



# Early Literacy Newsletter



Issue 5  
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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 six early literacy skills that parents can incorporate into their children's daily life. These six skills are: Print Motivation, Vocabulary, Print Awareness, Narrative Skills, Phonological Awareness, and Letter Knowledge.

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.

One of the six Early Literacy skills is:

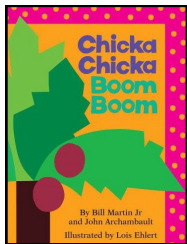
## Phonological Awareness

Children begin to read by listening to others read aloud, then recognizing sounds in words, sounding words out for themselves, recognizing familiar words, and so on. By engaging in word play, children learn to recognize patterns among words and use this knowledge to read and build words.

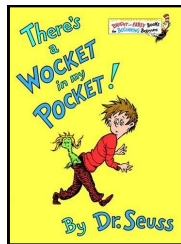
### Here are some ways to help develop your child's phonological awareness...

- Share nursery rhymes with your child.
- Read to your child. Even though your child may be too young to understand the content of what you are reading, he will hear the sounds and the rhythm of what you are saying.
- Sing a lot of songs! Songs are one of the easiest and best ways to build phonological awareness. Many songs have rhyming words. Plus, in music, most segments of words have a different musical note, so it trains your child's ear to hear smaller pieces of words.
- When you are selecting books to read with your child, make sure you include ones that rhyme. Ask your librarian for some suggestions.
- Make up silly words by changing the first sound in a word: milk, nilk, pilk, rilk, filk. These words aren't going to make sense, but it shows your child that you can change words and manipulate them!
- Say words with a pause between the syllables ("rab" and "it") and have your child guess what word you are saying.
- Clap out the syllables in words or clap as you sing - this helps your child notice how the words are built of smaller pieces.

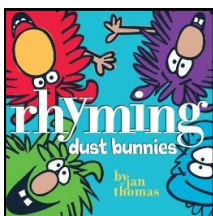
## Some great books to build phonological awareness:



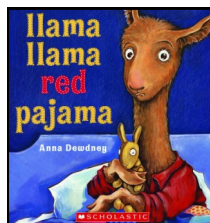
**Chicka Chicka Boom Boom**  
[Reserve this book](#)



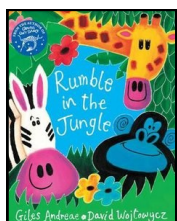
**There's a Wocket in my Pocket!**  
[Reserve this book](#)



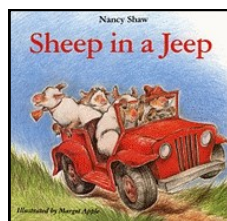
**Rhyming Dust Bunnies**  
[Reserve this book](#)



**Llama Llama Red Pajama**  
[Reserve this book](#)



**Rumble in the Jungle**  
[Reserve this book](#)



**Sheep in a Jeep**  
[Reserve this book](#)

### Craft: Chicka Chicka Boom Boom Tree

The book *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault is filled with funny, rhyming text that encourages children to recognize the sounds in words. After reading the book, help your kids create their own *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* tree. Use construction paper to cut out the tree's brown trunk, green leaves and brown coconuts. Glue them to a background color. Then add the letters of your child's name to the trunk using foam letters, alphabet stickers or by writing them on with a marker!



### Try this Fun Fingerplay with your Toddler or Preschooler:

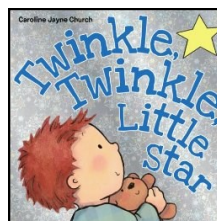
#### Four Busy Squirrels

Four busy squirrels (hold up four fingers) scamper all around (wiggle fingers).  
 One finds a nut (hold up one finger) to bury underground (pretend to dig).  
 One gnaws an acorn (pretend to chew) and doesn't make a sound (hold finger in front of lips).  
 One goes to sleep (pretend to sleep) high in a leafy nest (point upward).  
 One climbs a tree (pretend to climb tree) that's what it likes best (nod head).  
 Whoosh goes the wind (wave arms) leaves swirl round and round (turn around).  
 Four busy squirrels (hold up four fingers) scamper through the forest ground (wiggle fingers).

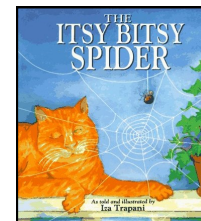


### Board Books for Babies

A great way to enhance your baby's phonological awareness is to sing songs together. Music can reinforce learning and singing words can help your child learn to read the words later. Here are some examples of familiar songs in board book format from our collection.



**Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star**  
[Reserve this book](#)



**The Itsy Bitsy Spider**  
[Reserve this book](#)

### Early Literacy App

The iPad app **Reading Raven** is a great resource for building kids' phonological awareness and phonics skills. The app takes your child from pre-reading to reading short sentences, using voice-over instructions and mini-games. It can be customized according to age so that the app grows along with your child's reading ability.

