



Building Early Literacy Skills

Reading helps build many skills including your child's language skills. While reading:

Let Your Child Lead

- Let your child set the pace; spend more time on pages that he likes
- Respond to what your child says/does with comments and questions
- Ask a question that encourage him to think and to give an opinion

Wait (give your child time to comment on the book)

- Before or after you turn a page
- After you make a comment
- After you ask a question

Comment more, question less to keep the conversation going

- I wonder..., I think., I like...



Reading in the early years is about building positive experiences with books, not about finishing every one you start.

- Reading Rockets



Tips for reading with babies

- Find books made of cardboard, fabric or plastic that can withstand chewing.
- Leave books in baby's reach; let your baby touch the books and put them into his/her mouth.
- Let your baby turn the pages; it's ok if they flip back and forth! Use words like "open", "close", "flip" or "turn" as they move through the book and explore.
- Talk about the pictures instead of reading the words. Don't worry about reading the entire book at this age, just enjoy the time bonding with your baby!

Bake for literacy!



Baking with your child is a great opportunity to build your child's literacy skills by showing them that words have meaning. It also:

- Practice listening and following directions
- Builds attention and concentration
- Introduces many new words: vocabulary (colours, sticky, sprinkle), concepts (full/empty, big/small), prepositions (on, over, under, through) math words (half, quarter) and measurement (teaspoon, cup)

Point to the recipe as you gather ingredients and follow the steps; this will help build their print awareness. Be sure to let them help gather, measure and pour the ingredients. You will be teaching them so many things as you create! Try the recipe below or one of your favourites!

Sugar Cookies

Ingredients

- 1 cup butter or 1 cup margarine
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 ³/₄ cups flour
- Things to decorate

Directions

1. Cream butter and sugar.
2. Add egg and vanilla.
3. Mix all dry ingredients and add slowly to wet ingredients until combined.
4. Roll dough on lightly floured counter.
5. Cut with cookies cutters and place on a baking sheet.
6. Bake at 400 degrees for 7- 10 minutes (should be light in color with light browning on the edges).



What if your child isn't interested or won't sit still?

Look for:

- Books about subjects/characters that interest your child
- Books that can be manipulated (e.g. lift the flap) or with textures
- Books with repetitive words/phrases that your child can fill in
- Books that come with toys or objects that your child can use to help tell the story