

growing  
readers

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# Prenatal & Babies



Talking



Singing



Writing



Reading



Playing

# Early Literacy Goals



**30 Million Words Before Age 4** is an Early Literacy goal that helps guide caregivers with their child's language development. The

number of words a child is exposed to before the age of four is correlated directly with a child's future academic success. When you see the **30 Million Words** symbol on a card, that activity is geared to increasing the number of words that your child hears.



**1000 Books Before Kindergarten** is an Early Literacy Program that encourages caregivers and their children to

share the joy of reading and prepare their children for future academic success.

When you see the **1000 Books Before Kindergarten** symbol on a card, that activity is geared to integrate more reading into your daily lives.

Track your child's progress on [hcpl.beanstack.org](http://hcpl.beanstack.org)

I belong to:

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# Babble Back!

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Anywhere



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Phonological awareness



**How much time will it take?**

5+ Minutes



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**Talking**



# Babble Back!

Have a conversation with your baby.

## Activity

When your baby is cooing, gurgling or making other noises at you, reply to them.

Ask: “ **Do you want this? Are you having a good day?** ” Keep the conversation going.

## Why this is important :

Taking turns with your baby as they babble will prepare your baby for the flow of conversation.

# Who am I?

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Vocabulary



**How much time will it take?**

5 minutes



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**Talking**



# Who am I?

Teach your baby the word for you.

## Activity

For example, Point to yourself and, “**I’m mama, mama, mama,**” and repeat. Point to others and say their names, for an example: dada, sister or brother.

## Why this is important :

This activity will help your baby to associate specific words with you and others.



# Hello Baby

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home

**What skill(s) does this build?**

Narrative skills



**How much time will it take?**

10+ Minutes



Prenatal & Babies  
**Talking**



# Hello Baby

Interact with your baby as they move and kick in the womb.

## Activity

When your baby starts to stir in the womb gently massage your belly where you felt movement. Repeat each time they wiggle.

## Why this is important :

This activity echoes the call and response pattern children learn in order to have a conversation.



# Toy Story

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Narrative skills



**How much time will it take?**

10+ Minutes



Prenatal & Babies  
**Talking**



# Toy Story

Use one of your baby's toys to tell a story.

## Activity

Tell a story using your baby's toys. Be sure to include feelings, colors, sounds, etc. to expose your baby to a wide range of words.

## Why this is important :

Storytelling helps your baby learn new vocabulary and early narrative skills.



# Baby in the Kitchen

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Vocabulary



**How much time will it take?**

30+ Minutes



Prenatal & Babies  
**Talking**



# Baby in the Kitchen

Have a fun and delicious time as you introduce your baby to the words and sounds of the kitchen.

## Activity

As you make your meal, speak the steps of the recipe out loud. You can also describe the smells and taste of the ingredients.

## Why this is important :

By getting in the habit of talking to your baby about everyday activities, you are helping them reach 30 million words by age 4.

# Rhyming Your Rituals

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Phonological awareness



**How much time will it take?**

15+ Minutes



**Singing**  
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# Rhyming Your Rituals

Use rhyme to introduce your baby to the world around them.

## Activity

While you go about your daily routines, try to rhyme what you do out loud. You can make it into song or simply rhyme words.

## Why this is important :

Connecting activities and words is a great way for your baby to understand the world around them and increase their verbal skills in a sensory stimulated way.

# Nursery Rhymes

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Phonological awareness



**How much time will it take?**

5 Minutes



**Singing**  
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# Nursey Rhymes

Sing classic nursery rhymes to your baby.

## Activity

Whenever possible, either by singing the songs yourself or playing popular baby music, sing classical nursery rhymes and children's songs throughout your day.

## Why this is important :

Singing helps to build strong connections between parent and child. It helps familiarize them with your voice and hearing common sounds and rhymes.



# This is the Way...

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Phonological awareness



**How much time will it take?**

5 Minutes



**Singing**  
Prenatal & Babies



# This is the Way...

To the tune of “**This is the way** “  
sing what you and your baby are doing.

## Activity

While going about your daily routine, tell your child what you’re doing in song form. “**This is the way we bundle up, bundle up, bundle up. This is the way we bundle up, early in the morning.**”

## Why this is important :

Singing builds phonological awareness. This helps your baby begin to recognize the sounds in words.



# Baby Karaoke

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Phonological awareness



**How much time will it take?**

15+ Minutes



**Singing**  
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# Baby Karaoke

Let your baby hear you! Expecting mothers, sing along while you listen to your favorite song.

## Activity

Whether you are taking a walk, doing household chores, or working, sing your favorite songs out loud to your baby

## Why this is important :

Singing any songs out loud will enhance baby's sensory experiences while in the womb.



# Singing Languages

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Anywhere



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Phonological awareness



**How much time will it take?**

5+ Minutes



Prenatal & Babies  
**Singing**



# Singing Language

Introduce your baby to a new language through song.

## Activity

Play music for your baby in another language and sing along if you can.

## Why this is important :

Hearing the sounds used in other languages will help your baby expand their phonological awareness.



# Messy Writing

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Motor skills



**How much time will it take?**

10+ Minutes



Prenatal & Babies  
**writing**

# Messy Writing

Make a mess and help your baby learn.

## Activity

Let your baby smear and explore with water or other baby-safe substances. You can play along by creating letters, shapes, or pictures and talking about them with your baby.

## Why this is important:

This type of playing helps your baby develop hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills needed to eventually hold a crayon or pencil to write.

# Hooray for fingerplay!

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Motor skills



**How much time will it take?**

5+ Minutes



Prenatal & Babies  
**Writing**



# Hooray for fingerplay!

For fingerplays and other songs, follow us on YouTube @HarrisCountyPL .

## Activity

Sing various fingerplay songs such as “**Open Shut Them**” or “**Row, Row, Row Your Boat**” to your child. Follow the movements of the song or make up your own.

Examples include helping your child raise and lower one finger at a time, move their arms/legs, etc.

## Why this is important :

Smaller movements such as moving individual fingers, helps your baby improve their muscle awareness, coordination, and strength.

# Open, Shut Them

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Motor skills



**How much time will it take?**

5+ Minutes



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**Writing**



# Open, Shut Them

Practice opening and shutting your hands along with the song, "Open, Shut Them."

**Activity** Open, Shut them, Open, Shut them,  
Give a little Clap, Clap Clap.  
Open, Shut them, Open, Shut them  
Put them in your Lap, Lap, Lap.  
Creep them, Creep them,  
Creep them right up to your chin.  
Open up your mouth, but do not let them in.

## Why this is important :

This song and hand movement will strengthen your baby's hands for future writing.

# Row, Row, Row Your Boat

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Anywhere



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Motor skills



**How much time will it take?**

5 minutes



Prenatal & Babies  
**Writing**

# Row, Row, Row Your Boat

Pretend that you are holding a boat oar and paddling along, or make up your own hand motions for the song.

## Activity

**Row, row, row your boat,  
Gently down the stream.  
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,  
Life is but a dream.**



## Why this is important :

This song and hand movement will strengthen your baby's hands for future writing.

○  
**Me**

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Motor skills



**How much time will it take?**

5+ Minutes



Prenatal & Babies  
**Writing**



# Me

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Sing this fun song with your baby.

## Activity

**I've got ten little fingers,** (Hold up both hands)

**And ten little toes,** (Point to feet)

**Two little eyes** (Point to eyes)

**And a mouth and a nose.** (Point to mouth and then nose.)

**Put them all together** (Circle arms as if hugging)

**And what have you got?** (Hands on hips)

**You've got me, baby** (Put thumbs on chest)

**And that's a lot!** (Wiggle hips)

## Why this is important :

This song and hand movement will strengthen your baby's hands for future writing.



# Read Picture Books

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Phonological awareness



**How much time will it take?**

10+ Minutes



**Reading**  
Prenatal & Babies



# Read Picture Books

Introduce yourself and your baby to picture books.

## Activity

Read picture books out loud. You can read them yourself or have a loved one read to you and your baby.

## Why this is important :

It's never too early to get into the habit of reading to your baby. When you read to your baby you are helping your baby familiarize themselves with words and sounds.

# Read All the Things!

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home

**What skill(s) does this build?**

Phonological awareness



**How much time will it take?**

30+ Minutes



**Reading**  
Prenatal & Babies



# Read All the Things!

Expecting mothers, share what you're reading with your baby.

## Activity

Read anything and everything out loud to your baby. You can read books, magazines, newspapers, blogs, emails or even reports to your baby. Read it all!

## Why this is important :

Reading out loud helps your baby bond and recognize your voice.



# 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Print awareness



**How much time will it take?**

10+ Minutes



**Reading**  
Prenatal & Babies



# 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten

Set a goal to read 1,000 books to your child before kindergarten.

## Activity

Read a book, any book, you can even repeat books to your child. Make it a goal to reach 1,000 books before Kindergarten.

Track your reading at [www.hcpl.beanstack.org](http://www.hcpl.beanstack.org)

## Why this is important :

This activity prepares your baby for academic success. A positive reading experience allows you and your baby to bond and become lifelong readers.

# Read Pictures

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Background knowledge



**How much time will it take?**

10+ Minutes



**Reading**  
Prenatal & Babies



# Read Pictures

Find books with great illustrations or photos and very minimal text.

## Activity

Babies can learn words quickly by seeing images matched with pictures. Flip through a book with your baby and point to the item and say the word.

## Why this is important :

Even with their eyesight limited to about 12 inches, newborns can recognize a face. This activity will help your baby to increase their object recognition.

# What Does This Sign Say?

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Out and about



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Print awareness  
Letter knowledge



**How much time will it take?**

10+ Minutes



**Reading**  
Prenatal & Babies



# What Does This Sign Say?

Point to and read signs to your baby while you're out and about.

## Activity

Point out signs and read them to your baby. Read out the letters on the sign, **"This red sign says, STOP, S-T-O-P, STOP!"**

## Why this is important :

Your baby's eye sight is still developing, so this activity helps them recognize the color and shapes of signs.

# What Do You Feel?

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Background knowledge  
Vocabulary



**How much time will it take?**

10 Minutes



**Playing**  
Prenatal & Babies



# What Do You Feel?

Explore different textures with your baby.

## Activity

Using anything with different textures, run the object over your baby's skin while you play and describe how it feels. **"Does it feel bumpy?"**  
**"Does it feel soft?"** Use as many descriptive words as you can.

## Why this is important :

Your baby is learning new textures and the words to describe them.

# Alphabet Touches

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Letter knowledge



**How much time will it take?**

10+ Minutes



Prenatal & Babies  
**Playing**



# Alphabet Touches

Have fun with your baby as you trace and say the alphabet.

## Activity

Use your finger to trace letters on your baby. Build upon this by saying **"A is for apple"** or other simple phrases.

## Why this is important :

This will introduce your baby to the alphabet in a fun and playful way.

# Peek-a-Boo!



**Where should I do this activity?**

Home

**What skill(s) does this build?**

Background knowledge



**How much time will it take?**

5+ Minutes



**Playing**  
Prenatal & Babies



# Peek-a-Boo!

Hide behind something and pop back out.

## Activity

Using a scarf, your hands, a pillow or anything else you have on hand, hide and ask your baby **“Where is \_\_\_\_?”** Then pop out and say, **“Here I am!”**

## Why this is important :

This activity teaches your baby object permanence which is the understanding that even if you can't see something, it's still there.



# Playing the Drums

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home



**What skill(s) does this build?**

Phonological awareness  
Motor skills



**How much time will it take?**

10+ Minutes



Prenatal & Babies  
**Playing**



# Playing the Drums

Turn everyday items into an instrument for baby to play.

## Activity

Allow your baby to drum away as you both make up and sing silly songs.

## Why this is important :

This activity will help your baby with the sounds of words and to recognize rhythm in language and music.



# Mirror Your Baby

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**Where should I do this activity?**

Home

**What skill(s) does this build?**

Interaction



**How much time will it take?**

5+ Minutes



**Playing**  
Prenatal & Babies



# Mirror Your Baby

Play “Follow the Leader” with the baby while inside the womb.

## Activity

When you feel or see the baby moving inside the womb, mirror their movements with some of your own such as light knocking, tapping, massaging or rubbing.

## Why this is important :

This activity creates an interaction with your baby and builds a stronger bond using touch.