



TOOLS for TODDLERS

LITERACY STRATEGIES for the Very Young Child

By Krista S. Heavner, MS, CCC-SLP/LSLS Cert AVT®

When you begin planning therapy for the infant with hearing loss, the first thought may be that books are not appropriate due to a baby's lack of maturity and attention. However, the opposite is actually true. You can and should begin introducing books to children when they are in the womb and certainly as soon as the child is born. Below are several charts designed to provide you with strategies on how to facilitate pre-literacy development in the very young child.

Therapy for the Infant (0–6 Months)		
The Adult	The Child	Book Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modeling (for parents) • Exposure to print • Familiarity with books • Familiarity with adult voice • Point to pictures • Use books with bright colors and tactile properties • Parentese (acoustic highlighting with the voice) • Read a few pages at a time • Watch for cues to turn the page • Use simple phrases • Make up your own words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen and observe • Bonding with the adult • By 6 months of age, the child wants to hold/touch/eat the book • Increased interest in pictures, bright and bold colors • Interest in pictures of faces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple, large pictures • Bright designs • Chunky/board books • Fold-out books • Cloth/vinyl books

Therapy for the Infant (6–12 Months)		
The Adult	The Child	Book Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with parentese • Follow child's lead—opportunity to explore turning pages • Talk about pictures • Keep books on low shelves • Offer a teething toy! • Make up "story" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attends to pictures • Recognizes familiar objects • Turns pages with help • Vocalizes in response to reading • Pats pictures • Prefers pictures of faces • Listens and observes with increased attention, yet continues to have short attention span for long books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board books • Pictures of babies • Familiar objects • Bath books • Small plastic photo albums • Nursery rhymes • Books about routine events • Multisensory books



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Therapy for the Toddler (12–18 Months)		
The Adult	The Child	Book Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point out author name/illustrator • Use rhyme • Continue to expand on the vocabulary in the books • Choose books with topics familiar to the child (relevancy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn pages • Holds book • May be too mobile to stay interested • Points to and names familiar objects in book • Enjoys familiar routine • May ask to be read to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Books that label • Sturdy books • Books of familiar routines • Rhyming • Repetition (same books over and over) • Repetitive phrases

Therapy for the Child (18–24 Months)		
The Adult	The Child	Book Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use props/finger puppets • Choose relevant books • Encourage participation • Continue to model for the parent • Encourage participation • Offer an occupying toy • Relate books to child's life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fills in words for familiar phrases • "Reads" aloud • Child's attention fluctuates—expect it! • Recites familiar passages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board books • Simple rhymes • Simple stories about familiar routines and animals • Bedtime stories • Character books • Predictable books • Books with flaps • Repetitive • Large Print