

Reception

Supporting your child with literacy at home



Communication and language development

Supporting your child to become an effective communicator is one of the most valuable things that you can do to help them to progress across all areas of learning.

What might you see your child learn to do between 40 and 60 months? From 'What to Expect, When' by Action for Children

Listening and attention

When I'm singing songs or sharing a story with a grown up, I am able to listen really carefully to what is happening.

I can listen to what you want me to do and then I can do it.

Understanding

When I'm singing songs or sharing a story with a grown up, I am able to listen really carefully to what is happening.

I can listen to what you want me to do and then I can do it.

Speaking

- I can use lots of words to tell you about something that I have made or something that I have done.
- I like you to use new words to talk to me about what I am doing or what I am using. Then I like to try to use these new words as I am playing.
- I can pretend to be different people and can pretend to do different things, like being a nurse and making sick patients better with bandages and care.
- I can use words like 'first', 'next' and 'then' when I am telling you a story or telling you about something I have done.
- When I am dressing up or playing with toy people I like to make up stories using what I know, what I have seen or what I have heard to help me.

Talking to your child and listening to what they have to say is important and makes children feel valued. Children like it when their familiar adults take an interest in them and the things that they enjoy.



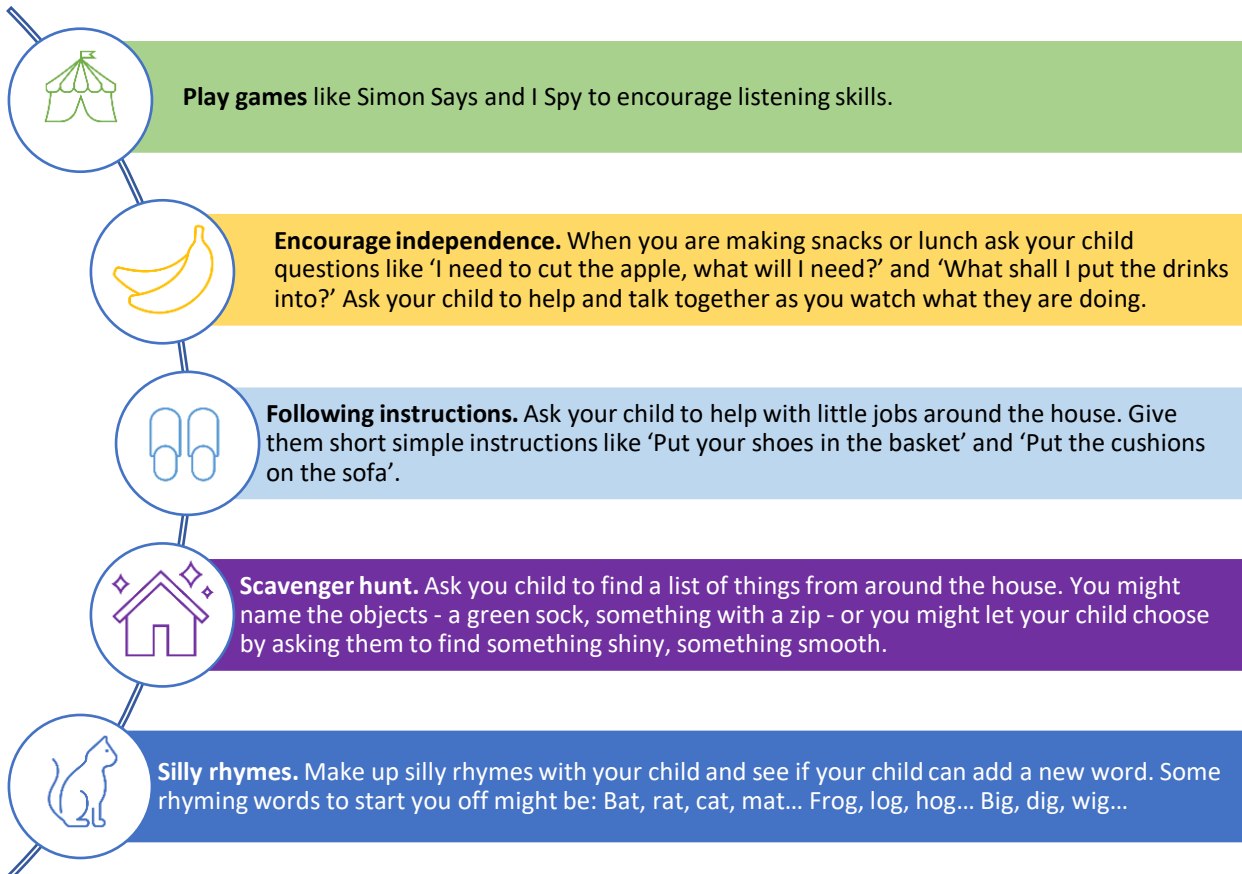
Top Tips for Supporting your Child's Communication and Language

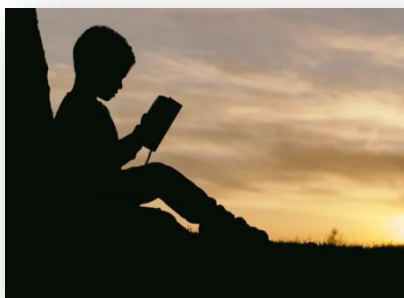
- Listen to your child and take an interest in things that they enjoy
- Take time to join your child in their play
- Read to your child as often as you can
- Use new and interesting words
- Sing songs and rhymes together
- Use open ended questions like 'What do you think?' and 'What can you see?'
- Talk about what you are doing as you are doing it - out at the shops, while making lunch, while out for a walk. Talk can happen anywhere and everywhere
- Help children to think independently using phrases like 'I wonder...'

Useful resources for communication and language - Online

Hungry Little Minds https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk/	Simple, fun activities for children from birth to 5 years.
Tiny Happy People https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people	Tiny Happy People is designed to help you develop your child's communication skills. Explore simple activities and play ideas and find out about children's amazing early development.
Communication Trust https://bit.ly/2HXJoc2	Hints, tips and activity ideas to help you support your child's communication and language development.
Mama Lisa https://www.mamalisa.com/	Books, songs and rhymes from around the world.
CBeebies Songs and Rhymes https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/curations/nursery-rhymes	A selection of songs and rhymes to sing with your child.

Activity suggestions for communication and language - Offline





How you can support your child with their reading

Reading to your child can help them to learn lots of new words. Try to read as often as you can with your child to help them listen, join in and understand what different letters and words look like.

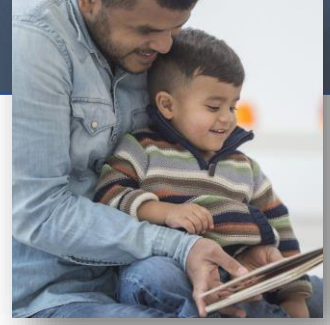
Top Tips for Reading

- Use your voice in different ways to make the story interesting for your child
- Point out new words and explain what they mean
- Look for rhyming words
- Ask your child questions about what they think and what might happen next
- Show your child that you are enjoying the book so that they see reading as a fun and enjoyable activity



Activity suggestions for reading - Online

<p>PROMOTING LANGUAGE AND LITERACY SKILLS THROUGH DIVERSE CHILDREN'S LITERATURE</p>	<p>Mya's Book Nook https://mayasbooknook.com/</p>	<p>Promoting language and literacy skills through diverse children's literature.</p>
<p>BookTrust transforms lives by getting children and families reading</p>	<p>Book Trust https://www.booktrust.org.uk/</p>	<p>A collection of online books that are free to use and fun to read.</p>
	<p>CBeebies Story Time https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/stories</p>	<p>Lots of stories to choose from for young children.</p>
<p>Children's Storybooks Online</p>	<p>Magic Keys http://www.magickeys.com/books/</p>	<p>Free online story books to read with young children.</p>
<p>Liverpool City Council Read Liverpool</p>	<p>ReadLiverpool https://www.readliverpool.co.uk/</p>	<p>Free online library service. Borrow 8 books at a time.</p>



Favourite books

Talk about your child's favourite books. Ask them questions about the characters, story and illustrations. Ask about why your child likes these particular books.

Make up new stories

Change stories that children know well or make up a completely new story. Your child might use teddy bears, toys or things found around the house to help them think of new ideas and to act out their story.

Make a cosy reading spot

Help your child to make a nice cosy space for reading and telling stories. This might be a den made of sheets and blankets, a comfy chair with lots of cushions or a quiet spot outside.

Make a puppet theatre

You could use a large box for the puppet theatre and make puppets using pictures from magazines or that have been drawn by your child. Lollipop sticks are great for keeping your puppet picture nice and secure. Simply cut your picture out and glue or tape it onto a lollipop stick, leaving enough stick at the bottom to hold onto. Help your child to make up new stories or retell their favourite ones.

Find letters all around

As you go about your day look for letters and words all around you. This might be on food packaging in the supermarket or on road signs you see while you are out for a walk. Talk to you child about the difference between letters.

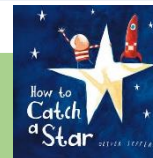
Book Recommendations

The Gruffalo by Julia Donaldson



Go on an adventure through the forest with the mouse in search of the Gruffalo. Look out for lots of rhyming words in the story.

How to Catch a Star by Oliver Jeffers



There was a boy and the boy loved stars very much. Find out about how the boy tries to catch a star of his own. Talk about how you might catch a star of your own as you read the story together.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle

Find out about the life cycle of a butterfly and days of the week with this classic tale.



Aliens Love Underpants by Claire Freedman

A cheeky book about some aliens who come to Earth to steal your underwear! You could talk about what the aliens look like and use your silly alien voice to tell the story.



Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak

Go on a wild adventure with Max and the wild things. When the wild rumpus begins try and think of lots of interesting words to describe the sounds like 'babble', 'pandemonium' and 'commotion'.



You Choose by Pippa Goodhart

A great book to help you start conversations with your child. Encourage them to talk to you about what they would choose and why.



Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae



Join Giraffe as he learns to be himself and dance, even when he is told that giraffe's can't dance. Look for new words that your child might not have heard before and talk about what those words mean.

Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister

Talk to your child about friendships with this beautifully illustrated story of a fish who learns to share.



Kindness Grows by Britta Teckentrup

A lovely book to help children think about how to be kind to others. Help your child think about ways that they are kind as you read the story and share the peep-through pictures together.

Before children can become confident writers, they need to play lots of games and activities to support their physical development. If your child is struggling to write letters and words that you can recognise, help them by joining them in their play, showing them how to write and by offering lots of encouragement so that they want to 'have a go'.



Top Tips for Writing



- Write in front of your child so that they can see the importance of writing. You might be writing a shopping list, a birthday card or a note.
- Encourage children to talk about the marks they are making as they draw and write.
- Offer lots of praise to your child when they write. Writing can be a very difficult skill to master so lots of encouragement will help them gain confidence.
- Give regular breaks. Writing can be very tiring for some children so don't worry about your child writing lots or for long periods of time if they are not ready.

Activity suggestions for writing and physical development - Online

Play Dough Action Songs	https://youtu.be/BOLR3pQt8zg	Grab some play dough and take your fingers to the dough disco!
Action Rhymes	https://www.amusictherapy.com/post/top-10-fingerplay-songs-to-develop-fine-motor-skills	Help your child learn some new rhymes, using their fingers to join in with the actions.
Sky Writer	http://www.ictgames.com/mobilePage/skyWriter/index.html	Watch how different letters are formed with Sky Writer. Try using your finger to 'write' the letters in the air.
Learning to Write	https://youtu.be/tKwruceavNO	A video showing some fun and engaging writing activities that can help your child when they are learning to write.

Activity suggestions for physical development - Offline

Zips, buttons and fastenings

Helping your child learn how to use zips, buttons and other fastenings can be great for their physical development and can also help them to become more independent. Collect coats, cardigans, shoes and bags from around the house that have different fastenings and let your child explore how to open and close them.



Pegs

Using pegs can be a fun way of helping to develop your child's fine motor control. Give your child a selection of different pegs to use for hanging up their doll clothes or pictures they have drawn. They can use larger pegs to attach sheets and blankets to some chairs or a clothes dryer frame to make a den. Pegs can also be used to make up games like trying to pick up as many cotton wool balls as you can in 10 seconds.

Using a knife and fork

Giving your child plenty of opportunities to use kitchen utensils, including a knife and fork, can have lots of benefits on their physical development. Learning to control the knife and fork for themselves can help children prepare for the physical demands of writing.



Making no cook dough

What you will need:

Measuring cup, bowl, 1 cup (250 ml) plain flour, 1 cup (250 ml) table salt, 1 cup (250 ml) water and a small drop of cooking oil.

Mix the flour and salt in a bowl. Make a hole in the centre and pour in the water little by little. Mix the flour, salt and water. Add water as necessary until it's not crumbly. Knead the dough for about 5 minutes until it's smooth. Add the cooking oil to make the dough soft.

Cooking



Asking your child to help while you cook can be very supportive of their communication and language development and it can also help them to learn new physical skills. Ask your child to help with tasks like washing the vegetables, spreading butter onto the bread or stirring ingredients in a bowl.

Activity suggestions for writing - Offline

Make a memory book

Collect photographs of your child from when they were a baby through to how they look now. Talk about the photographs: 'What was happening?' 'Who is in the photograph?' 'What do you remember?' Put the photographs into a book and help your child to add words and captions. If they are not ready to write all of the words by themselves help them by showing them how the words are written.



Write a rhyming list

Think of word that has lots of rhyming words such as 'big', 'dog' or 'sat'. Write the word at the top of a piece of paper. Explain that rhyming words have the same sound at the end but a different sound at the beginning like 'dog' and 'log'. Ask your child to write a list of words that rhyme with your word. Short, 3 letter words work well for this. Help by writing any letters that your child has not yet learned.

Make a name card

Help your child to practice writing their name. You may want to make a name card that your child can decorate or use as they try to write their names by themselves.



Plan a party

Plan a party for your child's favourite dolls or cuddly toys. Talk about all of the things you could make in preparation for the party that involve mark making and writing. This may include a shopping list, invitations and decorations. Help your child to make some or all of the things that they will need.



Send a card

Talk about what cards are for and when we might send cards. Help your child to make a card or write inside a pre-made one.



Phonics is the way that most children are now taught to read. It supports children by helping them to understand the relationship between the sounds of spoken language and the letters in the written language.

When your child has learned some sounds (phonemes) and can recognise the letters that represent these sounds (graphemes) it is important that they build on this knowledge as they learn to read.



One of the things that children will learn to do as they begin to read is to break a word down into its separate sounds. This is called segmenting.

They will then say the sounds together to make a word. This is called blending. So, when your child segments the word 'cat' they would say the 3 sounds (phonemes) separately c-a-t. They would then blend the sounds together to read the word 'cat'.

Top tips for phonics

- Say the sounds (phonemes) very clearly and try not to add in extra bits - so 'c' is a short sound that does not need an 'uh' at the end. 'c' not 'cuh'.
- Encourage your child to read new words using segmenting and blending rather than trying to guess the word or use the pictures as clues.
- Be patient and offer lots of encouragement. Phonics can be challenging for some children so don't worry if they need to take a little time.



Local support for literacy

For information on how to access books in Liverpool you may wish to contact Liverpool Library Service:

<https://liverpool.gov.uk/libraries/find-a-library/central-library/>

Dual language books are also available to loan through some of the Liverpool children's centres:

<http://search3.openobjects.com/kb5/liverpool/fsd/service.page?id=2uEkVlrcBLE&familychannel=7-7>

You can also find supportive resources including recommended reading lists on the Liverpool Learning Partnership website:

<https://www.liverpoollearningpartnership.com/resources-to-help-during-social-distancing-and-self-isolation/>

Activity suggestions for phonics - Online

***Note: it is important to ensure that the following resources complement the phonics programme used within your school.**

Activity suggestions for phonics - Offline



Practice segmenting and blending

While playing with your child make up games to help them segment and blend. Simon Says is a useful one to start with. Instead of 'Simon says jump' break down the word jump into its separate sounds, j-u-m-p. Try with other words like h-o-p and r-u-n.



Sounds all around

Ask your child to be as quiet as they can for 1 minute and listen to the sounds all around them. Ask them to remember what they could hear and in what order. This game can be played anywhere and will help your child to tune into different sounds.



Which toy?

Collect some of your child's toys together. Say the name of one of the toys using the sounds (phonemes) in the word, for example 'I am looking at the d-o-g.' Ask your child to choose which toy you are referring to. Your child could then take a turn and ask you to guess which toy.



Show and tell

Show children how to read new words using phonics. You could try this in the supermarket or while you are out for a walk. When you come to a word on a road sign or food packet, segment and blend the word out loud to show your child how it's done.