

BUILDING READERS®

How Families Can Help Children Get Ready to Read

Ladd Community Consolidated School
Mrs. Michelle V. Zeko, superintendent

Keep your preschooler's thinking skills sharp during the summer

Don't let your little thinker's brain turn to mush over the summer! Read together every day and:

- **Introduce your child** to new things. Explore a new park or playground. Take a trip to an age-appropriate theater or art gallery. Pay a virtual visit to another country online.
- **Investigate the wonders** all around him. Point out the constellations to your child on a clear night. Identify the trees in your backyard. Go on a bird-watching expedition around the block.
- **Help your child learn a new skill.** Enroll in a parent-child class. Teach him how to prepare a simple recipe.

Be creative! *Any* activity that makes your child think will help strengthen his thinking skills.



Create a picture book with your child

Young children love picture books. They also love to create their own stories. With all the new experiences that this summer will bring, it is a great time to encourage your child to draw and write.

Each time your child does something fun this summer:

1. **Give her a piece of paper** and ask her to draw you a picture about it. Fold under the bottom third of the paper so that it remains blank.
2. **Have your child tell you** about the picture when she finishes it. On the bottom third of the paper, write down exactly what your child says. Have her use a marker to trace over the letters you have written.

At the end of the summer, staple all the pages together to create your child's very own summer picture book! Have her "read" her summer book to you often. Use it to revisit the warm summer days when the weather turns cold!

Promote reading this summer

It is important to maintain your preschooler's interest in books and reading over the summer months.

Plan to:

- **Visit the library** every week. Encourage your child to check out a new genre each time you go. Ask the librarian for suggestions.
- **Pack books** to help pass the time on trips and errands.
- **Enroll your child** in a summer reading program.



Enthusiasm builds enthusiasm!

Want your preschooler to get excited about books? Get excited about them yourself! Along with reading stories to her, sharing your enthusiasm for books is one of the most effective ways to nurture your child's love of words!



Use the colors of the rainbow to practice letters

Help your child review the letters of the alphabet—and make a piece of art! Pick a word, such as his name. Then:

1. **Print the word** lightly on a piece of paper.
2. **Have your child** trace the letters several times, each time using a different color crayon.
3. **Read each letter aloud** as your child traces it. Make sure he says the letter with you!



Listening skills build reading skills

Listening is an important part of your child's language development and a key step to building reading skills. To help her become a better listener:

- **Speak to your child** in a clear and simple manner using correct grammar. Avoid using baby talk.
- **Model good listening** for your child. Make eye contact and repeat what you have heard to show you understand.
- **Ask your child questions** that require her to make a choice. "Would you like to wear your red shirt or your green shirt today?"
- **Play games that use listening** and following directions, such as Simon Says.



Help your child identify rhymes

Rhymes emphasize the *phonemes* (the sounds that letters make) that words have in common.

To have your child practice identifying rhymes, say three words aloud. Two of the words should rhyme and one should sound very different, like *cat, hat, tree*. Say each word slowly, and ask which one sounds different. Exaggerate *cat* and *hat* so he can hear the *at* sound.



Talking leads to 'incidental teaching'

What's one of the most effective ways to boost your child's word smarts? According to research, it's talking to her!

When you speak with your child, you're engaged in something called "incidental teaching."

Here's how it works:

1. **Your child introduces a topic.**
"I went on the swings today."
2. **You encourage her to elaborate.**
"Wow! What else did you do?"
3. **Your child replies.** "We went down the slide and played tag."
4. **You praise her language.** "You did a great job describing your day!"

The conversation is quick, simple, and ideal for getting your child to think about—and use—different words.

Source: V.J. Carbone, Ed.D., "Natural Environment Teaching," niswc.com/BR-RR_incidental.



Books to delight your early reader

- ***Oh, No!*** by Candace Fleming (Schwartz & Wade). When Frog falls into a deep hole, Mouse tries to help him out ... but then Mouse falls in, too! Will the animals make it out?
- ***Jack's House*** by Karen Magnuson Beil (Holiday House). Jack says he built a house—but Max the dog knows the true story. Hear Max's take on the construction in this funny adaptation of the classic tale, "The House that Jack Built."
- ***The Pirate of Kindergarten*** by George Ella Lyon (Atheneum). Ginny has a problem: She sees two of everything! A nurse diagnoses her problem and fixes it with an eye patch. Will this Kindergarten Pirate be able to enjoy the rest of the year?



Q: My son is only in preschool, but I'm already concerned about his doing well in elementary school and beyond. How can I set him up for success?

A: By making him *want* to learn! Surround your child with books and other types of reading materials. Talk to him every day. Draw and count together.

Sing the alphabet. Paint pictures. Basically, ignite a "knowledge spark" in him!

Do you have a question about reading? Email readingadvisor@parent-institute.com.

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