Parents in the Know

Focus on Early Reading

Reading and Writing

Children learn to read and write at the same time. The two skills develop together. Therefore, whatever you do to help your child learn to read, will help your child learn to write. And, whatever you do to help your child learn to write, will help your child learn to read. You should work with both skills each day with your child.

Dialogic Reading

Dialogic reading is the process of sharing the process of reading with your child. All of us know that reading to our child is important. However, many parents don't realize that reading "with" your child is even better! During dialogic reading the parent spends more time talking with their child about the pictures than actually reading the story. The process includes three steps:

1. **Ask "wh" questions:** Ex. What do you see?, What is she doing?, Where is the girl?
2. **Expand on what your child says:** Build on what your child says to encourage additional language.
3. **Ask open-ended questions:** Ex. What do you like to do at school?

Encouraging Your Child's Early Reading Skills

There are many things you can do with your young child to help her learn to read.

Read aloud daily

Sing songs

Tell stories

Turn off the t.v.

Play word games like "I Spy"

Work on letter sounds

Talk about what you read

Go to the library often

Practice nursery rhymes

Learn finger plays

Talk with your child throughout the day

Play games

Write and draw

Practice the alphabet

Teach the sounds of the letters

What Research Says

Research on dialogic (shared) reading has found that when parents actively ask their children questions as they read and share the reading process with their young children parents expand their children's language and emergent literacy skills. The exposure to dialogic reading opportunities for young children results in significant gains in expressive language, sound and letter identification, emergent writing skills, and knowledge of print concepts.

Based on: C. E. Huebner & K. Payne (2010). Home support for emergent literacy: Follow-up of a community-based implementation of dialogic reading. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 31*(3), 195-201.

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Early Reading

Opportunities to Write

Your child should have opportunities to write each day. Just as reading with your child every day is important, so is writing. Writing allows your child to express himself. Some materials that your child would enjoy writing with include:

Chalk	Magnetic letters
Markers	Dry erase markers
Crayons	Dry erase crayons
Colored pencils	Chalkboard
Letter stamps	Clipboard

Everybody Sing!

The world of children's music is changing. There are now several artists who specialize in music for young children. Their songs are filled with humor, rhythm, and fun. Next time you are at the library consider borrowing a few cds by the artists listed below. You and your children won't regret it!

Justin Roberts
Elizabeth Mitchell
Laurie Berkner
The Fresh Beat Band
Dan Zanes
Greg & Steve

Shared Writing

Young children often have wonderful ideas and a desire to see their ideas written down. However, their writing skills are not as advanced as their sense of story. Shared writing is a great way to let your child share her story and see it written down.

Ask your child to talk about what she knows or would like to write about. Write down what she dictates to you. Write it down in her language, using correct spelling and punctuation. Then, read it back to her.

After the story or event is written down, have your child read it back to you. This is great reading practice because it allows your child to read something that is meaningful to her. After she is done reading, she can draw an illustration!

Meet Mo Willems

You probably don't recognize the name. However, you might recognize the name of some of his Caldecott Honor books including *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!, Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale, and Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity.* Mo Willems has also won two Geisel Medals for *There is a Bird on Your Head!* and *Are You Ready to Play Outside?* While Mo was a writer and animator on Sesame Street he won six Emmy Awards.

Book Corner

Spotlight on the ABCs

What Pete Ate from A to Z, by Maira Kalman
G is for One Gzonk!, An Alpha-Number-Bet Book, by Tony DiTerlizzi
The Hidden Alphabet, by Laura Vaccaro Seeger
Alpha Oops! The Day Z Went First, The Graphic Alphabet, by David Pelletier

"Not all readers are leaders,
but all leaders are readers."
Harry S. Truman

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