

# The Importance of Literacy Development in Early Years

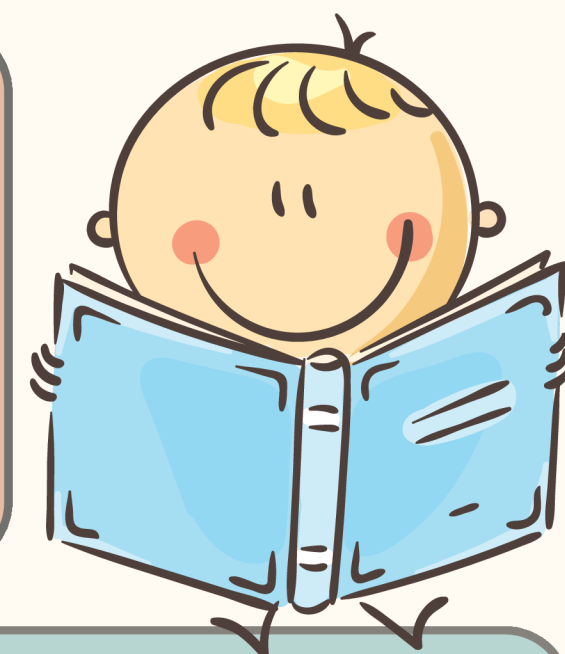


## The Foundations of Literacy:

Strong communication and language skills are the building blocks of literacy. High-quality interactions, like sharing stories and rhymes, are crucial for developing these foundational skills. Shared reading, in particular, exposes children to rich vocabulary and **complex language structures**, supporting their comprehension and critical thinking abilities.

## The Role of Home and School:

At home support plays a vital role in literacy development. However, for children who lack access to resources at home, the quality of the early years curriculum becomes even more critical in their life. Practitioners must ensure **opportunities for engagement** with books and language-rich activities.



## Long-Term Benefits:

Early literacy has many benefits, including improved academic ability, mental well-being, and **social-emotional development**. A well-developed vocabulary is linked to positive outcomes across the curriculum.



## Preparing for Reading and Writing:

Early literacy is about building foundational skills, not pushing formal instruction before children are ready. Developing spoken language, **phonological awareness** and print awareness are key.



## The Power of Play and Interaction:

Play provides a natural context for language and literacy development. Role-play areas and imaginative activities offer opportunities to use and expand vocabulary. **Back-and-forth conversations** with adults further enhance language skills and confidence.



## Fostering a Love of Books:

Inspiring a love of reading is a crucial goal. High-quality books that reflect diversity, along with shared book reading, can foster this love and help children **understand the connection** between print & spoken language.



Key messages for practitioners include **prioritising meaningful interactions**, using rich vocabulary, and modelling active listening to foster communication skills. Inspire a love of books through diverse selections and **engaging shared reading**. Focus on foundational skills before formal literacy tasks. Support parents with resources and guidance. Create a **language-rich environment** and utilise play. Monitor progress and adapt strategies to meet individual needs.