



# Sing into Reading!



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Visit [www.Nancymusic.com](http://www.Nancymusic.com) for free song downloads and information, or to order Nancy's recordings.

## What Are The Six Early Reading Skills?

- ◆ **Vocabulary-** Knowing the names of things
- ◆ **Print Motivation-** Being interested in and enjoying books
- ◆ **Print awareness-** Noticing print, how to handle a book, how to follow words on a page
- ◆ **Letter Knowledge-** Knowing letters are different from each other, knowing their names and sounds
- ◆ **Narrative Skills-** Being able to describe things and events and tell stories
- ◆ **Phonological Awareness-** Being able to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words

## How Does Singing Help Teach Children These Skills?

- ◆ Our brains are uniquely wired to respond to music, from *before* the time we are born.
- ◆ Because singing is interactive, it involves even the youngest children in language.
- ◆ Children learn language through repetition, and as songs are repeated the rhythm of the words is internalized.
- ◆ Singing brings a natural awareness of words, as each syllable or sound in a word gets a different note.
- ◆ Nursery rhymes and finger plays present a wide vocabulary, and teach sentence structure, story concepts and comprehension.
- ◆ The only things we remember word-for-word from our childhoods, are childhood songs and some rhymes!
- ◆ Children learn oral language before written language, and the more experience they have with oral language, the better prepared they will be for interpreting written words.
- ◆ Active participation in music (singing) increases retention, builds memory, and actually helps grow the brain in young children!
- ◆ Because children naturally love to sing, there is no “teaching,” just doing!

## How Can I Help Children Build Early Literacy Skills Though Singing?

This is the fun part! You are probably already involved in activities that will lay the foundation for early literacy. So just sing and have fun!

- ◆ Sing throughout your day, not just at circle time. Research shows that the more music a child experiences, the greater the benefits.
- ◆ Play “complex” music in the classroom. Examples of complex music are classical music or singing rounds. There are some wonderful classical recordings available just for young children.
- ◆ Make up songs, or sing familiar songs like “The Wheels on the Bus” using children’s names.
- ◆ Make up songs about the foods as you prepare them. Emphasize and exaggerate the letter sounds.
- ◆ Collect or make rhythm instruments, and use them to reinforce syllables and keep a steady beat as you sing. The same can be done with clapping.
- ◆ Use “books that sing” often as a daily part of your circle time (suggested titles on resource page). Ask your children's librarian to help you find them in the picture book section.
- ◆ Sing traditional folk songs with your children, as they bring with them a knowledge of our culture and language. Expand on them. For example, if you sing a song from another land, get out a map or globe and show children where the song comes from. Ask questions, and use the opportunity to build those narrative skills!