

## **GET READY TO READ**

### **My Favourite Book**

#### ***Print Knowledge***

##### ***BEGINNING: Functions of Print***

What You Need:

- Construction paper
- Pictures cut from magazines and newspapers
- Markers
- Glue
- Stapler

What You Do:

1. Fold two sheets of construction paper and staple them along the crease to make a book.
2. Have your child pick a title for the book, such as “My Favourite Toys”, “My Favourite Animals” or “My Favourite Foods”. Write the title and your child’s name on the front of the book.
3. Help your child pick pictures that have to do with the chosen title and glue them into the book.
4. Encourage your child to share his or her book with a sibling or friend.

Why?

Your child learns that pictures and print carry messages and have many uses.

Your child also learns about how books work.

### **Making a Menu**

#### ***Print Knowledge***

##### ***BEGINNING: Functions of Print***

What You Need:

- Paper
- Glue stick
- Pictures of food cut from a magazines
- Crayons or markers
- Names of different foods clearly written on index cards

What You Do:

1. Discuss with your child the purpose and use of a menu.
2. Choose a real or pretend meal for your child to put on the menu.
3. Lay out the pictures of the food.
4. Have your child pick out a few pictures. Discuss good choices and favourites.
5. Write “MENJU” at the top of the paper. Help your child, if he or she is ready, write the word on his or her own.
6. Have your child glue the pictures of the selected foods down the left side of the paper.
7. Help your child find the names of the selected foods on the cards. They can either glue the name next to the food or copy it directly onto the paper.
8. Your child can read the menu back to you or share it with a sibling or friend.

Why?

Your child becomes familiar with one of the many functions of print.

## My Name Has Letters

### *Print Knowledge*

#### **BEGINNING: Matching Letters**

What You Need:

- 3D Letters
- Paper
- Markers
- Shallow basket

What You Do:

1. Using the plastic letters, spell the child's name on the paper.
2. Trace the letters with the marker so that the child's name is written on the paper. Colour in the letters all the same colour.
3. Place the plastic letters that are in the child's name in the shallow basket.
4. Have the child pick letters from the basket and match them, one by one, to the corresponding letters on the paper. Continue until the child's name is spelled.

Why?

The child learns that his or her name is made up of letters and what those letters look like.

## The Reading Puppet

### *Print Knowledge*

#### **BEGINNING: Book rules**

What You Need:

- Puppet or stuffed animal
- Picture book

What You Do:

1. Place the book upside down where you and your child can see it.
2. Bring out the puppet and introduce it to your child. Explain that the puppet is going to read the book, but will need some help. Encourage your child to interact with the puppet.
3. Begin the activity by having the puppet look for the title, author and illustrator of the book. Since the book is upside down, the puppet should ask for help from your child. For example, "I want to read this book, but first I need to tell you the title. I can't find it! The book is upside down. There's the title. What does it mean?"
4. Continue the activity with the puppet asking for your child's help reading the book. For example:
  - ✓ "What should I do first if I want to read the book?"
  - ✓ "Where should I start reading?"
  - ✓ "Help me turn the page."
  - ✓ "Can you help me find the picture of \_\_\_\_\_?"

Why?

Your child learns about how books work.

## **Name Memory**

### ***Print Knowledge***

#### ***MAKING PROGRESS: Naming Letters***

What You Need:

- Same coloured index cards
- Markers

What You Do:

1. Make the game cards. Using only the letters in your child's name, write each letter on two cards so that you have several pairs of cards.
2. Shuffle the cards and spread them out face down.
3. Ask the child to turn over any two cards. If the cards match, help the child name the letter. The child then keeps the cards. If the cards do not match, the child turns the cards back over and tries again.
4. Play continues until all matches have been made.
5. Help your child put the letters in order to spell his or her name.

Why?

Your child learns about letter shapes, names and sounds.

## **Fishing for Letters**

### ***Print Knowledge***

#### ***MAKING PROGRESS: Naming Letters***

What You Need:

- Construction paper
- Magnet
- Scissors
- Large Paper clips
- String
- Stick or wooden Dowel
- Marker

What You Do:

1. Cut out 26 fish shapes from the construction paper.
2. Have your child decorate one side of each fish.
3. On the other side of the fish, write a letter of the alphabet.
4. Slide a paper clip onto each fish's tail.
5. To make the "fishing rod," tie the string to the end of the dowel or stick. Tie the magnet to the other end of the string.
6. Scatter the fish on the floor with the letter side down.
7. Have your child try to catch a fish with the rod and say the name of the letter on that fish.
8. For a more advanced version of the game, your child can also say the letter's sounds or a word that starts with that sound.

Why?

Your child learns about letter shapes, names and sounds.

## Find a Word

### *Print Knowledge*

#### *MAKING PROGRESS: Differentiating Print from Pictures*

What You Need:

- Pictures of familiar items cut from magazines and advertisements (Some pictures should include print, and some should be a picture with no print).
- Scissors
- Glue
- Index cards

What You Do:

1. In advance or together with your child, glue each picture onto an index card.
2. Give your child two cards, one that has a word or words on it and one that just has a picture.
3. Say, "Letters can go together to make words. Look for letters and words on your cards. Show e the card that has a word on it."
4. Help your child choose a picture with a word on it. You can challenge your child to tell you what word e or she sees in the picture.
5. Repeat with a few cards. Reinforce the purpose of the print in each picture. For example, say "This cereal box has a word on it that tells us the cereal's name."

Why?

Your child will learn to tell the difference between print and pictures and learn one of the purposes of print.

## Word Puzzles

### *Print Knowledge*

#### *MAKING PROGRESS: Environmental Print*

What You Need:

- Several empty cartons of foods familiar to your child (e.g. cereals, milk, pasta)
- Plastic sandwich bags

What You Do:

1. Cut the carton from into 4-5 puzzle shaped pieces.
2. Place each puzzle into a bag. If possible, have an intact, identical carton in front of your child to see as a model.
3. Put the puzzle together with your child. Ask him or her to point out the food words on the puzzle and say them out loud.

Why?

Your child learns about print in our everyday world and learns to differentiate print from pictures.

## Word Jump

### *Print Knowledge*

#### *READY TO READ: Reading Simple Words*

What You Need:

- Large index cards (or paper)
- Marker
- List of simple words (see list below)

What You Do:

1. Choose eight words that your child is learning.
2. Write each word in large print lowercase letters on an index card. (Remember we use a cursive joined handwriting script at school).
3. Spread the words out on the floor.
4. Say a word, and ask your child to jump to that word and read it.
5. Take turns saying words and jumping to them.

Why?

Your child will begin to recognise simple words

Sample Simple Words:

and, the, in, on, you, cat, it, my, we, me, with

## My Word Box

### *Print Knowledge*

#### *READY TO READ: Reading Simple Words*

What You Need:

- Small box
- Index cards
- Marker

What You Do:

1. Write your child's name on the box.
2. Have your child decorate his or her box.
3. Ask your child to tell you 3 or 4 of his or hers favourite words that are important to him or her.
4. Write these words on index cards. Your child can keep the special words in his or her own box. Repeat steps 3 and 4 every few days.
5. Your child can include pictures on the cards that illustrate some of the words.
6. Every few days, ask your child to "read" you his or her cards and tell you about the words.

Why?

Your child will begin to recognise words that are important to him or her.

## Letter Memory

### *Print Knowledge*

#### *READY TO READ: Naming Letters*

What You Need:

- Same coloured index cards
- Markers

What You Do:

1. Make the games cards. Choose 6 letters that you would like to practice with your child. Write each letter on to two cards so that you have six pairs of cards.
2. Shuffle the cards and place them face down.
3. Ask your child to turn over two cards. If the cards match, the child names the letter and keeps the cards.
4. Play continues until all matches have been made.

Why?

Your child becomes familiar with the names and shapes of the letters of the alphabet.

## Pick a Letter

### *Print Knowledge*

#### *READY TO READ: Naming Letters*

What You Need:

- Brown paper bag
- Plastic letters

What You Do:

1. Place the letters in the bag.
2. Model the activity by closing your eyes and picking a letter. As you feel the letter, describe what letter you think you've picked. Open your eyes and confirm your answer with your child.
3. Have your child close his or her eyes and pick out a letter.
4. Ask your child, "What letter do you think it is?" If the child is having trouble identifying the letter, give clues.

Variations:

Hide the letters in the bin or in the sand or rice.

Have your child match the letter that he or she finds to words you have printed on a piece of paper.

Why?

Your child learns about letter shapes and letter names.

## **Walk on a Letter**

### ***Emergent Writing***

#### ***Beginning: Printing Letters***

What You Need:

- Masking tape

What You Do:

1. Make a large letter on the floor with the masking tape.
2. Talk with child about the name of the letter and a word beginning with that letter.
3. Have your child walk or jump on the masking tape in the shape of the letter. He or she can say the name of the letter and sound of the letter while walking and jumping.
4. Help your child think of a few words that start with the letter.

Why?

Your child becomes familiar with the names and shapes of the letters of the alphabet.

## **Draw to the Music**

### ***Emergent Writing***

#### ***Beginning: Scribbling/Drawing***

What You Need:

- Music with different styles and tempos
- Paper
- Crayons

What You Do:

1. Give our child paper and crayons. You can use construction paper or large mural paper on the wall or floor.
2. Tell your child to draw when the music is on and stop when the music is off.
3. Turn on the music.
4. Let your child draw for a few minutes. Turn the music off and remind your child to stop drawing.
5. Repeat several times, changing the music after a few minutes to a different style or tempo.

Why?

Your child learns to connect arm and hand movements with the marks he or she makes on paper. Your child also practices controlling a crayon.

## **Tell About Your Picture**

### ***Emergent Writing***

#### ***Beginning: Drawing***

What You Need:

- Drawing paper
- Crayons
- Black marker

What You Do:

1. Give your child drawing paper and crayons. Tell your child to draw a picture of an activity that he or she has done recently. For example, the drawing can be something your child did in school, at home or with a friend
2. Ask your child to describe to you what he or she has drawn. Write, in clear print with the black marker, what your child says on the picture. Be sure to read the description out loud to your child after it is written.

Why?

Your child learns that pictures and words can be used to describe.

## **Draw Your Day**

### ***Emergent Writing***

#### ***Beginning: Drawing***

What You Need:

- A variety of drawing materials (crayons, markers, pencils)

What You Do:

1. As your child watches you, write at the top of the paper, "Today in school, I will ..." or "Today at home, we will ..."
2. Ask your child to finish the sentence with a drawing of something that will happen that day in school or at home. You can write your child's description of the drawing at the bottom of the page.

Why?

Your child learns that drawing a picture can tell a story or describe an event.



## **I Can Write Letters**

### ***Emergent Writing***

#### ***Beginning: Printing Letters***

What You Need:

- Sandpaper
- Backing sheet with sand spread out on it
- Large square of carpet

What You Do:

1. Stand side by side with your child.
2. With your index finger, “write” the letter that you would like to practice in the air in front of you. This should be done in large exaggerated way. Say the name of the letter out loud as you “write” it in the air. Do this several times along with your child.
3. Encourage your child to experiment with “writing” the letter with his or her index finger on sandpaper, in sand on a baking sheet and on carpet. Encourage all of your child’s attempts and help him or her as necessary.

Why?

Your child will practice the muscle movements involved in writing letter shapes, which will help him or her to learn how to write letters.

## **Clay Letters**

### ***Emergent Writing***

#### ***Making Progress: Letters***

What You Need:

- Modelling clay or play dough
- Paper and pencil

What You Do:

1. Print a few letters of the alphabet on the paper, making them at least 6 inches tall.
2. Roll lumps of clay or dough into long, thin strips.
3. Help your child form the strips into letters. At first, your child can make the letters directly on the written model. He or she can progress to forming the strips below the written letter, using it as a guide.

Why?

Your child will become familiar with the shape of the letters and practice forming them independently.

## **Build Your Name**

### ***Emergent Writing***

#### ***Making Progress: Printing Name***

What You Need:

- Upper case and lower case plastic letters
- Bag or cloth sack
- Paper
- Pencil or pencil crayons

What You Do:

1. Write your child's name at the top of the upper in large letters, using an uppercase letter for the first letter in your child's name, followed by lower case letters. Remember to use your cursive, joined up handwriting!
2. Place the plastic letters that are in your child's name into the bag. Also include one or two letters that are not in your child's name.
3. Tell your child to pick a letter out of the bag.
4. Ask your child, "What is the name of the letter that you picked? Is this letter in your name?"
5. Ask your child to place the plastic letter under the written letter, and continue until your child has picked all of the letters in his or her name.
6. When your child's name is complete, ask your child to print it out on the paper.

Why?

Your child will become familiar with the letters in his or her name.

## **Trace Your Name**

### ***Emergent Writing***

#### ***Beginning: Printing Name***

What You Need:

- Marker
- Chalk
- Construction paper or sandpaper, at least 8 ½ " x 11" in size

What You Do:

1. With the marker, write your child's name in large letters on the paper. Use an uppercase letter for the first letter of the name, and lowercase for the rest of the letters.
2. First, ask your child to use a finger to trace each letter of his or her name on the paper. Help your child say the name of each letter out loud as it is traced.
3. Give chalk to your child, and have him or her trace the letters with the chalk, saying the name of each letter out loud as it is traced. If necessary, begin by holding and guiding your child's hand as he or she holds the chalk.
4. Encourage your child to trace the letters in order, but be accepting of all attempts

Why?

Your child practices writing and saying the names of the letters in his or her name.

## Sequence Story

### *Emergent Writing*

#### *Beginning: Drawing*

What You Need:

- Crayons
- Stapler
- Black marker
- Drawing Paper

What You Do:

1. Tell your child about something you've done recently, like shopping or making dinner. On three sheets of paper, draw three simple pictures showing the beginning, middle and end of the experience. Use the pictures to tell the story again.
2. Help your child think of a recent experience. Talk together about the beginning, the middle and the end.
3. Help your child draw three pictures, describing the beginning, middle and end of the experience. Number the pictures in the correct order.
4. Ask your child to tell you about his or her pictures in sequence. Write the description for each picture on that picture.
5. Help your child put the pictures in order. Staple the pages together to make a "book" that your child can use to retell the experience.

Why?

Your child will learn to use words and pictures to communicate an experience and understand the importance of sequence in a story.

## Copy a Card

### *Emergent Writing*

#### *Making Progress: Copying*

What You Need:

- Paper
- Crayons
- 12 index cards, each with a different figure on one side (simple shape, squiggly line, letter)

What You Do:

1. Sit down with your child at a table or on the floor. Give your child a piece of paper and a crayon. Help your child write his or her name on the piece of paper.
2. Place the index cards face down in a pile.
3. Your child should pick a card from the pile. He or she can show you the card to you and then draw that figure on the paper. You can do this along with your child on our own paper.
4. after all of the cards have been picked, you and your child can colour and decorate each picture.

Why?

Your child practices the fine motor skills that will help him to her learn to form letters.

## Send a Message

### *Emergent Writing*

#### *Ready to read: Message Composition*

What You Need:

- Shoebox decorated as a mailbox with slot cut in the top
- paper and pencil or crayons

What You Do:

1. Model writing a short message to your child in order to introduce the activity. The message can include both text and pictures that represent text.
2. Explain to your child that he or she can write a message to you and put it in the mailbox. Your child can use scribbles, letters and/or pictures for the message.
3. Be sure to write a message back to your child. You can leave to near your child's bed, on the kitchen table, or in his or her own "mailbox."

Why?

Your child will practice using written language and drawings to communicate.

## Guess What's Inside

### *Emergent Writing*

#### *Ready to Read: Printing Name/Invented Spelling*

What You Need:

- Large box
- Markers
- Lightly coloured plain wrapping paper
- Item familiar to your child that will fit inside the box and can be named with one word.

What You Do:

1. Place the item in the box.
2. Wrap the box with the wrapping paper.
3. Tell your child that there is something in the box. You and your child could discuss some ideas about what might be inside. Place the wrapped box on a table with some markers next to it.
4. Ask your child to write his or her name on the wrapping paper, and try to write a guess as to what it is inside. All attempts at writing a word should be encouraged!
5. To help, ask your child to say the word out loud that he or she wants to write. Help him to hear listen for the sounds in that word and write the letters that make those sounds.
6. Later, open the box and show what is inside. The box can be reused another day with new paper on it.

Why?

Your child will learn that writing has a purpose and engage in beginning attempts at writing.

## **How Many Words?**

### ***Linguistic Awareness***

#### ***Beginning: Segmenting Sentences***

What You Need:

- Several plastic counters, (buttons, paperclips etc.) or other small game pieces

What You Do:

1. Give your child a pile of counters. Tell your child that sentences are made up of words, and that you are going to help him or her count the words in some sentences.
2. Say a simple sentence such as, "I have three books."
3. Help your child put down a counter for each word in the sentence.
4. Say the sentence again, having your child touch a counter for each word heard.
5. Continue with a few different sentences, using longer sentences when your child is ready.

Why?

Your child learns that sentences are made up of words. He or she also practices listening for small segments of language.

## **Match That Sound**

### ***Linguistic Awareness***

#### ***Beginning: Active Listening***

What You Need:

- 8 – 10 empty black film canisters with tops (or similar containers)
- Noisemakers: e.g. salt, beads, water, rice, metal keys, chalk, pebbles

What You Do:

1. Fill two canisters with the same item, e.g. a key. Do this for a total of eight canisters (four pairs).
2. Model the activity for your child. Shake one canister and describe what it sounds like. Shake another canister and describe it.
3. Repeat until you find two canisters that make the same sound. Describe the sound to your child.
4. Ask your child to try the activity. Encourage him or her to describe what is heard as the canisters are shaken.

Why?

Your child will learn to listen carefully for sounds. This will help your child to be a more active listener to the sounds in language.

## **Be an Expert Listener**

### ***Linguistic Awareness***

#### ***Beginning: Active Listening***

What You Need:

- Sound clips with common sounds recorded

What You Do:

1. Introduce the activity by talking to your child about the different sounds that are heard in the house and around the neighbourhood. Help your child think of a few sounds and discuss them.
2. Encourage your child to close his or her eyes and listen carefully to the sounds that are heard. Talk about the sounds with your child.
3. Try this activity with sounds (available on-line) or on a “listening walk” outside.

Why?

Your child learns to listen carefully for sound. This helps him or her to be a more active listener to the sounds in language..

## **Find the Rhymes**

### ***Linguistic Awareness***

#### ***Beginning: Rhyming Words***

What You Need:

- Pictures of rhyming word pairs

What You Do:

1. Begin with any two pairs of pictures displaying rhyming words.
2. Spread the pictures out on the table or floor.
3. Explain to your child that words that rhyme end with the same sounds. Give a few examples, such as *fat/rat* or *sing/ring*.
4. Let your child choose one of the pictures. Find the pictures that rhymes with the chosen picture and ask your child to determine if the words rhyme. Say the words together to emphasise the rhyming parts of the words. Do the same with the other rhyming pair.
5. Spread out more pictures and have your child find the rhyming pairs.

Why?

Your child begins to recognise that some words rhyme because they share common sounds.

## **Jump For A Rhyme**

### ***Linguistic Awareness***

#### ***Making Progress: Rhyming***

##### What You Need:

- Rhyming dictionary such as The Scholastic Rhyming Dictionary. Alternatives are available online.
- List of pairs of rhyming words
- List of pairs of non-rhyming words

##### What You Do:

1. Model the activity for your child. Say a pair of words that rhyme. For example, say, "Cat-bat. The end of those words sounds the same ... The words rhyme. I'm going to jump for a rhyme!"
2. Say a pair of words that do not rhyme. Tell your child, "Those words don't rhyme, so I'll just sit down."
3. Play the game with your child, beginning with several pairs that rhyme, and then add in some pairs that don't rhyme.

##### Variation:

- To adjust level of activity, begin with one syllable words and progress to two-and three syllable words.

##### Why?

Your child will become aware of rhymes and learn to identify them.

## **Mystery Sound**

### ***Linguistic Awareness***

#### ***Making Progress: Segmenting Words***

##### What You Need:

- Index cards
- Glue or tape
- Pictures of items familiar to your child: a few items should begin with the same sound

##### What You Do:

1. Make picture cards: Give a picture on each index card. Spread the cards on the table or on the floor.
2. Choose a beginning sound, but don't tell your child what it is. Collect the cards with pictures that begin with only that sound and give them to your child to hold.
3. Tell your child that his or her job is to figure out what the mystery beginning sound is.
4. Point to each picture on the cards that your child is holding and guide him or her in naming the pictures, emphasising the first sounds. Help your child figure out the "mystery" first sound.

##### Why?

Your child will learn that words are made up of sounds and learn to isolate the first sound in a word.

## How Many Words

### *Linguistic Awareness*

#### *Beginning: Segmenting Sentences*

What You Need:

- Several plastic counters, (buttons, paperclips etc.) or other small game pieces

What You Do:

6. Give your child a pile of counters. Tell your child that sentences are made up of words, and that you are going to help him or her count the words in some sentences.
7. Say a simple sentence such as, "I have three books."
8. Help your child put down a counter for each word in the sentence.
9. Say the sentence again, having your child touch a counter for each word heard.
10. Continue with a few different sentences, using longer sentences when your child is ready.

Why?

Your child learns that sentences are made up of words. He or she also practices listening for small segments of language.

## First Sound Sort

### *Linguistic Awareness*

#### *Ready to Read: Segmenting words*

What You Need:

- 3 bins or baskets
- Paper bag
- Several objects that begin with each of three different sounds

What You Do:

1. Label the outside of each bin or basket with one of the three chosen letter sounds.
2. Show the bins to your child. Review the names and sounds of the three letters.
3. Place all of the objects in the paper bag.
4. Have your child pick one object out of the bag at a time. Help your child name what he or she has chosen and say the first name of the object's name.
5. Tell your child to put the object in the bin or basket that is labelled with the first sound of the object's name.
6. Repeat until all of the objects have been sorted into the appropriate bins.
7. Take a few minutes at the end of this activity to go through each bin with your child, naming each object while emphasising its first sound.

Why?

Your child learns to listen for and isolate the first sound of a word. Your child also learns that a letter sound can appear in many different words.



## Stretched Out Story

### *Linguistic Awareness*

#### *Ready to Read: Segmenting Words*

What You Need:

- A picture book, poem or nursery rhyme

What You Do:

1. Say to your child, "I am going to tell you a story, but some words will sound a little different, I'm going to stretch out some words so that you can hear all the sounds in the word. Your job is to put back together each word that I stretch. Let's try a word for practice. Ssss-k-ooo-llll. What word am I stretching?"
2. Read or tell a story, rhyme or poem to your child. When you get to an important place, character or object in the story, say that word stretched out sound by sound.  
For example, "One day, Karen went to the sss-t-ore. She had to buy some mmm-i-lll-k for her sister."
3. As you tell the story, pause for your child to help say the word that you have stretched out.

Why?

Your child will learn about the individual sounds in speech and that words are made up of sounds.

## Find the Compound Word

### *Linguistic Awareness*

#### *Making Progress: Segmenting Compound Words*

What You Need:

- List of compound words
- Pictures of items that illustrate compound words and their parts (for example, a picture of a cup and a picture of a cake for "cupcake")

What You Do:

1. Tell your child that some words are made up of two shorter words put together and that you are going to use some of those words to play a game.
2. Say a compound word and ask your child to repeat it. For instance, say "Say cupcakes," and let him or her repeat the word.
3. Help your child to select the pictures that show the parts of the word, such as "cup" and "cake".
4. Continue with several other words on the list below.

Why?

Your child learns to listen for the smaller segments of language that are contained in words.

Word List:

Cowboy, baseball, jellyfish, grasshopper, cupcake, doorbell, raincoat, bedroom, football, starfish, haircut, sailboat