



# Reception Stay at Home Learning

A Booklet of Ideas  
for Parents & Carers



## Reception Stay at home Learning

### Some useful websites to support all areas of EYFS:

[EYFS Home.com](#) A simple, organised programme of activities, advice, support and a much needed community for all those looking after 3-5 year-olds and their siblings.

[50 Things to do before you're five](#) originated from St Edmunds Nursery School and Children's Centre and has been developed into an excellent App and resource for parents and carers. You can download the 50 Things App from anywhere, for free and there are specific versions for Bradford, Leeds, Kirklees, Calderdale and East Sussex but the ideas are useable from any location.

[Pobble simple and fun non-screen activities](#) that children can do at home + infographic poster free to download.

**CBeebies** website has lots available including [shows, games, watch and sing, make and colour, Bedtime stories](#) (with information for grown-ups too).

[Creative Star Learning 10 outdoor ideas series](#) supporting learning and play outside with all ages.

**HENRY Healthy Start, Bright Futures** - During this time of uncertainty and worry, we are here to support you. There are a number of resources and tips [here](#) to help you and your family to continue to be happy and healthy.

### Learning at home linked to EYFS

Children in Reception follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which has 7 areas of learning.

#### **3 Prime areas (these are the foundations for all areas of learning):**

[Personal Social Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development](#)

#### **4 Specific areas (these build upon the prime areas):**

[Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design](#)

The following guidance suggests some ideas that you can do at home that will support all these interlinking areas. There are lots of links to online resources that should support the activities. The most important principles of EYFS are that learning is based on play and that learning builds on children's interests. Learning is active, fun and encourages confidence and independence. If we follow their lead, children will teach us too!

## Personal Social Emotional Development - feeling safe and secure

Young children may need more support with this area at the moment, as life is different to what they usually know. Stories and talking about what is happening is often a great way to nurture wellbeing and help children manage their feelings and behaviour. A routine that supports a feeling of control and safety is a good way to help children understand what is happening now and what is coming next. Too much structure may be difficult for young children who need time to initiate their own play spontaneously, rest and relax. Following a child's lead is a good early learning principle - take notice of what they are interested in and make that the starting point for any learning together.

### Ideas for children:

**Talk to a grown up about your worries.** Ask a grown up about why things are different. Why are schools closed? Why can't I see my friends and family like I usually do? Grown-ups can get help with [talking to your child about coronavirus](#)

A digital picture book for children by the Gruffalo author [here](#).

**Do something kind for someone.** Can you make them something or help them with a job that needs doing? Help sort the washing or tidy up your toys?

**Talk about feelings.** Read a story and talk about how the characters might be feeling. Happy, sad, excited, grumpy, worried, bored? What makes you feel a certain way?

**Get out and about safely.** Perhaps in your garden or on a walk locally. Look up into the sky and notice what is around you. Can you find rainbows in the windows of houses that children have made. Fresh air and being active will support a feeling of wellbeing for everyone.

**Try something new.** Maybe something you haven't eaten before or a new skill like [cooking](#), making a snack or wiping the table. Talk about how that makes you feel. Confident? Pleased with yourself?

**Have some quiet time.** Find time to do something restful and relaxing. Drawing? Looking at picture books without the pressure of practising reading the words? Playing with a special toy or watching a favourite TV programme or DVD?

**Make choices about your day.** Choose what you might do next. Will you play a game first before reading or will you paint a picture? (Making choices gives children a sense of responsibility, control and supports independence.)



## Communication and Language- Chat, Play, Learn

Talking and listening are very important parts of early learning and these skills are the key ways that all areas of learning are supported. Chatting about what is happening in everyday activities as well as learning new things while watching a TV programme, reading a story or playing a game all help children learn new vocabulary. Best of all is just taking time to have a conversation about anything at all!

### Ideas for children:

**Share a story and talk about it.** What was your favourite bit? Can you guess what might happen at the end? How did the characters feel when something happened? Could you join in with parts of the story?

**Create a reading den.** Find somewhere cosy, snuggle up and read your favourite book to yourself or a toy friend. Choose a story, comic or an information book.

**Storymaker's bag.** Find a bag and collect items to go in it that relate to a story you know. If you can't find an item, you could draw a picture to include. Can others guess what the story is before you tell it?

**Play Kim's Game.** Find lots of interesting items from around the house and put them on a tray. Look carefully to remember what's there and then cover with a cloth. The other player takes away an item without them seeing. Which item is missing? Lots of talk about the objects increases vocabulary. More items to guess makes it more challenging!

**I went shopping and I bought.** Test your memory with this family game. Take turns for everyone to add something and keep remembering the whole list as it gets longer. "I went shopping and I bought a loaf of bread, a rubber duck, a dustpan and brush, a bunch of flowers and a....."

### Other helpful information and ideas to support communication, language and children's talk:

[National Literacy Trust Small Talk- loads of ideas for under 5s](#)

[Fun with Makaton on youtube](#)

[Hungry Little Minds App- simple, fun activities 0-5](#)

[Free audiobooks and why you should try them](#) Listening and reading: it's a multi-sensory approach to reading that works.

[I Can- Activities to encourage speaking and listening](#)





## Physical Development- Get moving and learning

Physical activity is important for health, wellbeing, development and learning (and promotes brain development). Large movements and small movements are important to build strength, control and coordination (and support early writing skills). Health and self-care is also part of this learning. Taking time to learn how to manage eating and dressing independently is enormously valuable.

### Ideas for children:

**Set up an obstacle course at home or in the garden.** Ask someone to time how fast you can complete it? Can you beat your personal best?

**Make playdough.** Use this no cook recipe [here](#) to make playdough and have fun playing with it. Keep it in an airtight container to use again.

**Scissor skills.** Increase fine motor control by cutting up little bits of paper or leaves from the garden or on your walk. You could even stick them on a collage picture. Ripping small bits is also good.

**Get Dancing.** Make up a dance routine to your favourite song and get others to learn it! You could even have a special costume for a performance.

**Make and blow bubbles.** Use washing up liquid with your hands or string. Can you catch them and make them pop?

**Be helpful.** Using a dustpan and brush, the Hoover, a broom or a rake are all really good for developing gross motor skills (large movements). Gets you moving and being helpful too!

**Get Moving.** Have a try at joining in with others. Try out [Disney Shake up Games](#) or You could do a high energy fitness workout with Joe Wicks and get your family to join with others all over the world live every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 9am. [PE with Joe](#)



## Literacy - reading and writing together

Early literacy is based on lots of shared experiences with an adult. Reading and talking about stories, helping to write a shopping list or ingredients for cooking, noticing words in books that you know, putting together sounds that you have learnt to read and write simple words. This is tricky for lots of children so it needs to be fun and motivating. Keep it real and share the load - you modelling and then your child taking over - creating a feeling of confidence is better than trying to do something that is too difficult and getting frustrated. Short, playful and fun experiences are best. If in doubt read lots and lots of stories and other books, the perfect way to support literacy.

### Ideas for children:

**Write a postcard to your teacher or someone you can't see at the moment.** What could you tell them about? How might you make someone feel happy?

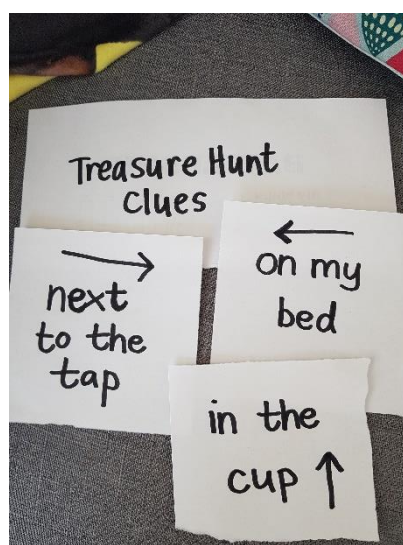
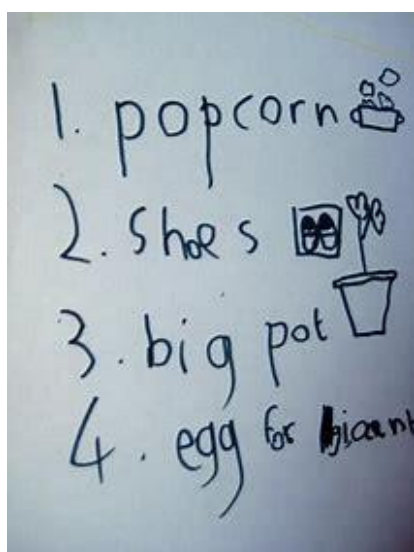
**Thank a community hero.** Think of someone that helps you and your family in some way and write a short letter to thank them. Have a go at reading your letter out loud and get some help with tricky words if you need to.

**Make a list.** Write a list of things that make you happy, things you're grateful for or things you are good at. A shopping list or all the things you need for a recipe?

**Read a story that you have practised to someone.** Remember to read with expression and ask for help if you get stuck on a tricky bit.

**Make up a secret code.** You could use letters, numbers, pictures or something else. Can you get someone else to try and crack it?

**Treasure hunt clues.** Can you solve a treasure hunt with simple clues that your grown up has written for you? Read them together and work out where to look next. What will the treasure be?



**Read, read, read!** Share books and practise reading - some of these free e-books are good to share together with an adult and some are good to practice some words you can read using your phonics. Show your grown ups how you do it.

[Practise reading using Oxford Owl books online](#)

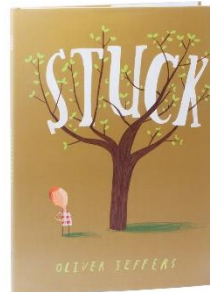
[Stories read to you online](#)

[Love my Books- A rich resource for parents and teachers](#)

[First Learning Phonics Book](#)

**Snuggle up and be read to.** Ask someone in your family to read you a story (lots of different ones or your favourite one over and over). If not, these authors will read their books to you at home. Let them take you to an imaginary world and get lost in a story.

[Stay at home storytime with Oliver Jeffers](#)



[Listen to stories on cbeebies radio](#)



[Book Trust Home Time – lots of fun activities](#)

Some fun stories and activities for you

and your child at home



**4 and 5 year olds**

## Maths- numbers and shapes everywhere

Children love numbers especially big ones! Talk about numbers in any situation and wonder about how many plates/cups we need to lay the table, how many stars are in the sky or how many things you can fit in a matchbox compared to a shoe box. Sorting things by shape and size also offers loads of opportunities for maths. Best of all is cooking and counting out how many spoonfuls of this and that are needed to make a cake.

### Ideas for children:

**Design and make a homemade board game** explain the rules clearly and ask someone in your family to play. [Here is an idea to get you started.](#)

**Get building.** You could build a Lego model, a tower of playing cards or something else. Take a photo of it when you have finished it and challenge someone in your family to build it again.

**Pair up the socks.** Collect up as many pairs of socks as you can. Unpair them and muddle them up. Can you find the pairs again? How many are there? Line them up to count. Do it against the clock. Phew!

**Scavenger Hunt.** See how many things you can find that fit a category before the timer goes off. Red things, things smaller than a credit card, things with 4 corners?

**Data handling.** Call friends and relatives and find out their favourite colour, fruit or animals. You can make a bar chart as you go using Lego or Duplo or record numbers in a tally chart.

**Target Game.** Use soft balls, balled socks or scrunched up balls of paper and set up numbered targets to aim for (paper bin, laundry bin, box). Make it challenging and add up points as you go. Can you write the points down?

**Long and short.** How many Lego blocks/ pencils long is the washing machine? Make a good guess and then check. Is the sofa longer or shorter? How many blocks to go from one side of the room to the other.

**Buckaroo Challenge.** How many objects can you balance on someone lying down on the floor before something falls off? No tickling allowed! Make a leader board with all the results.

**Ten Pin Bowling.** Use old plastic bottles or toilet rolls as the pins. A good opportunity to work on early subtraction. "We had 10 pins and you knocked 4 down, how many are left?"





## Expressive Arts and Design

### Music, role play, dancing and making

This area of learning can take the imagination to lots of new places and gives children a way to share their thoughts and ideas. Use anything you have to make things; draw and paint pictures or models; and use music to encourage singing and dancing. Making up stories and acting them out is also the way that young children represent their own thoughts and experiences. Den making is a great starting point to create a new world and play in.

#### Ideas for children:

**Use an old sock to create a puppet.** Give your puppet a name and make up a story or song to perform in a puppet show.

**Make up a song or rap about your favourite thing to do.**

Record it to play back another time to remember it or practise and perform it live to your family.

**Draw something carefully** Find a photograph or picture of a person, place or object and sketch it.

**Junk modelling.** Use recycled things like yoghurt pots, toilet rolls and cereal boxes to see what you can create with them.

**Listen to music of all kinds.** Find new music that you haven't heard of before. Jazz, folk, rock, pop or world music? Which do you like best? What does it make you think about? Make a playlist to share with others or just for yourself.

**Become an illustrator.** Learn how to create characters just like story illustrators. Challenge your family to all have a go. Have a go at drawing a dinosaur or a sausage dog with Children's author Rob Biddulph here: [#draw with rob](#)



## Understanding the World - finding out new things about people, places and technology

Spending time at home with family is a great opportunity for children to find out about the past and present in their own lives and others. Looking at photos and talking to family members is a great way to learn about themselves and others. Information books, the internet and TV programmes that show children places, animals and plants in the world they live in but might not know about, are great to talk about. Using the computer or a tablet in lots of different ways (finding out things, taking photos) is great learning for life.

### Ideas for children:

**Be a photographer.** Use a camera or a mobile phone to take some photos. What will you photograph? Your pets, toys or something living like a plant? What do you notice?

**Keep a nature diary.** Look out of the window each day and draw or write what you notice. Birds, flowers, changes in the weather, what else?

**Animal Expert.** Find out about your favourite animal. Where does it come from? What does it eat? [Follow a live zoo cam](#) Find out 10 Tiger facts [here](#).

**Visit a virtual museum.** What did you find out? What more would you like to know about? Could you use the internet to research? Museums with virtual tours are [here](#).

**Find out about the world you live in.** Look up maps of the world, the UK or locally where you live. Draw a map of your house or garden. Find out more about the world and play games [National Geographic Kids](#)

**Nurture a curious mind.** Engineering, science, art, music, animals, nature, animation. Find out more by watching film clips here of amazing stuff here: [The kids should see this](#). What does this make you wonder more about? Write about or draw your ideas.

**Smash a world record.** Check out these Guinness World records. Marvel at amazing challenges or give it a go yourself? Whether it's in your kitchen, bedroom or garden, there are hundreds of records that you can practise and attempt right in your home - by yourself or with a family member. Most dominoes stacked in 30 seconds? Furthest distance to blow a pea? [Guinness World Record Kids](#).

**Connect with the outdoors.** Have a go at some of these activities that are about going to a safe outdoor space such as your garden or a park. Each activity can be adapted to be inside if this is not possible. Can you make a shelter for your teddy? Make a story stick?

[Learning through Landscapes Outdoor Ideas](#)





**Bristol Early Years Website**  
[www.bristolearlyyears.org.uk](http://www.bristolearlyyears.org.uk)

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