

What can you do at home to help your child?

Foundational Skills

- Help your child understand which letters and letter combinations go with which sounds in whatever you are reading.
- Help your child to decode (take apart) common words so that he becomes familiar with how to sound words out.
- Help your child to break words into syllables so that he can more easily hear the sounds and decode the words.
- Help your child to recognize common vowel combinations, such as words that end with a silent e or those that have two vowels together.
- Help your child to read aloud text that is at his reading level, reading with accuracy, appropriate speed, and expression.
- Read higher levels of text to your child so that he can hear you read with accuracy, appropriate speed and expression.

Reading for Literature

- Ask your child about what she read, and have her ask you questions too.
- Ask your child to tell you about the story – the main idea, characters, events, where the story took place, and who is talking in the story.
- Ask your child to find words and phrases that describe feelings or that make her think of the senses (touch, taste, sight, smells, hearing).
- Help your child understand the difference between books that tell stories and those that give information.
- Ask your child to draw pictures to tell about the story.
- Ask your child to tell you what is different from and the same as in the characters in different stories.
- Get a book of poetry from the library and have fun with it!

Reading for Information

- Read nonfiction/informational books to and with your child.
- Ask your child to write facts from the book that he learned.
- Ask your child questions about the information in the book.
- Discuss with your child the meanings of words and phrases in the book.
- Help your child locate specific information in the book.
- Help your child use the table of contents and glossary.
- Help your child understand how to read and interpret graphs, charts, and diagrams in the book.
- Help your child to determine the main idea in the story.

Writing

- Help your child to give his opinion about a topic or book by stating his opinion and giving a reason for his thinking. "My favorite book is ... because ..." .
- Help your child to write about a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and find a way to close/end the narrative.
- Help your child see that order is important in writing about a story or happening, using a proper sequence of events.
- Help your child to improve on his original writing by responding to suggestions and adding details.
- Help your child to use the computer, pens, crayons, paint, etc. to produce and publish what he and others have written/drawn.
- Help your child to work with others to do simple research about a given topic – and write and organize the facts they find.
- Help your child to recall information about his own experiences, or what he has read or researched, to answer questions.

Speaking and Listening

- At dinner time or in the car, have conversations with your child to allow her to practice the art of conversation.
- Respond to your child in sentences to model for her the correct way to talk.
- Ask for details about books, movies, and television shows you are viewing with your child.
- Ask your child to tell you in her own words about what she hears and sees.
- Encourage your child to describe her feelings and ideas in phrases and sentences that are more descriptive than just one word.
- Use complete sentences when you talk to your child and encourage her to speak in the same way.
- Read aloud to your child books that are above her reading level and ask questions about the story.

Language

- Help your child practice printing and pointing out upper case and lower case letters.
- Help your child correctly use nouns (singular and plural), verbs (past, present, future), pronouns (I, me, my, they, them...), adjectives (bigger, best), adverbs (quickly, slowly) conjunctions (and, or, but, because), prepositions (during, beyond), and complete sentences.
- Give your child opportunities to write and to practice using punctuation and good spelling.
- Show your child how to figure out the meaning of words by looking at the root (main part of word), the prefix (beginning), suffix (ending) and how it fits into the sentence.
- Help your child to understand how words are related by helping him to see how they fit into categories, how they connect with other words, how they are similar or different, and how they help us to better understand what we are reading.
- Ask your child to find ways to use new words and phrases he has heard or read in his own conversations or writing.