

LEARNING AND THINKING

What to look for

Your child...

- ✓ Can match two pictures that are alike
- ✓ Can tell things that go together (a spoon and a fork, a fish and a boat)
- ✓ Can match, recognize and name circle, square, and triangle
- ✓ Can match, recognize and name at least 5 colors
- ✓ Can repeat a pattern you start (step, step, jump – step, step, jump)
- ✓ Can put 3 pictures in order (1. Planting flower seeds; 2. Flowers growing; 3. Picking flowers)
- ✓ Can work simple puzzles

To encourage your child's learning and thinking skills:

- ★ Collect real objects that go together: shoe/sock, hammer/nail.
- ★ Involve your child in putting pictures in order. You can use photos of your child at different ages, or pictures cut from a magazine.
- ★ Let your child help you fold laundry. Your child can match socks and other clothes by color or size.
- ★ Play "shapes" and "sizes" games with your child. Use coins, cut-out shapes, and other objects from around the house.
- ★ Have simple puzzles available for your child to play with. Make puzzles by cutting up greeting cards or the front of a cereal box into puzzle-shaped pieces.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

What to look for

Your child...

- ✓ Can speak in complete sentences
- ✓ Can follow directions with at least two steps
- ✓ Can understand words such as 'top' and 'bottom', 'big' and 'little'
- ✓ Can follow directions in a simple game with other children or adults.
- ✓ Can say or sing familiar songs and nursery rhymes
- ✓ Can recognize when words rhyme, such as 'cat' and 'hat'

To encourage your child's language development:

- ★ Take time each day to listen to and talk with your child. Some good times for conversation are while traveling, at mealtimes and at bedtime.
- ★ Encourage your child to listen and use language to express ideas.
- ★ Involve your child in activities and games that require listening and following directions.
- ★ Read and tell stories that have interesting characters and easy-to-follow plots. Talk with your child about the stories after you read or tell them.
- ★ Read and sing nursery rhymes and rhyming stories with your child.

BEGINNING READING

What to look for

Your child...

- ✓ Can make simple predictions and comments about a story being read
- ✓ Can tell a simple story back to you after listening to it
- ✓ Knows the letters in his or her own first name, and can recognize his or her own first name in print
- ✓ Can recognize words or signs he or she sees often (local restaurants and stores, street signs)
- ✓ Can hold and look at books right side up, turning the pages one at a time from front to back
- ✓ Knows and names at least 10 letters of the alphabet
- ✓ Can match a letter with the beginning sound of a word (such as the letter 'B' with a picture of a banana)

To encourage your child's beginning reading skills:

- ★ Set aside a special time each day to read with your child. Read your child's favorite books and rhymes over and over. Read some of your favorites from childhood, too. Talk with your child about the story and the characters.
- ★ Involve your child in putting pictures in order. You can use photos of your child at different ages, or pictures cut from a magazine.
- ★ Get a set of letter magnets, and put them on the refrigerator or a cookie sheet for your child to play with.
- ★ Make a name card for your child. Display the name card in a special place, and talk to your child about the names of the letters.
- ★ Using pictures from a magazine or real objects, and magnetic letters, help your child match pictures to their beginning sound.