

Supporting Language & Literacy at 24 Months

Phonics & Phonological Awareness

At 24 months, your child's vocabulary seems to be growing by the day. They can answer simple questions using more than just yes or no and will use 2-3 words to talk about and ask for things, like 'More milk'.

Phonics is understanding the relationship between letters and sounds and is a skill your child needs to learn to read and write.

An early part of phonics is *phonological awareness*, which is knowing that sounds and letters are connected. You easily can help your child develop phonological awareness at home with fun games and activities.

- Sing the alphabet with them and do it a lot. Be sure to slow down when you get to 'l-m-n-o' so they can distinguish each letter.
- Point to letters of the alphabet as you say their names, and don't always go in order.
- Look for letters wherever you go and think of other words that start with the same sound. Have fun hunting for letters on signs, cereal boxes, book covers, and toys.
- Make flashcards to play simple letter games such as Memory or Go Fish. Or write simple words like 'CAT' on a piece of paper, point to the first letter, and ask for the sound. Do the same thing for the next two letters (in order).

Language & pre-literacy skills to look for:

- follows simple instructions
- points to at least two body parts when you ask them to show you
- points to things or pictures in a book when you ask questions like, 'Where is the dog?'
- uses more gestures than just waving and pointing, like blowing a kiss or nodding yes
- answers simple questions with more than a yes-or-no-response
- uses 2-3 words to talk about and ask for things, like 'More milk', 'No juice', or 'Mommy book'
- repeats words overheard in conversation

Build your child's phonological awareness with stories and books. Here are some of our favorite books to explore with your 24-month-old:

- *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus* by Mo Willems
- *Are You My Mother?* by P.D. Eastman
- *Good Night, Gorilla* by Peggy Rathmann
- *Pig the Stinker* by Aaron Blabey
- *The Three Bears* (A Little Golden Book) by Feodor Rojankovsky
- *We're Different, We're the Same (Sesame Street)* by Bobbi Kates