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!”

**PIZZA CHANT**

Make pizza pieces from construction paper or use pieces from a play pizza set. When the child’s name is called, he/she removes a piece of pizza from a pan. You can also use this chant when serving real pizza!

6 pieces of pizza, tasty as can be,  
(child’s name) can eat a slice  
And leave some for me.

5 pieces of pizza, tasty as can be,  
(child’s name) can eat a slice  
And leave some for me.  
(Continue to count down)

1 piece of pizza, tasty as can be,  
(child’s) name can eat a slice  
And leave none for me!  
Yum, yum! That was fun!
PIZZA SONG
(To “Here We go ‘Round the Mulberry Bush”)

This is the way we roll the dough,
Roll the dough, roll the dough
This is the way we roll the dough when we make a pizza.

This is the way we spread the sauce…
This is the way we grate the cheese…
This is the way we put on the meat…
This is the way we bake the pizza …
This is the way we slice it up…
This is the way we eat it up…

NOW YOU’RE COOKING*

Mini Pizzas

Ingredients:
♦ A variety of pizza toppings - pepperoni, cheese, sausage, mushrooms, green peppers, tomato, etc.
♦ English muffins, bagels, or refrigerator biscuits
♦ Prepared pizza sauce

Directions:
1. Children can spread pizza sauce on pizza crust and then add desired toppings and cheese.
2. Broil the pizzas if using English muffins or bagels.
3. Bake at 400 degrees for 10 minutes if using refrigerator biscuits.

* All cooking projects require adult supervision.
GRAPHING FAVORITE PIZZA TOPPINGS

Using the graph below as a sample, make a graph with different kinds of pizza toppings as headings across the top of the paper. Put children’s names in the squares going down the left side of the graph. Each child can put a sticker or make a mark in a square under his/her favorite topping.

Things to discuss:
♦ A graph is a picture that gives you information.
♦ Talk about what rows and columns are. How many are there of each?
♦ As children “vote”, talk about more, less, and equal.
♦ Count the total number of votes.

SAMPLE GRAPH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child's Name</th>
<th>Pepperoni</th>
<th>Mushrooms</th>
<th>Sausage</th>
<th>Green Peppers</th>
<th>Other?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ART IDEAS

Play dough pizzas

Use different colors of play dough to make pizzas with their toppings. The children can roll out the dough with the rolling pins and make cheese with a garlic press.

Paper plate collages

Using white paper plates as a base, make a collage pizza by gluing on feathers, pom poms, tissue paper, paper scraps, buttons, ribbon, etc.

PLAYDOUGH RECIPE*

(Enough for three children. Can be doubled)

Ingredients:
2 cups flour
2 tablespoons cooking oil
2 cups water
¼ cup salt
4 teaspoons cream of tartar
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.
Bring books to life with these simple ideas that highlight early literacy skills.

**Pete's a Pizza** by William Steig

**Presentation Notes:** Point out the letter “P” in both words of the title. Invite children to share what makes them in a bad mood, what cheers them up and what makes them giggle.

**Skills Featured:**
Letter Knowledge; Narrative

**The Little Red Hen Makes a Pizza** retold by Philemon Sturges

**Presentation Notes:** Invite the children to join in with the “not I” refrain that is heard from the animals throughout the story and then let them guess the animals answers to “Would anybody like some pizza?” and “Who will help me do the dishes?” Pair with a classic version of “The Little Red Hen” and encourage children to find the similarities and differences between the two stories.

**Skills Featured:**
Print Motivation, Narrative

**Little Nino's Pizzeria** by Karen Barbour

**Presentation Notes:** Talk about the action words used in the story to describe Tony’s jobs like “knead,” “stir” and “grate” and have children think up actions to match. Throughout the book, point out the labels on ingredients and the character’s nametags.

**Skills Featured:**
Vocabulary; Print Awareness

**Let's Make Pizza** by Mary Hill

**Presentation Notes:** A father and daughter make a pizza step by step in this basic but informative non-fiction book. Point out bold text and ask children what they like on their pizza. For older children, point out the page numbers, contents, glossary and index. Identify these book parts and discuss that they are tools to help you find information quickly.

**Skills Featured:** Print Awareness, Narrative
Pizza at Sally’s by Monica Wellington

Presentation Notes: Point out the shop names, ingredient labels and street signs to reinforce print awareness and encourage children to look around their own neighborhoods and notice that words are everywhere! In addition to the recipe in the back of the book, help the children make their own lists of ingredients for their pizzas.

Skills Featured:
Print Awareness; Print Motivation; Narrative

MORE GREAT BOOKS!

Pizza Party by Grace Maccarone

Pizza Counting by Christina Dobson

The Pizza That We Made by Joan Holub

What Do You Want on Your Pizza? by William Boniface

The Princess and the Pizza by Mary Jane Auch