



# Parent's Guide to Emergent Literacy

**Preschoolers: 3 to 5 Years of Age**

## What is emergent literacy?

Emergent literacy is what children know about reading and writing before they can actually read and write. Early literacy skills are building blocks for later reading and writing. Children learn these skills beginning in infancy and continue to develop them in the years before they start school.

## Why parents are the best “teachers”

- Children begin to get ready to read long before they start school
- Young children have short attention spans but enjoy repeating favorite activities; parents can share these activities frequently at home
- No daycare or nursery school can provide the one-on-one teaching that parents can
- Parents know their children best and good mood

## What are the skills prereaders need to develop?

**Phonological sensitivity** is the ability to hear and manipulate the smaller sounds in words.

**Vocabulary** is knowing the names of things.

**Print awareness** is the child's understanding that written language has meaning.

**Narrative skills** describe the ability to understand and tell stories.

**Letter knowledge** is understanding that different letters have specific sounds.

**Print motivation** is a child's interest in and enjoyment of books.

## How can you help?

**Phonological sensitivity** can be developed by playing word games with your child. Some good games to try:

- saying words with a pause between the syllables (e.g., “rab” and “it”) and having your child guess what word you are saying
- categorizing words by their first sound (e.g., find everything in the house that begins with the “buh” sound: “ball,” “bed,” “baby,” “bowl”);
- making up “silly” words by changing the first sound in a word (e.g., “milk,” “nilk,” “pilk,” “rilk,” “filk”).


## Vocabulary and print awareness can be developed by reading with your child frequently.

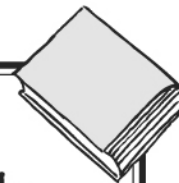
- Children who are read to three times per week or more do much better in later development than children who are read to less.
- When you are sharing picture books with your child, ask your child to talk about the book instead of just listening to you read the story..
- Ask your child to take turns with you in telling about the pages of a picture book that your child knows well.

## **Narrative skills** can be developed by:

- Asking your child to tell you about his/her's days events in sequence.
- Asking your child to retell a story to you after you have read it together.

**Letter knowledge** can be developed by involving your child in a variety of reading and writing activities.

- Point out and name letters in alphabet books, picture books, or on signs and labels.
  - Help your child read his or her name and other familiar words using magnetic letters, crayons, or pencil and paper.
- 



*Print motivation* can be developed by

- Making trips to the library or bookstore.
- Making shared book reading a special time for closeness between you and your child.
- And by letting your child see that you enjoy reading.

### Suggested Books for preschoolers

<b>Alborough</b>	Where's My Teddy?
<b>Aylesworth</b>	Old Black Fly
<b>Burleigh</b>	I Love Going Through This Book
<b>Compestine</b>	The Runaway Rice Cake
<b>Crews</b>	A Hot Summer Day
<b>Cronin</b>	Click, Clack, Moo
<b>Falwell</b>	David's Drawings
<b>Guarino</b>	Is Your Mama A Llama?
<b>Hoban</b>	The Look Book
<b>Johnson</b>	Alphabet City
<b>Johnson</b>	Daddy Calls Me Man
<b>McCall</b>	A Huge Hog is a Big Pig
<b>Numeroff</b>	If You Give a Mouse a Cookie
<b>Seeber</b>	A Pup Just for Me; A Boy Just for Me
<b>Stevens</b>	And the Dish Ran Away with the Spoon
<b>Wood</b>	Alphabet Adventure

## Suggested Titles For Parents

<b>Cullinan</b>	Let's Read About: Finding Books They'll Love to Read
<b>Fox</b>	Reading Magic: Why Reading Aloud to Our Children Will
<b>Haas</b>	Read It Aloud!: A parent's
<b>Trachtenberg</b>	The Best Children's Literature

### Adapted from:

The Early Literacy Initiative: a partnership between the Public Library Association and the National Institute of Child Health & Human Development (NICHD)

**\*\*\*Remember to ask your librarian for additional selections to share with your preschooler.**

## Parent's Guide to Emergent Literacy

**Preschoolers: 3 to 5 Years of Age**

