

# Welcome to Kindergarten

Play skills, language development (the understanding / use of words, sentences, stories, conversations) and reading / writing development are all closely related.

Here are some ideas for how to support your child's language development at home, which will impact on his or her reading and writing skill development:

Spend some time sharing books with your child every day

You can try...	So that your child can....
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using simple language that is close to the length of your child's sentences, while sharing books together E.g.: If you child uses mostly 4 word sentences, try to use many 4-5 word sentences while sharing books</li><li>• Emphasizing the important or new words in books by saying them louder and longer for your child to hear. Point to the words / pictures as you say the important words</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learn and use new words and sentences <u>You don't have to read the book exactly the way it was written!</u> <u>You can talk about the pictures or make up your own story.</u></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focusing on the meaning of the book by asking questions and making comments as you share the book together. E.g.: 'what is happening?', 'this part is scary', 'I think she looks nice', 'what will happen next?', 'why did she do that?'</li><li>• Try not to ask so many questions that he or she feels like they are being tested. If you find yourself asking a lot of questions, make some comments about what you see in the pictures.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand and express new stories</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read the same books over and over, pause and give your child a chance to read part of the book with you. Let your child take a role in choosing books from the library with you that he or she will enjoy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoy book sharing activities</li> </ul>
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**Spend some time playing with your child every day**

You can try...	So that your child can...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turning off the television and other technology, so that your child can focus on learning from your words and gestures</li> <li>• Being face-to-face with your child as much as possible, so that he or she can hear the words you are using and pay attention to your facial expressions / gestures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand and use new words and gestures. <b><u>Children learn language best through talking with you, not through television or computer programs</u></b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to take turns that are equal length. If you find yourself doing a lot of talking, try to use shorter sentences and pause between, to give your child a chance to take a talking turn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk more while sharing books together</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copying what your child says and add something new. E.g.: I see a car → ‘I see a <b><u>BIG, RED</u></b> car!’</li> <li>• Copying what your child does with toys and add something new. E.g.: child drives a toy car back and forth → drive the car back and forth and then pretend to take the car to the gas station for a fill-up. Talk about what you are doing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand on sentences and learn new words <b><u>You are your child’s most important model for language!</u></b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following the way your child wants to play some of the time. Expand on his or her ideas and talk about what he or she is doing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoy playing with you!</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using your child's first language at home, providing many models of different words and sentences.</li><li>• Using specific, simple language within all routines and incorporating play into any part of the day (making food, waiting in line, driving in the car, bath time)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build on a foundation of the child's first language, which will help with the acquisition of English.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using any safe object as a toy, for example, a banana can become a telephone and a block can become a race car.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use his or her imagination!</li></ul>