

# Comprehension Conversations

## Environmental Print

*By: Sarah Beebe*

**Environmental Print** - familiar print that surrounds children in their everyday lives such as traffic signs, restaurant signs, food containers, charts, labels, and logos. Environmental print is everywhere.

- While dining out, encourage children to “read” the menu and engage in conversation when ordering. Some children’s menus even have photos of the food as well as the printed names.
- In the car, engage children in conversation about passing buildings, signs, vehicles and billboards spotted along the way. For example, you might point out speed limit signs, exit signs, road signs, and various billboards advertising different products.
- At the grocery store, encourage your beginning readers and writers to create their own grocery list or engage in conversation about the labels found on the various packages. Give children a box of their favorite food and play an I Spy game as you go through the store. You might point out various letters, words, or logos found on each item.
- At home, have young readers help you “read” through the mail by sharing various catalogs and advertisements, especially ones for stores or toy catalogs. The vibrant colors found on printed materials are an eye-catching way to encourage “reading” at a very young age.
- Encourage children to make their own gift wish list for a birthday or other holiday by sharing a toy catalog. Young children can “read” the pictures to decide if they want to add it to their list and older readers can begin to use the printed text as well as the pictures to make their own list.
- Encourage young children to assist in the kitchen. Pointing out the steps found on a package of brownies or reading along on a recipe card teaches children the relationship between the text and the steps needed to complete the task. Some prepackaged brownies, cookies or other tasty treats, include both illustrations as well as printed words required to complete each step.
- Create an Environmental Print Collage (see below) using catalogs, mailings, food packages or any other print rich material. Encourage children to cut out recognizable words, logos, symbols, etc... as they create a one of kind collage. Display it where they can read it and add to it as they recognize more environmental print.

# I Can Read Collage

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_