

Every Child Ready to Read @ your library®

Early Literacy Workshop

For Newborn to Two-Year Olds

Early Talkers

Introduction for Presenters

Current research has proven the critical role of parents and caregivers in developing language and early literacy skills in children beginning at birth.

Early childhood and early literacy research is not always easily accessible to parents and caregivers — or even to library staff. The Public Library Association and the Association for Library Service to Children, in cooperation with the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development of the National Institutes of Health, have partnered to bring important information about early literacy to library systems around the country. Libraries will play a key role in disseminating information about the importance of early literacy to parents, child care providers, early childhood educators, children's advocates and political decision makers.

Making parents and others in your community aware that you are a resource for early literacy information and guidance will help position your library as a community partner in the common public goal of helping children become successful readers and learners.

Use the resources on this website to educate yourself and your community about the critical goal of libraries in making Every Child Ready To Read.

How to use the following script for presenting the workshop for *Early Literacy for Newborn to Two-Year Olds*:

- Use this script as a guide when making presentations to parents and caregivers.
- Feel free to substitute books and rhymes that are more familiar to you or your audience.
- Scripts with additional, supplemental information to incorporate into your presentation are also here on the website. Use these if you feel they are appropriate for your audience. Supplemental materials are indicated in the script with this symbol: ○
- Instructions for presenters are within brackets: []
- Workshop activities to do with your audience are marked with this symbol: ☀
- Every Child Ready to Read brochures and posters can be ordered from ALA. The brochures are also downloadable.
- You can refer to the training DVD that is available for purchase for additional information and help. Counter timings from the DVD are indicated in a box:

0:01:01

Program Background

Learning to read and write is essential to school success. Children who are proficient readers are usually the most successful learners.

Studies point to a relationship between shared reading experiences, language development and reading achievement. Children who are read to from an early age have more advanced language skills at age four. They also have a greater interest in books and enjoy reading activities to a greater extent. A child's interest in reading is an important predictor of later reading achievement. How we read with children also affects how and to what extent early literacy skills are developed.

Goals of Early Literacy for Newborn to Two-Year Olds

- Introduce book sharing between parents and infants at an earlier age that might otherwise occur.
- Offer ideas to make book sharing an enjoyable experience so that parent and child read together more often.
- Suggest books, rhymes and other resources that are age appropriate.

Organizing sessions

PLA and ALSC suggest the following for workshop sessions:

- Register up to 35 participants per session. The sessions are intended for parents and caregivers only, although children may come. Have books and toys on hand for children who attend.
- Choose a self-contained room, if possible, for the sessions.
- Offer sessions during the day and the evening or weekend to make them available to stay-at-home and working parents.

You will need:

Every Child Ready To Read poster (In kit or order separately)

Handouts:

Every Child Ready To Read brochure for early talkers (In kit or order separately)

Five Easy Steps for Sharing Books with Your Baby handout (in kit or downloadable from this website)

Right From Birth handout (in kit or downloadable from this website)

Materials [SUBSTITUTE OTHERS if you wish]

Opening rhyme

Eensy Weensy Spider and *Little Flea (Wee Sing for Babies)* or other rhymes for Phonological Awareness

Black on White or *White on Black* by Tana Hoban (S)

Baby Duck board book or other for example

Alphabet book for young children

One of the following videos:

Success Starts with Reading (15 minutes)

OR

Born to Succeed (12 minutes)

La llave del éxito (10 minutes)

Order from: Early Childhood Resources
Multnomah County Public Library
205 NE Russell Street
Portland, OR 97212
Phone: 503.988.5458 Fax: 503.988.5441
www.multcolib.org/birthtosix/ecr/ECROrderForm.pdf

OR

Ready to Learn (available English and Spanish)

Order from: Parents Action for Children
P.O. Box 2096
Culver City, CA 90231
888-447-3400
<http://store.parentsactionstore.org/prostores/servlet/Detail?no=615>

Equipment

VCR and TV/monitor

Flipchart or something to record responses

Optional:

Laptop and projector (if you use powerpoint)

Overhead projector if you use transparencies

Rethinking the Brain handout (S) (in kit or downloadable from this website)

Bibliography on Early Literacy (optional) (in kit or downloadable from this website)

Every Child Ready to Read @ your library®

Early Literacy Workshop For Newborn to Two-Year Olds

Early Taker Script

Program Outline and Script

0:05:58

Welcome & Introduction

[WELCOME PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS. Glad they came. Give brief introduction to library services and resources.]

S1

This workshop is about early literacy and what you can do to help young children to become aware of and comfortable with books and with language.

Let's start with a rhyme that young children enjoy. Keeping books and language fun will keep them coming back for more. [

0:06:14

☀ [DEMONSTRATE the following rhyme or song or one of your choice]

Peek-a-Boo to the tune of *Frère Jacques*.]

[You can use puppet or hands.]

Peek-a-boo, peek-a-boo

I see you. I see you.

I see your button nose.

I see your tiny toes.

I see you. Peek-a-boo.

1:15:03

Tip: What do I do if I can't sing?

0:06:42

[Presenter added information about peek-a-boo books. Example of how you can add information according to time and your audience's needs and interests.]

0:07:22

[PROVIDE background information to parents and caregivers.]

Learning to read and write is essential to school success.

Children who are good readers are usually the most successful learners.

Children get ready to read long before they start school.

You can help your baby or toddler learn important pre-reading skills now. That will make it easier for your child to learn to read when he or she starts school.

Research shows that children who are read to from an early age have a larger vocabulary and better language skills when they start school.

They also have a greater interest in books. Children who want to have books read to them are more likely to want to learn to read. A child's interest in reading is an important predictor of later reading achievement.

[Source: Adam Payne, Grover Whitehurst, and Andrea Angell. "The Role of Home Literacy Environment in the Development of Language Ability in Preschool Children for Low-Income Families". *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* v. 9 issues 3-4 (1994) p.422-440.]

[EXPLAIN *what parents and caregivers will learn.*]

- We're going to talk about things you can do with your baby or toddler to help him or her enjoy language, books and reading — and we will explain why it's important to start reading to children from the time they are babies.
- We will tell you about six very important skills that you can begin teaching right **now** so your child will be ready to learn to read when he or she begins school.
- We'll suggest some great books, nursery rhymes and songs that you can use to help your child learn these pre-reading skills.

S2

Parents can help children grow up to be successful readers and learners beginning at birth. You can give your child a life-long advantage if you start now to develop a love for books and reading.

Importance of Parent/Caregiver:

Parents and other caregivers are in the best position to help young children get ready to read because:

- Young children have short attention spans. You can do activities for short bits of time throughout the day.
- You know your children best and you can help them learn in ways and at times that are easiest for them.
- Parents are tremendous role models — if your children see that you value and enjoy reading, they will follow your lead.
- Children learn best by doing things — and they love doing things with YOU. So read with your children every day.

0:08:28

 **What Do Newborn to Two-Year-Olds Do?**

Babies and toddlers are busy learning language. What are some of the things your children do now during a typical day? What are some of the things you do with them?

[WRITE RESPONSES on flipchart or blackboard.]

Responses might include:

- Babble
- Like to explore
- Play with toys
- Listen to parent and others talk
- “Sing” songs
- Understand some words
- Beginning to say words
- Listen to music
- Listen to rhymes
- Imitate adults or siblings

1:17:11

Tip: How do I facilitate a response?

[Explain that all of these are part of early literacy.]

When do we start?--in INFANCY, even when the baby is in the womb. It's never too early to begin sharing books with babies.

S3

Before we talk about early literacy, I'd like to share with you some of the new research on brain development.

0:09:51

[DEFINE early literacy. Show definition on poster, flipchart or powerpoint (downloadable from website)]

You may have heard this term used. The definition we will use is this:

Early literacy is what children know about reading and writing before they can actually read or write.

[REPEAT definition.]


You can help develop early literacy skills by reading and talking about books and telling stories to children starting at birth.

The development of early literacy skills through early experiences with books and stories is critically linked to a child's success in learning to read. The earlier you begin to read to children, the better language and reading skills they will develop.

[Source: Catherine Snow. "The Contacts of Literacy: What Children Learn from Learning to Read Books" in W.H. Teale *Emergent Literacy: Writing and Reading*, Norwood.]

0:11:08

Let's see how different people interact with babies, books and language.

 **[SHOW THE VIDEO** *Born to Succeed* or *Ready to Learn* (the Baby Section beginning at minute 8:10) **DISCUSS** what participants noticed.]

0:11:32

INTRODUCE the Six Skills to Get Ready to Read

[REFER TO THE POSTER Six Pre-Reading Skills Your Child Can Start

Learning from Birth or use powerpoint]

[HAND OUT the brochure, *Parents' Guide to Early Literacy: Early Talkers, Newborn to Two--Year-Olds*

HAND OUT Bibliography on Early Literacy (optional) downloadable from this website under Research]

There are six skills that reading research has determined children must know before they can learn to read.

Parents can help even very young children learn these skills, which are:

[Give definition of each skill. Use Parents' Guide flyer.]

Print Motivation

Phonological Awareness

Vocabulary

Narrative Skills

Print Awareness

Letter Knowledge

Now we will talk about each skill.

0:12:04

[TALK ABOUT EACH SKILL]

PRINT MOTIVATION is a child's interest in and enjoyment of books.

Why is this important for children to find books interesting and enjoyable?

Children who enjoy books and reading will be curious about how to read. They will read more.

S4

Studies show that when the interaction around a book is negative (sit still; listen; harsh language) then the young child likes reading and books less. He associates the negative interaction with the book and reading. When the experience of sharing a book is pleasurable for both the parent and the child, the child will be more attentive and responsive. The more pleasurable book sharing is, the more regular and frequent an activity it will become.

[Source: Adriana Bus, Jay Belsky, Marinus H. van IJzendoorn, Keith Crnic. "Attachment and Bookreading Patterns: A Study of Mothers, Fathers, and Their Toddlers," *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 12,81-98 (1997)]

What can parents do to help babies and toddlers enjoy books and want to read more?

- § Read often and make it enjoyable.
- § Make sure you and your child are in good moods, so the experience is a positive one.
- § Stop reading when your child becomes tired or loses interest.

0:13:10

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS is the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words.

Babies and toddlers are much better at hearing different sounds or phonemes than adults. This is why children are wired for learning multiple languages in the early years.

S5

Why is it important for children to be able to hear the different sounds in words?

Being able to hear the beginning and ending sounds that make up words will help children sound out words when they begin to read

What can parents do to help babies and toddlers hear and play with the smaller sounds in words?

One of the best — and most enjoyable — ways is to say nursery rhymes and sing songs.

[Use *Eensy Weensy Spider* or a rhyme of your choice and demonstrate actions to go along with the rhyme.]

- Hearing words that rhyme helps your child learn that words are made up of smaller parts.
- Songs have different note for each syllable; this helps children break down words. Sing throughout the day, as you do routines such as diapering, bathing, etc. Make up your own songs, too.
- If you are using tapes or CDs with songs or rhymes, be sure to choose versions that repeat and that are a little slower in pacing than those for older preschool children. One example is *Little Flea* (from *Wee Sing for Baby* by Pamela Beall) Library staff can suggest books, tapes and CDs that your baby or toddler will enjoy.

1:15:03

Tip: What do I do if I can't sing?

[**HAVE EXAMPLES ON HAND** or give out a list of recommendations for this age.

OPTIONAL: Ask participants for a rhyme they remember or like to say.]

0:16:08

VOCABULARY is knowing the names of things

Why is it important for children to hear a wide range of vocabulary and to expose them to many words?

- § Children need to know the meaning of words to understand what they are reading.
- § When you think about it, you know if you are reading a word correctly if you have heard it before. You are sounding it out. The more words children hear, the more ready they will be to make connections when they read.

[GIVE EXAMPLE OF SOUNDING OUT CARROT. Write “carrot” on a flipchart or blackboard. As you sound out the word, you don’t know if you are saying it correctly unless you have heard it before.]

0:18:09

[HAND OUT *Right from Birth* handout]

Research findings by Dr. Janellen Huttenlocher of the University of Chicago show that the growth in vocabulary in children under two years of age is clearly linked to the extent that the parents talk with them. The more parents talked with the babies and toddlers, the more vocabulary the children had. By the time they were two years old, the children whose parents had a high level of speech with their children had a vocabulary five times as high as those children whose parents had a low level of speech.

[Source: *Right From Birth: Building Your Child’s Foundation for Life, Birth to 18 Months* by Craig Ramey, pg. 88-94) and Janellen Huttenlocher et al. “Early Vocabulary Growth: Relation to Language Input and Gender.” *Developmental Psychology*. v.27no.2 (March 1991) p.236-248.]

What can parents do to help babies and toddlers learn vocabulary?

- *The best way* to help children learn new words is to talk and read to them.
- Reading to children is especially important in building a larger vocabulary because children hear more *new* words when you read books.
- Explain unfamiliar words to your child rather than substituting familiar words; this exposes children to many more words.

If you are more fluent in a language other than English, research shows that it is best for you to speak to your child in the language you know best. This allows the child to hear language spoken fluently and allows you to explain many things to the child that you might not be able to do in English. By learning concepts and discussing thoughts and ideas, the child is exercising his mind. Then he will be able to translate what he knows when he gets to school, rather than having to learn both the concept and the English word at the same time.

[Source: Patton O. Tabors. *One Child, Two Languages*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes, 1997.]

0:20:55

Narrative skills the ability to describe things and events and tell stories.

Why are narrative skills important to learning how to read?

Being able to talk about and explain what happens in a story helps a child understand the meaning of what he or she is reading. Good narrative skills lead to good reading comprehension.

What can parents do to help babies and toddlers develop narrative skills?

- Name things (real objects and pictures in books) as you go through the day. Use songs and nursery rhymes like *Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes* and *Put Your Finger in the Air*.

- Make sure your child has lots of opportunities to talk with you, not just listen to you talk. Communication is two-way and involves interaction. This interaction helps develop parts of the brain involved with language. It's important that children not watch too much television because this is passive and does not lead to the same growth in language skills as talking.

Some ways of talking are better at developing narrative skills.

For example:

- Talk to your child in ways that encourage interaction and a response.

Ask your baby a question and then answer for her.

Ask your toddler to tell you about something that happened to him today; ask for more details so he can expand on his narrative.

Ask questions that cannot be answered with "yes" or "no." This encourages your child to think and increases comprehension.

- Tell your child stories about your life.

- Narrate your life. As you go through your day, talk about some of the things you are doing.

Explain them in simple terms: First we'll buy this pancake mix, then we'll go home and then we'll make pancakes. This helps children understand that stories have a beginning, middle and end.

- As your child gets older, label not just things but also actions, feelings, and ideas. Happy, sad and angry are common feelings, but think of less common ones, too: embarrassed, quiet, sleepy, jealous, frustrated and others. Talk about your own feelings. Use words to say what your child might be feeling.

0:24:18

PRINT AWARENESS is noticing print everywhere; knowing how to handle a book; knowing how we follow the words on a page.

Why is print awareness important?

Before children learn to read, they must be familiar with how books work: books have a cover, you begin to read at the top of the page and from left to right (in English and in many languages), books have words and pictures to tell the story. When children feel comfortable with books, they can concentrate on reading.

How can parents help children notice print and understand how books work?

- § Point to signs and other words around you and read what they say.
- § Get stuffy books that your baby can handle.
- § Let your toddler turn the pages as you read a book. Use your index finger or his to follow the words as you read.
- § If a book has a word that repeats, point to it on the page and let your toddler say it.

0:26:09

LETTER KNOWLEDGE is knowing that letters are different from each other, that they have different names and sounds.

Why is letter knowledge important?

To read written words, children must understand that they are made up of individual letters and that each letter has its own name and sound.

What can parents do to help children learn about letters?

Learning to tell one letter from another involves being able to see the differences in letter shapes. Helping babies and toddlers learn about different shapes and understand how things are alike and different will help prepare them to learn the alphabet.

- Hang mobiles with different shapes in your baby’s crib.
- Read books that feature geometric shapes like *White on White* and *Black on Black* by Tana Hoban. Babies also like to look at human faces.
- Use books like the baby face series by Margaret Miller to help your child compare and contrast shapes.
- Point out the shapes of toys: This ball is round. (Help your baby or toddler feel the rounded shape.) This block has corners.
- Use simple puzzles to help children see different shapes.

☀ ■ Read alphabet books and sing alphabet songs to introduce children to letters. [SHOW EXAMPLES.]

0:28:28

☀ [NOW REFER to the list of things that they say newborn to two-year-olds do or that they do with their children. For some of the activities they mentioned, see what early literacy skill it relates to. If you have the skills and their definitions written on posters on the wall, it helps them make the connections.]

1:17:11
Tip: How do I facilitate a response?

0:28:50

☀ **TIPS FOR SHARING BOOKS WITH BABIES**

First I’d like to go over this handout “Five Easy Steps for Sharing Books”

[HAND OUT *Five Easy Steps*]

Then I’ll talk about the kinds of books that are good for children this age and suggest some books and CDs you can check out from the library and use to help your children learn the skills we talked about today.

- **TIP 1 — Pick a time when you and your child are in a good mood, ready to enjoy each other.**
Try to pick a time when your child is quietly alert, not too tired and not too active. Each child is different. What are some times of the day that may be good for you and your baby to share a book?

[GET RESPONSES from participants. Optional.]

- **TIP 2 — Point to the pictures and talk in your most natural and cheerful voice.**

Watch what your child points to or looks at and talk about those pictures. After you name the item in the picture, talk about it: “Apple. A red apple. Hmmmm, I love apples. You can only eat apples when they are mashed up into apple sauce.”

You are adding to your baby’s vocabulary and showing him the “conversation game” of back and forth.

Your child will become familiar with the concepts of print, an important skill for school. For example: We open the book from right to left, books have pictures and words.

■ **TIP 3 — Talk and have fun.**

If your baby likes to be held, snuggle up and read a book together. Some babies like to lie on a blanket. You can lie beside your baby and look at a book together. Find a spot in your home where you and your baby are comfortable reading together—a chair, on a bed, or on the floor. What is your favorite spot to spend time with your baby?

[**GET RESPONSES** from participants. *Optional.*]

■ **TIP 4 — Watch what baby does.**

Babies like to play with books. That means they like to chew on them, throw them down and play with them like a toy. That is how children get to know books at this age. It's natural. If your baby just wants to play with the book, that's fine. Try reading it together later. What will a baby do when she holds a board book? Right! She'll put it in her mouth. And what is our reaction? Right! Is to say "No, no, no!" How do you think that makes the child feel? Do you think they will think of books in a positive way? What can we do instead?

Slowly take the book away from her mouth, turning the pages, and say, "Let's see what's in this book." It is natural for us to protect books. They are special! But for babies they are toys.

■ **Tip 5 — Read with your baby EVERY DAY!**

Read every day, even if it's just for a few minutes. Watch what your baby does. Let your baby play with the book. If your baby gets upset or cranky, stop for a while. Keep a book in the diaper bag, too. Even a few minutes a day is important! Try to find some time every day to share books with your baby. Ask the librarian to help you choose some good books for you and your child.

HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Supports both print motivation (enjoyment around books) and print awareness (how to handle a book).

Make sandwich bag book:

Materials:

- Ziplock sandwich bags (4)
- Staples
- Scissors
- Duck tape or similar tape
- Colorful paper (construction or poster)
- Clipart pictures or magazines to cut pictures from

Preparation: Pre-cut some colorful paper to the size that fits into the ziplock bags easily.
Staple together 4 ziplock bags per person (on the side opposite the opening)

At the workshop:

- Each participant receives one booklet (4 ziplock bags stapled together).
- Each participant chooses colorful paper to slip inside each bag—one per bag
- Each participant cuts out pictures their children might like to look at (clear pictures, bright colors) and slips them into the bags—one picture (from clipart or magazines) on each side of the colored piece of paper.
- Cut duck tape (comes in different colors) to size of ziplock bag and cover the staples with it.

Five Easy Steps for Sharing Books With Your Baby

1. Pick the best time

Choose a time when you and your baby are in a good mood and ready to enjoy each other.

2. Show Baby the book

Point to the pictures, and talk naturally and cheerfully.

3. Talk and have fun

Remember to touch and love your baby the whole time.

4. Watch what Baby does

Let your baby play with the book if he wants to and stop for now if he gets upset.

5. Share a book with your baby every day

Even just a few minutes a day is important.

0:32:36

What books are good for this age?

Babies and toddlers like:

- Thick sturdy cover and pages
 - Small size, for little hands
 - Bright colorful pictures
 - Simple geometric shapes
 - Clear pictures
 - Pictures of human faces
 - Few words
 - Nursery rhymes
-
- All board books are NOT appropriate for babies.
 - Board books with easy to see pictures are excellent for a baby, with high contrast between the object and the background.
 - Babies respond best to books that have sharp contrast between the picture and the background, not too fuzzy. Ask library staff at your local library to help you choose books for your baby and toddler. Tell staff what your children respond to best

☀ **[CHOOSE EXAMPLES FROM YOUR OWN COLLECTION** that illustrate high contrast, board books with photographs of faces, that are too busy or too fuzzy for a baby to distinguish the pictures]

Show book – Black on White or White on Black by Tana Hoban

Compare with a book not appropriate for babies (pastel or fuzzy pictures) like Baby Duck books by Hest in board book form.

Show Baby's Toys or other titles by Neil Ricklen.]

For toddlers:

Story can be more involved and pictures can have more detail

Things they can relate to—animals, dressing, what they see and do

Stories with rhyme and rhythm

Stories that have repeated phrases or repeated happenings

Stories that are predictable

Some libraries have and some do not have the kinds of books that your child may enjoy. For example, ones that make sounds, ones that have flaps, vinyl or cloth books for the bath. Mention these if you own them or suggest buying them.

☀ **Closing**

[DEMONSTRATE reading a favorite book, perhaps a new title, for this age group.

[HAND OUT SUGGESTIONS for appropriate materials for babies and toddlers.

TALK ABOUT library programs and collections for babies and toddlers, parenting materials.

ANSWER ANY REMAINING QUESTIONS.

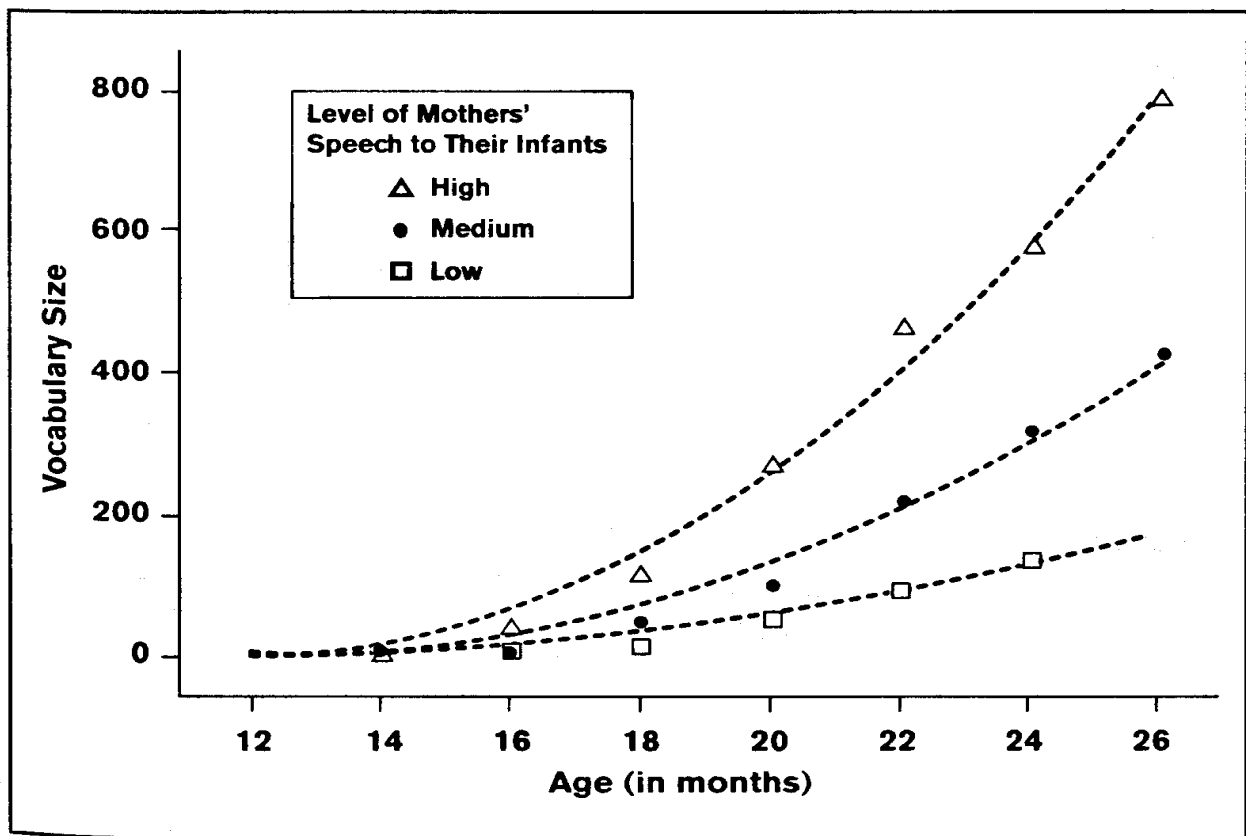
GIVE a TOUR OF THE LIBRARY for those who would like one.]

From **Right From Birth: Building Your Child's Foundation for Life, Birth To 18 Months** by Craig T. Ramey. New York: Goddard Press, 1999. (649.122 RAM)

This research illustrates the fact that mothers who have a high level of speech (language interactions per hour) have children with many more vocabulary words than children of mothers who have a low level of speech.

Note the increase in the difference between low and high level of speech as time goes by. The gap gets larger and larger as time goes by. The difference is even greater by the time the children reach third grade.

EFFECTS OF MOTHERS' SPEECH ON INFANT VOCABULARY



Janellen Huttenlocher, Wendy Haight, Anthony Bruk, Michael Seltzer, and Thomas Lyons (University of Chicago), "Early Vocabulary Growth: Relation to Language Input and Gender," Developmental Psychology, 1991, Vol. 27, No. 2.

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