

Grocery Store Literacy

A simple trip to the grocery store can turn into a real learning experience for your child. Below are some easy ways to build literacy and math skills while getting your shopping done at the same time!

Focus on reading skills

Lots of grocery items come in different flavors. Ask your child to help you find a particular flavor by reading the labels. For example, can she find the low fat milk? The tuna fish packed in water? She'll be using her reading skills to find the right item.

Put your child in charge of the grocery list. As you put items into the cart, ask your child to cross it off the list. If you buy an item that wasn't on your list, ask him to add it. This provides an opportunity to practice writing skills.

Focus on vocabulary skills

Take a trip down the pasta aisle to see the different boxes. Ask your child to **compare** and **contrast** the various noodle in terms of **length**, **width**, **shape**, and **size**. Choose one box and challenge your child to come up with descriptive words for that type of pasta.

The produce section is a great place to hear new **interesting words**. Words like rhubarb, asparagus, artichoke, and kiwi are fun to say, and fun to eat. As you introduce each one, use descriptive words to help your child learn. "A kiwi has a fuzzy outside, but the inside is bright green with black seeds!"

Focus on math skills

Look for **geometric shapes** (e.g., spheres, cubes, cones) as you go through the store. Play a game with your child. Find a **shape**, such as the **cube** shaped box of tissues, and then look for other items with the same **shape**.

Show your child the **unit pricing labels** on various items. Help them learn to compare prices using these tags. Ask your child, "Which size container is the better deal? Why?" Discuss the sale items too. What does "Buy one, get one free" mean? If frozen peas are 10 for \$10, how much would four bags cost?

You don't have to do all of these things each time you're at the store, but while you're there, find creative ways to turn your grocery store into a fun place of learning.

For more ideas, visit Reading Rockets' Reading Together section:

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/c442/>

