

# Diving into Literacy

**Instructors:** Don't forget to make an Achievry account for each student! [Make your account for the Achievry in English](#) or [Make your Account for the Achievry in Spanish](#).

**Objective:** By the end of this lesson, your students should have some familiarity with options for resources from the Student Portal that help students build literacy skills.

**Grade Span:** PreK-12

**Subjects:** Literacy

**Lesson Introduction:** It is crucial to nurture literacy skills in students of every age (even from birth). Strong reading and writing skills allow for better communication, which helps students connect with others. Effective communication involves not just reading and writing but also listening and speaking. Literacy is foundational for academic success and allows engagement across all subjects.

In addition, these skills encourage lifelong learning and critical thinking, enabling students to evaluate information and make informed decisions. In today's job market, strong literacy opens doors to better career opportunities.

**Lesson:** Your goal is to help students and families get comfortable using literacy tools and resources like the ones in the [IDRC Student & Family Resource Portal](#).

Translate this page? BETA

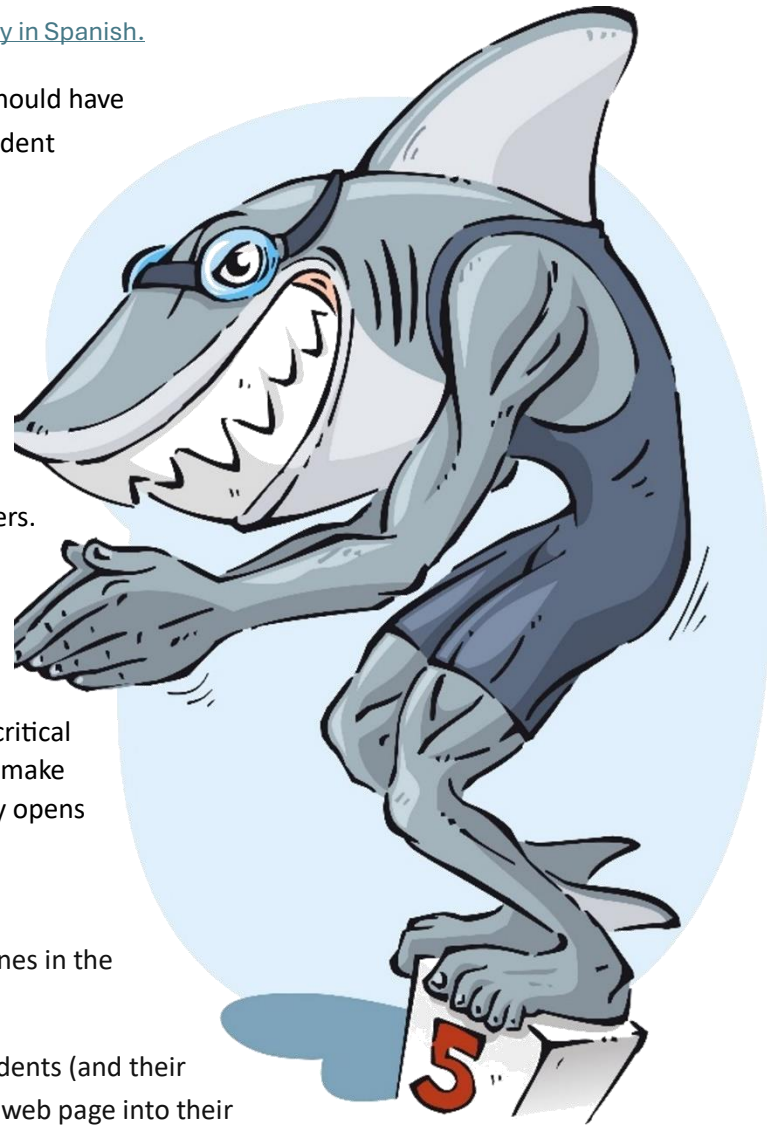
Translate from  
German

Translate to  
English

Translate Cancel

**Teacher Tip:** Show students (and their parents) how to translate a web page into their preferred language from the drop-down menu in the upper right corner.

**Younger Students:** Building literacy skills from birth is all about creating a language-rich environment. The goal is to expose children to language in various forms—spoken, written, and visual—so they start building the foundations for reading and writing as they grow.



**Storyline Online:** Storyline Online features celebrities reading children's books aloud with animated illustrations. It supports literacy by enhancing listening skills, vocabulary, and comprehension, while fostering a love for reading. This engaging resource helps children connect with stories and develop early language skills. Storyline Online does offer some bilingual options



**Better Letters** (ABC Phonics Songs for Pre-



schoolers): Research shows that teaching letter sounds, paired with letters, is more effective than just teaching letter names. Laurie Berkner, in partnership with Bjorem Speech, has created a fun, multisensory phonics series with catchy songs and movement. This approach helps children learn vowels, consonants, and digraphs in a memorable and engaging way.

**Toadstools and Fairy Dust:** a YouTube channel offering engaging children’s stories, educational songs, and whimsical content. With lively narration and animations, it promotes early literacy by fostering a love of reading, expanding vocabulary, and enhancing listening skills in young audiences.



**Ms. Rachel** Ms. Rachel’s YouTube channel and videos are known for being high-quality, research-based, and child-friendly, providing a fun and interactive learning experience that supports early childhood development. Her approach, backed by her background in music education and a second master’s degree in early childhood education, incorporates speech therapy techniques, sign language, and developmentally appropriate practices.

**Funbrain:** Play games and learn in a fun way!

**Sesame Street:** Play games, learn the alphabet, draw online and more!

**Scratch Garden:** Scratch Garden is a YouTube channel that uses fun songs and animations to teach kids basic skills in literacy, math, and more. Its engaging content helps young learners with concepts like the alphabet, phonics, and basic grammar in an entertaining way.



## Kids getting a little older?

While tools like [Storyline Online](#) still work well for older students, it’s helpful to add in additional resources that offer a mix of reading and listening practice, creative writing opportunities, and vocabulary-building games, ensuring that students stay motivated while mastering important literacy skills.



**Storybird:** Storybird is a creative writing platform that allows students to create and publish their own stories. Using a large library of beautiful artwork, students can write stories and poems, which they can then share with family and friends. Storybird is great for developing writing skills, story structure, and creative expression. Though there is a paid version, the free version allows students to write and publish books, making it a great tool for aspiring writers

**Write & Improve:** Write and Improve is a free tool where students can submit writing samples and receive immediate, helpful feedback. It's an excellent way for students to work on improving their writing skills, as the tool provides suggestions for improving grammar, punctuation, and coherence. It's an especially helpful resource for teachers or parents looking to provide immediate, constructive feedback on students' writing.

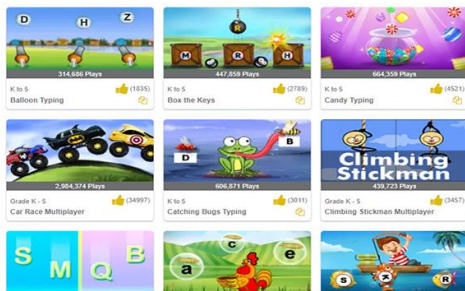


**ABCya Reading Games:** ABCya offers fun, interactive games that help children develop literacy skills, including letter recognition, phonics, spelling, and reading comprehension. These games make learning to read and write engaging and effective. It's now available in Spanish as well.

**TED-Ed:** TED-Ed offers animated videos that explain complex topics in an engaging, accessible way. These videos can enhance literacy practice by improving listening comprehension, expanding vocabulary, and promoting critical thinking through discussion and reflection on the content.



#### Typing Games



**Typing Club:** Typing Club is a free, ad-supported typing program that starts with the basics and gradually builds skills. It includes games and activities, with a dashboard tracking your practice time, words per minute, accuracy, and other stats. And try out **Turtle Diary** for fun typing games.

**The Learning Network:** The Learning Network from *The New York Times* offers current event articles, writing prompts, and lesson plans for older elementary and middle school students. The accessible content helps students practice reading and writing while engaging with real-world topics through creative activities like photo essays and quizzes.

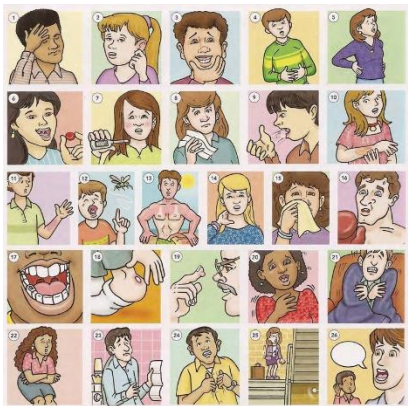
### Merriam-Webster Games & Quizzes:

The Merriam-Webster Spelling Games site is an excellent resource for older students looking to improve their spelling and vocabulary. It provides a competitive, game-like environment where middle and high school students can sharpen their language skills. The site features interactive activities that reinforce spelling, vocabulary, and word usage, making learning both fun and effective. Students can practice spelling while expanding their vocabulary and mastering new words.



### The Interactive Picture

Dictionary: The Picture Dictionary on



LanguageTools.biz helps learners build vocabulary by pairing words with simple, clear images. It's a great, visual way to understand and remember new words, especially for beginners.

**Keep it going!** Expand on this lesson with additional resources & Achievery lessons like:

Visual Literacy: Students learn how to detect when and understand why photos and videos on the Internet are sometimes edited and may tell an entirely different story from the original.

Fluency Lessons (Gr K-4): Students practice fluency: reading with expression and at an appropriate rate.

Finding the Main Idea When Reading (Gr K-1): Students practice identifying the main idea of informational (nonfiction) texts. They do this by saying or writing what the book or article is mostly about. Distinguishing the main idea from the details in a text is foundational for comprehension.

Explore The Value of Tact (Gr 4-5): When communicating with others, both online and off, it is important to choose our words wisely. Learn how the value of tact can help you communicate thoughtfully and truthfully.

Before you can create change, you need to dream about it. In the In My World lesson (Gr 6-8), students envision a better world through writing, using precise words and telling details to convey a world they wish to live in.

### **READ AND REPEAT WHAT I SAID AND HOW I SAID IT**

