

34 – 36
Months

Parenting Future Readers



What to expect

Your 3-year-old child is probably using about 1000 words and understands even more.

Your child is learning to become more independent, so let them help you with simple chores around the house.

Write out letters and words

At this age, your child may become interested in writing. Write out letters and words for your child.

Your child will love when you write out their name and point to the letters. Let them have a crayon or washable marker so they can try to practice writing their name.

At first their writing will look like scribbles on a piece of paper, but it will get better with practice.

Writing helps your child learn that what they say can be written down and read by others. This is an important literacy lesson!

Parenting tips

Keep books on low shelves so your child can look at them whenever they want.


Label things with your child's name, such as their coat, boots, toys and drawings.

Provide writing materials for your child, such as paper, crayons, and washable markers. When your child draws a picture, ask them to tell you about their drawing and write the words next to the picture.

Point to words as you read to your child, moving from left to right and top to bottom.

Make sure to read yourself. Your child will love to imitate what you are doing.

Did you know that...

 Pointing to words as you read out loud helps your child make connections between written words and spoken words.

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What can you do?

Make greeting cards

See if your child wants to make a greeting card. Ask them who they want to send it to. Help them decide what kind of card they want to make, such as a birthday, holiday or get-well card.

Help your child fold a piece of paper in half and then in half again, so it looks like a greeting card.

Let your child draw pictures on the front and inside of the card.

Have them tell you what to write in the card. Write down their exact words and read them back to them.

Put the card in an envelope and write the name and address on it. Have your child put on the stamp. Mail the card!



Make a Simple Treat

Following a simple recipe is one way to teach children the importance of words. Find a simple recipe (one that has only a few ingredients).

Lay out all the ingredients. Read each ingredient in the recipe out loud while pointing to the words. Have your child point to each ingredient as you say the word.

Next, read the first step of the recipe out loud to your child and then let them help you complete that step. Let them do simple steps like washing ingredients or adding them to the treat.

Continue until all steps of the recipe have been completed and enjoy the treat you made together!

Remember to keep your child safe while working in the kitchen. Do not let them use kitchen appliances or sharp objects such as knives.

Pre-writing activity

Dot to Dot

On a piece of paper, write your child's name using dots. Use 5 to 10 dots per letter.

Have your child start with the first letter and connect the dots. Then let your child continue to finish the other letters in their name.

Your child will probably recognize their name. If they like this activity, you can try other familiar words.

Check out this site for more tips:

<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/rtcprogram/>