



# Early Literacy Newsletter



Issue 14  
Jan - Mar 2018

## 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: **Family Literacy**

Family literacy is a term used to describe parents and children learning and reading together. Children raised in homes that promote family literacy grow up to be better readers and do better in school than children raised in homes where literacy is not promoted.

### Family activities that promote literacy:

- Take photos of your family doing a favorite activity. Then use the pictures to create a story together.
- As a family, go on a shape hunt throughout your home. Take turns pointing out items that are circles, squares, triangles, rectangles, etc.
- Create an imaginary restaurant with your child. Design a menu together and decide who will be the chef, server, customer, etc.
- Sing favorite songs together. Then write new words to the songs to make them about the people in your family! For example, instead of singing "Mary had a little lamb", put your child's name in the song with a favorite toy or some other special object that belongs to him.
- Make paper bag puppets. Then put on a puppet show together as a family.
- Take a walk as a family and talk about the things that you see along the way.
- Make cookies together. Show your child how you follow the steps of the recipe. Let them help you measure out ingredients using measuring cups and spoons.
- Listen to an Audio Book or music CD together as you travel from here to there.
- Visit the library together. When everyone in the family checks out books it shows your child that reading is valued in your family and that it brings pleasure.

**Talking**

**Singing**

**Reading**

**Writing**

**Playing**

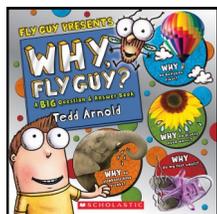
Here are some family activities to do that go along with the five early literacy practices!

## Talking



Need some encouragement to have nightly dinner conversations? In a study done by the National Literacy Trust, they found that two-thirds of kids who talk with parents at the dinner table feel confident about speaking in public.

Just one more reason to have great conversations at your table! Create a jar of table topic ideas to get the conversation going at dinner time. Take turns allowing different family members to choose a topic (or topics) from the jar. There are all kinds of ideas online or you can create your own! For more conversation fun, read “Why, Fly Guy? : A Big Question & Answer Book” by Tedd Arnold.



## Singing



Sing with your child every day. Singing is one of the best ways to develop the sound awareness skills that are critical to learning

to read successfully. Sing songs or nursery rhymes with actions such as “Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes” or “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.” Get the whole family involved by scheduling a family talent night – use a pretend microphone to sing your favorite songs together! Check out one of our Disney Karaoke CDs to get the party started.



## Reading

Make reading a book or a chapter in a book a family ritual each night before bed. Choose titles that are calming to help the kids wind down. “Shhh! This Book Is Sleeping” by Cedric Ramadier and “Bear Snores On” by Karma Wilson are some fun titles to get you started.

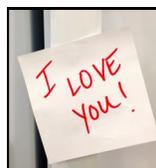


## Playing

Many families enjoy a weekly or monthly game night. Did you know that there are lots of games that require you to read or build literacy skills? And there are even some books that you can use to play games together. The book “One Is Not a Pair: A Spotting Book” by Britta Teckentrup includes picture puzzles and matching games. And the “I Spy” and “Look and Find” series books are a lot of fun for family together time. Make them into a game by seeing who can find the objects fastest on each page!



## Writing



One way to encourage writing practice is to have family members leave notes for one another on a regular basis. Leaving a note in a lunch box, taping a note to the

mirror in the hallway or slipping a note under a pillow are great ways to reinforce the importance of writing to communicate information. Children should be encouraged to send notes at every stage of their development - from scribbles to sentences.

For even more note writing fun, read the book “The Day the Crayons Quit” by Drew Daywalt where each crayon in the box leaves its owner a note!

