



Home learning activities for children working between *BPP5* & *BPP 8*



General tips for parents

Creating a literacy-rich environment

- **Make reading materials accessible:** Have books, paper, and mark-making tools within reach
- **Model reading and writing:** Let your child see you reading recipes, lists, messages, books
- **Label the environment:** Put words and symbols on everyday objects and places
- **Create a cosy reading area:** A comfortable space with cushions and good lighting

Supporting communication

- **Use total communication:** Combine words with signs, symbols, gestures, and pictures
- **Give processing time:** Wait 10+ seconds for your child to respond
- **Follow their lead:** Build on their interests and what they initiate
- **Expand and extend:** Add one or two words to what your child says
- **Celebrate all communication:** Words, signs, symbols, gestures – all are valid

Making It meaningful

- **Start with what matters:** Use your child's name, favourite characters, family members, preferred foods
- **Make it functional:** Show how reading and writing help us do things
- **Keep it playful:** Learning should be fun and pressure-free
- **Little and often:** 5-10 minutes several times a day is better than one long session

Remember: Every child's literacy journey is unique. Some children will progress quickly through these levels, while others will need more time and support. The most important things are that your child feels successful, enjoys books and stories, and understands that reading and writing are useful and meaningful.

Reading and story engagement

Interactive story reading

What to do: Read favourite stories together, encouraging your child to participate:

- Point to pictures and ask "What's that?"
- Pause before repeated phrases so your child can join in
- Ask simple questions: "Where's the cat?" "What colour is it?"
- Let your child turn the pages

Story sequencing

What to do: After reading a familiar story, help your child retell it:

- Use picture cards or the book's illustrations
- Ask "What happened first?" "Then what?"
- Create a simple story map with drawings or photos
- Start with very simple stories with 3-4 main events. Accept any form of communication – words, signs, symbols, or pointing

Making story props

What to do: Create simple props or puppets for favourite stories:

- Stick puppets from pictures
- Character masks
- Props from household items (e.g., three bowls for Goldilocks)

Creating personal books

What to do: Make books about your child's life and interests:

- Photo books of family, pets, favourite activities
- "My Day" books showing their routine
- Books about special events (birthday, holiday, trip to the park)

Word and symbol recognition

Environmental print hunt

What to do: Help your child spot familiar words and logos around the home and community:

- Food packaging (cereal boxes, favourite snacks)
- Shop signs and logos
- Road signs (STOP, their street name)

Name recognition activities

What to do: Help your child recognise and use their name:

- Label their belongings (coat peg, cup, toothbrush)
- Make their name in different ways (magnetic letters, playdough, paint)
- Play "find your name" games with family members' names
- Create a name card they can copy

Symbol and visual timetable use

What to do: Create and use visual supports throughout the day:

- Daily routine chart with symbols/photos
- Choice boards for activities, snacks, or toys
- "First/Then" boards for transitions
- Shopping lists with pictures

Matching and sorting words

What to do: Create simple matching activities:

- Match words to pictures (family names to photos)
- Sort objects by initial letter/sound
- Letter and sound recognition apps, simple word-building games
- Use technology together. Limit screen time and balance with hands-on activities
- Match identical words (snap/pairs games)
- Find objects that start with the same sound

Mark-making and early writing

Purposeful mark-making

What to do: Provide opportunities for mark-making with purpose:

- Writing shopping lists together, making cards for family members
- Signing their name on artwork
- Creating labels for toys or belongings
- Writing messages (even if just marks or letter-like shapes). Accept all attempts – scribbles, letter-like shapes, or actual letters all show understanding. Model writing in front of your child

Letter formation practice

What to do: Explore forming letters in multi-sensory ways:

- Writing in sand, salt, or flour trays
- Forming letters with playdough or clay, painting letters with water on paving stones
- Tracing over letters with finger paints
- Using chalk on the ground or blackboard, forming letters with pipe cleaners or string

Drawing with meaning

What to do: Encourage your child to draw and explain their pictures:

- Provide lots of drawing materials (crayons, markers, pencils)
- Ask "Tell me about your picture"
- Scribe what they say underneath their drawing
- Create a picture diary of daily events

Letter sound activities

What to do: Explore initial sounds in words:

- "I spy" games with sounds
- Sound sorting (objects beginning with 's' or 't')
- Silly soup – put things in a pot that start with the same sound
- Clapping syllables in names and words

Communication and Language

Commenting and describing

What to do: Encourage your child to describe and comment on what they see:

- During walks, talk about what you notice e.g. if they say car, say red car
- Describe what you're doing during daily routines
- Look at photos together and talk about them
- Play with toys and describe what's happening

Question and answer games

What to do: Practice answering and asking questions:

- Play "Guess Who?" or "20 Questions" with objects
- Ask simple questions during stories: "Who?" "Where?" "What?"
- Encourage your child to ask questions about things they're curious about
- Use question words in daily routines: "What shall we have for snack?"

Retelling events

What to do: Help your child talk about things that have happened:

- At the end of the day, talk about what you did
- Use photos to prompt memories
- Create simple news books about weekends or holidays
- Talk about what will happen tomorrow

Play-based literacy

Role play with literacy

What to do: Set up role play areas with reading and writing opportunities:

- Shop with labels, price tags, shopping lists
- Café with menus and order pads
- Doctor's surgery with appointment cards and prescriptions
- Post office with envelopes, stamps, and address labels

Rhyme and rhythm activities

What to do: Explore rhyming words through play:

- Sing nursery rhymes and songs, read rhyming books (Julia Donaldson books have a great range)
- Play rhyming pairs games, make up silly rhymes with your child's name

Functional reading activities

What to do: Involve your child in real-life reading:

- Following simple recipe cards with pictures
- Reading signs when out (shop names, road signs)
- Reading instructions for games or toys
- Checking labels when shopping