

Games and Activities: Improving Pre-Reading Skills



Matching Activities

- Card games
- Dominoes
- Activity books which involve matching shapes, pictures and letters
- Pairing up socks from the laundry
- Shape sorters
- Jigsaw puzzles

Rhyming Activities

- Singing nursery rhymes
- Pausing before the end of rhymes for the child to complete, e.g. "Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great...?". When that gets too easy for them, make it harder! "Humpty Dumpty sat in a tree, Humpty Dumpty had a cup of ...?"
- Playing rhyming games such as "I Spy with my little eye, something that rhymes with fox" (box)
- Encouraging children to sing along to nursery rhymes, pop songs, whatever they enjoy

Letter Skills

- Introducing letters and their sounds gradually
- Starting with letters that are important to the child, such as their name initial or those with an interesting shape which makes them easy to recognise
- Using letter sounds rather than letter names, for example 'a for ant'. Letter sounds are much more useful in learning to read than letter names
- Generally, sticking to lower case letters to start with, except for the first letter of a name
- Using magnetic letters to practice





Motor Skills

- Encouraging the child to be creative, drawing and painting with lots of different tools and materials
- Playing with small toys, especially construction sets will help to develop fine motor skills
- Using activity books with simple mazes and other exercises which involve following a path
- Using child-friendly scissors; this is a useful skill which also helps improve fine motor skills

Developing General Skills for Learning

- Playing simple card and board games with the child to improve their memory and concentration
- Using drawing and tracing activities to encourage them to focus on details
- Developing listening skills by using stories and nursery rhymes on CD
- Talking about the books you are reading; encourage the child to talk about the stories they have been reading
- Finding books with colourful and memorable characters
- Leaving messages or words on the fridge using magnetic letters