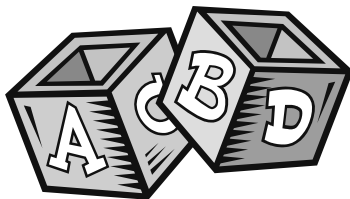


Talking with Baby

Babies respond with an entire array of gestures, expressions, and sounds even when they can't form words. By meeting the children on their level, you can engage them in quite interesting conversations!

For example, when walking by a pasture you might hold baby so she can see the horses grazing. Then you could point out the horses and excitedly call the child's attention to them, naming and describing the horses and mimicking a whinny. When the child responds with a coo or point, you can reciprocate by positively reinforcing the child's observations".

When you talk with children who are too young to form words themselves, they are still learning conversational structure, sounds of their primary language, and even the words that make up their early vocabulary. Even when too young to process word meaning, the sounds of love and support that come from your conversation are essential to baby's early development.



What Should I Read to Baby?

Don't feel awkward reading to baby! Try books that...

- ...are washable, durable, and chewable.
- ...have clear and colorful pictures.
- ...have nameable pictures to point out.
- ...show familiar objects or actions.
- ...have lots of different textures to feel.
- ...are simply rhythmic or rhyming.
- ...are homemade!
- ...are fun for caregivers and parents too.
- ...can be shared over and over again.

Don't forget that baby's books don't have to tell a story! If your favorite picture book is just too long, try focusing on one thing per page instead. You can read it in entirety when baby is older.

Interacting verbally with caregivers is the primary source of early literacy learning for babies. Sharing a book is one of the easiest ways to introduce new sights, sounds, and textures to baby.

If you are concerned about the life expectancy of the books you purchase for your home, try books similar to the "Indestructible" brand. These books are made with a special, baby-friendly paper that will hold up to even the most avid chewers and strongest fingers.

Every Baby Ready to Read



Early Literacy for Babies



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225 5th Street
Springfield, Oregon 97477
574 726-3766

Wheremindsgrow.org/kids

Springfield Public LIBRARY Springfieldkidsreadytoread.weebly.com
Where Minds Grow Based on Betty Bardige's Ed.D. "Talk to Me, Baby!: How You Can Support Young Children's Language Development." 2009

Fun Things to Do with Baby!

Blow soap bubbles

Create a simple puzzle

A pot with a lid, stackable cups, and other common items are great puzzles for babies. Encourage and talk baby through her actions.

Experiment with finger foods

New textures and tastes are fun, and so are the words you can use to describe what baby is experiencing.

Have baby look for hidden toys

Hide a toy under a blanket or in a pocket and ask baby where it is. You can even use smaller items (but nothing so small as to be a hazard) to hide in baby's pockets or cuffs.

Show baby their reflection

Does baby realize that it is a reflection? If you put a hat on baby, will they reach for the hat or the mirror? This is a fantastic discovery experience!

Make emptying and filling toys

Use a group of items like blocks, wooden clothespins, etc. and have baby fill a container. After baby has mastered the first toy, choose a new container with a narrower neck.

Make a baby obstacle course

Pillows, furniture cushions, and many other household items can make a fun, challenging, and safe area for baby to explore and discover.

Let baby explore effects

In a bathtub or sandbox, baby can explore what happens when water drips into the tub or sand pours from a cup held high. Supply lots of tools—sponges, cups, sieves, etc.—for baby to play with.

Sit and look out the window with baby

Talk about all the things you see! Remember, just because baby isn't talking doesn't mean that baby isn't learning.

Give baby different fabrics

Talk about the different textures and let baby pull and play with the fabrics.

Give baby a sturdy box or clothes basket

Ask baby to get inside or to put toys in and then take them out of the box. Bang it like a drum or hide inside it! Infinite possibilities.

A big thank you to Betty S. Bardige and her book *Talk to Me, Baby!: How You Can Support Young Children's Language Development* for this fantastic list and all her early literacy knowledge. We've quoted her liberally in this brochure.

Shaker Toys

Use plastic bottles or eggs, fill with rice, water, or lentils, and secure the seal. (Be sure the seals are nice and secure for baby's safety. Decorative Duct Tape works very well and is snazzy, too.) These are great for rolling, shaking, hiding, and carrying. Don't forget to talk to baby about what he's doing!

Remember to Rhyme

Never underestimate the power of a good rhyme. Rhymes that get the fingers going (think *Itsy Bitsy Spider* or *Pat-a-Cake*) are also called "finger plays" and help with language and fine motor skills.

Talk - Talk to baby, even if baby doesn't "talk back" in the traditional sense. She's laughing and learning along with you.

Sing - Sing! Sing while you're dressing baby and sing when taking a bath. You don't need to carry a tune to give baby the benefit of singing. Singing is a fundamental step in learning language.

Read - Perhaps the easiest way to raise a reader is simply to read with baby! Read books, recipes, street signs, the mail, and anything else that baby can see.

Write - Even though baby can't hold a crayon, you can still help baby practice his motor skills with lots of finger plays. Anything that uses his fingers will help!

Play - Oh, the importance of PLAY! Playing is a way for baby to explore and learn about the world around her. Playing is a learning fundamental.

Great Books for Baby

What is That?	By Tana Hoban
Goodnight Moon	By Margaret Wise Brown
Goodnight Gorilla	By Peggy Rathman
Jazz Baby	By Lisa Wheeler
Love You Forever	By Robert Munsch
Ten Night Eight	By Molly Bang
Blue Hat, Green Hat	By Sandra Boynton
Brown Bear, Brown Bear	By Bill Martin Jr.
Piggies	By Audrey & Dan Wood
Hop on Pop	By Dr. Seuss
Black on White	By Tana Hoban
Quite Loud	By Leslie Patricelli
Pat the Bunny	By Dorothy Kunhardt
Moo Baa La La La	By Sandra Boynton
No No Yes Yes	By Leslie Patricelli
Freight Train	By Donald Crews
Planting a Rainbow	By Lois Ehlert
It Looked Like Spilt Milk	By Charles Shaw
The Belly Book	By Fran Manushkin
Head, Shoulders, Knees & Toes	By Annie Kubler
Hippopposites	By Janik Coat

Expanding Vocabularies

1. If you see something catch your toddler's eye, follow their lead and talk about it with them! Identify the object by saying its name and discussing its function, characteristics, etc.
2. Sing a new song or rhyme with a funny or interesting word in it. Songs that repeat the same words and sounds will help your child remember it.
3. Read a new book together. Even books that are wordless help children pull words from their current vocabulary while adding new ones to it.
4. Tell a joke! Use humor to associate two things that clearly don't go together and help your child "get" the joke.
5. Just use your regular vocabulary and think out loud. Naturally curious kiddos will ask "what is that?" when you hit a fascinating word they don't know. Use it as a teaching moment.

HAVE FUN!

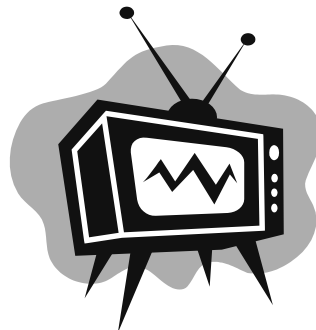
Most of these situations happen every day already. All you have to do is utilize them the best you can.

Much Ado about Screen-time

Oh, what to do about those screens? Most homes have screens of some kind, whether it be on a television, a computer, a tablet, or phone. It is difficult to eliminate screen time from our lives, but when it comes to your toddler, here's the skinny:

"Most experts advise keeping screen time to a minimum. Even when a program's content is developmentally appropriate, the presentation may be too stimulating. Too much exposure to attention-grabbing media may interfere with young children's development and ability to entertain themselves or form their own ideas.

Parents [and caregivers] should limit their own viewing as well, so that they model other behaviors such as being involved in physical activities, reading, and talking more. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no television for children younger than two years."



Quote from "Talk to Me, Baby! How You Can Support Young Children's Language Development" by Betty S. Bardige.

Every Toddler Ready to Read



Early Literacy for Toddlers



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Fun Things to Do with Toddlers!

Make Your Stuffed Animals Talk

Treat it like a puppet, even if the stuffed animal isn't built like one. You can even act out short skits!

Go on a Pretend Shopping Trip

This is especially excellent for toddlers who like to collect and carry things. Use a tote bag or mock shopping cart and name each item as you "buy" or borrow it.

Plan a Picnic

Work together to decide what to bring, pack, and prepare. Don't forget a small pail or bag so that your toddler can help transport the meal. You can even bring some food themed books!

Play Dress-Up

The clothes don't even have to be fancy! Collect old clothes, shoes, hats, bags, etc. and, whatever you do, don't forget the cape.

Make a Family Photo Album

Include pictures of family members, pets, friends, experiences, etc. Laminate the photos or place them in sturdy plastic sleeves. You have just made your own special book to discuss with your toddler!

Play Follow the Leader

After your toddler has mastered walking and running, this game becomes loads of fun. Games like "Red Light, Green Light" and "London Bridge" are other fun games to play.

Slide Different Objects Down a Slide

Use many different items—some soft, some round, some heavy, some square— and see what happens when they go down the slide. Compare to see which were the fastest and slowest.

Encourage Toddlers to Play Together

Give two young toddlers similar toys (two hats, balls, etc.). Watch to see if they play together or imitate each other. Comment on what each child is doing, either separately or together.

Do Something Silly!

Put a cup on your head or pretend to nibble a block like it was a piece of food. See if your toddler will imitate you.

Point Out & Name the Signs on a Walk

Around the room or on a hike, notice and handle the small pieces of the world around you.

Make Some Noise

Give your toddler rhythm instruments. They can be pots and pans, wooden spoons, shakers, tambourines, drums, or almost anything else. Line everyone up (even if it's just the two of you) and get the music going while you march around the room in your very own marching band. Bonus points if you dress up, too!

Talk

Try a wordless book with your toddler and have them walk you through what happens on each page and identify the characters. Searching for just the right word will expand your toddler's vocabulary!

Sing

Singing helps toddlers understand how sounds and words actually work! Everything coming together with music reinforces early literacy skills.

Read

Even a few minutes of reading with your child each day makes a noticeable difference in their literacy skills and kindergarten preparedness. By cultivating a love of reading, you are inspiring joy in learning.

Write

Grab the markers and break out the puzzles, because it's time to build some fine motor skills! Teach your toddler how to write their name. Few things will make them feel more accomplished.

Play

Dress up and get muddy; pretend and be silly! Playtime flexes your toddler's creative muscles and helps them put words to their experiences.

Great Books to Try

The Very Hungry Caterpillar	By Eric Carle
Green Eggs & Ham	By Dr. Seuss
Knuffle Bunny	By Mo Willems
Go Away, Big Green Monster!	By Ed Emberly
Not a Box	By Antoinette Portis
Mouse Paint	By Ellen Stoll Walsh
Press Here	By Herve Tullet
Goodnight, Goodnight, Construction Site	By Sherri Dusky Rinker
The Napping House	By Audrey Wood
Green	By Laura Vaccaro Seeger
There Are Cats in this Book	By Viviane Schwartz
Chicka Chicka Boom Boom	By Bill Martin
Jamberry	By Bruce Degen
Is Your Mama a Llama?	By Deboarh Guarino
Animals Should Definitely not Wear Clothing	By Judi Barrett
If You Give a Mouse a Cookie	By Laura Numeroff
No, David!	By David Shannon
Mr. Gumpy's Outing	By John Burningham
Lemons Are not Red	By Laura Vaccaro Seeger
The Cow Who Clucked	By Denise Fleming

A big thank you to Betty S. Bardige and her book *Talk to Me, Baby!: How You Can Support Young Children's Language Development* for this fantastic list and all her early literacy knowledge. We've quoted her liberally in this brochure.

What Preschoolers Like to Read

So which books will catch my preschooler's attention? Try books that...

...are uniquely illustrated.

...are fun to read out loud.

...feature a favorite character.

...have a distinct rhyme or rhythm.

...explain strange things that happen.

...teach kids about themselves.

...show cultures other than their own.

...have patterns.

...help them explore a specific interest.

...engage a "what will happen next" mindset.

...feature characters sharing their feelings.

...show characters overcoming adversities, both large and small.

...are books they have made themselves!

These are only a few examples of the books that will engage preschoolers; each presents unique learning opportunities. The more words your child hears, the better prepared they will be to enter kindergarten.



Let's Play Pretend

What does playing pretend have to do with learning to read? **Everything!**

When preschoolers play pretend, with each other and with caregivers, it exercises many different skills. Here are a few:

Planning

Negotiation

Storytelling

Taking Turns

Resourcefulness

Intellectual & Social Flexibility

Conversation

Vocabulary

Creativity

Imagination

Self-Confidence

Provides an Emotional Outlet

Emotional Resiliency

...and More!

"If you notice your preschooler's pretend play becoming a little static or overly wild, use those moments to teach or jumpstart the play session to make it more creative or productive. Support the children and help them work through disagreements and conflict."

Every Preschooler Ready to Read



Early Literacy for Preschoolers



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Fun Preschool Activities

Play “I Spy”

Pretend to Be Animals

Make Maps

It doesn't matter if you are mapping a real or imaginary place; making maps is a great way to learn.

Explore Rainbows

Can you make a rainbow? How many different ways?

Cook Together

Cooking allows preschoolers to learn about counting, measuring, nutrition, and even different cultures.

Introduce Photography

Made even more accessible with smart phones and tablets, photography is a great way for preschoolers to see the results of their actions. Let them take their own photographs, too!

Find Out what Lives Under your Neighborhood

Take a walk and find out what lives under that rock, the porch, and the swings. See how many different plants or creatures you can find and talk about them.

Make a Book

Fold a few brown paper sacks in half, punch wholes through the fold, and lace them with yarn. You now have a book with pockets and pop-up pages! Use whatever art supplies you find to finish your creation.

Try New Food

This is a great way to engage all your senses: sight, smell, taste, touch, and yes, even sound! Trying new and “strange” foods also provides an opportunity to expand your preschooler's vocabulary.

Get Messy

Try different art techniques! You can use cut vegetables as stamps and paint with spices, or you can make a collage with recycled materials. Even if you don't have paints or clay, you can create beautiful works of art with your preschooler.

A big thank you to Betty S. Bardige and her book *Talk to Me, Baby!: How You Can Support Young Children's Language Development* for this fantastic list and all her early literacy knowledge. We've quoted her liberally in this brochure.

Oobleck

Begin with equal parts cornstarch and water, then adjust the mixture so that it pours like liquid but feels solid when pressed.

Silly Putty

1 Tablespoon White Glue
1 Tablespoon Liquid Starch

Soapsuds Clay

3/4 Cup Ivory Snow Soap Powder
1 Tablespoon Warm Water
Beat with an electric or hand mixer
and add food coloring if desired.

Talk

Preschoolers love to talk! Talking with your preschooler is an ideal way to exchange ideas, pose questions and puzzles, and expose your child to an array of fabulous new words.

Sing

Singing helps preschoolers hear the individual sounds that make up words. Understanding these different sounds is crucial when learning to read.

Read

Share the joy of reading with your preschooler! By sitting and truly enjoying the reading experience with your child, you are cultivating that love in them and preparing them for later academic success and enjoyment.

Write

Remember that any task that utilizes fine motor skills is preparing your child for writing. This means that cutting, lacing, and coloring are wonderful preschool activities. Get those little fingers moving!

Play

Pretend play is especially important for preschoolers. They learn to work together and use their expanding vocabulary to put words to their feelings and experiences while they solve problems and create.

Great Preschool Reads

And Then It's Spring	By Julie Fogliano
Bear Has a Story to Tell	By Philip C. Stead
Charley's First Night	By Amy Hest
Demolition	By Sally Sutton
Let's Go for a Drive!	By Mo Willems
Oh, No!	By Candace Fleming
Penny and Her Doll	By Kevin Henkes
Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons	By Eric Litwin
Up, Tall, and High!	By Ethan Long
This Moose Belongs to Me	By Oliver Jeffers
This Is not My Hat	By Jon Klassen
Inside Outside	By Lizi Boyd
Mr. Tiger Goes Wild	By Peter Brown
Fancy Nancy	By Jane O'Connor
Chicka Chicka Boom Boom	By Bill Martin Jr.
Flora and the Flamingo	By Molly Idle
Creepy Carrots	By Aaron Reynolds
Nighttime Ninja	By Barbara DaCosta
Just Ducks	By Nichole Davies
Machines Go to Work in the City	By William Low