

Making Sense of Squiggles



Help your child understand that print carries a message by showing them pictures and symbols along with the printed word. Children will begin to make the connection that pictures give us information about words and words do not change (d-o-g is always "dog").



Tools / Materials:

Books and words found in the child's environment, sticky notes, markers and other writing tools

Steps to Take:

While you are working with your 4+ year-old child using uppercase/capital letters, your child will see lowercase/small letters alongside those uppercase letters. Tell your child that each uppercase letter has a lowercase match.



AT HOME

If you have more time

- Read to your child, point to the words on the page as you read them.
- Label some of your child's belongings with the word for that item (write ball on a ball).
- Play a game by traveling around the house with sticky notes and having your child point to items as you label them. Leave the notes up for your child to read later.
- Have your child draw a picture and talk about what they have drawn. Write down what your child says word for word as she/he speaks, repeating the words back to her/him. You could write a story or just simply label a drawing (car, Mom, tree).
- Play "books" with your child, encourage your child to "read" a book to you or her teddy bear.



ON THE GO

If you have more time

- Read signs when you are out and about (stop, one way, Wal-Mart, McDonald's, read bill boards as you pass them).
- Encourage your child to write words he/she sees as you travel on a wipe-off board, magnet writer or piece of paper.
- Read the print on products used available in the store. Point to the print as you read a product ("Do you want Cheerios, Captain Crunch or Frosted Flakes?") Have your child "read" his choice.
- Take your sticky notes and pen to the park and label items (slide, swing, tree, bench) or label items with chalk.
- Point out the familiar print on items in the store that interest your child (sports teams, Barbie, Spider Man).
- Draw a town on the sidewalk with chalk, draw a road and add some familiar places, have the child label each place with words and letters (gas station, amusement park, store).

Words to Know:

Alphabet Letters Uppercase Lowercase
Print Symbol

Possible Observations:

Names letters; may read words; names words on familiar signs or containers; draws pictures; labels pictures; looks at books; pretends to read; plays games

Learning Together Everywhere!