



Tips on

## Creating A Print-rich Environment

Children are more likely to become good readers when they see and hear words and letters in context and see reading happening in everyday life. One easy way to make that a reality is to expose children to print and provide them with opportunities to read.

**How you do the things suggested below will depend upon the age of your child.**

That's because learning to read and write happens over time. So, for example, very young children start writing by making simple scribbles. As they grow, they begin to turn those scribbles into letters and eventually into words. Find ways for children to participate that match their abilities.

### Label Everything

- ✓ **Help children label their drawings** by asking them to sign their work or by writing down a title or caption that they tell you (before proudly displaying it on your refrigerator or wall, of course!).
- ✓ **Put labels on objects around your home.** You might cover brand names on appliances with masking tape and, with a permanent marker, write the name of the object on the tape. Consider labeling things in more than one language.
- ✓ **Help children put their names on their bedroom door, clothing, toys, placemat, family mailbox, etc.**

### Demonstrate Reading In Your Daily Routine

- ✓ **Let children see how you use reading throughout the day** by helping them notice when you read your mail, a shopping list, a TV schedule, preparation instructions on a box of food, school announcements, a newspaper or magazine, etc.
- ✓ **Point out and read signs** in your neighborhood or travels (e.g., street signs, store names, billboards, marquees, sides of trucks, etc.).
- ✓ **Turn on the closed captioning when viewing TV or videos.**

### Create Times For Reading And Writing Together

- ✓ **Ask a relative or friend to send your child an e-mail or a letter.** Help your child respond by letting them dictate as you write or type.
- ✓ **Sing songs, play words games,** recite nursery rhymes and poems, or make up silly words.
- ✓ **Cut words and letters out of junk mail or old magazines** and let children make signs, artwork and games with them.
- ✓ **Keep writing / drawing materials** (e.g., paper and crayons or chalkboard and chalk) easily accessible so children can "write" (including scribbling) when they feel like it.
- ✓ **Read aloud every day.** Make a special reading time and place, where your child picks the book and gets to spend time sitting close to you.

To learn more, watch ***A Place of Our Own*** on your local public television station and visit the website at [www.aplaceofourown.org](http://www.aplaceofourown.org)

A production of KCET/Los Angeles in association with Sesame Workshop.  
A production of KCET/Los Angeles in association with 44 Blue Productions, Inc.



Major funding provided b



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