



# Preschool Parent Press

A publication brought to you by ECAC, the exceptional children's assistance center

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## Six Early Literacy Skills

Young children need a variety of skills to become successful readers. Early literacy skills become the building blocks for later reading and writing. Research indicates that children, who enter school with one or more of the skills outlined below, are better able to benefit from the reading instruction they receive at school.

**Vocabulary:** Most children enter school knowing between 3,000 and 5,000 words. Knowing the names of things is an extremely important skill for children to have when they are learning to read.



*Help* develop your child's vocabulary by reading a variety of books with him, and by naming all the objects in your child's world.

**Reading/Print Motivation:** This is a child's interest in and enjoyment of books. A child with print motivation enjoys being read to, plays with books, pretends to write, asks to be read to and likes trips to the library.

*Encourage* print motivation in your child by making shared book reading a special time, keeping books accessible, and letting your child see that you enjoy reading. Explain how you use reading and writing in everyday life.

**Print Awareness:** This includes learning that writing in English follows basic rules such as flowing from top-to-bottom and left-to-right, and that the print on the page is what is being read. An example of print awareness is a child's ability to point to the words on the page of a book.



*Promote* your child's print awareness by pointing out and reading words everywhere you see them, on signs, labels, at the grocery store and post office.

**Re-Telling:** Being able to understand, tell stories, and describe things are important skills for children learning to read.

An example of a narrative skill is a child's ability to tell what happens at a birthday party or on a trip to the zoo.

*Help* your child strengthen her narrative skills by asking her to tell you about the book, instead of just listening to you read the story.

**Alphabet/Letter Knowledge:** Discovering, that letters have names, are different from each other, and that specific sounds go with specific letters is called alphabet knowledge. An example of alphabet knowledge is a child's ability to tell the name of the letter B and the sound it makes.



*Support* your child by using a variety of fun reading activities like pointing out and naming letters in alphabet books, or on signs and labels, and saying the sounds each letter makes. For preschoolers, try drawing letters and pictures in the sand and then talking about each letter and their sounds.

**Phonemic Awareness:** This is the ability to hear and manipulate the smaller sounds in words. Phonemic awareness includes the ability to hear and create rhymes, to say words with sounds or chunks left out and the ability to put two word chunks together to make a word.

*Strengthen* your child's phonemic awareness by playing fun word games with your child:

- Make up silly words by changing the first sound in a word: milk, nilk, pilk, rilk, filk.
- Say words with a pause between the syllables ("rab" and "it") and have your child guess what word you are saying.

Source: Early Childhood Resources Program of Multnomah County Library, Portland, OR. <http://www.multcolib.org/birthtosix/elitskills.html>



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## Snowflakes and Cupcakes

(Tune: Raindrops and Lemon Drops)



If all the snowflakes were chocolate covered cupcakes,  
Oh, what a snow it would be!

I'd go outside with my mouth open wide, *(open mouth  
and stick out tongue)*

Ah ah ah ah ah ah ah ah ah ah

If all of the snowflakes were chocolate covered  
cupcakes,

Oh, what a snow it would be!

*A fun follow up would be to make and bake chocolate  
cupcakes. Kids love to be told that they can stick out their  
tongues and they think it's funny when their parents or  
teacher does, too!*

## Winter Time Poem

by Mary Ryer



Icy fingers, icy toes,  
Bright red cheeks and bright red nose.

Watch the snowflakes as they fall,  
Try so hard to count them all.

Build a snowman way up high,  
See if he can touch the sky.

Snow forts, snowballs, angels, too,  
In the snow, so white and new.

## Counting: Snowmen

by Melissa



Ten happy snowmen dancing all around. *(hold  
up ten fingers)*

Dancing all around *(spin in place)*.

The sun came out and one melted to the  
ground *(make sun with arms,  
put one finger down and melt to ground)*.

Nine.. Eight.. Seven.. and so on.

No little snowmen dancing in the sun.

First there were ten and now there are none!

*Tip: Use less finger's for younger children..*



## Candy Heart Games

Purchase a small box of candy hearts with messages on them,  
and help your child use the hearts for the following games.

- Look for letters and any familiar words on the hearts.
- Write the letters and words on a piece of paper, discuss how each letter is part of a word, and how each word is used to make a phrase or sentence
- Sort and count the hearts by colors.
- Guess how many hearts are in a handful. Count them, eat and enjoy!

## Wearing of the Green Art Ideas



Encourage your child to make a collage entirely  
of green things. Provide magazines, paints,  
markers, and construction paper. Talk about  
how the color green is usually associated with  
St. Patrick's Day.

Provide your child with blue and yellow finger-  
paint. Assist her in discovering how to make  
green.

Supply your child with a black cutout of a pot  
and several yellow circles. Assist him with  
gluing the "coins" into the pot for a pot of gold.  
Explain the story of the pot of gold at the end  
of the rainbow and the leprechaun.



## ECAC's Winter Book Picks

### The Night Before Valentine's Day

by Natasha Wing, Author and Heidi Petach, Illustrator

### Froggy's First Kiss

by Jonathan London Author, and Frank Remkiewicz, Illustrator

### Frozen Noses

by Jan Carr, Author and Dorothy Donohue, Illustrator

### Under My Hood I Have a Hat

By Karla Kuskin, Author and Fumi Kosha, Illustrator

### The Luckiest St. Patrick's Day Ever!

By Teddy Slater, Author and Ethan Long, Illustrator

ecac is committed to improving the lives and education of ALL  
children. For Information call 1-800-962-6817.  
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