



# Desire to Read

**Goal:** To help children develop positive attitudes, interests, and motivation toward reading.

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## Background

Children are born with a desire to learn. They are interested in the people, things, and events around them. Two of the things most children want to learn when they come to school are to read and write (Cochrane, Cochrane, Scalena, & Buchanan, 1988).

The desire to read and write is an important foundation for all literacy learning. Children who view reading and writing as interesting, exciting, and meaningful will be more likely to engage in reading and writing. As with any skill, additional practice and engagement with reading and writing leads to improved competence (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000).

You can capitalize on young children's natural interest and curiosity by providing a classroom environment that invites children into literacy. Classroom environments that contain many types of print, offer easy access to reading and writing materials, provide for choice, and immerse children in literacy activities motivate and support children's literacy development (Sulzby & Teale, 1991).

There are simple strategies and activities you can use in your classroom to arouse and build on children's natural curiosity and interest in literacy. The teaching strategies and activities that follow provide suggestions to assist you with creating a classroom environment and literacy program that will help children develop positive attitudes, interests, and motivation toward reading.

## MORNING MESSAGE

The Morning Message is a daily routine that provides a meaningful context for reading and writing. The teacher writes a Morning Message to children to share important information about the upcoming day and concludes by asking children a related personal question. Children may try to read the message on their own, and then the teacher engages in shared reading to guide the children through the reading. Finally, children discuss, draw, or write a response to the personal question.

## ✚ DIRECTIONS

1. Write a short message on the chalkboard or on chart paper. The message should include important information about the upcoming day. The message then concludes by asking the children a related personal response question. A sample message is shown on the next page.

Dear Boys and Girls,

Today is art day. We will be painting pictures. We will use blue, green, red, and yellow paint. I like to use many colors in my paintings. What colors will you use when you paint today?

Your friend,  
Mrs. Shaffer

2. Post the message prior to the children's arrival in the classroom. Provide ample time for the children to look at the message and informally discuss it among themselves.
3. Gather the children around the message. Read the message aloud to the children. Use your hand or a pointer to highlight the text as it is read.
4. Reread the message. Encourage the children to join in with the reading.
5. Discuss the ideas in the message. Discuss the question in the message. Provide time for students to informally discuss their responses to the question.
6. Ask children to record their responses to the question by either drawing or writing responses in their journals.
7. Provide time for children to share their responses. Sharing can be done in small groups or with the entire group.

Aa Bb Cc

## Tips for English Language Learners

- Add pictures to the morning message to help English Language Learners understand the context of the message.
- Encourage English Language Learners to partner with other children to explore the morning message before you discuss it as a group.
- If you know any words in the child's home language, consider using both the English language and the child's language for those words in the morning message. This action will support English Language Learners as well as encourage the other children to learn words in another language.

## SHARED READING

Shared Reading replicates the bedtime story sharing situation with an individual, a small group, or a classroom of children. This strategy allows children to participate in and enjoy books they cannot read on their own (Mooney, 1990). The emphasis of this strategy is on enjoyment of the story as a whole. Teachers can introduce a wide range of exciting books to children through Shared Reading.

### ✚ DIRECTIONS

1. Select a children's book with predictable text and engaging illustrations. If you are reading with a large group of children, a Big Book will work well.
2. Have children sit so they all can hear the story and see the illustrations. A story rug is a helpful addition to the classroom.
3. Show the children the cover of the book and read the title. Ask them to make predictions about the contents of the book. Invite selected children to respond to some of the ideas that are shared.
4. Read the story aloud, inviting children to read along if they would like to do so.
5. Provide time for the children to share their personal responses and favorite parts of the book.
6. Reread the book, inviting the children to read along if they would like to do so.
7. Place the book in the classroom library so the children can read it during their free time.

Aa Bb Cc

### Tips for English Language Learners

- Select predictable books with clear illustrations to provide clues for English Language Learners during shared reading. An extensive listing of predictable books can be found in Johns and Lenski (2005).
- Provide time for English Language Learners to engage in a picture walk to see the story before starting the shared reading. The picture walk allows children to look at the pictures and think about what the story line might be before hearing the actual story. To do a picture walk, have the children look at the cover and discuss what they see. Progress through the book, directing the children's attention to pictures that convey important information about the story. Direct helpful questions to the children. After viewing and discussing the pictures, begin reading the story with the children.

## FAVORITE BOOK SHOW AND TELL

Since literacy is a social process, children benefit from meaningful opportunities to share and discuss books with their peers. The Favorite Book Show and Tell strategy allows children to share their favorite books as well as to learn about books their classmates enjoy. This strategy also supports the children's listening and speaking skills.

## ↔ DIRECTIONS

1. Inform children that you will be having Favorite Book Show and Tell time each day. Explain to the children that each of them will have a chance to share a favorite book with the class. Clarify that the books can come from the children's homes, the public library, the school library, or the classroom library. Explain that the books can be new to the class or ones that have been read and shared together. Allow children to repeat a book if it is a favorite for more than one child in the classroom. Also, explain that children can select books that have been read to them or books they have read on their own.
2. Model the Favorite Book Show and Tell process using a book the children know from the classroom. Show the book to the children and say something such as, "The book *Lily's Purple Plastic Purse* is written by Kevin Henkes (1996). It is one of my favorites because it is funny, and Lily is an interesting character. I also like the pictures because they have some funny surprises hidden in them. The book has a happy ending, and it teaches a lesson too. I would recommend this book to anyone who likes funny books and stories about school."

# Favorite Book Show and Tell



Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Book Title \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Illustrator \_\_\_\_\_

I like this book because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Draw something you liked from the book.

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## POEMS, SONGS, AND RHYMES

A very natural and engaging way to help young children develop a favorable attitude toward reading is to capitalize on a wide variety of poems, songs, and nursery rhymes. It is possible to use these literary pieces to help develop sound awareness, speech-to-print matching, language flow, concepts for letters and words, and an understanding of print conventions (e.g., print goes from left to right and top to bottom in English). Some of the popular types of rhymes include lullabies (“Rock-a-bye Baby”), singing game rhymes (“Ring-a-Round O’Roses”), counting-out rhymes (“One, Two, Buckle My Shoe”), tongue twisters (“Peter Piper”), nonsense rhymes (“If All the World Were Paper”), and verse stories (“The Queen of Hearts”). They often appeal to children because of their sounds, rhymes, and strong rhythms.

### ✚ DIRECTIONS

1. Consider the maturity and interest of children when selecting a poem, song, or rhyme. It should be fun for the children and have the potential to help achieve a variety of teaching goals. For example, reciting “Jack and Jill” might be used to help children develop an understanding of rhyming.
2. Begin by sharing the selected material aloud. The children should listen. Read the material again and invite the children to join in as they are able. Read the material a third time in an echo reading fashion: read a line and have children echo it back to you. Then talk about the selection and invite children to share their ideas or reactions.
3. Present the material on a piece of chart paper or an overhead transparency. Read it while pointing to the words. Help the children understand that you are reading the words. Point out how the print flows and how the words rhyme. Carefully select the one or two aspects of language you wish to emphasize. Keep the sharing active and lively, stressing the joy and fun of the material.
4. Select additional material to share each day. Move gradually from oral sharing to reading the printed word. Some of the rhymes can be acted out (“One, Two, Buckle My Shoe”) so take every opportunity to actively engage children.
5. As children begin memorizing the material, take opportunities to have them say the rhyme from memory at various times during the day. These words in memory can be used in later lessons to develop speech-to-print match and other print concepts. Songs may be particularly enjoyable to the children and help them make connections to print as they demonstrate their interest. Children can also be shown how to keep time with the rhyme by clapping their hands or rocking back and forth.
6. Write the various poems, songs, and rhymes on chart paper and post them around the room. Invite the children to read the materials independently, with partners, or in small groups.
7. One variation is to use dramatization with nursery rhymes (Roush, 2005). For “Little Boy Blue,” get pictures, objects, or a video of the following: horn, sheep, meadow, corn, and haystack. Children can dramatize the rhyme by doing the following:

Pretend to blow a horn.

“Baa” like a sheep.

Eat corn like a cow.

Put hands up as if questioning where Little Boy Blue is.





Pretend to be asleep.

# Activities, tips, & Center Ideas

1. Provide daily class time for self-selected reading. Consider using a fun acronym as a name for this activity (e.g., DIRT: Daily Independent Reading Time or DEAR: Drop Everything And Read). Provide access to a wide variety of reading materials and allow children to find a comfortable place to read in the classroom. You can also provide a short sharing time after children have completed their reading.
2. Model your enthusiasm and love for reading. Bring in your favorite books and share them with the children. Discuss how and why reading is important to you. Provide a special display of your favorite books in the classroom. Update the display on a regular basis.
3. Create a print-rich classroom environment that includes access to and displays of various types of print. Possible types of print are listed below.
  - labels for important classroom locations and materials
  - lists of children's names (e.g., who lost a tooth, birthdays)
  - sign-in sheet
  - message board
  - posters with captions
  - displays of the children's work and writing
  - announcements
  - classroom rules and procedures
  - chart and language experience stories
  - children's books and magazines
4. Read aloud to the children at least once a day, more often if possible. Focus on the children's enjoyment of and personal reactions to the story. Consider using different voices and sound effects to make the read-aloud experience highly motivating for the children. Provide time for children to ask questions and discuss their responses to the story.
5. Schedule time for children to share with their classmates the books they are reading and stories they are writing. Learning what their peers are reading and writing often serves as a motivator for children to pursue similar reading and writing tasks. Consider using a special chair such as a rocking chair to make the sharing experience more special. Provide options so children can share with a small group of children or the entire class.
6. Implement a home-school reading program through the use of reading backpacks. Fill several small backpacks or book bags with children's books on specific topics or by particular authors. Include construction paper, markers, crayons, pencils, and a small notebook in the backpack. Attach a short note explaining that parents and children are invited to share the books and write or draw about their favorite parts. When children return the backpack to school, provide time for them to share their responses. Post their responses on a bulletin board or in the classroom library. Change the contents of the backpacks frequently and rotate them around the classroom so all children can take home a reading backpack on a regular basis.
7. Arrange the classroom so children have easy access to literacy materials. For example, consider establishing a writing center that contains different types of paper, markers, pencils, pens, a computer, a children's typewriter, letter stamps, picture dictionaries, scissors, glue, tape, letter tiles, magnetic

letters, and other writing supplies. Label storage areas for materials in the center so children can find and put away materials themselves.

8. Create literacy play centers so children can explore literacy through meaningful play situations. A list of literacy play centers and suggested materials is provided in the box below.

<b>LITERACY PLAY CENTERS</b>	
<p><b>Post Office Center</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mailboxes</li> <li>envelopes</li> <li>paper</li> <li>stationery</li> <li>stickers or stamp pads</li> <li>address labels</li> <li>boxes</li> <li>packages</li> <li>cash register</li> <li>play money</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Office Center</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>phone</li> <li>computer or typewriter</li> <li>message pad</li> <li>pens and pencils</li> <li>paper</li> <li>calculator</li> <li>note pads</li> <li>file folders</li> <li>rubber stamps and stamp pad</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Restaurant Center</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>menus</li> <li>order pad and pencil</li> <li>tablecloth</li> <li>dishes</li> <li>glasses</li> <li>silverware</li> <li>napkins</li> <li>list of daily specials</li> <li>cash register</li> <li>play money</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Grocery Store Center</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>grocery cart</li> <li>food packages</li> <li>price stickers</li> <li>advertisements</li> <li>coupons</li> <li>cash register</li> <li>play money</li> <li>shopping lists</li> <li>grocery bags</li> </ul>	

9. Implement a message board in the classroom. Consider using a bulletin board with a pocket or envelope for each child. To introduce the message board, write a personalized message to each student in the classroom. Provide daily time for children to write messages to their classmates. To keep the message board going, you may want to write messages to several children each day.
10. Invite children to engage in artistic responses to literature. Provide opportunities for children to explore creative dramatics, art, music, dance, and movement activities after reading a book. These types of responses actively involve children in learning and literature.
11. Introduce children to various genres of literature by doing brief book talks. During book talks, focus on enticing children to want to read the books without giving away the stories. After conducting book talks, make the books available in the classroom library.
12. Develop a cross-age reading buddy program. This type of program pairs a younger child and an older child so they can read together. The focus of this type of activity is on enjoying the stories and making reading fun.



13. Develop a classroom listening center so children can follow along as they listen to a tape-recorded version of a book. Rotate the books and tapes in the listening center on a regular basis.
14. Implement a guest reader program to invite various adults from the school and community to share their favorite books with children. Designate a special place in the classroom to display books shared by guest readers.
15. Establish a well-stocked classroom library and provide daily time for children to browse through the library and select materials. Suggestions for creating a classroom library are detailed in the following list.

### CREATING A CLASSROOM LIBRARY

<b>Specific, named location</b>	The classroom library is in a highly visible area, and it has a specific name.
<b>Partitioned and private</b>	The classroom library is separated from other areas in the classroom by book shelves, book carts, or other partitions.
<b>Comfortable</b>	The library contains comfortable seating such as bean bag chairs, carpet squares, or pillows.
<b>Number of books</b>	Provide a minimum of five to eight books per child.
<b>Assortment of books</b>	Provide books from varied genres and reading levels. Be sure to include other reading materials such as magazines, pamphlets, materials written by the children, and class books.
<b>Organization</b>	Organize books and provide labels to show the organization (e.g., genres, themes, topics, authors, or reading levels).
<b>Shelving</b>	Include some open shelving so students can see book covers. Shelve other books with the spines facing out to provide room for more books in the available space.
<b>Literature Displays</b>	Include displays with posters, felt boards, stuffed animals, and puppets that are related to children's books.



## READING AT HOME

Dear Families,

Here are some ideas to get your child interested in reading.

- Take your child to the library regularly to check out books on topics of interest. Ask the children's librarian for suggestions. Also, find out about special library events for children. Most public libraries offer summer reading programs, story times, and other programs free of charge.
- Give your child books as gifts to show the importance and value of books and reading.
- Set aside time to read to your children every night. Right before bedtime works well for many families. Make this a special quiet time that you and your children look forward to at the end of the day.
- Write notes to your child and encourage your child to write notes back to you. You can tuck notes in a lunch box or backpack, or you can post them on the refrigerator or bathroom mirror. If your child cannot read independently yet, use a combination of drawings with words such as

I ♥ You!

I hope you enjoy these ideas.

Sincerely,

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