



Moving Little Minds

The Lowdown on Early Literacy

An All-In-One Guide to
Understanding Early Literacy
Components and Resources to
Support Them!

Welcome to Your First Step in Early Literacy Growth!

Hi! I'm Melissa...a wife, mama of two children ages 8 and 10, preschool literacy teacher, former kindergarten and special education teacher, consultant, and early literacy advocate. I am here for questions and resources all things early literacy! Literacy matters and I am so glad that you have taken a step towards learning more about early literacy and how to support young children. There is nothing more painful than watching your child struggle to read. You feel helpless and confused. I know...I have been there. My daughter was fortunate enough to have a mother in education... someone to advocate for her, support her, tutor her, and explain the truth behind how hard it is to read. Most children aren't as lucky as my daughter. Most do not have parents with a background in education that can recognize issues early on. In fact, many children don't even have a parent that can read beyond a fourth-grade reading level themselves.

Some children are just lucky. Learning to read comes effortless. For others, learning to read will be hard. Approximately 60% of children required explicit instruction to learn to read, with around 10% to 15% having extreme challenges. I don't tell you these facts to scare you, but to open your mind to the realities of learning to read, as well as the wonderful opportunities that we have as parents to make a difference in our children's lives. I have created this guide to give you background knowledge about the different components of early literacy. It is my hope that if you understand each component of literacy more clearly, it will be easier for you to engage with your child in meaningful ways. There are so many easy, fun, purposeful practices that we can do with our children, which will set our children on a easier path to reading success. As a parent, I would do anything to make learning to read seamless for my children. Reading is a part of every aspect of learning. So, let's work together to give children the start that they deserve. Educate yourself. Plan a simple activity. Dedicate FIVE minutes a day to early literacy with your child! You can do it!

Happy Learning!

- Melissa



6 Components of Early Literacy Resource Guide

Oral Language and Vocabulary

- Receptive Language - Understanding of words, phrases, and sentences when others are speaking.
- Expressive Language – Ability to produce language in a meaningful way, including pronouncing sounds, words, phrases and sentences with proper vocabulary, parts of speech, tone, and volume.

Why Oral Language and Vocabulary Matter

Building strong oral language skills in young children builds brain connections between speech and meaning. Longitudinal studies have shown that oral language and vocabulary skills of children from birth to age 3 are strong predictors of academic achievement throughout elementary school. Approximately 8-12% of preschool children have a language impairment of some form, which increases the risk of reading deficiencies and behavior disorders. Early intervention is most effective when filling language gaps.

Top 3 Tips

1. Read, read, read!
2. Child-led Conversations:
 - Let attention and interests of child lead conversation.
 - Limit Questioning – Talk about things in your own day...this can lead to willingness to talk and share.
3. Imaginative Play:
 - Pick a theme (animals, hospital, fire station).
 - Let your child's interests guide play.

FREE Educational Apps

- Khan Academy Kids:
 - Click: Library > Reading > Writing and Language
- Starfall:
 - It's Fun to Read, ABC Rhymes, Nursery Rhymes, Sing-Alongs
- PBS Kids Games:

- Work It Out Wombats Step It Out, Daniel Tiger Nature Walk, Daniel Tiger Guess the Feeling. Pinkalicious Story Maker, Sesame Street Story Book Builder, Sesame Street A Job for Me

Oral Language Book Recommendations

Ages 0-3:

- Where is Baby's Belly Button by Karen Katz (and other books in this series)
- First 100 Word Flashcards by Priddy Books
- Alphablock by Christopher Franceschelli
- That's Not My Duck by Fiona Watt (and other books in this series)
- Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Eric Carle
- Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown
- Pat the Bunny by Dorothy Kunkardt

Ages 3-5:

- Create a Story Cards by Eeboo
- Fancy Nancy by Jane O'Connor (and other books in this series)
- Big Words for Little Geniuses by James and Susan Patterson
- The Word Collector by Peter Reynolds
- Thesaurus Rex by Laya Steinberg
- Big, Bigger, Biggest by Nancy Coffeit
- Stegothesaurus by Bridget Heos

Concepts of Print

- Understanding of how books work and having awareness that print has meaning, is useful, and important.

Why Concepts of Print Matter

Building an understanding that print holds meaning is a valuable step in beginning read skills. Longitudinal study of preschoolers that participated in shared reading 2-4 times per week with references to print showed significant impacts on reading, spelling, and comprehension for 2 years following the instruction. While explicit instruction is not necessary at home, occasionally include conversations about print when reading to your child in fun and natural ways!

Top 3 Tips

1. Start with Names!
2. Embrace Environmental Print
 - Talk about the names of stores and symbols that match
 - “Read” the kids menu
 - Label items in your home
3. Occasionally reference print while reading:
 - Touch each word while reading a simple sentence (one-to-one correspondence).
 - Talk about words vs. letters.
 - Point out punctuation.

FREE Educational Apps

- Khan Academy Kids:
 - Click: Library > Reading > Reading Foundation Skills
- Starfall:
 - All About Me, Magic
- PBS Kids Games:
 - Pinkalicious Story Maker, Sesame Street Story Book Builder
- Funny Animals
- First Words (Papumba)

Concepts of Print Book Recommendations

Ages 0-3:

- A is for Apple by Tiger Tales
- Dear Zoo by Rod Campbell
- LMNOPeas by Keith Baker
- Moo, Baa, La La La by Sandra Boynton
- Oops Pounce Quick Run! by Mike Twohy
- Peek-a Who? by Nina Laden
- First 100 Word Flashcards by Priddy Books

Ages 3-5:

- Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Eric Carle
- Go, Dog, Go! by P.D. Eastman
- Pete the Cat, I Love My White Shoes by Eric Litwin
- No, David! by David Shannon
- Mouse Mess by Linnea Riley
- We Are In a Book by Mo Willems
- The Book with No Pictures by B.J. Novak

Phonological Awareness

- Phonological Awareness - Understanding that words and sentences contain units of sounds.

Why Phonological Awareness Matters

Children that can manipulate words auditorily have a strong sense of how words work. Science has proven that knowing how to blend and segment sounds auditorily makes it easier for children to learn to blend words when beginning to read (decode) and write sounds in words when beginning to write (encode).

Examples of phonological awareness skills include rhyming, sentence segmentation, syllables, alliteration, and onset-rime. More advanced skills include phonemic awareness, which is the ability to hear and manipulate the individual sounds in a word. Mastering this skill is the ultimate goal of phonological awareness. Approximately 20% of children have a phonological awareness deficit, which is directly linked to reading difficulties.

Top 3 Tips

1. Sing songs, recite nursery rhymes, and repeat poems – Clap for each word!
2. Play with Words – Think deeper:
 - Syllables
 - Compound Words
 - Beginning and Ending Sounds
 - Onset and Rime
3. Read books that encourage chiming in with familiar phrases and rhymes.

FREE Educational Apps

- Sounder and Friends
- Khan Academy Kids:
 - Click: Library > Reading > Reading Foundational Skills
 - Click: Library > Letters > Beginning Letter Sounds and Ending Letter Sounds
- Starfall:
 - ABC Rhymes, Nursery Rhymes, Sing-Alongs
- PBS Kids Games:

- Super Why Rhyme Racer, Sesame Street Rhyme Time, Elinor Wonders Why Nature Sights and Sounds, Sesame Street Monster Music, Alma's Way Boom Boom Bah

Phonological Awareness Book Recommendations

Ages 0-3:

- Duck in a Truck by Jez Alborough
- We're Going on a Bear Hunt by Michael Rosen
- Llama Llama, Red Pajama by Anna Dowdney (and other books in this series)
- Little Blue Truck by Alice Schertle
- Noisy Animals by Tiger Tales
- Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear? by Eric Carle
- Mother Goose Treasury by Priscilla Lamont

Ages 3-5:

- There's a Wocket in My Pocket by Dr. Seuss (and all Dr. Seuss books!)
- A Was Once An Apple Pie by Suse MacDonald
- Did You Take the B from My -ook? by Beck and Matt Stanton
- Sheep in a Jeep by Nancy Shaw
- The Hungry Thing by Jan Slepian and Ann Seidler
- Many Marvelous Monsters by Ed Heck
- Cock-a-Doodle-Moo! by Bernard Most

Alphabetic Knowledge

- Understanding that each written letter has a name and that letters represent sounds.

Why Alphabetic Knowledge Matters

Building alphabetic knowledge in children creates a strong foundation for beginning blending, phonics, and decoding skills, all of which are vital components of reading. Studies have proven that alphabetic knowledge in preschool and kindergarten is one of the best predictors of reading, writing, spelling, and comprehension in later elementary years. On the contrary, there is a direct correlation between children that struggle with letter naming and later reading difficulties. Dedicating a few minutes each week to building your child's alphabetic knowledge pays off in the end!

Top 3 Tips

1. Hang an alphabet line in your home. Touch each letter while singing the ABCs!
2. Read ABC books with clear, simple illustrations and make letter/sound/object connections.
3. When teaching names and sounds, make sure to clip the sound! No schwa!

FREE Educational Apps

- Khan Academy Kids:
 - Click: Library > Reading > Reading Foundational Skills (Rhyming, Hear Syllables, Blend Sounds, End Sounds, Make New Words)
- Starfall:
 - ABC Rhymes, ABCs
- PBS Kids Games:
 - Super Why Paint by Letter, Super Why Spelling Play, Sesame Street Letter Dance Party
- Alphabet Learning Academy
- Learning Games for Toddlers
- ABC Kids – Tracing and Phonics
- ABC Little Letter Matchup

Alphabetic Knowledge Book Recommendations

Ages 0-3:

- A is for Apple by Tiger Tales
- Alphablock by Christopher Franceschelli
- Think, Touch, Learn: ABC by Xavier Deneux
- Neon Books: My First Book of the Alphabet by Silver Dolphin Books
- A to Z by Sandra Boynton
- LMNOPeas by Keith Baker
- T is for Tiger by Laura Watkins

Ages 3-5:

- Dr. Suess's ABCs by Dr. Suess
- Alphabet Mystery by Audrey Wood
- A is for Angry by Sandra Boynton
- Max's ABCs by Rosemary Wells
- Z is for Moose by Kelly Bingham
- Eating the Alphabet by Lois Ehlert
- The Little Red Cat Who Ran Away and Learned His ABCs by Patrick McDonnell

Text Comprehension

- Ability to understand the meaning of words read aloud and to relate to deeper concepts including making predictions, inferences, connections to the outside world, and conclusions.

Why Text Comprehension Matters

Building text comprehension skills at a young age helps to lay the foundation for reading comprehension in the future. Comprehension skills in children as young as age 4 are predictive of later performance of reading comprehension in upper elementary school grades. Text comprehension skills are built through reading and discussing stories, and make connections beyond the book. Children that are read multiple books on a daily basis have a strong vocabulary and oral language foundation, are exposed to concepts of print, alphabetic knowledge, and text comprehension skills. Children with a strong foundation in these early literacy skills are proven to perform better in reading, writing and spelling in elementary school. Brain scans of young children prove that children that are read to more often have more active brains!

Top 3 Tips

1. Read, Re-Read, Re-Tell!
2. ABC
 - a. Activate Prior Knowledge
 - b. Build Vocabulary
 - c. Connect to Child's World
3. Intentional Questioning – think about connecting to child's life, other stories, or events in the world around you.

FREE Educational Apps

- Khan Academy Kids:
 - Click: Library > Reading > Stories
- Starfall:
 - Talking Library, It's Fun to Read
- PBS Kids Games:
 - Pinkalicious Story Maker, Sesame Street Story Book Builder, Arthur's Puppet Theater, Clifford Adventure Stories, Xavier Riddle Story Creator

Text Comprehension Book Recommendations

Ages 0-3:

- Grumpy Monkey by Suzanne Long
- Good Night, Gorilla by Peggy Rathmann
- The Three Little Pigs by Tiger Tales
- Little Blue Truck by Alice Schertle
- The Little Engine That Could by Watty Piper
- Curious George Loves to Ride by H.A. Rey
- Harry the Dirty Dog by Gene Zion

Ages 3-5:

- Goldilocks and the Three Bears by James Marshall
- I'm a Frog by Mo Willems
- My Lucky Day by Keiko Kasza
- Enemy Pie by Derek Munson
- Elmer by David McKee
- Too Many Toys by David Shannon
- The Day the Crayons Quit by Drew Daywalt

Writing

- Written Expression - Ability to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas through words and drawings.
- Handwriting – Ability to use writing tools to form symbols, letters, words, and objects.

Why Writing Matters

Writing is essential for children, as this is a key form of communication and increases letter processing skills! As children progress into elementary school, the ability to write quickly and efficiently is important. Children that have handwriting deficits take longer to complete tasks. Taking longer to complete tasks can lead to frustration, stress, and a negative attitude towards school in the upper elementary grades. We must dedicate time to building fine motor skills through sensory experiences and daily practice. Neuroscience has proven that handwriting boost brain activity and activates memory centers, and a study with MRI scanning of five-year-old children shows that children’s “reading circuits” are engaged in the brain when handwriting practice is completed in free form.

Top 3 Tips

1. Model and encourage proper pencil grip from the start.
2. Use shortened writing utensils and write with paper and crayons over bumpy surfaces to build hand strength.
3. Engage in daily experiences that build fine motor skills and encourage writing. When children “write”, dictate their stories and celebrate!

FREE Educational Apps

- Khan Academy Kids:
 - Click: Library > Letters> Uppercase Letters and Lowercase Letters
- Starfall:
 - Talking Library, It’s Fun to Read
- PBS Kids Games:
 - Pinkalicious Story Maker, Sesame Street Story Book Builder, Arthur’s Puppet Theater, Xavier Riddle Story Creator, Scribbles and Ink In and Out, Peg + Cat Paint-a-Long
- ABC Kids
- Montessori Preschool

Writing Book Recommendations

Ages 0-3:

- Not a Box by Antoinette Portis
- Ellie by Mike Wu
- Lines that Wiggle by Candace Whitman
- Chalk by Bill Thomson
- Beautiful Oops! by Barney Saltzberg
- Mouse Paint by Ellen Walsh
- Let's Make Faces by Hanoch Piven

Ages 3-5:

- The Dot by Peter Reynolds
- Rocket Writes a Story by Tad Hills
- Ralph Tells a Story by Abby Hanlon
- I Am an Artist by Marta Altes
- Idea Jar by Adam Lehrhaupt
- The Line by Paula Bossio
- The Squiggly Story by Andrew Larson
- Ish by Peter Reynolds

Decoding Resources for Beginning Readers

- Decoding – Ability to apply knowledge of letter sound relationship and letter patterns to correctly pronounce (read) written words
- Encoding - Ability to hear individual sounds in words and apply knowledge of letter sound relationship and letter patterns to correctly write words

FREE Educational Apps

- Khan Academy Kids:
 - Click: Library > Letters > CVC Words
 - Click: Library > Reading > Early Readers
 - Explore the different ages levels (1st grade) for more resources
- Starfall – Learn to Read
- PBS Kids Games:
 - Pinkalicious Story Maker, Sesame Street Story Book Builder, Arthur’s Puppet Theater, Xavier Riddle Story Creator, Scribbles and Ink In and Out, Peg + Cat Paint-a-Long
- Blending Board
- ABC Spelling

Phonics Decodable Reader Recommendations

- BOB Books by Bobby Maslen
- Primary Phonics by Barbara Maker
- Learn to Read with Tug and Pug by My Very First I Can Read Books
- Word Family Tales by Scholastic

Join My 6 Week Coaching Session!

Is your child ready to learn to read but you are unsure of where to begin? I am here to walk you through the process of teaching your child to read using research-based practices, while providing support, community, and enthusiasm! Join my small group coaching session, where we work together to learn about the science behind learning to read and tackle the ends and outs of the process. We will meet via zoom once per week for six weeks, with a private Facebook group in which you can reach out for guidance and support from myself and other group members along the way. Download the [Ready to Read Guide](#) to learn more!

Jump on the waitlist!

How Do I Know If My Child Is Ready?

- Recognizes most letters of the alphabet.
- Can produce most letter sounds.
- Is beginning to show an interest in reading words.
- Shows a strong interest in books.
- Is willing to participate with you for 15-20 minutes 3-4 times per week.

What is Included?

- 6, 1-hour small group coaching sessions via zoom (max. of 6 students).
- Private Facebook group for consistent support and community.
- Teach to Read Notebook, including:
 - Phonological awareness warm-up activities
 - Sight word list and practice mat
 - Orton-Gillingham based Three Part Drill cards
 - Games and activities to support reading
 - So much more!

Give your child the gift of reading! *Join the waitlist!*

Looking for an EASY way to make literacy part of your daily routine?

100 Days of Preschool Literacy Activities to Move Little Minds



Build beginning literacy skills with easy, engaging activities that can be completed in just a few minutes of your day! Successful completion of these activities will build kindergarten and reading readiness skills for a strong future! Simply complete an activity, pull off a page, and celebrate!

Features:

- 5"X5" tear-off pad with table-top stand
- 100 research-based activities that focus on building the 6 key components of early literacy.
- Downloadable incentive chart linked in product
- Links to videos that provide background knowledge about each component being practiced
- Recommended for children ages 4-5.

A portion of every sale will be donated to Charlotte Family Housing, which will give pads to preschoolers facing unexpected homelessness.



SHOP NOW!