

How Parents Can Help Their Children Succeed

Pre-Kindergarten

- Read out loud to your child every day. This is the single most valuable thing you can do to help your child to become a good reader and to love reading.
- Read stories, books, poems, magazines, encyclopedias, signs, cereal boxes, and everything that has print on it!
- Look for books written for the Pre-Kindergarten child and read these together.
- Find books that use repeating phrases and rhymes and read them together. For example: "Little pig, little pig, let me come in. Not by the hair of my chinny-chin-chin.")
- Talk with your child as you read. Ask questions such as, "What do you think will happen next?" and take time to talk about pictures such as: "Look at this castle. It has a drawbridge." or "What do you think this is called?"
- Make reading time fun and rewarding for everyone. Set aside uninterrupted time to read with your child.
- Reading involves a physical act as well as a mental one. It involves eye-hand coordination. When you read, involve your child by pointing out objects, following the words with your finger to develop the sense that words go from left to right, and allowing your child to turn the pages from right to left. Sing the alphabet song or recite poems to help your child learn the letter names and sounds.
- Play rhyming games with words like manes and places.
- Name colors and shapes when discussing different objects.
- Play games to help your child understand opposites, (for example: in/out, on/off) and directional words (for example: up, under, behind, above).
- Practice writing by tracing printed names of family members, colors, shapes, letters, and common three and four letter nouns (for example: dog, cat, fish, hot).
- Play games which develop listening skills like Mother May I, Simon Says, or Musical Chairs.

Kindergarten

- Read out loud to your child every day. This is the single most valuable thing you can do to help your child both learn to read and love to read. Read stories, books, poems, magazines, encyclopedias, signs, cereal boxes - everything that has print on it!
- Look for books you and your child both love and read them together.
- Find books that use repeating phrases and rhymes (for example, Little pig, little pig, let me come in. Not by the hair of my chinny-chin-chin.") and read them together.
- Talk with your child as you read. Ask questions such as, "What do you think is going to happen next?" or "Do you know what a castle is?"
- If you and your child don't enjoy reading a particular book, it is okay to put it aside and start another one. Your reading time should be fun and rewarding for you both!
- With youngsters, remember that reading is a physical act as well as a mental one. It involves hand-eye coordination. so, when you read, involve your child by pointing out objects in the pictures, following the words with your finger (so your child develops the sense that words go from the left to the right of the page, and having your child turn the pages (to learn to turn pages from right to left).
- Sing or recite alphabet songs or poems to help children learn the letter names.
- Play rhyming games with words like names and places.
- Recite songs and chants while walking or playing outdoor games to help your child learn the rhyme and rhythm of language.
- Talk about colors and shapes when discussing different objects.
- Play games to help your child understand opposites, the same as, and directional words such as up, under, behind, and on top.
- Practice writing words such as family names, colors, objects, and feelings.
- Play games like Concentration and Bingo that involve pictures to match or letters to identify.

First Grade

- Read out loud to your child every day. This is the single most valuable thing you can do to help your child both learn to read and love to read.
- Let your child read to you. Find books at your child's reading levels and take turns reading. Be sure to tell your child how proud you are of his or her efforts.
- Look for books you and your child both love and read them together.
- Find books that use repeating phrases and rhymes (for example, Little pig, little pig, let me come in. Not by the hair of my chinny-chin-chin.") and read them together.
- Talk with your child as you read together. Ask questions such as "What do you think is going to happen next?" or "Do you know what a castle is?"
- If you and your child don't enjoy reading a particular book it is okay to put it aside and start another one. Your reading time should be fun and rewarding for you both!
- With youngsters, remember that reading is a physical act as well as a mental one. It involves hand-eye coordination. So, when you read, involve your child by following the words with your finger, (so your child develops the sense that words go from left to the right of the page). and having your child turn the pages (to learn to turn pages from right to left.).
- Sing or recite alphabet songs or poems to help children learn the letter names.
- Recite songs and chants while walking or playing outdoor games to help your child learn the rhyme and rhythm of language.
- Play games to help your child understand opposites, the same as, and directional words such as up, behind, and above.
- Practice writing words such as family names, colors, objects, and feelings.
- Play games like Concentration and bingo that involve pictures to match or letters to identify.
- Show your child the name of the author and illustrator of the book and discuss what they do.
- Limit television watching time. Read the TV schedule with your child and select worthwhile shows together. When you watch programs with your child, discuss what you have seen.

Second Grade

- Read out loud to your child every day. This is the single most valuable thing you can do to help your child both learn to read and love to read. Read stories, books, poems, magazines, encyclopedias, signs, cereal boxes - everything that has print on it!
- Let your child read to you. Find books at your child's reading levels, and take turns reading.
- Look for books you and your child both love and read them together.
- Talk with your child as you read together. Ask questions such as "What do you think is going to happen next?" or "Do you know what a castle is?"
- If you and your child don't enjoy reading a particular book it is okay to put it aside and start another one. Your reading time should be fun and rewarding for you both!
- By the second grade, it is important for your children to have some time to read by themselves everyday. Begin the practice of setting aside a few minutes of quiet time every evening. For a second grader, about 15 minutes would be reasonable. This idea is especially effective if you make a daily "Family Reading Time," when everyone spends some time reading. Let everyone pick out something they like and sit back to relax and enjoy the quiet time!
- Recite songs and chants while walking or playing outdoor games to help your child learn the rhyme and rhythm of language.
- Show your child the parts of a book (title page, table of contents, index, etc.) and discuss the purpose of each.
- Friendly letters help children understand that the printed word has a purpose. Send your child little notes in their backpacks or lunch boxes. Encourage your child to write letters and thank you notes to grandparents and other family members or friends.
- Limit television watching time. Read the TV schedule with your child and select worthwhile shows together. When you watch programs with your child, discuss what you have seen.

Third Grade

- Your third grader is expected to read 25 grade-level appropriate books by the end of the school year. You can help by taking your child to the library and making sure that he or she is reading regularly and keeping a list of all the reading done throughout the year.
- Even in the third grade children love to have their parents read to them. Look for books you and your child both love and continue to enjoy a special time together. Ask your child to help you select the books.
- Let your child read aloud to you. Children love to have someone appreciate their new ability. Find books at your child's reading level, and take turns reading.
- Be sure to tell your child how proud you are of his or her growing ability.
- Talk about the book as you read together. Ask your child questions about the characters or the situation in the story. Encourage your child to share his or her opinions about books.
- If you and your child don't enjoy reading a particular book, it is okay to put it aside and start another one. Your reading time should be fun and rewarding for you both!
- Continue the practice of setting aside regular quiet reading time every evening.
- For a third grader, thirty minutes every evening is reasonable. This idea is especially effective if you make a daily "Family Reading Time," when everyone spends some time reading. Let everyone pick out something they like and sit back to relax and enjoy the quiet time!

Fourth Grade

- Your fourth grader is expected to read 25 grade-related appropriate books by the end of the school year. You can help by taking your child to the library and making sure that he or she is reading regularly and keeping a list of all the reading done throughout the year.
- Even in fourth grade children love to have their parents read to them. Look for books you and your child both love (your child can help you make the selections), and continue to enjoy a special time reading together.
- Talk about the book as you read together. Ask your child questions about the characters or the situation in the story. Encourage your child to share his or her opinions about the books.
- If you and your child don't enjoy reading a particular book, it is okay to put it aside and start another one. Your reading time should be fun and rewarding for you both.
- Continue the practice of setting aside regular quiet reading time every evening. For a fourth grader, thirty minutes every evening is reasonable. This idea is especially effective if you make a daily "Family Reading Time" when everyone spends some time reading. Let everyone pick out something they like and sit back to relax and enjoy the quiet time!
- Show your child the parts of a book (title page, table of contents, index, etc.) and discuss the purpose of each.
- Friendly letters help children understand that the printed word has a purpose.
- Send your child little notes in their backpacks or lunch boxes. Encourage your child to write letters and thank you notes to grandparents and other family members or friends.
- Write a trip journal with your child. Recording the trip's special event and pasting photos in a book creates a written record of your family's experiences.
- You can also include everyday trips like going to the park or to a sports event.
- Have your child help read recipes, plan the menu, and do the shopping for a family meal. Reading a recipe is a good way to practice making meaning from writing.
- Limit television watching time. Read the TV schedule with your child and select worthwhile shows together. When you watch programs with your child, discuss what you have seen.

Fifth Grade

- Your fifth grader is expected to read 25 grade-related appropriate books by the end of the school year. You can help by taking your child to the library and making sure that he or she is reading regularly and keeping a list of all the reading done throughout the year.
- Talk about the books your child is reading. Ask your child questions about the characters or the situation in the story. Encourage your child to share his or her opinions about books.
- Continue the practice of setting aside regular quiet reading time every evening. For a fifth grader, thirty minutes every evening is reasonable. This idea is especially effective if you make a daily "Family Reading Time" when everyone spends some time reading. Let everyone pick out something they like and sit back to relax and enjoy the quiet time!
- Encourage your child to write letters to friend and family members who may live far away. Writing letters helps children to understand that writing has an audience and a purpose.
- Write a trip journal with your child. Recording the trip's special event and pasting photos in a book creates a written record of your family's experiences.
- You can also include everyday trips like going to the park or to a sports event.
- Have your child help read recipes, plan the menu, and do the shopping for a family meal. Reading a recipe is a good way to practice making meaning from writing.
- Limit television watching time. Read the TV schedule with your child and select worthwhile shows together. When you watch programs with your child, discuss what you have seen.

Sixth Grade

- Your sixth grader is expected to read at least 25 grade-level appropriate books by the end of the school year. You can help by taking your child to the library and making sure that he or she is reading regularly and keeping a list of all the reading done throughout the year.
- You can't put a pre-teen on your lap and read stories every night. However, you can still help older children become enthusiastic and fluent readers by adapting some of the same ideas that work with the little ones. It is especially important to continue the following efforts:
 - Encourage reading for the fun of it and as a free-time activity.
 - Create an environment rich with books.
 - Talk and listen to your child. Language is like a four-legged stool: speaking, listening, and writing are its parts and each supports the other. Read with your child every chance you get - even if it's just part of a newspaper article at the breakfast table
 - Encourage your child to write by responding to the ideas they try to communicate in writing.
 - Set the example yourself. Put a book in your hands and be sure your child knows that you read for enjoyment and to get needed information.
 - Monitor your child's schoolwork and applaud his or her efforts.
 - Limit television watching time. Read the TV schedule with your child and select worthwhile shows together. When you watch program with your child, discuss what you have seen.

Seventh Grade

- Your seventh grader is expected to read at least 25 grade-level appropriate books by the end of the school year. You can help by taking your child to the library and making sure that he or she is reading regularly and keeping a list of all the reading done throughout the year.
- You can't put a young teen on your lap and read stories every night. However, you can still help older children become enthusiastic and fluent readers by adapting some of the same ideas that work with the little ones. It is especially important to continue the following efforts.
 - Encourage reading for the fun of it and as a free-time activity.
 - Create an environment rich with books.
 - Talk and listen to your child. Language is like a four-legged stool: speaking, listening, reading, and writing are its parts, and each support the other.
 - Read with your child every chance you get - even if it's just part of a newspaper article at the breakfast table.
 - Encourage your child to write by reading and discussing the ideas they communicate in writing.
 - Set the example yourself. Put a book in your hands and be sure your child knows that you read for enjoyment and to get needed information.
 - Monitor your child's schoolwork and applaud his or her efforts.
 - Limit television watching time. Read the TV schedule with your child and select worthwhile shows together. When you watch programs with your child, discuss what you have seen.

Eighth Grade

- Your eighth grader is expected to read at least 25 grade-level appropriate books by the end of the school year. You can help by taking your child to the library and making sure that he or she is reading regularly and keeping a list of all the reading done throughout the year.
- You can't put a teenager on your lap and read stories every night. However you can still help older children become enthusiastic and fluent readers by adapting some of the same ideas that work with the little ones. It is especially important to continue the following efforts:
 - Encourage reading for the fun of it and as a free-time activity.
 - Create an environment rich with books.
 - Talk and listen to your child. Language is like a four-legged stool: speaking, listening, reading, and writing are its parts, and each support the other.
 - Read with your child every chance you get - even if it's just part of a newspaper article at the breakfast table.
 - Encourage your child to write by reading and discussing the ideas they communicate in writing.
 - Set the example yourself. Put a book in your hands and be sure your child knows that you read for enjoyment and to get needed information.
 - Monitor your child's schoolwork and applaud his or her efforts.
 - Limit television watching time. Read the TV schedule with your child and select worthwhile shows together. When you watch programs with your child, discuss what you have seen.