



## Developing Pre-Reading Skills

Pre-reading skills are the skills children need in order to help them to become a reader. By talking and reading with your child, you will be doing a great deal to help these essential skills to develop.

Below are some of the activities that will play a part in developing pre-reading skills in your children.

**Matching:** When we read, part of what we do involves matching. Children learn to match shapes, patterns, letters and finally, words.

- Card games
- Dominoes
- Activity books which involve matching shapes, pictures and letters
- Pairing up socks from the laundry
- Shape sorters
- Jigsaw puzzles

**Rhyming:** Research shows that children who can understand about rhyming words have a head start in learning to read and, even more, to spell

- Sing nursery rhymes
- Miss of the end of rhymes for your child to complete, e.g. "Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great...?"
- When that gets too easy for them, make it harder! "Humpty Dumpty sat in a tree, Humpty Dumpty had a cup of ...?"
- Play rhyming games such as "I Spy with my little eye, something that rhymes with fox" (box).
- Encourage your child to sing along to nursery rhymes, pop songs, whatever they enjoy.

**Memory:** Being able to remember what you hear is important in reading and writing. In reading, you remember sounds and blend them together to 'make' a word. In writing, children have to remember single sounds to write words and then words to write sentences.

- Play a shopping list game: start with two items on the list. When your child can remember two, move onto three etc. Can your child remember 5 items?
- Say two random numbers (0-9) to your child. Can he/she repeat them? Move onto three numbers etc. Can your child remember 5 numbers?

**Physical development:** Developing physically will lead to a child being able to write. It involves 'switching on' many parts of the brain as possible as a child has to link many concepts when needing to write.

- Gross Motor skills
  - Walking, running, hopping, jumping, tip-toeing, climbing etc
  - Ball skills – kicking, bouncing, catching, rolling etc
- Fine Motor Skills
  - Putting on hats, gloves, shoes etc
  - Doing zips, buttons and buckles
  - Using cutlery
  - Turning pages
  - Picking up small items
- Manipulative skills
  - Small figure play
  - Play dough
  - Finger rhymes
- Hand/Eye co-ordination
  - Jigsaws
  - Pegboards
  - Threading, lacing, weaving
  - Building with blocks
  - Throwing and catching