



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP

Family Literacy at Home

“[Family Literacy at Home](#)” is a bilingual video series from Colorín Colorado, the nation’s leading website about serving English language learners (ELLs). It highlights how **all** families can support their child’s literacy development, regardless of the adults’ literacy level. The six videos in the series are available in English and Spanish.

You are welcome to share these videos online, via text or messaging apps, or on school social media channels. You can also use them in family engagement events. If you’d like to include these videos in your outreach, here are some activity ideas!

In addition, our [related family literacy tip sheet](#) is available in 16 languages. The videos, guide, and tip sheets are all available at: www.colorincolorado.org/family-literacy-bilingual-videos.

Planning an event

Before scheduling a family event:

- Ask bilingual staff members or volunteers who speak families’ languages to help.
- Ask family liaisons to brainstorm well-known songs and stories from families’ cultures.
- Find some bilingual books in families’ languages to bring to the session.
- Find some common objects to bring that families would have at home, such as plastic cups, a box of cereal, a bottle of shampoo, and pairs of socks.
- Consider inviting a school librarian or public librarian to the event.
- If the video is not available in all of your families’ languages, plan on having interpreters available who can share the content of the video in other languages.

For additional suggestions on planning events with multilingual families, see our [related guide](#)!

Sharing the video with families

1. Ask families to sit in small groups. (Group families by language if possible.)
2. Assign a bilingual staff member or parent volunteer to each group to facilitate.
3. Pass out the literacy tip sheet in families’ languages.
4. Show families the videos in their languages.

Tip: *You may wish to use laptops in small groups so that you can show the video in multiple languages simultaneously.*





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Family Literacy at Home: Activities

The following activities are designed to encourage discussion among families. You may wish to try each activity listed below, or go more in-depth on just a few activities. Keep in mind that:

- Families may have varying levels of literacy. The activities below focus on ideas that families can try regardless of literacy level.
- Families may be hesitant to speak about their language and culture, especially if they have faced discrimination. Keep a warm, encouraging tone to build trust and foster engagement!
- You may wish to ask families to share ideas from their small groups with the bigger group after each activity or at the closing of the event.

ACTIVITY #1



Family Literacy Tips for Babies: Singing Songs and Nursery Rhymes

- Ask families what songs, rhymes, or games are sung with babies and children in their language.
- Ask your bilingual volunteers for ideas!

For example, in Spanish, you can find well-known songs and rhymes such as “[Los pollitos](#)” in [these books and collections](#).

Going deeper: Have families compare the lyrics from the different versions of popular songs. See if there are any differences! Librarian Lucía Gonzalez [notes that](#) families can get pretty animated about which version is the “right” one! And you might see if a brave participant would lead a sing-a-long!

ACTIVITY #2



Family Literacy Tips for Young Children: Talking Together

- Ask families what activities they do with their children each day (eating, bath time, etc.).
- Demonstrate how they might talk about some common objects they use during those daily activities, such as pouring out water from a plastic cup in the bath.
- Demonstrate guessing or matching games that focus on color, size, counting, etc., such as matching socks.

Going deeper: Ask families to try coming up with a game with some common objects in their small groups and then share their ideas with the larger group.



For more ideas ...
ColorinColorado.org/reading





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Family Literacy at Home: Activities

ACTIVITY #3

Family Literacy Tips for Older Children and Teens: A Lifelong Love of Reading

- Ask families about their children's favorite activities and interests.
- Pass out some different kinds of books for families to see.
- Tell families about the kinds of books they can find at the school or public library, including books they can download on their phone.

Going deeper: If a librarian is attending the event, ask them to share some book titles related to the interests and activities that families mentioned.

ACTIVITY #4

Family Literacy Tips: Talking About Picture Books

- Demonstrate how to talk about the illustrations together in a picture book. ("What is the girl doing in this picture? What is she wearing?")
- Holding up a book, ask families the kinds of questions about the illustrations they might use with a child.

Going deeper: Put your attendees into pairs and ask them to take turns looking and talking about a book together.

ACTIVITY #5

Family Literacy Tips: Reading to Your Children in Your Home Language

Share some bilingual books with your families. If possible, look for culturally responsive titles that [reflect families' cultures and experiences](#).

- Model a read-aloud in families' home languages.
- Encourage families to listen to their children reading out loud.
- Talk with families about the benefits of learning to read in your first language.

Going deeper: If a librarian is at the event, ask them to talk about the kinds of books at the library, how to sign up for a library card, and how to download books on phones or tablets.

ACTIVITY #6

Family Literacy Tips: Early Print Awareness

- Point out the words and letters on common household objects such as canned goods, cereal boxes, or shampoo bottles.
- Ask families for ideas on where they might see words and letters outside of the house, like on street signs.

Going deeper: Share some ideas of games that children can play, such as looking for letters around the house. They might try to find all of the letters in the alphabet or in their name. For more literacy games you can share, see these ideas from [PBS Parents!](#)



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Family Literacy at Home: Activities

At the end

- Ask families what they have learned from the session and which ideas they might try. Which ideas in the video are they already doing?
- Let them know that there are many ways they can support their child's education, even if they are still learning to read and still learning English.
- Encourage them to keep their language and culture strong at home and ask the school for support where needed!
- Ask families where they might share this video series with their own networks.



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