

READY FOR SCHOOL IN DERBYSHIRE

The 10 keys to unlocking school readiness*

- I can settle happily without my parent/carer
- I can talk to friends and grown-ups about what I need
- I can take turns and share when I am playing
- I can go to the toilet on my own and wash my hands
- I can put on my own coat and shoes and feed myself
- I can tell a grown up if I am happy, sad or cross
- I know that what I do and say can make others happy or unhappy
- I am curious and want to learn and play
- I can stop what I am doing, listen and follow simple instructions.
- I enjoy sharing books with grown-ups and talk about them

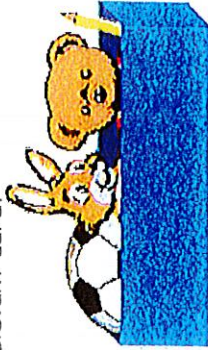
*If a child is developing typically for their age

'What does it start with?' Box

You will need:

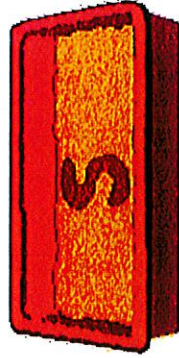
- ♦ A box
- ♦ Several items each beginning with a different sound
- ♦ Corresponding letter cards

This game is similar to the common objects game on the previous page, but the emphasis now is on recognising the sounds the letters make. Ask your child to choose an object from the box, to think what its first sound is (remember it is the sound you are looking for rather than the alphabet name) and then to match the object with the relevant card.



Sand Tray or Finger Paints

Children enjoy writing letters with their fingers in a tray of sand or with finger paints. These ways provide good opportunities to teach correct letter formation.



Sentence Games

This activity is quite useful when your child has been given an early reading book. Quite often parents say "He's not reading the book. He's remembering the story off by heart". This can happen. Some children become over-dependent on the picture clues and do not look for clues from the words.

Making Sentences

Read the book with your child so he/she is familiar with the story. Then simply use the first sentence from the reading book and copy it out on a strip of paper. Either write it out or if you use a word processor use a font such as Century Gothic (font size 36 at least). Leave a double space in between each word. Now cut up the sentence into the individual words. For example:



Ask your child to make the sentence, "This is a dog.", using the individual words. At first you will probably need to help. When he/she has made the sentence ask your child to read it to you and encourage him/her to point to each word with a finger.

Retain interest by only spending a few minutes a day on the activity. If your child makes a mistake do not say "That's wrong" immediately, because negative comments discourage. Ask your child to read the sentence and mistakes will often be self-corrected. If not, you can give clues such as, "What sound does **dog** start with?" If your child is still unable to read it, say positive comments such as "What a good try. You got all these right and only this part wrong. Well done." Then show your child the correct order.

We recommend working on a maximum of five sentences on each reading book.

If you require further information or advice please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher.

Hasland Infant and
Nursery School

Learning Through
Play

Letters and Sounds



Why begin Teaching Reading through Games?

It is vital that early reading experiences are happy and positive. The aim should be not just for children to learn to read, but to enjoy reading. Whilst games may appear to be an indirect approach, they do protect a child from a feeling of failure. By 'playing together' both parent and child are relaxed. Where a child could feel pressured in a formal teaching situation he/she will usually enjoy reading activities in a 'play' situation. This leaflet aims to give you simple ideas to try. Also remember that singing action songs and Nursery rhymes is a fundamental part of the process and so important at this stage.

The Sounds of Letters

Tips for teaching your child the sounds:

- ♦ It is important for a child to learn lower case or small letters rather than capital letters at first. Most early books and games use lower case letters and your child will learn these first at school. Obviously you should use a capital letter when required, such as at the beginning of the child's name, eg. Paul.
- ♦ When you talk about letters to your child, remember to use the letter sounds: a buh cuh duh e ... rather than the alphabet names of the letters: ay bee see dee ee. The reason for this is that sounding out words is practically impossible if you use the alphabet names. eg. cat, would sound like: see ay tee
- ♦ When saying the sounds of b, d, g, j and w you will notice the 'uh' sound which follows each, for example buh, duh... try always to emphasise the main letter sound only.

Sound Games to Play at Home...

Common Objects

Collect several objects that begin with the same sound and make a card with this letter sound on it. Make a second group of objects beginning with a different sound and a card to go with those.

Discuss the sounds of the letters on the two cards with your child and shuffle the objects. Separate the cards on the floor and ask your child to put each object near the sound that it starts with. This activity can help your child to "hear" the first sound of a word.

Odd-one Out

Say a number of words, all but one of which begin with the same sound. See if your child can pick out the odd one. It can be helpful to have the corresponding objects there for the child to look at.

I-Spy

For small children the usual way of playing that starts 'I spy with my little eye something that begins with ...' can be too difficult. You can make this easier by providing a clue. 'I spy with my little eye something that barks and begins with d'.

Sounds Scrapbook

Write a letter at the top of each page of a scrapbook. Concentrating on a few letters at a time collect pictures of objects that begin with those letters. Do not use as examples words where the first sound does not make its normal sound such as in giraffe, ship, cheese, thumb. Stick the pictures on the appropriate pages.

Games For Recognising Letter Shapes...

Fishing for Sounds

You will need a few cards with individual letters. Attach a paper clip to each card. Using a small stick with a string and magnet, your child fishes for letter sounds. If your child can say the sound of the letter he/she wins the card, otherwise you win it.

Sequencing the Letters in your Child's Name

Providing the individual letter cards for each letter of your child's first name can be a useful way to teach the sequence of letters. Remember you will need to write a capital for the first letter and lower case for the rest.

If you want to print out the cards using a word processor use a font such as Century Gothic on PC which has a not a. Show your child how to make the name first, before shuffling the cards for him/her to have a try. For a very long name work with the first few and build up a letter at a time.

Skill 4

The number of objects is the same however they are arranged.

Ordering Numbers

Make some cards with numbers on one side and the corresponding number of spots on the reverse.

Lay the cards out with the spotted sides upwards and ask your child to put them in order.



It is important that he or she can recognise the number of objects **however they are arranged**. Using the cards theme, you can represent some numbers with different patterns of spots. Ask your child to match the cards with the same number of spots. Take the opportunity also, to arrange everyday items in different formations, for your child to count.

Estimating

Developing the ability to estimate is also a useful skill. Asking a child to guess how many items are on a tray will help to develop this. Always count them out together afterwards, so that the child can see how close he or she was.

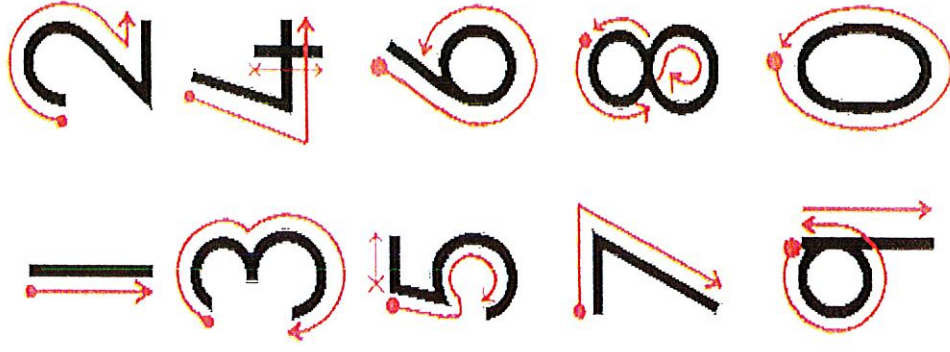
Recognising the Symbols

A fun way to help recognition of numbers is to select a few number cards. Take one from the pile without letting your child see it. Ask him or her to guess which one you have as you gradually expose the number from behind a screen (eg. a book). If your child guesses wrongly explain what the number is. Introduce a few numbers at first and build up slowly.

Number Formation Guide

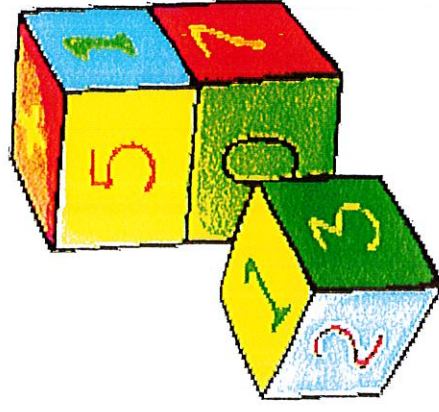
Encourage your child to form numbers in the standard way. Bad habits are difficult to break, so following our simple guide can help to prevent problems at a later stage

Spots indicate the starting position of the pencil. The pencil should remain on the paper, following the arrows. For the numbers four and five, the pencil must be raised before completing the second part of each number. Crosses indicate the second starting positions.



Learning through Play

Numbers



Introduction

Numbers can provide a lot of entertainment for small children. They first become aware of the sounds of numbers, then they begin to understand what they mean. Finally they need to recognise them when they are written down. There are **four main skills** that children need to develop before they can count. Follow the links to see these explained and how you can help.

1. Recognition of the sounds of the numbers.
2. The understanding of one-to-one correspondence.
3. The understanding of "How many are there?"
4. The number of objects is the same however they are arranged.

The next stage is for your child to recognise numbers as symbols which can taught by playing number recognition games.

Once children recognise numbers they will want to start writing them themselves. To help encourage them to form their numbers correctly, use our number formation guide. (found at the back of this leaflet)

Skill 1

Children need to learn the sounds of the numbers 'one, two, three...'

Children can start to recognise the sound of numbers from an early age if they hear number songs and rhymes and hear people counting. Some examples of rhymes are:

Five currant buns in the baker's shop
1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Once I caught a fish alive
Five fat sausages frying in a pan
1 potato, 2 potato, 3 potato, 4

Books and stories that include numbers can help too. At story time make a point of counting the characters and the key items in the pictures. Some examples of books are:

Goldilocks and the Three Bears
The Three Billy Goats Gruff
The Very Hungry Caterpillar
The Three Little Pigs

These will give reinforcement to the sound of counting and with it the fact that numbers relate to different amounts. Children will then start to notice numbers in speech and begin to develop an understanding of how they are used.

The children may even be able to count by reciting the numbers from 1 - 10, but this has little meaning at this stage. It is a good idea to point out numbers that appear in everyday contexts such as on a clock, a telephone, on doors and money. This will help children to understand that numbers have a practical use, as well helping them to recognise written numbers.

Skill 2

Before learning to count a child needs to understand 'one to one correspondence'. This means being able to match one object to one other object or person.

You can practise 'one to one correspondence' in all sorts of different contexts. Laying the table is a good idea. Alternatively you can do this in a play situation as indicated below.

Dough Cakes

Make some dough cakes and ask your child to give one to each of their soft toys. Use very small numbers at first.

Skill 3

Children need to understand what is meant by 'How many are there?'

Counting

As you count objects together touch each one. This helps children to understand they are counting one thing at a time. Also, only count up to three at first and do not progress until your child can do this successfully. Gradually add one more number at a time. Counting opportunities arise with everyday objects such as cutlery or biscuits. Ask your child to guess how many objects there are before counting them together. It is important to build confidence through positive comments.

Counting Game/Throwing games

Games which involve throwing a number of objects, such as rolled up socks, in a waste paper bin or cardboard box can give good counting practice.

Counting trays

Use paper plates for this activity. Write a number on the plate. Provide a pile of dried pasta or bricks and show your child how to count the appropriate number onto each plate before he or she has a try. Underline 6 and 9 to avoid confusion.

Counting everyday objects

You will find many daily opportunities to count aloud together. Cooking is a wonderful way to introduce a child to practical maths and extend vocabulary. You can count baking cases, spoons of sugar or chocolate button decorations. Later you can use buns for simple addition and subtraction sums.



z fr x w v tr t

s r b o r m n

l k f i y b

f e d c q a