

At Home Literacy Activities

Letter Naming Fluency

Go on a letter hunt.

Write five different letters in both upper- and lowercase on 10 sticky notes. Hide them around a room and send your child on a hunt to find the matches. Once they're paired up, talk about each letter and its sound. For example: "Here we have d. It makes the /d/ sound. What can you find in this room that starts with that sound?" This idea was inspired by BusyToddler.

Make bath time a literacy game.

Have some uppercase and lowercase letter magnets or foam bath letters? Use them to practise matching letters, or turn it into a race by seeing how quickly your child can find each pair. Add a stopwatch if your child loves a little friendly competition.

Nonsense Words

Make up silly words.

Grab some letter magnets or foam bath letters and build three-letter words using two consonants and a vowel. Sound them out together, then let your child create five or six letter long silly words for you to read. The goal isn't to make real words. It's to practise putting sounds together.

Get silly with storytime.

The Book with No Pictures by B.J. Novak is packed with ridiculous words and sounds. Invite your child to help you sound out the silly words and model how you stretch out each sound.

Keep a literacy kit in the car.

Stash a small dry-erase board and marker in the car. Choose three letters for your child to write, then challenge them to put the sounds together. It's an easy way to sneak in a few minutes of practice while you're on the go.

Sound Fluency

Turn I-Spy into a sound game.

Instead of saying "I spy something blue," choose a sound: "I spy something that starts with /s/." A sign, sock, or seat could all work!

Play "I'm Going to the Store."

Start with, "I'm going to the store and I'm going to buy cheese." Your child has to add something that starts with the same sound. Keep going until you run out of ideas. Cheese, chicken, Cheetos, chocolate... the sillier the list, the better.

Talk like a robot.

For older kids, say a word in slow, choppy "robot" sounds. See if they can blend the sounds together and figure out your word.

Race the word.

Write a word on a piece of paper. Have your child sound it out slowly, then challenge them to "race car" the word by blending the sounds together smoothly.

Become word detectives.

Give your child little mysteries to solve using the words they see around them. At bath time, point out the labels on the shampoo and conditioner bottles and ask them to figure out which one is shampoo by sounding out the first few letters. You can do the same thing with ingredient labels while baking.

Oral Reading Fluency

Build confidence with books.

Have your child read a simple book to you, or take turns reading pages together. Keep it fun and choose books connected to their interests. If dinosaurs, hockey or space are their thing, use that enthusiasm to keep them reading. The goal is to build confidence, accuracy and a love of reading.

