



## HELLO PARENTS,

Early language and literacy development begins long before children learn the ABCs or enter school. Children gain significant knowledge of language, reading, and writing through positive interactions with people and literacy materials, such as books and stories, magazines, writing tools, and paper. Children need to know the alphabet in order to make a connection between the spoken and written language, but, more importantly, they need to be able to use the language to think and learn. In this newsletter, you will find activities that will help expand your child's vocabulary, engage them in interesting conversations, and encourage them to tell their own stories.

## ACTIVITIES

### INFANTS (3 -18 MONTHS)

#### PARTS OF MY BODY

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Sit next to your infant and point to your nose, saying: "nose". Then point to your child's nose, and say: "nose".
- Continue pointing to and naming various body parts on you and your child.
- Sing "[Head, Shoulders, Knees & Toes](#)" touching yours and your child's body parts as they appear in the song.
- Sing it fast or slowly and encourage your infant to point to their body parts, too.
- This activity expands your child's vocabulary in a fun and meaningful context.

[Click here](#) for more literacy activities.

### TODDLERS (19 MONTHS – 2.5 YEARS)

#### "ARE YOU MY MOTHER?" - A STORY WITH PROPS

##### MATERIALS:

- Book "[Are You My Mother?](#)" by P.D Eastman
- Small toys representing the characters in the book (bird, cat, dog, small toy car, small ball for an egg)
- Box

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Gather all the props in the box.
- Start reading "Are You My Mother?" with your child.
- As you read, assist your child in using the props to illustrate the events in the story.
- When your child becomes familiar with the story, they can use the props to tell and act out the story independently.
- You can create similar prop boxes for other books your child likes to read.
- This activity will enhance your child's language development and help them remember the sequence of the events in the story.

[Click here](#) for more ideas.

### PRESCHOOLERS (2.5 – 5 YEARS)

#### TURN BOOK READING INTO A CONVERSATION

##### MATERIALS:

- Book that your child may find interesting

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Sit down with your child and start reading the book together.
- Observe your child's reactions to the story and try to notice what in particular draws their attention: a character, an event, an illustration?
- Pause every now and then to give your child a chance to say something. For example, you can stop before you turn a page, after you read an interesting section, or after you point to and comment on an illustration.
- Follow your child's lead by responding to their comments and building on what they have said to keep the conversation going.
- Show that you are really interested in what your child has to say. Ask questions directly related to what they have said, or questions that will make them think or give opinions. For example: "What do you think will happen if...?", "Why is he...?", "What would you do if...?"
- If your child starts talking about something that is not directly related to the story in the book, follow their lead. This is how your child makes a connection between something they already know and something new.
- This activity is more than just reading a story; it is an exchange of ideas and information, an invitation to a meaningful conversation, and a building block to better reading comprehension.

[Click here](#) for a list of preschool books.

### JK/SK (4 – 6 YEARS)

#### MAKE A NEW WORD SPARKLE

##### MATERIALS:

- Paper
- Markers

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Based on what your child is currently interested in, explore one difficult word. For example: "hibernate".
- Find a book that talks about hibernation. For example, you can read "[Sleep, Big Bear, Sleep!](#)".
- After reading the story, discuss with your child why the bear was getting more and more sleepy. In the context of the story, mention the term "hibernate" and explain what it means.
- Engage your child in a conversation about sleep, why some animals hibernate, where they sleep during that time, what people and other animals do in winter, etc.
- Ask your child to draw a picture of a hibernating bear and help them write the word "hibernate" next to it.
- Ask your child to think of other words that have a similar meaning (sleep, rest, nap, etc.).
- If your child knows other animals that hibernate, they can add their pictures next to the bear.
- Help your child to set up a "cave" using a blanket and pretend to hibernate for the winter.
- Highlighting new words and using them in different contexts helps your child expand their vocabulary.

[Click here](#) for literacy activities and games for kindergarten children.

### SCHOOL-AGERS (6 – 12 YEARS)

#### IMAGINARY TRAVEL

##### MATERIALS:

- Construction paper
- Notebook
- Scissors
- Markers or pencils
- Map

##### DIRECTIONS:

- Start by looking at the map of the world.
- Choose one destination that you would like to visit.
- Do some research about your chosen destination: look up interesting sites, museums, parks, etc.; what the weather is like there; how to get there; or what language is spoken there.
- Decide what you would like to do and see in your chosen destination and make a list of things you will need to take with you.
- Create a passport for yourself: cut and fold a piece of construction paper into a booklet cover, and fill it with white paper for the booklet, cut and folded to the same size.
- If they speak a different language in the place you are going to visit, you can learn a few useful expressions in that language (hello, how are you, bye, thank you etc.)
- Start your imaginary trip. As part of your adventure, you can pay virtual visits to some of the sites you want to see.
- Make a travel log to document your trip and adventures you had there. Let your imagination guide you!
- In this activity, you will learn how to organize information, plan, and extend your knowledge about something that you are interested in.

[Click here](#) for more ideas to get children writing.



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada

#### A TIP FOR TODAY

- Create a print-rich environment at home with books and magazines easily accessible to help your child become familiar with written language.
- Introduce new words in meaningful contexts and use them in daily conversations with your child.
- Incorporate singing and nursery rhymes into your child's daily routines.
- Read with your child books with fun rhymes, sounds, and interesting pictures.
- Build conversations into book reading and ask questions that could expand your child's understanding of stories.