



**ready...
set...
READ!**

Everyday Activities to Help Create Stronger Readers

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There are many times during the course of a busy day that parents can interact with their children in such a way as to improve their beginning and emergent reading skills. Many activities can be done without using paper and pencil. They can take place in the home, in the car, waiting for a sibling to finish soccer practice or for a meal to come in a restaurant. Almost anywhere! These activities



not only reinforce skills and help to pass the time, but the repeated practice will help your child become more familiar and comfortable with letters, sounds, and words. Thus, reading will become more enjoyable, and it is reading that is the foundation of all learning.



Alphabet Activities:

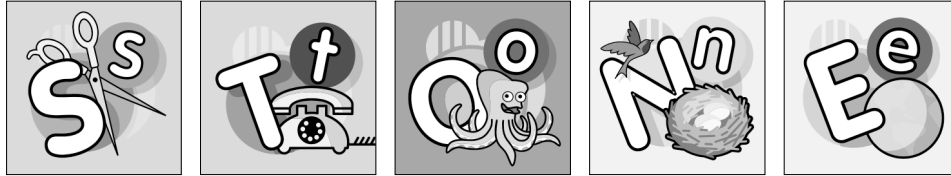
- Sing the Alphabet Song with your child. (Just go slowly when you come to "L, M, N, O, P." It is not one letter!)
- When riding in the car, take turns looking for the letters of the alphabet on signs, buildings, license plates, etc.
- Play "I'm Going on Vacation". One person mentions an item they are going to bring, starting with the letter "a". The next person repeats this item and then adds his/her own item which begins with the next letter of the alphabet ("I'm going on vacation and I'm going to bring an apple, a book,..."). To vary the game you can try to bring items that rhyme (hat, cat, mat) rather than using the alphabet letters.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Sounds...Letter/Word Activities:

- **Talk about the sounds of letters.** "Your name, 'John', begins with the letter 'J'. The word 'jump' begins with the same sound. 'John, jump.'" Repeat with other letters. Have your child take a turn.
- **Guess My Letter.** "I'm thinking of a letter and it makes the sound m-m-m-m. What's my letter?" Now it's your child's turn.
- **Can You Guess My Word?** Say a word, holding each separate sound longer than normal (m-o-p). Have your child say the word. Take turns.
- **Listening Game.** Your child must blend the onset sound and rhyme which you say separately. Example: Parent says, "b...at". Child then says, "bat". (This is great for practicing rhyming words or initial or ending sounds.) Parent: "s...and". Child: "sand".
- **Change the Word.** Have your child listen carefully to hear how you change two words. For example, mat fat, or sat sap. Encourage your child to try his/her own pair of words.
- **Sound Spy.** Tell your child that he/she is going to be a spy who has to find matching sounds at the beginning of words. Say 2 words that begin with the same sound and one word that does not (mat, sit, mop). Have your child repeat the 3 words and ask them to "Sound Spy" and identify the 2 words that begin the same. Variations: Try with middle or ending sounds that match.
- **Word Ladder.** Start with a small word (to). Challenge your child to make new words by adding 1 letter at a time:
to + n = ton ton + e = tone tone + s = stone
- **On-the-Go Rhyming.** When walking or riding in the car, tell your child you're going to name something you see. Then repeat this word with 2 different words. ("I see a house. House, horse. House, mouse.") Ask your child to tell you which pair of words rhyme.
- **SNAP!** One player says 2 words. If the words share a sound (beginning, middle, or end) the other players say, "Snap" and snap their fingers. (You can change the name of the game to CLAP!, and clap if your child is unable to snap his/her fingers.) If the two words do not share a sound, the other players are quiet. This can be a great family game.

- **Tongue Twisters.** Repeat tongue twisters to help your child become more aware of the sounds in words. Have fun!
- **Mind Reader.** Think of a sentence. Say the sentence out loud, but leave out one word. Example: "It was so cold outside that my body was _____." Ask child for words that could fit in the sentence. (Example: "freezing, cold, shaking".) Give child clues by saying, "My word starts with a blend" or "The word I'm thinking of rhymes with bold." Have your child guess the answer.



Rhyme and Poetry Activities:

- **Silly Nursery Rhymes.** Read or recite a nursery rhyme. Reread or recite it again, but substitute rhyming words that are not in the rhyme. (Humpty Dumpty sat on a ball.) Have your child identify what is wrong.
- **Dramatic Reading.** Read a poem with expression ("ham" it up!). Ask your child to act out a favorite line, verse, or the whole poem (make faces to demonstrate the way the character in the poem is feeling). Switch roles.

Reading Activities:

- **Sentence Hangman.** Write a sentence. Put lines for the missing letters in a word (I saw a T G E R at the zoo.) Have your child guess the missing letters.
- **Add-a-Part.** Take turns adding to a story you and your child (family) make up. Try making the story funny or spooky. Add suspense. "Suddenly..." then have the next person take over.
- **In the Kitchen.** Read words on cereal boxes/packages. Have your child get you the ingredients you need when cooking. Have them read the directions.
- Locate specific words at the mall, zoo, on a map. Find a street name or city when on the road.
- Keep a bag of books in the car. Read, read, read!