

Encourage Literacy Through Environmental Print

Print is an essential tool in our world and is seen everywhere in our environment. Use these everyday tools, such as street signs, directions, labels, store advertisements, etc, to help your child grow as a learner.

- ◆ Get cooking! Have your child read recipes and help you prepare food in the kitchen.
- ◆ Notice soaring news. Read aloud sections of the newspaper and encourage your child to read the article with you. Discuss current events.
- ◆ Work together to determine the meaning of political cartoons.
- ◆ Play games! Get out a board game and have family game night; have your child read the playing instructions aloud to the family.
- ◆ Have your child write out your grocery or shopping list as you dictate.
- ◆ Go shopping! Have your child assist you in reading food labels at the grocery store or in reading the cooking directions located on the back of boxes.
- ◆ Get on the trail. Perhaps your family has just taken up hiking. Research together to determine what should be carried in a back pack in case of emergencies. Have your children help with this family project.
- ◆ Vacationing? Include your children in planning trip itineraries/budgets. Have them make lists and read road maps.
- ◆ Family journals...while vacationing, keep a family journal in which every member contributes.
- ◆ Visit some open space. Go for a walk together; have your child pick up a trail map and determine the shortest or longest path, or paths with the highest increase in altitude.
- ◆ Go to a ballgame! Read the program together, read the scoreboard, read the advertisements, amuse yourselves with the price of concessions!
- ◆ How-to projects. When you buy those products stamped with "Some Assembly Required", have your child read the instructions with you and assist with putting it together.
- ◆ Go to the zoo or other local attractions. Have your child be responsible for reading the map and locating various attractions.
- ◆ Eat it up! When dining out, read the menu with your child.
- ◆ Does your child have a hobby? Show an interest and read a book together about that particular activity.

- ◆ Driving around in the automobile.....read street signs, business signs and billboards together.
- ◆ Take a walk on the wild side! Research and learn about the Colorado 14ers and the wildlife in our area. Make this a family project and make a scrapbook.
- ◆ Party! Make your own invitations for parties.
- ◆ At the breakfast table....read those cereal boxes while you eat!
- ◆ Dinner discussion. Have book talks during dinner. Everyone (including parents) discuss what they have been reading.
- ◆ Research your family tree.
- ◆ Too much TV?? Read the tv guide channel together. Read the back excerpts of DVD or video cases together.
- ◆ Your child is going through an adolescent stage and doesn't like to talk to you??? Email him/her!! Ask him/her what they are doing in school. Email a question, you may actually get a response!
- ◆ Build vocabulary by solving crossword puzzles together.
- ◆ Encourage literacy through the computer. Here are some fun sites that offer word games:
 - www.funbrain.com/words.html
 - www.blackdog4kids.com/games/word/
 - www.pitara.com/games/word_games.asp

** Remember, literacy is a 3-way partnership between parents, children and teachers.

Please contact me if you have questions about how you can support literacy within your home.

Wendy Vasu

