

# On-The-Go

In English

Language and Early  
Literacy Activities for  
Infants and Toddlers



## Use *On-the-Go* with *Language is the Key*

The *On-the-Go* materials are excellent follow-up activities for *Language is the Key*. Fourteen home and community activities show how to promote language, and early literacy during everyday activities. After viewing the video program “*Talking and Books*” or “*Talking and Play*,” trainers can distribute the *On-the-Go materials* as “take-homes” for parents and caregivers learning to use language facilitation strategies from *Language is the Key*.

“Hints” for each activity help caregivers and parents adapt the activity to the developmental level of the child. *On-the-Go* activities are appropriate for children with disabilities as well as children who are developing typically.

For children ages birth to three, the *On-the-Go* activities address:

- Language development
- Sounds & rhythms
- Book & print awareness

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## Activity

## Activity: Doing Things with Music

*Do different things while listening to the car radio or to a tape or CD:*

- Sing
- Clap (while at a stop light!)
- Move to the music, when you're stopped or in the back seat with your child
- Talk about how the music makes you feel



*On the Go*

## Activity

## Activity: Beginning to Sing Songs

*While singing in the car together, you can:*

- Move to the beat together when stopped or sitting in the back seat
- Make gestures that go with the song (e.g. Row, Row, Row Your Boat)
- Encourage your child to sing along
- Sing the rhyming words louder or softer



*On the Go*

## Hints

## Doing Things with Music

*To help your child succeed, you can:*

- Encourage your child to make sounds (la-la-la)
- Show your child how to move to the music - car dancing - when you're stopped at a light!
- Ask Yes/No questions (e.g. Does this song make you feel happy?)

*To make it more of a challenge, you can:*

- Encourage your child to sing without you
- Let your child use a musical instrument such as a toy drum
- Have your child create dance moves - but stay buckled up!
- Ask open-ended questions (e.g. Why does this music make you feel like dancing?)



*On the Go*

## Hints

## Beginning to Sing Songs

*To help your child succeed, you can:*

- Play your child's favorite tape or CD in the car
- Sing his or her favorite song while driving
- Bounce up and down in the car seat!
- Tune the radio to your child's favorite station



*To make it more of a challenge, you can:*

- Encourage your child to move to the beat on his or her own while in the car seat
- Encourage your child to make gestures that go with the song all by him or herself
- Have your child sing some of the song's words aloud (e.g. Wheels on the Bus)
- Have your child say the rhyming words with you

*On the Go*

## Activity

## Making up Silly Songs

*Do different things while singing to the car radio:*

- Make up words to the song (Row, Row, Row My Car)
- Make up silly words to the song (Bow, Bow, Bow My Squoat)
- Talk about your silly song, use words to describe it



*On the Go*

## Activity

## Rhyming Words

*As you are driving around, play with words that rhyme:*

- Say a word and ask your child to say another that rhymes (bike/Mike)
- Let your child make up words to rhyme with real words (tike/bike)
- Put different sounds at the beginning of your child's name to make words that rhyme with it (Sam/ram; Lee/tea)



*On the Go*

## Hints

## Making Up Silly Songs

*To help your child succeed, you can:*

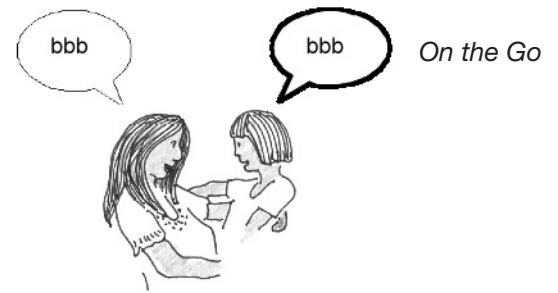
- Make up a song that describes what you're doing (Honk, Honk, Honk the Horn)
- Say some real and nonsense words and see if your child can pick out the silly ones
- Have your child say a letter sound and make up a silly word that starts with that sound

*To make it more of a challenge, you can:*

- Have your child make up a song that describes what he or she is doing (Going, Going, Going to Grandma's)
- Say a sound, have your child make up a silly word and then use that word in a song
- Encourage your child to write those silly words down on a piece of paper

## Hints

## Rhyming Words

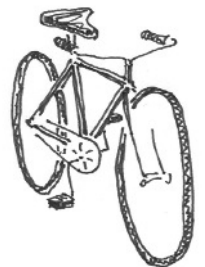


*To help your child succeed, you can:*

- Say softly some words that rhyme with your word and encourage your child to repeat them (car/far)
- Say a new first sound to make a new rhyming word
- Say the end of your word and ask your child what word might sound like that

*To make it more of a challenge, you can:*

- Give your child longer words to rhyme (railroad track/piggy back)
- Encourage your child to say as many words that rhyme as he or she can think of
- Have your child tell you why the words sound alike



*On the Go*

Activity

## Guess the Password

*Play this game in the car to make the miles go faster!:*

- Pretend your child’s stuffed animal or doll has a password to get into a special place
- Say a word that rhymes with the password (It sounds like ham).
- Have your child guess the password (It’s a name).
- Later, you can write the word down and read it together



*On the Go*

Activity

## Seeing Words

*As you are driving around, point out all the print you see on:*

- Buildings **SAFEWAY**
- Road signs **Auburn**
- Cars & trucks **Ford**
- Snacks you have in the car **Goldfish crackers**



*On the Go*

## Hints

## Guess the Password

*To help your child succeed, you can:*

- Give your child hints of what the password is (“It starts with the same sound as your name.” “Sounds like hat, it’s furry...”)
- Draw a picture on the car window of what the password is (when you’re stopped!)
- Do this activity as your child is asking for something in the car, a snack or a toy

*To make it more of a challenge, you can:*

- Have your child use the password in a sentence
- Encourage your child to write the password down on paper
- Ask your child why your word sounds like the password



## Hints

## Seeing Words

*To help your child succeed, you can:*

- Point to words on things that your child touches often in the car (snacks, toys, books)
- Point out the letters in words as you read the word out loud (“**S-t-o-p**”)
- Bring your child up close to the words so he or she can see them - stop at the **STOP** sign and say the letters; read the **Safeway** logo together

*To make it more of a challenge, you can:*

- Ask your child to find words on his or her own as you drive around
- See if your child knows what the words say
- Have your child say the letters in the word
- Encourage your child to write the words down





## Activity

## Keeping a Diary

Keep a pad of paper handy in the car and:

- Offer paper and encourage your child to scribble, draw or write
- Ask your child to draw what he or she sees out of the car window
- Can your child write words to go with his or her picture (road, trees, cars)?
- When you're stopped, help your child write a sentence about his or her drawing; remember to date it
- Look back at the pictures in your child's pad and read what he or she wrote



On the Go

## Activity

## Talking About Nursery Rhymes

Recite nursery rhymes together as you drive and:

- Talk about the nursery rhymes
- Play a tape or CD of nursery rhymes (**Wee-Sing; Raffi**)
- Keep a book of nursery rhymes handy in the car for your child to look at as you're traveling



On the Go

## Hints

## Keeping a Diary

*To help your child succeed, you can:*

- Give your child different things to make pictures with (stickers & paper; magazines & a glue stick -tear the paper, **NO scissors in a moving car!**; crayons & a coloring book)
- When you're stopped, help your child write words that go with his or her picture

*To make it more of a challenge, you can:*

- Have your child read the picture sentence back to you
- Ask open-ended questions about your child's drawing (What do you think the truck is hauling?)
- Have your child date their masterpiece!



*On the Go*

## Hints

## Talking About Nursery Rhymes

*To help your child succeed, you can:*

- Recite your child's favorite nursery rhyme over and over (and over!) as you drive
- Ask your child to pick a nursery rhyme from a book and see if you can recite it!
- Encourage your child to draw a picture of his or her favorite nursery rhyme

*To make it more of a challenge, you can:*

- Ask your child to draw two pictures about the same nursery rhyme and talk about how they go together
- Encourage your child to say the nursery rhyme all by him or herself
- Ask simple questions about the nursery rhyme



*On the Go*

## Activity

## Talking About What Will Happen Next

*As you are out and about, ask your child what will happen next when you are:*

- About to go into the store
- On your way to the doctor's
- Going to visit a friend or family member
- Heading out to a place your child likes (McDonald's; playground, library)



*On the Go*

## Activity

## Talking About Things Outside

*Ask your child questions about things he sees out the car window:*

- What color is it?
- What shape is it?
- How do you think it feels?
- Do you think it has a smell?



*On the Go*

## Hints

## Talking About What Will Happen Next

*To help your child succeed, you can:*

- Tell your child what will happen next
- Ask yes/no questions about what will happen next (Will there be other cars in the Safeway parking lot?)
- Show your child pictures of what will happen next in your outing today (first we'll go to the library, then McDonald's for lunch, and then home)

*To make it more of a challenge, you can:*

- Ask your child what will happen next as you get to where you're going
- Ask your child what will happen tomorrow when you two go someplace
- Ask what your child thinks will happen at a special event (visit to Grandpa's birthday party)



*On the Go*

## Hints

## Talking About Things Outside

*To help your child succeed, you can:*

- Talk about what color and shape things are and how they feel and smell
- Ask your child questions about things your child is really interested in (trucks, bugs, flying)
- Ask yes/no questions (was that a Ford truck we just passed?)



*To make it more of a challenge, you can:*

- Encourage your child to describe things with more than one word (that's a fast, brown dump truck)
- Describe something you're passing by and see if your child can find it
- Have your child describe something for you and you try to find it

*On the Go*

Activity

## Listening to Different Things Outside

*As you are driving, have your child listen for:*

- Birds
- Cars, trains and planes
- Animals in trees and fields
- Water
- Wind in the trees.....and talk about how they sound



*On the Go*

Activity

## I Spy

*This is the original car game to pass the time! The basic rules are:*

- Pick something easy for your child to identify
- Say “I spy with my little eye something beginning with.....”
- Give your child time to guess
- Take turns being the person spying and the person guessing



*On the Go*

## Hints

## Listening to Different Things Outside

*To help your child succeed, you can:*

- Have your child listen for things he or she likes (birds, car horns, engines )
- Have your child listen for loud things (dogs barking, trucks passing, train whistles blowing)
- Talk together about what you hear



*To make it more of a challenge, you can:*

- Have your child listen for quiet things (leaves moving, birdsong, water babbling)
- Have your child describe what he or she hears with more than one word (out there, pounding, hard)
- Ask your child to tell you the location of the sound (up high, down here, close by)

*On the Go*

## Hints

## I Spy

*To help your child succeed, you can:*

- Choose something that starts with a letter you know your child already knows
- Spy something very obvious such as trees or the road
- Give extra clues like a rhyming word (starts with “t” and rhymes with “bees”)



*To make it more of a challenge, you can:*

- Choose a letter your child is working on at school
- Pick something familiar up the road or at where you’ll be staying (“I’m going to spy...”)
- Ask your child to draw the last three things you both spied and to write the words that go with them

*On the Go*

Activity

## Window Writing

*On very hot or very cold days when the car windows are all steamed up, have your child:*

- Write the letters in their name
- Make scribbles & shapes
- Pretend to “write”
- Write numbers 1-10



*Then give your child a cloth to wipe the window clean!*

On the Go

Activity

## Talking Maps

*As you are driving to familiar places with your child (grandma’s house):*

- Talk about the different landmarks on the way (school, park, grocery store)
- Talk about directions as you go straight or turn right or left
- When you arrive ask your child to tell how you got there (How did we go from our house to grandma’s?)



On the Go

Hints

## Window Writing

To help your child succeed, you can have your child:

- Copy a simple shape such as a circle - make your's while you're stopped, not driving!
- Copy the first letter in his or her name - again, make the model for your child when it's safe for you to do so
- Draw themselves

To make it more of a challenge, you can ask your child to:

- Write in cursive!
- Write the letter that begins the word you're saying
- Draw a favorite cartoon character and write the character's name



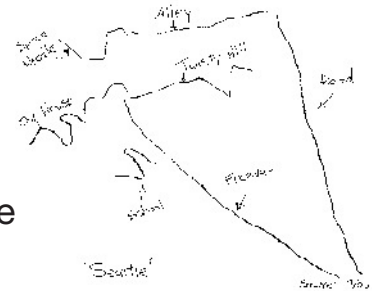
On the Go

Hints

## Talking Maps

To help your child succeed, you can have your child:

- Have your child tell you what they see
- Encourage your child to notice landmarks ("Look, there's the fire station!").
- Remind your child of all the landmarks ("First we went by the park, then we went by Sandy's house").



To make it more of a challenge, you can ask your child to:

- Draw a map

On the Go