

**Early Literacy** is what children know about communication, language, verbal and non-verbal, reading and writing before they can actually read and write.

## Summary of Early Literacy Components

<p><b>Oral Language</b> the foundation of all later literacy: early literacy and reading. Includes listening, speaking and communication skills</p>	<p>Listening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk so children hear sounds of language</li> <li>• Talk about sounds in environment (doorbell, animal sounds)</li> <li>• Talk in parentese to babies</li> <li>• Tell stories that child listens to</li> <li>• Give one-, two-, or three- step directions according to child's abilities</li> <li>• Talk about things not in the present (past and future) or not visible (concepts, ideas)</li> </ul> <p>Speaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow time for child to verbally respond</li> <li>• Have children repeat words/phrases</li> <li>• Have child tell/retell stories</li> <li>• Have child recount events</li> <li>• Use rich language: encouragements, add explanations, narrate what you do, what your child does, think out loud</li> <li>• Ask open-ended questions</li> <li>• Listen to what your child says</li> </ul> <p>Communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take turns talking—one speaks, other listens and reverse roles</li> <li>• Use social rules of conversation, such as hello/goodbye, please/thank you</li> <li>• Model and encourage the use language to gain information by asking questions</li> </ul>
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### Early Literacy Components

Early Literacy Component Explanation	Ways to Support the Early Literacy Component
<p><u>Phonological Awareness</u> Ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words  Helps with sounding out words</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say and encourage children to hear and say animal sounds, environmental sounds (doorbell, etc.)</li> <li>• Point out beginning sounds—books/songs with alliteration—so children hear beginning sounds.</li> <li>• Say nursery rhymes and use rhyming books and rhyming games to support rhyming.</li> <li>• Sequence: Hearing rhyme, recognizing rhyme, producing rhymes.</li> <li>• Children fill in the rhyming word.</li> <li>• Break words apart and putting word syllables together. Mon-key; ti-ger</li> <li>• Clap syllables of words.</li> <li>• Play "I Spy" games: I spy something red that rhymes with block—sock. Let's see how many things we can find in this picture that start with /d/.</li> <li>• Share songbooks and singing: singing slows down language.</li> <li>• Be silly with word sounds—change beginning sounds of words.</li> <li>• Share poetry and poetry books.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Vocabulary</u> Vocabulary is knowing the meanings of words: things, feelings, concepts, ideas  Helps children decode words and to understand what they will read</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use words your child may not be familiar with when you talk.</li> <li>• Talk about meanings of new words.</li> <li>• When sharing books with infants, add words to words on the page.</li> <li>• Books have words not found in conversation. Explain words, don't replace them.</li> <li>• Talk about the different meanings of a word: wave, cap</li> <li>• Add synonyms to add new words for familiar words.</li> <li>• Read factual books. They have different vocabulary from storybooks.</li> <li>• Use words in context, as part of experience.</li> <li>• Use words for things that happened in the past and will happen in the future.</li> <li>• Use words for feelings, actions, concepts and ideas whether or not the words are specifically used in the book.</li> <li>• Add words for description.</li> <li>• For preschoolers, explain differences in words with similar meanings.</li> <li>• Use specific words rather than "it", "this", "that", "here", "there".</li> </ul>

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<p><u>Print Awareness/Conventions</u>            Print has meaning            Knowing how to handle a book            In English we read from left to right and top to bottom of page            Print is all around us</p> <p>Helps children feel comfortable with books so that when they learn to read, they can concentrate on reading itself.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Run finger under title and/or repeated phrase as you say them.</li> <li>• Write out rhymes/songs on flipcharts.</li> <li>• Talk about environmental print—print all around us, on signs, containers, logos.</li> <li>• Share books with writing as part of the story (ex. <i>Bunny Cakes</i>).</li> <li>• Share books with signs in the pictures (ex. <i>Little Red Hen Makes a Pizza</i>).</li> <li>• Share books with varying print orientations (ex. <i>My Friend Rabbit</i>).</li> <li>• Use nametags for children and adults; allow participants to write own names.</li> <li>• Let child turn the pages of the book.</li> <li>• Play around with the orientation of the book. Start with it upside down. <u>Tell</u> your child you are turning it around so you can read it.</li> <li>• Encourage scribbling. Your child can “write” the words to the story on another piece of paper.</li> <li>• Encourage drawing. Your child can draw a picture of what is happening in the book.</li> <li>• Name the author and illustrator and explain what they do.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Background Knowledge</u>            [Includes Narrative Skills and Print Motivation]            Background knowledge is prior knowledge, things child has learned            There are four areas of background knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conceptual thinking*</li> <li>• content knowledge</li> <li>• book/story knowledge               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ enjoyment—print motivation</li> <li>▫ story structure—narrative skills</li> <li>▫ uses of books</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Helps children understand what they will read.</p> <p>*Conceptual thinking is thinking skills, abstract thinking, not just about development of specific concepts (seasons, shapes, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage children to talk by asking open-ended questions.</li> <li>• Encourage children to use their imaginations, to hypothesize, to guess what might happen.</li> <li>• Encourage children to solve problems, to think about possibilities.</li> <li>• Let your child “hear you thinking”.</li> <li>• Describe objects and toys baby is exploring.</li> <li>• Explore and talk about cause and effect.</li> <li>• Play sorting, matching games.</li> <li>• Encourage children to explore and experiment. Talk about the experiences.</li> <li>• Talk about and encourage children to talk about events in the past and in the future.</li> <li>• Talk about ideas, about things that cannot be seen. (fairness, privacy, consequences)</li> <li>• Share books about concepts. (opposites, spatial relationships, size, comparisons)</li> <li>• Share factual books to build content knowledge.</li> <li>• Share what you know about various topics with your children.</li> <li>• Make reading books and book sharing an enjoyable experience so that children associate books and reading with pleasure.</li> <li>• Share storybooks so that children understand the structure of story.</li> <li>• Tell stories so that children learn how stories “work”. Stories have a beginning, a middle, and an end.</li> <li>• Encourage children to say a repeated phrase and to retell stories.</li> <li>• Use props to retell stories.</li> <li>• Have children draw a picture from a book or story and tell you about it or make up a story.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Letter Knowledge</u>            Knowing that letters are different from each other            Knowing that the same letter can look different            Letters have names and represent sounds</p> <p>Helps children as they decode words when they are learning to read.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Point out shapes in book pictures and all around.</li> <li>• Let children feel different shapes.</li> <li>• Give opportunities to have children match, see how things are alike and different (for ex., matching games on flannel board).</li> <li>• Have large foam letters; allow children to play with them.</li> <li>• Have children make letter with body.</li> <li>• Have children make letter with fingers.</li> <li>• Use manual alphabet for some words in theme or book.</li> <li>• Use an alphabet book even if you don’t go through all the letters.</li> <li>• Talk about the first letter in your theme, what does the letter look like?</li> <li>• Talk about a letter in title of a book.</li> <li>• Use nametags for adults and children.</li> <li>• Give children opportunity to write after storytime or encourage it as an at-home activity.</li> <li>• Use variations of the B-I-N-G-O song, perhaps with your theme.</li> <li>• Sing alphabet song.</li> <li>• Use nametags for both children and adults; allow participants to write their own names.</li> <li>• Trace a letter from the title with your finger and let your child do it, too.</li> <li>• Show your child the first letter in his/her name. Look for that letter in the book.</li> <li>• Choose two letters. How do they look alike; how do they look different? What shapes do you see?</li> <li>• Encourage scribbling, drawing, and writing.</li> </ul>