



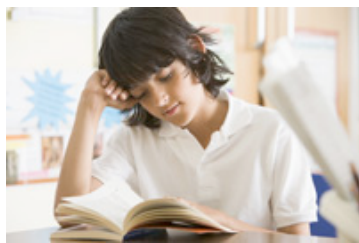
Accelerated Literacy Learning

Tips from literacy specialist Susan Radley Brown

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Susan Says....

I hope the school year is off to a good start. It is October, the trees are changing color and the days are already getting shorter. Soon we will be setting the clocks back and spending long evenings at home so, in this month's newsletter, we are inviting parents to think about fun and smart ideas for encouraging the love of reading and writing with their children.



We know that students need to master certain reading skills. To be proficient readers, however, they must also develop the habits of reading. Of course,

they need to read books and have books read aloud to them, but when children read the cover of a cereal box or milk carton or a movie schedule or follow instructions for playing a new game, they are also engaged in literate acts. Our homes are print rich environments and parents play an important role by encouraging their children to read in these varied ways.

This summer, when I was in a local nursery, I saw a sign for a flower that I like -- Chrysanthemum. I like saying the word over and over again. The sound of "themum" at the end creates a pleasing rhythm in my ears. I wrote that word, along with others I find interesting, in my writer's notebook. Children can go on a [Treasure Hunt](#) for words at home. They should look for them in unexpected places, such as on boxes or cans of food and cleaning supplies. They can collect these words, and create a list as a notebook entry or on a sheet of paper. Students should select words that they like the sound of or that are interesting to them in some way.

Explaining the steps of how to do something has a real-world purpose. When children write directions to their house, a recipe for a birthday

cake, or the steps required to run a spell check on a piece of writing on their computer, they are sharing their knowledge with

others. With Halloween fast approaching, we found fun costumes to make. By reading instructions that detail how to do something new, a child's expertise is expanded.

We've included an article about a literacy-rich home environment written by Dorothy Strickland and Leslie Morrow, both renowned emerging literacy educators. The authors share ways to bring literacy into the home. They suggest having a variety of books available to read, as well as playing fun literacy games.

Happy Reading!

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“How To” Halloween Costumes

The Pea Pod

1. Cut a piece of crepe to a length of the circumference of the wearer's head plus 1 1/2 inches and a height of 20 inches.
2. Fold in half from right to left along the length, and starting where the ends meet at the bottom left corner, sew on a gently curved diagonal to the upper right corner, which will be the cap's point. Trim excess crepe.
3. The seam will be in back; trim bottom edge in front to form a curved, inverted V at the wearer's forehead.
4. Cut a strip of three joined leaves (like the lily-of-the-valley petals, but shorter); floral-tape them to cap stem. For each pea, cut a crepe circle 8 inches in diameter, and make a running stitch around edge. Do not cut thread.
5. Place batting on top of circle, and gather crepe to enclose it; tie thread, and stitch pea to T-shirt before cutting thread. Repeat to make four peas.
6. The crepe cape is T-shaped (20 inches high, 4 feet across at top, and 2 feet across at bottom) with rounded edges. Punch two holes at the ends of the T's top bar; loop ribbon through for a neck closure.



The Tomato

1. Make a red basic cap.
2. For leaves, cut a strip of crepe 9 inches wide and as long as the basic cap piece.
3. Fold into 1-inch pleats; cut a deep V into one end, unfold, and cut irregular spikes.
4. Wrap around cap's stem, and floral-tape in place.

In Next Month's Accelerated Literacy Learning Newsletter

Getting ready for Parent/Teacher Conferences.

Apple Cider Recipe

Literacy-rich environments at home

Article from *Reading is Fundamental* website www.rif.org

Literacy development is a continuous process that begins in infancy when babies are first exposed to language, books, and stories. Its roots are in the home, with branches extending to other environments. Books are the key ingredient to creating a literacy-rich home environment. Families can support language and literacy learning by creating a home atmosphere in which reading, writing, talking, and listening are a natural part of daily life.

In literacy-rich homes, families:

1. Establish a regular time and place for daily read-aloud sessions, such as before bed or during bath time.
2. Keep on hand a variety of reading materials: picture books, chapter books, atlases, dictionaries, magazines, and newspapers. They also get library cards for everyone and use them often.
3. Share their love of books and reading. Parents may say to children, "This was my favorite book when I was your age," or "I can't wait to start my new book."
4. Talk about what they read and encourage children to think, solve problems, and make predictions. Parents may discuss the books a child is reading, then ask questions such as, "Did you ever...?" or "How would you feel if that happened to you?"
5. Have plenty of paper and writing tools.
6. Store books and writing materials in places children can reach.
7. Have frequent conversations with each child, as well as with the family as a whole. Parents should encourage everyone to express their ideas, opinions, and feelings.
8. Reinforce language and literacy skills by doing puzzles and playing games that reinforce literacy, such as Lotto, Candyland, Old Maid, Concentration, Scrabble, and Trivial Pursuit.
9. Model reading and writing for pleasure and for specific uses, such as making a shopping list.
10. Respond positively to children's reading and writing efforts.
11. Set aside plenty of time for reading, by balancing time devoted to sports, television, and other activities.

All of the above strategies tell children that reading and writing are important lifelong activities that are fun and useful. Families also can show children how much they value reading and writing by building partnerships with child development programs and schools.

Resources: *Clinic-based Intervention to Promote Literacy*, American Journal of Diseases of Children, R. Needlman, et. al. 1991. *Emerging Literacy: Young Children Learn to Read and Write*, Dorothy Strickland and Leslie Morrow, 1989.