Reading and writing

Sharing stories and drawing

Literacy skills

Children enjoy listening to stories and sharing texts in real-life situations (e.g. signs, recipes and emails). Reading with children every day is vital for developing their vocabulary and early literacy skills. Children learn early reading behaviours by watching adults read and by being read to (e.g. the way to hold a book and turn the pages). They explore the visual symbols in books and learn that the pictures and letters communicate meaning. Children also become aware that the words that are spoken to them can be written down.

Ideas for sharing texts

When sharing a text, you can encourage your child to:

• talk about ideas in the text and characters
• guess what’s going to happen next
• identify any known letters/words (e.g. That is a ‘J’ like in your name)
• join in the reading (e.g. join in reading the repeated lines and predicting rhyming words)
• think about how the story might end
• look for information in pictures that match the words
• explain how to use the text (e.g. This part of the recipe tells us what we need).

Supporting your child’s early reading learning

• Share a wide variety of books and texts including non-fiction books.
• Re-read favourite stories so that your child can join in and ‘read’ with you.
• Visit the local library and borrow a wide variety of books to read together.
• Draw attention to the relationship between the picture on the page and what the words are saying when they are read.
• Talk about how you look at the ‘letters’ and think about the ‘sounds’ they make to help you read.
• Talk about letters and sounds in words and names that your child is familiar with or might know.
• Let your child see you writing (e.g. letters, shopping lists).
• Encourage your child to point out words they recognise.
• Make signs and labels together and read them with your child.
• Write down your child’s stories and read their story back to them.

Most of all, enjoy sharing stories and texts with your child. This will help your child feel positive about reading.
Drawing to communicate

Drawing provides children with opportunities to explore ways to communicate ideas and experiences. Learning to convey meaning through their drawings is an important part of developing early literacy skills.

Supporting your child as they draw

Children’s drawing skills develop gradually over time when they:

• have daily access to crayons, pencils and other drawing materials
• are encouraged to draw in their own way without adults directing how to draw
• watch others draw and talk about ways to represent what they see, feel and do (e.g. What colours could you use to show this is a happy/sad drawing? How can you show your dog has black spots?)

Stages of drawing

Children develop drawing skills at different times. They begin by making marks and gradually build skills for representing ideas.

**Scribble stage: Ages 2–3**
This stage is basic to the child’s development. At this age, movement of hand, arm and body is satisfying and important.

**Outline shapes: Ages 3–4**
With increased muscular control and development comes the ability to draw a variety of simple shapes. These may be circles, ovals, rectangles or crosses.

**The child and design: Ages 3–5**
Shapes in outline form can now be combined to make a design. Shapes can be side by side or inside one another.

**Circles, suns and radials: Ages 3–5**
At age three, most children begin to draw circles and place crosses within them. This then becomes a sun shape with lines coming out from the circle shape. From here, children experiment by drawing lines from a point or a very small circle. These are called radials.

**People and places: Ages 4–5**
At about age four, most children begin to draw people. This follows soon after the sun and radial stage. The sun becomes the human head, and arms and legs are attached directly to the head. Other familiar symbols are added for facial features, hair and hands (small suns).

**Animals: Ages 4–6**
Between the ages of four and six, children begin to draw pictures of animals that stand on two legs. The child will often put two ears on top of a figure they have drawn and use sun rays for fingers or claws. People figures will now be made up of a head and a body, with arms, and legs attached to the body shape.

Children around the world develop their ability to represent ideas in similar stages. Understanding these stages can help you to value their drawing and support their learning.

For further information, visit www.qld.gov.au/kindy

Disclaimer: the information in this resource sheet is offered as a guide only, and should not be treated as an exhaustive statement on the subject.