



Read-At-Home Plan

Strategies to help your child become a more proficient reader



Pasco County Schools

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Welcome!

Dear Parents,

Learning begins in the home. You are your child's first teacher, and reading with your child is a proven way to promote early literacy. Helping to make sure your child is reading on grade level by the end of third grade is one of the most important things you can do to prepare him/her for the future. Reading with your child for at least 20 minutes a day and using a few simple strategies from our Read-At-Home Plan can make a positive impact on your child's success in school.

We are happy to provide you with this Read-At-Home plan, which includes strategies you can use to help your child become a more proficient reader and cultivate a love of reading.

Sincerely,

The Office for Leading and Learning

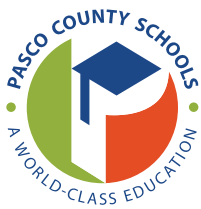


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Phonemic Awareness

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 Activities

Play "I'm thinking of a word" where you say, "I'm thinking of a word that rhymes with the word _____."
For example, "I am thinking of a word that rhymes with dog."

Play a game in which you say a compound word and your child has to break apart the words.
For example, you say football and ask your child for the first part in football, which is foot.

Say a sentence aloud and ask your child to determine how many words were in the sentence.

Explain that rhymes are words that sound the same at the end.
Prompt your child to produce rhymes. Ask, "Can you tell me a word that rhymes with 'cake'?"

Read books over and over again containing rhymes.

Orally provide pairs of words that rhyme and pairs that do not rhyme (eX: pan/man; pat/boy).
Ask, "Do 'pan' and 'man' rhyme? Why? Do 'pat' and 'boy' rhyme? Why not?"

Sing rhyming songs like "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" or "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

Sing nursery rhymes and other child-friendly songs together.

Play "I am thinking". "I am thinking of something that begins with the /w/ sound (window).
I am thinking of something that begins with the /t/ sound. You will find them in your mouth (teeth)."

Play "What's the first sound?". Using important people's names or objects, ask your child, "What's the first sound you hear in dad or mom?"



Phonics

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)

Common Consonant Digraphs and Blends

bl, br, ch, ck, cl, cr, dr, fl, fr, gh, gl, gr, ng, ph, pl, pr, qu, sc, sh, sk, sl, sm, sn, sp, st, sw, th, tr, tw, wh, wr

Common Vowel Digraphs

ai, au, aw, ay, ea, ee, ei, eu, ew, ey, ie, oi, oo, ou, ow, oy

Phonics Activities

Make letter sounds and have your child write the letter or letters that match the sounds.

Write letters on cards. Hold up the cards one at a time and have your child say the sounds and/or name of the letter (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 name (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 on the page that starts with a /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 which hand the letter is in. 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 shaving cream or sand.

Using two sets of letters, show your child one letter from your set, and ask your child to find that letter from their set. For example, you hold a "b" and ask your child to find a "b".



Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read with sufficient speed, accuracy, tone, and phrasing to support understanding.

This includes:

- **Automatic word recognition**
- **Accurate word recognition**
- **Use of expression**

Fluency Activities

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.

In a repetitive text, ask your child to repeat the familiar phrase with you. (ex: For the story, "The House that Jack Built," your child can recite with you "in the house that Jack built.")

Read the same book multiple times. This helps your child in many areas in reading.

Encourage your child to sing 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 chunks. (ex: The boy went/ to the store /with his mother.)

Alternate repeating the favorite lines of a poem or nursery rhyme with your child. He/she will mimic your phrasing and expression.



Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a student's 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

Vocabulary Activities

Read aloud: Read aloud to your child, daily. Choose books above your child's level because they are likely to contain broader vocabulary. This way, you are actually teaching him/her 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.

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 to the park, museums, the zoo, etc.

Play "categories" with your child. Name a topic such as "space" 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!



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Comprehension

Comprehension is the ability to understand and draw meaning from text.

This includes:

- **Paying attention to important information**
- **Interpreting specific meanings in text**
- **Identifying the main idea**
- **Verbal responses to questions**
- **Application of new information gained through reading**

Comprehension Activities

Sequencing errands: Talk about errands that you will run today. Use sequencing words (ex: first, next, last, finally, beginning, middle, end) when describing your trip. For example, you might say, “We are going to make three stops. First, we will go to the gas station. Next, we will go to the bank. Finally, we will go to the grocery store.”

Every day comprehension: Ask your child who, what, when, where, why, and how questions about an event in his/her day. For example, if your child attended a party, you could ask, “Who was there? What did you do? When did you have cake? Where did you go? Why did the invitation have dogs on it? How did the birthday child like the presents?” Once your child is comfortable answering these questions about his/ her experiences, try asking these questions about a book you’ve read together.

Think aloud: When you read aloud to your child, talk about what you are thinking. It is your opportunity to show your child that reading is a lot more than just figuring out the words. Describe how you feel about what’s going on in the book, what you think will happen next, or what you thought about a character’s choice.

Reading Fiction

Before reading: Point out the title and author. Look at the picture on the cover and ask, “What do you think is going to happen in this story? Why?” This will help your child set a purpose for reading.

During reading: Stop every now and then to ask your child to tell you what has happened so far or what he/she predicts will happen. You might also ask for your child’s opinion. “Do you think the character did the right thing? How do you feel about that choice?” Explain any unfamiliar words.

After reading: Ask your child to retell the story from the beginning and ask for opinions, too. “What was your favorite part? Would you recommend this to a friend?”



Phonemic Awareness

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 Activities

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/ /ö/ /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 cat; - he/she can pretend to stretch the word with a rubber band, or tap it out on their arm. Your child should say /c/ /a/ /t/.

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.

Read books over and over again containing rhymes. As you read, have your child complete the rhyming word at the end of each line.

Orally provide pairs of words that rhyme and pairs that do not rhyme (ex: pan/man; pat/boy). Ask, “Do ‘pan’ and ‘man’ rhyme? Why? Do ‘pat’ and ‘boy’ rhyme? Why not?”

Prompt your child to produce rhymes. Ask, “Can you tell me a word that rhymes with ‘cake’?”

Sing rhyming songs like “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” or “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.”

Phonemic Activities *(continued)*

Give your child a small car (such as a Matchbox car). Write a three to four 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:

- Give your child three to five 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.
- Play “Jump for Sounds.” Say a word and have your child jump for each sound in the word while saying the sound.





Phonics

Phonics is the ability to understand the relationship between letters and the sounds they represent.

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- Word parts (prefixes, suffixes and root words)

Common Consonant Digraphs and Blends

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Common Vowel Digraphs

ai, au, aw, ay, ea, ee, ei, eu, ew, ey, ie, oi, oo, ou, ow, oy

Phonics Activities

Use magnetic letters to spell words on the refrigerator or spell names of family members and friends.

Discuss how names are similar and different. Look at do they start the same, end the same, have the same number of letters.

Ask your child to name stores, restaurants, and other places that have signs. This is called environmental print. Have your child cut the images of these signs from bags, take-out containers, and fliers, and post them somewhere to make an Environmental Print Word Wall or book.

Ask your child to look through ads to point out things he/she recognizes. Ask if he/she knows any of the letters on the page.

Use stores as an opportunity for learning! Ask questions like, "Can you find something that has a letter C? Can you find a word that begins with an M? Can you find something with four letters?" Praise all efforts and keep it like a game.

Make alphabet letters out of Play-doh®.

Write letters with your finger on your child's back and have them guess the letter. Have your child do the same to you.

Play "Memory" or "Go Fish" using alphabet cards.

Read alphabet books to your child and ask him/her to name the items on the page that you know he/she can successfully tell you.

Phonics Activities *(continued)*

Making words: For this game, you will need magnetic letters and three bags. Put half of the consonants into the first bag. Put the vowels into the middle bag, and put the remaining consonants into the last bag. Have your child pull one letter from the first bag. That will be the first letter of their word. Then have your child pull from the vowel bag for the second letter of the word and from the other consonant bag for the third letter of the word. Next, the child will read the word and decide if it is a real word or a nonsense word. Take turns, replace the vowels as needed until there are no more consonants left.

Labeling words: When reading with your child, keep Post-it® notes handy. Every so often, have your child choose one object in the picture and write the word on a Post-it®. Put the note in the book to read each time you come to that page.

Practicing words with pictures: Choose pictures from a magazine or catalog. Say the name of the picture and have your child say the sound that the picture begins with and the name of that letter.

Hunting for words: Choose a letter and have your child hunt for five items beginning with that letter sound. As each object is found, help your child write the word on a list. For example, if the target sound is “m,” the child might find and write mop, mat, Mom, money, and microwave.

Hints for helping your child sound out words:

- **First Sound:** Have your child say the first sound in the word and make a guess based on the picture or surrounding words. Double-check the printed word to see if it matches the child’s guess.
- **Sound and Blend:** First, have your child say each sound separately (sss aaa t). This is called “sounding it out.” Next, say the sounds together (sat). This is “blending.”
- **Familiar Parts:** When your child starts reading longer words, have him notice the parts of the word that he already knows. For example, in a word such as “presenting,” your child may already know the prefix pre-, the word “sent,” and the word ending -ing.

Teach your child to recognize the letters in his or her name.

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 name (for example, John and jump). Talk about how the beginning sounds of the words are alike.

Phonics Activities *(continued)*

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 the letters out. Have your child say the sounds that match the letters.

Make letter sounds and ask your child to draw the matching letters in shaving cream or wet sand.

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).





Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read with sufficient speed, accuracy, tone, and phrasing to support understanding.

This includes:

- **Automatic word recognition**
- **Accurate word recognition**
- **Use of expression**

Fluency Activities

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 your child to sing favorite songs and repeat favorite lines of songs.

Make your own books of favorite songs for your child to practice “reading.” This builds confidence and helps your child identify him/herself as a reader.

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.)

Alternate repeating the favorite lines of a poem or nursery rhyme with your child. He/she will mimic your phrasing and expression.

Fluency Activities *(continued)*

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 cell phone or computer. 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!

Recite nursery rhymes and poems to build familiar phrases in speech.

In a repetitive text, ask your child to repeat the familiar phrase with you. (ex: For the story, "The House that Jack Built," your child can recite with you "in the house that Jack built.")





Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a student's 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

Vocabulary Activities

Read aloud: Continue to read aloud to your child even after he/she 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/her 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 look out 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.



Vocabulary Activities *(continued)*

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 to the 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 opposites (antonyms). Then practice by giving words and having your child provide the antonym. For example: hot, cold.

Discuss and show your child 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?)

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!”

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 produce section. I can find apples, bananas, and oranges.” Ask your child, “What else do you think I could find here?”

When you read a book about a topic, ask him/her to tell you all the words related to it. (ex: If you read a book about a dog, he/she might say dog, puppies, toy, food, play, leash.) Add other words to help expand upon what he/she says.



Comprehension

Comprehension is the ability to understand and draw meaning from text.

This includes:

- Paying attention to important information
- Interpreting specific meanings in text
- Identifying the main idea
- Verbal responses to questions
- Application of new information gained through reading

Comprehension Activities

Sequencing errands: Talk about errands that you will run today. Use sequencing words (first, next, last, finally, beginning, middle, end) when describing your trip. For example, you might say, “We are going to make three stops. First, we will go to the gas station. Next, we will go to the bank. Finally, we will go to the grocery store.”

Every day comprehension: Ask your child who, what, when, where, why, and how questions about an event in his/her day. For example, if your child attended a party, you could ask, “Who was there? What did you do? When did you have cake? Where did you go? Why did the invitation have dogs on it? How did the birthday child like the presents?” Once your child is comfortable answering these questions about his/ her experiences, try asking these questions about a book you’ve read together.

Think aloud: When you read aloud to your child, talk about what you are thinking. It is your opportunity to show your child that reading is a lot more than just figuring out the words. Describe how you feel about what’s going on in the book, what you think will happen next, or what you thought about a character’s choice.

Reading Fiction

Before reading: Point out the title and author. Look at the picture on the cover and ask, “What do you think is going to happen in this story? Why?” This will help your child set a purpose for reading.

During reading: Stop every now and then to ask your child to tell you what has happened so far or what he/she predicts will happen. You might also ask for your child’s opinion. “Do you think the character did the right thing? How do you feel about that choice?” Explain any unfamiliar words.

After reading: Ask your child to retell the story from the beginning and ask for opinions, too. “What was your favorite part? Would you recommend this to a friend?”

Comprehension Activities *(continued)*

Reading Nonfiction

Before reading: Point out the title and author. Look at the picture on the cover and ask, “What do you think you’ll learn about in this book? Why?” This helps your child consider what he already knows about the topic. Look at the table of contents. You and your child may choose to read the book cover to cover or go directly to a certain chapter.

During reading: Don’t forget the captions, headings, sidebars, or any other information on the page. Young readers tend to overlook these, so it’s a good idea to show that the author includes lots of information in these “extras”.

After reading: Ask, “What are some things you learned about in this book? Show me where you learned that?”

Other Ideas

Before your child reads a story, read the title and look at the cover. Ask, “What do you think will happen in the story?”

Take a quick “book look” and encourage your child to talk about what he/she thinks about what might happen in the story.

As your child reads, ask questions that start with who, what, where, when, why and how. If your child does not answer with an appropriate response, redirect by saying, “I think you mean a person because it was a “who” question,” then restate the question.

After you read a few pages, ask, “What do you think will happen next?”

Ask your child to talk about the beginning, middle, and end of the story. You will need to model this several times at first.

Discuss words related to stories such as: characters, problem, and solution. For example, “How did characters of “The Three Bears” solve the problem of the porridge being too hot?” If the child does not know, show the picture or reread the page.

After reading, ask your child, “What was your favorite part? Show me. Why do you like that part?”

Ask questions about character traits. (ex: “Which character do you think was kind? Which character was bossy? How do you know?”) If your child doesn’t know, give your answer. You may need to do this many times before your child can do it. He/she may also “mimic” your answer. Encourage your child’s attempts.

Encourage deeper thinking by asking, “If the story kept going, what do you think would happen next?”

Help your child make connections to his/her life experience while reading. You could say, “Is there anything you read in the story that reminds you of something? The boy who went to the zoo with his family reminds me of when we went to the zoo over the summer. What do you think?”



Phonemic Awareness

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 Activities

Demonstrate clapping a word into its syllables. Ask your child to clap words into syllables.

Make tally marks for the number of syllables in the names of people in your family, favorite foods, etc.

Give your child a small car (such as a Matchbox car). Write a word containing five or more letters 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:

- Give your child four to seven 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.
- Play "Jump for Sounds." Say a word and have your child jump for each sound in the word while saying the sound.





Phonics

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)

Common Consonant Digraphs and Blends

bl, br, ch, ck, cl, cr, dr, fl, fr, gh, gl, gr, ng, ph, pl, pr, qu, sc, sh, sk, sl, sm, sn, sp, st, sw, th, tr, tw, wh, wr

Common Vowel Digraphs

ai, au, aw, ay, ea, ee, ei, eu, ew, ey, ie, oi, oo, ou, ow, oy

Phonics Activities

Make blend sounds and have your child write the letters that match the sounds (for example, /sh/, /tr/, /th/).

Write vowel and consonant digraphs, trigraphs, and blends on cards. Hold up the cards one at a time and have your child say the sounds (for example, the long e sound /ē/ for the vowel digraphs ea and ee).

Writing words: Many children love to send and receive notes, and writing is a great way to reinforce phonics skills. Send your child notes in his/her backpack or place notes on the pillow. Have a relative or friend send a letter or email to your child. Whenever your child receives a note, have him/her write back. Don't be concerned about spelling. Instead, have your child sound out the words to the best of his/her ability.

Hunting for words: Choose a blend and have your child hunt for five items beginning with that sound. As each object is found, help your child write the word on a list. For example, if the target sound is "bl," the child might find and write blanket, blood, blue, blizzard, blast.

Hints for helping your child sound out words

- First Sound - Have your child say the first sound in the word and make a guess based on the picture or surrounding words. Double-check the printed word to see if it matches the child's guess.
- Sound and Blend - Have your child say each sound separately (sss aaa t). This is called "sounding it out". Then say the sounds together (sat). This is "blending".
- Familiar Parts - When your child starts reading longer words, have him notice the parts of the word that he already knows. For example, in a word such as "presenting," your child may already know the prefix pre-, the word "sent," and the word ending -ing.
- Play "Memory" or "Go Fish" using consonant and vowel digraphs, trigraphs, and blends.



Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read with sufficient speed, accuracy, tone, and phrasing to support understanding.

This includes:

- Automatic word recognition
- Accurate word recognition
- Use of expression

Fluency Activities

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 cell phone or computer. 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 your 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.



Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a student's 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

Vocabulary Activities

Read aloud: Continue to read aloud to your child even after he/she 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/her 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 prefixes or suffixes. The prefixes dis-, ex-, mis-, non-, pre-, re-, and un-, are common. Common suffixes include -able/-ible, -ed, -er, -est, -ful, -ish, -less, -ly, -ment, and -ness.

Word Collecting: Have each family member be on the look out 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.

Play "categories" with your child. Name a topic such as "habitats" and ask your child to think of all the words he/she can related to that topic. This is a great way to build word knowledge!

When you read a book about a topic, ask him/her to tell you all the words related to it. (ex: If you read a book about dinosaurs, he/she might say Tyrannosaurus Rex, paleontologist, herbivore, carnivore, fossil.) Add other words to help expand upon what he/she says.



Comprehension

Comprehension is the ability to understand and draw meaning from text.

This includes:

- Paying attention to important information
- Interpreting specific meanings in text
- Identifying the main idea
- Verbal responses to questions
- Application of new information gained through reading

Comprehension Activities

Sequencing comics: Choose a comic strip from the Sunday paper. Cut out each square and mix the squares up. Have your child put them in order and describe what is happening. Encourage your child to use words like: first, second, next, finally, etc.

Every day comprehension: Ask your child who, what, when, where, why, and how questions about an event in his/her day. Once your child is comfortable answering these questions about his/ her experiences, try asking these questions about a book you've read together.

Reading Fiction

Before reading: Point out the title and author. Look at the picture on the cover and ask, "What do you think is going to happen in this story? Why?" This will help your child set a purpose for reading.

During reading: Stop every now and then to ask your child to tell you what has happened so far or what he/she predicts will happen. You might also ask for your child's opinion. "Do you think the character did the right thing? How do you feel about that choice?" Explain any unfamiliar words.

After reading: Ask your child to retell the story from the beginning and ask for opinions, too. "What was your favorite part? Would you recommend this to a friend?"

Comprehension Activities *(continued)*

Reading Nonfiction

Before reading: Point out the title and author. Look at the picture on the cover and ask, “What do you think you’ll learn about in this book? Why?” This helps your child consider what he already knows about the topic. Look at the table of contents.

During reading: Don’t forget the captions, headings, sidebars, or any other information on the page. Young readers tend to overlook these, so it’s a good idea to show that the author includes lots of information in these “extras”.

After reading: Ask your child, “What was it mostly about? What do you still want to know? Where could you find out?”

Other Ideas

Discuss words related to stories such as: characters, problem, and solution. For example, “How did the Wright Brothers find a solution to help their plane fly longer?” If the child does not know, show the picture or reread the page.

Ask questions about character traits. (ex: “Which character do you think was kind? Which character was bossy? How do you know?”) If your child doesn’t know, give your answer. You may need to do this many times before your child can do it.

Encourage deeper thinking by asking, “If the story kept going, what do you think would happen next?”

Help your child make connections to his/her life experience while reading. You could say, “Is there anything you read in the story that reminds you of something?”

Digital Resource Library

Florida Center for Reading Research

www.fcrr.org

Research-based practice activities to help students grow skills in the five areas of reading.

Reading Rainbow

www.readingrainbow.org

This site offers a variety of stories read aloud.

Book Adventure

www.bookadventure.com

Tumblebooks

www.tumblebooklibrary.com

A digital book collection for students. Books are interactive and read aloud to students.

Login: remc13, Password: learn13

Seussville

www.seussville.com

The official website of all things Dr. Seuss. Includes books, games, and lots of activities to get kids excited about reading.

Storyline Online

www.storylineonline.net

Well-known actors read children's books online to get kids excited about reading.

Storybird

www.storybird.com

Get kids excited about reading by having them write their own stories.

StarFall

www.starfall.com

Help children learn to read using this audiovisual interactive site.

ReadWriteThink

www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources

Includes resources for parents to help encourage their children to read.

Story Jumper

www.storyjumper.com

Have kids create, share, and read books online!

Robert Munsch

www.robertmunsch.com

This popular author reads all 50 of his stories with enthusiasm and excitement.

The audio can be listened to online or downloaded.

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