

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **phonological awareness** or the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words. The ability to rhyme is part of this skill. Here is an activity to help you and your child play around with rhyme.

Find two words that rhyme in the story. Now substitute those words in place of *rhyme, rhyme*, (for example, *king, ring*). This song helps children hear the words that rhyme.



*To the tune of "Skip to My Lou":*

Rhyme, rhyme, these words rhyme.

Rhyme, rhyme, these words rhyme.

So rhyme along with me.

Keep changing the rhyming words, singing as you go.

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Go back and find the pairs of rhyming words in the book.

Together, say more words that rhyme with each pair.

Talk about other sets of words that rhyme. Can you think of words that rhyme with your child's name? How about with your name? Remember the words don't have to make sense! They can be silly words.

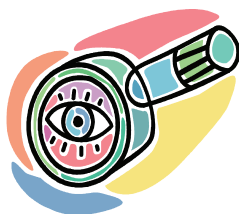
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Think of something in the room. Now think of a word that rhymes with it. Use this little poem to get you started:

I spy with my little eye  
Something that rhymes with \_\_\_\_.

You can switch roles and ask your child to be the one that "spies" the object.

*Remember to keep it fun!*



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Help your child to make up rhymes that are based on what you are doing, where you are going, or anything at all! For example:

"We're sitting in a chair. What rhymes with chair?"

Hair, bear, what else?

"Let's eat some soup. What rhymes with soup?"

Droop, loop, roop, what else?.

Include nonsense words, or words that don't mean anything. Being able to play with the sounds of words will help when they learn how to read.

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Pick some rhyming word pairs from the story. Sing this rhyming song, to the tune of *Row, Row, Row your Boat*.

Rhyme, rhyme, rhyme along,

Rhyme along with me.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are rhyming words.

It's easy don't you see!



Boat and  
goat  
rhyme!



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Pick some of the rhyming words from the story. Pair them up and sing this rhyming song, to the tune of *Skip to my Lou*.

Rhyme along with me!

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, these words rhyme.

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, these words rhyme.

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, these words rhyme.

So rhyme along with me!

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **phonological awareness** or the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words. The ability to rhyme helps kids with this skill. Here is an activity to help you and your child play with this skill.

Find a pair of words that rhymes from the story. Now help your child think of other words that rhyme by helping her switch the first sound of the word. For example, with the pair *light, sight*, you could say, "What happens if we take the first sound off of the word? We would have the sound -ite. Now let's add sounds to -ite. We then have *bite, kite, might, sight*, This is a skill that will help your child sound out words once she is being taught how to read.

**LIGHT**, drop /l/ = **IGHT**

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Read the book all the way through once. Go back and read the book again, leaving out the rhyming word. Have your child guess the word you left out. Try it with a poem, like this:



Twinkle, twinkle little star.

How I wonder what you \_\_\_\_.

Up above the world so high.

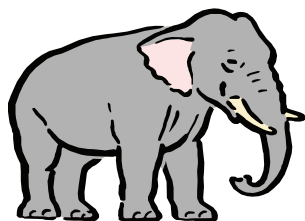
Like a diamond in the \_\_\_\_.

Help your child as much as you need to so that nobody gets frustrated!

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **phonological awareness** or the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words. The ability to segment words, or to break them up into syllables or parts, is part of this skill. Here is an activity for you to do with your child to help her develop this skill.

Find words of different lengths in the book. Clap out its syllables, or parts. For example, ma-chine has two parts, or two claps. El-e-phant would have three claps, and rose just one. You can do this with the names of flowers, food, or even the names of people in your family.

EL-E-PHANT



Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **phonological awareness** or the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words. The ability to hear the differences among sounds is part of this skill. Here is an activity for you to do with your child to help her develop this skill.

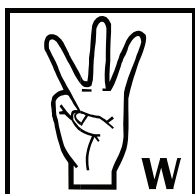
Ask them to tell you which word "sounds different" from the other ones. You can do this by saying, "I am going to say three words. Tell me which one has a different sound at the beginning — tight, tiger, fun. That's right, *fun* has a different first sound." Now give your child other examples of sets of words. Emphasize the first sound to help your child hear the difference.

When your child can hear the beginning sound easily, try this activity with the **ENDING** sound. This is much harder.

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **letter knowledge**, or knowing that letters are different from each other, that they have names and are related to sounds. Here is an activity for you to do with your child that will help her develop this skill.

Pick the first letter from a word that is an important part of the story that you read. Now, make a body part into that letter. You can use your hands, legs, or your entire body. As you put yourselves into the letter's shape, say the sound that the letter makes. For example the letter D makes the dee (/d/) sound. Having your child experience the letter in a physical way often makes it easier for them to remember it.

HERE IS THE LETTER W!



Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **letter knowledge**, or knowing that letters are different from each other, that they have names and are related to sounds. Here is an activity for you to do with your child that will help her develop this skill.

Children need to know both the letter name and the sound the letter makes before going to school. Here is a game that you can play to help your child learn this important skill. Say:

I spy with my little eye,

Something that starts with the sound /d/.

Help your child find objects that start with the sound and letter you are working on.

The first sound in

Dog is /d/



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Look for the first letter of your child's name throughout the book. Every time you see it on a page, point it out. Have your child help. Remember to say the sound that the letter makes, not just the letter name. For example, the letter F is called *eff* and makes the /f/ sound.

When it is no longer fun, stop! You can always try again another day!

# HEY! THAT'S MY LETTER!

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **letter knowledge**, or knowing that letters are different from each other, that they have names and relate to sounds. Here is an activity for you to do with your child that will help her develop this skill.

Look around the room and find something that starts with the same letter as the one you are talking about. For example, let's say you are talking about the letter **p** and its sound /p/. You can say, "I hear, with my little ear, something that starts with *pee* and has the /p/ sound."

**PAINT!**



**PICTURE!**

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **letter knowledge**, or knowing that letters are different from one another and that they make different sounds. Here is an activity for you to do with your child that will help her develop this skill.

Help your child learn one letter at a time. Start with letters that have meaning, like the first letter in your child's name. Finger-draw the letter in shaving cream, sand, sugar, or flour.

Draw the letter in the air.

Trace it on your child's back, arm, and hand.

Some children learn best when they can touch what it is that they are learning, plus it is fun! Remember to say the sound the letter makes as well as its name.

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these is **vocabulary**, or knowing the names of things. Research indicates that children with large vocabularies do better in school. Children can learn new words every day, building up the number of words they know. Here are some things you can do:

- Look for new words every time you read with your child.
- Remember to look at the pictures as a source of new vocabulary words. When you talk about the pictures use some words your child may not know, even if those words are not in the text.
- When you are out and about, talk about what you see. Ask your child to repeat the new words and help him to use them in sentences.

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **letter knowledge**, or knowing that letters are different from each other, that they have names and are related to sounds. Here is an activity for you to do with your child that will help her develop this skill.

It is easier for your child to learn one letter at a time.

Choose a letter,;

Look for it all day long everywhere you go.

Make a list of things that start with that letter.

Make a book cutting out pictures from catalogs and magazines of things that start with "your" letter.

"Look, Tony! There's your **T** on that *Taxi* sign.



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Read a book you enjoy together.

Decide on one letter to look for.

Then go back and have your child find the letter you have decided to talk about. Help her if she cannot recognize the letter.



Remember to say the letter sound as well as its name.

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these is **narrative skills**, or the ability to retell stories and events. Do the following activity to help your child develop this skill.

You and your child have just shared a story that would be fun to retell. Talk about the *beginning*, the *middle*, and the *end* of the story. This will help your child remember what happened in the book. It is important that children be able to retell a story before they go to school.



You can also talk about the story of your child's life. You can say things like,

"When you were little you...  
And then...  
Now you..."



Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these is **narrative skills**, or the ability to retell stories and events. Do the following activity to help your child develop this skill.

Sing a song using the events in the story, or the things you do everyday. Use this song to get you started. "This is the way we wash our clothes."

This is the way we set the table,

Set the table, set the table.

This is the way we set the table,

Before we eat our meal.

This is the way we get our drinks,

Get our drinks, get our drinks,

This is the way we get our drinks

Before we eat our meal.

This is how we serve the food . . .

Before we eat our meal.



You can use this song to describe any part of your day!

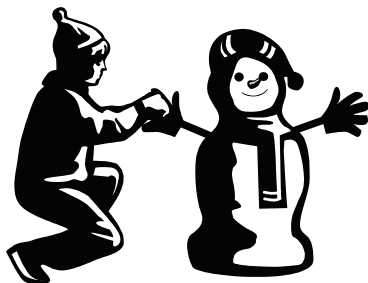


**Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these is narrative skills,** or the ability to retell stories and events. Do the following activity to help your child develop this skill.

Do a cumulative activity, an activity that builds on itself, like making a block tower, a snowman, or stringing cheerios on yarn. Talk about the process that you used, the order in which you did the activity.

Say, "First we...,  
Then we...,  
And finally we..."

This will help your child remember how things happened in order.



**Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these is vocabulary,** or knowing the names of things. It is much easier for children to read words that they know. Talk and talk with your child. Use some words your child does not know and explain them to your child.

Use a picture book as a jumping off point for conversation. Help your child learn new words as you read together. The more words your child knows, the better! Try this activity to help your child develop this skill:

Go through the book and say the names of things in the pictures. Use hard words and explain them to your child.

Ask questions that start with "who, why, how, where".

Try not to ask questions that can be answered with a simple "No." or "Yes." For example, instead of saying "Is this blue?" ask, "What color is this?" When your child does not know the answer to a question, help him out. Keep it fun.

**Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these is narrative skills,** or the ability to retell stories and events. Do the following activity to help your child develop this skill.

Prediction, or knowing what happens next, can help a child develop narrative skills. You can help your child develop this skill by having the child guess what comes next in the story.

You can ask, "What do you think will happen next?" You can also make up different endings by saying, "What do you think would have happened if...?"

**Remember to keep it fun!**



**Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these is print awareness,** or knowing how to handle books and how to follow the words on the page. Here is how you can help your child develop this skill.

Turn the book around, so it is backwards, and ask your child if that is how it is read. Keep turning it around until it is facing the right way.

From time to time use your finger to point to the words on the page as you read them.

Talk about who the author and the illustrator are. Point out their names on the cover of the book.



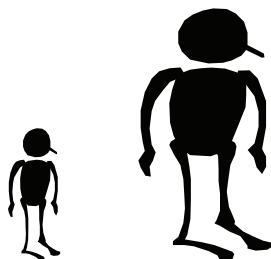
Children need to know many things to be ready for school. We can help them get ready for school by teaching them about numbers, as well as letters. There are lots of different ways to use a storybook. You can use it to help teach some math concepts too. Here are some ideas:

Count the objects on a page.

Talk about the relative sizes of things -- which is bigger? Biggest? Smaller? Smallest?

Look for other concepts like short/tall, smooth/rough.

These are all concepts that will help get your child ready to do math!



Children need to know many things to be ready for school. We can help them get ready for school by teaching them about numbers, as well as letters.

Let's look at some numbers using a picture book.

Go through the book and point out the page numbers that are written at the bottom of the page.

Clap your hands or stomp your feet for the number on each page.



As always, remember do this activity only as long as you and your child are having fun,.

Children need to know many things to be ready for school. We can help them get ready for school by teaching them about numbers, as well as letters.

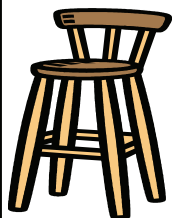
Count the number of items on one of the pages in the book you are sharing.

Next, look around you and count things around the house.

Do you have 3 chairs?

How many beds?

How many pieces of silverware do you use to set the table at night?



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Think of something you and your child can see. For example, touch the wall and say, "Let's think of some words that rhyme with wall." Give your child a first sound, like /b/, to get things going. Now sing this rhyming song to the tune of "A-Hunting We Will Go".

A-rhyming we will go  
A-rhyming we will go.  
We'll catch a rhyme  
In the nick of time.  
And this is how it goes.

Say, "That's right! Ball and wall rhyme." Let's think of some more rhyming words and we'll sing the song again!

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Help your child play with rhyming words by making up some rhyming riddles. Say:

"I am thinking of where you sleep. It rhymes with red." (bed)

"I am thinking of something that you put on over your sock and rhymes with blue." (shoe)

"I am thinking of a pet and rhymes with hat." (cat)

"I am thinking of something you use to eat with and rhymes with cork." (fork)



Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **phonological awareness** or the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words. Here is a listening game that you can play together.

Say, "This is a listening game. I'm going to say a sound. When you hear it, clap your hands."

Use this poem to begin:

"I hear with my little ear

The sound /f/."



Say three words, one of which has the /f/ sound.

For example, say "eye, wall, foot"

Your child would clap for foot. If he doesn't, help him hear the sound, and YOU clap. Make this a playful game together.

Your child can also pick the sound and the words and have you clap.

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **phonological awareness** or the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words. One way to practice this is by changing the sounds of words.

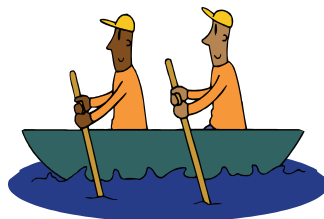
Sing this old favorite once through.

Row, row, row, your boat

Gently down the stream;

Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,

Life is but a dream.



Now change the song so that every word starts with the same first sound, for example, /d/. It will now be "dow, dow, dow, dour doat." Try lots of different sounds.

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **phonological awareness** or the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words. Here is a listening game to play with your child to help him identify similar sounds.

To the tune of "Old MacDonald Had a Farm"

What's the sound that these words share?

Listen to these words.

*Sun* and *silly* are the words.

Tell me what you've heard. (sss, not ess)

With a /s/, /s/, here, and a /s/, /s/, there,

Here a /s/, there a /s/, everywhere a /s/, /s/.

/S/ is the sound that these words share.

We can hear the sound!



Use other word combinations that share the same first sound.



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Begin by explaining that sometimes a new word can be made by adding a sound to a word.

As an example, say "ox," and have your child to repeat it.

Then ask what will happen if they add a new sound to the beginning of the word such as f-f-f-f-f: "f-f-f-f-f...ox, f-f-f-f-f...ox, f-f-f-f-f-ox." The child says, "fox!"

You can then explain, "We put a new sound on the beginning, and we have a new word!"

Try new starting sounds.

Try this with lots of different word families, like -at, -in, -ot.

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Read this poem about changing words aloud to your child.

The first sound that you hear

Can be dropped without fear.

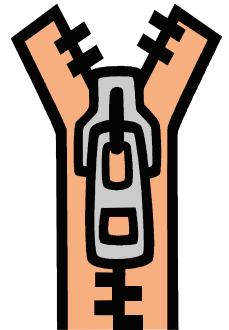
For without B boo would *ooo*.

A zipper would *ipper*,

A zither would *ither*

And then, what would we do?

Play around with the idea behind this poem by dropping the first sound of words. A table would *able*, a girl would *irl*



Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **phonological awareness** or the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words. Here is an animal talk game that you can play with your child.

Talk about the different ways that animals talk. A dog says, *bow-wow*, a pig, *oink-oink*. A dog who wants to speak with a pig would say *bow-oink*. The pig would reply *oink-bow*. Try this with different kinds of animals.



Bow-Oink!

Oink-Bow!



Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **phonological awareness** or the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words. The ability to drop and switch sounds is one of these skills.

Explain to your child that you are going to make a new word by dropping the first sound in a word. For example, say the word. *Sand*. Say, "What is the first sound you hear?" "That's right, its /s/." And the new word is *and*. Sing this song to have more fun.

To the tune of the "Hokey Pokey"

You say the word *sand*

And you take the first sound out.

*Sand* becomes *and*

It's time to twist and shout.

You're doing the sound drop

And we're never going to stop

'Cause that's what it's all about.



Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these skills is **phonological awareness** or the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words. The ability to add and drop sounds is one of these skills.

Use this song to help your child develop this skill. Try this only after you and she have been playing with words and sounds for a while. If this is too hard, try it again another time.

Sing to the tune of "Pop Goes the Weasel"

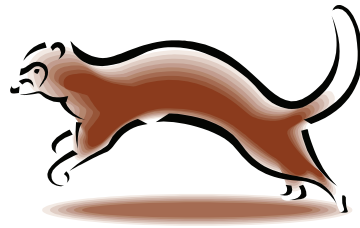
Adding letters as we go,

At is the beginning.

/C/ with -at

Becomes cat.

That's how it goes!



Try this with different sound families, like *-in*, *-ot*, *-an*.

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these is called **print awareness**, which is knowing that print has meaning and how to handle a book. Here are some ways to help children learn this skill:

Show your child where the words on the page begin.

Point out where one word ends and the next one begins

Point to a period to show where sentences begin and end.



Since children get most of the information from a picture book from the pictures, not the words, it is important to show them how the words "work" on the written page.

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these is called **print awareness**, which is knowing that print has meaning.

Go on a word hunt! Go around your house, your street, your neighborhood and look at all of the different ways that words are used. You will notice

- street signs
- advertisements
- traffic signs.



Keep going once you are in the grocery store!  
What a lot of words there are there!

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these is called **print awareness**, which is knowing that print has meaning. Here are some ways to help children learn this skill:

Show your child the front of the book. Point out the names of the author and illustrator.



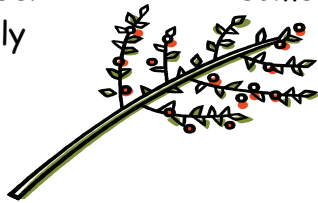
Explain that you are starting to read at the top of the page.

From time to time, run your finger under the words on the page as you read them. This helps your child see that it is the words we read, not the pictures. It also helps your child understand that the words that we are saying

are the ones that are written on the page.

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these is **vocabulary**, or knowing the names of things. Research shows that it is easier for children to read words that they know.

Research also indicates that children learn new words more easily when they are related to things they know. For example, to teach the word *twig*, you might relate it to other parts of the tree that the child might know, like branch. It is easier to remember something that is not conceptually entirely new.



Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these is **vocabulary**, or knowing the names of things. It is much easier for children to read words that they know, so talk and talk and explain and explain to your child! Here is one way to help your child's vocabulary grow.



When you are reading with your child, ask questions about the story. Use your child's response to help grow his vocabulary. For example, if you say, "What animal is this?" and your child says, "Cat." You can say, "That's right it is a cat. It is a white, fluffy cat!" By taking your child's words and extending his idea, you are given him positive feedback AND helping him to grow his vocabulary.

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these is **vocabulary**, or knowing the names of things. Research shows that it is easier for children to read words that they know.

After you read a book together, talk about what happened in the story. You can expand on your child's ideas by saying what your child said, but in a different way.

For example, if your child says, "It was a big giant," you can respond by stating that it was "huge", "enormous" or "gargantuan."

# Big Huge Enormous

Research has shown us that there are six skills that young children need to be ready to read. One of these is **vocabulary**, or knowing the names of things. Research shows that it is easier for children to read words that they know.

Here are a few tips on how you can help your child's vocabulary grow:

Call things what they are. If it is a rose, call it a rose, not a flower.

Talk, talk, talk. The more words your child hears, the more he will learn.

Ask your child specific questions. Instead of, "How was school," ask, "what was the best part of school today?" Be patient and give your child plenty of time to think of an answer. Count slowly to five while you wait!