

Tips for Developing Language, Literacy, and Learning Behavior

Area of Practice	Tip #1	Tip #2	Tip #3
Phonemic Awareness	Use rhyming whenever the opportunity presents itself and talk about what makes a rhyme—“words that end with the same sound(s) rhyme.”	Exaggerate pronouncing parts of words and show students how to get their mouths ready to say words that begin or end with different letters.	Clap and count syllables in words; identify “chunks” of sounds in words.
Print Concepts	As you read to students, show where to begin, where to end, which way to go after you start reading, and where you go at the end of a line; show the difference between a letter, word, and sentence.	Help students distinguish between lower- and uppercase letters and differences in punctuation (e.g., periods, question marks, exclamations, commas, and quotation marks).	Read slowly, pointing under each word. Make sure students are watching and tracking as your finger moves from left-to-right.
Repeated Sentences	Listen, wait for students to respond, and do not interrupt. Establish a warm, face-to-face style when talking and pay close attention to what students say. Smile, nod, and laugh a lot together!	Show understanding and empathy and invite students to say more. Say: “Tell me more about that” or “That’s interesting. I didn’t know that.”	Restate what students say; expand or refine their responses, using different words to clarify or enhance a conversation.
Story Retelling	Look at 3–4 pictures (e.g., family photos) and put them in order to tell a story; cut pictures from the comic section of a newspaper or magazine and tell stories about them.	Ask students to retell stories you’ve told; add details as they retell it to fill in any gaps or important details.	Invite students to tell how a story begins, explain what happens next, and tell how the story ends.
Expository Reading and Writing	Find information from the newspaper or Internet concerning local or world events; talk with students about the main ideas, details, and the end results.	Watch portions of informational videos or TV programs; ask questions about them and help fill in the blanks or provide details (i.e., “Who?” “What?” “When?” “Where?” “How?” or “Why?”).	Invite conversation by saying: “Tell me one important thing you learned about...” or “Tell me what you were thinking while we watched...” or “Tell me what you were feeling when...” or “Tell me the most important question you might ask about...” You might need to first model how to answer these kinds of questions.
Learning Behavior	Encourage students with “I like the way you worked hard” or “I like how you stuck with it” or similar affirming statements any time you can.	Observe any negative behaviors out loud such as, “I noticed you made a face and slumped down in your chair when I asked you to try this.” Then offer a possible alternative response to the task.	Discuss openly with students any negative patterns of response you may have noticed to oral language and literacy activities. Ask for their thoughts on the task and set a small, achievable goal together for the next lesson. Monitor and document progress.