

Practitioner's role

"Reading and writing float on a sea of talk" James Britton.

Babies are born ready to have conversations, they can recognise voices from before they were born and are sensitive and enthusiastic communicators from birth.

- Tune into facial expressions, movements and sounds/noises: 20cm is the optimum distance for communicating with babies.
- Have turn-taking "conversations" with babies about what's happening.
- Share books from the earliest age with simple repetitive words & phrases including rhyme – use pitch/tone/volume to provide lots of expression.
- Use actions to reinforce words.
- Use comments not questions.
- Model – if they say words that aren't clear, you say it again correctly rather than make them say it again.
- Repeat & expand - build on what they say – e.g. add in a descriptive word. If they say "bus" you might say "yes it's the blue bus".
- Play peek-a-boo and turn-taking songs & rhymes.
- Wonder aloud and explain what is happening, talk about what you are doing, what you are going to do next and what you notice about them.

A child needs to hear a word 20 times before it becomes part of their vocabulary. Keep parents informed of new words, songs and rhymes their child has been learning at nursery.

"Talking, singing, cuddles, storytelling is building babies brains" The Scottish Book Trust

The Environment

Ideas for setting the scene:

- Welcome & nurturing, set up for exploring.
- Resources - natural, real-life resources are best providing holistic, sensory experiences with rich language opportunities.
- A well –resourced home corner with familiar and new objects.
- All resources should be accessible, organised and presented in creative and imaginative ways to encourage wonder and curiosity.
- Outdoors – great for listening opportunities, musical instruments, wind chimes, water, sensory experiences.
- Provide lots of opportunities for mark making using a variety of sensory media.
- Value process not product.
- Ensure there is a well-resourced comfortable and inviting book corner, that will provide an opportunity for some quiet time if needed.
- Rich in environmental print.
- Pictorial cards.
- Tune into schematic play and provide appropriate resources , e.g. bags, envelopes, boxes and containers, wheels to turn and objects to rotate.
- Give tickling games like "roon about , roon about goes the wee moose" all the drama of a story – there's a beginning, excitement and anticipation in the middle, and a happy ending cuddle!



Parental Involvement

All parents or carers should be encouraged to be actively involved in their children's literacy learning, through:

- Home to ELCC setting – **All about Me** including favourite songs, rhymes, stories
- **Play Talk Read** – www.playtalkread.org
- **Bookbug**
 - Universal Bookbug Sessions
 - Assertive Outreach – Bookbug for the Home
 - Bookbug baby pack
 - Bookbug Toddler pack (including Parents' guide to sharing books with your child)
 - www.scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug
- **Play@Home** Baby & Toddler books
- **Ready Steady Baby/Toddler**
- **Every day's a learning day** birth to 3 years – Education Scotland

"Children are made readers on the laps of their parents" Emilie Buchwald

