

Introduction and Language

Learning with your child can be a wonderful experience, especially during the holidays. Take opportunities this season to create experiences with your child to promote literacy in your home. Reading and writing doesn't begin at the age of 6, but long before when your child is just an infant. Your child's experiences in his first few years are the foundation for a lifetime of learning.

Literacy begins with language development. Talk daily with your child about her interest. Doing so will help develop your child's vocabulary. The holidays are a wonderful time to introduce new words and concepts. For example, "Look at the big shiny balls on the tall tree". Encourage your child to use many words to describe what they see, want to do, hear, taste, and need. While talking *with* your child, ask questions that can't be answered with a simple *yes* or *no*. This will help them to use more language. Try asking your child *how* and *why* questions. Asking your child how and why promotes thinking skills.

Enhance your holidays by talking and reading with your children. Language skills are the foundation for literacy. If you have any questions or want to learn more about early childhood literacy and school readiness, please contact Project S.E.E.D at 601-266-5163. Project SEED is a collaborative initiative between the Hattiesburg Mayor's Council for Early Learning Opportunities and The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies. Project SEED is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children and Families (Grant # 90L00134/01).

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