

How can you help to develop your child's literacy skills at home?

Speaking and Listening Tips

Your child has learned to talk and listen with your help and encouragement. You can continue to support your child's language development at school by doing some of the following:

- ✓ Give your child opportunities to talk with you each day. Show you are interested by giving nods, smiles, sounds, words, gestures, but try not to interrupt. Respond to your child's talk. Dinner time or in the car are perfect times for a chat!
- ✓ Encourage your child to talk about their interests, friends, pets, favourite books and favourite movies. Instead of asking 'How was your day?' perhaps ask some direct questions e.g. 'Did you borrow any books from the library?'
- ✓ Ask your child to explain how they have made something that they have brought home from school.
- ✓ Read stories together and ask your child to summarise what has happened in their own words. Encourage them to read informative texts (non-fiction) and talk about the information presented.
- ✓ Give your child multiple instructions to follow or encourage them to relay messages to family members. If your child has trouble remembering what was spoken, a good technique is for him or them to repeat in their mind what has been said, rephrasing it in his or her own words.
- ✓ If you are planning something, such as a meal or an outing, ask your child for ideas for the occasion. You could just listen to one another share ideas or write them down.
- ✓ Discuss common dates on the calendar such as public holidays and have your child mark in important events on a family calendar. Talk about days, months and years in relation to events such as birthdays and other special occasions and discuss what will occur.
- ✓ Encourage your child to play a variety of speaking and listening games such as 'The Shopping Game' (one child begins by saying 'I went shopping and bought an apple'. Each child must remember what has been said before and add a new shopping item) or 'Eye Spy'. Develop their descriptive language and attention to specific details.

Reading and Viewing

Reading should be enjoyable for you and your child. All children, regardless of age, like to be read to. Make a special time whenever possible for reading with your child away from interruptions. You can help your child in reading when you:

- ✓ Show your child that reading is a valued activity in your home by reading whenever you can.
- ✓ Share texts in different ways- read aloud to your child, ask them to read to you, read together. Encourage expression and smooth reading. Try reading with different voices, lots of emotion, invented sound effects and funny faces. Change the tone in your voice, vary the loudness or softness of your voice. Have fun and enjoy it.
- ✓ Read and view a variety of different texts, both print (e.g. newspapers, comics, poems, plays, cartoons, reference books, recipe books) and spoken, visual, media, multimedia and digital texts (e.g. advertisements, movies, games). Read for enjoyment as well as for information.
- ✓ Talk about the ways in which a film version compares with the print version. Encourage comparison and ask your child why they differ and which they prefer.
- ✓ Encourage your child to predict what might happen next or to infer using information from the text the reason why a character has done something.
- ✓ Talk about the different purposes for reading different texts and who texts might be intended for.
- ✓ Join the local library and visit as a family. Encourage your child to borrow from the school library as well.
- ✓ Ask your child to think of possible beginnings and endings for stories read and heard.



- ✓ Praise your child when they are reading. Encourage your child to have a go at reading words that are unfamiliar. Ask your child to read on past the unknown word to gain clues from the rest of the sentence. 'Sound out' difficult words and/or give clues to the meaning of difficult words. Show your child how to find the meanings of unfamiliar words in dictionaries.
- ✓ The **Internet** requires different skills and knowledge to printed materials. It is a wonderful resource to gather information that you can use to support your child's literacy development. Work alongside your child on the Internet. You can use locate a suitable book to read by entering a publisher or an author's name into a reliable search engine, such as *Google*. Some reliable publishers are Scholastic, Penguin, Allen & Unwin and Pan Macmillan. These publishers have their own databases that will allow you to preview recent releases, read sample extracts, covers and read brief overviews or use one of the links below.
- ✓ Encourage and support your child to enter the **Premier's Reading Challenge** to develop his or her love of reading. There are hundreds of titles on the PRC booklist that include humour, fantasy, mysteries, poetry, sport and factual books and these lists are a fabulous resource to help parents locate quality texts.
- ✓ Talk with your child about their projects or assignments. Ask questions like- What is your project about? When is it due? Where do you think you'll start? Would you like any help or are you okay? Where will you go to find out the information? Encourage them not to copy information word for word from books or the Internet. Write their ideas clearly in their own words and use spell check or dictionary.com to check the spelling and meaning of words.

Writing and Representing

Make writing experiences at home fun for you and your child:

- ✓ Encourage your child to use their imagination, be curious and wonder about the world around them.
- ✓ Write in front of your child and discuss what you are writing, e.g. shopping lists, cards, letters and notes. Encourage them to write cards and invitations, and letters to friends, relatives, neighbours and their teacher. Ask them to write signs, poems, favourite recipes and instructions or label their artworks or creations.
- ✓ Play word games such as 'I Spy', 'Scrabble', 'Boggle', 'Scattegories', 'Junior Pictionary' or complete crosswords and word searches.
- ✓ Display paintings, drawings and writing that your child brings home from school.
- ✓ Encourage your child to keep a scrap book or photo album for putting in pictures and writing or perhaps keep a diary and to write in it whenever possible.
- ✓ Encourage your child to always write in the NSW Foundation Style Writing.



Parent Resources

Australian Government Learning Potential Site links-

- <https://www.learningpotential.edu.au/>
- <https://www.learningpotential.edu.au/links>
- <https://www.learningpotential.edu.au/everyday-ideas?selectedYearLevel=Years%205-6>

Suggested Texts-

- NESA <https://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/assets/global/files/english-k10-suggested-texts.pdf>
- Children's Book Council of Australia <http://www.cbc.org.au>
- Publishers <http://www.publishers.asn.au>
- Book reviews <http://www.cool-reads.co.uk>
- Premier's Reading Challenge <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/premiersreadingchallenge>