

Tips for Parents

Ways to help your child learn to read

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- Be a reader! Model reading in front of your child. Read aloud to him/her every day. You are your child's first teacher!
- Apply new learning to the real world. Ask your child to identify letters in the store, on signs, on television so that he/she recognizes that words and letters can be found everywhere.
- Cut letters from newspapers or magazines and glue on clean paper to create words that your child knows how to read/spell. Cutting and gluing help organizational skills and develop fine motor skills essential for writing.
- Play with clay or modeling play-dough. Create letters and words ask your child to recognize the letter, and sound it makes. Ask things like: What word begins with this letter? Make it a fun, evaluative play-time.
- Take your child to the library or book store to replenish the variety of books available at home.
- Invent stories together which may be similar to stories you both know. Change the ending, character, point of view or events in the story to develop a new story.
- When your child has begun to read words, it is common for errors to be made. Rather than auto-correcting your child, allow for him/her to pronounce, sound out or work through the process of decoding the word. If they misread, say: "The word is _____, you pronounce it _____." (You may choose to point out a spelling pattern in the word.) Then have the child reread the word in context since repetition is vital for learning to take place.
- After watching a movie or program on television together, ask questions to check for comprehension. Prompt your child to use complete sentences to answer since this will help develop language skills and prepare for school in a natural way at an early age.
- Sing songs aloud with your child. This develops fluency.
- Create rhyming games with your child. Word games help motivate a child to read, and assist with comprehension since you are expanding your child's vocabulary.
- After reading aloud, always ask questions or discuss to check for comprehension. What happened in the story? Explain to me your favorite part of the story. What part would you like to change in the story?
It is never too early to begin developing literacy skills like cause and effect, predicting outcomes, drawing conclusions and making inferences.