

HWDSB

Let's **READ** *Together*

EMERGENT (Experimental) Literacy: An Activity Guide for Families

The Essential Components of Reading



STAGE 1



Emergent Literacy: An Activity Guide for Families

Symbols Used in This Guide:



Activity



Extension Activity



Additional Information or Explanation



An Essential Component of Reading –
What is it? Why is it important?

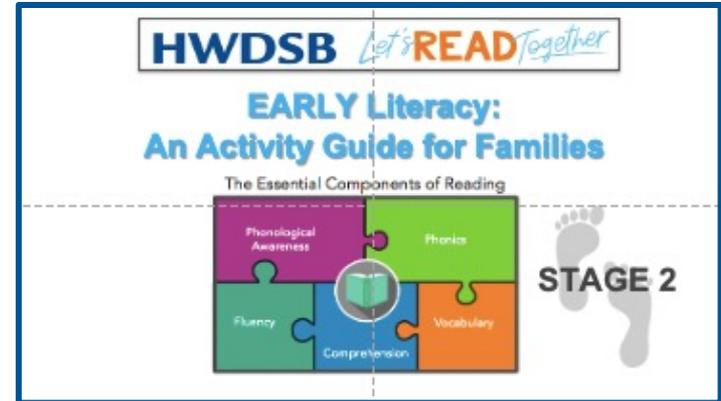
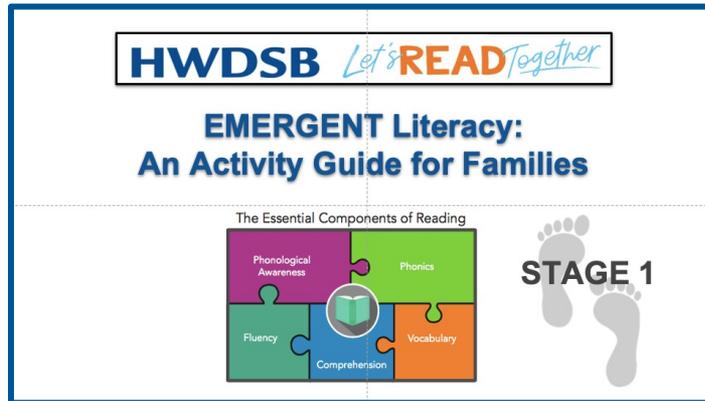


Outdoor opportunity

Emergent Literacy: An Activity Guide for Families



Emergent Literacy: An Activity Guide for Families is appropriate for children who are in the **emergent stage of reading development**. When the child is ready, you may consider accessing **Early Literacy: An Activity Guide for Families** which reflects the next stage of reading development.



*Please see the next page for more information on the stages of reading development.

Emergent Literacy: An Activity Guide for Families



The Stages of Reading

STAGE 1: Emergent Readers may act out reading behaviours and pretend to read. They are developing concepts about print (e.g., left to right directionality, the concept of a word vs. a letter). They begin to understand that some words rhyme, some words start with the same sound and some words end with the same sound. They are working on simple comprehension skills such as sharing their personal opinion of a text they have listened to.

STAGE 2: Early Readers begin to understand how the 44 sounds in the English language can be represented by letters or groups of letters. They learn how to break words into individual sounds and to manipulate words by removing or substituting sounds. They begin to store some words as high frequency words. Early readers are working on next step comprehension skills such as making predictions and retelling a story.

STAGE 3: Fluent Readers read with more automaticity. They have an ever-expanding bank of high frequency words. They are learning more complex phonics patterns and rules such as plural endings and less common spelling choices (e.g. -igh, -tch). Fluent readers are starting to practice more advanced comprehension strategies such as inferring and identifying point of view in texts.



Source: A Guide to Effective Instruction in Reading (K-3)

Emergent Literacy: Activity Guide for Families



What is the purpose of *Emergent Literacy: An Activity Guide for Families*?

So much of a child's early learning takes place in the presence of the caring adults in the home. Learning happens in the everyday moments shared with a child. Together, with a strong home-school connection, we can support the development of early literacy skills and set children up for future success.

This guide is intended to be a springboard of sample activities. If a child finds an activity too challenging, then simply modify it or consider returning to it at a later time. Caregivers are encouraged to have fun with children and be creative.

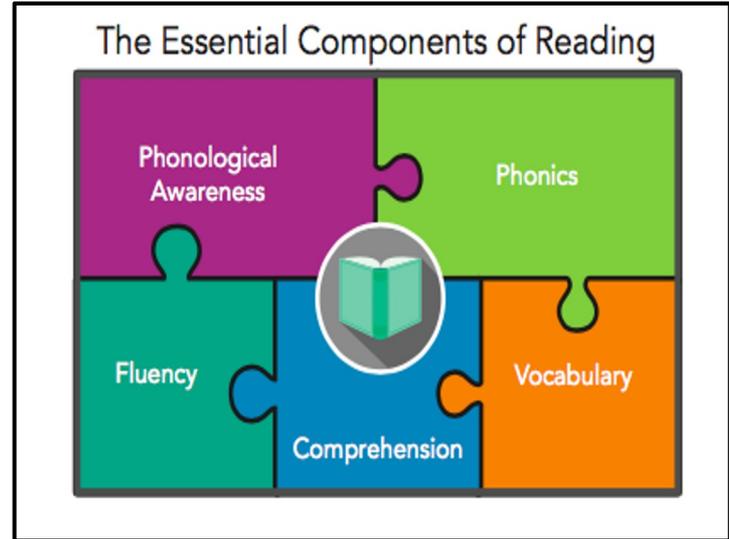
In this guide, the word *caregiver* refers to parents, guardians, and other family members who support the development of emergent literacy skills.

Emergent Literacy: An Activity Guide for Families



How is *Emergent Literacy: An Activity Guide for Families* organized?

Emergent Literacy: An Activity Guide for Families is organized around **The 5 Essential Components of Reading** which are the foundation to becoming a capable, confident and fluent reader.



Emergent Literacy: An Activity Guide for Families



What are the 5 Essential Components of Reading?

Phonological Awareness is an **oral skill** that refers to the ability to recognize, manipulate and hear words, syllables and sounds.

Phonics is the rules of how letter combinations go together to represent different sounds **in print**.

Vocabulary refers to the words children know. It includes both understanding words and using words.

Fluency is the ability to read text accurately, with expression, automaticity, phrasing and pausing.

Comprehension is the process of understanding, reflecting on and learning from what is read (e.g., books, magazines, recipes, games, invitations).

Emergent Literacy: An Activity Guide for Families



Tips For Supporting Children With Literacy

- ✓ Make library visits part of your family routine or access books [online](#) through the public library
- ✓ Make reading together a special time and part of your daily routine. Ask the child questions before, during and after reading in English or your home language (e.g., What do you think this book might be about? What do you think of the story?)
- ✓ Be a reading role model. Children learn by example, so let children see you read and share your enthusiasm for reading. Show children that reading is fun and important.

Emergent Literacy: An Activity Guide for Families



Continued...

- ✓ Draw attention to print concepts (e.g., reading left to right, front and back of the book, title, 1-1 finger pointing to words, paying attention to punctuation).
- ✓ It's okay to read the same book more than once. Children enjoy reading books many times.
- ✓ Talk! Conversations with children help them expand their thinking and build vocabulary.
- ✓ Reading should be fun and authentic (e.g., use voices that match the character, point out environmental print such as signs and advertisements, have reading and writing materials readily available, read recipes together).

Emergent Literacy Activity Guide for Families



A Word About the Alphabet

At the earliest stage, learning to read involves recognizing that the symbols (letters) have names and represent sounds. To support this learning, children benefit from exposure to the letters of the alphabet. Notice and name letters in a variety of environments.

Have fun creating letters and words with:

- *playdough*
- *paper and pencil*
- *markers, crayons*
- *magnetic letters*
- *dry erase markers and boards*
- *chalk and chalkboards*



Find letters everywhere!

street signs
license plates
cereal boxes
on the TV
magazines
on your clothes
alphabet-shaped pasta



text messages
recipes
birthday cards
store signs
puzzles
advertisements
newspapers

Emergent Literacy Activity Guide for Families



Multi-Language Families

Caregivers are **strongly** encouraged to enjoy the activities in this guide, using their home language. Reading stories, singing songs, writing and playing games with children in their home language will help to support English learning. Skills learned in one language transfer to other languages.

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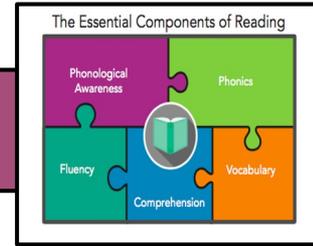
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Phonological Awareness



What is Phonological Awareness?

Phonological awareness is an **oral skill** that refers to the ability to recognize, manipulate and hear words, syllables and sounds. Developing phonological awareness includes exposure to rhyme, syllables, blending and segmenting as well as identifying the beginning, middle and ending sounds in words.

Why is it important?

As children develop phonological awareness, they begin to hear individual sounds in words. This skill paired with letter knowledge is a strong predictor of success in learning to read and write.



For these activities, focus on the SOUND, not the letter name, or the proper spelling of the word.



The number of sounds in a word does not necessarily correspond to the number of letters. For example, the word sh-o-p has 4 letters but only 3 sounds.

Phonological Awareness – Sound Awareness



Listen Up!

Phonological awareness begins with tuning into the concept of sound. Play fun sound awareness games with children. Here are two to start:

*Invite the child to close their eyes. Make sounds at different places in the room and ask the child to point where the sounds are coming from. Take turns!

*Invite the child to close their eyes and identify sounds they hear (e.g., footsteps, the furnace, the clothes dryer).



Do the same activities outside.

Phonological Awareness - Syllables



Syllable a Name

Use familiar names to practice clapping syllables (e.g., Fat-i-ma). Whose name has the most syllables? Whose name has the fewest syllables?



Animal Names

Use animal names to practice clapping syllables.



Body Syllables

Jump, hop, tap or stomp the syllables in familiar words.

Phonological Awareness - Syllables



I Spy

Play **I Spy** by breaking words up into syllables and the child to guess the word you are saying. Start with 2 syllable words. Use common objects in your home and in the community. Take turns guessing the objects.

For Example:

Caregiver: I spy a ta-ble.

Child: Table



If the child has mastered syllables, try playing **I Spy** with rhyming words or first sounds.

For Example:

Caregiver: I spy something that starts with the sound 'mmm'.

Child: Motorcycle

Phonological Awareness - Syllables



Take Away a Part

Practice syllable deletion by taking away part of a compound word.

For example:

Caregiver: Say 'popcorn'

Child: Popcorn

Caregiver: Say 'popcorn' but don't say 'corn'

Child: Pop

Possible Word List:

pan**cake**

bed**room**

hot**dog**

foot**ball**

ro**bot**

playdough

bubblegum

bedroom

toothpaste

playground

Phonological Awareness - Rhyme



I Hear With My Little Ear

Play a variation of the game **I Spy**, changing it to **I Hear**.

For example:

Caregiver: I hear with my little ear something that rhymes with 'moon' and you can eat cereal with it.

Child: Spoon

Possible Word List:

moo-shoe

hest-nest

mable-table

hand-sand

head-bed

word-bird

call-ball

proud-cloud

guide-slide

sock-block

far-car

night-light

Phonological Awareness - Rhyme



Rhyming Rope



Invite children to say a word that rhymes with your word. If their word rhymes, they can jump over the rhyming rope.



You can play this game by asking the child to identify the syllables in words and/or first sounds in words too!



Phonological Awareness - Rhyme



Sing a Song

For Example: **Down By the Bay** (Song by Raffi)

*Down by the Bay
Where the watermelons grow
Back to my home
I dare not go
For if I do
My mother will say
Have you ever seen a **goose**
Kissing a **moose**?
Down by the bay.*

Other Animals

Whale - with a polka dot **tail**

Fly - wearing a **tie**

Bat - flying on a **mat**

Dog - sailing on a **log**

Bear - blow drying his **hair**

Llamas - wearing striped **pajamas**

Goat - driving a **boat**



Rhyming words don't always have to make sense. Children often learn to rhyme with 'nonsense' or silly sounding words (i.e. table/wable, fork/nork) so continue to praise their efforts for generating a rhyme!

Phonological Awareness - Rhyme



On the Way to the Store

Begin the game by saying: *I was on my way to the store to buy some _____ (e.g., **cheese**).*

The next person repeats the sentence and adds a rhyming word: *I was on my way to the store to buy some **cheese** and some **peas**.*

The next person adds on another rhyming word and the game continues in the same way. Real or nonsense words are okay.

Possible Words to Start With:

milk	soap
noodles	jam
cream	meat
candy	cake
rice	apples
crackers	grapes

Phonological Awareness – First Sounds



I Spy - First Sounds

Play **I Spy** with common objects in your home and in the community. Take turns guessing the objects.

For Example:

Caregiver: I spy something that starts with the sound /m/.

Child: Mitten

Caregiver: I spy something that starts with the sound /b/.

Child: Bed



Notice and name natural items in your area to build recognition and appreciation for the environment.

Phonological Awareness - First Sounds



Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down

Play 'Thumbs Up' by first choosing a sound. Say words that *do* start and *do not* start with that sound. Children can give a 'thumbs up' for those that *do* and a thumbs down for those that *do not*.

For example:

Caregiver: The sound is 'sss'. What's the sound?

Child: 'sss'

Caregiver: soap

Child: (puts thumb up)

Caregiver: window

Child: (puts thumb down)



Invite children to sort toys according to first or last sound.



If a child has mastered first sounds, practice identifying last sounds (e.g., most**t**, shake**ke**).

Phonological Awareness - Manipulating Words



Poem Play With Names

For Example: Willoughby Wallaby Woo

Willoughby Wallaby Wee
An elephant sat on me

Willoughby Wallaby Woo
An elephant sat on you

Willoughby Wallaby Balik
An elephant sat on ____ (Malik)

Willoughby Wallaby Bara
An elephant sat on ____ (Zara)



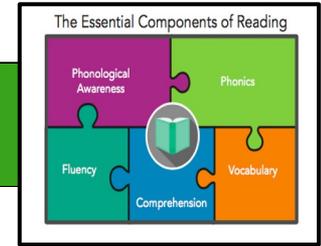
Manipulating words involves changing or omitting sounds. Try omitting the first sound in a name.

For example:

*Willoughby Wallaby -ance
An elephant sat on ____ (Lance)*

*Willoughby Wallaby -enry
An elephant set on ____ (Henry)*

Phonics



What is Phonics?

Phonics refers to the rules of how letter combinations go together to represent different sounds.

Why is it important?

Phonics is the link between what readers hear and see in print. After children learn letter-sound relationships and phonological awareness, the next step is making the print connection which is known as phonics (e.g., I **hear** the sounds S-A-T in the word *sat* so I **write** the letters S, A, T).

Phonics



My Special Name

Learning letter names and sounds often starts with a child's own name. Start with the first letter of a child's name and gradually work with the child to learn to read, spell and print their entire name. There are many fun songs to support this skill. Here is one to try:

Tune: BINGO

I have a friend whose name is spelled R-O-F-I-D-A, R-O-F-I-D-A, R-O-F-I-D-A, is their name, oh!



Once the child has learned their first name (read, spell, write), move on to their last name.

Phonics



Letter Hunt

Go on a letter hunt around your home. You may choose to start in the kitchen. How many letters can you find? How many letters can you name? Can you say the sound that letter makes?



Go on a first sound hunt. Consider starting with the first sound of the child's name. For example, if the child's name is Moatz, look for objects that start with the sound /m/ such as mitten or macaroni.



Go on a letter hunt outside!



Phonics



Hopscotch



Create a hopscotch game with letters. Children can say the letter sound and/or name as they hop on the square.



Phonics



Tic Tac Toe

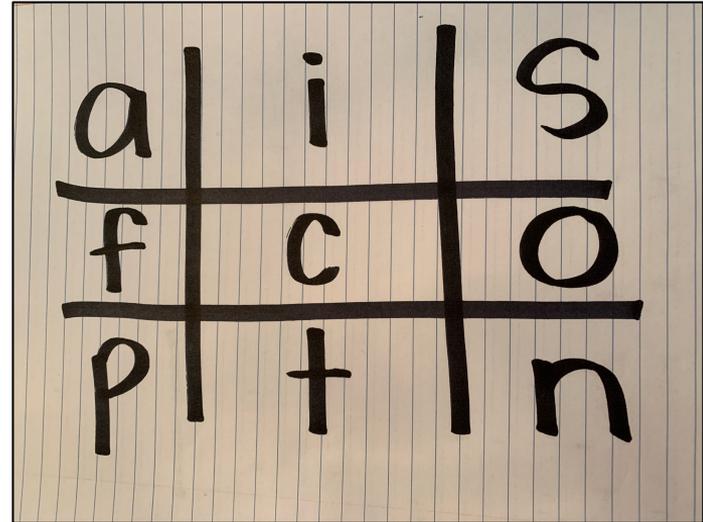
Draw a tic tac toe board. Fill in the board with letters. Have the child say the letter sound and/or letter name before they mark it off with an X or an O.



Invite the child to tell you a word that begins with that letter sound.



Play outside using chalk.



Phonics



Name Puzzles

Create a name puzzle for the child. Invite the child to put the letters in their name together in the correct order. To start, include a model and remove the model when the child is ready.

 Turn a puzzle over and write letters on the back side of the puzzle. Put the puzzle together with the child, naming the letters and/or letter sounds as you go.



Phonics



Letters, Letters Everywhere!

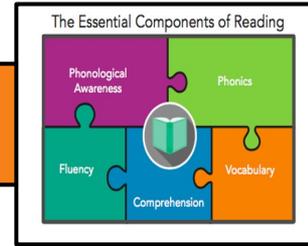
Add letters to children's toys. For example, print them on blocks and stick them on cars. Notice and name the letters and/or letter sounds when you are playing together.



When the child is ready, you might choose to add words to some of the toys (see photo example). You can label items in your house too.



Vocabulary



What is Vocabulary?

Vocabulary refers to the words children know both in conversation and in print. It includes both **understanding** words (hearing) and **using** words appropriately (saying).

Why is it Important?

If a child knows a word and can say the word, they can read the word. Knowing the meaning of a word helps students understand what they are reading. Developing a large bank of *high frequency words* (i.e., words that occur most often in print) is an important part of vocabulary development.

Vocabulary



Strive for Five

Strive for 5 exchanges in conversations with the child to build oral language skills, including oral vocabulary.

- Start the conversation by making an **observation**.
- Give the child time to **respond**. (Wait 10-15 seconds or longer if needed.)
- Use **open-ended questions** to keep the conversation going! For example: *Tell me more...*
- **Extend** the conversation by asking another question, expanding on the child's comment, or confirming/repeating what the child said, until you've had at least 5 exchanges.

Vocabulary



Flashlight Finder

Invite children to use a flashlight to find words, letters and/or letter sounds around your home. Talk about the words, letters and/or sounds the child finds (e.g., name the letter, use the word in a sentence, name some words that starts with the letter sound).



Children can follow a text from left to right using a flashlight.



Use a flashlight to read in the dark. It's fun!



Vocabulary



Use-Create-Read

Use Environmental Print. Cut out, craft, play games, and make sentences with words from:

- Food packages
- Magazines
- Flyers

Create Environmental Print. Label items around your home:

- Furniture
- Food items
- Toys, bins, baskets

Read Environmental Print. Draw attention to:

- Signs
- Instructions
- Labels



Vocabulary



Telephone

Engage in a make-believe phone conversation with children. This helps to develop their social skills and expands their oral vocabulary at the same time. What will you talk about? Let children take the lead.



Vocabulary



Simon Says

Playing Simon Says can help to increase a child's vocabulary.

Consider naming body parts:

Simon says touch your - ear lobe, elbow, forehead, wrist...

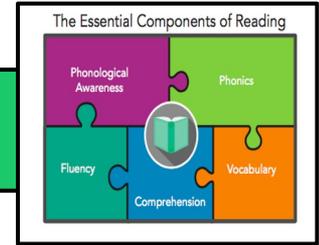
Consider playing with actions:

Simon says - crawl, leap, hop, slither, stretch, twist...



Take turns!

Fluency



What is Fluency?

Fluency is the ability to read like you speak. It involves reading text (in any language) accurately, with expression (changing tone of voice), automaticity (know a word by sight), phrasing (grouping words together) and pausing (paying attention to punctuation).

Why is it important?

When children read with fluency they are able to use their energy to comprehend what they are reading.

Fluency



Letter Sound Fluency

Arrange a row of letters (or write a row of letters) then invite the child to name and/or say the sound for each letter, reading left to right. The goal is for the child to read the letters fluently (e.g., accurately, at a reasonable pace).



Add new letters gradually. Always keep some known letters in the row.



Make a pathway or a race track (for the child to zoom cars along) with letters. Name the letters as you go.

Fluency



Hear! Here!

Audiobooks can be found at your local library and online through the [Hamilton Public Library](#). Listening to audiobooks helps the child build fluency by hearing how fluent reading sounds.



Fluency



Starring...Me!

Act out familiar stories together, especially with predictable, repeated phrases. Children develop fluency by repeating these phrases over and over while using expression. Here are some books children might enjoy dramatizing:

The Three Little Pigs

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom

Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?



Puppets are fun to use when dramatizing a story. You can even make them out of paper bags.

Fluency



Sing a Song

There are many fun and familiar songs that support children to develop fluency. Here are a few to try:

Down by the Bay

Old MacDonald Had a Farm

The Wheels on the Bus

If You're Happy and You Know It

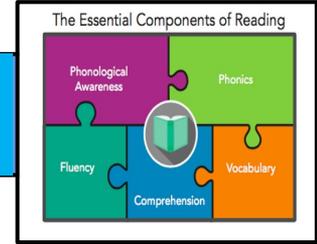
Five Little Speckled Frogs

Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes



Switch the words up to make silly songs (e.g. *Old Macdonald Had a Zoo; Hair and Tummy, Waist and Nose*).

Comprehension



What is Comprehension?

Comprehension involves thinking about, reflecting on and understanding what is read.

Why is it important?

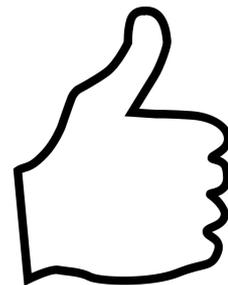
Comprehension is important because it influences the enjoyment and the effectiveness of reading. To be strong readers, children need to understand, reflect on and think critically about what they are reading.

Comprehension



Thumbs Up or Down

Invite the child to share their personal opinion of a story they have listened to. Thumbs up means the child liked it and thumbs down means they didn't like it.



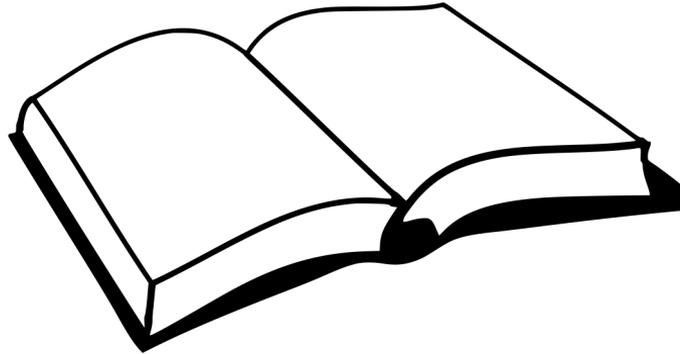
Invite the child to explain why they liked or did not like the story. You can invite the child to share their personal opinion of food, weather, events, and media texts too such a TV shows.

Comprehension



Picture Walk

When looking through books together, take the time to talk about the illustrations and/or photographs. What do you notice? What might this story be about? What might happen next?



Comprehension



Retell Road



Go on a walk together. Retell what you did and/or saw on the walk using the words *first*, *next*, *then* and *last*.



Ask the child to retell their day, in sequence, or what happened in a show they watched. Encourage them to use *first*, *next*, *then*, *last* as sentence starters, and share in complete sentences.

Comprehension



Just Hanging Around!

Sometimes well-loved books fall apart. Instead of recycling the pages, get some clothespins and string. Choose a few key illustrations from the beginning, middle and end. Invite the child to hang the pages up in the order they happened in the book.



Use the images to retell the story together.



Comprehension



Toy Stories

Invite the child to retell (i.e., beginning, middle, end) a favourite story they have listened to using stuffed animals, drawings, puppets, or figurines. The child could even act the story out.



HWDSB

Let's **READ** *Together*

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