

What activities create a strong home-learning environment?

Activities to 'stretch a child's mind'

Reading with and to children	Singing songs and rhymes	Going on visits	Painting and drawing	Creating opportunities to play with friends	Going to the library	Playing with letters and numbers
------------------------------	--------------------------	-----------------	----------------------	---	----------------------	----------------------------------

(Sylva and others 2004)

Also important for a child

Research suggests that practitioners should share with parents the importance of the following.

Developing adult-child relationships which are loving, warm and responsive	Listening, responding, and vocalising/talking – from birth onwards	Providing opportunities to learn in meaningful, enjoyable contexts	Recognising success, giving positive feedback – building confidence and self-esteem
Giving opportunity and encouragement to explore with support, encouraging child to have some control	Providing real experiences; including the child in everyday routines. Learning through action and making sense	Following a child's interests, encouraging deep involvement	Playing together; allowing a child to lead
Storytelling – and sharing stories – at home	Using a wide variety of texts – encouraging repeating of favourites, talking about books	Developing understanding of letter sounds and patterns	Listening to children; engaging in sustained, shared thinking – reasoning, speculating, describing, making connections and questioning
Talking about words, letters, sounds in context of everyday and book experience	Encouraging and affirming early writing attempts	Knowing that growing up bilingual gives positive social and cognitive outcomes	Using and developing a strong first language whilst acquiring a second [including visual languages such as British Sign Language (BSL)]

(Nutbrown and others 2005; Siraj-Blatchford and McCallum 2005; DfES(2002b); National Literacy Trust 2001)