



Northern  
Territory  
Government



# Learning Literacy

## With Family

a smart  
**Territory**  
fresh ideas | real results

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z



*'I remember sitting with my mother when I was very young. She used to always weave mats from pandanas. I was watching her hands, listening to her words and feeling the dry pandanus. Now I can make my own mat. Remember parents, you are your children's first teachers.'*

**Yalmay Yunupingu.**

**Families as First Teachers**  
helping families helping children



# Sharing Books is Beginning Literacy

*Kids enjoy learning about words and pictures when you share a book.*

## Ideas for families

- Sit with kids and look at a simple picture book every day. Kids learn that books are fun.
- Hold kids close while looking at books. It helps kids enjoy reading and makes them feel safe and happy.
- Point to the words and pictures in books as you read. Kids learn that words always carry the same message.
- Show kids how to hold books and turn the pages. Learning how books work is part of learning to read.



# Words are All Around

*Looking at words helps kids learn that symbols can carry a message.*

## Ideas for families

- Point to road signs in the community. Talk to kids about what they tell us.
- Talk about logos and words on T-shirts.
- Look at the words on food packets with your kids. Tell kids what they say.
- Show kids your name on the letters you get in the mail.





# Songs and Rhymes

*Songs and rhymes help kids to practice sounds, learn language and have fun.*

## Ideas for families

- Sing songs in your language. Kids learn new words and practice sounds when they sing.
- Sing action songs to help kids learn to think, speak, listen and do.
- Singing helps kids learn to hear rhyming words that sound the same.
- Sing about every day things to well known tunes.





# Watching and Listening

*Watching and listening helps children to develop language.*

## Ideas for families

- Talk with kids about what you are doing.
- Look at babies when you talk. They are learning about how to make sounds.
- Use actions to help kids understand language.
- Show kids you are listening when they talk. Repeat the same words back.





# Same and Different

*Kids learn words to describe their world.*

## Ideas for families

- Help kids learn words to describe things. “These trees are all tall.”
- Talk about things that are the same and different. “Look at the seedpods. Some are thick and some are thin.”
- Collect things with kids. Sort them into piles.
- Talk with kids about what makes things the same or different.

# Drawing and Scribbling

*Drawing and scribbling helps kids learn that symbols and signs carry messages.*

## Ideas for families

- Talk to kids about symbols and signs and what they mean.
- Give kids pencils, paper and time to scribble and draw.
- When kids do pretend writing, ask them what it says.
- Write your kid's name on their picture.





# Pictures Tell Stories

*Kids learn language when they talk about pictures.*

## Ideas for families

- Look at newspapers, books and magazines with kids. Talk to your kids about the pictures.
- At the art centre, share the stories in the paintings.
- Paint with kids. Ask kids to tell you the stories in their paintings.
- Draw pictures in the sand and tell sand stories.





# Telling Stories

*Children learn language from stories.*

## Ideas for families

- Talk to kids about the stories in paintings.
- Tell stories while you draw in the sand.
- Draw with kids. Talk about the pictures.
- Tell kids stories about when you were growing up.





# Pretend Reading is Practice Reading

*Children make up stories about pictures before they can read the words.*

## Ideas for families

- Show kids how to use books.
- Point to the pictures in books. Ask, “What’s happening here?”
- Listen to kids when they tell you stories about the pictures in books.
- Give kids picture books to pretend read.



# Reading Gives Information

*Kids learn that reading gives us information.*

## Ideas for families

- Use hand signs with kids. They are learning about communicating with symbols.
- Look at magazines and newspapers with kids. Talk about the pictures and the written information.
- Read posters around the community with kids.
- Look at food labels in the shop. The label tells us what is inside.





# Reading Helps Us

*Kids learn that reading can tell us how to do things.*

## Ideas for families

- Talk to kids about words that tell us what to do. Read labels on the medicine bottle. The words tell us how much medicine to take.
- Show kids the writing on the food packet. “The words tell us we need two cups of milk.”
- Look at a map and show kids where they live and places they know.
- Show kids signs around the community. “The sign tells us the shop is open.”



# Computers for Reading

*Kids learn that families find and read information from computers.*

## Ideas for families

- Kids see you using computers. Kids learn that computers are used for reading and writing.
- Read email messages to kids. Kids learn that words carry a message.
- Show kids the email messages you write. Kids learn that computers can send messages to people in other places.
- Look up things on the internet that your child is interested in.





# Mobile Phones

*Kids learn that families use reading and writing to send and get messages on their phone.*

## Ideas for families

- Let kids talk when family rings up. They learn about talking and listening.
- Read text messages to kids. Show them the text. They learn that letters carry messages.
- Talk about what you are doing on the phone. Kids like to have a turn.
- Show kids how you make letters and numbers on the screen.



# Talking About TV

*Talking with kids about what you watch on TV helps kids to think and learn.*

## Ideas for families

- Watch TV or DVD's with kids. Talk about what is happening.
- Ask questions about what you see on TV.
- Sing and dance to the songs.
- Practice the same songs and dances when the TV is off.

