



Dear families,

All readers need exposure to words and sounds in many different ways. The more exposure they have, the more flexible they will be in their reading, speaking and writing. Provide your child with opportunities to learn how written words are made up of letters that match the sounds in words we speak everyday. They will have increased vocabulary, more prior knowledge of concepts and be more familiar with patterns in language.

Books are just one of the ways you can expose your child to words and sounds. One of my daughter's favorite games to play in the car is "Letter Play".

To play this game, you chose a theme, such as animals. You take turns naming animals that start with the letter of the alphabet you're assigned to. For example, if my husband, daughter and I are in the car, my husband would start the game off by naming an animal that begins with the letter "A" (ape!). My daughter will then take a turn and name an animal that begins with "B" (bear!). We would continue to take turns. Right around the time we are on the letter "N", she starts calculating who is going to get stuck with the letter "Q" or "X"! It's an easy game to incorporate into your everyday routines. It takes no preparation and no time to play! (It also helps with arguing over whose turn it is to pick the radio station.) It encourages new vocabulary as well... Did you know there is an animal named Quoll? It lives in Australia. The reason I know this is because my daughter asked "Siri" (on the i-Pad) for an animal that began with Q so she would be prepared! You can play this game with endless themes - food, people's names, types of machines...

It is an easy game to modify as well to fit your child's needs. Instead of the letter needing to be in the beginning, try to think of an animal that ends with "T". Later, add in chunks of words, letter blends and digraphs. What's better than some family fun while learning in the car?

