



Early Literacy Milestones/Activities

4 YEARS OF AGE

- ☐ Retells familiar stories and “reads” along with a very familiar, memorized book or story.
- ☐ Begins to recognize/name some letters and print their own name ~ it might look messy, but that’s ok!
- ☐ Makes up silly rhyming words (cat-mat-lat).
- ☐ Claps for syllables in a word (elephant ~ e-le-phant).
- ☐ Can guess what will happen next in a story.



5 YEARS OF AGE

- ☐ Identifies all the letters of the alphabet.
- ☐ Understands that text flows in a consistent direction (always left → right).
- ☐ Retells stories with a clear beginning, middle and end (including mention of characters and resolution).
- ☐ Claps for each word they hear in a sentence.
- ☐ Recognizes their own name when printed.

ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE EARLY LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

- ☐ Take turns when reading books or retelling stories. Encourage your child to tell you what’s happening in the picture and retell stories.
- ☐ Ask your child to guess what happens next in a favorite book.
- ☐ Praise your child as they “read” a favorite book that they have memorized.
- ☐ Encourage your child to print their name on artwork as they play creatively with crafts.
- ☐ Point out letters in the environment. Start with the beginning letter of their name and find it in signs, books, magazines.
- ☐ Play silly rhyming games.
- ☐ Talk about words that start or end with the same letter or sound (e.g. “I can hear a /t/ at the end of *Cat & Boat*”).

Communication Milestones/Activities

4 YEARS OF AGE

- Understands most of what is said to them.
- Follows longer directions like 'wash your hands, get a cup, and come sit at the table.'
- Asks and answers questions about a story.
- Uses sentences that give lots of details and are understood by others.
- Describes the steps involved in an activity (like brushing teeth).
- Uses more specific words (like firefighter and police officer instead of "guy").

5 YEARS OF AGE

- Pronounces most speech sounds correctly and are easy to understand.
- Understands that words can be put into groups or categories, and give examples from each (e.g., animals, vehicles, food, community helpers).
- Clarifies themselves using descriptive words (e.g., "I didn't want my yellow gloves, I wanted the spotty ones that match my hat").
- Starts conversations and joins in with others.
- Plays cooperatively and pretends to be someone else talking. These games may be quite elaborate and detailed.
- Uses language to communicate a wider range of things – such as asking, negotiating, giving opinions and discussing ideas and feelings (e.g., "Can we go to the park after school today – it's a sunny day and it will be fun").

LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES FOR 4- AND 5- YEAR OLDS

- Add new words and ideas to what your child is saying. Highlight new words by emphasizing them. (e.g., Child: "Look at that bug." Adult: "That bug is **gigantic!**")
- If your child uses words incorrectly, repeat it back to them using the correct words (e.g., Child: "I goed to the store." Adult: "Oh, you went to the store. What did you see?")
 - Sit face to face with your child and follow their lead in play.
 - Show your child that you are interested in what they are saying, and talk to your child throughout the day. For example, if you're out on a walk you can point out and describe the things that you see as you pass by.
 - Language is best learned through conversation. Try to limit screen time as much as possible; however, if you are using a screen, talk about what you and your child are watching.
- Play games like I Spy and Simon Says
- Don't ask too many questions but try to focus on making comments. It's okay to just talk about what the two of you are doing together. For example, instead of asking, "What colour is that truck?" you can say, "Look at the blue truck!"



