

# Literacy Fundamentals: Integrating Academics and Recreation for School Aged Children

An atmosphere that is casual and relaxed is the best environment for learning.

Books are available on every topic of interest to children.

If a child is interested in the subject matter of a book, s/he will be more likely to want to read that book.

Comic books are literature. They have dialogue, adventurous plots, interesting characters, and most importantly are seen by children as fun to read. Any reading a child enjoys is likely to lead to more reading. A comic book version of a classic might lead to an interest in the original work.

Dramas can be created, staged and presented, out of everything from actual life experiences, books, news stories or students' imaginations.

Education happens most effectively when children are happy and at play.

Fractions can be taught by sharing actual pie, dividing table space or even real money. The more actual investment a student has in the utilization of real math, the more motivated is he or she to learn math skills.

Geography and history can be studied by tracing students' family origins and migrations—even within San Francisco.

Homework can be fun too. TV can be included as a venue of observation. Those with cable can be asked to watch a program in another language.

Imagination is crucial to the creative spirit. Encourage its development with your interest and positive attention.

Jumping rope and juggling involve physical dexterity, and can be studied for their historical and cultural significance.

Kitchens are venues ripe with learning potential.

Recipes require math, cleaning utilizes chemistry (cooking too!), sharing involves problem solving skills and eating can inspire discussions about nutrition. Kids, like adults, talk more easily in kitchens too.

Lunchtime can be an opportunity for social and political discussions.

Music reflects culture and history, uses math and science, and promotes relaxation and learning other subjects too.

News stories are great entries for learning and discussing history, geography, politics, economics and other subjects.

Open-ended questions tend to elicit the most creative responses.

Poetry can be read and written both individually and as a group.

Quotation books provide good, short introductions to literary and historical figures and opinions about a variety of subjects to discuss

Relaxation loosens the muscles and the mind for learning.

Science is the study of questions about the natural world within and around us.

Toys and games provide a fun based way to learn all sort of subjects from physics (pulleys, car racetracks, yo-yos), drama (dolls, puppets), chemistry (bubbles), design (blocks, legos, doll houses), vocabulary (Scrabble, Boggle, hangman), etc.

Understanding is promoted by exploration.

Vocabularies are enhanced by hearing new words used in context. Keep a dictionary in the classroom and use it.

Weather is earth science. Water play is physics. Word play is English.

Xylophones make music. Jazz bands can be formed from any type and combination of instruments.

~~Young~~ children need for their interests + talents to be noticed and encouraged,

Zoology includes the observation of insects and birds, the understanding of dogs and cats, and exploring ourselves as animals.

- 1 Teacher or summer program Can make a huge difference in a child's life.
- 2 or more classrooms can join forces to have a schoolyard Olympics (combining physical education, history and math)
- 3 are a good number of choices to present to a class for a project decision.

