



## Early Literacy Skills

1. **Print Motivation:** Is being interested in and enjoying books. Children who enjoy books will be curious about reading and motivated to learn to read for themselves.

Motivation is important because learning to read is HARD WORK!

### What Can You Do to Help Build This Skill?

- Have fun!
- Read books you both like.
- Stop (or shift gears) when it is no longer fun. Length is not important; enjoyment.

2. **Print Awareness:** Is noticing print everywhere, knowing how to handle a book, and knowing how to follow the written word on the page. Children have to be aware of words before they can read them.

### What Can You Do to Build This Skill?

- Read board books that your child can handle on his/her own; let him/her turn the pages.
- Sometimes point to the words as you read.
- Talk about print and look for letters and words on signs, labels, and lists.

3. **Letter Knowledge:** Is knowing that letters are different from each other, knowing letter names and sounds, and recognizing letters everywhere.

### What Can You Do to Build This Skill?

- Look and talk about different shapes (letters are based on shapes).
- Notice different types of letters of a child's own name.
- Notice different types of letters ("a" or "A") on signs and in books.
- Read ABC books.

4. **Vocabulary:** Is knowing all kinds of words. It is much easier to read a word when it is one you know. Children with large vocabularies have an easier time when they start to read.

**What Can You Do to Build This Skill?**

- Encourage children to learn their native or home language first.
- Talk with children in positive and conversational ways.
- Explain the meanings of new words.
- Read books! Picture books use a different vocabulary than casual spoken conversation.

5. **Phonological Awareness:** Is hearing and playing with the smaller sounds of words. Children who can hear how words “come apart” into separate sounds will be more successful at “sounding out” words when they start to read.

**What Can You Do To Help Build This Skill?**

- Sing Songs; most break words up into one syllable per note.
- Recite rhymes; rhymes depend upon ending sounds.
- Play with tongue twisters.

6. **Narrative Skills:** Is describing things, events, telling stories, knowing the order of events, and making predictions. When children can retell a story, it shows that they are comprehending what they are reading.

**What Can You Do To Help Build This Skill?**

- Ask open-ended questions.
- Talk about your day and its series of events.
- Mix up the events in a story; make it silly!
- Guess what comes next-or come up with a different ending.
- Read stories without words; they really help focus on this skill.
- Name objects, feelings, and events.

**For More Information  
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