Scott County Library

LITTLEST LEARNERS:

FOR AGES BIRTH-24 MONTHS

Parents: Join us online each Monday starting September 21st for a video of the week's rhyme and song as well as additional tips and activities to do together!
www.scottlib.org/athome

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12 WEEKS OF PLAYFUL ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE GROWTH AND LEARNING TO DO TOGETHER

September 21 - Superheroes
September 28 - Palace Pals
October 5 - Robots
October 12 - Weather
October 19 - Music
October 26 - Celebrate Me
November 2 - Sports
November 9 - Dinosaurs
November 16 - Animals
November 23 - Food
November 30 - Construction
December 7 - Art

Build fantastic learners when you Read, Write, Talk, Sing, and Play TOGETHER. Try some of these early literacy practices every day:

Children who enjoy being read to are more likely to enjoy reading themselves.

Tips: Keep reading a fun and positive experience. Choose both fiction and factual books based on interests. Explain and talk about new or unfamiliar words as you read them.

Children learn that printed letters and words have sounds and meaning.

Tips: Provide opportunities to scribble, draw, and write. Use materials like playdough, shaving cream, or snow to make shapes or letters. Point out words and letters in books, signs, and around town.

Children learn about language by listening and talking.

Tips: Talk as you play. Respond to your child's noises and babbles. Choose books with interesting words and subjects. Use baby signs to help reinforce language and vocabulary skills.

Children learn the rhythm and rhyme of language through singing.

Tips: Sing songs with letters or rhymes that highlight word sounds. Choose books based on songs. Change the lyrics to popular songs to reflect interests or activities.

Children develop language skills by playing with others.

Tips: Act out a favorite book. Retell favorite stories using every day objects. Play “I-Spy” using colors and shapes.

WEEK 1: SUPERHEROES
EARLY LITERACY PRACTICE: PLAY
DEVELOP: SOCIAL SKILLS

SONG OF THE WEEK: IF YOU'RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT

If you're happy & you know it,
Clap your hands
If you're happy & you know it,
Clap your hands.
If you're happy & you know it,
Then your face will
surely show it
If you're happy & you know it,
Clap your hands.

Additional Verses:
...Tickle your toes
...Beep your belly

RHYME OF THE WEEK: ICKY BICKY

Icky bicky soda cracker
Icky bicky boo!
Icky bicky soda cracker
Up goes you!
Icky bicky soda cracker
Icky bicky boo!
Icky bicky soda cracker
I love you!

PLAY TOGETHER:

- Mirrors are a great way to help your child explore. Hold your child in front of a mirror. Point to their nose, eyes, and ears. As they grow older, they will recognize their reflection.
- Create a sensory bin using non-chokeable props and a base such as water. Sensory bins help your child develop fine motor skills, creativity, and independence.

SOCIAL SKILLS:

- Talk to your baby about their emotions. Label feelings as you talk.
- Play with your facial expression and label your emotions. Smile and say happy. Frown and say sad.

SIGN IT: BABY

Pretend you are cradling a baby in your arms. Then gently move your arms from side to side.

Why sign language?

Sign language is an effective communication tool to help babies and toddlers express their needs before speaking.

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WEEK 2: PALACE PALS
EARLY LITERACY PRACTICE: TALK
DEVELOP: COMMUNICATION SKILLS

RHYME OF THE WEEK: JACK IN THE BOX

(Personalize this rhyme - Replace "baby" with your child's name)

Baby is a JACK IN THE BOX!
Baby is a JACK IN THE BOX!
Baby is a…
Baby is a…
Baby is a JACK IN THE BOX!

SONG OF THE WEEK: SHAKE AND STOP!

We shake and we shake
And we STOP!
We shake and we shake
And we STOP!
We shake and we shake.
We shake and we shake.
We shake and we shake
And we STOP!

We dance…
We jump/bounce…

TALK TOGETHER:

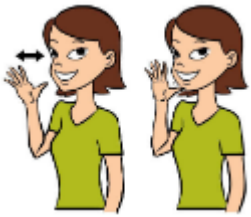
- Talk to your child! Keep a running conversation during diaper changes, bath times or as you prepare meals. They will learn about speaking including inflections and intonations. As babies grow older, they will begin responding.
- Offer a toy and describe it. Is a ball bumpy or smooth? What colors are it?

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Talking is a whole body experience. As your baby begins to move, respond to their movements by talking to them.
- Sing songs and say rhymes with movements to them.

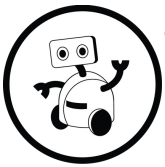
SIGN IT: MOMMY

Spread your fingers apart. With your pinkie facing forward, tap your thumb on your chin.



Why sign language?

Learning sign language is similar to learning a spoken language. Sign as much as you can.



WEEK 3: ROBOTS
EARLY LITERACY PRACTICE: READ
DEVELOP: SCIENCE SKILLS

SONG OF THE WEEK: OPEN THEM, SHUT THEM

Open them, shut them
Open them, shut them
Give a little clap, clap, clap

Open them, shut them
Open them, shut them
Put them in your lap, lap, lap

Creep them, creep them
Right up to your chin
Open your mouth — ahhh!
But don't let them in

RHYME OF THE WEEK: BANANAS UNITE

First we:
Peel bananas
Peel, peel bananas
Next we:
Chop bananas
Chop, chop bananas
Then we:
Smash bananas
Smash, smash bananas
And we:
Eat bananas
Eat, eat bananas
Finally, we:
Go bananas!

READ TOGETHER:

- Read a book more than once to increase your child's vocabulary. Books have three times as many rare words than conversation.
- Starting around 9 months, babies may open books and begin to turn pages. Board book pages are easier for babies to grasp. Remember, it's OK to skip pages!

SCIENCE SKILLS:

- For babies, hide objects under a blanket or a cup. Have them find them.
- As your child begins to crawl and walk, play hide and seek, taking turns to find each other.

SIGN IT: EAT/FOOD

Touch the tip of your thumb to the the tips of your fingers (like a hand puppet). Then tap your mouth.

Sign Language Tip

Signing is about your whole body - include emotion. When teaching your child, don't focus on your hand but on what your face is telling them.

WEEK 4: WEATHER
EARLY LITERACY PRACTICE: WRITE
DEVELOP: SCIENCE EXPLORATION

RHYME OF THE WEEK: ITSY BITSY SPIDER

The itsy bitsy spider
climbed up the water spout.
Down came the rain and
washed the spider out.
Out came the sun and
dried up all the rain.
And the itsy bitsy spider
climbed up the spout again.

SONG OF THE WEEK: MISTER SUN

Oh, Mr. Sun, Sun, Mr. Golden Sun
Please shine down on me
Oh, Mr. Sun, Sun, Mr. Golden Sun
Hiding behind a tree
These little children are asking
you to please come out
so we can play with you
Oh, Mr. Sun, Sun, Mr. Golden Sun
Please shine down on me

WRITE TOGETHER:

- Even babies can do some pre-writing activities. Practice some finger drawing. Put some whipped cream or pudding on a surface then have babies run their fingers through it.
- Big crayons, large pencils, and other specially-designed writing instruments are great tools to help little fingers practice writing and scribbling.

SCIENCE SKILLS:

- Create different rain shakers. Add a food item (rice, dried beans, pasta, etc) to an empty plastic bottle or food storage container. Talk about how they sound alike and different.

SIGN IT: DADDY

Extend and spread out your five fingers. Tap your hand on your forehead.

Sign Language Tip

A child may not be able to do a sign immediately, but that's expected. Practice makes perfect.

WEEK 5: MUSIC
EARLY LITERACY PRACTICE: SING
DEVELOP: MATH SKILLS

SONG OF THE WEEK: WHERE IS THUMBKIN?

Where is thumbkin?
Where is thumbkin?
Here I am. Here I am.
How are you today, sir?
Very well, I thank you.
Run away. Run away.

Where is pointer?...
Where is tall man?...
Where is ring man?...
Where is pinkie?...

RHYME OF THE WEEK: TICK TOCK

Tick tock, tick tock
I'm a little cuckoo clock
Tick tock, tick tock
Now I'm striking one o'clock!
CUCKOO!
Tick tock, tick tock
I'm a little cuckoo clock
Tick tock, tick tock
Now I'm striking two o'clock!
CUCKOO! CUCKOO!

SING TOGETHER:

- Sing about your day. Make up different lyrics to common songs about what you are doing. Songs like *Row, Row, Row Your Boat* or *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* are some simple melodies to start with.
- Clap your hands to the rhythm of any song you sing or softly tap the rhythm on baby's hands or tummy as long as they enjoy it.

MATH SKILLS:

- Babies begin to recognize patterns from birth. As your baby grows, they may repeat favorite songs or actions to a song.

SIGN IT: LOVE

Make your hands into fists and cross your arms across your chest, as if giving your self a big squeeze.

Why sign language?
Earlier communication can provide psychological benefits, such as self-esteem and confidence.

WEEK 6: CELEBRATE ME
EARLY LITERACY PRACTICE: TALK
DEVELOP: SOCIAL SKILLS

RHYME OF THE WEEK: CHEEK CHIN

Point out the body parts as you say them. Start slow and get faster as you get used to them.

Cheek chin cheek chin
Cheek chin NOSE
Cheek chin cheek chin
Cheek chin TOES
Cheek chin cheek chin
Up we go!

SONG OF THE WEEK: HEAD, SHOULDERS, KNEES, AND TOES

Head, shoulders, knees and toes
(knees and toes)
Head, shoulders, knees and toes
(knees and toes)
Eyes and ears
And mouth and nose
Head, shoulders, knees and toes
(knees and toes)

TALK TOGETHER:

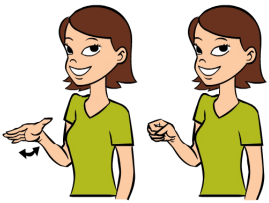
- Take turns naming common items. Build on what your child says. If your toddler names a cup, describe it's color, shape, or function.
- When asking a question, give your child five seconds to respond. They're strengthening synapses in their brain each time you ask a question and they respond.

SOCIAL SKILLS:

- Have a baby look at both of you in a mirror. Point out baby's nose and eyes then point out yours. Talk about how you are the same and different.

SIGN IT: MILK

Pretend to milk a cow (or goat). Take your dominant hand, make it into a fist, relax and repeat.



Why Sign Language?
When you and your child are able to communicate, you create a closer bond.

WEEK 7: SPORTS
EARLY LITERACY PRACTICE: PLAY
DEVELOP: LARGE MOTOR SKILLS

SONG OF THE WEEK: THE HOKEY POKEY

You put your right foot in
You put your right foot out
You put your right foot in
And you shake it all about
You do the Hokey-Pokey
And you turn yourself around
That's what it's all about!

You put your left foot in,
...your right hand in
... your left hand in

RHYME OF THE WEEK: THIS IS THE WAY

This is the way we
bounce the ball,
bounce the ball,
bounce the ball,
This is the way we
bounce the ball,
when we play basketball.

Kick the ball…When we play soccer.
Jump in the pool...when we go swimming.
Hike the ball…When we play football.
Twirl around..When we dance ballet
Swing the bat…When we play baseball.

PLAY TOGETHER:

- Roll a ball to your baby. Let them explore the texture. If older, invite them to roll or throw it to you. Take turns.
- Encourage tummy time! Set up fun activities like mess-free paint. Place paint in a sealable food storage bag. Let them "paint" while doing tummy time.

MOTOR SKILLS:

- Get your baby moving. Put on a variety of music on for them to shake and bounce to.
- Give babies board books with bold illustrations. They'll be tempted to turn the page and see what's on the other side.

SIGN IT: WATER

Take your dominant hand, extending and separating the three middle fingers. Tap your index finger on your chin.

Why sign language?
It helps develop language and reasoning skills.

WEEK 8: ROAR ROAR DINOSAUR
EARLY LITERACY PRACTICE: WRITE
DEVELOP: MOTOR SKILLS

RHYME OF THE WEEK: THIS IS BIG, THIS IS SMALL

This is big big big
Hold arms out to side
This is small small small
Cup hands together
This is short short short
Hold hands with palms facing each other
This is tall tall tall
Reach one hand above head
This is fast fast fast
Circle fists quickly
This is slow slow slow
Circle fists slowly
This is yes yes yes
Nod
This is no no no
Shake head

SONG OF THE WEEK: ONE DINOSAUR

One dinosaur went out to play
In a giant swamp one day
She had such enormous fun
That she called for another
dinosaur to come:
Oh, Diiiiiiiiinosaur!

Two dinosaurs…
Three dinosaurs…
Four dinosaurs…
Five dinosaurs went out to play
In a giant swamp one day
They had such enormous fun
That they played until the day was done

WRITE TOGETHER:

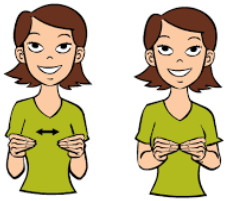
- Write out your child's name. Point out the different letters in their name on the page and as you find them in your environment.

MOTOR SKILLS:

- Give your child lots of different items to grab. This will help develop the fine motor skills to grab markers and crayons.
- For babies, a tissue box is the ultimate toy. When a box is almost empty let them pull out tissues. Add fabric or small objects for them to continue the fun.

SIGN IT: MORE

Bring your thumb and fingers together on each hand. Then, bring your hands together and pull them apart repeatedly.



Sign Language Tip

To help your baby learn quickly, say the word as you make the sign in a real-world setting.

WEEK 9: ANIMALS
EARLY LITERACY PRACTICE: SING
DEVELOP: CURIOSITY

SONG OF THE WEEK: OLD MACDONALD

Old MacDonald had a farm
E-I-E-I-O
And on that farm he had a pig
E-I-E-I-O
With an oink oink here
And an oink oink there
Here an oink
There an oink
Everywhere an oink oink
Old MacDonald had a farm
E-I-E-I-O

...had a cow
...had a horse
... had a dog

RHYME OF THE WEEK: A HIPPOPOTAMUS

A hip, a hip, a hippopotamus
Got up, got up, got up on a bus
And all the people on the bus said,
"Oh, you're squishing me."
A cow, a cow, got up on the bus
A cow, a cow, got up on the bus
And all the people on the bus said,
"Mooooooove over."
A sheep, a sheep, got up on the bus.
A sheep, a sheep, got up on the bus.
And all the people on the bus said,
"Baaaaack up."
A snake, a snake, got up on the bus.
A snake, a snake got up on the bus.
And all the people on the bus said,
"Ssssit down."

SING TOGETHER:

- Use your child's name instead of Old Macdonald
- Try singing a book - there are many book versions of favorite nursery rhymes and songs!
- Stop just before the end of phrases in favorite songs – your child can try joining in with little noises now!

SCIENCE SKILLS:

- Babies and toddlers are natural scientists. Let them use all senses to explore the world around them. As they grow older let them use objects as tools. Can they hit two blocks together?

SIGN IT: ALL DONE

Start with palms facing in, then turn the hands so that they are facing out.

Sign Language Tip

Stay patient with your child when they are learning new signs.

WEEK 10: FOOD
EARLY LITERACY PRACTICE: READ
DEVELOP: MATH SKILLS

RHYME OF THE WEEK: PATTYCAKE

Change the letter to first letter of your child's name. Have older babies and toddlers clap try to clap along

Pattycake, pattycake,
baker's man
Bake me a cake
as fast as you can
Roll it and pat it
and mark it with a B
And throw it in the oven
for baby and me

SONG OF THE WEEK: APPLES AND BANANAS

I like to eat, eat, eat
apples and bananas
I like to eat, eat, eat
apples and bananas

A lake to ate... aypples and baynaynays
E leke to eat...eeples and beeneenees
I like to ite...ipples and bininis
O loke to ote...opples and bononos
U luke to ute...upples and bununus

READ TOGETHER:

- Read food labels or recipes out loud as you are preparing meals.
- As babies get more active, they may want to sit less for stories but they are still listening and learning new words. Keep reading during those times. Everyone learns in different ways.

MATH SKILLS:

- Count! There are so many ways to introduce numbers. Count items on the page of a book. Count toys as you bring them out. Count down as you put toys away. Count types of food on a plate.

SIGN IT: PLEASE

Take you hand with fingers extended and together, thumb extended. With your palm facing in, rub your hand in a circle on your chest.

Sign Language Tip

It's never too early to introduce signs. When your baby starts paying attention to their hands, they're ready to start signing.

WEEK 11: CONSTRUCTION
EARLY LITERACY PRACTICE: PLAY
DEVELOP: FINE MOTOR SKILLS

SONG OF THE WEEK: SEE THE DUMP TRUCK

Tune: Twinkle, twinkle little star

See the dump truck going slow.
It must have a great big load
full of dirt or maybe rocks.
Working hard, it never stops.
See the dump truck going slow.
It must have a great big load

RHYME OF THE WEEK: CRANES

See how far you can stretch as you say the rhyme. Slow down the words as you stretch.

Cranes reach up
Cranes reach down
Cranes reach out
And all around.

PLAY TOGETHER:

- Have a pretend car wash. Fill large tupperware with bubbles, soap, and sponges then let your baby explore.
- Encourage your child to play with puzzles and shape sorters
- Cardboard boxes are great for playing - they can become cars, buildings, and the basis for craft projects.

MOTOR SKILLS:

- Small motor skills are important. From eating to learning how to write, use those hands! Build towers together - then have fun knocking them down.
- Introduce baby sign language - not only does it build language but hand strength.

SIGN IT: THANK YOU

Extend your fingers and thumb. Touch you fingers to your chin and bring your fingers forward.

Sign Language Tip:
Begin with just a few signs. Start with the ones you think will be most useful, like "eat," "please," and "more."

WEEK 12: ART
EARLY LITERACY PRACTICE: READ
DEVELOP: SOCIAL SKILLS

RHYME OF THE WEEK: MAKE A CIRCLE

Criss cross applesauce
(draw an x)
Spiders crawling up your back
(walk finger tips on arm)
Cool breeze
(blow on back of neck)
Tight squeeze
(hug)
And now you've got the shivers
(tickle)

SONG OF THE WEEK: MAKE A CIRCLE

Tune: Oh, My Darling

Make a circle, make a circle,
draw it in the sky
Use your finger, use your finger,
make it round as pie
Make a square, make a square,
make the lines so straight
Draw a square, draw a square,
draw one or draw eight
Draw a triangle, draw a triangle,
always start at the top
Make a tent, make a tent,
use three lines and then stop!

READ TOGETHER:

- Keep story time a positive experience. Like everything, developing a love of reading can take time. Start slowly and incorporate books into quiet times.
- Model positive reading behavior. Read something for yourself - a book, a magazine, a piece of mail. You reading will become a motivating factor for your child to learn to read.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS:

- Introduce your child to a variety of books, activities, music, and foods. Having a variety will allow them to develop favorites.
- As they get older, let them choose between two items (snacks, books, clothes).

SIGN IT: BED

Put two hands together, palm to palm. Rest your hands on your cheek as if it were a pillow

Find more baby sign language resources at www.babysignlanguage.com

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BOOKS WE LOVE!

Here are 30 of our favorite books to spark your baby's love of reading. You can request copies to pick up at bit.ly/SCLB-24

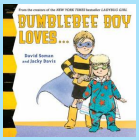
Baby Bear Sees Blue

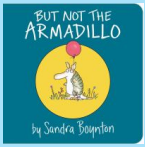
Baby Play/ Jugando con bebe

Big Little

Bizzy Bear Race Car Driver

Bumblebee Boy Loves...





But Not the Armadillo

Bye-bye Bottles Zebra

Colors in the Cold

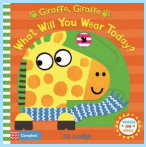
Construction Site

Dinosaurs

First Words With a Ladybug

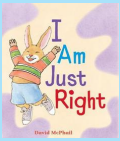
Friends/ Amigos

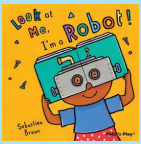
Giraffe, Giraffe What Will You Wear Today?



Happy, Sad, Mad, and Glad

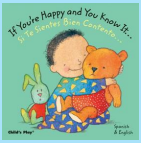
I Am Just Right

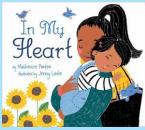




I'm a Robot!

If You're Happy & You Know It



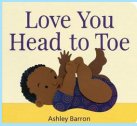


In My Heart

Let's Learn 4/4 Time

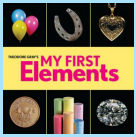
Library Babies

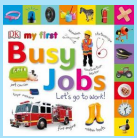
Look at Baby's House



Love You Head to Toe

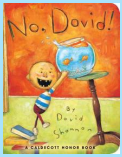
My First Elements





My First Busy Jobs

My First Out and About

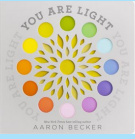


No, David!

Nita's First Signs

Skeletitos

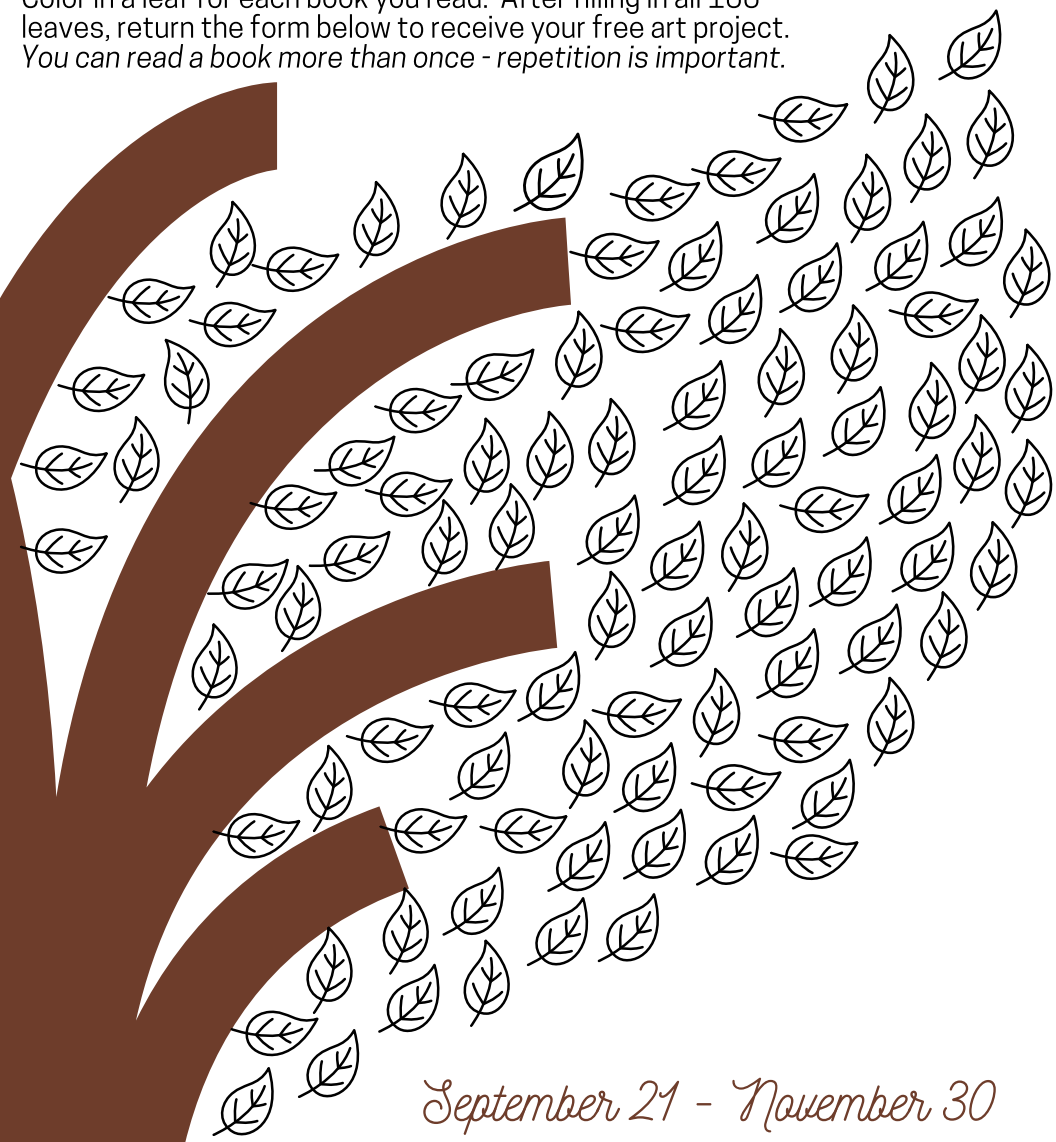
Will Ladybug Hug?



You Are Light

Fall in love with reading!

Color in a leaf for each book you read. After filling in all 100 leaves, return the form below to receive your free art project.
You can read a book more than once - repetition is important.



September 21 - November 30

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