Reading aloud, singing, doing fingerplays and engaging young children in conversation are all ways that parents and caregivers lay the foundation for young children to become successful readers and writers. The following activities were created to promote literacy with young children through hands-on, real-life experiences that will stimulate learning.

Have fun and “Grow a Reader!”

**This is the Way We Make the Bread**  
(To the tune of “Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush”)

This is the way we mix the dough, mix, the dough, mix the dough.  
This is the way we mix the dough to make some bread for you!

This is the way we knead the dough, knead the dough, knead the dough.  
This is the way we knead the dough to make some bread for you.

This is the way we shape the dough, shape the dough, shape the dough.  
This is the way we shape the dough to make some bread for you.

This is the way we bake the dough, bake the dough, bake the dough.  
This is the way we bake the dough to make some bread for you.

**BUBBLE, BUBBLE, BUBBLE**  
(Yeast Experiment)

To demonstrate the **effects of yeast when making bread**, try this experiment.

1. Pour one package of dry yeast, ½ cup of sugar, and one cup of warm water into an empty soda bottle.  
2. Cover the bottle opening with a small balloon and watch the balloon expand.
ALLIGATOR PIE
(Keep the 1-2 beat by patting lap and clapping hands while chanting)

Alligator Pie, Alligator Pie,
If I don’t get some I think I’m gonna cry.
You can take away my green grass,
You can take away my sky,
But please don’t take away my Alligator Pie.

Alligator Bread, Alligator Bread,
If I don’t get some I think I’ll shave my head.
You can take away my pillow,
You can take away my bread,
But please don’t take away my Alligator Bread.

Alligator Cake, Alligator Cake,
If I don’t get some I think I’m gonna break.
You can take away my french fries,
You can take away my shake,
But please don’t take away my Alligator Cake.

PLAYDOUGH RECIPE*

Make bread, muffins, and rolls using white play dough, rolling pins
and mini bread and muffin tins.

(Enough for 3 children. Recipe can be doubled)

**Ingredients:**
- 1/4 cup salt
- 2 cups flour
- 4 t cream of tartar
- 2 T cooking oil
- 2 cups water
- Food coloring

**Directions:**
1. Put food coloring in water.
2. Combine all ingredients and cook over medium heat.
3. Stir constantly until ball forms.
4. Remove from heat.
5. Knead ball of dough until smooth.

*all cooking projects require adult supervision.*
ART IDEAS

Bread Clay

1 slice of stale, dry white bread
1 tablespoon white glue
Food coloring (optional)

Discard crust and break bread into small pieces. Place bread pieces in bowl. Pour glue over bread and mix. Add food coloring if desired. Knead until soft and pliable. Dries hard in 12 hours. (Keeps several days in the refrigerator when sealed in an air tight container.)

Ingredients:

1 ½ cups whole wheat flour
1 pkg. dry yeast
1 t. salt
2 T. honey
2 T. vegetable oil
1 c. hot water
1 c. white flour
Nonstick spray

Directions:

1. Pour whole wheat flour, yeast and salt into bag
2. Seal bag and shake
3. Open bag and add oil, honey and water
4. Seal bag, squeezing out air
5. Squeeze ingredients to mix
6. Open bag and add white flour
7. Seal again and squeeze and knead for ten minutes
8. Place bag in warm place, such as a sunny windowsill and cover with dishtowel
9. Let rise for about 1 hour (dough doubles in size)
10. Spray loaf pan with nonstick spray
11. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
12. Punch dough down through bag
13. Remove dough from bag and place in pan
14. Cover pan with dishtowel and set aside
15. Let dough rise until it reaches top of the pan’s sides
16. Bake until golden, about 35 minutes
17. Let bread cool before serving

*all cooking projects require adult supervision.
NOW YOU'RE COOKING!*  

Painted Toast  
Add food coloring to milk and let children paint designs on bread with new (or cooking only) paint brushes. Toast the bread and eat!

Croutons  (a good use for stale bread)
- Butter slices of bread or brush with olive oil.
- Sprinkle with garlic powder if desired.
- Cut bread into ½ inch cubes.
- Bake in a 375 degree oven for 10 to 15 minutes, until bread is golden brown and crisp.

*all cooking projects require adult supervision.

MAKING A MUSICAL PEANUT BUTTER SANDWICH

You and the children can act out making a peanut butter sandwich while reciting the refrain of the classic chant “Peanut Butter and Jelly. Be sure to act out washing and drying your hands, before the actual singing begins. A fun action to use when singing “Peanut, Peanut Butter” is to shake hands in front of you to the right side of your body, and when singing “Jelly“, move your hands to the left and spread open fingers quickly.

Making a real peanut butter and jelly sandwich is a yummy follow up activity.

For a fun musical version, try the CD: Songs for Wiggleworms.

Litery Connection: Introduce or follow up this activity by reading Peanut Butter and Jelly by Nadine Bernard Westcott
Bring the books to life with these simple ideas that highlight early literacy skills.

**Bread is for Eating** by David Gershator

**Presentation Notes:**
Beginning with the seed, the process of making bread is described. The book is accompanied by lyrical text in both Spanish and English as well as gorgeous illustrations featuring a Guatemalan setting. Have children join in and sing along with the songs in Spanish. Have them recount the steps involved in making bread to reinforce sequencing skills.

**Skills:** Narrative, Phonological Awareness, Vocabulary

**Peanut Butter and Jelly** Illustrated by Nadine Bernard Westcott

**Presentation Notes:** Illustrations add to the fun of this action rhyme about this perennial sandwich favorite. Ask children to keep the beat by slapping their thighs or clapping their hands during the refrain, then have them act out the steps involved in making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. If you need ideas, there are suggested actions at the back of the book.

**Skills:** Print Motivation, Vocabulary, Phonological Awareness

**The Giant Jam Sandwich** by John Vernon Lord

**Presentation Notes:** A town with a wasp problem devises a plan involving a giant jam sandwich to secure their freedom. Use this tale of imagination, creative problem-solving and teamwork to inspire discussions of cause, effect and sequencing. While reading aloud, pause and let children fill in the rhyming words to build vocabulary.

**Skills:** Narrative, Vocabulary, Phonological Awareness
**Bread, Bread, Bread** by Ann Morris

**Presentation Notes:** Photographs from around the world help create this simple but effective non-fiction book. After reading aloud to the group, encourage children to look at the different types of bread at their own homes or when they go to the store. Bring samples of bread to share with the children and have them describe the taste, texture and color using a wide variety of **adjectives**.

**Skills:** Vocabulary, Print Motivation

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**The Little Red Hen** by Jerry Pinkney

**Presentation Notes:** Have the children join in on the refrain of “not I” recited by all the animals in this classic story about the rewards of hard work and value of being helpful. Point out the colored text. Ask the children to talk about why words are particular colors.

**Skills:** Narrative, Print Awareness

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**MORE GREAT BOOKS**

**Bread and Jam for Frances** by Russell Hoban

**Everybody Bakes Bread** by Norah Dooley

**Tony’s Bread** by Tomie DePaola

**From Wheat to Bread** by Stacy Taus-Bolstad

**Sam’s Sandwich** by David Pelham