

Early Years- Morning Work Ideas:

Intent: Help make arrival time focused and calm (challenge when everyone arrives together) and to give both children and adults a definite purpose. This session replaces the concept of 'homework' and instead gives parents the opportunity to work side by side, one-on-one with their child with educators to support them and share strategies (if requested). It offers parents an insight of how their own child approaches a task and copes with repetition or a challenge, where they are personally 'at' with literacy and numeracy, and to enjoy the long, slow process of learning a complex set of skills (children imbibe and absorb for a long time before they demonstrate what they actually know- think about learning to talk- it starts at birth.) Readers and writers go through different stages and we accept all attempts at literacy and numeracy, we expect children to write what they hear (we will slowly teach them to make words look right/conventional), we gently model the appropriate way to form a letter or the correct spelling (remember how they learned to talk and walk, how each attempt was important and never criticised as 'wrong'? Same process with literacy!!!) Learning is a growing process and **children need to expect some things will be difficult and take time and effort** and that mistakes ARE part of the process!!!.

Learning to be literate is like:

- a seed- **germinating** (absorbing all the good nutrients and swelling but not much outward 'action'-lots of proactive, loving gardening required!),
- then it **sprouts** (small outwards signs of change and growth over time, millimetre by millimetre until a small leaf sprouts and provides more 'food/fuel' for other leaves to grow- children need to know the basics like all letter names and their single sounds, recognise numerals and their associated amounts and the fine motor control to form recognisable symbols – letters and numerals...this is the THE FIRST LEAF which then fuels other leaves/learning like word awareness, concept of a sentence... to sprout.)
- Once the stem has some strength, the roots have thickened (by lots of practice, conversation, being read aloud to daily...) and children have developed concepts of print like directionality (words go from left to right, top to bottom, words have a beginning, middle and end sound, letters make a variety of sounds depending upon who they are sitting next to, they have an increasing bank of sight words they can read and write from memory around 50- 100 words ...)
- THEN a flower starts to **bud**, vocabulary grows, speed and fluency of reading and writing increase, different genres (types/styles of writing including information texts) are explored, comprehension and understanding of more complex text THEY themselves have independently read deepens...
- THEN the flower **blossoms...** with prolific ideas, many books being consumed, long stories being written ... with the whole plant covered in blossoms
- and later on **fruits**, with work being proof read and edited and published, books being re-read and re-read, text being scanned and skimmed to research certain details for Big Idea projects, writing becomes more thoughtful and analytical and measured.

In the years before school (0-4 years) the soil is being nourished and lovingly tilled with many favourite stories being read over and over again (See Mem Fox's 'Reading Magic'- we have copies for loan), oral language being developed, enriched vocabulary, responsive listening from parents, lots of rhymes and songs... **The early years at school (4-8 year olds)** are when the seed germinates – at different rates of course!- and it starts to sprout, covered in leaves... The Middle Years phase (around 8- 12 years) is when the flowers have enough strength (knowledge, practice and purpose)

to bud and start to blossom. Early Adolescence (between 12 and 15 years) is when the plant fruits (as long as the gardener- parents and educators- has been interested and attentive and the growing conditions – the learning culture- have been conducive with great role-modelling, interesting texts and real life tasks, high expectations from the plant- it MUST expend it's own energy to get this far!)

Purpose of Morning Work- short, routine, practise tasks to improve fluency, flow, confidence, building blocks of literacy and numeracy, in particular:

- Recognising and writing correct formation of letter names and sounds, alphabetical order.
- **Correct Pencil grip and starting points for letters and numbers**, especially 'a, c, o, g, d, e' and b/d. Letter and numeral reversals are common; we raise children's awareness by calling reversed letters/numerals 'pancake' letters that need to be flipped over.
- **sight words (common words frequently seen)** and used in writing that need to be instantly recognised- not sounded out)- golden, red, blue, orange words... learn to READ them first, then spell and write, not just copy.
- **word and sentence awareness-** what is a word, what makes a sentence? Beginning and end sounds in a word. Long and short words. How many words in the sentence they write each day for a week. Word shapes-tall letters, tails, twins/double letters. Capital/adult letters to start a sentence, full stop to end. Capital/adult letters for names.
- **Counting in order to 20 both forwards and backwards.**
- **Amounts connected to numerals-** 10 means 10 actual, physical objects.
- **Number facts and familiarity** eg; 10 can be broken into 2+8, 5 and 5, 2 x5... etc,
- **Numbers can be operated on** grow and shrink... bigger, smaller, patterns, number operations (+ is Farmer Plus,- is Mr. Minus, x is Tommy Times, divide is Ms. Divide and the all have stories behind them to describe their jobs of changing numbers, making them grow or shrink. Ask us.)

Morning work is intended to be HANDS-ON using a.) **concrete, hands-on materials**, b.) **drawing** and then c.) symbols such as numbers, +, = x, words. *1+2 = 3 is an abstract concept and MUST be put into a context/story/situation and physically made or built, this helps children visualise down the track what 10- 4 really means.* CONCRETE MATERIALS SUCH AS DICE, COUNTERS, NUMBER CHARTS, ALPHABET BOOKS... WILL BE KEPT IN SPECIFIC LOCATIONS FOR EASE OF ACCESS. PLEASE HELP CHILDREN HONOUR THIS SPACE AND RETURN MATERIALS.

Germination phase...

1. **Literacy-** (ONE only each day) Less is more- quality rather than quantity, use the '**drip, drip, drip**' approach...
 - ***Write your name or family's names-*** whiteboards, paper, blackboards
 - ***Make your names (or family names)*** with Lego blocks, or with plasticine, pipe-cleaners, blocks, counters.... Adult makes 'name/word' sick (remove or reverse letters) and child is the word doctor and fixes it up.
 - ***Personal word books-*** add or choose word to add such as an animal, family names, things they love to do... Set out a page for each....
 - ***Alphabet practice,*** choose a letter to practice writing, show how to hold pencil and where to start letter (check with educator if unsure), use dolphin band if necessary. Only practice 5 or

6 each time. Use letter name and talk about sounds letter can make (see pictures on page). Find children whose names start with these letters eg: I for Izaak, K for Karron.

- Ask us for an Alphabet Practice book. Please use a sharp writing pencil. Sing the alphabet until you reach today's letter.
- **Draw a picture and adult scribes a sentence.** Choose one word (usually a noun) for them to copy and draw a line to match the picture. Count the words in the sentence, notice repeated words like 'the, and'... "Hey, I just noticed that these two words are the same..."
- **Read a book together.** Find some letters in the title from your names "Look, I can see an 's' (letter name) in this word and it says 'sss' like in your name." Draw a picture from the story- main character, favourite part, the beginning or the end.... Find long/short words- count the letters. Say only the first sound (not letter name) in a certain word and ask child to predict rest of word based upon the picture and meaning from the rest of the sentence.
- **Use the alphabet tubs or books to sort in order and sing the alphabet** as you point (slow down when you sing l, m, n, o, p). Look in the tub or the book that starts your names and draw one thing from it, have a go writing that letter (focus mostly on lower case letters as writing consists mostly of these rather than capital letters which have a specific job to do like in names).
- **Magnetic rhyming game-** match moon/spoon, coat/boat... ask us how to play...
- **Magnetic letters on blackboard wall near kitchen.** Use to make familiar or high-interest words such as cow, mum, like... (adult to help find letters needed or takes too long). Mix up the word and make again and again focusing on the order of the letters and the SOUNDS. Try and take a letter out and see if they can find it from a 'small' range of mixed letters below. Try and write the word (use white board markers to actually write on each letter- noting correct start position and direction).

2. **Numeracy-**

- **Roll a dice** (or two) and **collect unifix cubes** (coloured blocks) and count, add up, build a tower, draw, write the numbers.
- Use unifix cubes with purple number on top, make the 'wrong' amount for the tower. Child has to be Farmer Plus or Mr Minus to add more on or take some away. Try and trick each other.
- **Take 10 game.** Take ten red/yellow counters. Shake and 'throw' on table. Sort and count red and yellow, see if you still have 10. Draw and colour in the yellows and the red then circle all and write 10. Or adult writes 5 _ ed and 5 _ ellow make __. Use alphabet charts to copy r and y or show on a whiteboard.
- **Bears in the train,** roll a number and a colour and put in a carriage. Roll and new number and colour. And add to carriage. OR Start with 10 in a carriage, roll a dice and see how many get out at the next train station? How many are left to go to Perth?
- **Dominoes,** match dots, add up all dots on one piece and then go on a treasure hunt to find that many 'jewels, blocks, shells, cars...'
- **Use unifix cubes to make a measuring stick to measure different objects.** Does Farmer Plus have to add on more blocks this time to measure this book or is it Mr. Minus's turn to make it shorter?
- **Lucky dip (numeral recognition)-** put some numerals in a bag, randomly choose a numeral say 10, and then go on a number hunt to find that many objects. Count carefully. Try anything up to 20. Most children skip numbers between 12-20. Help them slow down and physically touch/move each object as they count.

Sprouting Phase: Morning Work (check out the whiteboard or ask Rachel/Leonie)

Literacy- Keep it short, no more than 15-20 minutes. Cut out a task some days when the book or task is new.

- ***Choose sentence from same book and write the SAME one each day over the week-*** (adult chooses one with lots of frequently read/written words.) Focus on: ***fluency, familiarity, flow-*** each day, try not to just copy but look and read aloud 2 -4 words at a time then hide the sentence/book and have a go writing the 2 or 4 words from memory (easier the 2nd, 3rd time around). Write over tricky sounds in problem words in a red crayon eg; fly, want. Choose a sentence with lots of 'sight' words- like, the, could, all, went, can, to.... Try and read the sentence backwards at the end of the week!!!
- ***Read same book over the week*** -a few pages or sentence each day and read a number of times, over and over to become fluent. Re-read pages from yesterday. Build up each day.
- ***Practice 3-5 golden/red/blue/orange... 'sight' words*** from the lists in their files (at least twice a week). Use graph paper and draw outline of word- ***word shapes*** (focus on tall letters, tails, twins, blends- new sound when certain letters are neighbours like sh, th, ch, er, ing, bl, fl...) or play the gap game, make rainbow words, use Lego letter blocks. Take a photo with eyes then turn word over and try and write. Check.

Numeracy-

See white board or educator as this changes frequently.

Suggestions if no set task (please ask for materials)

- Skip counting practice- use 100 charts to count in 2s, 5s or 10s. Put a block on each number. Sometimes start at 50 or 70.
- Use number lines or charts to start at a random number say 56 and count on 10 places. Use an empty 100 chart or 10 strip to place a number and then have the child fill in the numbers around it.
- Adding 3 or more numbers using materials, drawings and symbols. Use the story boards and cubes to act out eg: the cave picture, roll the dice 3 x keep adding more bats.
- Place value: Choose a number bigger than 10 and make it with popsticks (count out the required amount, bundle each group of 10 with an elastic band)

OR

Play a literacy/numeracy game like: (look on Literacy/numeracy shelf in focus room). Please ask us or the children.

- Grid game,
- Money game
- Read and think game
- Word lotto/bingo or snap game