

“Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest” (DFE, 2017)

Children imitate the adults around them. Reading magazines and books, colouring and writing can ease anxiety in adults as well as showing children the value of reading and writing.

## Literacy



Speaking and listening skills are vital for the development of reading and writing...

...Share conversations, songs and books with children and encourage them to create their own.

Before children can form recognisable letters, they make marks and give meaning to these marks using their imagination. This process can be encouraged by providing a range of materials to enable mark-making and by listening and supporting children when they talk about the marks they have made.

## Promoting Reading

Activity	How adults can support	Learning (DfE, 2013)
<b>Listening for Sounds</b>	Set a timer for one minute and sit outside, open the window or walk around a room. What sounds can your child hear? Can they imitate any of these sounds?	Listen attentively in a range of situations
<b>Story and Rhyme Time</b>	<p>Try creating a cosy reading den space together using blankets and chairs.</p> <p>When reading rhyming books, encourage your child to join in by pausing to see if they can complete the rhyme . Can they also think of a rhyming nickname for each family member?</p> <p>Encourage your child to talk about their favourite book, pages and characters.</p>	<p>Anticipates phrases in rhymes and stories</p> <p>Enjoys an increasing range of books</p>
<b>Letter Detective</b>	<p>Encourage your child to become a detective by hunting for letters, such as the first letter in their name. Look inside books during the bedtime story, recipe books, or on the front of post which arrives through the door.</p> <p>Create a word search for your child containing a familiar letter, name or simple words. Ask your child to say the sound of the letters aloud when they find them.</p>	<p>Begins to show an interest in print in books and print in the environment</p> <p>Links sounds to letters</p>
<b>I Spy</b>	Play 'I spy with my little eye' with your child to help them hear the initial sound in words. To make this game easier gather a selection of objects or toys starting with the same sound for your child to choose from. For example, a scarf, saucepan and snake.	Hears and says the initial sound in words
<b>Musical Statues</b>	Place letters familiar to your child on the floor. Play music and ask them to dance. When the music stops say a sound and see if they can run to the matching letter. If you have access to an outside area, you adapt this game by placing the letters on fences or walls where they can run to each letter or aim at them with balls.	Links sounds to letters.



## Promoting Writing

Activity	How adults can support	Learning (DfE, 2013)
<b>Pretend Play</b>	Provide your child with writing materials and tools when they are engaging in imaginative play. For example if they are pretending to be a doctor, provide them with a notepad to encourage them to pretend to write a prescription. Allow daily access to materials which you have already in the home for making marks. For example, old notepads or diaries, pencils, paint, post-it notes, adult pens and chalk.	Gives meaning to marks they make as they draw, write and paint
<b>Writing for Purpose</b>	Build in opportunities for your child to write for a specific purpose. This could include writing letters to family and friends, a shopping list for the weekly shop or a thank you card.	Write in meaningful contexts
<b>Name Writing</b>	Together, choose a special place where their name is displayed for them to see every day. This could be their bedroom door or where they eat their meals for instance. Ensure the first letter in their name is written as a capital letter and all remaining letters in their name are in lower case. Encourage them to write their name on any artwork they are proud of to promote the purpose of name writing. Try making a string washing line inside and writing the letters in their name on pieces of paper for them to hang with pegs in the correct order.	Writes own name
<b>Sensory Writing</b>	<p>Before encouraging your child to use a paper and pencil to write new letters first encourage them to try forming the letters by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tracing the letter in the air with their finger</li> <li>-Drawing it on your back</li> <li>-Using their finger to create the letter in a baking tray filled with sensory materials such as salt, flour or lentils.</li> </ul>	Uses some clearly identifiable letters
<b>Storytelling</b>	<p>Encourage your child to tell you stories. Make a storytelling hat together out of paper or cardboard and take it in turns to wear the hat and become the storyteller.</p> <p>As part of the bedtime story routine, tell your child a story about the events of the day featuring themselves as a character. When they are used to this process encourage them to create their own story for their day.</p>	Develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

## References

Communication Trust. (N.D.). Top Tips for Parents on Supporting Children's Speech and Language. Available at: [https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/18662/tott\\_top\\_talking\\_tips\\_for\\_parents\\_final.pdf](https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/18662/tott_top_talking_tips_for_parents_final.pdf)

DCSF. (2009). *Learning, Playing & Interacting: Good practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage*. Available at: <https://www.keap.org.uk/documents/LearningPlayingInteracting.pdf>

DfE. (2017). *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five*. Available from [https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2017/03/EYFS\\_STATUTORY\\_FRAMEWORK\\_2017.pdf](https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2017/03/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf)

DoHSC. (2019). Physical Activity Guidelines: Infographics. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-guidelines-infographics>

Early Education. (2012). Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Available at: <https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2012/03/Development-Matters-FINAL-PRINT-AMENDED.pdf>

Fisher, J. (2016). *Interacting or Interfering? Improving interactions in the early years*. Maidenhead: Open University Press

Laxton, D., & Leask, M. (2017). MESH Guide: Early Years/ Early Childhood. Retrieved October 29, 2019, from <http://meshguides.org/guides/node/1343>

## Acknowledgements

With particular thanks to Dr Linda Cooper and Lianna Wilding of the University of Chichester for their contributions to the Understanding the World and Literacy pages.

This document and other information related to SKIP for Early Years Educators can be freely accessed and downloaded from:

<https://www.skipforeyeducators.co.uk>

