



# Supporting your child's reading and writing



## Everyday activities to make connections at home

- 1 Share rhymes and songs and encourage your child to join in.
- 2 Save safe cardboard household items for your child to build with. Ask your child to describe what they are building.
- 3 Have a dress-up box for your child to use for imaginative play.
- 4 Listen to your child and respond to their ideas with questions and ask for more information.
- 5 Write down your child's stories as they tell you and encourage him or her to read it back to you.
- 6 Point out and talk about letters and words all around you. For example, on cereal boxes, car number plates, signs.
- 7 Cook simple things together. Read out the recipe, talk through what you are doing.
- 8 Join a toy library and choose toys together.
- 9 Look at junk mail and talk about the things for sale.
- 10 Provide materials and create a writing/drawing table or area.
- 11 Talk about family photos and histories.

## Story-telling about:

- 12 A favourite character from a book or television program.
- 13 Another family member.
- 14 Your child's favourite toy.

## Reading together

- 15 Encourage your child to select the books, magazines, catalogues, multimedia stories or DVDs.
- 16 Discuss the pictures in a book and encourage your child to talk about the pictures.
- 17 Share wordless picture books to develop imagination, ideas and vocabulary by naming things in the pictures.
- 18 Re-read your child's favourite books and stories.
- 19 Look for rhyme, rhythm or repetition in books.
- 20 Support your child to make their own books with pictures and then 'read' the story to you.

## Questions to explore

- 21 Look at the picture, what can you see that might start with that letter?
- 22 Look at the picture, what word makes sense to describe it?
- 23 What letter does it start with? What sound does the letter make? What letter does it end with?

24 What would you like to read about?

- 25 Look at the cover – what do you think this book is about?
- 26 What is happening in the pictures?
- 27 How could we work out these tricky words?
- 28 What do you think is going to happen next?
- 29 What was your favourite part of the book?
- 30 Who was your favourite character in the story? Why did you like that character?
- 31 If you could change the ending of this book, what would it be?

## Reading ideas

- 32 Write down what your child is telling you about an experience and then read it back together.
- 33 Visit your local library or school library to select and read books together.
- 34 Find out facts about your body by visiting [www.cyh.com/subdefault.aspx?p=255](http://www.cyh.com/subdefault.aspx?p=255)
- 35 Draw or paint pictures about the scenes by visiting Brushster at [www.nga.gov/kids/zone/brushster.htm](http://www.nga.gov/kids/zone/brushster.htm)
- 36 Talk about what authors and illustrators do.
- 37 Point out important things about a book – for example, the front cover, the spine, the contents page, or the title.

## Reading and writing go hand in hand

- 38 Ask your child to talk about an experience or something that interests them.
- 39 Ask your child what part of the conversation they would like you to write.
- 40 Write a shopping list or add items to the list and tick off the items as you buy or unpack them.
- 41 Keep a board to write and read family messages.
- 42 Give your child a pad of sticky notes to write reminders for themselves.
- 43 Plan and write your weekly menu together.
- 44 Write captions for photographs in your family photo albums.
- 45 Write labels for your child's art works and creations.
- 46 Make words using magnetic letters and stick them on the fridge.
- 47 Make and write greeting cards, birthday cards, and thank you notes.
- 48 Keep a family calendar on display and write down family events. Talk about upcoming events with your child, for example, where, when, and who will be there.



# Exploring maths with your child

## Playing shop

- 1 Talk about how we pay for items using notes and coins.
- 2 Make paper money or use play money to buy and sell goods from the shop.
- 3 Order the food items by size (tallest to the shortest) or by cost (least expensive to most expensive).
- 4 Introduce kitchen scales to the shop to weigh some foods such as a bag of rice or teabags.

## Playing games

- 5 Play I Spy or other games to identify shapes, numbers and patterns.
- 6 Dice are a great addition to any toy collection. Roll the dice and say, make or write the numbers identified. Roll the dice and add the numbers together to find the total.
- 7 Play number games online with your child. Try this website: <http://www.abc.net.au/countusin/>

## Making patterns

- 8 Identify and explain visual patterns on clothing, wrapping paper, crockery, cards and furniture.
- 9 Use coloured pegs, blocks, beads or cutlery to begin a pattern for your child to continue. For example, red, blue, white, red, blue, white.
- 10 Encourage your child to draw, create and describe their own patterns. Use them for borders or greeting cards or on material.

## Measuring things

- 11 Use a wall measuring chart to measure the height of people in your family.
- 12 Cut a piece of string for your child, any length will do. Use the string to measure the objects in your house to find out what is longer or shorter than your 'string measuring tape'. Ask your child to identify anything that is the same length.
- 13 Explore other ways of measuring using a cup, jug, teaspoon, icy pole sticks, foot prints or hand lengths.
- 14 Build a tower of blocks that is taller than a favourite toy. Ask your child to count the total blocks to measure the height.

## Go on a number hunt

- 15 With your child find numbers around you, for example house numbers, calendars.
- 16 Look at and say the numbers on car number plates, signs, calendars, newspapers, shopping catalogues, speed signs, house numbers.
- 17 Use different numbers as the starting point for practising counting, for example start counting from 6 or 10. Ask your child to count forwards and backwards. Ask what number comes before or what number comes after.



- 18 Identify the numbers on a calculator. Use an online talking calculator at <http://pbskids.org/cyberchase/math-games/calculator>

## Turning maths into a story

- 19 Count the fruit in the fruit bowl.
- 20 Cut fruit into six pieces.
- 21 Count the pieces of toast you cooked at breakfast.
- 22 Add the total cutlery at the table.
- 23 Count the number of people travelling in the car or the bus.
- 24 Encourage your child to draw and talk about the numbers of things in pictures. Eg: There are five pieces of fruit in our bowl. Three are apples and two are bananas.

## Moving with maths

- 25 How many throws can we do without dropping the ball?
- 26 How many jumps does it take to get to...?
- 27 How many times can you tap the balloon before it touches the ground?
- 28 How long does it take you to skip to...?

## Using playing cards

- 29 Play matching number games with playing cards.
- 30 Put cards in order from largest to smallest by counting the shapes (hearts, spades) or using the numbers on the cards.

## Asking questions to investigate

- 31 What shapes can you see?
- 32 How could we measure the...?
- 33 How will we find half?
- 34 What is the best way to share...?

## Have you tried these counting ideas at home?

- 35 Count the food items as they are placed in the trolley or unpacked at home.
- 36 Count the steps to the letterbox, front door, clothes line.
- 37 Collect and count objects such as toys, shells, and flowers from the garden.
- 38 Count days on a calendar. Count days down to a special event.
- 39 Read books that involve counting.