series may also have patterned text.</p>
read some names, turn pages and look at the print	<p>Plan Adult introduces the patterned book with a “scaffold”. That is the adult takes the child for a “picture walk” through the book talking about the ideas, using examples of the pattern in the text, and saying any unusual words in the book (names for instance). Do The child (with adult help if necessary) reads the words on the first page, maybe pointing under the text with a finger. On the next page the child reads the same pattern, using the picture as a clue about the unknown word. Where the text varies from the pattern the adult may give additional help.</p>
choose from a variety of books, point to pictures and name them	<p>Reflect The child reads the book over and over with satisfaction to many people, pointing at the print. The print may well be memorized but if the child is also doing the “hug a word” activity (see above activity), new words can be added to his or her word collection.</p>

Ready, set, read: Starting to put everything together and read

Sharing the reading of books



read beginning books independently	<p><u>Activity: Sharing the reading of the book</u> Time: a few minutes Materials: a new picture book, a story or a nonfiction text.</p>
<p><u>read some sentences fluently and attempt to problem-solve unfamiliar words</u></p>	<p><u>Plan</u> The adult and child talk briefly about the whole of a new book by doing a picture walk and guessing what is in the book. The adult asks the child to help by reading some words in the book. <i>I am going to read this new book. Sometimes I am going to leave out words and I want you to put them in.</i></p>
read short sentences with familiar words	<p><u>Do</u> The adult starts reading. When the adult comes to a word the child could guess without seeing it, the adult pauses expectantly. <i>The gingerbread boy ran away and called, "You can't catch"</i></p>
read some words and know a few letters	<p>Expect the child to say a word that makes sense and give praise. If the child says the word in the text, check it out by looking at the first letter. <i>You said the word is "me". That makes sense and it looks right...see the letter m. Run your finger under the word and say it slowl, m...e.</i></p>
read some names, turn pages and look at the print	<p>The adult carries on reading to the child and finding more words the child can guess and check. Do this until the child is almost fed up and wants the adult to get on with the book. Finish the book.</p>
choose from a variety of books, point to pictures and name them	<p><u>Reflect</u> Adult and child decide if they want to read the book again. Can the child do more of the reading?</p>

Ready, set, read: Starting to put everything together and read

Prompts for words

Sentence puzzles

Shared reading of longer books



<p><u>read beginning books independently</u> <u>Activity Page 1</u></p>	<p><u>Activity: Prompts for words</u> <u>Time:</u> 15 to 20 minutes <u>Materials:</u> beginning commercial picture books made with some controlled vocabulary. Some of these can be accessed at www.readinga-z.com for \$49.95 a year and some can be borrowed at your local library. They are also available in school catalogues from such companies as Nelson. Choose a book where the child will know many words and will only have a little tricky work to do.</p>
<p>read some sentences fluently and attempt to problem-solve unfamiliar words</p>	<p><u>Plan</u> The adult and child choose a book. They set the scene by taking a picture walk, predicting the story or ideas in the book; the adult may point out some tricky words if there is unfamiliar vocabulary.</p> <p><u>Do</u> The child reads as much as possible. When the child comes to a word he or she does not know at sight, the adult waits for the child to make an independent guess. The adult can give the child help by saying: <i>Check the picture.</i> <i>What word could it be?</i> <i>Say the sounds slowly.</i> <i>Read on to the end of the sentence, then guess.</i> <i>I'll tell you the word.</i></p>
<p>read short sentences with familiar words</p>	<p>If the child makes a guess that does not make sense, the adult encourages the child to read on to the end of the sentence. Then if the child does not correct himself, the adult points to the word and asks: <i>You said this word is....</i> <i>Does that make sense? (Check meaning.)</i> <i>Does that sound right when you say the sentence? (Check sentence grammar.)</i> <i>Does that look right? (Check letters and sounds.)</i></p>
<p>read some words and know a few letters</p>	<p><u>Reflect</u> The adult encourages the child to reread fluently. <i>Put your words together so it sounds like talking.</i> Rereading the same book with pleasure several times helps the child read fluently.</p>
<p>read some names, turn pages and look at the print</p>	<p><u>Activity: Sentence puzzles</u> <u>Time:</u> a few minutes <u>Materials:</u> strips of paper, scissors, pencils</p>
<p>choose from a variety of books, point to pictures and name them</p>	<p><u>Plan</u> The adult and child have some time to work on words. The child dictates a short sentence to the adult, who writes it on the long strip of paper. The child rereads the sentence.</p> <p><u>Do</u> The adult or child cuts the strip into words and sets them out in a straight line. The child moves the words together and rereads them. The child or adult then mixes up the words and the child tries puzzle them out into the same sentence.</p> <p><u>Reflect</u> The adult asks the child to give him or her each word by name and puts them in the child's word box. Every few days reread the words in the word collection and throw away the ones the child is not interested in.</p>

Ready, set, read: Starting to put everything together and read Shared reading of longer books



read beginning books independently Activity page 2

read some sentences fluently and attempt to problem-solve unfamiliar words

read short sentences with familiar words

read some words and know a few letters

read some names, turn pages and look at the print

choose from a variety of books, point to pictures and name them

Activity: Shared reading of longer books

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: a book the child wants to read (or has to read for school) which is a little bit difficult

Plan

The child and adult guess what the book is going to be about from the cover, the blurb on the back of the book the chapter headings, illustrations etc.

They plan to take turns to read it, either by page or by paragraph.

Do

The adult reads the introductory paragraph (or page). Child and adult talk:

I wonder if... I think that...I could see...

The child reads the next bit. If the child is stuck on a tricky word try:

1. Look at the picture.
2. Read from the beginning of the sentence again and guess.
3. Check...Does it make sense? Does it sound right? Does it look right?
4. Look at it and say the sounds slowly.
5. Read the sentence but leave the word out. Can you guess it now?
6. Ask the adult.

The adult reads his or her share. The child reads again.

Reflect

The child and adult talk briefly about their feelings and thoughts about the book.

Was this book worth reading? What questions do we have about...? I wonder if...? Did I do anything to make reading better?

There is a great deal of evidence to show that children become better readers by practicing reading extensively:

- nursery rhymes songs and poetry,
- signs and directions and posters and manuals and menus
- informational books and computer programs
- picture books and chapter books
- fairy tales and hero tales
- magazines and newspapers

Calendars of Daily Literacy Activities

In the following calendars, an activity for each link is suggested for each day in the week to give parents and caregivers some practical ideas. It would be even more powerful if you did some reading with your child and some writing with your child every day as well as encouraging your child to spend his/her own time with books, paper and computers.



1. *Point to signs and print: Understanding print in the world around us*



2. *Label your world with words: Writing signs to make our mark in the world around us*



3. *Read, sing and talk: Thinking about songs and books as we hear and join in*



4. *Learn how books work; Learning how books work (pages, print, which direction to go)*



5. *Collect and connect words and letters: Using sounds, letters and words in the search for meaning*










6. *Write it down: Starting to put everything together and write*










7. *Ready, set, read: Starting to put everything together and read*

These are some activities you could use at each level of your child's growth to reading and writing. They are written for use over three weeks, but will usually need to be used joyfully for much longer than this. Your child will grow into the next step.








First Step *Read with your child every day and show some writing and....*

Point to signs and print 	Label your world with words 	Read, sing and talk 	Learn how books work 	Collect and connect words and letters 	Write it down 	Ready, set, read 
<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>
Touch objects in the kitchen and say the names many times together in conversation.	Do some writing; you make a list and your child adds a scribble with a crayon.	Sing an action song together. Read a new book to your child, point to the pictures and talk about them.	Read a familiar book to your child and turn the pages together from front to back.	Imitate the sounds your child is making and make sounds for things in the world. Play with sounds.	Encourage your child to pick up small things e.g. dry cereal. Talk to your child as you write something.	Watch to see which books your child likes. Ask your child to pick a book and you read it aloud.
Touch objects in the bedroom and say the names many times together in conversation.	Do some writing; you write a card and your child adds a scribble.	Sing an action song together. Read a new book to your child, point to the pictures and talk about them.	Read a familiar book to your child and talk about the front of the book. Point to the print as you read.	Make interesting sounds as you are singing a song together. Play with sounds.	Encourage your child to pick up small things e.g. toys. Talk to your child as you write something.	Ask your child to point to a familiar book. Read it together with your child pointing and saying words and sounds for pictures.
Touch objects in the bathroom and say the names many times together in conversation.	Do some writing; you write a note to a family member and your child adds a scribble.	Sing an action song together. Read a new book to your child, point to the pictures and talk about them.	Read a familiar book to your child and talk about the order of pages from front to back. Show your child the print when you read something.	Look at the pictures in a familiar book and make interesting sounds together. Play with sounds.	Encourage your child to pick up small objects e.g. a spoon. Talk as you write something.	When your child shows he or she likes a book, read it together with your child pointing, trying to say words for pictures and turning the pages.
Design your own activity.	Design your own activity.	Design your own activity.	Design your own activity.	Design your own activity.	Design your own activity.	Design your own activity.








Second Step *Read and write with your child every day and ...*

Point to signs and print 	Label your world with words 	Read, sing and talk 	Learn how books work 	Collect and connect words and letters 	Write it down 	Ready, set, read 
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Point to labels in the kitchen and read them together. Read signs and labels in the community e.g. MacDonald's.	Ask your child to look at labels on drink boxes and choose the drink he or she wants. Your child might scribble a label and put it on a glass of milk.	Read a new book to your child and talk about how the things in the book are like things your child knows. Read a song book to your child and invite him or her to join in the repeated words.	Read a familiar book to your child pointing to where the print begins.	Say your child's name very slowly. See if the two of you can find objects in the room which begin with the same sound. Make a silly saying with rhymes for your child's names.	Help your child control the crayon: put your hand softly over the small hand and make lovely lines and circles. Invite your child to make some writing marks and "read" them afterwards.	Ask your child to pick a favorite book and join in as much as possible while you read. Ask your child to point to pictures as you read.
Point to labels in some clothes and read them together. Read signs and labels in the community e.g. at the grocery store.	Ask your child to look at labels on clothes and choose the t-shirt he or she wants to wear. Your child might scribble on a label and put it on a toy doll or car.	Read a new book to your child and talk about how the things in the book are like things your child knows. Read a nursery rhyme book to your child and invite him or her to join in the rhythmic and rhyming sections.	Read a familiar book to your child asking him or her to show you the front cover and where to start reading the words on a page.	Say a family name very slowly. See if the two of you can find objects in the room which begin with the same sound. Make a silly saying with rhymes for the name.	Help your child control the crayon: put your hand softly over the small hand and make lovely lines and circles. Invite your child to imitate you as you do some writing and make his or her own marks.	Ask your child to pick a favorite book. Ask your child to turn the pages and join in as much as possible while you read.
Point to some labels in advertisements and read them together. Read sign and labels in the community e.g. at restaurants.	Ask your child to look at 2 or 3 pictures and labels in a grocery store flyer and choose the food he or she prefers. Your child might scribble a label and put it on a plate of favorite dessert.	Read a new book to your child. Talk about how the things in the book are like things your child knows. Read a story book to your child and invite him or her to join in any repeated words.	Read a familiar book to your child encouraging him or her to point to the print as you read one or two pages.	Say the name of a fascinating object very slowly. See if the two of you can find other objects in the room which begin with the same sound. Make silly rhyming sayings using their names.	Help your child control the crayon: put your hand softly over the small hand and make lovely lines and circles. Invite your child to do some writing and "read" it afterwards.	Ask your child to pick a favorite book. Ask your child to point a finger under the print from left to right while you read and talk together.








Third Step *Read and write with your child every day and ...*

Point to signs and print 	Label your world with words 	Read, sing and talk 	Learn how books work 	Collect and connect words and letters 	Write it down 	Ready, set, read 
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Make a name cards for your child on white paper, on brown paper and with different crayons. Put the name card in the word collection box.	You and your child draw a picture of the child together and write your child's name, with your child helping.	After reading a new story book to your child, retell the story together by looking at the pictures from front to back.	While you are reading a familiar book to your child, run a finger under the print from left to right and point to some important words.	Tell your child the names of letters in his or her first name. Find the letters in signs and labels. Play with them with letter cards.	Write a little book with your child. Write one sentence on a page and start each one with "(Child's name) likes..." As your child draws pictures on each page, make sure your child is holding the crayon comfortably.	Read name tags together. Say the letters in the name tags. Read the little book you wrote together. Make some word tags from the book and put them together to read.
Make name cards for important people like mum and dad. Put the cards on the floor invite your child to find the one he or she wants. Put the cards in the word collection box.	You and your child draw a family picture together and write the family names with your child helping.	After reading a new story book to your child, retell the story together by looking at the pictures and enjoy making sound effects.	While you are reading a familiar book to your child, invite him or her to run a finger under the print from left to right then show where you begin reading the next line.	Tell your child the names of letters in family names. Make letter cards and playfully identify and name the letters. Find the letters on signs and in books.	Write a little book with your child. Write one sentence on a page and start each one with "(Child's name) can..." As your child draws pictures on each page, make sure your child is holding the crayon comfortably.	Read all the name tags together. Say the letters in them. Ask your child to read the little book. Make word cards from the book and put them together to read new sentences. Keep them in the word collection box.
Make word cards for toys. Put them on the toys and read them often. Make a collection of word cards. Read them often and keep the ones your child learns to remember.	You and your child draw a picture of the house together and write labels for some objects you have drawn.	After reading a familiar story book to your child, retell the story together with the book closed. What happened at the beginning, middle and end? Use a story line. 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4	While you are reading a sentence from a familiar book to your child, point to each word from left to right as you read them. Invite your child to do the same.	Play games matching lower case letters and capital letters on letter cards. Find capital and lower case letters on signs and in books.	Write a little book with your child. On each page write something your child is going to do that day. As your child draws pictures on each page, make sure your child is holding the crayon comfortably.	Ask your child to read a few word cards, telling the words if necessary. Find and name some letters. Ask your child to read the little book. Make word cards from the book and put them together in sentences.








Fourth Step *Read and write with your child every day and ...*

Point to signs and print 	Label your world with words 	Read, sing and talk 	Learn how books work 	Collect and connect words and letters 	Write it down 	Ready, set, read 
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Make a collection of word cards (see third step). Invite your child to put them together to make signs and sentences. You write any words the child does not have in the collection.</p>	<p>As your child is making a fort, add signs to the play. See if your child can write one or two letters of the sign and you write the rest.</p>	<p>Read a new book to your child, asking questions about the cover, the pictures and the ideas. Comment on the answers you find in the book. Enjoy interesting words from the book together.</p>	<p>Read a familiar book to your child, occasionally stopping and pointing out an interesting word or a word your child knows by putting your fingers around it. Identify letters the same way.</p>	<p>Sort out words from the word collection which start with the same letter and sound as your child's name. Read the words with your child, listening carefully to the first sound.</p>	<p>Write a name with your child. Your child writes the letters he or she can hear in a word and you write the rest. Teach your child to say the words slowly to hear the letters. Teach your child how to form letters well.</p>	<p>Choose simple pattern books for your child to read. Read them aloud first and then ask your child to read them to you. Continue to make and read little books and use your word collection (see third step).</p>
<p>Reread the collection of word cards (see third step). Invite your child to put them together to make signs and sentences. You write any words the child does not have in the collection.</p>	<p>As your child is making a store or castle, add signs to the play. See if your child can write one or two letters of the sign and you write the rest.</p>	<p>Read a new book to your child. Encourage your child to ask questions, wonder about the pictures and ideas and find answers. Enjoy using interesting phrases from the book.</p>	<p>Read a familiar book to your child, occasionally stopping at a familiar word and asking your child to put fingers around it. Identify letters the same way.</p>	<p>Starting with a favorite word, find words from the word collection which start with the same letter and sound. Read the words with your child, listening to the first sound.</p>	<p>Write a list with your child. Your child writes the letters he or she knows and you write the rest. Say the words slowly to hear the letters. Teach your child how to form letters well.</p>	<p>Choose simple pattern books for your child to read. Read them aloud first and then ask your child to read them. Continue to make and read little books and use your word collection.</p>
<p>Reread the collection of word cards (see third step). Invite your child to put them together to make signs and sentences. You write any words the child does not have in the collection.</p>	<p>As your child is making a play house with toys, add signs to the play. See if your child can write one or two letters of the sign and you write the rest.</p>	<p>Read a new book to your child. Encourage your child to ask questions, wonder about the pictures and ideas and find answers. Enjoy using interesting phrases from the book.</p>	<p>Read a familiar book to your child, occasionally stopping at a familiar word and asking your child to put fingers around it. Identify letters the same way.</p>	<p>Sort out words from the word collection which start with the same letter and sound as a favorite word. Read the words with your child, and find other words which start the same way.</p>	<p>Write a list with your child. Your child writes the letters he or she knows and you write the rest. Say the words slowly to hear the letters. Teach your child how to form letters well.</p>	<p>Choose simple pattern books for your child to read. Read them aloud first and then ask your child to read them. Continue to make and read little books and use your word collection.</p>

Fifth Step *Read and write with your child every day and ...*

Point to signs and print 	Label your world with words 	Read, sing and talk 	Learn how books work 	Collect and connect words and letters 	Write it down 	Ready, set, read 
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Help your child read a simple instruction in a coloring book. You read some words, he or she reads some words and you do the activity together.</p>	<p>Make a big calendar with your child. Plan some activities for the week and write them in. Your child can draw the pictures to go with the plans.</p>	<p>Read two books about the same character e.g. Franklin the turtle. Retell each story. Tell a new story about the same character. Stop occasionally while you read to your child and talk about the meaning of a word.</p>	<p>Read a familiar book to your child. Stop occasionally, point to a period and comment how you have to stop when you reach it. It helps you make sense. Find familiar words in books and on signs.</p>	<p>Play a rhyming game with your child by writing a well-known word, cutting it into beginning and ending parts and putting it together. Which other beginning letters can you and your child think of for the same ending? E.g. c—at, turns into b--at</p>	<p>Help your child think of a short message he or she wants to write. Say the first word slowly. Your child writes the letters he or she hears, you write the others. Reread the first word and gradually add the other words.</p>	<p>Share the reading of a new or familiar book. Talk about the book before you read it. Read aloud, pointing at the words and stop when you come to a word your child can read. Your child can fill it in.</p>
<p>Help your child read a simple instruction in a craft book. Help your child make new word guesses that make sense. Do the activity together.</p>	<p>Invite your child to help you write some more plans in the calendar. Your child can write the words he or she knows and say words slowly to hear the letter sounds. You can share the pencil to help.</p>	<p>Read two books about the same character e.g. Clifford the big red dog. Retell each story. Tell a new story about the same character. Stop occasionally while you are reading to your child and talk about the meaning of a word.</p>	<p>Read a familiar book to your child. Stop occasionally and comment how you have to stop when you reach a period. It helps you make sense. Ask your child to read a well-known little book and point when he or she reaches a period.</p>	<p>Play a rhyming game. Your child writes a well-known word, cuts it into it beginning and ending parts and puts it together. Which other beginning letters can you and your child think of? Find some of the words as you read a familiar book.</p>	<p>Help your child think of a short message. Encourage your child to write as much of each word as possible by saying words slowly. You share the pencil and write the rest. Practice writing letters correctly.</p>	<p>Share the reading of a new or familiar book. Read aloud, pointing at the words and stop when you come to a word your child can guess. Praise for a good guess which makes sense and starts with the correct letter.</p>
<p>Help your child read a simple recipe with pictures. Help your child guess the unknown words and check to see if the first letter matches the guess. Cook.</p>	<p>Talk about plans for the day. Write a few simple words about them. Your child writes the known words and you help with the rest. Choose what to do first, second etc.</p>	<p>Read two books about the same character e.g. Curious George. Retell each story. Tell a new story about the same character. Talk about the meaning of some words.</p>	<p>Ask your child to read a little book and point when he or she reaches a period. Make a comment about how well he or she has read a whole sentence.</p>	<p>Make some more rhyming word puzzles. As you read a familiar book, try to find out what words are by putting together the beginning part and rhyming part.</p>	<p>Your child thinks of a short message to write and writes it as independently as possible. Make a list of words your child can write quickly. Practice..</p>	<p>Share the reading of a very familiar book. Ask your child to do as much reading as he or she can and you help when your child gets stuck.</p>

Sixth Step *Read and write with your child every day and ...*

Point to signs and print 	Label your world with words 	Read, sing and talk 	Learn how books work 	Collect and connect words and letters 	Write it down 	Ready, set, read 
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Encourage your child to read signs and instructions on cereal boxes, guessing the unknown words or asking you to help.	You and your child decide to create a project together. Your child draws a plan and you help him or her label it with the names of things you need.	Read a new chapter book to your child. Talk about how you make pictures in your head to understand what is going on. Explain interesting words to your child.	As you read aloud a familiar book, occasionally stop and comment on how you read question marks. Expect your child to notice them in other books.	Play a game of adding endings to root words. Find root words and endings in the books you read e.g. read is the root word, and we add ing to make read-ing.	Encourage your child to write a letter spelling the best way he or she can. If your child can write most letters correctly and quickly, you might introduce lines.	Ask your child to dictate a sentence. Cut it up and put it together again. Continue to collect and reread a word collection.
Encourage your child to read signs and instructions in how-to-make-things books, guessing the unknown words or asking you to help.	You and your child decide to create a project together. Your child draws a plan and you help him or her label it with the names and quantities of things you need.	Continue reading a chapter book to your child and ask him or her to make a picture inside the head (place? person?) Look up an interesting word in the dictionary.	As you read aloud a familiar book, occasionally stop and comment on how you read different lettering. Expect your child to notice it in other books.	Play a game of adding endings to root words. Write root words and add ending e.g. " read" is a root word and we add "s" to make "reads". Notice root words and endings in familiar books.	Encourage your child to write an "everything about..." book, spelling the best way he or she can. Read it over. Does your child want to add anything?	Using an early school reader, support your child reading independently by prompting your child to read new words.
Encourage your child to read advertising or information pamphlets, guessing the unknown words or asking you to help.	You and your child decide to create a project together. Your child draws a plan and you help him or her label it and write an instruction for a tricky part.	Continue reading a chapter book to your child and ask him or her to make a picture inside the head about a dramatic event. Find interesting words and talk about them.	As you read aloud a familiar book, occasionally stop and comment on how you read speech marks. Expect your child to notice them in other books.	Take the word collection and sort it out into words with similar spelling patterns (infinite variety of patterns).	Encourage your child to write a story, spelling the best way he or she can. Help your child correct the spelling of one common word .	Using an early school reader, support your child reading independently by telling the story first, then prompting your child to read new words.

Appendix 1

Baby Literacy

Moms and dads, grandparents and older brothers and sisters are wonderful teachers, because they love their babies so much and are so interested in every little thing they do.

You get your baby involved in listening and talking from the earliest days by talking, cooing and singing. You notice when your baby responds to you and you take turns making noises and “talking”.

The way you teach your baby to listen and talk leads naturally to the way you will teach your young child to read and write. Here are some aspects of what you do.

Surrounding your baby with language

Your baby is surrounded by talk as you and your family go about your daily lives. For reading and writing, you will surround your child with books and print in the house and the community.

For now, show your baby some household labels by touching them and saying the name (on the diaper box and the pablum box) and show your baby some books (there are lovely board books and cloth books and bath books to buy or borrow).

Showing your baby how

Every time you talk to your baby up close and personal you are showing your baby how to talk. You do it during feeding, bathing, changing, soothing. You say the same word over and over again and touch the object you are talking about. For reading and writing, you will sit your child on your knee as you are reading a newspaper or writing a list and talk about what you are doing.

For now, point to the labels on the cereal box as you choose it from the cupboard, point to the pictures and headlines in the newspaper before your baby tries to tear it to shreds. Encourage your baby to hold onto your hand as you are writing.

Expecting your baby to join in

You know your baby will learn to talk and you expect this to happen from new words to clear communication over several years. What a wonderful learner your baby is! You set up situations where you expect your baby to communicate. “Do you want some more milk?”

In your daily life you create opportunities for your baby to communicate. You catch your baby making a funny sound, you make it back and you have a sound conversation. You expect your baby to “take responsibility”, to respond and later to start conversations with words.

You will expect your child to learn to read and write over a few years with help and patience from you. You will expect your child to listen hard to sounds and later attach them to letters and try to read and write them. You will watch for times your child plays word games and letter games and reading books games independently.

For now, you expect your baby to participate in short enjoyable activities like looking at picture books and clapping hands as you sing a song together. Put two familiar books in front of your baby and read the one he chooses.

Giving your baby lots of practice

You and your baby use language hundreds of times a day. You can't avoid practicing listening and talking unless the television is taking up a lot of time. The more you practice by using the language of everyday fun and living, the better your child's talk will be.

In reading and writing, your child will need many, many short times to practice skills in joyful, interesting ways.

For now, you encourage your baby to reach for things and grasp them: he will need those fine muscles for holding a crayon to write or turning a page carefully. Read the same book over and over and over again when your baby enjoys it.

Enjoying your baby's good attempts

Your baby learns to talk in delightful stages. Noises come first and your baby learns the sounds of English (or the languages you use most at home). Then come words, but what words! Words which tell you a whole range of meaning. "Mum" can mean everything from love, to distress, to calls for attention. "Milk" can mean "I want some", "I spilled some" or "The dog is drinking my milk". Later your baby adds other words to make the meaning clearer and gradually finds out the whole grammatical system of the language.

Your child learns to read and write in stages too. We are delighted when your child "reads" a book by turning the pages and telling about the picture. We are thrilled when your child makes some little scribbles which look like letters. We are interested when children learn to write some of the sounds in words they want to spell. Over years they learn to read and write correctly, but they need time and encouragement to use guesses and approximations along the way.

For now, your baby can try turning the pages of a board book, join in with some actions in a familiar song, scribble on your newspaper, point to pictures as you are reading a book.

Responding to your baby

You would have a very quiet baby if you did not react to her desire to talk to you. It is your interest and response which encourage him to keep on talking, and your delight in her cute efforts which build self-esteem.

In reading and writing, it will be the daily response and delight in progress which keeps your child interested in print and the fun of reading and writing. Appreciate the small steps and the neat things your child comes up with.

For now, show how much you like your baby pointing to the pictures in a book, or chuckling as you write his name, or imitating sounds in songs.

Doing things that are interesting to your baby

Listening and talking are things you do with other people. Your baby learns them because he wants to be with you and do what you do. He learns language fastest when you are absorbed in something together, a song, a story, a mealtime, a tickle of all his body parts. She is active and engaged; he is interested.

Reading and writing are things children learn in good company. You will have no fun trying to force a bored and whiny child to learn about letters and words. You will want to do things at the times your child is willing to concentrate and interested in learning something. You will look for magical minutes when your child can concentrate and be absorbed in favorite games to play together.

For now, read books together when he is interested. Point to the pictures, tap the part of the picture you are talking about to direct her attention to the same thing you are looking at. Take her around the store and tap the signs with words and say the words.

Have fun, have patience, persist with listening and talking and reading and writing.

Appendix 2

Talk, Sing and Play

Talk, read, sing, dance and play with your child every day for fun and for literacy.

Try these daily activities:

- Show your child when you are reading and writing during your day.
- Read together and talk about books every day in such a way that you and your child have fun together. Read during the day as well as at bedtime. Your child will enjoy books, learn how to follow along, think and learn a lot about the world.
- Keep reading and writing materials where your child can find them and play with them.
- Search for lots of books: start your own collection of board books, picture books, pattern books, easy reading books and beginning reading books. Visit your local library and drop-in centers to borrow books.
- Provide opportunities for children to play at being writers by writing pictures and words and letters which are important to them. Help them to develop hand control for writing by playing with toys and safe writing materials.
- Develop early reading skills, using children's books as the starting point:
 - Enjoying reading and singing
 - Retelling stories
 - Talking about pictures
 - Recognizing sounds and letters
 - Recognizing names and recognizing words in books signs and labels.
 - Building a collection of familiar words written on paper strips
 - Thinking and talking about books, asking questions, connecting books to their own lives
- Build early writing skills using children's interests as the starting point for ideas. Writing is talk written down. Write the children's ideas down and share the pencil as soon as the children can write something on their own. Encourage children to draw and label (even with scribbles).
 - Learn how to make letters
 - Relate letters to sounds
 - Write names (child matches, traces, copies)
 - Write common words
 - Think of sentences to write and hold them in mind while writing
 - Try to write using the sounds in words (approximating spelling)

Appendix 3

Teaching Your Pre-school Child to Read

It's as Easy as PLISS

A growing number of parents and teachers realize that it is potentially disastrous to leave the development of beginning reading skills until the child goes to school. The teacher's problem is that she will have to deal with twenty or more learners at the same time—hardly the formula for learning anything effectively. Evidence shows that an alarming number of children simply cannot master reading in this environment.

You do not need a teaching license to teach a young child to read. What you do require is i) the ability to read yourself; ii) the belief that a preschool child can begin to master some of the component skills; iii) common sense; iv) patience. But above all these must be a genuine love for your child that expresses itself in a commitment to supporting his/her optimal growth as a human being. Here are some simple steps to follow-- the PLISS method.

P stands for “point out”. This is a code word for the act of directing the child's attention to an object in his environment and, while the child is looking at it, saying its name. For example, approaching the door with a six month infant in arms, i) the parent taps on the door to direct child's attention to it; ii) child looks at door; iii) parent says “Door. This is a door. Door.” Repeat several times daily until the child will turn and look at the door, or point at it, when you say “Where's the door?” Naming valued new things in the environment is something you will do as long as you know the names of more things than your child does.

L stands for “label”. This is a code word for the act of associating printed labels with the things the child has already learned the names of. Thus, beginning when the child shows some interest and can say the name--around the second birthday for most children--stick the word “door” on the door in 6” print, and ask, “What does this say?” when you pass by it. Prompt where required. Make an extra copy for the child's portfolio of sight words and read them daily, prompting where required. Include the names of family members, pets, and personal belongings. Encourage the child's own scribbled efforts to “write”, starting with his/her own name.

I stands for “initial letters”. This is a code word for getting children to use the sounds of parts of words to figure out what the word says. Obviously, to start we would use the words that the child can already say. For example, working with Kyle, the parent i) visually isolates the first letter in Kyle's name; ii) says “this is the letter K. It says ‘k’.”; iii) points out other words in the child's sight vocabulary, or the names of other people he knows, that start with the same letter (sound). An alphabet book, each page containing a letter and pictures of a set of objects whose name starts with that letter, should be introduced about this time and worked through over a period of months.

S stands for “sentences”. Once the child has a portfolio of two dozen or more sight words on cards, these should be formed into sentences. This will require that you add some connecting words such as “a”, “the”, “is” ... as well as some actions words such as “likes”, “plays”, “eats”. These should be chosen for their relevance to the child’s immediate situation, ideally using his own name. Model how to read sentences—read print left to right and top of page to bottom—saying each word distinctly as you run your finger under it. Children should be encouraged to compose their own sentences, parents acting a scribe to supplement what the child can write for himself.

S stands for “structured reader”. This is a book that introduces only a couple of new words per page, so that the flow is maintained in the child’s reading. The child’s own beginning sentences (from above) would be ideal, perhaps put together into something called My Story. If the parent doesn’t have time for this extra effort, many series of Easy Readers are now available on loan from public libraries.

Once the child gets into structured readers, his reading vocabulary and supporting skills will increase rapidly with much less detailed individual attention than was required at the start. He is now ready to profit from the kind of reading support the school can offer.

PLISS goes far beyond the conventional wisdom that “parents should read to their children”. Indeed they should, but they should quickly progress from “reading to” to “reading with” as quickly as possible. For it is in the reading with routine that the parent can best determine what the child can and can’t do for himself, and thus determine the optimal next steps in his reading development.

CONCLUDING THOUGHT

There is no formula that tells us how quickly a particular child can or should progress through the PLISS sequence. The key should be that the child is enjoying your reading together—so back off for a while if he shows any signs of discomfort or unease. Fifteen minutes a day will be ample reading development time for four year olds, with adjustments down and up for younger and older children.

Lucy Robinson
Oct 2003

Appendix 4

List of Children's Books

Picture Books for Babies

Ahlberg, Janet and Allan, "The Baby's Catalogue"

Lilly, Kenneth, "Animals on the farm"

Nursery Rhymes

Silberg, Jackie, "The complete book of rhymes, songs, poems, fingerplays, and chants"

Taback, Simms, "This is the house that Jack built"

Cabrera, Jane, "Old Mother Hubbard"

Stevens, Janet, "And the dish ran away with the spoon"

Denton, Kady MacDonald, "A child's treasury of nursery rhymes"

Collins, Heather, "Eensy weensy spider"

Collins, Heather, "Hickory dickory dock"

Kroll, Virginia L. "Jaha and Jamil went down the hill: an African Mother Goose"

"Mother Goose: a Canadian sampler"

Kovalski, Maryann. "Doctor Knickerbocker and other rhymes: a Canadian collection"

Aylesworth, Jim, "The cat & the fiddle & more"

Bolam, Emily, "The House that Jack Built"

Cole, Joanna, "Pat-a-cake and other play rhymes"

Katz, Michael Jay, "Ten potatoes in a pot and other counting rhymes"

Alphabet books

Any and all

Picture Books to read to Toddlers

Barton, Byron, "The Three Bears"

Bang, Molly, "Ten, Nine, Eight"

Brown, Margaret Wise, "The Runaway Bunny"

Crewe, Donald, "Freight Train"

Hill, Eric, "Where's Spot?"

Hughes, Shirley, "Two Shoes, New Shoes"

Jonas, Anne, "Holes and Peeks"

Martin, Bill, "Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?"

Zelinsky, Paul, "The Wheels on the Bus"

Picture Books to read to Young Children

Brown, Mark, the "Arthur" books

Bourgeois, Paulette, "Franklin in the Dark"

Carle, Eric, "The Very Hungry Caterpillar"

Fox, Mem, "Hattie and the Fox"

Galdone, Paul, "The Gingerbread Man"

Ginsburg, Mirra, "The Chick and the Duckling"

Hutchins, Pat, "Goodnight Owl"

Shaw, Charles, "It Looked Like Spilt Milk"

Wood, Audrey, "The Napping House"

Folk Tales and Fables

Brett, Jan, "The Mitten"

Kellogg, Steven, "Jack and the Beanstalk"

Marshall, James, "Red Riding Hood"

Young, Ed, "Lon Po Po" the story of Sleeping Beauty

Zemach, Margot "It could always be worse"

Picture Books to Read to Preschoolers and all other ages!

Bemelmans, Ludwig, "Madeleine"

Burton, Virginia Lee, "Mike Mulligan and the Steam Shovel"

Christelow, Eileen, "Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed"

DePaola, Tomie, "Strega Nonna"

Domanska, Janina, "If All the Seas Were One Sea"

Flack, Marjorie, "The Story About Ping"

Freeman, Don, "Corduroy"

Gilman, Phoebe, "The Balloon Tree"

Hoban, Russel, the "Francis" books

Lottridge, Celia, "One Watermelon Seed"

Marshall, James, "The Three Little Pigs" and the "George and Martha" books

McClosky, Robert, "Make Way for Ducklings"

Munsch, Robert, "Mud Puddle"

Poulin, Stephane, "Have You Seen Josephine"

Rey, H.A., the "Curious George" books

Sendak, Maurice, "Where the Wild Things Are"

Staunton, Ted, "Simon's Surprise"

Waber, Bernard, “Ira Sleeps Over” and the “Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile” books

Yolen, Jane “Owl Moon”

Poetry Books

Prelutsky, Jack, “New Kid on the Block”

Prelutsky, Jack, “The Random House Book of Poetry for Kids”

Chapter Books to read to Beginning Readers

Cleary, Beverly, “Ramona the Pest”

Dahl, Roudal, “The Fantastic Mr. Fox.

Duncan, Lois, “Summer of Fear”

King-Smith, Dick, “Babe the Gallant Pig”

Lewis, C.S., “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe”

MacLachlan, Patricia, “Sarah Plain and Tall”

Norton, Mary, “The Borrowers”

Sobol, Donald, “Encyclopedia Brown, Boy Detective”

White, E.B., “Charlotte’s Web”

Early Reading Books

Oxford Reading Tree, Non fiction and fiction strands
available from Oxford University Press

1-800-387-8020

Flying Colours

First Stories

available from Nelson Canada

1-800-268-2222

McGraw Hill Ryerson

1-800-565-5758

readinga-z.com, available on-line

*Appendix 5*Common Words for Reading and Writing

a all am an and are as ask at back be because big but by can come day dear did do don't down	eat for friend from fun get go good had has have he hello her here him his home how I if in into	is it it's let like little look lot love make me more my new night no not now of old on one our	play please put run said say school see she small so some stop that the their them then there they this to too	up us use very want was we went were what when where who why will with would yes you your
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Appendix 6

Printing lower case letters

l i j t

c o a s g d e q f

n r h m b p

u u

v w z

x k

Printing capital letters

I L J U

F E T H

C O S Q G

D P R B

V W Z

A M N X K Y

Appendix 7 **Samples of Children's Writing**

***Appendix 8* Alphabet Charts**