

Pre-Reading Skills

Cognitive development during early childhood includes building skills such as pre-reading, language, vocabulary, which begins as soon as a child is born.

A child who enters school without these skills runs a significant risk of starting behind and staying behind.

The following are cognitive skills connected to reading for pre-school and games and activities to help your child develop these skills. These activities should continue even when your child begins to read;

Sustained Attention. If minds go wandering off partway through the word or between words, decoding is going to be impeded.

- ✓ Listening to you read a story helps with this
- ✓ Making a model together, e.g. Duplo/Lego
- ✓ Jigsaw puzzles
- ✓ Colouring in pictures

Many of the games below will also improve sustained attention

Auditory Discrimination. The ability to distinguish between similar sounds

- ✓ Listening for sounds: Sound walks. Have your child close their eyes and listen to environmental sounds around them. Sounds like cars, aeroplanes, animals, outside sounds, sounds in the next room etc.: ask them to name them
- ✓ Read a well-known story, but where similar sounding words are changed. Your child tells you when you've made a mistake. E.g. Goldilocks; once upon a time there were three *Chairs*, mummy bear, *baddy* bear and baby
- ✓ Finish my line; ask your child to finish the sentence of a popular children's songs, or nursery rhyme, e.g., "Twinkle, twinkle little..."
- ✓ Riddles – Says 'I'm thinking of a word that means unhappy, and it begins with sa...' etc. 'I'm thinking of a fruit that begins in gr'

- ✓ Which is the odd one out: cat, rat, sat, pit? Ship, shop, chip, shed? Men, ten, pen, bin? Then, them, pen, men?

Auditory Short-Term memory to remember sounds in order

- ✓ I went to the shops and bought a bike; the next person says I went to the shops and bought a bike and some grapes Etc... Could be 'I went on holiday and took', or 'I went to the café and ate'
- ✓ As above but you can ask your child to include descriptions. Adult: "We went to the zoo and saw an elephant eating peanuts." child: "We went to the zoo and saw an elephant eating peanuts and a zebra with stripes" etc.

(Just an extract of many activities)