

## Early Literacy

### Introduction

The ability to read and write well is a vital skill for all children, paving the way for an enjoyable and successful school experience.

Children learn and practise many of the skills that they need for reading and writing from a very early age. They do this through a wide range of activities and experiences, at home, in settings and in school.

Encourage your child to explore and learn by:

Talking with others

Singing and saying rhymes

Asking questions

Being confident

Making and listening to music

Socialising with other children



Dressing up

Reading aloud and sharing books

Using puppets and toys to retell and make up stories

Experimenting with writing

## **First steps to reading and writing**

From a very early stage, children develop an awareness of different sounds in spoken language. They develop and understand that spoken words are made up of different sounds (phonemes) and they learn to match these phonemes to letters (graphemes). Phonics is about children knowing how letters link to sounds (graphemes to phonemes), e.g. **c** as in 'cat', **ll** as in 'fell', **ee** as in 'sheep'.

Children use this phonic knowledge when they are reading and writing. This approach has been shown to be a quick and efficient way for most young children to learn to read words on the page, fluently and accurately.

Letters and sounds is a systematic phonics programme and is divided into six phases.

### **Phase 1 consists of seven interlinking parts.**

Aspect 1: General sound discrimination - environmental sounds

Aspect 2: General sound discrimination - instrumental sounds

Aspect 3: General sound discrimination - body percussion

Aspect 4: Rhythm and rhyme

Aspect 5: Alliteration

Aspect 6: Voice sounds

Aspect 7: Oral blending and segmenting

Go on a listening walk; make a point of listening to different sounds: cars, birds and people talking.

## **Environmental Sounds**

Children enjoy experimenting with the sounds different objects can make. Use a range of props, sticks along the fence, pots and pans.

Making large movements with swirling ribbons help to develop the physical skills necessary for writing.

Sing known songs loudly and then softly, stretch words in known songs and add new words or sounds.

## **Instrumental Sounds**

Listen to a range of music with your child. Encourage your child to move in response to the variety of music.

Children use home-made shakers to explore and learn how sounds can be changed.

Learn action rhymes, e.g. 'Heads, Shoulder, Knees and Toes'.

## **Body Percussion**

Use your body to make different sounds, e.g. clapping, slapping thighs, tap your fingers, stomping your feet, soft, fast, making a pattern.

Listen to the sounds your feet make when walking, stomping hard, running, skipping, jumping.

Make up own rhythmic chants, e.g. "two, four, six, eight, hurry up or we'll be late".

## **Rhythm and Rhyme**

Get into the rhythm of language, bounce, march, clap, chant to the rhythm of a song or rhyme.

Sharing rhyming stories, nursery rhymes, songs and poems.

Share songs and stories, emphasising alliteration e.g . 'Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers'.

Play around with familiar song such as 'Old MacDonald had some sheep, shoes, shorts, ships, with a 'sh sh here and a sh sh there', to emphasise alliteration.

## Alliteration

Make up little nonsense stories and phrases together using lots of alliteration, e.g . 'Mummy munches muffins, 'Daddy is doing the dishes'.

Add sound effects to stories, make it fun and involve the whole family.

## Voice Sounds

Use different voices for different characters when reading stories.

Say sounds in different ways, slow, fast, high, low, varying tempo and pitch.

Blending is a vital skill for spelling

The whole word is spoken aloud, in order, all through the word, and is then merged together into the whole word.

This merging is called 'blending'. E.g.c-a-t – cat.

## Oral blending and segmenting

Segmenting is a vital skill for spelling

The whole word is spoken aloud and then broken up into its separate sounds in order, all through the word.

E.g. cat – c-a-t

Use 'sound-talk'

Help the children to hear the separate sounds in words e.g

Can you get your h-a-t?

Where is the c-a-t?

S-i-t on the m-a-t.

Some more ideas:

- Using water to 'paint' outdoor surfaces
- Digging
- Using pegs
- Visit the library
- Use magnetic or foam letters
- Encourage reading of books, catalogues, comics,
- Encourage children to use a picture to make up their own story.
- Create a special 'writing bag' for travelling, visiting friends and doctors etc.
- Experiment with mark making inside and outside, e.g. chalks, playdough, sand, water, cake mixture
- Using the internet to explore stories and sounds

Useful websites for more information

<http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk/> - 'I spy a picture book'.

<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/>

<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/>

<http://www.education.com/reference/article/the> 'road to reading' and 'Making their mark - children's early writing'

<http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/>

<http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/FunIdeas>

Email: [putnoeprimary@schools.bedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:putnoeprimary@schools.bedfordshire.gov.uk) Website: [www.putnoeprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.putnoeprimaryschool.co.uk)

