



Literacy Everyday Everywhere

Literacy begins at infancy. Singing, talking, playing, and laughing with babies nurtures communication. Stories, rhymes, books, games, and songs build early language. A child learns to understand language (spoken and/or sign) and then uses language to learn. Language is the foundation for literacy. Families of children with hearing loss can create emerging literacy experiences everyday everywhere.

Parents as Readers

Parents reading to their children who are deaf or hard of hearing can consider where a child has better access to language. Sitting to the side or in the lap of an adult allows a child using spoken language to be close, hear the reader and see the book. Children using sign language can be at the side or across from a reader to see expressions, signing and the book. Chatting about stories is also part of literacy.

Reading can be enjoyed multiple times per day. Families can adapt a book to fit a child's attention span. Parents might focus on the pictures or emphasize pages that the child likes. Families can rely on the pictures to re-tell stories that are complex or written in other languages. It is fine to read a child's favorite book often. Repeating the same story helps with listening, remembering, and thinking.

Children as Readers

Babies look at books and cuddle as parents read. Toddlers might mouth books and point to pictures. Preschoolers can ask questions and discuss stories. Reading together increases vocabulary and comprehension. Gradually children can be guided in early literacy skills including re-telling stories, reading parts of books, print awareness, alphabet knowledge, letter sounds, sight words and writing.



- Babies and parents share stories and songs for emotional connections and rhythmic language.
- Toddlers enjoy books with different textures, bright pictures, fun words, and short stories.
- Preschoolers are ready for engaging picture books with much information or longer stories.
- School age children like to re-tell stories, listen to many types of books, and discuss reading.
- Students reading independently choose varied levels of books but still benefit from being read to often.

Literacy in the Home

Daily routines can include conversation, stories, songs, and chants. Books related to the songs or rhymes add more language. Children can choose books, turn pages, and help read. Varied voices and lively reading keep children interested. Book time may provide calmness for attending and thinking. Reading

alone and together after school, before bed or at nap can become anticipated favorite routines.

- Pictorial schedules or grocery lists can include children's coloring, scribble or cut/paste.
- Helping draw reminders to family, notes to teachers or pictures for friends is a start to writing.
- Measuring, timing, or sequencing in recipes, gardening, and home repairs involves early math.
- Acting out books, role plays, or make-believe stories offers fun conversational turn taking.
- Keeping a box with paper, crayons or books within reach lets children choose to read/write.
- Collecting catalogues, magazines or take-out menus provides different literacy explorations.
- Counting toys, snacks, cups, towels, shoes, or other items can be a part of clean up tasks.
- Creating experience books of photos with captions is special reading about children's activities.

Literacy on the Go

Songs, talking, reading, and writing are done everywhere. Books can be read on the bus, in the car, at the store and waiting for appointments. Paper and pencils in their backpacks let children draw or scribble anytime. Their pictures can become stories about what they saw or did. Playing outside, walking in the neighborhood, and doing family errands can include many types of literacy experiences.

- Songs can be sung with new words: "wheels go round n round" becomes "tigers go roar n roar."
- Community libraries, local schools, neighborhood sales and free tables provide book choices.
- Colors, sizes, and symbols can be compared in logos, banners, billboards, or store windows.
- Alphabet letter names, sounds, and shapes can be pointed out for children to say or touch.
- Finding the first letter of his name on community signs can encourage a child to recognize it.
- Labels, coupons, or adverts used in shopping can guide children to get items or check the list.
- Playing number games can introduce counting. "I see one bus, two trees, three dogs and....?"
- Silly poems or simple jokes can be invented to recite, repeat, revise, or write together.

Parents thoughtfully create many experiences to encourage children's early literacy. When families model the pleasure of reading and writing they provide a powerful example for children. Discovering language and exploring books can be filled with learning and fun at all ages. An early interest in rhymes, songs, and books can be a child's start to fluent, expressive reading and a lifetime love of literacy.