

Family Literacy Tips from A to Z

Act as a reading role model for your children by reading in your spare time. Remember, children learn by example.

Boost baby's brainpower by reading aloud. Infants love the sound of a parent's voice and the closeness of sharing.

Coordinate a book club with your friends or neighbours.

Donate some of your time to a literacy program in your community. Volunteer to tutor adult learners, read to children or help in the office.

Engage in sing-along sessions with your children. Singing helps develop a greater awareness of rhythm, rhyme, words and sounds.

Follow a recipe together – it's a fun way to practise reading, math and comprehension.

Give the gift of words – make a donation to a literacy organization in your community.

Have fun. Make learning a delight by writing a funny story, making up a new song or creating a new counting game.

Introduce a family board game night where everyone is encouraged to read instructions, spell words and keep score.

Just reading to your child for 20 minutes a day adds up to more than 1,450 hours of learning, from infancy to the end of Grade 6.

Keepteen reading by providing them with books, magazines and Internet sites about things that interest them – like music, movies, TV and computers.

Let children count out the change when making a purchase. Reinforce the importance of math in everyday life!

Make everyday tasks learning experiences. Ask your children to write out a shopping list, address an envelope or help make a calendar of weekly activities.

Nurture good literacy habits by having a quiet place in your home with reading and writing material always handy.

Offer to proofread homework, spell-check a paragraph, or verify math answers after your child has done the work.

Purchase gently used books and magazines at garage sales and second-hand stores as a cost-effective way to continuously add to your library.

Question your child about the story you're reading together (what do you think happens next?) to make sure they understand and to stimulate thoughts.

Road trips can offer great opportunities to enhance literacy skills. Read signs, billboards and licence plates together and show your children the proper way to read a map.

Surf the Internet to discover fun and educational sites.

Turn off the TV and video games and set aside one hour each night for everyone in the family to do homework or quiet reading.

Use it or lose it! Reading is like a muscle, if you don't exercise it often, you will not maintain the same level of reading ability as you get older.

Visit your public library every week.

Write a letter, short story or song.

'X-ercise' your mind doing crossword puzzles, word jumbles and word searches.

Your child can pick up early math skills by playing games that include counting, such as skipping, jumping sidewalk cracks and hopscotch.

Zoo outings and visits to museums and galleries can be fun and educational. Be sure to read all the descriptions on exhibits and displays.

For more family literacy tips, activity ideas and Family Literacy Day® information, please visit www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca