



TOOLS for TODDLERS

LITERACY STRATEGIES for the Very Young Child

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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 printFamiliarity with booksFamiliarity with adult voicePoint to picturesUse books with bright colors and tactile propertiesParentese (acoustic highlighting with the voice)Read a few pages at a timeWatch for cues to turn the pageUse simple phrasesMake up your own words	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Listen and observeBonding with the adultBy 6 months of age, the child wants to hold/touch/eat the bookIncreased interest in pictures, bright and bold colorsInterest in pictures of faces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Simple, large picturesBright designsChunky/board booksFold-out booksCloth/vinyl books

Therapy for the Infant (6–12 Months)		
The Adult	The Child	Book Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue with parenteseFollow child's lead—opportunity to explore turning pagesTalk about picturesKeep books on low shelvesOffer a teething toy!Make up "story"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Attends to picturesRecognizes familiar objectsTurns pages with helpVocalizes in response to readingPats picturesPrefers pictures of facesListens and observes with increased attention, yet continues to have short attention span for long books	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Board booksPictures of babiesFamiliar objectsBath booksSmall plastic photo albumsNursery rhymesBooks about routine eventsMultisensory 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