

Reading Is
Fundamental

Home-Visit Idea Guide

2012-2013

Section 1



Important Notes about this Guide

We want you to enjoy the RIF experience!

Remember, this handbook is a guide for the literacy component of your RIF session during home visits. Feel free to use as many or as few ideas as you desire. We understand that you may have other literacy plans for your families' needs and do not want to place restrictions. On the contrary, we would love for you to share your innovations with us.

Model your flexibility 😊

Your ability to be flexible with the books and/or presentations during your home visits makes you an excellent model for parents. It is wonderful for them to see that you can adapt your literacy time instead of forcing your way through an activity or book. Think outside of the box and identify your own ideas about how to engage children and their families around literacy building activities.

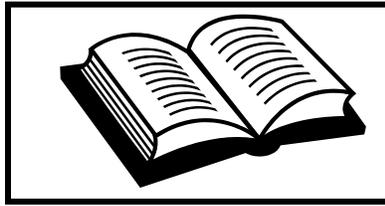
The motivational activities may be presented at many levels.

You may be presenting topics to parents from the prenatal stage through age 5. We know that every child grows at his or her own pace and that family circumstances vary greatly; so feel free to present the topics in the order that is suitable for your families. Modify the activities as needed. Remember, the most reliable indicator of any activity's appropriateness is the child's interest.

None of the motivational activities specifically address socio-economic or emotional topics or developmental stages.

There are simply too many possible scenarios and we know that you are very well equipped to help your families. However, you may choose to cover a topic such as welcoming a new family member or loss of a loved one, with a book that will help address this particular need. Please let us know if we can help with appropriate titles and we will do our best to have the special books on hand.





Reading Aloud: The Benefits

Reading Aloud...

- 📖 is the most effective early literacy activity a parent can share with their child.
- 📖 helps parent and child bond.
- 📖 presents a model of adults as readers.
- 📖 establishes reading as a source of enjoyment.
- 📖 develops the imagination.
- 📖 encourages conversation: listening, asking questions and problem solving.
- 📖 develops vocabulary.
- 📖 develops rhythm and rhyme.
- 📖 promotes exploration of sounds, letters, and words.
- 📖 teaches book concepts:
 - holding a book right side up,
 - turning pages from right to left,
 - identifying beginning and end,
 - recognizing that print holds meaning.
- 📖 inspires writing.
- 📖 allows children to compare themselves to characters, reflect on their own thoughts and feelings, and imagine how they would respond to a situation.

Reading Aloud: The Basic Process

1. Choose a book that is developmentally appropriate for the child.
2. Show the cover of the book to the child and read the title, author and illustrator. This is a great opportunity to explain what an author and illustrator do. If you use hand gestures as visual clues for these new vocabulary words, such as pretend writing with a pen or moving your arm in large strokes in the air, it is easier for the child to recall the meaning.
3. Feel free to talk about the cover illustrations and ask the child if they can predict what the story will be about.
4. Begin to read the story at a conversation pace so that children don't feel rushed. Use different character voices and inflections for entertainment purposes.



5. Ask questions during the story. This helps children become involved in the story.
 - a. **Knowledge questions:** These types of questions help children recall the basic facts of a story. Examples: “How many bears were in the story?” “Where did the bears live?”
 - b. **Understanding questions:** These types of questions help the child understand the story. Example: “Why did the bears go for a walk?”
 - c. **Creative thinking questions:** These types of questions encourage children to think creatively and to figure out how things might have turned out differently. They help stimulate children to solve problems, make judgments, categorize information, and think abstractly. Examples: “How do you think the story should end?” “Do you know anyone who is silly like that bear in the story?”
6. It is appropriate to read up to 3 books per session to preschoolers- 2 familiar books and 1 new book. This will be something a parent works up to. Children enjoy reading the same book over again and again. Children learn through repetition and they like the comfort that the routine and familiarity provide.



Reading Aloud: Extension Activities

1. **Predict what will happen:** Before reading a book, parent and child can look at the cover, or even through the whole book. The child can be asked to predict what will happen.
2. **Dramatize a story:** use gestures, puppets, or silly voices.
3. **Draw a picture:** Parents can ask their child to draw, or they can draw pictures together about: the story in general, their favorite part of the story or a certain character. Children should always be given the opportunity to tell the parent what their drawing is about.
4. **Imagine something new:** Parents can ask the child if they would like to change the ending of a story. Sometimes children like the story just the way it is. At other times they may like to change an event or the ending.
5. **Let the child “read” to you!** If the book is a favorite that has been read many times, the child probably asks parents to read it more than once. However, the parent can ask the child to “read” the book. Many parents will be surprised at how much of the story is known by heart.





Visiting the Public Library

It is one of our goals to open up the world of books to families. Exposing children and parents to the many services offered by local libraries, at no charge, can be life changing!

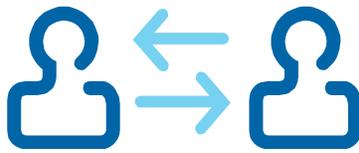
Presentation:

1. If possible, before visiting the family, check out a few books from the library to bring during your home visit.
2. Show the books to the children. Ask the parent if they have ever been to the Austin Public Library. Explain to them what the library experience is like. Also take time to explain how a librarian can help them and their family.
3. Demonstrate to the family how library books differ from their school or RIF books; show the special protective binding and classification system numbers on their spine for tracking.
4. Inform parents of the procedure for borrowing a book as well as library locations and hours. Explain to the parent that everyone is welcome to read books at the library and take advantage of library programs such as story-time. There is no need to have a card for these purposes.
5. Ask parent if they would like to request a library card and provide them with library handouts. Many of these forms can be found on the Austin Public Library website: <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/library>
6. Offer to help parents and their children complete the library card application form. Reassure parents that children of all ages and adults are welcome.
7. If it is feasible, meet the family at their local library branch. Give them a brief tour, assist them with any procedures, and help to ensure that they have a pleasant experience.

Families with low literacy levels may not feel comfortable going to a place like the library and may find it intimidating. The processes of obtaining a library card and checking out books may need to be explained thoroughly to them, and facilitated by a person they trust.

For more information, go to: <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/library/>





Talking and Listening to Children: The Benefits

Talking to babies (even before they're born)...

-  allows them to learn the sound and rhythm of voices now for an incredible language explosion later.
-  can be soothing to baby. Babies find familiar voices soothing and this helps form a stronger bond with the person who provides that comfort.
-  Helps them acquire language. Listening to adults speak stimulates the language-related areas of the brain.

Reading and Talking to Toddlers/Preschoolers...

-  helps develop speech sounds, vocabulary, and language structure. (Adults serve as language models.)
-  is calming for a child. Reading aloud to a child an early age, especially if it is associated with a peaceful, secure time of day, is beneficial. It begins to develop the child's attention span.
-  instills rhymes, poems and songs in the child's memory and provides the perfect bridge between speaking and reading.
-  improves a child's memory, vocabulary, and sequencing skills. Each time a story is read a new bit of meaning is collected. Often misunderstandings can be sorted out by repeated readings.

Talking and Listening to Children: Activities

1. **Play Peek-A-Boo:** A game of Peek-a-Boo is always fun for the young child and you can use a singing game to engage babies that cannot speak yet.

"Where is Baby?" (tune of "Where is Thumbkin?")

Where is Emily? Where is Emily?

Where are you? Where are you?

Cover up your eyes, now,

Give us a surprise, now,

Peek-a-Boo! Peek-a-Boo!

(Point to child.)

(Use both hands to cover eyes.)

(Lift hands off eyes.)





2. **Puppet Talk:** Babies believe in everybody and everything! They believe in a puppet who says it is bedtime, or it's time to eat. Use a puppet to help you to tell stories, strike up conversations, or read books aloud.

- a. Find a mismatched sock.
- b. Slide the sock on one hand.
- c. Pencil in the eyes, nose, and mouth. You can add ears, eyebrows, hair, etc.
- d. Go over the pencil marks with colorful markers.(A Sharpie works well)
- e. Create a "special voice" for the puppet.

****Do not use buttons or other things that a baby can pull off and choke on.*

Things puppets can do:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| *Hide under blanket | *Soothe scary situations |
| *Turn pages of a book | *Feed the baby |
| *Help pick up toys | *Give noisy/loud kisses |

This activity also works with a "pre-made" stuffed animal. ☺

3. **Naming Things:** The world is new to babies. They need their parents to teach them the name of absolutely everything! When we point to something and say its name, we are teaching the baby a new word. The more they point and say, the more words babies will understand and begin to use.

This activity can be done with a book (of course!) With infants, parent should try to use a book that has only one to two pictures per page. If the object being named in the book is also in the room, encourage the parent to point to the object there as well and repeat the name. Try naming things in other places too – at the grocery store, on the bus, at the doctor's office, etc. As a child gets older, post-it notes can be used to label familiar objects with the words that name them. This will help a child make a connection between spoken words and print.

4. **Album Story Telling:** Ask the parent to pull out a family album and tell stories to their child about their childhood, family members, or holiday gatherings. The parent can also tell stories about the child from the child's own photo album. This allows the child to recall memories and join in the story telling.



5. **Listening Snack:** Listening is important for enjoyment of stories, but also for following directions. This activity is hands-on, requires keen listening, and makes a tasty treat! Have parent say simple instructions so that the child can produce a snack. It is helpful if some prep is done beforehand and items are easily available on a table or countertop.

Ants on a Log

- Place a celery stick on a plate.
- Scoop out a spoonful of peanut butter.
- Spread peanut butter into the hollow part of the celery.
- Sprinkle raisins on top.
- Eat your creation

6. **This Is the Way I Wash My Face:** Every child has routines, parents can sing during daily routines to make normal everyday tasks more fun. Try this idea:

Tune is “Here We Go ‘Round the Mulberry Bush”

This is the way I wash my face,
wash my face,
wash my face.
This is the way I wash my face,
so early in the morning.

Other Examples:

This is the way you brush your teeth...
This is the way I drink my milk...
This is the way we buckle you up . . .

7. **I Spy:** This categorizing game can be played anytime-while taking a walk, waiting in the doctor’s office, or at the grocery store. Parents can talk to their children about the different ways to sort or categorize things in their surroundings. For this simple version of I Spy, decide on a category; then see how many things everyone playing can spot.

For infants: colors, shapes

For toddlers: flowers, animals, flags, street signs

For preschoolers: trucks, boots, trees, letters, numbers



I spy a bicycle!

