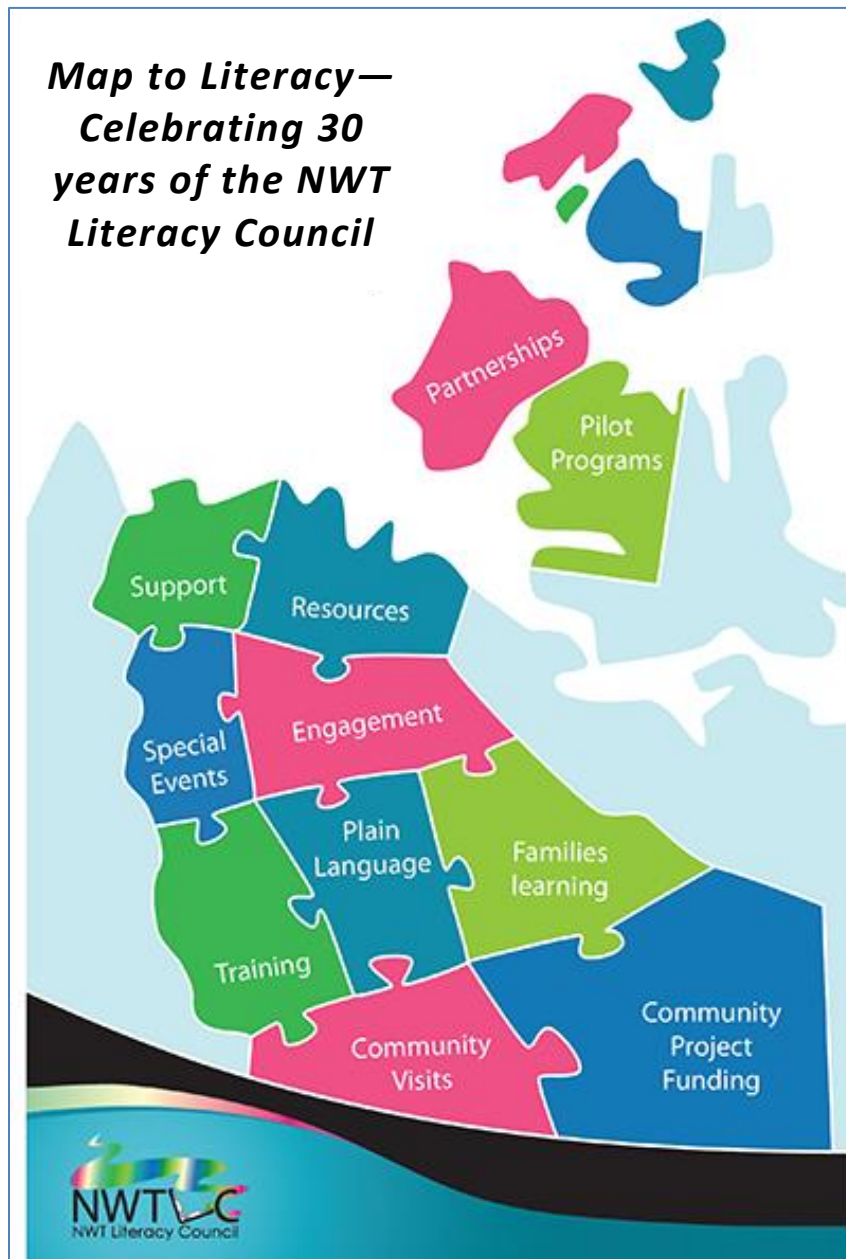


# 30 Ways to Support Literacy

*Resources for at-home learning  
during COVID-19 Pandemic*

***Map to Literacy—  
Celebrating 30  
years of the NWT  
Literacy Council***



---

## Introduction

These activities help us celebrate NWT Literacy Week and still keep physical distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. We encourage everyone to follow Canadian and NWT Public Health Orders. Visit the NWT COVID-19 website for the latest updates.

- <https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/en/services/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/enforcement-what-you-need-know>

If you need more information about these activities or we can help in other ways, please contact the NWT Literacy Council. All our staff are working from home so the best way to reach us directly is by email or regular mail.

Everyone stay safe.

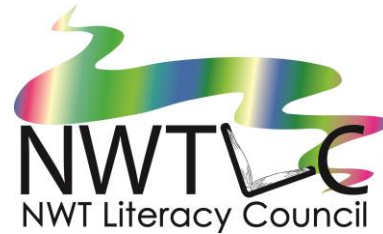
Box 761, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2N6

Email: [nwtliteracy@nwtliteracy.ca](mailto:nwtliteracy@nwtliteracy.ca)

Website: [www.nwtliteracy.ca](http://www.nwtliteracy.ca)

Follow us on:

Facebook  Twitter  Instagram  YouTube 



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## Speak \_\_\_\_\_ (your language) Café

For all ages

In Yellowknife, the Speak English Café is offered to immigrants once a week. The Café is a safe supportive space to practice conversational English. The Speak English Café coordinators provide coffee and tea. People drop in to chat.



With physical distancing, you could use an online platform to host your own language café. To find a platform that suits you, here are two websites that offer information about different platforms.

- <https://www.voipreview.org/free-web-conferencing>
- <https://getvoip.com/blog/2016/11/21/free-web-conferencing/>

Here are some suggestions for conversation starters.

- Bring printed material, such as a book or a newspaper to share and discuss.
- Show a video in the language that you are practicing. Then discuss it.
- Bring local event posters or a listing of current events to share.
- Try show and tell. Ask people to bring in an object or photo of something that is important to them.
- Talk about a current event in the news.

---

## Active for Life

For all ages

Active for Life is a Canadian not-for-profit social organization. It was created to help parents give their children the right start in life through developing physical literacy. Making regular physical activity a part of life at a young age is key to having a healthy lifestyle as an adult.

This website is full of children's activities, resources, and information on child development, health, lifestyle, and more.

<https://activeforlife.com>



Click on the 'Activities for Kids' tab to see hundreds of activities. Each activity lists the equipment needs (nothing fancy), instructions to do the activity, and variations to adapt for children's various needs and benefits.

If you sign up for the newsletter(s) you can get new tips on fun activities to do with your kids.

---

## Mothers Matter Centre

For preschool children

The Mothers Matter Centre in Vancouver runs a program called HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters). Check out the Resources for Families during COVID-19.



- <https://www.mothersmattercentre.ca/#>

Stay 'N' Play offers three weeks of activities that you can use to engage preschool children, using things from around the house.

- <https://www.mothersmattercentre.ca/stay-n-play/>

---

## MonicaZesl.com – ESL Teacher's Basic Worksheets and Videos

For all ages

This website has worksheets on the alphabet, numbers, basic transportation, education, Canada, housing, cities and neighbourhoods, money and banking, and holidays.

The focus is teaching ESL students—English as a second language. Parents of young children may find these resources useful.

Each worksheet has a QR code to link to a video to help learners with pronunciation.

<https://monicazesl.com>

---

## National Film Board of Canada

For all ages

Are you looking to watch something different?  
Do you need a change from the usual romance  
and mystery?

You can access many films and documentaries  
on the National Film Board website.

- <https://www.nfb.ca>



Choose from films, documentaries, animation, interactive, and  
education categories. For example:

- Movies based on children's books, such as the classic *Paddle to the Sea*
- Animated shorts such as *The Big Snit* and *Log Driver's Waltz* (one of the Canada Vignettes series)
- Cartoons for Kids
- Mini-lessons with certain films in the Education section
- "*Supreme Law*" in the Interactive section, which is about the Canadian Constitution
- Indigenous stories
- Films about immigrants
- Stories of black history

Use the index to find a movie about almost any topic.



---

## InferCabulary

For ages 5 years to adults

InferCabulary is a web-based vocabulary tool to help learners use critical thinking to learn the meaning of various words. It uses different images with 'friendly' descriptions to help students gain understanding to figure out and learn the meaning of a word.



The website features thousands of words and vocabulary from hundreds of books.

InferCabulary is set up like a game, where the learner tries to climb a mountain. A system of bonus points helps when they make a mistake.

Try the free demo to see how it works.

It is subscription-based so after the demo you pay to use the website.

<https://infercabulary.com>

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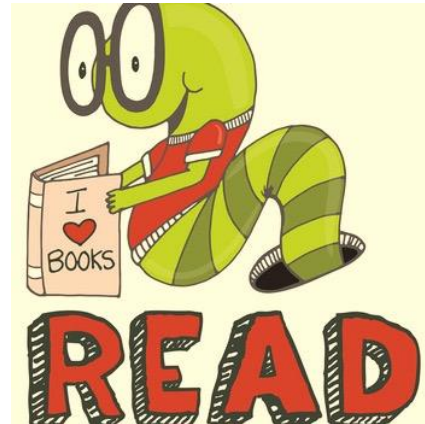
## Reading Log

For all ages

Reading logs can be a great way to keep track of your reading. They can help encourage you to read more and help support children's reading habits.

Reasons to keep a reading log:

- Keep a record of what you read
- Know how much you read
- Trace your impressions
- Know what you like to read
- Become a better writer



Reading logs come in many different forms. Use a reading log that suits the reader's age and reading level. You can print a reading log for free from any of these websites.

This website has many choices for elementary readers.

- <https://www.sightwordsgame.com/learning-to-read/reading-log/>

This website has a basic reading log.

- [http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson\\_images/lesson141/log.pdf](http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson141/log.pdf)

This website has reading logs for time spent reading, or adding comments, or for summer reading, or a reading log calendar, or number of pages read.

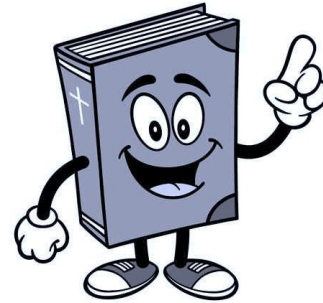
- <https://www.k12reader.com/printable-reading-logs/>

---

## Make Your Own Talking Book

For all ages

Talking books are a great literacy activity for anyone. They encourage creativity and are great for beginner readers. Children enjoy hearing their own words in a story and feel successful.



Create a talking book for a certain age group or about a certain topic. Feature northern landscapes and themes, tell traditional stories, write and read in Indigenous languages.

Talking books combine text, pictures, and sound. You make one on the computer, using PowerPoint.

### ***What you need***

- Computer with PowerPoint app (part of Microsoft Office)
- Microphone and speakers/headphones
- Images or photos
- Digital camera, scanner, projector (all optional)

The NWT Literacy Council Digital Literacy Kit has some of these items. Contact us to find out how to use it.

### ***Instructions***

#### **Step 1: Decide on a theme/topic**

Think about different types of talking books you could make. Start with stories. Some good sources of stories are:

- Family
- Community
- Culture
- Indigenous languages

- Teaching children different words in an Indigenous language
- Teaching the ABC's, 1-2-3's or colours
- A child's day-to-day life
- Teaching or showing a skill, such as how to skin a moose, how to grow a plant, or how to use the writing process

What story would you like to make?

### Step 2: Write the story and gather pictures/images

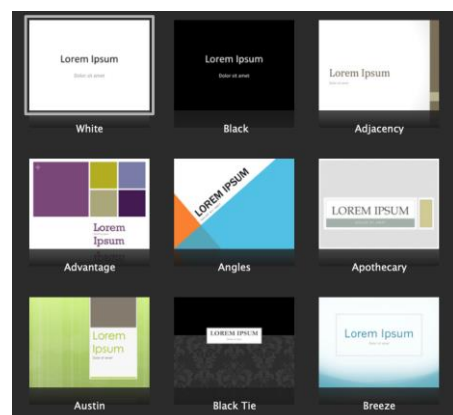
Sometimes people write the story first and then find or take pictures. Sometimes people like to do it the other way around.

- Decide how long your story is – 10 slides is a good place to start.
- Write a draft on paper or a computer.
- Gather photos/images.  
Use photos you already have, search the internet, or take photos with your digital camera or smartphone. All the photos/images you use need to be a digital file.

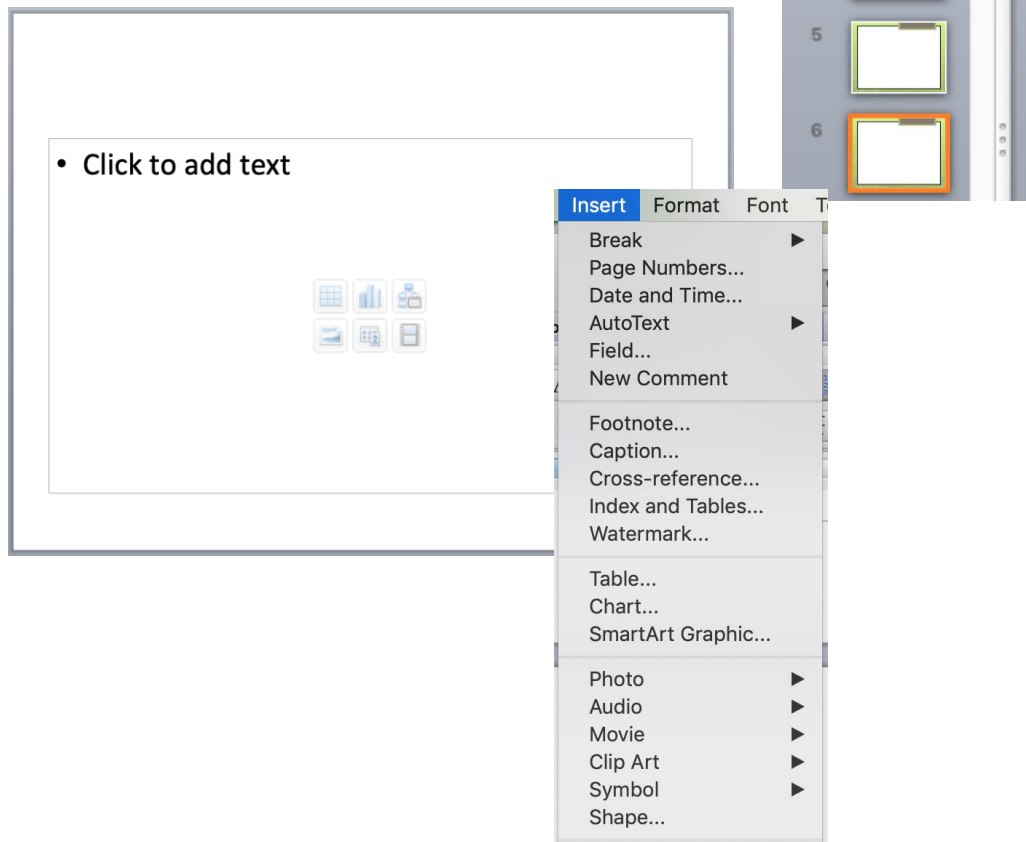
### Step 3: Put it all together on PowerPoint

Now you have text and some photos, you can make the book. You may have to adjust the details of these instructions depending on the version of PowerPoint you have.

1. Open the PowerPoint software.  
Double click on the template you want to use. There are lots to choose from.  
This opens a new file.  
If you want to change the template, open the **Themes** tab and choose a different template.



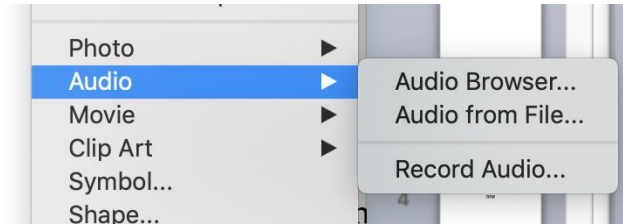
2. Add slides. Click **New Slide** under the **Home** tab.  
Add as many slides as you need.  
Add or delete slides at any time along the way.  
Change the order of the slides as you go, if needed. Use the sidebar to drag them into place.
3. Add text and/or photos to each slide.
  - To add text, type into the text box, or copy and paste from another file.
  - To add photos, under the **Insert** tab select **Photo**. Choose from available options.



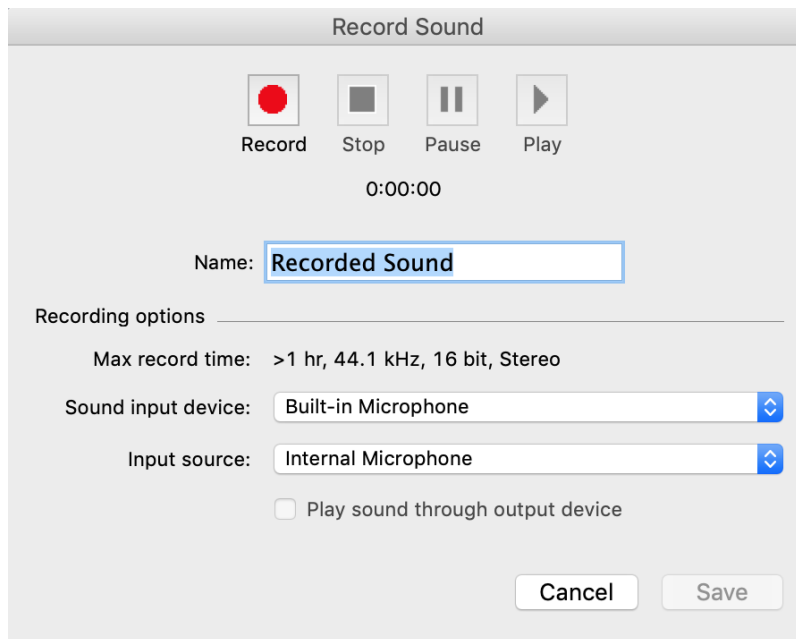
#### Step 4: Add the 'talking' to your book

On each slide, record yourself or someone else reading the text.

1. Select **Audio** under the **Insert** tab. Then choose **Record Audio**.

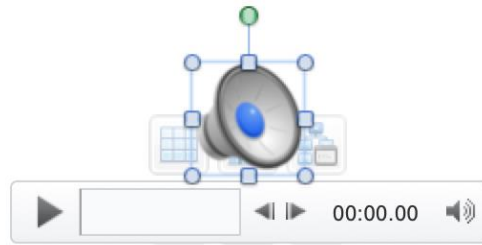


2. Click on the red **Record** button to start recording. Speak normally. The computer's built-in microphone picks up your voice. Click on the **Stop** button to end recording. Click on the **Play** button to hear the recording. If you want to change the recording, do it again. When you're happy with it, click on **Save** or **OK** (depending on your computer and version of PowerPoint).

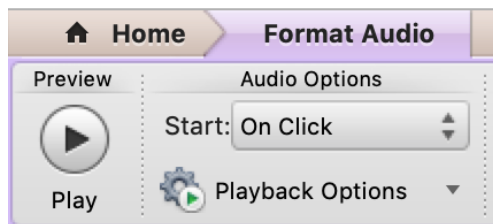


3. To listen to the audio on each slide, click on the audio symbol and then the play arrow.

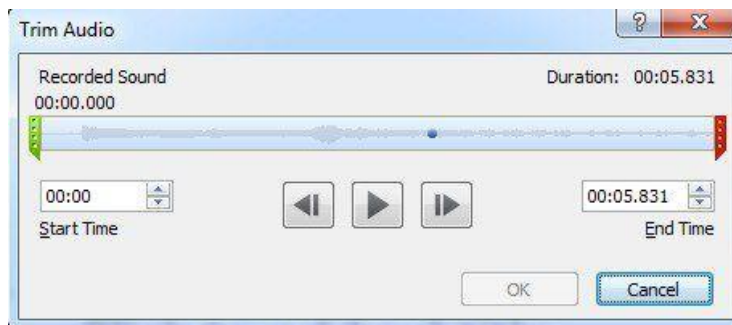
You can adjust the sound level, and fast forward and back.



4. Adjust playback and start options. Select the audio symbol on the slide and then click on the **Format Audio** tab. Choose the options that suit you.



5. To trim the audio<sup>1</sup> (change when it starts and stops), select the **Playback** tab, then click on **Trim**. The audio trim box appears.



Click and drag the green and red markers to adjust start and end times.

To hear the edited audio clip, press the play button. When you are happy with your clip press okay.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Mac version of PowerPoint does not include this feature.

### **Step 5: Add special effects to slides**

The PowerPoint menu offers some options to add special effects. Use them or not, that is up to you.



- Transitions are motion effects that occur in Slide Show view when you move from one slide to the next.
- Animations are different visual effects, such as having text or photos fade in or out in different ways.
- You can add tables, charts, or shapes; you can change fonts (size, colour, type).

### **Step 6: Share your talking book**

Email the PowerPoint file or share it with people in your home.

When physical distancing ends, share it with friends and family.



---

## 30 Days of Yoga

For all ages

Yoga calms the mind and renews the body. It can reduce stress, help relieve anxiety, and ground us.

Yoga tones muscles and increases flexibility. Yoga feels good and is accessible to everyone. And you don't have to leave your house.

Yoga With Adriene is a YouTube channel with a huge library of free yoga videos. The library has videos that suit any skill level (including beginners), body type, and gender.



- Yoga for beginners: Beginners and Foundations of Yoga series of videos help you build a happy, healthy home yoga practice.
- Yoga for back pain: different videos focus on relieving pain in lower back, upper back, neck and shoulders.
- Yoga for weight loss or to work up a sweat: Yoga for Weight Loss or Total Body Yoga playlists.
- Yoga practices of different lengths of time: videos from under 10 minutes to 60 minutes, and times in between.
- Yoga 'playlists' on different topics: nurture (30 videos), standing (5 videos), uncertain times (34 videos), create (31 videos), neck tension (8 videos), HOME 30-day Journey (31 videos), and others.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene/videos>

---

## YearCompass

For adults and 'older' teenagers

YearCompass is a booklet that helps you close one year and plan the next one. It works simply.

- Find a few quiet hours for yourself.
- Make a cup of tea or coffee.
- Answer 20 pages of questions.
- Praise yourself for taking a step towards the life you want.

Download an online or printable booklet here:

<https://yearcompass.com/>

Invite friends and family to complete their own booklet. Get together online or by phone to share reflections and ideas that emerged for each of you.

THE  
YEAR  
AHEAD



---

## Poetry

For all ages

Poetry is a window into the human heart and expresses the human condition. "Poetry rises up in human societies when official words fail us and we lose sight of how to find our way back to one another."<sup>2</sup>



Write one poem a day for a week (or some other timeline).

Post a photo with your poem on Instagram or Facebook and tag the Literacy Council @NWTLiteracyCouncil. Are you up for the challenge? Everyone can write poetry.

The NWT Literacy Council has resources on what poetry is and a guide to writing your own poetry. Click on the link for *Poetry for Northern Learners*.

- <http://www.nwtliteracy.ca/sites/default/files/resources/148188%20Poetry%20Book%20120.pdf>

Check out *On Being Poetry and Writing*. This website has many podcasts from writers and poets who share their work and wisdom on the subject.

- <https://onbeing.org/poetry-and-writing/>

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<sup>2</sup> On Being Poetry and Writing <https://onbeing.org/poetry-and-writing/>

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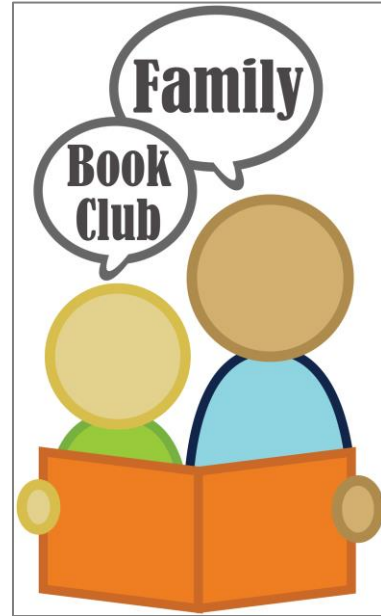
## Family Book Club

For all ages

Start a family book club. Transport the whole family together, to another world, time, or place.

A family book club encourages reading and makes reading a time for family bonding and sharing.

- Decide if each family member reads the book on their own or if the family reads the book together.
- Choose a book that suits the whole family.
- Make time to read and talk about the book.
- Include extended family members. Set a time to include them on a video call.



For more tips on how to start, book recommendations, and conversation topics after reading together, visit this Scholastic website.

<https://www.scholastic.com/parents/books-and-reading/raise-a-reader-blog/how-to-start-family-book-club.html>

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## Our Ever Awesome NWT Brushing Song! Family Contest

For all ages

Brushing teeth is **very** important!  
Win a copy of this book  
**and** electric toothbrushes with a  
year's supply of toothbrush heads,  
for the whole family.

To enter this contest:

- Video your family singing the song as you brush your teeth.
- Tag the Literacy Council Facebook page on your post @NWTLiteracyCouncil.



Words to the song (a bit different in the book) —  
Sing along with the audio file (Double click to open).

*The Elders say that life's a feast.  
So do your best when you brush your teeth.  
To all my teeth, mahsi cho!  
I'll polish you row by row  
With oral health we are the boss,  
When we brush and spit and floss  
Sometimes we might eat some sweets  
but every day we brush our teeth.*

*(Repeat two more times)*



We started to give this book away in communities across the NWT. But now we can't travel. So we decided to have this contest. What could be more fun than humming a tune and brushing as a family?

---

## Five of the Best Apps and Podcasts to Help You Learn on the Go

For all ages

### ***Khan Academy and Khan Academy Kids - App***

Khan Academy is a free learning library. It has thousands of interactive exercises and videos on topics like math, science, economics, grammar, history, and much more. Put your knowledge to the test with practice quizzes, tests, and more. It is great for students, teachers, homeschoolers, and adults returning to education after a long break.



- <https://www.khanacademy.org>

Khan Academy Kids is another free and fun educational app. It targets ages 2 to 7 years. It helps children with reading, writing, math, social-emotional development, problem solving, and motor development. Children have fun learning new skills with games, activities, drawing, and storytelling.



- <https://learn.khanacademy.org/khan-academy-kids/>

### ***TED – App and Podcasts***

Stay curious, become informed, and get inspired. TED's video and audio library has thousands of talks on a wide range of topics—great variety and easy to access.

- <https://www.ted.com>



TED app hosts the entire video library in one place. All content is free to view, or download and enjoy offline.

TED podcasts are also available to download for offline listening. Organized into categories to suit your preferences.

### ***A History of the World in 100 Objects - Podcast from BBC Radio 4***

This podcast started as a book. The 100 episodes take listeners through two million years of history, told by everyday objects such as a bronze mirror from Japan, a 14th-century banknote from the Ming Dynasty, and the Rosetta Stone. Each episode is like going back in history and traveling to another time and place.



- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00nrttd2/episodes/downloads>

Neal MacGregor wrote the book and does the podcast. He is the former director of the British Museum.

### ***Duolingo - App***

Interested in learning a foreign language? Duolingo's mobile app is a great way to get started. It offers lessons in over 30 languages and keeps things fun and motivating. The app is a user-friendly, go-at-your-own pace system that works well for beginning and advanced speakers. You can develop writing, speaking, listening, and conversational skills.



- <https://www.duolingo.com>

Adults sometimes find it hard to learn a new language. Try this app and see where it can take you.

### ***Brains on! - Podcast***

Calling all science-lovers—this podcast is for you. The whole family can enjoy it. A different child is co-host for each weekly episode.



- <https://www.brainson.org>

Podcasts unravels questions such as “What is it like to be a snake handler?” or “Why does the sun make people sneeze?” or “Where do tornadoes come from?” and countless others.



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## Legit-O-Meter<sup>3</sup>

For ages 13+ and bring a questioning mind

This is a great resource for media literacy. Use it when you read articles online, especially with unfamiliar websites and social media.

---



| Legit  | Middle  | Fake  |
|--|---|---|
| Sites that end “.org”, “.gov”, or “.edu” tend to be more credible.   | Watch for sites with unusual URL endings (e.g. “.com.co”) They may be mimicking legitimate sites or trying to appear legitimate. They could have false or misleading "facts." |   |
| Sites have images with credits.  |   | Images seem too good to be true or bring on a strong reaction. Proceed with caution. You may be seeing a hoax. Do a reverse image search and see if you can uncover the original image. |
| “About Us” lists information about the author, organization, etc. Authors and contributors are credible sources. | No “About Us” information or you have to register to get more information. Be careful. It is a red flag when they are not transparent.  |   |

---

<sup>3</sup> © 2017 Common Sense Inc. all rights reserved. Adapted from the original file. See the original at [https://d1e2bohyu2u2w9.cloudfront.net/education/sites/default/files/tlr-asset/hs-legitposter\\_8.5x11.pdf](https://d1e2bohyu2u2w9.cloudfront.net/education/sites/default/files/tlr-asset/hs-legitposter_8.5x11.pdf)





| Legit  | Middle   | Fake   |
|--|--|--|
|  | Says "Sponsored Content."<br>Simply means paid-for advertising.                | Tons of pop-ups and banner ads. Be aware that what you see and read may only be clickbait.   |
| Headlines seem direct and to the point. Be aware that what you see and read may only be clickbait. | Has typos and bad grammar.<br>A clue that should leave you a little skeptical. | Headlines use words such as epic, amazing, unbelievable, or incredible. Hesitate if a headline works too hard to get your attention. |
| Evokes a strong emotional reaction. Real news stories can make you feel a gut reaction.            |  | Evokes a strong emotional reaction. Non-legit stories and sources mess with your emotions to get you to click.                       |
| Info is accurate and other organizations report on the same story.                                 |  | Info seems outdated or inaccurate. Tread lightly. Some social media often bring back outdated stories.                               |

### Good Rules of Thumb

- ☐ Don't jump to conclusions. Take a look at other credible sources. Are other mainstream news outlets reporting on the same story?
- ☐ Check your own biases. Do you only pay attention to stories that confirm your own beliefs and ignore other information?
- ☐ Check your emotions. Clickbait and fake news strive for extreme reactions.
- ☐ Don't forget, fake news brings in lots of money through online advertising. Remember, they are not real stories by real journalists.
- ☐ Remember that search rankings (such as those on Google) are not based on reliability or trustworthiness. Don't rely on the first thing that pops up in your search.
- ☐ When in doubt, don't share. The more you click, the more money the creators get.

---

## Native Land Interactive Map

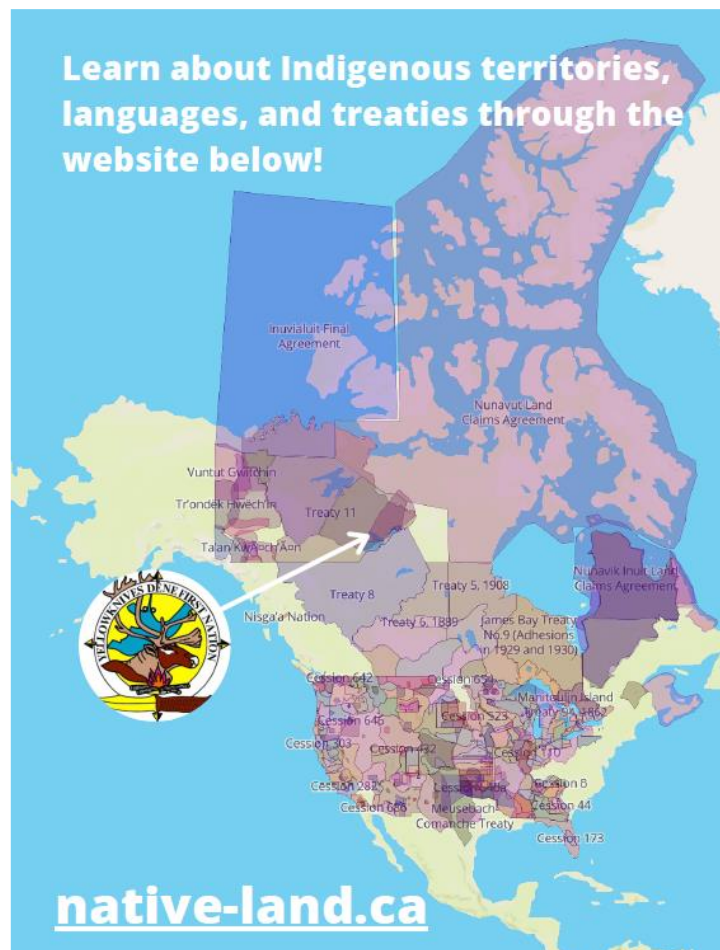
For ages 6+

You need:

- Device with internet browser
- Internet connection

Website: <https://native-land.ca/>

Native Land Digital is a Canadian not-for-profit organization. It is Indigenous-led, with an Indigenous Executive Director and Board of Directors. Their website includes maps that show territories, languages, and treaties; information on territory acknowledgement; and a teacher's guide.



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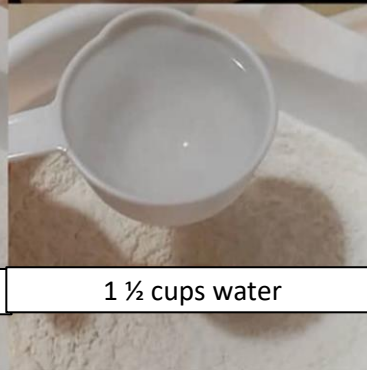

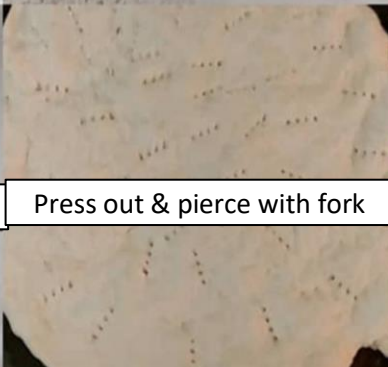

## Don't Panic, Make Bannock

For ages: 13+ years or 3-12 years with adult help/supervision

A super easy recipe and great for beginners.

### ***Ingredients***

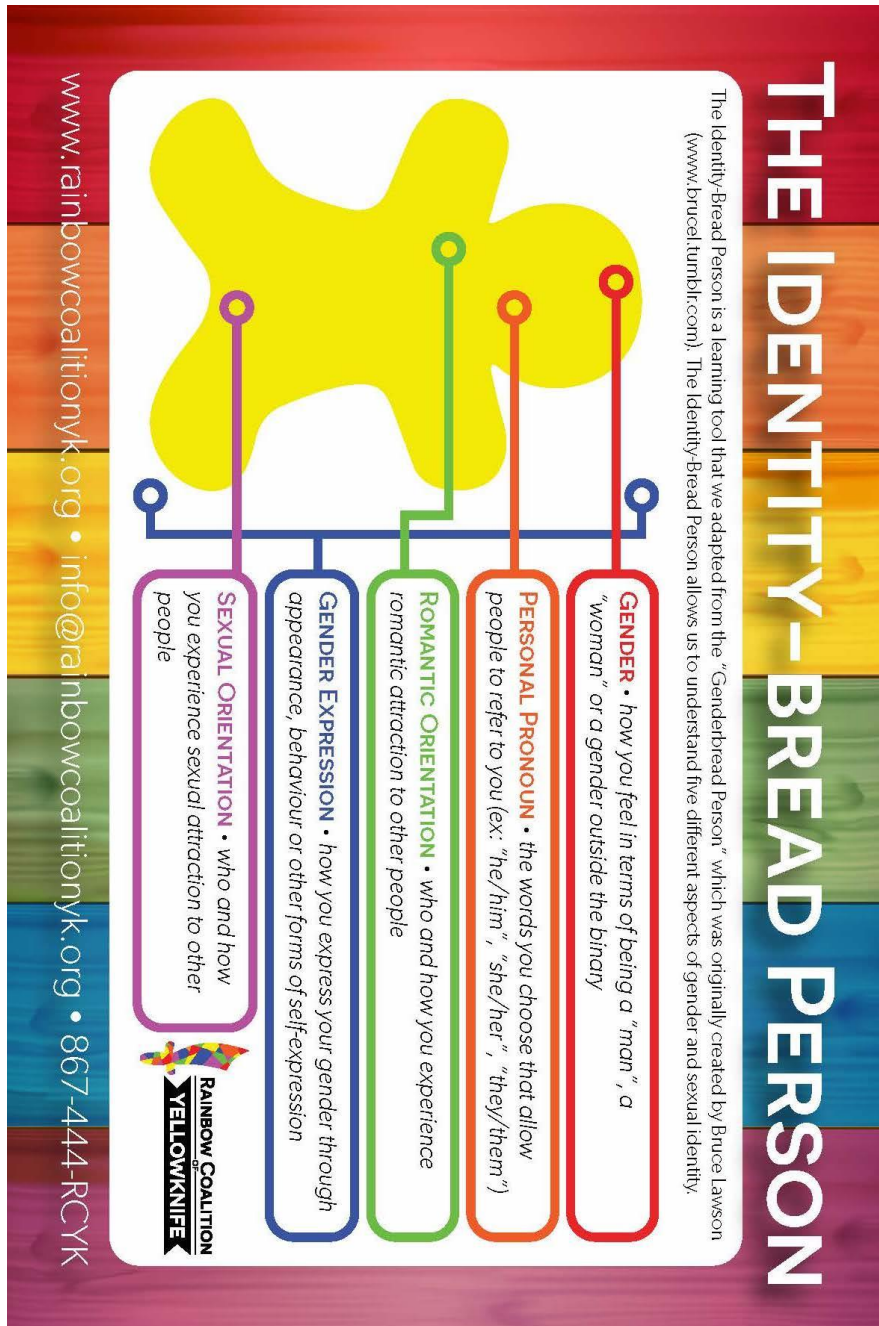
- Flour, baking powder, salt, lard, water

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <br>Set oven to 375   | <br>3 cups flour                   | <br>2 tablespoons baking powder |
| <br>Pinch of salt    | <br>$\frac{1}{4}$ cup lard melted | <br>1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups water |
| <br>Mix ingredients | <br>Press out & pierce with fork | <br>Bake 20 to 25 minutes     |

## The Identity-Bread Person

For ages 12+

Rainbow Coalition of Yellowknife created this resource to help us better understand the LGBTQ+ community and ourselves. They have lots of other info and resources at <http://www.rainbowcoalitionyk.org>



---

## Family Media Agreement<sup>4</sup>—page 1 of 2

For ages 10+

This is a contract between you and your children about using the internet. Add your own ideas where needed.

---



I (write your name)

promise to:

---

### ... take care

- ☐ I will take care of the device I'm using and tell my family if it's broken, stolen, or lost. As a family, we will agree on the consequences if I lose or break a device, and I understand those consequences.
  - ☐ Unless I paid for a device with my own money or it was a gift, I understand that the device belongs to the family member(s) who bought it.
  - ☐
- 

### ... stay safe

- ☐ I will not create accounts or give out any private information—such as my full name, date of birth, address, phone number, or photos of myself or others—without my family's permission.
  - ☐ I will not share my passwords with anyone other than my family. I will ask my family to help me with privacy settings if I want to set up devices, accounts, or profiles.
  - ☐ If anyone makes me feel pressured or uncomfortable or acts inappropriately toward me online, I'll stop talking to that person and tell a family member or other trusted adult about it, right away.
  - ☐
- 

### ... communicate openly

- ☐ I will talk to my family about what media I use and what I do online and answer any questions they have, openly and honestly.
  - ☐ I will talk to my family if I'm struggling with media use, have made a mistake online, or need help.
  - ☐
- 

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## ***Family Media Agreement—page 2 of 2<sup>5</sup>***

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### **... think first**

- ☐ I will not bully, humiliate, or upset anyone online—not through sharing photos, videos, or screenshots; spreading rumours or gossip; or setting up fake profiles. And I will stand up to those who do.
  - ☐ I know that whatever I share online can spread fast and far. I will not post anything online that could harm me or others.
  - ☐ Whenever I use, refer to, or share someone else’s creative work online, I will give proper credit to them.
  - ☐ I know that not everything I read, hear, or see online is true. I will consider whether a source or author is credible or not.
  - ☐
- 

### **... stay balanced**

- ☐ I will help my family set media time limits that make sense, and follow them.
  - ☐ I will be mindful of how much time I spend in front of screens, and continue to enjoy the other activities and people in my life.
  - ☐ If using media or being online makes me unhappy or it’s hard to stop, I will take a break and talk to a family member.
  - ☐
- 

### **... in exchange my family promises to**

- ☐ Recognize that media is a big part of my life, even if they don’t always understand why.
  - ☐ Talk with me about what worries them and why before they say “no.”
  - ☐ Talk with me about my interests and embrace my world, including helping me find media that’s appropriate and fun.
  - ☐
- 

My signature

My parent or guardian’s signature

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## Sharing Family Stories

For all ages

Storytelling is a great way to share family or community history, nurture family literacy in the home, and build literacy skills for storytellers of all ages. Here are five ideas for how you can write, share, and tell your family stories: puppet show, talking books, family biography, stop motion video, and comics.



### ***Puppet Show***

1. Pick out the family story you want to tell.
2. Write down the story. If appropriate, write a script.
3. List the important characters in the story—people, animals, objects, etc.
4. Draw each character and cut them out. Tape or glue them to straws or popsicle sticks to make them into puppets.
5. Use the puppets to act out the story.
6. Practice the story. Make a video and send it to friends and family.

### ***Talking Books***

Talking books are a great way to create and share family stories you want to tell. They give you the power to choose your own photos and share the story in your Indigenous language. They are easy to share with others.

See pages 11-16 for detailed instructions to make your own talking book.

### ***Family Biography***

1. Call a relative—aunt, uncle, grandmother, grandfather, parent, cousin, sister, brother, etc.
2. Interview them about their life.
3. Ask questions about who, what, when, where, why, and how.
4. Write down or record the answers.

Start with easy questions such as:

- When were you born? Where?
  - Who are your parents?
  - Who are your brothers or sisters?
  - What was life like when you were young?
5. Write the biography. Include your own stories and favourite things about the person, photos from family members, and any drawings you do.
  6. Put in all together and make a book for the family library.



## ***Stop Motion Video***

Make your own stop motion video to tell a family story. Use toys like Lego©, Playmobile©, Barbies©, or different action figures. YouTube has lots of videos with tips and tricks. Here are a few links to try.

- 50 ideas and videos  
<https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2008/12/50-incredible-stop-motion-videos/>
- Easy stop motion for beginners/kids  
<https://tinkerlab.com/easy-stop-motion-animation-kids/>
- How to make stop motion video with your phone  
<https://www.instructables.com/id/How-To-Make-a-Stop-Motion-Video-Using-your-Phone/>

1. Download Stop Motion Studio. It's easy to use and has a free trial time. Or choose a different app. Here is a link with info about 'free' stop motion apps.
  - <https://freeappsforme.com/stop-motion-apps/#stop-motion-studio>
2. Gather all your props and set up the camera. Keep the camera as still as possible. A tripod works best, or make your own camera stand.
3. Set up the first scene and take a picture.  
Move the subject (only small movements) and take another picture.  
Repeat this process.  
Remember that smaller movements between each photo create a smoother video; bigger movements create a more jerky video.
4. Check through the video. Delete any unwanted frames, and then you're done.

## **Comics**

Is there a young budding artist in the family? Comic books are a great way to combine storytelling and art.

1. Talk to family members. Ask them to tell some family stories or pick a favourite story you already know.
2. Write out the story.
3. Separate the story into sections and frames.
4. Plan what can fit in each frame.
5. Figure out how many frames you need (this may change along the way).
6. Brainstorm what the illustrations look like.
7. Use a pencil to start making your comic strip.
8. Go over it in pen or colour once you're happy with it.
9. Add speech bubbles.
10. Once you're done, share it with family and friends.
11. Hang it on the fridge.
12. Send it in an email; post it on social media.

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## Family Gardening

For all ages with adult supervision

There are many good reasons to garden as a family.

- Learn where food comes from; eat your own veggies.
- Spend time together, outside; get away from screens.
- Become more aware of the environment—land and water.
- Learn about the growing cycle of plants and how to take care of them.
- Learn patience, how to solve problems, how to stick with things and keep working/thinking.
- Learn about compost and start a compost heap.
- Read books together about gardening.



Some things to consider when you start gardening:

- Find out what plants grow well in your community. Talk to knowledgeable gardeners.
- Consider where you can grow things: in pots or other containers, in a raised bed, in a garden bed on the ground.
- Decide what things you want to plant and where you plan to put them. Grow things you like to eat. If you're new to gardening, start with a few 'easy' things so you have good success.  
Do you plan to start seedlings in the house, to plant outside when the weather gets warm enough?
- Figure out what supplies you need for what you want to do, and where to get them: e.g. soil, containers, seeds, etc.

Two helpful websites:

- Gardening as a Family  
<http://www.londonmiddlesexmastergardeners.com/family-gardening-has-great-benefits/>
- Gardening with Kids  
<https://www.gardenloka.com/gardening-with-kids/>

A few children's gardening storybooks to read together:

- *Compost Stew: An A to Z Recipe for the Earth* by Mary McKenna Siddals
- *Square Foot Gardening with Kids* by Mel Bartholomew
- *Up in the Garden and Down in the Dirt* by Kate Messner
- *The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle
- *Yucky Worms* by Vivian French

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## Write a Letter to Promote Literacy Programs

For all ages

Write a letter or email to government reps or leaders: local, territorial, federal, and/or Indigenous. Tell them why literacy is important and encourage them to support literacy programs. Use a computer or pen and paper.



Follow these steps to get ready and to write your letter.

1. Think about the literacy issue you want to focus on.

Examples:

- More funding for early learning programs
  - More books or longer hours at the community public library
  - Indigenous language programs on the radio
  - Support for hunting or trapping workshops
  - Funding for a beading or sewing circle
  - More security for NWTLC funding
  - Some other issue important to you, your family, or community?
2. Decide who is the best person to contact about this issue. To help figure this out, talk to people involved with the issue.  
What level of government is responsible for this issue?  
What person has influence with this issue?
    - Find the contact information for the right person.

3. Think about **WHAT**.
  - What is the issue?
  - What solution do you have?
  - What resources are already available?
  - What resources do you need?
4. Think about **WHY**.
  - Why is this issue important to you, your family and community, the NWT, Canada?
  - Why should the person reading the letter care?
  - Why is your solution the right one?
5. Think about **WHERE**.
  - Is this a local issue, just in your community?
  - Does this issue impact people or organizations in other communities or territories and provinces?
6. Think about **WHEN**.
  - Is this a critical issue?
  - How long will your idea take?
  - How do you foresee this issue in the future?
7. Think about **WHO**.
  - What person or organization is best suited to tackle this issue?
  - What are their strengths?
  - Who can they partner with?

8. Start writing.
  - Use the template on the next page to help shape your letter.
  - If you write a letter that involves another person or organization, be sure to tell them before you send the letter. And send them a copy. They need to know what you said so they can respond well, if the person you write to contacts them.
  - If you need statistics or other information about literacy, visit our webpage [www.nwtliteracy.ca](http://www.nwtliteracy.ca)
9. Send the letter by email or mail.
10. If you don't hear from the person, follow up with a phone call after a period of time that seems appropriate to you.

Literacy gives people the skills and knowledge to participate in life to the best of their ability and to reach their full potential. We all benefit from the many shapes and sizes of literacy initiatives: family literacy, tutoring, written and online resources for all ages, adult literacy and basic education, training literacy practitioners, community projects and special events, Indigenous languages, funding for literacy organizations and lobbying, etc.

Many people and groups have in the past supported and continue to support the NWT Literacy Council. We are now celebrating 30 years of promoting and supporting literacy across the NWT.

Date

Name of person you're writing to

Their Address

City, Territory or Province

Postal code

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

In the first paragraph discuss **what**: what is the issue, what is the solution.

In the next paragraph (maybe this takes two paragraphs) discuss **who**, **where**, **when**, and **why**. Give details about how and why the issue matters, the people and places most affected, why this person should care. Help the reader understand the full scope of the issue

In the next paragraph, repeat the solution. Give more details about what you need. State clearly what you expect this person to do, to help with this issue. Outline the concrete steps or commitment you expect from them. Encourage them to contact you if they have questions.

In the final paragraph thank them for their time and attention to this letter and issue. Say, "I look forward to hearing from you." And provide contact information.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Print your name



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## 1-2-3 Rhyme with Me and Other Rhyming Activities

For all ages

*1-2-3 Rhyme with Me* is usually an in-person family literacy program. During this time of physical distancing we have some other ideas for learning and sharing songs and rhymes. Share rhymes and songs at home. Or get together with friends and family over video chat (e.g. Facebook live, Messenger, Skype, Zoom).



- *1-2-3 Rhyme with Me* Rhyme and Song Booklet.  
[https://www.nwtliteracy.ca/sites/default/files/resources/1-2-3 Rhyme Song Booklet.pdf](https://www.nwtliteracy.ca/sites/default/files/resources/1-2-3%20Rhyme%20Song%20Booklet.pdf)  
If you want the CD that goes with the songbook, contact the NWT Literacy Council.
- The Best of Fred Penner—the best playlist ever  
[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-2SXhKnHdMC5zomrUCsOgVNp0Or8\\_vMI](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-2SXhKnHdMC5zomrUCsOgVNp0Or8_vMI)
- Little Baby Bum—nursery rhymes and kids songs  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKAqou7V9FAWXpZd9xtOg3Q>
- Jbrary—tuning in for storytime success  
<https://jbrary.com/youtube-playlists/>

Songs and rhymes are a fun way to help develop children's oral language. Learning new songs and rhymes adds to parent resources. Silly songs and rhymes can help pre-schoolers burn some energy. Tickling and touching songs and rhymes can help with parent-child bonding. Songs and rhymes help children learn new words, gain self-esteem, and have some fun. Songs and rhymes help parents gain confidence in parenting, spend time bonding with their children, and they too can have some fun.

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## Family Game Night

For all ages

You need:

- Board games
- Paper and pen
- Snacks
- Prizes (optional)
- Literacy Games and Activities—NWTLC How-to-Kits  
<https://www.nwtliteracy.ca/resources/how-to-kits#87>
- Other printable board games online
  - <https://www.printableboardgames.net>
  - <https://homeschoolgameschool.com/free-printable-board-games/>



Some ideas for a family game night:

- Each week let a different family member pick the game.
- If you play more than one game, let everyone pick their favourite.
- Make game-themed snacks such as:
  - [Million Dollar Dip](#) when playing Monopoly©
  - Candy buffet when playing Candyland©
  - Cheese tower when playing Jenga©
  - Fruit salsa when playing Apples to Apples©
- Have prizes to help foster healthy competition.

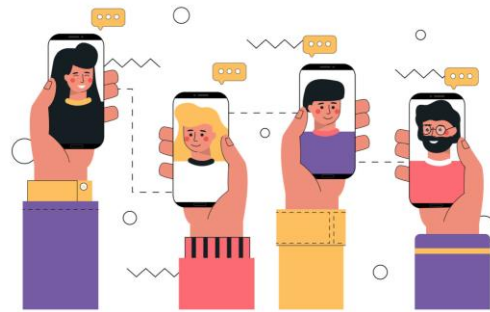
Family game nights are a fun way to spend time together. You can modify just about any board game to suit the ages of all the players. Many games such as charades or Pictionary don't take many supplies.

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## Storytime Online during COVID-19

For all ages

This activity is based on the NWT Literacy Council how-to kit called *Storytime on the Radio*. It is adapted for physical distancing during COVID-19 pandemic.



Follow these simple instructions to create your own storytime online.

1. Choose a story to read: original story, traditional story, news, stories in Indigenous languages, or a favourite book.
2. Choose a good day and time to share the story with friends and family. You can make it a weekly event.  
Figure out what video chat app is best to use.  
This website might help.
  - <https://techcrunch.com/2020/03/23/the-best-video-chat-apps-to-turn-social-distancing-into-distant-socializing/>
3. Make sure everyone has a copy of the story. Email, mail, or deliver it by hand (keeping distance) if needed.
4. Sign in at the appointed time and start reading. Everyone follows along. Take turns reading. Read together. Be creative.  
Discuss the story when you're done.

---

## Directed Drawing

For all ages



Drawing is good for kids and people of all ages. Drawing helps us:

- Express ourselves
- Process our world
- Experiment with ideas and techniques
- Make art
- Develop and enhance fine motor skills

The Art for Kids Hub has hundreds of art tutorials on video. Choose one that suits you and get started. Once you finish, hang up your art.

- <https://www.artforkidshub.com>

You need a laptop and internet, paper, and markers, crayons, paint, or some other medium.

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## Story Time Adventures

For ages 0-8 years

A story time adventure is a series of activities related to a book you already read. The activities can be almost anything: crafts, games, drawing and colouring, treasure hunts, etc.

The NWT Literacy Council has a 'Storytime Adventures' resource. It has activities and crafts for selected books. Use this resource directly or as a template to create your own adventure.



- [https://www.nwtliteracy.ca/sites/default/files/resources/story\\_time\\_adventures.pdf](https://www.nwtliteracy.ca/sites/default/files/resources/story_time_adventures.pdf)

Connecting activities with a story engages children more with reading. Once they get the idea, they will have their own ideas for activities.

Here are example activities for a storytime adventure for *Elisapee and Her Baby Seagull* by Nancy Mike. Here is the gist of the story.

*Elisapee's father brings home a baby seagull. Elisapee falls in love with the bird right away. She feeds and cares for her new friend named Nau. She even helps Nau learn how to fly.*

*Nau grows and grows until she's big enough to fly all over town and play with the other seagulls. Soon, it seems like Nau is ready to leave home for good, and Elisapee has to learn how to say goodbye.*

- Create paper plate birds—seagulls or some other birds.
- Make food items from play dough (or for real) for the birds.
- Make a map of what Nau sees when she flies.
- Make up and sing a 'love song' or poem for Nau.
- Learn about and draw the babies of other birds or animals.
- Make paper airplanes and fly them. Try different models.
- Play a 'flying' game of tag.

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## Kitchen Math

For ages 4-8 years

Math is everywhere around us. We use math in the kitchen all the time for cooking, baking, and eating.

The NWT Literacy Council has a resource *Kitchen Math* with many great ideas on how to include math when you cook and bake with your family. It also has activities about shopping and nutrition.



- [https://www.nwtliteracy.ca/sites/default/files/resources/kitchen\\_math\\_2017\\_139886\\_0.pdf](https://www.nwtliteracy.ca/sites/default/files/resources/kitchen_math_2017_139886_0.pdf)

Check out other websites with math and science activities to do at home, in the kitchen, with your kids.

- Kitchen Smarts! 10 Ways to Teach Math & Science While Cooking  
<https://www.kindercare.com/content-hub/articles/2017/november/kitchen-smarts-10-ways-to-teach-math-and-science-while-cooking-today-dinner>
- 5 Ways to Teach Preschool with Kitchen Math  
<https://homeschoolpreschool.net/kitchen-math/>

Use these resources directly, or as a template to create your own ideas to develop math skills in the kitchen. You may have to adapt some of the activities to fit with physical distancing during COVID-19 pandemic.

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## Bring a Story to Life

For ages 0-8 years

This activity helps children engage in a story—a good way to create interest and improve literacy. Young children often associate a spoken word with a picture (on paper or in their mind) before they connect a picture with a written word.

With this activity, you make props or hand-made objects (characters and settings) for a particular story or book. Use paper and markers, cardboard, play dough, or other materials that suit. As you read the story and after you read the story, children can play with the props and mimic situations in the book and create different situations.



As a child becomes more familiar with this activity, read them a story without showing them the pictures. Then ask them to draw or create the characters and setting. Compare these with the drawings in the book. Talk about what they created.

This is a great way to improve literacy and show how words can make different images for different people.



## ***Scratch—Block based programming***

For ages 8+

Scratch is a website and a free computer programming language. It is an online community where you can create your own interactive stories, games, and animations.

- <https://scratch.mit.edu>



The ability to code computer programs is an important part of literacy in today's world. Scratch uses block-based programming—premade, simple coding steps. When people learn to code in Scratch, they learn important strategies to solve problems, design projects, and communicate ideas. Scratch helps young people learn to think creatively, reason systematically, and work together—essential skills for life.

Scratch is designed for ages 8 to 16, but people of all ages use it. Millions of people create Scratch projects at homes, schools, museums, libraries, and community centers.

The site is very user friendly. Many children already have good technology skills. They will pick this up quickly. This is a great introduction to how computers and coding work, and fosters creativity and language-based literacy at the same time.

To participate, you need a computer or smart device and internet access. Go to the website and explore, learn, create, and have fun.



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## Create a 'Moment' Collage

For all ages

A great way to promote literacy is to tie meaning to the words we use and write. An easy way to do this is to make a memory collage.



1. Take a bunch of sticky notes, or small pieces of paper, and have a jar to put them in.
2. With your children, write down or draw on the pieces of paper a good memory or event that happened that day and add it to the jar.
3. Another approach is for children to write their favourite part of each day every evening, and then write their favourite part of each week on Sunday.
4. Younger children who cannot write can draw or tell you what to write.
5. At the end of a certain time frame (week, month) empty the jar and make a collage together from the papers in it.
6. As you make the collage, you may choose (or not) to create a certain shape such as a tree or heart or ?



This activity encourages children to write their feelings, thoughts, and memories and helps them connect language and meaning. It helps give children power in writing. It is a fun way to look back in time, remember things, and talk about them.