



Early Literacy Skills – Print Awareness

Print awareness is understanding how print works and is an important skill for reading

Using the Book

- Understand how to hold the book correctly (not upside down)
- Turn the page in the correct direction
- Children love to explore books – this is ok! Allow them to experiment and comment on what they're doing (“uh oh! That's upside down! The monkey is upside down!”, “we're going backwards!”, “let's turn the pages back to look for the train”)

Directionality

- Drag your finger under the print so your child understands that we read left to right
- Ask your child to help you find where to start reading

Print carries meaning - explain that words carry meaning

- Practice pointing out print vs. pictures on the page
- Point to each word as you read or practice counting the words on the page
- Identify words in thought bubbles and describe their meaning
- Find print everywhere (example: signs, menus, lists, instructions, recipes) and explain its purpose (example: these words tell me what I need to buy at the store, these words tell us how to play the game)

Parts of the book

- Teach your child that books have an author, an illustrator and a title
- Practice finding the front and the back of the book
- Talk about the “start” vs. the “end” of the story

Big letters and little letters

- Teach your child that we have upper case letters (big letters) and lower case letters (little letters)
- Use magnet letters or foam letters to sort upper case and lower case letters
- Write capital letters on paper and small letters on sticky notes and match them
- Do a “book hunt” and search for big or little letters

Punctuation

- Point out question marks, periods, commas, etc.
- Provide a basic description of what they mean (example: “look at this! It's a question mark. We put this at the end of a question)
- “go on a symbol hunt” and look for these different symbols in books

Remember:

There are a variety of other skills important for reading

- Vocabulary
- Understanding and use of language
- Alphabet knowledge
- Sound awareness (also called phonological awareness)