

# EARLY LITERACY TIPS FOR PARENTS

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## Cooking with your kids can be a delicious learning experience! 5 Ways Cooking With Kids Can Boost Literacy Skills

Children love to help in the kitchen. And while it's not likely something you have the time for every day, there is a great deal of learning that happens when you cook together. From toddlers to teenagers, cooking offers a practical, hands-on way for kids to:

Practice an important life skill.

Develop mathematical understanding (measuring ingredients, setting oven temperature, etc.).

Further their scientific knowledge (observing change).

Apply their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills.

Encouraging literacy skill development, as you cook together, is easy when you allow it to flow naturally from what you're doing. So, round up your favourite kid-friendly recipes and give these simple ideas a try.

### 1. Make a shopping list together

Before you begin, name the items you'll need with your child. Independent writers can jot down a list for you and you can entice pre-readers with a paper and a pen, just like the ones you are using. Sit beside your little one as you write your shopping list, saying aloud what you are writing as you add each item to the list. Your child will be sure to imitate you and will learn an important purpose of writing in the process. Younger kids also enjoy ticking off the items from the list once you're at the store.

### 2. Read the recipe together

Recipes provide a wonderful introduction to instructional texts. Older children can read the ingredient list, gather the necessary ingredients, and read the recipe instructions aloud, step-by-step, as you go. Keep it simple for little ones. For example, "A recipe tells us what we need to make our cupcakes, and how to make them. It says we need flour, here's the flour..."

### 3. Taste ingredients

It's a great way to get your kids talking about different categories of foods (spices, fruit, dairy product, etc.), as well as textures (smooth, lumpy, crunchy, etc.) and flavors (sweet, spicy, sour, salty, etc.) and it provides a physical connection between the senses and the descriptive words used.

### 4. Grow vocabulary

There are so many interesting words to learn when cooking! Names of ingredients — cinnamon or saffron — as well as processes, such as whisking and dicing, measurements and temperatures. Hearing and seeing these words used within a real-life application, equips your child to better understand and remember the words and their meanings.

### 5. Encourage younger children to notice environmental print

Environmental print is all around us. It's the name given to print that appears on signs, labels and logos.

Encouraging preschoolers and beginning readers to notice environmental print helps them to learn that reading involves not just letters and sounds but pictures and context too. Asking your three-year-old to find the cornflakes from among the cereal boxes in your pantry, or your six-year-old to find the all-purpose flour that sits next to the whole wheat flour on the shelf, is inviting them to take notice of environmental print.



Resource: Scholastic, Raise A Reader



## *You're My Valentine*

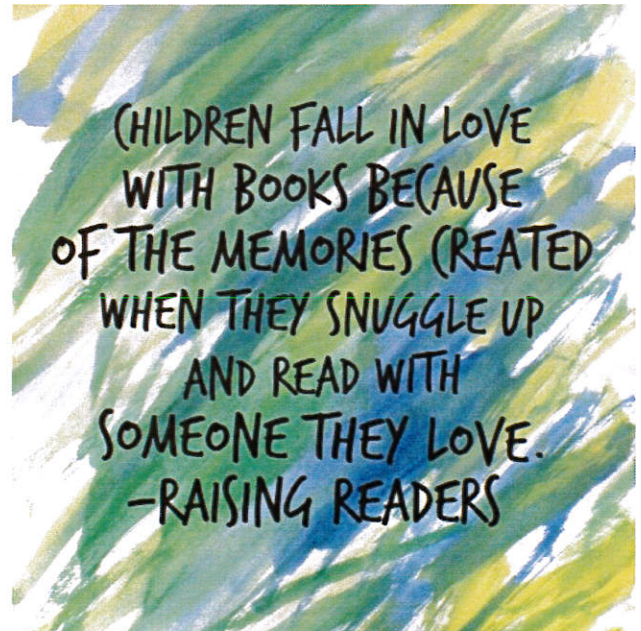
(Sung to tune of Love me Tender)

You're my rainbow, you're my star,  
you're my bright red cookie jar.  
You're my goldfish, you're my pie,  
you're the apple of my eye.  
You're my daisy, you're my vine,  
you're my one true Valentine.



Skinnamarinky dinky dink,  
Skinnamarinky do,  
I love you.  
Skinnamarinky dinky dink,  
Skinnamarinky do,  
I love you.

I love you in the morning  
And in the afternoon,  
I love you in the evening  
And underneath the moon;  
Oh, Skinnamarinky dinky dink,  
Skinnamarinky do,  
I love you!



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