



# How to Promote Your Child's Literacy

## Parent Guide for supporting your student at home with literacy development



### Kindergarten and First

As a parent, reading to your child is one of the most important things you can do to prepare him/her with a foundation for academic ex-

cellence. By the age of five, most children can understand up to 13,000 words, forming sentences containing 5-8 words ([www.earlymoments.com](http://www.earlymoments.com)). As your child approaches kindergarten and first grade, pre-reading activities will become a fundamental part of their everyday life. Pre-reading activities mean:

- looking at print direction,
- first letters of words,
- letters placed together to form words,
- discussing title of book and the difference between author and illustrator,
- using the cover (front and back) to make predictions of what the book might be about .
- discussing the pictures during reading along with why the author may have written the book and why the illustrator may have drawn objects.

Practicing these skills help with forming critical thinking. After reading, ask children questions about the content of the text and ask for proof or evidence from the book to support their thinking. For example, in *The Three*

*Little Pigs*, what did the pigs think of the wolf? Ask for places that show the student's thinking. Students should be able to connect stories to other stories with the same characters. Consider reading different versions of the same fairy tales and noting the differences. Children should be able to retell the main points as well.

Another important part of literacy is writing. Your child will enjoy telling stories on paper as well. Some pointers are the following:

- Provide a quiet place for your child to write that has supplies such as markers, pencils, pens, and crayons to write with. At early stages of literacy development, drawing pictures and allowing dictation appropriate. Writing words properly takes time.
- Collect magazine pictures and family photographs to provide story starters.
- Encourage, but do not force, a writing journal that young students can log their thoughts or begin stories in. Consider having the student write about things they see, hear or learn in their regular day.
- Have your child listen to a story and log what they thought about the characters, the setting of the story or how a problem was solved.
- Provide authentic opportunities for your student to write such as thank you notes, letters to family members, and party invitations.

Model writing and if invited by your child, respond to their entries in writing. Keep it fun to increase a positive outlook on writing.

### Benefits of reading aloud to a child

*Aside from building a stronger relationship you, there are many benefits to reading aloud to a young person. Oral language develops as you model enunciation, tone and other critical language skills. Different features of a book can be a focal point such as print awareness (direction of print, letters make words, illustrations) and structure of writing (the type of book, the purpose for which a text is written, how the text is put together, text features such as charts and maps). By witnessing the interactions between the characters in the books you read, and the time spent with an adult, students are much more likely to express themselves and relate to others in a healthy way. Another illustration of the importance of reading to children is their ability to grasp abstract concepts, apply logic in various scenarios, recognize cause and effect, and utilize good judgment as they relate the scenarios in books to what's happening in their own world. Finally, along with reading comprehension comes a stronger self-discipline, longer attention span, and better memory retention, all of which will serve your child in an academic setting.*

AT HOME, YOU AND YOUR CHILD WILL NEED TO SET ASIDE SOME SHARED TIME FOR READING; A TIME WHEN YOU READ BOOKS TOGETHER. THIS WILL HELP YOUR CHILD SUCCEED IN BUILDING THEIR LITERACY SKILLS.



## Second and Third Grade

During these grades, students are reading AND writing with more accuracy. Many students will enjoy the task of putting their thoughts and illustrations on paper, as they portray an author. Their vocabulary is

growing as well so phonics plays a large role in decoding new words and sight words should be mastered to build fluency. Activities to support your student as they gain independence are:

- When your child has sounded out an unfamiliar word, have him or her re-read that sentence. Often readers at this stage are so busy figuring out a word, they lose the meaning of what they've just read.
- Your child needs opportunities to build confidence and skills so practicing reading aloud supports their growth.
- Telling stories at home of experiences, such as trips or visits with family connects your young person to story structure. Either you or the child should tell the story.
- When reading or storytelling with your child, ask them for the important points to help with summarizing. Recalling general story elements (characters, the place the story takes place in and plot), should be mastered by second grade. Third grade should begin to consider characters' feelings and details in the plot.
- Using specific strategies with your student before, during and after the read aloud are critical at this stage:

- ◇ Setting a purpose for reading and predicting
- ◇ Connecting to prior knowledge and inferring
- ◇ Comparing and contrasting events and characters,
- ◇ Determining importance of events and characters
- ◇ Asking AND answering questions.

Ask your child's teacher for support in any of these areas and remember to continue to build on skills mastered in Kindergarten and First grades.

Another key area of literacy is writing. Your student may need support in this area and several ideas can be aid them at home:

- Be a model for both reading and writing.
- Encourage students to keep a journal with stories and thoughts about books they have read. Incorporate vocabulary development by making a game of using new words in their writing.
- As a student writes, ask questions like "What happened next? How did that make you feel? What are some other words that can describe that?"
- Find ways to publish your child's work through different sites such as [CyberKids](#) and [Stone Soup](#). Even posting on the refrigerator for others to see builds confidence in writing.

Other resources a parent may wish to use for literacy are:

[www.storylineonline.net](http://www.storylineonline.net) Actors from the Screen Actors Guild read favorite stories

[www.gigglepoetry.com](http://www.gigglepoetry.com) Poems and games from favorite authors

[www.graphite.org](http://www.graphite.org) A site that rates the best apps, websites, and tools by certified educators.



### References and Resources:

[www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)  
[www.earlymoments.com](http://www.earlymoments.com)

[www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org)  
[www.pageahead.org](http://www.pageahead.org)  
[www.greatschools.org](http://www.greatschools.org)

[www.ohiorc.org/literacy\\_k5/](http://www.ohiorc.org/literacy_k5/)  
[ww2.kqed.org](http://ww2.kqed.org)  
[www.heinemann.com](http://www.heinemann.com)