



This calendar offers activities that parents and their young children ages 0-5 can do together. Each activity is labeled to identify how it will help you build your child's literacy skills in at least one of the following areas:

**1. Oral Language:** Children develop oral language through the amount of talk they hear spoken by others. Encourage children to use new words, to interact with others using words, and to listen to how other people talk. Listening to adults read also helps children build their oral language.

**2. Phonological Awareness:** When children experience "phonological awareness," they are learning to play with the sounds of language. Encourage children to play and experiment with sounds by making up non-sense words, repeating rhyming words, singing songs and reciting chants. Each of these activities helps children experiment with sound.

**3. Print Awareness:** Children begin to understand more about how print works as they experience books and other written materials. They begin to see that pictures and words on the page represent different things. Adults can help children by showing them different

types of print (such as poetry, stories, and directions). Adults also can help children understand how print works on a page—for example, by showing that we read English from left to right.

**4. Alphabetic Knowledge:** Children can begin playing with the letters of the alphabet when they are very young. As children become more familiar with letters, they begin to understand that these letters represent sounds. They also begin to see that letters work together to form words. Adults can help children experiment with letters in meaningful ways. One way is by learning the letters in the most important word—a child's name!

- 1 Tell your child a story from your childhood. Ask your child to tell you her favorite story. [1] (National Family Literacy Day)
- 2 Look at the pictures in a book, newspaper or magazine. Talk about the pictures. Ask your child to describe what he sees. [1, 3] (Election Day)
- 3 Read a rhyming story or sing a song with your child. Let her fill in the rhyming words. [1, 2]
- 4 Help your child draw or cut out the first letter of his name. Look for other things in your home that start with that letter. [4]
- 5 Make up your own rhyme about something in your home. "The fat cat sat on the hat!" [2]
- 6 Let your child pick his favorite book to read out loud. Show him the title on the cover and the author's name before reading. [3]
- 7 Ask your child to help create a grocery list. Describe each item you put on the list. "A carrot is a vegetable and it is orange." [1, 3]
- 8 Recite a Nursery Rhyme or poem, one line at a time. Ask your child to repeat each line after you. [1, 2]
- 9 Help your child make labels for some things in her room, like "door" and "bookcase." Hang the labels in the room together. [3, 4]
- 10 Play the "I Spy" game by asking your child to find an object that starts with a particular letter. "I spy something that starts with the letter 'B.'" [1, 2, 4]
- 11 Help your child make a map of your home or your child's room. Write on the map the names of each item, like "Joe's Bed" or "Mommy's Stove." [3]
- 12 Make up rhymes for your child's name—it's okay if they're silly! [2]
- 13 Visit the library together. Take time to look at the children's books, and also newspapers, magazines, and the computer lab. [3]
- 14 Close your eyes and listen to the sounds around you. Talk about what you hear. Imitate the different sounds. [1, 2]
- 15 Read a story out loud with your child. Let him turn the pages for you. [1, 3]
- 16 Cut out large letters from the newspaper or a magazine. See how many words you can make together by moving the letters around. [3, 4]
- 17 Look at the pictures in a book or a magazine. Talk about the colors you see. "This flower is blue. What else is blue?" [1, 3]
- 18 Pick a song or rhyme both you and your child know. Sing it out loud, clapping the rhythm of the words. [1, 2]
- 19 Read a story together. Talk about the story. Ask questions to see if your child can remember some of the events of the story. [1]
- 20 Pick a letter of the alphabet—maybe a letter in your child's name. Throughout the day, look for objects that start with that letter. [2, 4]
- 21 Read a comic strip out loud from the newspaper. Ask your child to help you act it out. [1, 3]
- 22 Describe an item in your home. "It has four legs and we sit on it when we eat dinner." Can your child guess what it is? [1]
- 23 Make up two-word rhymes about items in your home, like "hot pot" and "night light." It's okay if the rhymes are silly, like "hug rug." [1, 2]
- 24 As you read together, show your child how each sentence starts with an uppercase letter. Point out the difference between uppercase and lowercase letters. [3, 4]
- 25 Talk about something you are thankful for. Ask your child what he is thankful for. [1] (Thanksgiving)
- 26 With your child, try to think of words that start with some letters of the alphabet. Help your child write the words, or draw pictures to represent the words. [3, 4]
- 27 Make the sound of a letter. Ask your child to try to find that letter in a book or newspaper. Read the word aloud that contains that letter. [2, 3, 4]
- 28 Ask a grandparent or older friend to tell you and your child about a special celebration he or she remembers from childhood. [1]
- 29 Describe the things you see outdoors or indoors, using words that start with the same sound—"silly snowflake," "big box," "cool car." [1, 2]
- 30 Read a story together in the morning. Then, before bedtime, read it again. Can your child remember what will happen next? [1, 3]