

Canyons School District



Schools and Parents Supporting

# Future Success

Collaborative Effort

Positive Outcomes

Canyons School District Evidence-Based Learning Department  
9150 South 500 West Sandy, Utah 84070

# Parent Letter

Parents,



The activities in this booklet are designed to support growth and development that will enable your child to be successful in kindergarten. These short activities can be done each day in a fun, positive and game-like way.

All activities should be done together, adult and child. Keep in mind that all children develop at different rates. Some activities might be challenging for your child. If your child is unsure of a concept, encourage them to keep trying. You might comment on what they were able to do, then ask if you can have a turn. You can then show your child how to do the activity. Always end by saying, "Your turn," allowing your child to try the new skill after you have shown him/her how to do it. The most important thing to remember is to keep your comments positive and specific to their accomplishments. This way, you will build your child's confidence to continue trying until the skill is mastered. Remember to utilize the **More For 4** Checklist as a visual reminder of skills that can be added into your daily routines and eventually celebrated when mastered.

If your child struggles with these concepts, it does **NOT** mean that he/she isn't ready for kindergarten. Instead it simply means more practice is helpful and that your child will master these concepts **IN** kindergarten.

More for 4 is meant to be collaborative effort between parents and Canyons District schools. By working together we can ensure future success for your children, our students.

**Canyons School District Evidence-Based Learning Department**

# Self-Help Skills

- I can eat independently.
- I can use the restroom independently.
- I can remove outerwear (coats, gloves).
- I can clean up after myself.
- I am curious to try new things.



# Self-Help Skills

I can eat independently



- Provide your child with a variety of foods that require the use of a spoon (thick soup, ice cream, cereal), and a fork (cooked meats, vegetables, potatoes). Practice will make this easy!
- Activity 1:
  - At mealtime, engage in conversation with your child. Topics of conversation could include events of the day, interests of your child, or any upcoming events. Encourage your child to do things for themselves such as pouring, serving their own plate, and using the appropriate utensils.



# Self-Help Skills

I can remove outerwear

- Sometimes students struggle with zippers, snaps, buttons, and clasps. When your child gets to school each morning, he or she will be expected to remove their coats and backpacks and hang them up. Practicing all kinds of fasteners will make this task faster and easier.
  - Activity 1: The Laundry Game
    - While folding laundry, ask your child to zip, snap, button and fasten the clothes, then hand them to you to be folded. Take the opportunity to have conversations around colors, sizes and shapes of the clothing. This activity provides lots of practice!
    - When getting dressed, your child will now have to unzip, unbutton, unsnap, etc., before dressing. Before you know it, your child will be more independent!



# Self-Help Skills

I can clean up after myself



- Kindergarten students use lots of supplies like glue, scissors, crayons, and pencils. Part of a kindergarten routine is cleaning up after an activity. This is an important skill that supports literacy and numeracy.
  - Activity 1: Play the Clean Up Game!
    - Whenever your child plays with toys, helps you cook, works on a project, or cleans his or her room, you can support them by talking about/showing where items go. Praise them for putting things away in the right place. Labeling your child's room supports this skill.
    - Tell your child what you expect ("The toys all need to go in the basket, ready, set, go!") rather than asking them to perform a task ("Will you put the toys in the basket for me?")



# Self-Help Skills

I am curious to try new things

- Kids are naturally curious. However, some of them are also very cautious. Trying new things can be intimidating for them. In kindergarten, your child will experience new things every day. Encouraging them to try new things at home and in the community can help prepare them for the kindergarten experience.
- Activity 1: I Like New Things!
  - Encourage your child to sample new foods, one bite at a time. Praise them for taking that first bite and spend time talking about the taste, texture, likes and dislikes of the food.
  - Encourage your child to do new things. If you already read a favorite book every night, reward them for choosing a different one. The reward could be that favorite book the next night!
  - Talk to your child about new things. The more they know, the less fearful they tend to be. Make connections to things they are comfortable with like “We are going to a new store today. What do you think it will be like?” Or “Tonight we are going to make chicken a new way. What do think it will taste like?” and, “Would you like to help?”



# Self-Help Skills

I can use the restroom independently

- Your child will feel a sense of accomplishment if he or she can:
  - Use the toilet without help
  - Wash hands without help
  - Leave the bathroom clean for the next child
  - Activity 1: Teach your child how to do each of these tasks. If needed, take pictures of what each task looks like...with your child doing it. Make comments about their accomplishments reminding them how independent they are becoming.
  - Activity 2: Teach your child how to do each of these tasks. Use a chore chart to record when your child accomplishes them. Reward with stickers, smiley faces and/or praise.



# Social/Emotional Skills

- I listen while others speak.
- I show concern for others.
- I share materials and take turns.
- I persist in completing tasks.



# Social/Emotional Skills

I listen while others speak

- Listening skills are very important in kindergarten. Students need to listen to the teacher, the playground aide, the bus driver, the principal, etc. Listening skills make learning new things easier.
- Children show that they are listening by:
  - Looking at the person who is speaking to them
  - Responding to questions
  - Asking questions



# Social/Emotional Skills

## I listen while others speak

### ■ Activity 1: Follow the Leader

- Play this version of “Follow the Leader “with your child.
  - Get down to your child’s level and give eye contact.
  - Tell your child you are going to play a listening game to find hidden treasures.
  - Get eye contact from your child by saying, “You have to look at me when I give you the clues.”
  - Begin giving one step directions such as, “The first treasure is behind the rocking chair. “
  - Your child retrieves the object and waits for the next direction. Repeat the procedure. In addition, let them be the leader and give you directions to find the hidden treasure.
  - Comment on what your child is doing to listen. For example, “You looked right at me that time!” or “You knew right where it was, because you listened.”



# Social/Emotional Skills

I show concern for others



- Children get along much better and are better liked by their peers when they can empathize with each other. They learn how to do this by watching you!
- Children should not be expected to **do** this at the age of four! However, they can **begin to learn** how to empathize at this age.



# Social/Emotional Skills

## I share materials and take turns

- Teaching a preschooler how to share something they don't want to give up can be a daunting task, but it can be done!
  - Activity 1: Prepare a snack for yourself and offer your child some of the snack. Ask him or her what they have shared recently. Talk about how it felt to make someone else happy.
  - Activity 2: Do you have a good set of markers that you usually don't share with your child? Let him or her draw a picture with them, then discuss why it was hard for you to share and why you are glad you did.
  - Activity 3: Model sharing with others. Share things with your spouse or partner and draw attention to the action. "Thanks, Daddy, for sharing your popcorn with me. I love it when we can share a snack together."
  - Model how to show concern by being calm and supportive when your child is upset.
  - When your child is upset label their emotion: "You are sad. When I am sad...."
  - Practice in pretend play how to comfort one another.
  - Display positive emotions at home. Let your children see they can rely on you for positive emotional support.



# Social/Emotional Skills

## I persist in completing tasks

- Children tend to give up easily when presented with a difficult task. Sometimes, it is much easier to do something for them rather than watch them struggle. However, when we guide our children through the steps, we are helping them be more self-sufficient and supporting their development. Here are some ideas for helping kids to not give up:
  - Break the hard task down into smaller parts. Have your child perform the easier parts of the task without help. When they need help, ask if you can show them, then let them try. Coach them verbally through the task if possible, giving them suggestions on how you handle the task. Comment on what they accomplish with or without your help, such as “You did it! You put everything away!”
  - Let your child watch you do something that is hard. Talk to them about why you wanted to give up, why you didn’t give up, and how it felt to accomplish something on your own.
  - Give lots of encouragement for each part of a task a child completes.



# Social/Emotional Skills

## I persist in completing tasks

- Activity 1: Teaching your child to persist when doing something difficult.
- Pick a task that you and your child agree upon that you can break down into smaller parts. Celebrate as he/she is able to complete each small task to get to the larger task. Point out and celebrate that they did not give up, that they accomplished the small and large tasks all on their OWN!



# Small Motor Skills

- I can hold pencils, crayons correctly.
- I hold scissors correctly.
- I can build with blocks.
- I can make objects with play dough.
- I can put together simple puzzles.



# Small Motor Skills

I can hold pencils, crayons correctly.



**ACTIVITY 1:** Just as any muscle needs to be strengthened, the small muscles in a preschooler's hands need to be strengthened. Show your child how to hold a pencil and crayon. Drawing and coloring are wonderful ways to practice holding a pencil and crayon to strengthen small motor skills. If your child uses a palm grasp when using pencils or crayons, he/she needs to strengthen his or her small and large motor muscles.

For small motor: Use squirt bottles outside or in the bath tub, Tear pictures of items out of the weekly circulars you receive in the mail. Use a variety of tools to create, draw, glue, and build. HAVE FUN!!

For large motor: Play "wheel barrow" races or practice drawing large circles in the air. This will strengthen the shoulder, which in turn strengthens the hands.

**ACTIVITY 2:** Play example/non example of how to hold a pencil and crayon. Young children enjoy "helping" their parents to hold the crayon or pencil the right way.



# Small Motor Skills

I can hold scissors correctly.



**ACTIVITY 1:** Just as with holding a pencil or crayon, preschoolers need to build up their strength for using scissors. Show your child how to hold scissors. Begin by standing behind your child assisting him/her to cut scratch paper. As you cut the paper with the scissors say, “Open, shut, open shut, open, shut.” This will help your child understand that the opening and closing of the scissors is what cuts the paper.

**ACTIVITY 2:** Discuss that scissors are for cutting paper ONLY. Begin by having your child cut pictures out of a magazine or catalog that interests them. Encourage them to create a story, or create a paper house with a couch, lamps, pictures, etc. When your child is able to carefully cut around items, this skill will be mastered!



# Small Motor Skills

I can build with blocks.

**ACTIVITY 1:** Make building with blocks a fun activity that you and your child can do together. Stacking, lining blocks up, and creating buildings and bridges strengthen small motor skills in a fun way. Build a house/garage/castle/barn/grocery store. Decorate with all the items cut out from the catalog/magazines from the previous activity.

**ACTIVITY 2:** Discuss which blocks are bigger, smaller, taller. Ask, “What are you building and how”? “Who will live in your building”? “What kinds of cars or trucks will drive across your bridge”? “I notice that you are making a tall building.....” Pause and allow your child to tell you in complete sentences about what/how they are building. Say, “Tell me about your building/road.” Conversation is key!



# Small Motor Skills

I can build with blocks.



Remember to build **WITH** your child and let them tell you about what they are building. Allow them to take the lead in the conversation.



# Small Motor Skills

I can make objects with play dough.

**ACTIVITY 1:** Make snakes, bird nests, people, and other objects with play dough **WITH** your child. A small rolling pin and cookie cutters can also be used to create fun objects. One great activity is to create a variety of pizzas, such as a blueberry-spaghetti pizza or a pepperoni – chicken nugget pizza. Engage in conversations about how to create your child's idea of pizzas. Discuss shapes, actions and colors. Don't be afraid to **MIX** the play dough!

**ACTIVITY 2:** Follow the recipes on the next page and make home-made salt play dough and **EDIBLE** peanut butter play dough. The peanut butter play dough can be eaten after you and your child are finished molding it into objects.



# Small Motor Skills

I can make objects with play dough.



## Play Dough (not edible)

Boil 2 cups water.

Add and mix  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup salt, 1 tbsp. oil,

1 tbsp. alum & a few drops of food coloring.

Mix well and add 2 cups flour. Let cool and knead.



## EDIBLE Peanut Butter Play Dough

2 cups peanut butter

3 tbsp. honey

2 cups powdered milk

Combine ingredients in a medium-size bowl. If it is too sticky, add more powdered milk, one tablespoon at a time. Make sure children wash hands before playing with and eating this one!

# Math Skills

- I can count to ten.
- I can create groups of up to five objects.
- I can place like items together (red cars and blue cars).
- I can identify and name the shapes (circle, triangle, etc.)



# Math Skills

## I Can Count to Ten

### ACTIVITY 1



Take opportunities each day to count while doing activities such as walking up the stairs, cleaning up toys, or setting out clothing to wear. This is a great time to count the clothing. Find opportunities in every day life to count objects and make it fun!

### ACTIVITY 2:

- Sing or chant songs “One potato, two potato...” or “One, two, buckle my shoe...”
- Read number books and count the items on each page.
- Count the dots on dominoes.

# Math Skills

I can identify and name the shapes (circle, triangle, etc.).

**ACTIVITY 3:** Show your child the shapes and name them.

Repeat as needed. Use shape “vocabulary” when you are doing errands together. For example, comment on environmental items such as “Those lights on the ceiling look like rectangles” or “That sign has four sides, just like a square.”

**ACTIVITY 4:** Ask your child to name shapes. Play “I Spy” and have your child identify objects in the home, yard, or while riding in the car that have certain shapes. To make it simpler, create a paper circle, square, triangle, and rectangle. Use it as a model for them to match to the real items.

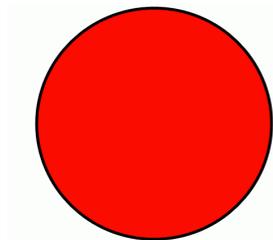
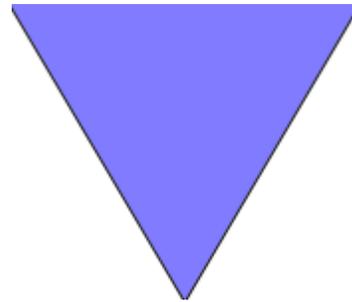
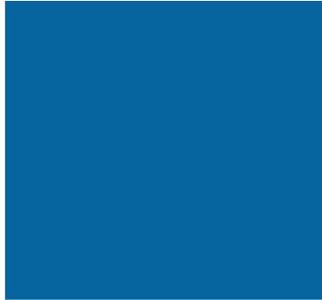


# Math Skills

I can identify and name the shapes (circle, triangle, etc.).



Name the shapes



# Math Skills

I can place like items together (red cars and blue cars).



**ACTIVITY 5:** Show your child how to place like items together (red cars and blue cars). Find items around the house to group together. This could happen in the kitchen...sorting all the utensils, or matching socks from the laundry. Comment on similarities and differences.

## **Ways preschoolers can sort and match:**

- Exact matching: all red cars
- Similar characteristics: things made of paper
- Sorting into 2 categories: things that roll, things that don't roll

# Math Skills

I can place like items together (all red cars and all blue cars).



# Math Skills

I can create groups of up to five objects.



**ACTIVITY 5:** Show your child how to create groups of up to five objects. The objects can be stickers, toys, macaroni, socks or other items around the house. In conversation, ask for a quantity of items you may need during an activity. For example, “I need four more spoons on the table.”

**Example of a group of five**



# Language Skills

- I can speak in complete sentences.
- I listen and respond to stories and books.
- I express my feelings and ideas.
- I respond when spoken to.



# Language Skills

I can listen and respond to stories and books.



**ACTIVITY 1:** Say, "I am going to tell you a story, and I want you to listen to it. When you hear the name of a color, point to the color."

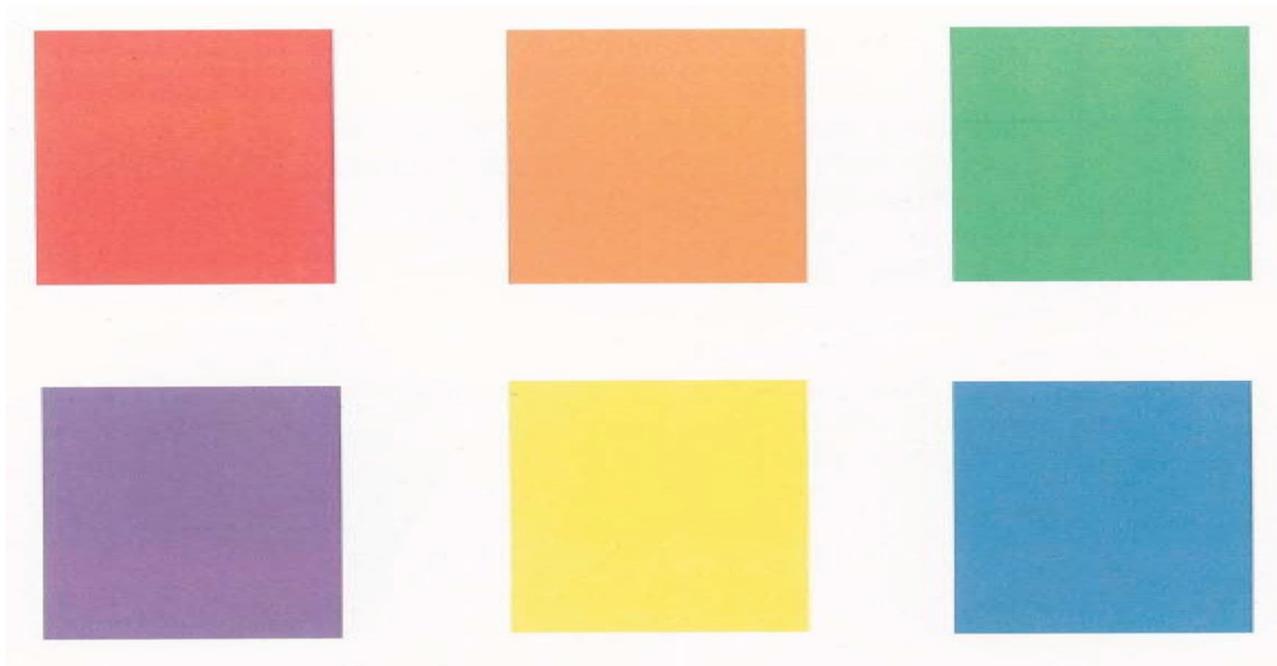
READ: Ann and Jim were walking in the woods. Ann was wearing PURPLE shoes. *Tell me what color shoes Ann was wearing? Have your child repeat "Ann was wearing PURPLE shoes" while pointing to the correct color. Continue questioning throughout the story.* Jim wore GREEN shoes. The YELLOW sun made the children happy. The BLUE sky did not have any clouds in it. There was a RED bird, a butterfly with BLUE spots, and a fuzzy ORANGE caterpillar. They picked some YELLOW tulips, PURPLE roses, RED poppies and GREEN leaves to take home.

**ACTIVITY 2:** Tell me which is your favorite color. Can you think of some things that are your favorite color? Tell me a story about YOUR favorite color.

# Language Skills

I can listen and respond to stories and books.

Colors



# Literacy Skills

- I can identify 10 or more letters of the alphabet, especially those in my name.
- I use pictures or inventive spelling to “write” stories and ideas.
- I use real or made-up letters to “write” stories and ideas.
- My vocabulary includes color words, body parts, and positional words (e.g., in/out).
- I can identify signs, symbols, or logos.
- Phonological awareness: I can clap or count how many words are in a sentence.
- I can clap how many syllables are in words (especially family names).



# Literacy Skills

I can identify 10 or more letters of the alphabet, especially those in my name.



**ACTIVITY 1:** Talk about letters all the time. Point out letters in the environment, such as “The letter S in the stop sign is just like the letter in your name.”

Point out that the child's name is made up of letters of the alphabet, and when we put them together they spell a word. Point out that some upper-case letters are printed just the same as the lower-case letters, only bigger (C, c; S, s; O, o; V, v; W, w; Z, z).

**ACTIVITY 2:** If your child is ready for more, you can follow up by printing other family members' names, noting upper-case letters at the beginning of each name. If the same letter repeats itself in a name, point out the different shapes of upper-case versus lower-case letters.

# Literacy Skills

I can identify 10 or more letters of the alphabet, especially those in my name.

My Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mom: \_\_\_\_\_

Dad: \_\_\_\_\_



# Literacy Skills

I can identify 10 or more letters of the alphabet, especially those in my name.

Begin teaching the letters in your child's name

A a B b C c D d E e F f G g  
H h I i J j K k L l M m N n  
O o P p Q q R r S s T t U u  
V v W w X x Y y Z z



# Literacy Skills

I can identify 10 or more letters of the alphabet, especially those in my name.



**ACTIVITY 1:** Read the book “Chicka, Chicka Boom Boom,” about all the letters of the alphabet leaving and coming back. Talk about the letters in your child’s name and how they climb the coconut tree. An extension activity would be to not finish the end of the book and tell them all the letters landed in the newspaper/magazine and your job together is to find as many as you can to bring them back. Label and discuss each letter you find.

**ACTIVITY 2:** Help your child make letters from clay or cookie dough. This can also be done with pancake batter, wet spaghetti noodles, or play dough.

# Literacy Skills

I can identify 10 or more letters of the alphabet, especially those in my name.



**ACTIVITY 3:** Create a pair of binoculars by gluing two toilet paper rolls together. Punch holes in the tubes and attach a piece of string or yarn to make a strap to hang around the child's neck. Have your child look for the letters in his/her environment. (You may point out that sometimes the letters "a" and "g" are printed differently than the one he/she learned). Reading the letters and numbers on license plates and road signs provides practice with both letter and number recognition. Point out that the letters on license plates are all upper-case.



# Literacy Skills

I use real or made-up letters to “write” stories and ideas.



**ACTIVITY 1:** Children will make scribbles first, then shapes, then approximations to letters, and then true letters. This is a process that should be honored. When the child begins to print made-up letters, point out that the letters are made by making sticks and circles. Model how the letters in their names are made by sticks and circles. DO NOT use lined paper when a child is just beginning the proper formation of a letter. A child who learns to correctly create his/her writing on blank paper transfers easily to lined paper.



**ACTIVITY 2:** Encourage students to “write” their stories or ideas down on paper. Young children’s stories can consist of pictures, made-up letters, real letters or a combination of all three. Encourage opportunities to write, such as making a grocery list, or writing a story with a sequence of beginning, middle and end. Praise your child for getting his/her stories down on paper. **DO NOT** focus on correct spelling at this point. Correct spelling will come later, at the end of kindergarten.



# Literacy Skills

I can identify signs, symbols, or logos.



**ACTIVITY 1:** Using the signs on the following page, tell your child you are going to read some sentences to him/her to see if he/she can point to the correct sign.

READ:

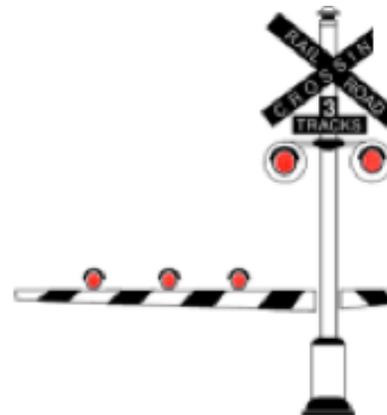
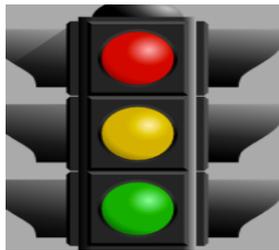
- This sign tells drivers to stop.
- This sign tells boys and girls where to walk safely to school.
- This sign warns drivers that trains may come down the train track and to watch out for them.
- This sign tells us a train is coming.
- This sign tells us not to go in this area.
- This traffic light tells people to stop, go, or slow down.

# Literacy Skills

I can identify signs, symbols, or logos.



Examples



# Literacy Skills

I can identify signs, symbols, or logos.

**ACTIVITY 1:** Ask your child, “Can you tell me which restaurant or store this logo stands for?” Tell your child that it is like **reading** when you can look at a sign or logo and you know which store or restaurant it is.

**ACTIVITY 2:** While driving in your car, play “I Spy.” See who can find the most signs and logos and identify which stores, teams or restaurants they represent.



# Literacy Skills

I can identify signs, symbols, or logos.



Examples



# Literacy Skills

Phonological awareness: I can clap or count how many words are in a sentence.

**ACTIVITY 1:** While reading your child's favorite story, choose a short sentence and count/clap the **words** in the sentence.

**ACTIVITY 2:** During everyday conversations, count/clap how many words are in your sentences. "Can I go to grandma's house"? Count 6 words with your child.



# Literacy Skills

Phonological awareness: I can clap or count how many words are in a sentence.



**ACTIVITY 3:** Read the following sentences to your child. Clap out how many words are in the sentences.

**The little girl was looking for her cat.**

**Did her cat get lost in the park?**

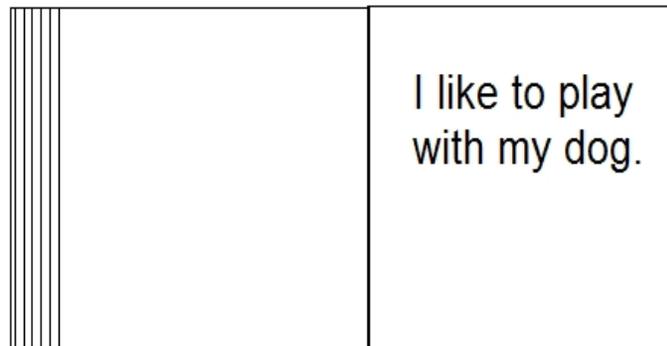


# Literacy Skills

Phonological awareness: I can clap or count how many words are in a sentence.



**ACTIVITY 4:** Now pick up a children's book (perhaps one you have been reading aloud with your child). Find two or three short sentences, and repeat clapping how many words are in a few sentences.



# Literacy Skills

I can clap how many syllables are in words (especially family names).



**ACTIVITY 1:** Say: “Now we’re going to play a game.” Point to the child’s, mom’s or dad’s name. Clap the syllables in each person’s name. Count how many syllables are in each person’s name.

For example: Su – san has 2 syllables or Al – li – son has 3 syllables

**ACTIVITY 2:** Tell your child that hearing syllables in words is fun! Be sure he/she understands the concept of clapping and counting one, two and three-syllables in words. For example you can say, “Listen to this word, hopping (clap the syllables), bopping (clap the syllables) stopping (clap the syllables). How many syllables did these words have?” For even more fun, make up silly rhymes using the child’s name, such as Joshua, boshua, foshua, or Emma, temma, lemma. Count the syllables of the silly rhymes of names as well.

**ACTIVITY 3:** Clap out the syllables in these words:

apple	rabbit	bug
sun	volcano	kangaroo
pickle	umbrella	elephant

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