

Communications, Language & Literacy

33 to 48 months



Have continuous conversations with your child during routines such as mealtimes, in the car, going to another place, morning and nighttime schedule, etc.

Model and expand language by sharing books, making up stories, singing, and talking about what's happening around them.

Introduce new words especially those in the current learning experience. For example, when playing with a ball, use words like bounce, sphere, dribble, etc.

Have your child describe what they are building or what they built, making/made, doing/did, etc. Ask questions about these activities and allow your child to respond.

Sing songs, chants, or rhymes frequently.

Make up stories with your child.

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Give your child two- or three-step directions, such as take off your coat, hang it up on the hook, and then use the bathroom. If three steps are too many, begin with two and increase as your child can master more steps.

Ask your child to read to you. Encourage them to read left to right, top of page to bottom of page.

Read books without words in them. Encourage your child to make up the story according to the pictures.

While reading books, talk about the beginning, middle, and end of the story.

When possible, discuss and compare experiences in a book with real life experiences. If you are reading a book about a dog, and you have a dog, talk about same and different, what dogs do, and whether your dog behaves like the dog in the story.

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Teach your child simple words like "hello" in other languages: hola (Spanish), nin hao (nee-how) (Chinese), bonjour (French), guten tag (German), ta-blu (Karen), etc.

Identify letters in the environment such as M for McDonald's or S for Stop sign.

Practice saying letters with your child, especially those in their name.

Find letters in the environment that begin with the same letter as their name.

If you have an old keyboard, let your child play on it, and repeat letters as they touch them.

Help your child practice writing their name. At this stage, children may write all uppercase letters, they may not be in order or may be backwards, and they may not even be in a line. With practice and modeling, they will begin to master this skill.

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Make lists with your child and encourage them to “read” them with you. Make a grocery list and have your child cross items off as you get them off the shelf.

Introduce a variety of print materials: books, magazines, newspapers, phone books, greeting cards, etc.

Make silly rhymes together about objects in the house, car, or outside: bed-red, couch-pouch, spoon-moon, seat-feet. If words do not have another real words that rhyme, allow for made up words: window-pindow.

Allow your child to practice writing with assorted writing tools and papers: crayons, markers, pens, pencils, paint brushes, copy paper, construction paper, light sandpaper, magazines, etc.

Provide tracing materials/stencils. Trace shapes or letters.