

Pre-K and Kindergarten Reading Activities

Kindergarten Literacy Readiness: Early Emergent Reader Stage

Parents or Guardians, here are some beneficial and fun activities you can do at home to help your child become more successful in reading. Short sessions seem to work best, and these simple activities can be worthwhile and enjoyable for both your child and you. Being successful in reading can help your child do well all through the school years.

Activity	Skill Addressed
Read aloud to your child. As you are reading, model reading by pointing with your finger. Follow the words with your finger from left to right as you read them. Talk about what you are doing as you move your finger along. After reading, talk about the story: “What did you like about the story? Who were the characters?”	Hold a book upright and know that printed text is read from left to right.
Play peppy music and model the movements you call out, such as: “Move your hands <u>up</u> , jump to the <u>right</u> , squat <u>down</u> ,” etc. Learning about these concepts by moving helps your child understand words that indicate direction.	Track printed words from left to right and top to bottom on a page.
Set up a pretend grocery store. Help your child make labels for things (for example, <i>apple, milk, jam</i>). Count out the letters with your child and help him or her tell which word is the shortest and which is the longest?	Compare the lengths of different words based on how many letters they contain.
Help your child create a sign with his or her name on it. Decorate the letters with items such as beads, glitter, buttons, etc. Go over his or her name, pointing out the letters and whole word (for example, “Your name is <i>Sally</i> . Here is the word <i>Sally</i> . See? It begins with a capital letter <i>S</i> . I can see the letter <i>a</i> too. Can you find the letter <i>l</i> ? How many <i>l</i> ’s do you see?”).	Distinguish letters from words.
Sing songs like “The Alphabet Song” to help your child learn the alphabet, and songs like “One, Two, Buckle My Shoe” to help your child learn numbers. Say a letter or number and ask your child to tell you which one it is (for example, “Is <i>A</i> a letter or a number? How about <i>3</i> ?”).	Distinguish letters from numbers.
Sit with your child and say simple two- or three-word sentences (for example, “I sat. We had fun.”) As you say a sentence, clap your hands each time you say a word. Ask your child to clap with you.	Clap the number of words in a given sentence.
Play an alphabet matching game. Create alphabet cards with an uppercase (capital) letter on one card and its matching lowercase letter on another card. Start out with just a few matches. Place the cards facedown and take turns turning over two cards with your child. If the two letters are a match, for example, <i>A</i> and <i>a</i> , the player keeps the match and has another turn. If the letters do not match, place the cards back down and the other player has a turn.	Distinguish between the shapes of upper- and lowercase letters.

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Enjoy an alphabet book with your child (the local library probably has a good selection of alphabet books). As you read through the book, encourage your child to point out the various letters.	Identify the letters of the alphabet.
Give your child some play dough. Sit with him or her and write out one of the letters of the alphabet. Show your child how to roll out the play dough to form the letter. Say the letter name as you help your child form the letter.	Name most letters of the alphabet.
Share several nursery rhymes or rhyming stories with your child (for example, “Humpty Dumpty,” “Jack and Jill,” or Dr. Seuss books). As you share the books, talk about which words sound the same (for example, <i>wall</i> and <i>fall</i> both have the sound <i>-all</i> ; <i>Humpty</i> and <i>Dumpty</i> both have the sound <i>-umpty</i>). Ask your child to find words which rhyme and to come up with other rhymes. For example, “I hear the same sound in <i>Jill</i> and <i>hill</i> . Can you think of another word with the sound <i>-ill</i> ?”	Recognize and produce rhyming sounds in words.
Begin the letters that have the most highly recognizable sounds (for example, sounds which your mouth can “feel,” such as /m/, /s/, /f/, /t/). After choosing a target letter, choose one item from your home which begins with that sound (for example, a mitten for /m/) and place it in a shoe box. Help your child search through the house for other items which begin with that same sound, for example, a magazine, a monkey, etc). Talk about the beginning sound as the item is placed into the shoe box. Continue with other letter sounds.	Say the correct sound for the first letter of familiar words.
Cut out pictures of common objects from a magazine (for example, apple, book, cup, dog, etc.). Using note cards, write down the alphabet, one letter to a note card. Place the note cards on a flat surface and encourage your child to put the picture of the item under its correct beginning sound: for example, the apple under <i>A</i> , book under <i>B</i> , cup under <i>C</i> , dog under <i>D</i> , etc.	Link an initial sound to the corresponding printed letter.
Say familiar nursery rhymes with your child (for example, “Humpty Dumpty” or “Jack and Jill”). Tell your child that you are going to say the nursery rhyme “Jack and Jill” with a “Silly Same Starting Sound.” Say, “Back band Bill bent bup ba bill, bo betch ba bail bof bater. Back bell bown band broke bis brown band Bill bame bumping bafter.” Say it again with a different beginning sound. Ask your child to join in and then see if he or she can say the rhyme with a different beginning sound.	Produce groups of words that begin with the same initial sound (alliteration).
Use a familiar picture book. Find a picture of something that has more than one syllable, such as monkey. Say the word. Repeat the word, this time clapping for each syllable: <i>mon-key</i> . Ask your child to clap the word out too. Then ask your child to pick out another picture, say its name, and clap out its syllables. Variations can include hopping or tapping instead of clapping.	With modeling and support, identify, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words.

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<p>Help your child create his or her own name card, using materials from around the house (beads, feathers, buttons, etc.). Write your child's name on his or her artwork. Make name cards for things your child finds important, such as the door to his or her room, his or her own books, or his or her chair at the table. Ask your child to go on a name hunt, trying to find where you have placed these name cards.</p>	<p>Recognize own name in print.</p>
<p>Using play dough or another type of modeling clay, help your child create the letters in his or her name. Encourage him or her to trace over the letters. Lightly write your child's name in pencil on an index card. Using white glue, trace over the letters and let the glue dry completely. Give the card to your child and allow time for him or her to trace over the bumpy letters to get a feel for how the letter is formed.</p>	<p>Write one's own name.</p>
<p>While running errands with your child, point out various words on signs, for example, on gas stations, on Stop signs, on chain stores). On another trip, play "I Spy," and encourage your child to find the signs (for example, "I spy a big, purple letter G. Can you find it?")</p>	<p>Read and tell the meaning of familiar signs and symbols in or from the environment.</p>
<p>Using index cards, draw a simple picture and its name (for example, draw an apple with the word <i>apple</i> beneath; draw a tree with the word <i>tree</i> beneath). Carefully cut the cards apart, separating the word from the picture. Lay all of the cards on a flat surface, face up, and encourage your child to match each picture with its word.</p>	<p>Associate words with pictorial representations.</p>
<p>Find various objects in your home which can be sorted into categories, for example, various coins. Use an empty egg carton to help your child place the same kinds of objects together in a section. Have your child sort other items by size or color or shape.</p>	<p>Determine categorical relationships.</p>
<p>Get a small box. Use a token such as a button or a small toy, and ask your child to place it on top of the box. Next, ask your child to place the button in other areas relating to the box (for example, under, next to, behind). Once your child has a good understanding of the position words, switch roles and ask him or her to give you directions on where to place the item.</p>	<p>Understand position words.</p>

Kindergarten: Late Emergent Reader Stage

Parents or Guardians, here are some beneficial and fun activities you can do at home to help your child become more successful in reading. Short sessions seem to work best, and these simple activities can be worthwhile and enjoyable for both your child and you. Being successful in reading can help your child do well all through the school years.

Activity	Skill Addressed
Model reading by pointing with your finger. Follow the words with your finger from left to right as you read them. Mention what you are doing as you move your finger along.	Pages are read from left to right and top to bottom.
Make a card game using pictures of things that are important to the child. Using pictures from magazines, catalogs, etc., create a set of cards with pictures (for example, pictures of a cat, a dog, and a pig). Make another set of cards with a label of each of the pictures (for example the words <i>cat</i> , <i>dog</i> , and <i>pig</i>). Make a game of matching the labels to the pictures.	Understand printed words carry meaning.
Make a frame out of a piece of cardboard or a 3 × 5 card. Cut the center out of the card so that when the card is placed over one of the words in a sentence, only one word shows through. Have the child move the frame over each of the words to show just one at a time.	Understand words are separated by spaces.
Write a letter on an index card or piece of paper (for example, write the letter <i>M</i>). Next, say, “I’m thinking of this letter and it makes the sound /mmmmmm/. What letter is it?”	Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet.
Share a book with repeated rhyming phrases (for example, <i>Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?</i> or any Dr. Seuss-type story) aloud with the child. Stress the rhyming words and encourage the child to find additional words that rhyme. (For example, “Brown bear, brown bear what do you see? I see a green frog looking at <u>me</u> . Which word rhymes with <i>see</i> ?”).	Recognize rhyming words.
Share a book with repeated rhyming phrases (for example, <i>Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?</i> or any Dr. Seuss-type story) with the child. Leave off the final rhyming word within a phrase and help the child fill in the missing rhyming word (for example, “Brown bear, brown bear what do you <u>see</u> ? I see a green frog looking at _____.”).	Produce rhyming words.
Say the child’s name syllable by syllable while clapping it out (for example, “Ni-co” [clap, clap]). Ask the child to say and clap his or her name along with you. After his or her name has been clapped, ask, “How many claps (syllables) did you hear?” Add the last name and clap both names out. Do this with other names of varying lengths the child knows.	Count syllables.
Ask the child to listen carefully as you pronounce and pause slightly between the syllables in words. Have the child repeat the word without the pause (for example, you say “hap/py,” and the child responds with <i>happy</i>). Do this for other word examples, such as el/e/phant— <i>elephant</i> or kit/ten/— <i>kitten</i> . Take turns saying other words in syllables or as a whole word.	Pronounce syllables.

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<p>Prepare cards with pictures of common words having more than one syllable such as <i>lion</i>; <i>tiger</i>; <i>monkey</i>; <i>umbrella</i>. Take turns picking a card and saying the word in syllables: li/on; ti/ger; mon/key; um/brel/la. The other player then says the word without pausing between syllables.</p>	<p>Blend syllables.</p>
<p>Draw a hopscotch board with sidewalk chalk. Take turns coming up with words and ask the child to figure out how many syllables are in the word. For example, in <i>hamburger</i> /ham//bur//ger/—there are three. The child then jumps that many spaces on the hopscotch board.</p>	<p>Segment syllables.</p>
<p>Share <i>There's a Wocket in My Pocket</i> (Seuss, 1974) with the child. In the story, beginning sounds of everyday objects are substituted as a child talks about made-up objects around the house, such as the “zamp in the lamp.” The child can make up his or her own objects such as the “zook in my book” or a “floom in my room.”</p>	<p>Blend onsets and rimes.</p>
<p>Share <i>There's a Wocket in My Pocket</i> (Seuss, 1974) with the child. In the story, beginning sounds of everyday objects are substituted as a child talks about made-up objects around the house, such as the “zamp in the lamp.” The child can make up his or her own objects such as the “zook in my book” or a “floom in my room.” Next, say the new word by separating the first sound from the rest of the word: There's a /z/amp in the /l/amp and so on with the rest of the words you've made up.</p>	<p>Segment onsets and rimes.</p>
<p>Play a story game with the child. Tell this story about a troll who likes to speak in sounds: Once upon a time, there was a wonderful little troll who loved to give children presents. However, the troll always wanted children to guess what the present was before he gave it to them. He spoke in his own special way. When he shared what the gift was, he would say the sounds “/b-/i-/k/” instead of “bike.” Once the child guessed the troll's gift, the troll would be very excited. I will pretend to be the troll and I will name a surprise for you. When you figure out what it is, it will be your turn to think of a surprise for me.</p>	<p>Isolate and pronounce the initial sounds (phonemes) in three-phoneme words.</p>
<p>Play a story game. Tell this story about a troll who likes to speak in sounds: Once upon a time, there was a wonderful, little troll who loved to give children presents. However, the troll always wanted children to guess what the present was before he gave it to them. He spoke in his own special way. When he shared what a gift was, he would say “/b-/i-/k/” instead of “bike.” Once the child guessed the troll's gift, the troll would be very excited. I will pretend to be the troll and I will name a surprise for you. When you figure out what it is, it will be your turn to think of a surprise for me.</p>	<p>Isolate and pronounce the medial vowel sounds in three-phoneme words.</p>

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<p>Play a story game with the child. Tell this story about a troll who likes to speak in sounds: Once upon a time, there was a wonderful, little troll who loved to give children presents. However, the troll always wanted children to guess what the present was before he gave it to them. He spoke in his own special way. When he shared what a gift was, he would say “/b/-/i/-/k/” instead of “bike.” Once the child guessed the troll’s gift, the troll would be very excited. I will pretend to be the troll and I will name a surprise for you. When you figure out what it is, it will be your turn to think of a surprise for me.</p>	<p>Isolate and pronounce the final sounds in three-phoneme words.</p>
<p>Play a game involving the addition of sounds in words. Say something like this, “Add /m/ to /at/. What word did you make?” (<i>mat</i>) “Good, add /ch/ to the end of the word <i>mat</i>. What word did you make?” (<i>match</i>)</p>	<p>Add individual sounds (phonemes) in simple, one syllable words to make new words.</p>
<p>Create word families with the child. Use refrigerator magnets or letter cards (write the alphabet on paper and cut each letter out to make a card) to spell a word ending (-at). Have the child put other letters in front of the word ending to create rhyming words (<i>pat, cat, mat, and sat</i>).</p>	<p>Substitute individual sounds (phonemes) in simple, one syllable words to make new words.</p>
<p>As you shop for groceries, ask your child to tell you what sound each fruit or vegetable begins with.</p>	<p>Produce primary consonant sounds</p>
<p>Cut out known words from cereal boxes, can labels and yogurt containers. Use these individual words to talk about capital and lowercase letters. Talk about the sounds of letters (“The letter <i>B</i> says /b/”). Help the child read the words you’ve cut out.</p>	<p>Know one-to-one letter-sound correspondences.</p>
<p>Create a word book using strips of paper. Write these short words, one to a strip, leaving extra space at the end: <i>at, cap, mad, Sam, can, Jan, pal, tap</i>. Lay the strips on a table, and fold each strip back toward the word, barely touching the edge of the paper to the final consonant. Write the letter <i>e</i> on the flap. Staple the strips together to form a Silent <i>e</i> book and take turns reading each word in its first form and then folding the flap back to then read the word with -<i>e</i> on the end. Talk about how the -<i>e</i> changes the sound of the vowel from a short sound to a long one (for example, <i>at</i> becomes <i>ate</i>, <i>cap</i> becomes <i>cape</i>, etc.).</p>	<p>Associate long vowel sounds with common spellings.</p>
<p>Create a word book using strips of paper. Write these short words, one to a strip, leaving extra space at the end: <i>at, cap, mad, Sam, can, Jan, pal, tap</i>. Lay the strips on a table, and fold each strip back toward the word, barely touching the edge of the paper to the final consonant. Write the letter <i>e</i> on the flap. Staple the strips together to form a Silent <i>e</i> book and take turns reading each word in its first form and then folding the flap back to then read the word with -<i>e</i> on the end. Talk about how the -<i>e</i> changes the sound of the vowel from a short sound to a long one (for example, <i>at</i> becomes <i>ate</i>, <i>cap</i> becomes <i>cape</i>, etc.).</p>	<p>Associate short vowel sounds with common spellings.</p>

Activity	Skill Addressed
Cut out known words from cereal boxes, can labels and yogurt containers. Use these individual words to talk about capital and lowercase letters. Talk about the sounds of letters (“The letter <i>B</i> says /b/”). Help the child read the words you’ve cut out.	Read high-frequency sight words.
Play Alphabet Charades: Choose a letter and act out words which begin with that letter sound (for example, choose the letter <i>B</i> and act out words like <i>bee</i> , <i>baby</i> , and <i>bug</i>). Encourage the child to name the beginning sound after he or she has guessed a few words.	Identify the sounds of letters.
On a piece of paper, write sets of three words. Two of them should be the same. One of them will be the same except for one letter (for example, hill, will, hill; bed, bed, bud; big, big, bit and so on. Ask the child which word is different.	Distinguish between similarly spelled words.
Choose a book that your child wants to read. Ask why he or she chose that book. Was it for fun? Was it to learn about something? After the book has been read, ask a question about what he or she enjoyed in the story or what was learned.	Read texts with purpose and understanding.
Read books with simple spelling patterns, such as <i>The Cat in the Hat</i>). Start by reading the first sentence of the book aloud. The child should read along silently. At the end of the sentence, give the child the chance to read the same sentence aloud while you follow along silently. Continue to read together, taking turns reading aloud. Provide help where needed and praise the child for his or her efforts. When it’s time, your child will be able to read some sentences first.	Read emergent-level texts.
While in the car or on the bus, play a game of thinking of MM words—words that have more than one meaning; for example, <i>bat</i> , <i>bowl</i> , <i>can</i> , <i>foot</i> , <i>hand</i> , <i>park</i> , and <i>orange</i> . Say the word and give one meaning. Ask your child to think of another meaning for it. Ask your child to come up with other examples.	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on kindergarten reading and content.
While grocery shopping, ask the child to find things which start with the same letter sound as his or her name (for example, “Tommy, I see tomatoes, turkey, and tape. Can you find something else which begins with the sound /t/?”).	Recognize, identify, and produce alliterative words.