

LEARNING TO READ AT THE GROCERY STORE

Young children are learning, learning, learning all the time. So why not make grocery shopping a time that helps your child get ready to read? Sure, it *is* faster to do the grocery shopping without kids, but if yours is with you, you can make this ordinary chore do double-duty. You can teach your child to help you get the groceries *and* you can help him get ready to read. Here's how:

First, *if you made a list of things you need, read it out loud* as you push the cart through the store. It's good for little children to see us grown-ups write and read during an ordinary day. When you read *bananas* or *potatoes*, for example, ask your child to help you find them. And why not ask your child to count the bananas with you, as you put them in the plastic bag? That way the grocery shopping will help with counting, too!

Point out to your child how the store is organized. Help him see that things in the store are organized in categories. Everything's not jumbled together. Why are the lemons in one pile and different kinds of apples in others? Where do you like to begin in the store—in the cleaning and paper goods section? Or do you always start with vegetables and fruits? Help your child notice your system.

Tell your child the names of things as you push your cart by them. That way you're helping his vocabulary grow. Even if you don't need **batteries** or **sausages** or **eggs**, why not say their names out loud and take advantage of this chance to help him learn these words?

If you usually buy the same brand of packaged goods, see if your child recognizes the label. Can she find the cereal with the big **K**, for example? Does she know that letter's name? Or if you tell her to look for the cereal that starts with **CH** or the detergent with the big **T**, will she be able to find it?

Before they can read, *children will use the pictures on a package to guess what's inside and what the words say on the outside.* They might confuse green olives with green grapes and lima beans with peas or tomato soup with tomato sauce. You probably won't have time to read every label to your child but if you read some of them, you might notice him trying to read them on his own later. Point out the **g r a p e** on the jelly jar or the **c r u n c h y** on the peanut butter and then when you're home, see if your child can find those words when you have the jars out, ready to make a sandwich.

Maybe when you're in the store the next time, *your child will show you that she's learned to read those words. You'll be glad and so will she!*

WOW! Your child is reading!