

Play is the most powerful way young children learn.

Every time you play, sing or read to young children they are learning about language.

By sharing this book and play activities with them they will have the opportunity to:

- Play in an environment that is rich in print and literacy resources.
- Become aware of the visual features of words and letters.
- See print and reading as a meaningful part of life.

We hope these activities will provide you with a starting point for fun play with young children.

Engaging With Language and Literacy

When children hear stories they are building the skills and knowledge needed for learning to read and write.

Have fun reading to children everyday!



- Spend time enjoying and exploring the book with small groups of children.
- Make a Big Book with the children called *Our Book About Books*.

In it record the children's thoughts, ideas and feelings about books.

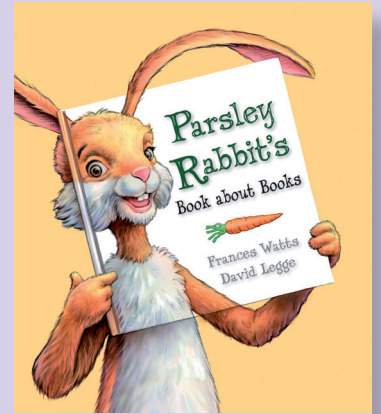
- When reading other books, point out the:
 - End papers
 - Title page
 - Imprint page
 - Author and illustrator
 - Page numbers

Involve the children in finding and naming the parts of the book.

- Have a Book Treasure Hunt.

Give each child a book and ask them to find:

- The title page
- A page number
- The Imprint page etc...



Parsley Rabbit's Book About Books

by Frances Watts and David Legge

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Page 1 of 9

Following a similar simple format everyday will give children the confidence to have a go at reading the letter by themselves.

Encourage parents and carers to read the letter with the children so that the children can see reading used as a purposeful activity.

Read the letter together with the children as part of your morning routine. When you are reading the letter you can:

- Point out letters and the sounds they make.
 Don't worry if the children aren't able to remember the letters yet.
 By making letters a part of everyday conversations and repeating them frequently you are building the foundation for when the children are developmentally ready for that next step.
- Point to the words and let the children have a turn pointing to the words.
- Let the children find the letters that are in their names.
- Look at simple punctuation.
- If you write the letters in a large scrapbook then the children can enjoy revisiting past letters.

Some different ideas for enjoying stories with children:

- Discuss with the children all the places where you can read books.
 Make a list with the children of all the places you can think of.
 Take a selection of books, a blanket and some pillows outside for a reading picnic.
- Create a special area for reading with the children.
 If the children are involved in creating the area they will be more likely to use it and care for it.
 You can turn a quiet corner into a special reading area by hanging a curtain or some material to partially enclose it, string up some fairy lights and put in some cosy pillows and beanbags.
 You could try a Reading Island or Reading Castle, consider the children's interests and what props and resources you have available.
- Tape record yourself reading a favourite story for the children to listen to.
 You could also tape the children reading or retelling stories or singing songs and rhymes.

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Enjoying Imaginative Play



- Provide children with many opportunities for retelling favourite stories. You can encourage this by:
 - Providing children with puppets, masks or toys to represent characters in a story.
 - Using the block corner, sand tray, dolls house, home corner etc... to create a setting from a favourite story.
 - Read favourite stories with small groups of interested children and help them to create a setting from the story for them to play in.

Being Creative Through Play



Lift The Flap Books

- Try making lift the flap books with the children.
- Look carefully at the flaps in Parsley Rabbit's Book About Books and other lift the flap books so that children have an understanding of the purpose of making a flap.

Exploring Our World



Nothing stimulates children's speech as much as new and exciting experiences.

- Books aren't the only things we read. Provide the children with:
- Poetry books
 - Recipe books
 - Joke books
 - Books in other languages
 - Magazines
 - Maps, street directories and atlases
 - Telephone books
 - Newspapers
 - Catalogues
 - Dictionaries
 - Travel brochures
 - Comics
 - Calendars
 - E-Books

Go to www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au and read *Cat* by Mike Dumbleton

Literacy and Play



When children have opportunities to use print in their play they are learning:

- Print carries a message
- Reading and writing are interconnected
- Reading and writing are tools that help us to make sense of the world
- Reading and writing occur in many different forms, eg, signs, labels, books etc...

Environmental Print

Make signs and labels with the children when they are playing, eg,

Train set:

- Tunnel ahead!
- Happyville Station
- Tickets \$2.00

Zoo animals:

- Feed the seals at 11.00 am
- Don't feed the lions!

Provide a small amount of paper and pencils at each play area so children can easily access them for making their own signs, labels etc...

Alphabet Activities

Regularly provide alphabet activities for the children to play with, eg,

- Alphabet Dominoes
- Jigsaw Puzzles

You can make your own by writing a letter on A4 size card and then cutting into several pieces for the children to put back together.

Or cut a piece of card in half. On one half write a letter and on the other half draw a picture of something that begins with that letter. Help the children to match the two halves.

- Magnetic letters
- Alphabet fishing games

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Notes List any other books, rhymes or activities the children have enjoyed.

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Provide Literacy Props In Play

- Encourage the use of literacy in the children's play, eg,
- At the painting area consider:
 - Displaying posters and postcards showing famous artworks
 - Providing books about art
 - Labelling the different art materials
 - Encouraging children to name and make a title for their artwork.
 - Include literacy props in dramatic play areas, eg, A Travel Agency would need:
 - Brochures
 - Posters of other countries, cities and cultures
 - Booking forms
 - Passports
 - Tickets
 - Maps or a globe
 - Telephone
 - Lots of paper and pens!
 - With the zoo animals include:
 - Posters of zoo animals
 - A map of the local zoo
 - Paper and pens for children to make their own maps
 - Charts of songs and rhymes about zoo animals.

Literacy and Art and Craft



Displays of children's artwork, including paintings, 3D constructions, photos of sand play, play dough creations etc... provide great opportunities for relevant and interesting labelling.

Make sure that labels are clearly written and at an appropriate height for the children to read them.

Try the following activity:

- You will need large pieces of paper, paint or collage materials, names of body parts on strips of card, eg, head, arm, leg etc...
- Trace around each child's body while they are lying down.

- Let the children paint or decorate their bodies.
- Encourage children to write their name on their piece of paper.
- Help the children match the correct label to their body and stick it on.
- You may want to encourage some children to write their own labels.
- Display the 'children' around the room and have fun with the children 'reading' them.

Having Fun with Music and Movement



Nursery Rhymes

Young children love nursery rhymes.

The rhyme and repetition make it easy for young children to quickly learn them.

Research has shown that good rhymers become good readers!

Make your own nursery rhyme books with the children.

- Enlarge and photocopy some of the nursery rhymes listed under Rhymes and Songs.
- Staple together 3-4 rhymes for each book.
- Read the first rhyme together with the children and ask a child to illustrate it.

Ask the children what would make a good illustration, ie, a picture that matches the words.

- Let each child have a turn at illustrating a rhyme
- By involving the children in the process they will be more likely to want to interact with the books.
- If you make several copies of the same book the children can enjoy reading the books with their friends.

Musical Letters

- You will need to make large alphabet cards (about A3 size) of both upper case and lower case letters and matching smaller alphabet cards (about the size of a playing card).
- Give each child a small alphabet card to hold and spread the large cards out in a circle.

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Songs & Rhymes:

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

Twinkle twinkle little star
How I wonder what you are
Up above the world so high
Like a diamond in the sky
Twinkle twinkle little star
How I wonder what you are

Hickory Dickory Dock

Hickory dickory dock
The mouse ran up the clock
The clock struck one
The mouse ran down
Hickory dickory dock

Humpty Dumpty

Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall
All the kings horses
And all the kings men
Couldn't put Humpty together again

I'm a Little Teapot

I'm a little teapot
Short and stout
Here is my handle
Here is my spout
When I get all steamed up
Then I shout
Tip me over
Pour me out

Hey Diddle Diddle

Hey diddle diddle
The cat and the fiddle
The cow jumped over the moon
The little dog laughed to see such fun
And the dish ran away with the spoon

Kookaburra Sits In The Old Gum Tree

Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree
Merry merry king of the bush is he
Laugh kookaburra laugh
Kookaburra gay your life must be

Pat A Cake

Pat a cake
Pat a cake
Baker's man
Bake me a cake
As fast as you can
Pat it and roll it
And mark it with B
And put it in the oven
For baby and me

Incy Wincy Spider

Incy wincy spider
Climbed up the water spout
Down came the rain
And washed poor Incy out
Out came the sun
And dried up all the rain
So the incy wincy spider
Climbed up the spout again

Row Row Row Your Boat

Row row row your boat
Gently down the stream
Merrily merrily merrily merrily
Life is but a dream

Row row row your boat
Gently down the stream
If you see a crocodile
Don't forget to scream!

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