

LANGUAGE

It was very hard for me to learn how to read. It did not seem logical for the letter "m" to be called "em," and yet with some vowel following it you did not say "ema" but "ma."

It was impossible for me to read that way. At last, when I went to the Montessori school, the teacher did not teach me the names of the consonants but their sounds. In this way I could read the first book I found in a dusty chest in the storeroom of the house. It was tattered and incomplete, but it involved me in so intense a way that Sara's fiancé had a terrifying premonition as he walked by: "Damn! This kid's going to be a writer."

— Gabriel García Márquez

Nobel Prize recipient for literature

The main influence on the development of a child's spoken and written language is family. The adult should speak clearly and precisely to the child. Reading aloud gives the message that reading is fun, and introduces

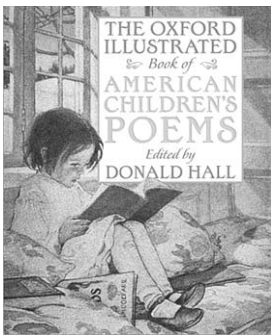


Children read earlier in Montessori classes because they are not required to read aloud, but silently, to themselves.

concepts and vocabulary that would not usually come up in spoken language.

Reading and writing should not be taught to a child before age six or seven, but, given the sensorial experiences of appropriate materials a child of normal intelligence will quite naturally teach herself to read and write sometimes as early as three or four years of age. Here is a quote from Dr. Montessori about her experience in the first Casa dei Bambini, "house of children," in Rome in the beginning of the 20th century:

Ours was a house for children, rather than a real school. We had prepared a place for children where a diffused culture could be assimilated from the environment, without any need for direct instruction . . . Yet these children learned to read and write before they were five, and no one had given them



AMERICAN CHILDREN'S POEMS

A MUST HAVE, beautifully illustrated anthology of 81 poems representing American literature, history, and culture. Poets include Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, Carl Sandburg, T.S. Eliot, James Whitcomb Riley, Eugene Field, Ogden Nash, Langston Hughes, Dr. Seuss, John Ciardi, Shel Silverstein, and Janet Wong. Softcover, 8.25" x 10.25", color, 90 pages.

DL237 \$12.95

FAVORITE AGE 3-6 STORY CD'S

Have you ever noticed that the young child wants to hear the same story over and over again with no changes? This is an important step in learning language. Please do not stop reading to your child, but these CD's by Jim Weiss provide a wonderful way for them to choose the story and repeat and repeat and repeat—and to learn to create pictures in the mind! *Animal Tales*: stories from Grimm, Aesop, Chaucer, etc. *Tell Me a Story*: classics such as Goldilocks, Little Red Hen, Rumpelstiltskin. *Uncle Wiggly's Storybook*: the kindhearted, resourceful rabbit gentleman who has pleased generations of young readers.

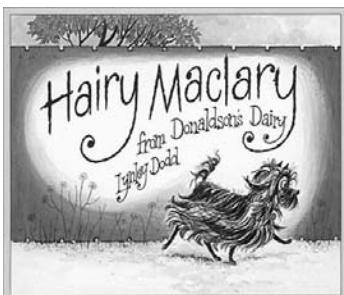
EL720 <i>Animal Tales</i>	\$14.95
EL721 <i>Tell Me a Story</i>	\$14.95
EL722 <i>Uncle Wiggly's Storybook</i>	\$14.95
EL725 <i>Favorite 3-6 Story Set/3</i>	\$44.00



HAIRY MACLARY & SLINKY MALINKI

These wonderful books began to be published in New Zealand almost 20 years ago and are finally available in the USA! The characters draw the children into the story and expose them to a wealth of excellent vocabulary and rhyme. They were introduced to us, as were most things in this section, by Montessori teacher trainers who lecture in language. Softcover, 9" x 6.75", color, 32 pages.

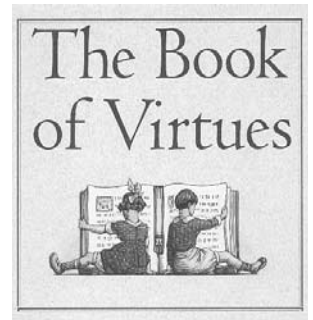
DL260 <i>Hairy Maclary from Donaldson's Dairy</i>	\$5.95
DL261 <i>Hairy Maclary Scattercat</i>	\$5.95
DL262 <i>Slinky Malinki</i>	\$5.95
DL263 <i>Slinky Malinki Cat Flaps</i>	\$5.95
DL264 <i>Harry Maclary and Zachary Quack</i>	\$5.95
DL270 <i>Malinki Maclary Set/5</i>	\$29.50



THE BOOK OF VIRTUES—GREAT MORAL STORIES

The traditional old-favorite stories which teach the morals we really want for our children, including The Tortoise and the Hare, The Little Steam Engine (remember *I think I can!*?), The Selfish Giant, The Boy Who Cried Wolf, Little Red Hen, and The Velveteen Rabbit. There are hundreds more. If you only have one reading book in the home or classroom, we recommend this one—the selections are interesting not only to the young child, but teenagers and adults. Hardcover, 9.5" x 6.75", 831 pages.

EL91 \$32.00



NOTE: Many language items for 3-6 are found in *Michael Olaf's Joyful child, for Birth to Three*.

any lessons. At that time it seemed miraculous that children of four and a half should be able to write, and that they should have learned without the feeling of having been taught.

We puzzled over it for a long time. Only after repeated experiments did we conclude with certainty that all children are endowed with this capacity to absorb culture. If this be true—we then argued—if culture can be acquired without effort, let us provide the children with other elements of culture. And then we saw them 'absorb' far more than reading and writing: botany, zoology, mathematics,

geography, and all with the same ease, spontaneously and without getting tired. And so we discovered that education is not something that the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being. It is not acquired by listening to words, but in virtue of experiences in which the child acts on his environment. The teacher's task is not to talk, but to prepare and arrange a series of motives for cultural activity in a special environment made for the child. My experiments, conducted in many different countries, have now been going on for forty years (ed. Now ninety-plus years), and as the children grew up parents kept asking me to extend my methods to the later ages. We then found that individual activity is the

one factor that stimulates and produces development, and that this is not more true for the little ones of preschool age than it is for the junior, middle and upper school children.
— Maria Montessori
The Absorbent Mind

For success in language a child needs confidence that what she has to say is important, a desire to relate to others, real experience on which language is based, and the physical abilities necessary in reading and writing. There are several things that we can do to help.

We can *listen* attentively and with eye contact, and *speak* to the child in a respectful tone. We can provide a stimulating environment, rich in sensorial experiences and in language—language is meaningless if it is not based on



Sandpaper letters from a school in Thailand!

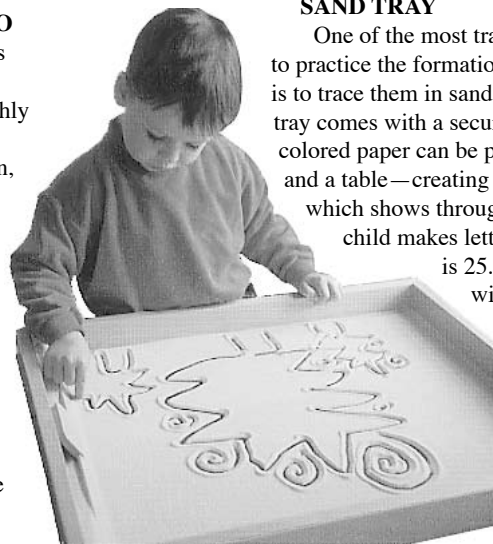


STOREFRONT BINGO

Vocabulary of the Child's Community. This kind of vocabulary material came highly recommended in my AMI Montessori training in London, this set of pictures takes the child beyond the vocabulary of the home, to the



vocabulary of the neighborhood. It will be used as a simple matching exercise at first, and eventually a bingo game as the child learns to name



SAND TRAY

One of the most traditional ways for a child to practice the formation of letters and numbers is to trace them in sand. This solid beechwood tray comes with a security-glass base so that colored paper can be placed between the base and a table—creating a surprise color or colors which shows through the white sand as the child makes letters or pictures. The tray is 25.5" x 19.5" x 2" and comes with 3 pounds of fine, white sand, and three wooden pattern tools for artistic exploration.

DL010 \$180.00

items from the hardware store, music store, pet shop, bakery, toy store and hat shop. Contains: six 10" x 7" storefront cards, 48 product tiles, a drawstring bag holding the tiles, and complete instructions.

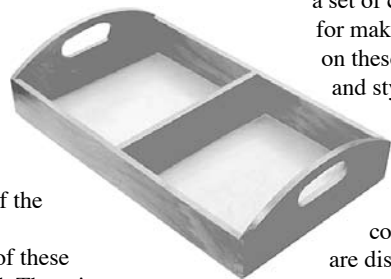
DL870 \$15.50

2-PART LANGUAGE CARD TRAY

A favorite activity in the 3-6 class is the use of 3-part language cards. The pictures with the label are kept in one side of this tray. And the pictures without labels, and the labels themselves, kept in the other. The teacher selects a different set each week to highlight the language of the different areas of the classroom.

This beautiful wood tray is used for all of these language exercises and other activities as well. There is a handle at each end for a firm grasp. The tray is hand made of hardwood, and finished to the highest standards. 11.75" x 7."

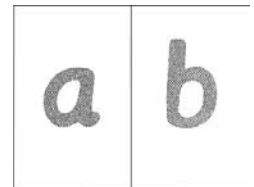
PE07 \$36.00



SANDPAPER LETTER TEMPLATES

These are NOT sandpaper letters, but a set of cardstock templates with directions for making your own. The letters printed on these templates are exactly the size and style used in Montessori training centers—Italics preferred by many teachers because: (1) it teaches the graceful "flow" of the hand which prepares the child for beautiful handwriting, (2) there is no confusion between letters such as "d" and "b" because the letters are distinct from each other, and (3) being halfway between print and cursive, Italics prepares the child to read both. The kit consists of twenty-six 8.5" x 5.5" pieces of white cardstock, each with one printed letter, and instructions for creating sandpaper letters.

DL660 \$14.00



experience.

We can set an example and model precise language in our everyday activities with the child. If we share good literature, in the form of rhymes, songs, poetry and stories we will greatly increase the child's love of language.

LANGUAGE OF THE CHILD'S WORLD

The most important first vocabulary is of objects in the home environment—clothing, kitchen objects, tools, toys, and so forth. Your child will be thrilled to know the names and to be able to use them correctly. All we need to do is to use the correct names, and the precise language for objects and activities, in the presence of the child. Eventually, as she joins us more in conversation, the words of the child's environment will be there.

EXPERIENCE FIRST

In any good language environment, in as many situations as possible, the teacher makes sure that experience precedes vocabulary and pictures of objects. She will introduce real vegetables before vegetable cards, real actions before verb cards, real music before composer picture and labels, real shells before shell cards, and so on.

At home parents can do the same thing—show the kitchen objects, the office or bathroom objects, and then give the opportunity to handle these objects and to learn the names. In this way the child learns that language is connected to the real world.

VOCABULARY CARDS—SPEAKING

If you ever visit a Montessori classroom you will notice that there are many vocabulary books and cards. It is natural that, during this intense interest in words, children be given pictures of everything—to practice and improve their new abilities. These books and cards are valuable for the home. There are many materials in *The Joyful Child, Essential Montessori for 0-3* appropriate for this age. For information on this publication, see www.michaelolaf.net.

THE VOCABULARY OF THE WIDER ENVIRONMENT

A rich and enjoyable vocabulary, and an interesting introduction to the structure of English, is available through poems, finger plays, songs, fables, stories, and even great literature. There is only so much time in a



FIRST ALPHABET PUZZLE

This puzzle provides an excellent way for the child to learn the order of the letters of the alphabet—while enjoying the challenge of putting together a puzzle. It can also be used for making simple words as the child explores sounds and symbols of our letters. When teaching the names of the letters with this puzzle, be sure to use only the sounds, not the traditional names. This simplicity makes learning written language logical and not such a chore. Wood, brightly colored letters, 23" x 15".

DL860 \$62.00

ALPHABET MAGNETS

This is a very pleasant alternative to the old brightly colored plastic magnets made for refrigerators. Instead of tiny magnets inserted in the back, these letters are made of foam, completely backed with sheet magnet. We especially like the colors which are in soft shades - pink, green, blue, and yellow. There are 70 lowercase letters—which are much better for learning than capital letters, and hard to find—and also periods, capital letters and commas. Between 1.5" and 2.25" tall.

DL123 \$13.50

big?



ALPHABET MAGNET SET

When the child is exploring letters, he might want first to sort them, "t's" together, tall and short letters grouped, or even to try to make up words and sentences.

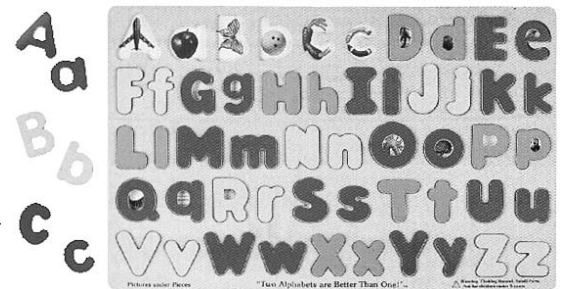
These little magnets

can be put on the refrigerator, or the board and the magnets can be used together. This is excellent for a travel game. There are 99 lower case and 26 upper case magnetic alphabet tiles, 7 blank tiles, and a 9" x 12" magnetic board.

DL12 \$13.00

ALPHABET PUZZLE - LOWER & UPPER CASE LETTERS

The perfect way to teach the child to match lower case to capital letters! It is best to wait until the child is well underway with reading and writing, using only lower case letters and the *sounds* of letters, before expecting him to learn the capital letters and the *names* of letters. With this puzzle the child can begin to absorb the relationship between



lower case letters and capitals easily. There are pictures beneath each letter for "sounding out" practice. The colors of each pair of letters matches so the child can also use this as a matching puzzle outside the puzzle frame. The wooden puzzle is 12" x 18", and the letters are red, blue, yellow, and green.

DL485 \$20.00

day for reading to children so we should make the best of these times by providing the best in literature and nonfiction that we can find.

Even in these early years, we give the language as we present the objects and activities that lay the foundation for many future academic studies. As you look through the pages of *Child of the World* you will find many opportunities for enriching experience and vocabulary. Give the correct names for the toys a child plays with, the colors and shapes of blocks, the parts of a broom or mop, activities such as *wash, sweep, pound, pour*; adjectives such as *hot and cold, loud and soft*; in the Earth section the names of the planets, rocks and continents, or the parts of the electric circuit; in the Plant and Animal sections

the names of flowers, the fruits and vegetables of the home, the colors of leaves in the fall, shells, fossils, animals of all kinds, and dinosaur models; in the People section the names of flags, famous people, countries and states; in the Music and Art sections the names of musical instruments of the world, famous paintings, artists and musicians; and in the math section plane and solid shapes, counting systems in several languages, measurement terms.

And this is just the beginning. Look around your own home and classroom for the elements that make your particular environments unique, and find the objects, activities, and vocabulary that you can share with children.

PRE-READING AND WRITING

There are three main areas where we can help children prepare for reading and writing. When the ground is well prepared over the years before reading and writing is attempted, acquiring these skills is very enjoyable.

(1) Physical Skills—balance, using the hands, coordination of eye-hand work, learning to concentrate and focus, recognizing sizes and shapes, working with knobbed puzzles, crayons and pencils, and practice in speaking.

(2) Mental Skills—absorbing and using language, learning the "sounds" that each letter makes (not the 'names' of the letter) and playing games to break up words into sounds—the "I spy" game.

(3) Social Skills—living in homes where people talk at the table, sit down

PHONETIC READING CARDS

Reading card sets that take children happily through the beginning stages of reading. Each *Packet* contains 6 control cards (3¾" x 4¼"), 6 matching picture cards (3¾" x 3"), and 6 word cards (3¾" x 1¼"); 18 cards per *Packet*.

Level 1: the simplest, truly phonetic words (*cat, dog, bed, gum*). There are 5 *packets*, or 90 cards;

Level 2: more challenging words that include blends such as "cr", "sk", and "st" (*mask, crab, frog, flag*). There are 5 *packets*, or 90 cards;

Level 3a, Traditional Phonograms: in each word there is a single phonogram/ digraph highlighted in red, the rest of the word phonetic (*paint, tree, book, ship*). There are 9 *packets*, or 162 cards;

Level 3b, Other Phonograms: in each word there is a single phonogram/ digraph highlighted in red, the rest of the word phonetic (*leaf, lime, coin, owl*). There are 10 *packets*, or 180 cards. Protected by heavy laminate, corners rounded, for years of use.

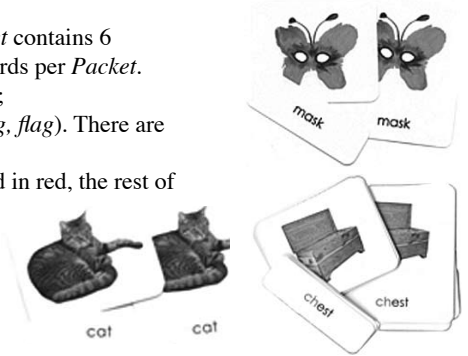
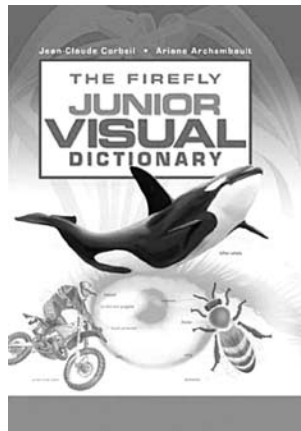
- (*) **DL160** Phonetic Reading Cards, Level 1 **\$59.95**
- (*) **DL161** Phonetic Reading Cards, Level 2 **\$59.95**
- (*) **DL162** Phonetic Reading Cards, Level 3a **\$112.95**
- (*) **DL163** Phonetic Reading Cards, Level 3b **\$124.95**

THE FIREFLY JUNIOR VISUAL DICTIONARY

This book is a standard in the 3-6+ Montessori classes, and a wonderful first reading book for the home. Visual dictionaries for this age come and go and we are always on the look-out for the best available.

This one contains selections that are very interesting to the child such as traffic signs, vegetable kingdom, animal kingdom, human being, food, clothing and personal objects, the objects about the house, music, vehicles. It also contains the pictures and vocabulary that will interest the child in subjects that will be studied throughout life such as sports, geography, energy, society, symbols. 12,000 terms, 2,000 illustrations, all in full color. Hardcover, 7" x 9.5", 320 pages.

DL101 **\$19.95**



HOME & TOWN VOCABULARY CARDS

These beautiful "first" vocabulary cards are printed in full color, laminated, the corners rounded, and they will last for years. First teach the child the names of these objects with REAL OBJECTS, then using the unlabeled cards as flashcards to practice and solidify the vocabulary. When the child begins to read single words she can read the label, match it to the picture, and then check her own work with the labeled cards. This makes it possible for a child to practice reading at anytime, without help, and is far more valuable than having a child read aloud.

There are 12 unlabeled pictures in each set, 12 labels, and 12 labeled pictures for checking work. 36 pieces in all per set. The labeled cards are 3.75" x 4.24", All cards are laminated, the corners rounded.

- DL370** Around Town **\$18.95**
- DL372** Around the House **\$18.95**
- DL374** Transportation **\$18.95**



and have conversations, and read, instead of watching television or "learning language" on a computer.

THE I SPY GAME

When a child knows the names of objects in pictures, introduce the *I Spy Game*. Pick up an object, a ball. Say "I spy something in my hand that begins with *b*." (Make the short *b* sound, not the sound of the name of the letter *bee*.) Do this with several objects, maybe the same ones for weeks. Eventually you can use pictures for this game as well.

Later go on to sound out the ending sound "Something that begins with *p* and ends with *n*" (*pen*), and finally the whole word "Please hand me the *"p-e-n-s-l"* (pencil).

This is similar to spelling, but we

say isolated sounds, not letters. *Lamb* would be sounded out as *l-a-m*. This is not spelling or reading, but a vital and enjoyable exploration of sounds of language. You will be amazed at the ability of a child to later decode words when he has had this preparation.

READING AND WRITING

Children should never be forced to read silently or aloud, or to write, at a young age. But the tools for these skills, when offered and their use shown, prepare and inspire many. This is the *sensitive period* in a child's life for knowing the names of everything, including the sounds of letters, and for touching and feeling. So we offer letters made of sandpaper to trace with their fingers while saying the sound.

To meet the child's need to touch and feel, and to learn the names of objects in the environment, we use sandpaper letters. The child feels and says the sound, repeating many times. The traditional sandpaper letters used in the 3-6 class are very sturdy and expensive, but it is possible to make some at home, or for the child to trace letters in corn meal or sand. Since 99% of written language is in lower case letters, you will be doing the child a favor to begin with these ("a" and "b," not "A" and "B"), and with the sounds instead of the names of the letters. Introducing capital letters first puts off both reading and writing.

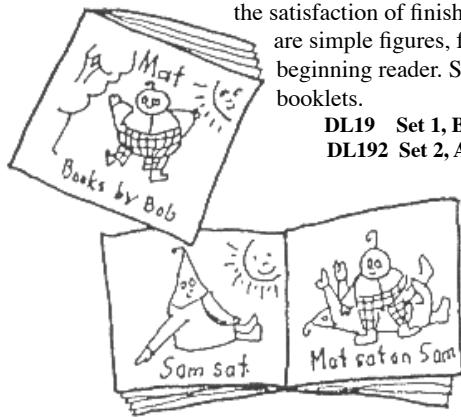
For those who were not physically ready to hold a pencil and write, but who were mentally ready, Dr. Montessori prepared cutout movable letters for their work. Similar *movable alphabets* are still

BOB BOOKS

When you notice that a child is starting to sound out words on her own and has learned many of the letter sounds (not the names), it is time to offer these little books. They were drawn and written by a teacher for the students to fill a gap in beginning reading books.

The first set of twelve books contains simple, short, mostly phonetic words, and the next set includes more words per page and a few non-phonetic words.

The stories are about nonsensical imaginary figures who interact in delightful ways. The progression is arranged to provide success for the child, and the satisfaction of finishing a whole book! The drawings are simple figures, funny enough to interest an older beginning reader. Softcover, 4.5" x 5.5", two boxes of booklets.



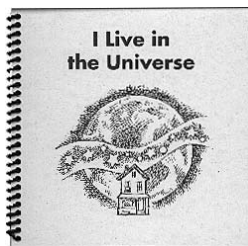
DL19 Set 1, Beginning Readers (12 Books) \$17.00
DL192 Set 2, Advanced Beginner (8 Books) \$17.00

PEACE READERS

This is a set of charming and important early reading books—to read to the child—and later for the child to read. The drawings are simple hand-drawn figures and the subjects are important.

The titles are: *I Live in the Universe*; *I Look "Out" at the Stars*; *I Know What Gravity Does*; *Pledge to the Earth*; *I Offer You Peace*. And a new one: (*) *When I Make Silence*. Printed in black ink on five different earth tone colors of cardstock, 5.5" x 5.5", a set of 6 books.

(*) **DL071 Set/6 \$36.00**



BOOKS TO REMEMBER, MONTESSORI READERS

These special books were developed by a Montessori teacher who was not able to find stories about real events, with beautiful illustrations, that beginning readers could actually read—so she wrote them and found the artists to illustrate her stories.

We read and tested all of these books

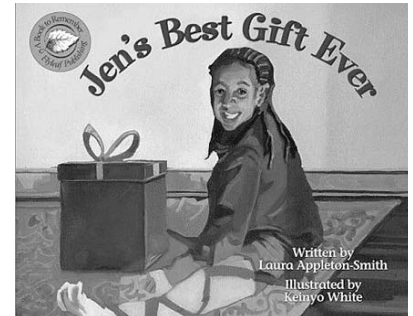
and the selection below was chosen by children. Each book sticks to the phonetic sounds of the alphabet and introduces a few puzzle words (such as "I" and "she") that can be taught ahead of time, and gives repetition to one new blend such as "er". The children love the fact that they can read real books and adults value the guide for using the books that is found in the back of each. Note: Frank the Fish is a child's first read-it-yourself chapter book! Softcover, 9" x 7.5", color, 28 pages.

LEVEL ONE:

DL510 Sunset Pond	\$8.95
DL512 Jen's Best Gift Ever	\$8.95
DL514 Meg & Jim's Sled Trip	\$8.95
DL516 It is Halloween	\$8.95
DL520 Level One/4 books	\$35.50

LEVEL TWO:

DL540 Frank the Fish	\$8.95
DL542 Mr. Sanchez....Kick Ball	\$8.95
DL544 My Summer Camping Trip	\$8.95
DL546 A Sled Dog Morning	\$8.95
DL550 Level Two/4 books	\$35.50



used in schools today.

Children often spontaneously "explode" into writing, not with correct spelling, but with great joy and enthusiasm, several months before reading. It is very important the child's first "writing" is from her own head, and not from objects and pictures. Ask questions like "What did you have for breakfast?" or "What did you see on the way to school?" to inspire creative writing from the very beginning.

VOCABULARY CARDS—READING

When a child first begins to recognize the sounds of letters in groups—words—he is doing this silently in his head. Saying these words aloud complicates the process, especially if someone is listening. So a child is

NEVER asked to READ ALOUD in the Montessori class.

To provide practice with this new, exciting single-word skill, give the child pictures and labels for objects for which he already knows the names. He reads each label and matches it to the picture. Then, if the names of the objects have been written on the back of the picture cards, the child can turn the pictures over to see if he has placed the labels correctly. Children love reading and checking their own work and will repeat over and over again till they get it exactly right. Hundreds of meaningful words can be added to the child's reading vocabulary in this way.

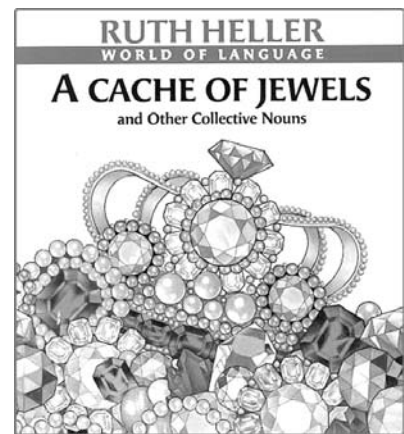
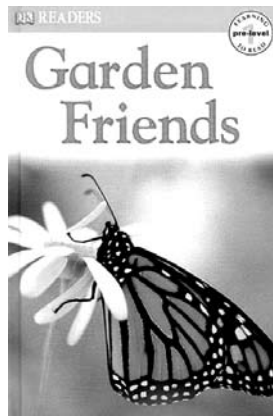
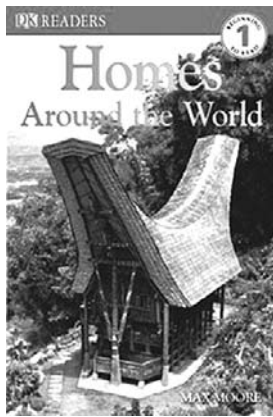
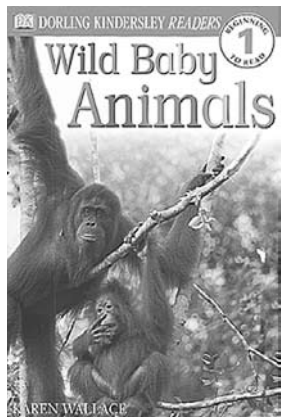
Just as with giving spoken vocabulary, the most important words to give the child when beginning to read

are the labels of the common objects in the home or classroom.

READING BOOKS

Just as the child has been taught the names of vocabulary card images before being asked to read them (silently) the first early readers should have been read to the child, by an adult or older child, many times before he is expected to read them (silently) for himself.

Above all, this work must be offered in a spirit of enjoyment and not imposed. Adults really have to forget the tedious process they might have gone through to learn to read, and to approach it in a spirit of fun and ease.



DK (DORIS KINDERSLEY) FIRST READERS

Here are two levels of very interesting nonfiction early readers that children love. The *pre-level* readers have labels just like the vocabulary cards the child are used to and one sentence per page. *Level 1* readers has several sentences per page describing clear illustrations. Softcover, 6" x 9", color, 32 pages.

PRE-LEVEL 1

- DL300 *Farm Animals* \$4.00
- DL302 *Garden Friends* \$4.00
- DL304 *Fishy Tales* \$4.00
- DL310 *Prelevel Set/3* \$11.95

LEVEL 1

- DL320 *A Day at Greenhill Farm* \$4.00
- DL322 *Wild Baby Animals* \$4.00
- DL324 *A Day at Seagull Beach* \$4.00
- DL326 *Busy Buzzy Bee* \$4.00
- DL328 *Born To Be a Butterfly* \$4.00
- DL330 *Tale of a Tadpole* \$4.00
- (*) DL332 *Homes around the world* \$4.00
- (*) DL336 *Level I, Set/7* \$27.00

GRAMMAR BOOKS

This set of books provides a simple, colorful, fun way to be introduced to an important subject—grammar. In these amazing first *grammar books*, nouns, verbs, and other parts of speech are presented with simple rhyme and beautiful pictures. Before age six children will naturally begin to abstract the concept and use, for example of the *noun*, and to begin to explore language, a natural interest at this age. Older children (and adults) find that these books simplify concepts that may have seemed complicated at school. Use these books for review and lessons for older children. Softcover, 9" x 9", color, 48 pages.

- DL81 *Cache of Jewels (collective nouns)* \$8.00
- DL83 *Luscious Lollipops (adjectives)* \$8.00
- DL85 *Up, Up, and Away (adverbs)* \$8.00
- DL851 *Behind the Mask (prepositions)* \$8.00
- DL852 *Mine, All Mine (pronouns)* \$7.00
- DL853 *Fantastic! Wow! Unreal! (interjections/conjunctions)* \$7.00
- DL82 *Kites Sail High (verbs)* \$8.00
- DL84 *Merry-go-round (nouns)* \$8.00
- DL857 *Grammar Books, Set/8* \$61.00

NOTE: See page 17 for The Farm, used for grammar games.

