



RAISING READERS BENCHMARK CARDS



RAISEMETOREAD.ORG



WHAT ARE RAISING READERS BENCHMARK CARDS?

The Raising Readers Benchmark Cards are an early literacy tool designed to help parents and caregivers better understand their child's development.

To get the next set of Raising Readers Benchmark Cards, or to find out more information, please visit us at raisemetoread.org/resources-southwest-iowa/



MARY, MARY, QUITE CONTRARY

Mary, Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With silver bells, and cockle shells,
And pretty maids all in a row.



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A graphic for infant development. It features a large, rounded purple shape on the left containing the text '0-3 MOS' in white. To the right of this shape are three horizontal purple bars of decreasing length, each containing white text: 'WATCH ME GROW', 'SMILES', and 'COOS & BABBLES'.

**0-3
MOS**

WATCH ME GROW

SMILES

COOS & BABBLES

RAISING READERS

- Offer safe things that are different & interesting to look at & tell your child about them
- Give child big, soft & safe toys to explore with mouth
- Place noisy toys & soft books next to child

BENCHMARK

- Lift head and chest when laying on stomach



LITTLE BOY BLUE

Little boy blue,
Come blow your horn,
The sheep's in the meadow,
The cow's in the corn.
But where is the boy
Who looks after the sheep?
He's under a haystack,
Fast asleep.



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A graphic for infant development. It features a large, rounded, light blue shape on the left containing the text '0-3 MOS'. To the right of this shape are three horizontal, light blue bars of decreasing length, each containing a developmental milestone. The background is a solid light blue, and the bottom of the page has a green wavy border.

**0-3
MOS**

WATCH ME GROW

SMILES

COOS & BABBLES

RAISING READERS

- Gently clap child's hands together while singing rhymes
- Gently move your child's legs as if pedaling a bike while telling your child about pretend places they are visiting
- Use a foot rattle with a towel roll under the bottom of child's leg

BENCHMARK

- Wiggle and kick legs



BAA, BAA, BLACK SHEEP

Baa, baa, black sheep, have you any wool?
Yes sir, yes sir, three bags full!
One for the master,
And one for the dame,
One for the little boy
Who lives down the lane.



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A graphic with a large blue rounded rectangle on the left containing the text '0-3 MOS'. To its right are three horizontal blue bars of decreasing length, each containing white text. The top bar says 'WATCH ME GROW', the middle bar says 'SMILES', and the bottom bar says 'COOS & BABBLES'.

**0-3
MOS**

WATCH ME GROW

SMILES

COOS & BABBLES

RAISING READERS

- Point to pictures & things while naming the objects
- Read books to child that use colorful, clear, & realistic illustrations
- Hold & move various things in front of child while talking about the object

BENCHMARK

- Follow a moving object or person with eyes



TO MARKET, TO MARKET

To market, to market to buy a fat pig.
Home again, home again, jiggy jig.
To market, to market, to buy a fat hog,
Home again, home again, joggity jog.



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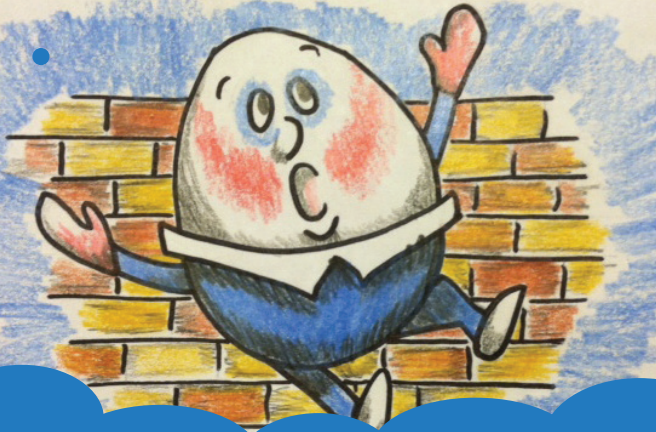


RAISING READERS

- Comfort child by looking at them & using a soft & soothing tone
- Sing lullabies, songs or nursery rhymes
- Use repetition, sing same songs or read the same stories

BENCHMARK

- Make cooing or babbling sounds



HUMPTY DUMPTY

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall;
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall;
All the King's horses and all the King's men
Couldn't put Humpty Dumpty together again.



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**3-6
MOS**

WATCH ME GROW

ROLLS

GIGGLES

RAISING READERS

- Bounce child on your knee or dance with them to music
- Lay child on side and read a story to them
- Remove two legs from an activity table, set it on the floor at an angle next to child. Talk about the lights, colors, shapes, etc. that are on the table

BENCHMARK

- Roll from back to stomach and stomach to back



MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB

Mary had a little lamb,
Its fleece was white as snow.
Everywhere that Mary went,
The little lamb was sure to go.
He followed her to school one day,
And broke the teachers rule.
It made the children laugh and play,
To see a lamb at school.



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**3-6
MOS**

WATCH ME GROW

ROLLS

GIGGLES

RAISING READERS

- Expose child to people or photos of people of different cultures
- Allow child to hold book while looking at colorful pictures together
- Create a book with photos of family members, then talk about members while looking at the book with your child

BENCHMARK

- Recognize familiar faces and smiles



HOT-CROSS BUNS

Hot-cross buns!
Hot-cross buns!
One a penny, two a penny,
Hot-cross buns!
If you have no daughters,
Give them to your sons;
One a penny, two a penny,
Hot-cross buns!



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**3-6
MOS**

WATCH ME GROW

ROLLS

GIGGLES

RAISING READERS

- Tell child what loud or unusual sounds are (train whistle, dog barking, etc.)
- Sing Action Songs (Wheels on the Bus, If You're Happy & You Know It, Five Little Monkeys, etc.)
- Make noises and reward child when they look in the direction of the noise (clapping & a hug, kiss or smile)

BENCHMARK

- Searches or looks for sounds



JACK AND JILL

Jack and Jill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water;
Jack fell down and broke his crown,
and Jill came tumbling after.



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**3-6
MOS**

WATCH ME GROW

ROLLS

GIGGLES

RAISING READERS

- Tell your child about your day
- Sing songs that use sounds & not just words (Baby Shark, Five Little Speckled Frogs, etc.)
- Imitate child's babbles

BENCHMARK

- Coos, giggles and makes lots of sounds



RING AROUND THE ROSY

Ring around the rosy,
Pocket full of posy,
Ashes! Ashes!
We all fall down!



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**6-9
MOS**

WATCH ME GROW

IMITATE

PICK THINGS UP

RAISING READERS

- Let child explore different containers with things in them & discuss child's activities (What is in the bag? Oops! They all fell out. You're holding a blue block)
- Read books about messes (Can you do a similar activity with your child?)
- Build a tower and let child knock it down, repeat

BENCHMARK

- Love to dump toys and things out of containers



DON'T WORRY IF YOUR JOB IS SMALL

Don't worry if your job is small,
And your rewards are few.
Remember that the mighty oak,
Was once a nut like you.



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**6-9
MONTHS**

WATCH ME GROW

IMITATE

PICK THINGS UP

RAISING READERS

- Do Finger Plays with child (Patty Cake, Itsy Bitsy Spider, Where is Thumbkin, etc.)
- Read sensory books to child (Let child touch & feel)
- Let child finger paint with thick pudding or jell-o

BENCHMARK

- Use thumb and finger together to pick up little things



THERE WAS A CROOKED MAN

There was a crooked man,
and he walked a crooked mile,
He found a crooked sixpence against a crooked stile;
He bought a crooked cat
which caught a crooked mouse,
And they all lived together in a little crooked house.



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RAISING READERS

- Play Peek-A-Boo
- Narrate what is happening
- Let child touch safe, large things with different textures

BENCHMARK

- Recognize and look for familiar people



HEY, DIDDLE, DIDDLE

Hey, diddle, diddle,
The cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon;
The little dog laughed
To see such sport,
And the dish ran away with the spoon.



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**6-9
MOS**

WATCH ME GROW

IMITATE

PICK THINGS UP

RAISING READERS

- Sing & read to your child
- Sit in front of a mirror with child while making funny faces & noises
- Take child outside to see new things & people

BENCHMARK

- Start to imitate and make sounds like real words



TWINKLE, TWINKLE, LITTLE STAR

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are.
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.
Twinkle, twinkle little star,
How I wonder what you are.



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A graphic with a blue background and a pink border. On the left, a large pink oval contains the text '9-12 MOS' in white. To the right of the oval are three horizontal pink bars, each containing white text: 'WATCH ME GROW', 'SIT UP ALONE', and 'BEGINNING STEPS'.

**9-12
MOS**

WATCH ME GROW

SIT UP ALONE

BEGINNING STEPS

RAISING READERS

- Let child pick out a book & read it to them
- Ask child where someone in the room is, asking where they are also
- Say the child's name in different tones & encourage when child responds

BENCHMARK

- Respond to own name



YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE

You are my sunshine, my only sunshine.
You make me happy when skies are grey.
You'll never know, dear, how much I love you.
Please don't take my sunshine away.



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**9-12
MOS**

WATCH ME GROW

SIT UP ALONE

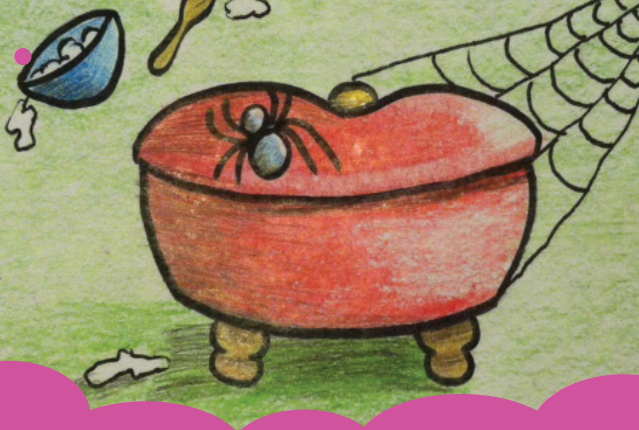
BEGINNING STEPS

RAISING READERS

- Play various types of music
- Explore music with your child, mimic sounds you hear around you (drums from a pan and wooden spoon, crinkling paper, tapping fingers on a table, etc.)
- Dance with child

BENCHMARK

- Dance or bounce to music



LITTLE MISS MUFFET

Little Miss Muffet
Sat on a tuffet,
Eating her curds and whey;
Along came a spider,
Who sat down beside her,
And frightened Miss Muffet away.



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**9-12
MOS**

WATCH ME GROW

SIT UP ALONE

BEGINNING STEPS

RAISING READERS

- Ask child to point to different things while reading a book
- Name different things while ‘waiting’ times (doctor offices, long lines, etc.)
- Point to and name body parts, make it a game (Where are your eyes?)

BENCHMARK

- Point to a few objects when asked to find



JACK BE NIMBLE

Jack be nimble,
Jack be quick,
Jack jump over
The candlestick.



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**9-12
MOS**

The infographic features a large, rounded, pink-outlined shape on a blue background. Inside this shape, the text '9-12 MOS' is written in large, bold, white letters. To the right of this shape, three horizontal pink-outlined bars extend outwards, each containing a milestone in white text. The background is a solid blue color. At the bottom of the page, there are green, wavy, cloud-like shapes.

WATCH ME GROW

SIT UP ALONE

BEGINNING STEPS

RAISING READERS

- Move items just out of child's reach
- Have child walk short distances while encouraging them
- Walk around with child standing on the top of your feet, talk about walking

BENCHMARK

- Take beginning steps



HICKORY DICKORY DOCK

Hickory Dickory dock,
The mouse ran up the clock,
The clock struck one
The mouse ran down,
Hickory Dickory dock.



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12-18 MOS

WATCH ME GROW

TEMPER

COMBINE WORDS

RAISING READERS

- Encourage child to say how they feel and why (mad because they lost their toy or happy because they got a piece of candy)
- Tell child about how you felt throughout the day and why
- Follow through with what you tell your child

BENCHMARK

- Begin showing a temper



THIS LITTLE PIGGY

This little piggy went to market,
This little piggy stayed home,
This little piggy had roast beef,
This little piggy had none.
This little piggy went ...
Wee, wee, wee,
all the way home!



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**12-18
MOS**

WATCH ME GROW

TEMPER

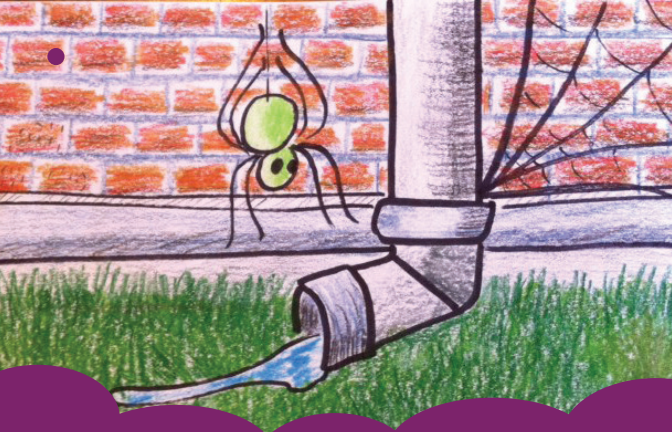
COMBINE WORDS

RAISING READERS

- Model pushing, pulling or taking things apart & narrate (Look daddy is pushing the broom)
- Play with child using activity boards, blocks, dolls, balls, & stacking containers
- Read children stories about building things

BENCHMARK

- Push, pull or take things apart



THE ITSY BITSY SPIDER

The Itsy Bitsy spider crawled 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 went up the spout again!



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12-18 MOS

WATCH ME GROW

TEMPER

COMBINE WORDS

RAISING READERS

- Teach simple songs that use motion (Heads & Shoulders, Knees & Toes, Open Shut Them, etc.)
- Read the same story over & over again
- Use child's interests (If like animals, What sounds do they make? What are they called? Read a book about them. Pretend to be your favorite animal)

BENCHMARK

- Use single words, gestures and use words together



TEENY TINY LITTLE MOUSEY

Teeny tiny little mousey
from the barn up to the housie
went upstairs to the pantry shelf
found some cheese and helped himself.
Nibble, nibble, nibble.



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12-18 MOS

WATCH ME GROW

TEMPER

COMBINE WORDS

RAISING READERS

- Ask child to show you how to do simple things (pick up a book, touch your nose, etc.)
- Have child help you & narrate what you are doing
- Use pronouns as much as possible (use 'ball' instead of 'that', etc.)

BENCHMARK

- Understand simple one step directions



PEASE PORRIDGE HOT

Pease porridge hot,
Pease porridge cold,
Pease porridge in the pot
Nine days old.



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**2
YRS**

WATCH ME GROW

LIKES TO SAY NO

USES MORE WORDS

RAISING READERS

- Use 'Copy Cat' play to have child follow two-step directions (Point to elbow then say elbow, now it is the child's turn)
- Sing in the car or have child repeat after you
- As child becomes familiar with a book, song or rhyme, pause and let them fill in the next word or words

BENCHMARK

- Sing songs and say rhymes



I CAUGHT A FISH ALIVE

One, two, three, four, five.
Once I caught a fish alive.
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten.
Then I let it go again.



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**2
YRS**

The infographic features a large green number '2' and the text 'YRS' inside a rounded green shape. To the right, three horizontal green bars with white text list milestones: 'WATCH ME GROW', 'LIKES TO SAY NO', and 'USES MORE WORDS'. The background is blue with green cloud-like shapes at the bottom.

WATCH ME GROW

LIKES TO SAY NO

USES MORE WORDS

RAISING READERS

- Point out a 'new' item every day
- Let child hold & turn pages while you read
- Role play ideas from books

BENCHMARK

- Use 50+ words frequently



YANKEE DOODLE

Yankee Doodle went to town,
A-riding on a pony;
Stuck a feather in his hat
And called it macaroni.



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**2
YRS**

The infographic features a large green number '2' and the text 'YRS' inside a rounded green shape. To the right, three horizontal green bars of varying lengths contain the text 'WATCH ME GROW', 'LIKES TO SAY NO', and 'USES MORE WORDS' respectively. The entire graphic is set against a blue background with green cloud-like shapes at the bottom.

WATCH ME GROW

LIKES TO SAY NO

USES MORE WORDS

RAISING READERS

- Ask questions about things (What does it smell/taste/feel like?)
- Be patient, let your child finish their sentences & do not interrupt them
- Add additional words to your child's sentences (If child says 'want car' ask 'you want the car?')

BENCHMARK

- Put 2-3 words together in a sentence



LAZY CAT

Kitty, where have you been today?
"In the meadows, asleep in the hay."
Kitty, you are a lazy cat
If you have done no more than that!



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**2
YRS**

WATCH ME GROW

LIKES TO SAY NO

USES MORE WORDS

RAISING READERS

- Model 'Please', 'Thank-you', & 'I'm Sorry'
- Put your child in charge, give two options you are okay with (Do you want corn or beans with your dinner?)
- Ask your public librarian for children stories that deal with emotions & read them to your child

BENCHMARK

- Love to use the word 'no'



LITTLE JACK HORNER

*Little Jack Horner
Sat in the corner,
Eating a Christmas pie;
He put in his thumb,
And pulled out a plum,
And said, "What a good boy am I!"*



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RAISING READERS

- Participate in activities at the public library
- Make believe play with your child
- Play the 'Sharing Game' (Pass an object back and forth while saying 'my turn' or 'your turn')

BENCHMARK

- Play with others and share toys sometimes



MIX A PANCAKE

Mix a pancake,
Stir a pancake,
Pop it in the pan;
Fry the pancake,
Toss the pancake—
Catch it if you can.



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**3
YRS**

WATCH ME GROW

SORTS ITEMS

WHY QUESTIONS

RAISING READERS

- Have child help with every day sorting (putting away silverware, laundry to wash, putting away toys, etc.)
- Ask child to find similar items while reading (This is a bird. Do you see another bird?)
- Offer various items to sort (noodles, small toys, buttons) & talk about different ways of sorting them (size, color, shape, etc.)

BENCHMARK

- Sort two objects that match



ROW, ROW YOUR BOAT

Row, row, row your boat,
Gently down the stream.
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,
Life is but a dream.



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**3
YRS**

WATCH ME GROW

SORTS ITEMS

WHY QUESTIONS

RAISING READERS

- Make up stories together
- Name emotions (They are happy playing together, he is crying because he is sad, etc.)
- Read aloud, slowly & exaggerate sounds

BENCHMARK

- Talk in short sentences and try to tell you their feelings



RAIN, RAIN GO AWAY

Rain, rain, go away
Come again another day
Little Arthur wants to play.



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RAISING READERS

- Talk to your child about what is going to happen or has already happened during the day
- Look up answers you don't know together
- Encourage child to touch & find things in pictures

BENCHMARK

- Ask what and why questions



IT'S RAINING, IT'S POURING

It's raining, it's pouring,
The old man's snoring.
He went to bed
And bumped his head
And couldn't get up in the morning.



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**4
YRS**

WATCH ME GROW

MATCHES ITEMS

SIMPLE PUZZLES

RAISING READERS

- Provide crayons, sand, play-doh, chalk & other various materials to write and draw with
- Have child trace large letters in books with finger while you read
- Read a story, have child draw their favorite part

BENCHMARK

- Draw simple circles and stick figures



I EAT MY PEAS WITH HONEY

I eat my peas with honey;
I've done it all my life.
It makes the peas taste funny,
But it keeps them on the knife.



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**4
YRS**

WATCH ME GROW

MATCHES ITEMS

SIMPLE PUZZLES

RAISING READERS

- Pay attention when child is talking & add 'new' information to their sentences
- Encourage the child to speak with family and friends
- Give child the opportunity to hear troublesome sounds pronounced correctly (If child struggles with /sh/ & /ch/ sounds, use words like shoes, shut & chair more often)

BENCHMARK

- Talk with words in a sentence being mostly understood



HERE IS THE BEEHIVE

Here is the Beehive
But where are all the bees?
Hiding away where nobody sees.
Here they come creeping
Out of their hive,
One and two and three, four, five.



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RAISING READERS

- Let child pick out their own clothes (Can you wear a blue shirt today?)
- Go on a color hunt (Can you find a yellow vegetable at the grocery store? Or a green sign while driving?)
- Let child help add food coloring to milk, talk about what color they are going to drink (What if you add more than one color?)

BENCHMARK

- Match & name 3-4 colors



PATTY CAKE

Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, baker's man,
Bake me a cake, as fast as you can;
Pat it, prick it, and mark it with B,
Put it in the oven for baby and me.



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**4
YRS**

WATCH ME GROW

MATCHES ITEMS

SIMPLE PUZZLES

RAISING READERS

- Play I-Spy
- Cut a color or illustrated magazine page into large pieces & let the child reassemble the image (start with large pieces, cut into smaller pieces as child masters it)
- Give opportunities to play with other children

BENCHMARK

- Put together simple puzzles with 5-6 pieces



LITTLE BO-PEEP

Little Bo-Peep has lost her sheep,
And can't tell where to find them;
Leave them alone, and they'll come home,
Bringing their tails behind them.



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**5
YRS**

WATCH ME GROW

PATIENCE

TALK ABOUT FEELINGS

RAISING READERS

- Vary your voice & make funny faces while you read
- Model that it is okay to express your feelings
- While watching TV ask questions (Why do you think the boy is crying?)

BENCHMARK

- Can talk about their thoughts and feelings



WHERE OH WHERE

Where oh where has my little dog gone?
Oh, where oh where could he be?
With his tale cut short and his ears cut long,
Oh where oh where could he be?



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**5
YRS**

WATCH ME GROW

PATIENCE

TALK ABOUT FEELINGS

RAISING READERS

- Let child help plan daily activities
- Ask questions when reading (What do you think they will do next?)
- Talk about placement of objects (on, under, behind, etc.)

BENCHMARK

- Ask and answer who, what, why, when, and where questions



STAR LIGHT, STAR BRIGHT

Star light, star bright,
First star I see tonight,
I wish I may, I wish I might,
Have this wish I wish tonight.



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**5
YRS**

WATCH ME GROW

PATIENCE

TALK ABOUT FEELINGS

RAISING READERS

- Point out words & familiar symbols for your child to name
- See if your child can find small words (off, go, the) in books or magazines. How many times?
- Use foam letters or magnets to write words together

BENCHMARK

- Recognize printed names



HOBBY HORSE

I had a little hobby horse
and it was dabble grey.
His head was made of pea-straw
His tail was made of hay.



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**5
YRS**

WATCH ME GROW

PATIENCE

TALK ABOUT FEELINGS

RAISING READERS

- Play Freeze Tag
- Use “waiting” time to read books (doctor offices, long lines, etc.)
- Play Simon Says

BENCHMARK

- Have patience