

Pre-literacy skills as a path to learning to read

When children get to school, they will be taught how to read. But to be successful readers, there are some pre-literacy skills that parents and caregivers can help their babies and toddlers develop. Below are some of these:



**BABY
READ** |

CAREN
VON HIPPEL

Rhyme words:

Singing or reading aloud nursery rhymes is a great way to help babies and toddlers learn to hear how different words sound, like the difference between “sun” and “fun” and “back” and “tack.” Key to reading is learning to recognize the sounds that letters make.

Look at books:

Children need to be interested in words and books to read. Reading to children every day will encourage this interest. Almost all children love being read to. And this is an emotionally bonding experience between the child and the reader.

Track objects: Reading requires children to follow objects with their eyes. This takes paying attention and focus. These skills are critical to learning just about anything, including how to read. These skills can be learned and cultivated as you read to your child.

Talk: Children need an extensive vocabulary to understand what they read. Books contain millions of words, many of which are not used in daily conversation. Read a variety of books to your preschooler. Talk to your child about the world around him/her to help them associate words with what your child sees and hears. Describe the lasagna you are making for dinner; give the names of different vegetables and fruits in the supermarket; talk about the colors of the clothing your baby is wearing. It is endless.

Do puzzles: Children need to be able to differentiate sizes, shapes, lines and directions to learn how to read.

Build fine motor skills:

Children need to use their fingers and hands independently to hold books and turn pages. They need to learn how to turn the pages of a book, from the front to the end.

Read daily: Most of all, children need someone to read to them every day, starting as early as birth. This will help them develop the pre-literacy skills needed for them to become successful readers in school.

This list is taken and expanded from bookoola.com.

BABYREAD’S MISSION is to raise the literacy level in Oconee County by encouraging moms/caregivers to read daily to children from birth. This prepares children for success in school and in life. Readers read with moms/caregivers in person regularly in public places, e.g. town libraries. Questions? Contact Caren von Hippel, Ph.D., President, at babyread@charter.net or visit babyread.org.