

Ten Ways Parents Can Promote Language Learning at Home

1. Begin reading to your children at an early age, and as often as possible, in your native language and if possible in English. Literacy in the native language helps in developing proficiency in the second language.
2. Visit your public library with your children. Choose books for yourself and your children. As often as possible, read them stories in your native language and about your native culture.
3. Keep many types of reading materials (books, magazines, newspapers, etc.) in your native language and in English in your home. Encourage your older children to read to your younger children, and allow your children to see that you also enjoy reading.
4. Ask your children questions about what they have read, such as:
 - What is happening in the story?
 - What do you think will happen next?
 - What did you like best about the story?

Asking these questions can help your children become excited about reading, more responsible for their own learning, and more knowledgeable about their native and new cultures.

5. Take your children to places in the community that offer educational activities and learning experiences. Talk to your children about what they are seeing. Provide them with the names of new objects of attention, concern, or interest. Answer questions they may have. Remember, you are your child's first teacher.
6. Tell your children stories about your family, as well as stories and songs you liked to hear when you were a child in your native country. In this way, not only are you reinforcing listening skills, but you are also passing along important cultural information.
7. Discuss things that happen in school every day. Engage your children in conversation about their favorite subjects and teachers, and any special events that go on. Listen closely to what they say in response.
8. Find different opportunities for your children to write frequently in your native language and in English. Encourage them to write in a journal or diary, leave notes for family members, compile shopping lists, write down recipes, and write letters to family, friends, and/or pen pals.

9. Select television programs that you and your child can watch and discuss. Limit the amount of time your children can watch television and encourage them to read, write, listen to music, or talk with family members or friends.
10. Designate a quiet place in your home for reading where your child is comfortable and away from distractions.

* *Original source unknown*