How to Help

Direct children's attention to print by:

- **Pointing to words as you read**
- **Making comments about print**
  eg. "This says…."
- **Asking questions about print**
  eg. "Show me the word 'cat'."

This can be done as you **see print during the day**, for example pointing out the print you see on signs, boxes or packaging.

Book reading is a prime opportunity where adults can pay attention to print. Every time you read a book to a child, try to point out 3 or 4 things about print during the story.

Magnetic alphabet letters or alphabet blocks help children become familiar with letters, and with help they can learn to make simple words.

Talking about print during reading shows children that print is important and helps build early literacy skills.

References:

Ezell, H. & Justice, L. (2005). Shared storybook reading. Paul Brookes Publishing:

South Australian Department of Education & Children's Services

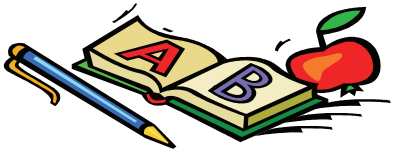
Talking Literacy Project, 2009 http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/svpst/pages/resources

Government of South Australia
Department of Education and Children's Services

Talking Literacy

Print Knowledge

Getting Ready for Reading & Writing

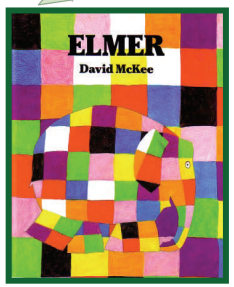


Research has shown that children who have a strong understanding of how print works do better learning to read and write in the early years of school. Knowledge about print can prepare children for a successful launch in to literacy.

Print knowledge is more than learning about letters. The brochure provides examples of important areas of print knowledge and ways to talk about them with children.

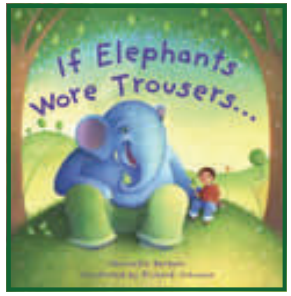
Knowing how books work

- **"This is the front cover of the book."**
- **"Here is the name of the book. 'Elmer' is the name of the book. The name of the book is called the title of the book."**
- **"This is the name of the person who wrote the book. David McKee, wrote the book. A person who writes a book is called an author."**



The reading direction

The reading direction is left to right. "I start reading here, and go this way. Then I go to the next line."



Moving through the book

"I read this page first, then I read this one next."

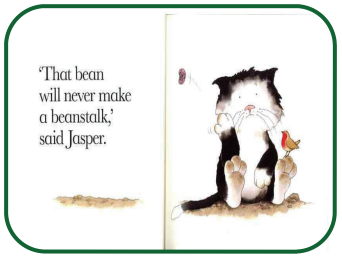
Knowing print has meaning

•Matching words to pictures

"There's a picture of a bean. Look, these letters spell the word 'bean'."

•Pointing out speech in text

"Here are the bird's words. He says 'Vroom-vroom, vroomy, vroom-vroom?' The bird's talk is in a speech bubble."



Knowing about letters

•Words are made up of letters

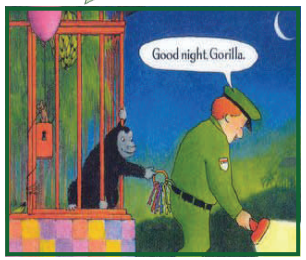
"Words are made up of letters. Let's count the number of letters in this word – 'hen' (point to the word) 1, 2, 3. There are 3 letters in this word."

•The first letter of their name

Focus on capital letters as names start with a capital letter. "I can see the letter G. This is a 'G' like the 'G' in your name, Gabby. The letter goes around, and up. Let's find another one. "

• Learn some letters of the alphabet

Choose a letter that appears several times at the beginning of a word throughout the book. Point out the letter several times as you read through the story. "We are going to look for the letter 'B' in this book. Here is the letter 'B'." As you read the story find 3 or 4 words with the letter 'B' and say, "Show me the letter 'B' in this word." Move the child's finger to the correct letter if they find this hard.

Look for the same letter in other places as well, not just books!

Choose a new letter when the child can easily find 'B'.