



Reading Resources for Families

Reading At-Home

One of the most important things we can do for our kids is to help them learn how to read and write. This isn't just about doing well in school; it's about setting them up for success in life. When kids become confident readers, it opens up a world of possibilities. They can follow their interests and explore the world through books.

We all read for different reasons. Sometimes it's to have fun, to go on exciting adventures in our imagination, to connect with others through stories, to figure out how to do something new, or to learn about history, science, and all sorts of other topics.

Learning to read is a bit like learning a complex dance. It's not just one step after another. Kids are actually learning several things all at once. They're learning to figure out words on a page, read smoothly and comfortably, pick up new words, understand what the text is saying, and most importantly, discover the joy of reading and how it helps them learn about the world.

Reading should be an enjoyable and bonding experience for both you and your child. Be patient and supportive, and provide a variety of books and reading materials to cater to their interests. Celebrate their progress, and most importantly, make reading a daily habit in your household. By actively engaging in these at-home activities and games, you'll help your elementary student become a confident and proficient reader, setting the foundation for a lifelong love of learning. We want to give you tips on how you can support them in becoming great readers, writers, and learners!

Phonemic Awareness:

Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate the individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. It involves recognizing that words are made up of separate sounds and being able to work with those sounds, like identifying rhyming words or isolating the beginning or ending sounds in a word. It's a fundamental skill for learning to read and spell because it helps children understand the relationship between spoken and written language.

At-Home Activities

Sound Matching: Find objects around the house that start with the same sound. For example, you can gather a sock, a spoon, and a sock and ask your child to identify the beginning sound they all share.

Rhyming Games: Play rhyming games like "I Spy" with rhyming words. Say, "I spy something that rhymes with cat," and have your child guess the word (e.g., hat).

Blending Sounds: Say the individual sounds of a word, like /b/ /u/ /g/, and have your child blend them together to guess the word (bug).

Syllable Clap: Clap or tap your hands for each syllable in a word. Your child can join in and practice clapping for words with different numbers of syllables.

Game: Phoneme Bingo

Create Bingo cards with words or pictures representing different phonemes (e.g., "cat" for /k/ /a/ /t/). Call out the sounds, and your child marks the corresponding words or pictures on their card.

Phonics:

Phonics is a method of reading and writing instruction that teaches the relationship between spelling patterns (graphemes) and their sounds (phonemes) in order to read and spell words.

At-Home Activities

Letter Writing: Make a letter sound and ask your child to write the matching letter. Try giving your child fun materials to write with for example shaving cream or sand.

Word Families: Work with word families (e.g., -at, -an, -it). Show your child how changing the beginning sound of a word can create new words. Make lists of words from the same family and read them together.

Word Building: Provide letter tiles or magnets, and have your child create words by manipulating the letters. You can start with simple three-letter words and progress to more complex ones.

Magnetic Letters: Use magnetic letters on the fridge to spell out simple words, and encourage your child to sound them out..

Fluency:

Fluency is the ability to read a text smoothly, accurately, at a good pace, and with expression to comprehend what is read.

At-Home Activities

Read Aloud: Read aloud to your child daily. When you read aloud, you are giving your child a model of what fluent reading sounds like.

Repeated Reading: Have your child do repeated readings. Choose a small passage or book that will not be difficult for your child. Read the passage aloud to your child, and then read it

together. Next, have your child read it to you with a focus on reading it accurately. Finally, have your child read it to you again with a focus on fluency and expression.

Audio Books: Listen to audiobooks while following along with the printed text. This helps children hear how fluent reading should sound and can improve their own reading.

Phrased Reading: Teach your child to read in phrases rather than word by word. Point out how sentences are divided into meaningful groups of words, and encourage them to read accordingly.

Reader's Theater: Act out a story with your child. Assign roles, and have them read their lines fluently. This adds an element of fun and expression to reading.

Vocabulary:

Vocabulary is knowledge of words and word meanings that includes words a person knows and uses in their language. It is the collection of words you understand and can use to communicate and express yourself. Vocabulary is essential for both learning to read and comprehending text.

At-Home Activities

Reading Genres: Explore different genres of books, including fiction, nonfiction, fantasy, and mystery, to expose your child to varied vocabulary.

Homonyms and Homophones: Explore words that sound the same but have different meanings (homophones) and words that are spelled the same but have different meanings (homonyms).

Synonym Pairs: Create a set of cards with words and their synonyms. Shuffle the cards, lay them face down, and take turns flipping two cards at a time. If the two words are synonyms, the player keeps the pair.

Categories: Name a topic such as farms and ask your child to think of all the words they can that are related to that topic.

Vocabulary Match: Create pairs of cards with words and their definitions. Lay them face down and take turns flipping over two cards at a time. If a player matches a word with its definition, they keep the pair. The player with the most matches wins.

Comprehension:

Comprehension is the process of understanding and constructing meaning from stories that are read orally or independently.

At-Home Activities

Before Reading:

Activate Prior Knowledge: Ask your child what they already know about the topic or subject of the text. Discuss their existing knowledge and experiences related to it.

Preview the Text: Look at the cover, title, and any illustrations or diagrams in the book. Ask your child what they think the book might be about based on these clues.

Set a Purpose for Reading: Ask your child to consider why they are reading the text. Are they reading for entertainment, to learn something new, or to answer specific questions?

During Reading:

Retelling: Ask your child to retell a section of the story in their own words. This confirms their comprehension and helps them remember what they've read.

Questioning: After reading a story, ask questions about the plot, characters, and their opinions.

Predicting: Encourage your child to predict what might happen next in a story.

Character Exploration: Discuss the characters in the text. For example: details like their appearance, personality, motivations, how they change throughout the story. This helps your child connect with the characters.

Setting Exploration: Discuss the story's setting. Where and when does it take place? How does the setting impact the events of the story?

Reread for Clarity: If your child encounters a challenging section, suggest they reread it to gain a better understanding. Sometimes a second or third reading can help.

After Reading:

Discussion and Questions: Engage in a discussion with your child about the text. Ask open-ended questions like, "What did you learn from the reading?" and "How did the story make you feel?" Encourage them to ask questions about parts they didn't understand.

Retelling the Story: Have your child retell the story or summarize the main points. This not only tests their comprehension but also helps them process and remember the material.

Sequencing: Challenge your child to list the events in the story in the order they occurred. This helps reinforce the story's timeline.

Storyboarding: Create a storyboard of the story's events. Use simple drawings or images to represent key scenes.