

Family Activities



Readiness Skill: Knows how books work

Before children can “read” books on their own, they must have a basic understanding of the functions of print. Knowing how books work includes the knowledge of the difference between print and pictures, knowledge that books are read from front to back and that print moves from left to right.

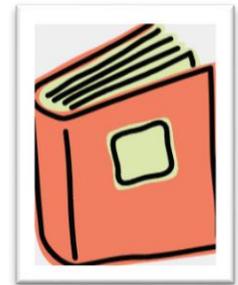
Print and Pictures



As your child begins to learn that words are made up of a group of marks and symbols known as the alphabet, he or she will then learn that these special symbols are different than pictures and illustrations. Most children begin the “learning to read” process by “reading” the pictures and illustrations they see in a story. They are naturally drawn to books with lots of illustrations. There is a normal progression of moving from reading pictures to the actual print that is found in a story. Parents may foster this skill by first providing their child simple picture books that contain few if any words. As your child matures you may move onto other books that contain more of a balanced mixture of pictures and words.

Front to Back

One of the best ways to teach basic print concepts to your child is through reading books to him or her each day. As you read the book take some time to point out the characteristics of the book such as: “Here we have the front cover of the book. The front cover of the book is where we can find the title, author, and illustrator of the story. The title tells us the name of the story. The author is the person that wrote the story and the illustrator made the pictures for the story.” Be sure to point to and read the title, author, and illustrator of the story using your finger. Repeat this every time you read a story to your child. Over time, he or she will eventually learn to associate this part of the book as being the front of the book.



Left to Right and Top to Bottom

As mentioned above, reading and demonstrating the reading process to your child each day is a critical first step in your child’s ability to learn to read. You can help him or her learn that the print in a story moves from left to right and from the top to the bottom of the page by using your finger to point to each word as it is read. You can also show him or her how to sweep down to the next line in the story by using your finger. Remember to do this slowly at first until your child begins to catch on to this concept. Give your child plenty of opportunities to use his or her own finger to track the print in the story as well.

Word and Picture Sort

Try this fun sorting game to give your child opportunities to practice recognizing the difference between printed words and pictures. Using the sorting board and game pieces provided in this Family Print Activity, help your child sort the game pieces into two categories: words or pictures. As you work with your child you can make comments or ask questions such as: “See this piece? It is a word. I know it is a word because it is made up of letters that are put together.” “Where does this piece go on the chart?” “Is this piece a word or a picture.” “How do you know?” Once you have finished you can invite your child to count how many words and then how many pictures were placed on the chart. Repeat this game with your child until he or she is able to do it independently.

Words and Pictures Sorting Game Board	
Words	Pictures

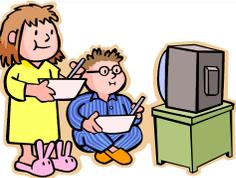
Directions: Start with your child to sort the word and picture game pieces to the appropriate boxes to practice them on the table before each game.

Pointer Fun



A fun way to encourage and help your child learn to track the print in a story from left to right and from top to bottom is by using a pointer. A pointer is any device that can be used to track the print by your child. You can use any safe item from around your home as a story pointer. Ideas may include unsharpened pencils, popsicle sticks, and Q-tips. Help your child decorate his or her pointer to make it extra special by using markers, glitter, paint, pom-poms, or other craft supplies you may have on hand.

Words and Pictures Sorting Game Pieces

dog	bee		and	
	is		The	are
	book	not		
	was	Jack		

Directions: ✂ Cut apart the above game pieces to be used with the provided sorting mat. Use the blank game pieces to create your own using words and pictures cut from magazines, newspapers or food or other packaging.

Words and Pictures Sorting Game Board

Words

Pictures

Directions: Work with your child to sort the word and picture game pieces into the categories above. Be sure to scramble them up on the table before each game.