



Hands on Literacy Activities

Hands-On Is Minds-On

Hands-on experiences provide meaning to words.

Research shows that when children are engaged in activities that require movement, talking and listening it activates multiple areas of the brain and they are more likely to retain information.

Hands-on projects engage children who are tactile and kinesthetic learners— those who learn best through movement. They also engage children who are visual and auditory learners, those who learn best by seeing or hearing.

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Activity Ideas

When planning your book distribution, you are encouraged to also provide a hands-on literacy activity for the children at the event. You are welcome to find your own ideas, or utilize any (or all) of the ideas provided. Through hands-on experiences children build their literacy skills and concepts. All are low-cost ideas to build children's literacy skills. A directions sheet is included that can be printed and posted to make these a self directed activity. The ideas provided in this packet are listed below.

- Fishing for Sight Words
- Glitter Word Work
- ABC I-Spy
- Re-telling Glove

Also provided are two hand outs:

- ABC's of Early Literacy
- Tips for Reading with Children

Websites for additional activity ideas

Looking for new ideas for hands-on literacy activities? Check out these websites!

- Pinterest (search for literacy activities)
- www.scholastic.com
- www.rif.org





Fishing for Sight Words



Supplies

- Fishing pole (dowel rod or similar)
- String
- Magnet
- Paper fish shapes
- Sight words list
- Paper clip
- Tape
- "Pond" for fish

Directions:

Tape sight words to fish.
Secure paperclip on each fish.
Tie string to dowel rod with magnet on the end of the string to create a fishing pole.
Go fishing!

Instructions

Grab a fishing pole and try to catch a sight word fish. Read the word on the back of the fish. If you can read the word keep the fish. If you can't read the word have a friend help you say the word and then throw it back. See if you can collect 5 fish. After you have caught your 5 fish throw them back for another child to try.

Optional: Have separate ponds with individual letters for younger learners and/or create separate sight word ponds with the sight word lists for lower and upper grades (e.g. preschool, K-2 and 3-5)

Learning Objectives

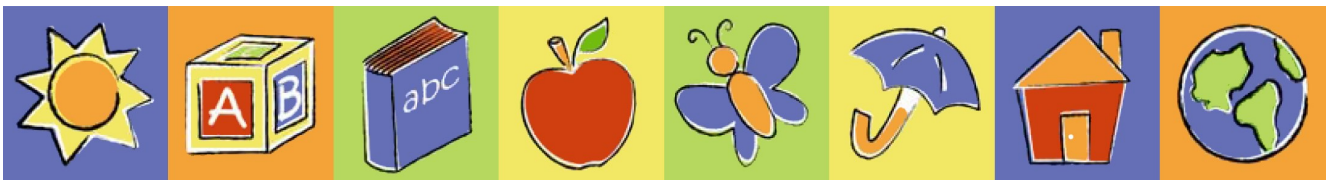
Dolch words or sight words, provide an excellent base for reading at an early age. They are often called sight words because some of them can't be sounded out, and need to be learned by sight. In this activity learners will review the Dolch sight words. Learners will read the words on the fish they catch. This activity helps learners practice common sight words that will help with reading skills.

Common Core Connection

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.K.1.D– Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet.

CCS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.K.3.C– Read common high-frequency words by sight (e.g. the, of, to, you, she, my, is, are, do, does).

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Sight Words

What is a sight word?

Sight words, or high frequency words, are commonly used words. These words account for up to 75% of the words in beginning children’s books. Children are encouraged to learn to recognize these words by sight so that they can focus on comprehension instead of decoding every single word as they read. Furthermore, many of these words cannot be decoded using typical strategies due to unusual or atypical spelling patterns.

There are many different sight wordlists, but the most commonly utilized list of high frequency words are the Dolch sight word list of the 220 most commonly used words. The words are divided into levels, with some overlap, as a guidance for introduction in Kindergarten through 3rd grades.

The Dolch sight word list has been around for over 70 years! It was compiled in 1936 by Edward William Dolch, PhD. Complete lists can be found online in many locations.

Dolch Sight Words– Pre-Primer

a	blue	find	help	is	look	not	run	three	we
and	can	for	here	it	make	one	said	to	where
away	come	funny	I	jump	me	play	see	two	yellow
big	down	go	in	little	my	red	the	up	you

Dolch Sight Words– Primer

all	black	eat	into	on	ride	that	want	who
am	brown	four	like	our	saw	there	was	will
are	but	get	must	out	say	they	well	with
at	came	good	new	please	she	this	went	yes
ate	did	have	no	pretty	so	too	what	
be	do	he	now	ran	soon	under	white	

Dolch Sight Words– Grade One

after	as	from	her	know	old	round	them	when
again	by	give	him	let	once	some	then	
an	could	going	his	live	open	stop	think	
any	every	had	how	may	over	take	walk	
ask	fly	has	just	of	put	thank	were	



Glitter Word Work



Supply List

- Gallon size freezer bags (use freezer bags, they are thicker and won't break open as easily)
- Clear hair gel
- Food coloring
- Glitter
- Clear packing tape
- Word or letter lists as desired

Directions:

Combine hair gel, food coloring and glitter in zip-top style bag. Zip bag closed and mix well! Tape the zip top closed and get started having practicing letters, numbers words and much more!

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Instructions



Image courtesy of <http://www.sandraraief.com/>

Choose a word list or alphabet letter list. Select your favorite glitter bag! Practice writing each word or letter on the list in the bag of glitter. Have a variety of sight word and alphabet letter lists available for children of all ages!

Tip: Use the pad of your finger not your nail it will slice holes in the bag!

Learning Objectives

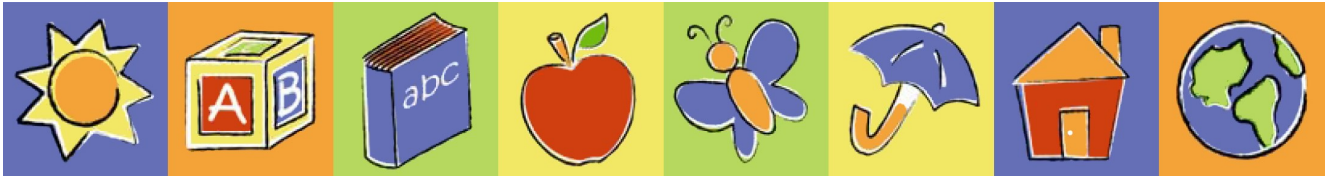
In this activity learners practice pre-writing skills such as shapes, letters and words. This multisensory activity, helps learners to retain the information they are practicing. Writing is an important part of literacy. In addition, this activity offers a great therapeutic/calming effect for some children.

Common Core Connection

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big	down	go	in	little	my	red	the	up	you

Dolch Sight Words- Primer

all	black	eat	into	on	ride	that	want	who
am	brown	four	like	our	saw	there	was	will
are	but	get	must	out	say	they	well	with
at	came	good	new	please	she	this	went	yes
ate	did	have	no	pretty	so	too	what	
be	do	he	now	ran	soon	under	white	

Dolch Sight Words- Grade One

after	as	from	her	know	old	round	them	when
again	by	give	him	let	once	some	then	
an	could	going	his	live	open	stop	think	
any	every	had	how	may	over	take	walk	
ask	fly	has	just	of	put	thank	were	

Find more information about early childhood development, literacy and academic success at

www.msue.msu.edu



“The Retelling Glove”



Why it’s important?

Reading with children helps build a strong foundation for academic success.

Reading skills help determine a child’s ability to master content and knowledge and progress in school.

The “Retelling Glove” is a way to help your child learn how to retell a story.

Retelling a story helps children practice reading comprehension and helps them understand the heart of the story.

By using the “Retelling Glove” children will learn to ask questions as they read which helps them develop critical thinking skills.

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What you need

- Plain, light colored glove (one per person)
- Fine point permanent markers

What to do

Draw on each finger of the glove the following:

- Thumb: Stick person or face
- Index Finger: Tree, house or clock
- Middle Finger: Question mark, sad face, or lock
- Ring Finger: 1, 2, 3 or ladder
- Pinkie Finger: Happy face, exclamation point or key
- Palm of the hand: Heart or light bulb

How to use

Read a story together. Then put the glove on your hand and have the child retell the story according to the pictures on each finger.

- Thumb: Who were the characters in the story?
- Index Finger: When and where did the story take place?
- Middle Finger: What is the problem in the story?
- Ring Finger: What events happened in the story; what happened first, second, etc.?
- Pinkie Finger: How was the problem fixed; what is the end of the story?
- Palm of the hand: Theme: what is the message the author wanted to send?

Common Core Connection

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.2- Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.





How to use

- Have the child use the retelling glove to tell you and others the story by answering the questions for each finger. As the child gives you ideas for each finger put the finger down toward the palm of the hand.
- When all the fingers are down, then we have told the “heart” or idea of the story.
- Do this each time you read a new story to help increase the child’s understanding of the story.
- Change the questions that you use with your retelling glove so you are focusing on a different part of the story each time you use the retelling glove.
- Take turns, have the child wear the glove and with your support ask the questions and you retell the story. Help introduce younger children to the glove using this option.



Retelling Glove Questions

The questions below are suggestions to use with your Retelling Glove. You will have lots of questions that will also work with the retelling glove. Remember to make it fun!

WHO

- Who is the main character in the story?
- Name some other characters in the story.
- Tell me about one of the characters.

WHERE

- Where does the story take place?
- Where do the characters live?

WHAT

- What is the problem in the story?
- What happened in the story?

EVENTS

- Retell the events in order: beginning, middle & end.
- What happened first, second, etc.?
- Tell me about a specific event.
- This is a great place to ask “why” questions.

ENDING

- Tell me about the end of the story.
- Were you surprised at the way the story ended?
- Tell me another way the story could have ended.



ABC I-Spy Bottle



Supply List

- Clear container with tightly fitting lid. (VOS brand water bottles work well)
- Small object for filler such as beads or rice.
- Plastic alphabet letters or shapes
- Hot glue

Directions:

Fill container with filler material such as beads or rice, and plastic letters or shapes. Alternate rice/letters/rice as you fill. Tightly seal container. Shake up and enjoy!

**Optional– Instead of filling container with alphabet letters consider using small plastic objects. Children would then find the object and identify the first letter of that object. (ie. Ball– B, Cat– C, etc.)*

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Instructions



Turn the container, shake it, roll it and look all around to find the hidden letters. Have children call out the letters as they find them or have them find the letters in their name, or spell out a word such as MOM, DAD, etc.

Image courtesy of <http://livinginthedeepend.wordpress.com/>

Optional: *If you fill the jar with plastic objects instead of letters, you can provide children with a sheet to record their answers. Print the picture of the object next to a blank space for them to record the first letter of what they found! (B– Ball, etc.)*

Learning Objectives

In this activity learners practice recognizing and naming all of the letters of the alphabet as well as practicing one to one letter to sound correspondence with the primary (first) letter of each word. For example, knowing that “B” is the first sound they hear in the word “ball.”

Common Core Connection

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.K.1.D– Recognize and name all upper– and lowercase letters of the alphabet.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.K.3.A- Demonstrate basic knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondences by producing the primary sound or many of the most frequent sounds for each consonant





Tips for Reading with Children

Why it's important!

Children whose parents and caregivers read to them, tell them stories, and/or sing songs with them tend to develop larger vocabularies, become better readers and perform better in school.

If you read to your child for 30 minutes a day, every day from birth they will go to kindergarten with over 900 hours of literacy experiences! But if you reduce that to 30 minutes a week, they only have 130 hours of reading time before they start school.

MSU Extension recommends 30 minutes of literacy activities a day. Read more about how to make that an easy part of your daily routine.

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Read every day:

- Make story time a part of your daily routine
- Read many different kinds of materials with your children. Picture books, story books, magazines, newspapers, even catalogs or advertisements. Anything that has words!!
- Keep books within your children's reach so they can get one any time they want!
- Read the stories you child loves over and over again. Have a special way you read favorite stories, such as a silly voice for a character or sound effects that you repeat every time you read that book.

When reading aloud with children:

- Have fun while you read! Change your voice, read fast or slow, make up silly words. Make reading fun!
- Answer children's questions while you are reading. Don't make children wait until the end of the story if there is something they are wondering about.
- Involve children in the story. Ask them what they think will happen next or have them describe the story based on pictures.

Talk and listen—a lot!

- Talk to children while you are doing your everyday activities. Talk about what you are doing and why. Sing songs, say nursery rhymes or play games with letter sounds out loud.
- Point out words where you see them. On signs, in books, newspapers, on clothes, food packages and in the world around you!
- Let children see you read! Read books, magazines and newspapers in front of your child. Read for fun, with joy, and not as work. Let your children see that you enjoy and value reading.



30 minutes of literacy activities recommended each day

Literacy activities are more than just reading! Look for the opportunities to include reading, songs, word play and more games in your every day schedule! Literacy activities can take place anytime, anywhere! When you look for all the ways to “fit in” literacy activities in your daily routines it isn’t hard to fit in the critical 30 minutes of literacy activities that experts recommend for school readiness.

In the morning:

Wake your child up with a special song	1 minute
Sing “Head and shoulders” while getting dressed	1 minute
Read the cereal box and milk jug during breakfast	2 minutes
Listen to music in the car; sing along!	2 minutes
Read the signs on the way to school	3 minutes



During the day:

Ask your child’s caregiver to read to them	5 minutes
Listen to an audio book on the way home	3 minutes
Give your child time to practice writing	2 minutes

At home:

Have your child “read” to you	3 minutes
Write in the bathtub with bath crayons	4 minutes
Read a book as part of your bedtime routine	5 minutes
Sing a lullaby at bedtime	1 minute



Total of literacy activities 32 minutes

Literacy activities should be fun and never feel like work. Make reading and literacy fun for your child and instill a life long love of reading! *(adapted from “Feed Me a Story”, Connecticut Family Literacy Initiative)*

Additional Resources from MSU Extension:

Early Childhood website: http://msue.msu.edu/topic/info/early_childhood_development

Scan this QR code to receive [MSU Extension’s Family Book Sheets](#) for more ideas to extend your child’s learning beyond books!





Developing early literacy skills goes beyond the ABCs!

Did you know?

- Reading proficiently by the end of the third grade can be a “make or break benchmark” in a child’s educational development.
- Eighty-three percent of children who are not reading by the fourth grade are at risk of failing to graduate from high school on time.
- Michigan ranks 43 out of the 50 states in meeting national reading standards by the fourth grade.
- Preschoolers, whose parents read to them, tell them stories or sing songs with them, tend to develop larger vocabularies, become better readers and perform better in school.



Emergent literacy = getting ready to read

Parents should watch for and encourage these “emergent literacy” skills, which children need to develop before they actually begin to read.

1. **Oral language.** Children use verbal communication patterns, or speech, to express themselves.
2. **Experimental writing.** A child makes these first attempts at writing, which are often scribble marks, but they also include attempts to write letters or his or her name. Children without access to writing materials may not even know how to hold a pencil or crayon.

Developing early literacy skills goes beyond the ABCs!

3. **Print awareness.** A child will begin to understand that print on a page stands for something. A child with print awareness skills will hold a book correctly even if given the book upside down and backwards, will know that text is read from left to right and will know where the story begins by pointing to the text.
4. **Vocabulary.** Developing a vocabulary begins with oral language, that is, the child's ability to communicate with others through verbal interactions.
5. **Alphabetic principle.** Children can associate letters with sounds and sounds with words. A child will know that the letter B makes a "buh" sound.
6. **Letter knowledge.** A child knows letters of the alphabet and can also recognize letters in print. Children will know that letters are different from each other and have different names and sounds.

What can parents do?

Literacy activities are more than just reading. They can include:

- Talking about a book
- Having a general conversation with both parent and child participating
- Asking questions and listening to the child's answers
- Helping the child learn the alphabet through books, signs, labels and the alphabet song
- Helping the child learn colors
- Playing rhyming games
- Reading or saying nursery rhymes
- Playing word games and finger plays, such as "Itsy Bitsy Spider" and "Where is Thumbkin?"
- Singing songs with or to a child
- Allowing the child to read to you even if the child can't actually read
- Teaching shapes to the child
- Visiting the library or bookstore

Literacy activities can take place anytime, anywhere. Thirty minutes of reading can be a daunting task (most of us don't even exercise for 30 minutes a day), but it can be broken up into 5- or 10-minute chunks that could include looking at labels together at the grocery store, singing a song together in the car and reading a short bedtime story. Activities should never feel like work. They should be fun so families are likely to repeat them.

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