



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.

Over the course of the next five newsletters we will look at how the basic concepts of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math (STEAM) can be incorporated with early literacy activities!

What is STEAM? "STEAM" stands for science, technology, engineering, art, and math. For young children, we focus on STEAM through exploration, play and building curiosity about the world and the way things work. The real-life skills that people develop when learning STEAM help make them better problem-solvers and learners.

This issue is all about:

Early Literacy and Science

Science is a way of thinking. Science is observing and experimenting, making predictions, sharing discoveries, asking questions, and wondering how things work. Young children who participate in learning science are more likely to interpret and learn with challenging text, acquire rich vocabulary and language and write for a broader range of purposes.

Science activities that promote literacy:

- Go for a walk outside. See how many different types of leaves you can gather. Describe and sort the leaves by shape, size, and color.
- You and your child can have fun investigating and observing different liquids. Working together with oil or corn syrup and water, compare and contrast the smell, color, and thickness or density of the different liquids. Encourage your child to use descriptive words to describe the stickiness and weight of each liquid.
- Explore with a magnet. Gather a variety of objects from around your house. Then let your child use the magnet to discover which items are magnetic and which are not. Sort the items and talk about why or why not each item is magnetic.
- Grow a bean in a plastic zip top baggie by using some dried beans and a damp paper towel. Wet the paper towel and fold it so it fits nicely inside the baggie. Place a few beans in the bag and seal the bag shut. Tape the baggie to a window and watch as the seed begins to grow! Have your child draw or help them write what they see each day.

Talking

Singing

Reading

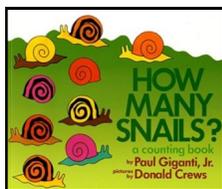
Writing

Playing

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

Talking

Measuring cups provide a great opportunity to learn concepts of volume, including vocabulary words such as more, less, and equal to. Fill a plastic bin with uncooked rice, un-popped popcorn, dried beans, or noodles. Allow your child to explore using all different sized measuring cups including teaspoons, tablespoons, and cup measurers. Pouring from one sized container into another helps children quickly see differences in volume. Ask your child questions, "Which container holds the most? Which holds the least? How many small scoops equals one big scoop? How many noodles do you think will fit into this container? How many popcorn seeds do you think will fit? Let's count and find out!" Then check out Paul Giganti Jr.'s book *How Many Snails?*, a great

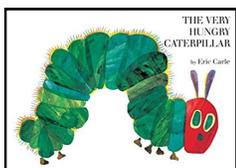


book for developing a child's powers of observation, discrimination, and visual analysis as well as providing lots of opportunity for talking together.

Reading

Kids easily learn that one thing follows another. Helping children sequence also develops their scientific inquiry skills. In order to study or observe changes in something, one must follow along and record changes. Use your story time books as sequencing models. The books you read together provide a chance to talk about a sequence of events. After you finish a book, ask your child what happened first? And then what happened? How did the book end? To extend this idea, write or draw each event on a separate index card or popsicle stick. Ask your child to put the cards (or sticks) in order.

Try it with Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, a great book for teaching sequencing!



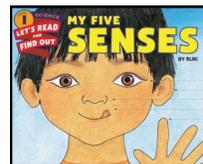
Singing

Kids can learn science concepts by incorporating songs and movement. Read *My Five Senses* by Aliki then sing and act out the song below.

Our Five Senses

(to the tune of : BINGO)

We have five senses that we use (hold up five fingers)
Each and every day (tap wrist like tapping a watch)



Sight (point to eyes), smell (nose), taste (mouth), touch (hand), hear (ear)

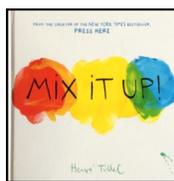
Sight, smell, taste, touch, hear

Sight, smell, taste, touch, hear

These are our five senses! (hold up five fingers)

Playing

Kids love playing with water! And by incorporating a few added elements, you can introduce a fun science experiment along with water play. Using red, blue, and yellow colored water, make several trays of little ice cubes. Provide your child with a few empty jars, a cup of warm water, and an eye dropper. Give your child the colored ice cubes in small batches and allow him to mix two different colors of ice cubes and warm water in the jars. Encourage your child to talk about his experiences and to keep track of the different colors he makes and discovers. Ask your child to explain what



happens to the ice and to predict what will happen when different colors, such as blue and yellow, are mixed together. Then have fun "playing" with the interactive book, *Mix It Up* by Herve Tullet.

Writing

Help your child create a special science journal where she can keep track of her observations and predictions of different things as you go through your day. You can help your child write, draw pictures of things you see outdoors or even tape or glue some nature items into the book.

Then explore a riverbank, a town, a forest, the country, a park and a beach with a little boy and his grandmother in the book *Toshi's Little Treasures* and see what they discover along the way!

