

## THINGS TO DO WITH BOOKS

- Talk about books and pictures
- Explain what the book is about
- Ask children to predict
  - What might happen next?
- Ask about what has happened
  - Which words/sentences did you like?
  - What did you think about ..... ?
  - Tell me about ....
- Have fun with the stories
  - Make up your own endings.
  - Change the names to make them about your child.
  - Retell the story putting in nonsense words
- Look for letters in your child's name.
  - See how many you can find?
  - Who is the quickest at finding them?



## CAN I GET INVOLVED MORE?

- Come in as a parent helper for CAPER, Story Sacks, Trips, Parties and Outings.
- Value your child's experiences in nursery and school by coming to Stay and Play, Open Days, Parents' Evenings, Achievement Assemblies.
- Join the School Parent Council—a great way to get an inside look at what the school is doing and striving to achieve. It also lets your voice be heard!
- Follow the nursery and school on Twitter.
- Play with your child when they bring a Story Sack home.
- Make sure your child completes their homework, CAPER/Story Sack Diary.
- Join the local Library to borrow books for yourself and your child.

## SOME USEFUL WEBSITES

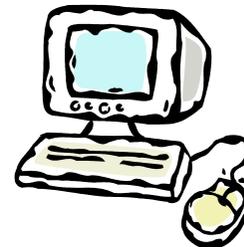
[www.lovereadings.co.uk](http://www.lovereadings.co.uk)

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-at-home/Supporting%20literacy%20at%20home>

[www.scottishbooktrust.com](http://www.scottishbooktrust.com)

<http://www.wigtownbookfestival.com>

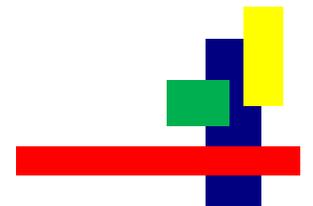
[www.doorwayonline.co.uk](http://www.doorwayonline.co.uk)

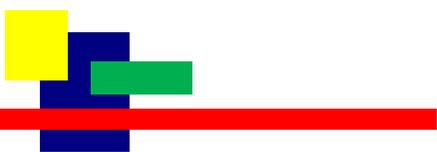


**GATEHOUSE  
PRIMARY**

# How to Help Your Child to Develop Literacy Skills

**Dumfries  
& Galloway**  
COUNCIL





## INTRODUCTION

Becoming literate is a critical skill for all children if they are to learn, achieve and function in today's society.

But how do we help our children to become literate?

This leaflet provides information about literacy development and a few practical tips and ideas to explain how you can help your child at home.



## HOW CHILDREN DEVELOP LITERACY SKILLS

Before children learn to speak we are already teaching them the basic skills of communication.

A young baby soon learns that by crying their needs are met. As adults we change the tone on our voice when speaking to babies, we exaggerate our speech and some of the sounds we use. These responses build connections in the baby's brain which lay down the foundations for future communication.

There is a clear link between the adult's responsive nurturing care and the child's future language development.

## AGES AND STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT



### Babies (by 12 months)

Communicates through babbling, crying and gesturing  
Responds to familiar words like 'bye-bye'  
Start to understand simple words  
Start to use simple words

### Toddlers (by age two)

Start to put two or three words together into simple sentences like 'Show me your nose'  
Learn two or three words a day on average  
Start to ask lots questions that helps them to remember and learn words

### Nursery age children (by the age of four)

Start to learn more complex meanings of words  
Start to ask lots of questions about what words mean  
Express their thoughts and feelings clearly to adults and children  
Make careful choices about the words they are using and conform with grammatical rules on, for example, tenses and plurals  
May still find some sounds difficult to use but are understood by most people  
May stumble over words and sentences



### School age (by the age of five)

Able to understand and talk with new people using well formed sentences  
Ask lots of 'why?' questions  
Understand longer and more complicated sentences  
Use and understand most everyday words that adults use  
Explain what has happened, and why, in an interesting way

## THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF PARENTS AND THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

The strongest influence on the language skills of young children is their parents or carers.

Indirectly, through the everyday behaviour of parents and carers – the way that key adults interact with a child, such as how often they talk with a child or how they set boundaries on a child's behaviour.

Directly, through the home learning environment – the engagement of parents in their child's early learning and the quality of learning opportunities in the home, including access to toys and books.



## HOW CAN I HELP?

- Switch off the television and reduce background noises when playing together or talking together.
- Watch television together and talk about what you have seen.
- Read stories together every day, share books, magazines etc.
- Play alphabet games such as I spy.
- Give your child undivided attention when talking together.
- Sing songs, say poem and rhymes. Make up your own silly ones.
- Do art and craft activities together talking about what you are doing.
- Encourage your child to draw and paint pictures.
- Monitor carefully the technology your child is using.