

# Read at Home Recommendations

Parents are a child's first teacher. Reading to children is a vital way to improve early literacy. We are committed to making every effort to ensure that your child is reading on grade level by the end of third grade. Simply incorporating daily reading with a few simple everyday strategies will have a profound impact on your child's success. Below are a few ways that we can work together to help your child become a successful reader.

**Phonemic awareness** is the ability to **hear** and distinguish sounds.

This includes: - Recognizing sounds, alone and in words - Adding sounds to words - Taking apart words and breaking them into their different sounds - Moving sounds

**Phonemic Awareness Activities;** focus on 1 to 2 of these activities per week. If you feel your child needs to redo a lesson, by all means repeat a week's lesson for automaticity and accuracy.

- Play "I Spy" with your child, but instead of giving a color say, "I spy something that starts with /b/." or "I spy something with these sounds, /d/ /ō/ /g/." Have your child do the same.
- Play a game in which you say a word and your child has to break apart all the sounds. Ask your child to stretch out a word like dog and he/she can pretend to stretch a word with a **rubber band**. Your child should say /d/ /ō/ /g/.
- Play the "Silly Name Game". Replace the first letter of each family member's name with a different letter. For example, 'Tob' for 'Bob', 'Watt' for 'Matt', etc.
- Say a sentence aloud and ask your child to determine how many words were in the sentence. (Push up a crayon, bean, or a block up for every word; use whatever is handy)
- Explain that rhymes are words that sound the same at the end. Ex. cat/bat
- Read books or passages over and over again containing rhymes. Sing songs that rhyme.
- Give your child a small car (such as a Matchbox car). Write a 3-4 letter word on a piece of paper with the letters spaced apart. Have your child drive the car over each letter saying the letter sound. Have your child begin driving the car slowly over the letters and then drive over them again slightly faster. Continue until the word is said at a **good rate**.
- To help your child segment (separate) sounds in words: oGive your child 3-5 blocks, beads, bingo chips, or similar items. Say a word and have your child move an object for each sound in the word.
- Play Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes with sounds. Say a word and have your child touch his/her head for the first sound, shoulders for the second sound, and knees for the third while saying each sound.
- Jump for Sounds. Say a word and have your child jump for each sound in the word while saying the sound.

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**Phonics** is the ability to **understand** the **relationship** between **letters** and the **sounds** they represent. This includes:- Recognizing print patterns that represent sounds - Syllable patterns - Word parts (prefixes, suffixes, and root words)

- Make letter-sounds and have your child write the letter or letters that match the sounds.
- Play word games that connect sounds with syllables and words. (for example, if the letters “p-e-n” spell pen, how do you spell hen?)
- Write letters on cards. Hold up the cards one at a time and have your child say the sounds (for example, the /d/ sound for the letter d).
- Teach your child to match the letters in his/her name with the sounds in his/her name.
- Point out words that begin with the same letter as your child's names (for example, John and jump). Talk about how the beginning sounds of the words are alike.
- Use alphabet books and guessing games to give your child practice in matching letters and sounds. A good example is the game, "I am thinking of something that starts with /t/.
- Write letters on pieces of paper and put them in a paper bag. Let your child reach into the bag and take out letters. Have your child say the sounds that match the letters.
- Take a letter and hide it in your hand. Let your child guess in which hand is the letter. Then show the letter and have your child say the letter name and make the sound (for example, the letter m matches the /m/ sound as in man).
- Make letter-sounds and ask your child to draw the matching letters in cornmeal, flour, or sand.
- Practicing words with pictures - Choose pictures from a magazine or catalog. Say the name of the picture, have your child say the sound that the picture begins with and the name of that letter.
- Building words - Using magnetic letters, make a three letter word on the refrigerator (cat). Have your child read the word and use it in a sentence. Every day, change one letter to make a new word. Start by changing only the beginning letter (cat, bat, hat, sat, mat, rat, pat). Then change only the ending letter (pat, pal, pad, pan). Finally, change only the middle letter (pan, pen, pin, pun).

# Read at Home Recommendations

**K-1 -Fluency** is the ability to read with sufficient speed to support understanding.

This includes: - Automatic word recognition - Accurate word recognition - Use of expression

- Repeated reading - Choose a passage that will not be very difficult for your child. Read the passage aloud to your child, and then read it together, helping your child figure out any tricky words. Next, have your child read the passage to you with a focus on accuracy. Finally, have your child read the passage to you again, paying attention to fluency and expression. The goal is to sound smooth and natural.
- Use different voices - When reading a familiar story or passage, try having your child use different voices. Read the story in a mouse voice, cowboy voice, or a princess voice. This is another way to do repeated reading, and it adds some fun to reading practice.
- Read to different audiences - Reading aloud is a way to communicate to an audience. When a reader keeps the audience in mind, he/ she knows that his reading must be fluent and expressive. Provide a variety of opportunities for your child to read to an audience. Your child can read to stuffed animals, pets, siblings, neighbors, grandparents - anyone who is willing to listen. This is a good way to show off what was practiced with repeated reading.
- Record the reading - After your child has practiced a passage, have him/her record it with a tape player or MP3 device. Once recorded, your child can listen to his reading and follow along in the book. Often, he/she will want to record it again and make it even better!
- When you read a story, use appropriate expression during dialogue. Encourage your child to mimic your expression. Talk with him/her about what that expression means. Ex: If the character is excited about going to the park, he/she should sound like that in his/her voice. Encourage your child to repeat key phrases or dialogue.
- Recite nursery rhymes and poems to build familiar phrases in speech.
- When you read a story, use appropriate expression during the speaking parts (dialogue). Encourage your child to copy your expression. Talk with him/her about what that expression means. Ex: If the character is excited about going to the park, he/she should sound like that in his/her voice. Encourage your child to repeat key phrases or dialogue
- Point out punctuation marks that aid in expression such as question marks, exclamation points and quotation marks. Demonstrate how your voice changes as you read for each. Only focus on one during a book. Remember it is important to enjoy it first and foremost.
- Encourage singing favorite songs and repeat favorite lines of songs.
- Say a sentence to your child and ask him/her to repeat it to you. Challenge your child to increase the number of words he/she can repeat. As you say it, put it in meaningful phrases. Ex: The boy went/ to the store /with his mother.

# Read at Home Recommendations

**2-3 -Fluency** is the ability to read with sufficient speed to support understanding.

This includes: - Automatic word recognition - Accurate word recognition - Use of expression

- Repeated reading - Choose a passage that will not be very difficult for your child. Read the passage aloud to your child, and then read it together, helping your child figure out any tricky words. Next, have your child read the passage to you with a focus on accuracy. Finally, have your child read the passage to you again, paying attention to fluency and expression. The goal is to sound smooth and natural.
- Use different voices - When reading a familiar story or passage, try having your child use different voices. Read the story in a mouse voice, cowboy voice, or a princess voice. This is another way to do repeated reading, and it adds some fun to reading practice.
- Read to different audiences - Reading aloud is a way to communicate to an audience. When a reader keeps the audience in mind, he/she knows that his reading must be fluent and expressive. Provide a variety of opportunities for your child to read to an audience. Your child can read to stuffed animals, pets, siblings, neighbors, grandparents - anyone who is willing to listen. This is a good way to show off what was practiced with repeated reading.
- Record the reading - After your child has practiced a passage, have him/ her record it with a tape player, cell phone, or MP3 device. Once recorded, your child can listen to his reading and follow along in the book. Often, he/ she will want to record it again and make it even better!
- When you read a story, use appropriate expression during dialogue. Encourage your child to mimic your expression. Talk with him/her about what that expression means. Ex: If the character is excited about going to the park, he/she should sound like that in his/her voice. Encourage your child to repeat key phrases or dialogue
- Make your own books of favorite songs for child to practice "reading". This builds confidence and helps your child identify him/herself as a reader.
- Alternate repeating the favorite lines of a poem with your child. He/ she will mimic your phrasing and expression.

# Read at Home Recommendations

**Vocabulary** is students' knowledge of and memory for word meanings.

This includes: -

**Receptive Vocabulary** Words we understand when read or spoken to us

**Expressive vocabulary** Words we know well enough to use in speaking and writing

- Read aloud - Continue to read aloud to your child even after he is able to read independently. Choose books above your child's level because they are likely to contain broader vocabulary. This way, you are actually teaching him new words and how they are used in context.
- Preview words - Before reading to or with your child, scan through the book, choose two words that you think might be interesting or unfamiliar to your child. Tell your child what the words are and what they mean. As you read the book, have your child listen for those words
- Hot potato (version 1) - Play hot potato with synonyms. Choose a word, and then your child has to think of another word that means the same thing. Take turns until neither player can think of another word. For example, you may say, "Cold," and your child might say, "Freezing." Then you could say, "Chilly," and so on. Try the game again with antonyms (opposites)
- Hot potato (version 2) - Play hot potato with categories. For younger children, the categories can be simple: pets, clothes, family members. For older children, the categories can be quite complex: The Revolutionary War, astronomy, math terms.
- Word Collecting - Have each family member be on the lookout for interesting words that they heard that day. At dinner or bedtime, have everyone share the word they collected and tell what they think it means. If the child shares an incorrect meaning, guide him/her to the correct meaning. Try to use some of the words in conversation.
- Introduce your child to a variety of experiences to help build background knowledge he/she can use while making sense of print by taking them on a virtual field trip on a computer or your phone, or to an actual park, museums, the zoo, etc.
- Play "categories" with your child. Name a topic such as "farms" and ask your child to think of all the words he/she can relate to that topic. This is a great way to build word knowledge!
- Discuss positional words such as beside, below, under, over, etc. Make it into a game at dinner by asking your child to place his/her fork in different places in relation to his/her plate. Ex: Put your fork above your plate.
- Use the language of books such as author, title, illustrator, title page, etc.
- Discuss ordinal words such as first, last, beginning, middle, etc.
- Talk about how things are similar/alike as well as how things are different. Ex: How is a dog like a cat? How is a dog different from a cat?
- Trips to everyday places build vocabulary. Discuss what you are doing and seeing as you are going through the store, for example. "I'm here in the bakery. I can find donuts, cookies, and bread." Ask your child, "What else do you think I could find here?"

# Read at Home Recommendations

- Use a variety of words to describe feelings and emotions. For example, your child says he/she is happy. You can validate that by saying, "I'm so glad you are so joyful today! You sure look happy!"