



An Australian Government Initiative

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A TO Z FAMILY LITERACY AND NUMERACY IDEAS

National Literacy and Numeracy Week

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Here are some ideas and activities for building and encouraging your child's literacy and numeracy skills:

Ask your child to weigh and measure ingredients for your recipes both in the supermarket and at home.

Banking and interest rates could be discussed; how budgets work at home and in the workplace.

Create a special reading place in your home with your child's favourite books within easy reach. Let your child help decorate it with patterns, shapes and designs.

Demonstrate how to calculate the amount of ingredients when you want to change a recipe.

Encourage estimating skills, such as predicting how long a journey will take; how long it takes to set the table; how long it takes to walk the length of your street.

Family joke journals can be created by interviewing family members and writing down favourite jokes. Perhaps publish them in a word document.

Give time to reading aloud to your child, no matter how proficient he or she may be.

Have a new word each hour for a week to develop your child's range of words. How about doing this in both your home language and English? Make a game of it.

Involve your child in everyday conversations. Ask his or her opinion and reasons for answers.

Joining the Premier's Reading Challenge really encourages reading, spelling and vocabulary skills.

Keep teenagers of all ages reading and writing. Give them magazines and newspaper articles about things that interest them: sport, music, fashion, TV and computers.

Let your child count out the change when making a purchase. Reinforce the importance of numeracy in everyday life whenever you can.

Measure things around the home: the difference between a towel, a hand-towel and a face cloth; the size of your dining table; the amount of food for your pet each day and calculate how much it eats in a week.

News and documentaries on TV and in the newspaper are excellent opportunities to develop talking and listening skills by discussing significant issues or events.

Organise a children's book club or board game club with friends in your neighbourhood.

Play games such as *Monopoly*, *Snakes and Ladders*, dominoes or cards. Using two dice instead of one when playing board games can help with addition and subtraction.

Questions that only require a "yes" or a "no" are boring. Ask ones that need a longer answer or require your child to give reasons for a decision.

Remember that children learn by example. Think how you can set positive models of literacy and numeracy at home. Teach your child how to measure in your home language.

Sport offers opportunities for exploring literacy and numeracy. Calculate scores. Write a letter of encouragement to a sports person. Listen to sports programs and discuss the scores, angles of shots and probable results. Discuss camera shots and effects.

Turn off the TV for a while and talk to your child in your home language about some of the issues in the TV programs or things that have recently happened in society.

Use the computer as a research and learning tool. There are many sites to help your child practise his or her skills. Use it as a dictionary, a thesaurus or to check spelling.

Viewing films and talking about any issues will greatly expand your child's thinking.

Working out how much time it takes to do things or go somewhere using a timetable will give your child opportunities to calculate.

X-ercise your mind like a muscle! Let your child see you calculating things without a calculator.

You are the key to improving your child's literacy and numeracy skills. Place a high priority on them in your home.

Zip up to your local library with your child and borrow books, magazines and listening tapes.