



Early Literacy Newsletter



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What is Early Literacy?

Early Literacy is what children know about reading and writing before they can actually read and write. Research shows that children get ready to read years before they start school. There are five early literacy practices that parents can incorporate into their children's daily life.

These five practices are:

Talking, Writing, Reading, Playing,
and Singing

This newsletter's purpose is to help parents of children from birth to age five put early literacy principles into practice. You can help your baby, toddler and preschooler learn important skills now so they can become good readers. There are many simple and fun ways to do this.

We invite you to bring your child to Library storytimes, which utilize research-based techniques to build early literacy skills. This newsletter will help you extend storytime benefits by including book-related fingerplays, crafts, and other activities.

This issue is all about:

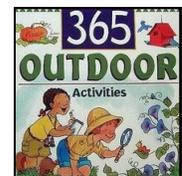
Outdoor Literacy Activities

The summer months are a great time to get outdoors. And there's no reason why the early literacy practices can't be brought outdoors too. In fact, with the ideas in this newsletter, you'll see the variety of ways outdoor activities can help your child with the early literacy skills they need to be ready to read and write!

Outdoor Activities that promote literacy:

- Read outside
- Create alphabet rocks by gathering rocks and writing or painting the letters of the alphabet on them. Then hide them outside in the backyard and have your child find them.
- Create your own nature ABC book with items you find outside.
- Use sidewalk chalk or a stick in the dirt to draw or write letters.
- Take a walk and talk about the things you see - signs, animals, plants, etc.
- Act out stories outside using materials from nature to create props.
- Have an adult use sidewalk chalk to draw shapes, letters, etc. Then have your child use a paintbrush and water to trace them.

For more ideas, check out the book *365 Outdoor Activities* by Maria Birmingham found in our Parent-Teacher Collection!

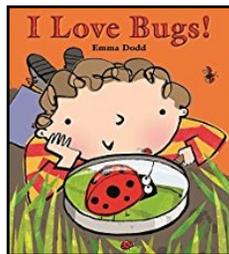


Here are some ways to use the five early literacy practices outdoors this summer!

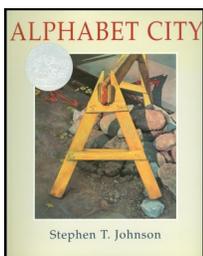


Talking

Summer is the time of year when bugs are out and about! Find a place outside to read *Some Bugs* by Angela DiTerlizzi or *I Love Bugs* by Emma Dodd. Then talk about the different colors and sizes of bugs. Talk about where bugs live - in the ground, in trees, etc. Look around and see if you can spot any bugs. If so, talk about what kind of bug it is. Ask your child what they think that bug is doing. Make up a story about the bugs you see.



Writing



Letters are all around us! The book *Alphabet City* by Stephen T. Johnson shows how the letters of the alphabet are hiding in items we see everyday. Have fun exploring this book together. Then go

for a walk outside to see what letters you can find in the world around you. Looking for letters in unusual places is a great way to get your child to think outside the box while learning letter recognition, an important skill when learning to...



Reading

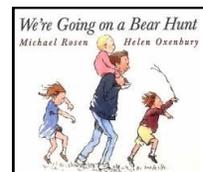


The book *Bringing the Outside In* by Mary McKenna Siddals inspires outdoor play and exploration in every season all through the year.

Splash in a puddle, jump in the leaves, collect some natural treasures and make all kinds of memories along the way!

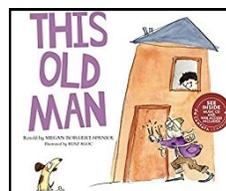
Playing

Pretend play is an important part of your child's developmental process. And the outdoors can be a great environment for your little



ones to use their imaginations. After reading the book *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* by Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury, go on your own bear hunt outside. Pretend to go through the long grass and splash through the cold river. To make the adventure more fun create homemade binoculars by taping together cardboard tubes and coloring them. You could even hide some stuffed teddy bears for your child to "hunt" for!

Singing



Singing is one of the best literacy activities you can take outside. Use a sing-along book, such as *This Old Man* by Megan Borgert-Spaniol, to spark the creation of an

outdoor orchestra. Encourage children to use drum or rhythm sticks to make tones and rhythms on play equipment, rocks, trees, etc. Turn your fence into an instrument by hanging foil pans, spoons, and rattles on it. Read and sing the book together with your outdoor instrumental accompaniment.

