

Gaining Information Through Signs and Symbols: Ages 4-5

Working with your child to identify signs and symbols in their environment will help him:

- Recognize common symbols in the environment
- Begin the reading process by recognizing print in their world (on buildings, food labels, road signs, etc.)



Ideas to try with your child:

- Point out the symbols on the doors of the restrooms. Ask your child how she knows which one to use.
- Point out the signs as you enter your favorite stores or restaurants. Name the first letter in the sign: "That is a 'J' for Jimmy's Market. It begins like your name, Juan."
- Talk about signs you see while driving in the car. Describe how they affect you as the driver: "That red sign says STOP. The yellow circle with black X and two R's means it's a railroad crossing. We must stop to let the train pass."

If your child is struggling:

- Take a walk around the neighborhood and look at street signs or traffic signs. Talk about what they mean.
- Look at brand symbols on cans of food or cereal boxes. Ask your child to find 2 of the same brand by the symbol.

Going further:

- Introduce shapes common to math such as + or = signs. Use coins for counting and begin to write number sentences ($2 + 2 = 4$).
- Look for the recycle symbol on containers throughout the community. Talk about the meaning of recycling.

The WA State Department of Early Learning and the Richland School District believes that parents, families, and caregivers are young children's best teachers. This resource guide, part of *Strong Foundations for School: Resource Guides for Parents of Young Children*, highlights a key developmental skill for **children ages 4-5** that parents can help improve at home.



Adapted from *WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, 2012*: "Recognize objects, places, and ideas by symbols." Learning About My World (Knowledge), pg. 78