



Playing

Play, in addition to being fun, helps children to think symbolically. One item represents another—a block might represent a telephone. This kind of symbolic thinking is the same kind of thinking that is used for reading. Pictures and letters represent real things. Dramatic play, when children act out stories, helps them build background knowledge—how stories work. As you play with children, you have the opportunity to support their pre-reading skills in little ways that add up to make a difference by the time children enter school. Using the five practices (Talking, Singing, Reading, Writing and Playing) to support the early literacy skills in enjoyable ways is the best way to help children enter school ready to learn to read.

Several libraries in Virginia have Early Literacy Activity Centers or places for children to develop early literacy skills through play.

Discover some ideas at DaybyDayVa.org.

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