

2-3 Reading, Writing and Stories



Parent Guide

Welcome to Twinkl Tots. This parent guide focuses on what your two to three-year-old might be learning about themselves, their relationships and their emotions, including milestones you might see your child meeting and ideas for how you can support them at home. Like with everything you come across while exploring our Twinkl Tots course, please remember that all children are different and develop at their own pace. Your child might show the development of these skills at different times or in different ways. However, we will look at milestones that are fairly typical for this particular age group.

What do they mean by 'Reading, Writing and Stories'?

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (the curriculum followed by all childcare and school settings in England for children from birth to five years old), one of the areas of learning is literacy. Throughout the Twinkl Tots resources, we are referring to literacy as 'Reading, Writing and Stories' because this is exactly what it covers.

If you have been reading with your child since they were young, it's likely that they will enjoy reading and stories. They may have favourite books (or current favourites at least) and seek out reading as an enjoyable activity throughout the day. Offer chances to share stories and look at books frequently, including non-fiction books. For example, your child might be interested in looking at a recipe book - you could even try following a simple recipe from a book together. This is great for helping them understand that text has meaning.

At two years old, your child might start to notice numbers, letters and words or signs that are important to them or that they see regularly. For example, they might recognise the number on your front door or a bus you regularly take and the logo from shops or restaurants they go to a lot. You can encourage your child to know the first letter of their name and point it out to them in different places. They may say, 'That's my name - T for Thomas' when they see a 'Tesco' sign - although this isn't wholly accurate, this is still fantastic early reading.

Writing will still not look like words or even letters at this age. Giving your child plenty of opportunities to draw and mark make with different tools and material is perfect for this stage of early writing development. Your child might start to give meaning to different marks they make, such as saying, 'That's my hair and my arms' or, 'That's my name'. You can help them develop their pencil control and grip with simple fine motor activities like threading, posting and using tweezers or pegs, like in our **Twinkl Tots Painting with Pegs activity**.



Ways to Support Your Child's Early Literacy Development

Create a Reading Area

Giving your child the ability to access books independently throughout the day is a fantastic way of encouraging a love of reading. You might have noticed that your child tends to play with what they can see and get to easily, so by creating a reading area where they can choose their books themselves, you are teaching them that books aren't just for bedtime.

Your reading area doesn't have to be large or contain lots of things - a few books on a low shelf or in a small box and perhaps a blanket or cushion can do the job! It's sometimes best to limit the number of books you have in the reading area at any one time - try employing a book rotation instead. This doesn't need to be on a strict timetable either, just as and when you remember is fine! This is likely to be when you notice your child isn't going to their reading area anymore.

I can listen to books and stories for longer periods of time.

I can ask questions about the book, e.g. 'What are they doing?'. 

Milestones This Supports:

I can point to objects and pictures I find interesting when listening to or looking at a book.



Retell Stories - Even If They're Not from Books!

Telling your child stories about photos or videos of them from the past, recapping what you have done together that day, singing nursery rhymes together or telling them short, silly stories during play is all great for helping your child learn story structure and teaching them how to retell a story themselves. As they get older, you can ask them to retell simple activities to you to let them have practice - and it will take a lot of practice!

You might find that your child likes to take toys into their reading area or take their books into their play elsewhere. This is good for them, even if it does mean more tidying up, as it's another way they can practise retelling and making up stories. They might use their toys to retell stories from their favourite TV shows - again, this is a good thing! Just because the story isn't from a book, it doesn't mean it's less of a story. If your child does not really enjoy books, encouraging this sort of play is really important, and you might like to introduce books based on characters that they already know to begin to develop their interest in books.

Milestones This Supports:

I can sing songs and say rhymes independently, for example, singing whilst playing.

I can develop play around favourite stories using props.

I can make comments and share my own ideas about stories.

I can join in with songs and rhymes, copying sounds, rhythms, tunes and tempos.



Encourage Drawing Wherever You Can

You can draw and mark make with so many things! Why not try adding some of the following activities into your child's playtime or providing some of these simple additions to your child's play space so they have plenty of chances to draw and experiment with marks freely? And, of course, feel free to mix and match!

- colouring books and crayons (always keep some in your on-the-go bag!)
- magnetic drawing boards
- whiteboards and dry wipe pens
- laminated mark-making cards
- sand and spades
- water and paintbrushes (good for outside!)
- modelling dough and different tools
- wallpaper offcuts and paints
- cardboard boxes (if they're big enough to get inside, even better!)
- shaving foam and fingers
- mud and sticks
- chalk on pavement or walls
- water doodle mats
- good old paper and pencils

Milestones This Supports:

I can use my thumb and fingers to hold mark-making tools.

I can enjoy drawing freely.

I can add some marks to my drawings, which I give meaning to. For example, 'That says daddy' or 'That's my hair and my arms'.

I can make marks on a picture to stand for my name.

Ask Questions

Books with more complex or detailed illustrations can be good to introduce to your two-year-old if you haven't already. You can draw their attention to the pictures whilst sharing the story and ask your child questions about what is happening - this might be as simple as, 'Who's jumping?'. As your child hears the same story more often, or develops the necessary communication and language skills, they will be able to answer more complex questions like, 'Why are they feeling sad?' or 'What do you think might happen next?'. By asking questions, you are also modelling to your child how to ask questions themselves and they may begin to do this during storytime together.

I can answer questions that begin with who, what, when, where, and why.

I can ask questions about books, e.g. 'What are they doing?'

Milestones This Supports:

I can recognise verbs in pictures, pointing to the correct picture when asked, 'Who's jumping?' for example.



Disclaimer: Welcome to Twinkl Tots. We hope you find the information on our course and resources useful. This course is provided for informational and educational purposes only. As all children are different and develop at their own pace, your child might show development at different times or in different ways. Our aim is simply to give you general guidance and the information may not apply to your specific situation. If you have any concerns about your child's development, please speak to your health visitor or GP.

