

Children have opportunities to learn the alphabet.

Dear Parents:

Children who enter school able to name and identify the letters of the alphabet usually have an easier time learning to read. Being able to call out letter names quickly and easily is important.

Ideas for helping your child at home

- Sing the alphabet song with your children as they play with alphabet books, blocks, and magnetic letters.
- When reading to your child, ask him/her to point to certain letters on that page. Example: Can you find all the M's?
- Put the letters on flash cards. Learn to discriminate a few at a time. Keep reviewing. Begin with the letters in the child's name.
- Provide your child with pencils, crayons, and paper so that he/she can learn to write individual letters and gradually learn to write his/her own name.
- Put cornmeal or sand in a cake pan or on a cookie sheet. Say a letter and have your child draw the letter in the cornmeal or sand.
- Have your child say the alphabet as he/she jumps a rope, rides a seesaw, pushes back and forth on a swing, or goes up and down the stairs.

Los niños tienen oportunidades de aprender el alfabeto.

Queridos padres:

Los niños que comienzan la escuela capaces de nombrar e identificar las letras del alfabeto, usualmente aprenden a leer con facilidad. Estar capacitado para nombrar las letras rápido y fácilmente es muy importante.

Ideas para ayudar a su hijo/a en casa:

- Cante la canción del alfabeto con sus niños/as mientras ellos juegan con libros de alfabeto, bloques y/o letras magnetizadas.
- Cuando le lea a su hijo/a, pídale que señale ciertas letras de la página. Ejemplo: ¿Puedes encontrar todas las letras "M"?
- Pegue o dibuje las letras en tarjetas. Enséñele a distinguir las individualmente en pequeños grupos y repáselas oportunamente a diario en revistas, afiches, carteles, nombres de calles, etc. Comience con las letras del nombre de su hijo/a.
- Provea a su niño/a con lapices, crayolas y papel, para que él/ella pueda aprender a escribir o dibujar letras individuales, y gradualmente llegue a escribir su propio nombre.
- Ponga harina de maíz o arena en un recipiente plano (charola o fuente). Diga una letra y haga que su hijo/a dibuje esa letra en la harina o en la arena.
- Haga que su hijo/a diga las letras del alfabeto al tiempo que suba o baje las escaleras, saltando a la cuerda, hamacándose, marchando, columpiándose, etc.

Children have opportunities to learn the relationship between the sounds of spoken language and the letters of the written language (phonics).

Dear Parents:

Children learn that written words are made up of letters that match the sounds in spoken words (for example, the letter "n" matches the /n/ sound in "nurse"). Children should be taught to match the sounds with letters in an orderly and direct way. But, be prepared for them to figure some matches on their own. As they learn letter-sound matches, children can practice using them in words.

Ideas for helping your child at home:

- Teach your child to match the letters in his/her name with the sounds in his/her name.
- Point out words that begin with the same letter as your child's name (for example, "Maria" and "milk"). Talk about how the beginning sounds of the words are alike.
- Use alphabet books and guessing games to give your child practice in matching letters and sounds. A good example is the game, "I am thinking of something that starts with /t/."
- Write letters on pieces of paper and put them in a paper bag. Let your child reach into the bag and take out letters. Have him/her say the sounds that match the letters.
- Make letter-sounds and ask your child to draw the matching letters in cornmeal or sand.

Los niños tienen oportunidades de aprender la relación entre el sonido del lenguaje oral y las letras del lenguaje escrito (fonética).

Queridos padres:

Los niños aprenden que las palabras escritas están compuestas de letras que equivalen a los sonidos de la palabra hablada. (Por ejemplo: la letra "n" equivale al sonido /n/ en "nudo").

Los niños tendrían que aprender a coordinar esos sonidos con sus letras en forma directa y ordenada. A medida que lo aprendan, podrán practicarlo en palabras, luego en frases y libros.

Ideas para ayudar a su hijo/a en casa:

- Enseñe a su hijo/a a relacionar las letras con los sonidos de su nombre.
- Muéstrole palabras que comienzan con la misma letra de su nombre (por ejemplo: "Lisa" y "leche") y enséñele que los sonidos iniciales de las dos palabras son iguales.
- Usando libros del alfabeto y libros de juegos y preguntas, haga que su niño/a practique la correspondencia de las letras con los sonidos. Un juego apropiado sería: "Estoy pensando en algo que empieza con /T/..."
- Recorte letras de revistas o escribalas en papelitos y póngalas en una bolsa de papel. Haga que su hijo/a saque las letras de la bolsa, una por una, y le diga en voz alta el sonido equivalente a cada letra.
- Pronuncie el sonido de letras y haga que su niño/a dibuje la letra equivalente en papel, arena, harina de maíz, etc.

Children have opportunities to practice the sounds they are learning about in stories.

Dear Parents:

Stories that have words made up of the letter-sound matches children are learning are called decodable stories. These stories give children practice in what they are learning about letters and sounds. As children learn to read fluently, they are more easily able to comprehend (understand) what they are reading.

Ideas for helping your child at home:

- Ask your child's teacher to share how you can help your child practice at home on what she/he is reading in school.
- As you read with your child, show her/him that reading aloud should sound like talking.
- If your child is decoding the words in a sentence slowly, word by word, have her/him reread the sentence to make the reading sound like talking. This gives your child practice in reading the new words and helps her/him understand the meaning of the sentence.
- If your child makes a mistake in reading a word, stop her/his reading and point out the word that was missed. You may want to help her/him read the word correctly. When she/he comes to the end of the sentence, have her/him reread it to make the reading sound like talking. If she/he makes many mistakes, the book she/he is reading may be too difficult.

Important Side Notes:

- As you listen to your child read, give her/him praise and encouragement.
- Post on the refrigerator or home bulletin board a list of the books and stories your child has read.
- When your child has finished reading a book, have her/him read it to another family member or friend.
- Make audio or videotapes of your child reading and send them to grandparents or other family members.

Children have opportunities to develop and comprehend new vocabulary through wide reading and direct vocabulary instruction.

Dear Parents:

Learning the meanings of new words (vocabulary) helps children to read more complex books and stories and to learn wonderful new things.

Children learn new words by being read to and by reading on their own; the more children read, the more words they are likely to know. Children also learn words through lessons that focus on the meanings of words and how the words are used in written materials. When children write stories, they often use their new words.

Ideas for helping your child at home:

- Select many kinds of books, stories, and other printed material to read to your child. Also, help him/her choose different types of books and stories to read on his/her own.
- Talk with your child about daily events, about events that have happened in the past, and about plans for the future. Every once in a while, use a "hard" word and discuss the meaning of that word.
- Have your child keep a list of new words he/she has learned. Ask him/her to listen for new words as people talk. Have your child find new words in newspapers, books, catalogs, and magazines. Discuss the meanings of new words with your child and have him/her add these to the list.
- Give your child a word that is found in other words (for example, "grow" is found in "growing" and "growth"). Ask him/her to name other words that are related. You can call this group of words a "word family." Have your child make a book of word families by writing words from the same family on a page and by drawing pictures about the words. Clip or staple together several pages of word families and pictures to form a book.

Children have opportunities to learn decoding strategies.

Dear Parents:

Children can use what they know about letter-sound matches to decode (figure out) written words. They can do this by saying the sounds of the letters and by smoothly putting the sounds together (blending) to make words.

Being able to decode words helps children to read new words on their own. Good readers learn to decode so quickly and easily that they do not have to use pictures to help them figure out words and what they mean.

Ideas for helping your child at home:

- As you and your child look at a new word, touch each letter and say the sound, moving from left to right through the word (for example, say the sounds /s/ /u/ /n/ and blend the sounds to make "sun"). Begin with short, easy words such as "hop," "mat," or "cat."
- Play games: Write words on cards and place the cards upside down in a stack. Take turns choosing a card and blending the sounds to form the word seen on the card. Use the word in a sentence.

Los niños tienen oportunidades de aprender estrategias para decodificar.

Queridos padres:

Los niños pueden usar su conocimiento sobre la correspondencia de letra-sonido para decodificar la palabra escrita. Ellos/as pueden hacerlo diciendo los sonidos de las letras y cautelosamente, uniendo los sonidos para hacer las palabras.

La capacidad de decodificar palabras ayuda a que los niños/as lean palabras nuevas solos. Los buenos lectores aprenden a descifrar tan rápido y tan fácilmente que no necesitan usar dibujos.

Ideas para ayudar a su hijo/a en casa:

- Cuando usted y su niño/a quieran decodificar una palabra nueva, señale tocando cada letra de izquierda a derecha y diga su sonido (por ejemplo: diga los sonidos /s//o//l/ y una los sonidos en orden para formar "sol". Comience con palabras cortas como "oso," "pez," o "ave."
- Haga un juego: Escriba palabras en tarjetas y póngalas boca abajo en una pila. Tome turnos sacando una tarjeta y una los sonidos que corresponden a la palabra de la tarjeta. Luego hágale usar esa palabra para crear una frase.

Children have opportunities to learn and apply comprehension strategies as they reflect upon and think critically about what they read.

Dear Parents:

Children who identify quickly and correctly most of the words in the books that they are reading usually comprehend what they are reading. However, comprehension involves more than just reading the words; it involves understanding, thinking, and often learning something new. The more children know about what they are reading, the more likely they are to comprehend what they are reading.

From their reading, children add new information, ideas, and vocabulary to their store of knowledge. Children benefit from comprehension activities such as talking about what they have read, discussing the meanings of new words, and comparing one story with another. As children start reading more complex books in science and social studies, they may learn some specific comprehension strategies.

Ideas for helping your child at home:

- As you read a book with your child, ask him/her questions about the book's characters, places, and events.
- When returning to a story, have your child talk about what was already read.
- Have your child read a new story; then ask him/her to tell you the story in his/her own words. Be sure the child tells the story in the order in which it happened.
- Talk about any new words your child has read in a book. Ask him/her to make up sentences with the new words and have him/her write out the sentences.
- As you read together but before you come to the end of the story, ask your child to tell how she/he thinks the story will end or how the problems in the story could be solved.
- Talk with your child about how the books he/she is reading are similar to other books already read. Ask your child to tell you things he/she has done that are similar to the events in the story.

IMPORTANT NOTE: All of the above can be done in the child's primary language.

Children have opportunities to develop concepts of print.

Dear Parents:

It is important that children understand what is meant by a letter, a word, and a sentence. They also need to understand where to start on a page (concepts of left to right, top and bottom) and after reading to the end of the line where to go next. Children need to understand that longer spoken words are represented by longer, printed words.

Ideas for helping your child at home:

- When reading to your child track with your finger (move under each word as you read so your child understands there is one printed word for each spoken word).
- When you get to the end of a sentence, let him/her show you where to go next.
- Clap out the number of syllables in a word with your child.
- Point to the words as you read them. Help your child to see that there are spaces between words, that you read from the top of the page to the bottom, and that you read from left to right.
- Ask your child to think about the story as you read it.
- From time to time, talk about specific letters and words in the story.
- Read expressively: talk the way the story's characters would talk; make sound effects and funny faces; and vary the pitch of your voice throughout the story to make it more interesting.
- Encourage your child to ask questions about the story's characters and events.
- Talk about the story and relate it to your child's personal experiences.

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Los niños tienen oportunidades de desarrollar el concepto de escritura.

Queridos padres:

Es importante que los niños/as entiendan qué representa una letra, una palabra y/o una frase. También necesitan entender la idea de página: dónde comienza, dónde termina (los conceptos de izquierda a derecha, de arriba hacia abajo) y después de terminar de leer un renglón ¿dónde se continúa leyendo? Los niños necesitan entender que las palabras largas de pronunciar son representadas por palabras largas de escribir.

Ideas para ayudar a su hijo/a en casa:

- Cuando lea con su niño/a, indique y acompañe con su dedo las palabras a medida que las lee, para que su niño/a entienda que hay una palabra escrita por cada palabra leída.
- Cuando lleguen al final de una frase, deje que él/ella le indique dónde continuar.
- Márque el número de sílabas que tiene cada palabra leída, aplaudiendo.
- Apunte cada palabra que lea y ayude a su hijo/a a ver los espacios entre ellas. Hágame ver que usted lee de izquierda a derecha y de arriba de la página para abajo.
- Pida a su hijo que piense acerca del cuento mientras usted lo lee.
- De vez en cuando, hable sobre algunas letras y/o palabras del cuento.
- Lea con expresión imitando los personajes del cuento; exagere los efectos de sonido y gesticule, variando el timbre de su voz a través de la lectura para hacerla más interesante.
- Anime a su hijo/a para que pregunte detalles acerca de la historia y sus personajes.
- Hable del cuento y relacione la historia con experiencias personales de su hijo/a.

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Children have opportunities to understand and use their phonemic awareness skills.

Definitions:

A **phoneme** is a single speech sound that carries no meaning by itself. Phonemes are the sounds we "hear" in words. **Phonemic awareness** is the understanding that speech is made up of a sequence of sounds (phonemes) that are combined to form words. It is also the ability to identify and manipulate those sounds. Phonemic awareness is the best predictor of learning to read between kindergarten and second grade.

Phonics is the relationship between sounds and their symbols. In phonics instruction, students learn that phonics are the letters we "see" in words and use in reading and writing. There is a strong correlation between a child's phonemic awareness development and his/her success with phonics.

Dear Parents:

Children can learn that spoken sentences are made up of words and that words are made up of separate sounds. They can learn that many words can be separated into syllables (for example, /bu/ /cket/ in "bucket" and /tel/ /e/ /phone/ in "telephone").

Children can also learn that syllables can be separated into sounds (for example, /b/ /u/ and /k/ /e/ /t/ in "bucket") and that words can be separated into sounds (for example, /k/ /a/ /t/ in "cat"). Later children will be able to connect the sounds in spoken words with the letters in printed words.

Most children will benefit from much practice at playing with the sounds of words.

Ideas for helping your child at home:

Rhyming

- Sing songs and read rhyming books with your child. After repeated exposure to rhyming books, read a line, then pause and ask your child to fill in the missing rhyming word.

Beginning Sounds

- Ask your child for a word that begins like his/her name. Examples: Silly Sara, Happy Heather

Los niños tienen oportunidades de entender y usar su conocimiento fonético.

Definición:

El **fonema** es un sonido que no tiene significado. Fonemas son sonidos que "oímos" en las palabras. La **conciencia fonémica** es el entendimiento de que la palabra está compuesta de una secuencia de sonidos (fonemas) que se recombinan para emitir otras palabras, e incluye la habilidad de identificar y manipular esos sonidos. La conciencia fonémica es la mejor predictoria para aprender a leer entre kindergarten y segundo grado.

La **fonética** es la relación entre el sonido y su símbolo. Al estudiar la fonética, se aprende que la fonética son las letras que "vemos" en las palabras y que las usamos en lecturas. Existe una correlación acentuada entre el desarrollo de la conciencia fonémica del niño/a y su éxito con la fonética.

Queridos padres:

Los niños pueden aprender que las frases habladas están hechas con palabras y que las palabras están hechas con sonidos separados. También pueden aprender que muchas palabras pueden ser separadas en sílabas (por ejemplo: /bal//de/ en "balde" y /te//lé//fo//no/ en "teléfono").

Los niños también pueden aprender que las sílabas pueden ser separadas en sonidos (por ejemplo: /b//a//l//d//e/ en "balde") y que las palabras también pueden ser separadas en sonidos (por ejemplo: /g//a//t//o/ en "gato"). Luego, los niños/as podrán conectar los sonidos de las palabras habladas con las letras de las palabras escritas.

La mayoría de los alumnos se beneficiará jugando y practicando con los sonidos de las palabras.

Ideas para ayudar a su hijo/a en casa:

Rimando:

- Cante canciones y lea con su niño/a libros de versos que riman. Después de practicar las rimas varias veces, comience a leer una estrofa, haga una pausa, y anime a su niño/a para que la termine, usando las palabras que riman.
- (Continúa)

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Children have opportunities to write and relate their writing to spelling and reading.

Dear Parents:

As children learn some letter-sound matches and start to read, they begin to write words and sentences. Seeing how words are spelled helps children in reading and writing.

In the early grades, reading and spelling are learned together. As children become better readers, formal spelling lessons are helpful.

Ideas for Helping Your Child at Home:

- Your child can learn to spell some words by sounding out each letter. Short simple words are best to learn in the beginning. Encourage your child to write stories and to spell words using the sounds the letters make.
- Say a word and have your child repeat the word. Then have him/her write the letters that match the sounds in the word.
- Point out that some words are similar. Talk about how "hop" is similar to "top," "cop," and "mop."
- Ask your child to draw a picture of a family activity. Have him/her write a sentence about it below the picture. Encourage your child to say the sentence and write letters to match the sounds in each word. Be sure and have your child read what he/she wrote.
- Have your child cut a picture from an old magazine and write a story about the picture.
- Tell your child a story and have him/her write an ending for it.
- Have your child write letters and thank-you notes to friends and relatives.
- As your child progresses, help him/her learn the correct spelling of the words written.

Los niños tienen oportunidades de escribir y de relacionar su escritura con la ortografía y la lectura.

Queridos padres:

Mientras los niños/as aprenden la correspondencia de letra-sonido y comienzan a leer, ellos/as empiezan a escribir palabras y frases. Viendo cómo se deletrean las palabras, les ayuda a leer y a escribir.

En los primeros grados aprenden la lectura y la ortografía simultáneamente. Cuando los niños mejoran su lectura, las lecciones de gramática y acentuación son muy útiles.

Ideas para ayudar a su hijo/a en casa:

- Su niño/a puede aprender a deletrear las palabras diciendo el sonido de cada letra. Es mejor comenzar con palabras cortas. Anime a su hijo/a para que escriba cuentos y para que deletree las palabras usando el sonido de las letras.
- Diga una palabra y haga que su niño/a la repita. Luego hágale escribir las letras equivalentes a esos sonidos.
- Hágale notar que hay palabras que son parecidas entre sí. Hable acerca de que "pata" es similar a "lata", "mata", y a "gata".
- Pídale a su hijo/a que haga un dibujo de alguna actividad familiar. Hágale escribir debajo una frase describiendo la actividad familiar e incítelo a verbalizar la frase y a escribir las letras que complementan los sonidos en cada palabra. Asegúrese que su niño/a lea lo que él/ella escribió.
- Haga que su niño/a escriba cuentos sobre ilustraciones recortadas de revistas viejas.
- Empiece a contarle un cuento y haga que él/ella escriba un final para ese cuento.
- Haga que su niño/a escriba cartas y notas de agradecimiento a amigos y parientes.
- A medida que su niño/a progresa, ayúdele a aprender a corregir la ortografía de las palabras que escribe.

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Children have opportunities to read and comprehend a wide assortment of books and other texts.

Dear Parents:

As children become fluent readers, they will begin to read and comprehend more complex books and stories. Children become excited about reading. They enjoy reading all kinds of books, stories, newspapers, and magazines by themselves.

Having books at home for children to read is important. Classroom and school libraries must offer children many kinds of reading materials; some should be easy to read while others should be more difficult. Children should be able to bring books home for reading with family members.

Ideas for helping your child at home:

- Encourage your child to read books and other materials related to her/his interests or hobbies.
- Have your child read game instructions, recipe directions, comic books, catalogs, toy advertisements, and children's magazines.
- Make sure your child has a comfortable, quiet spot for reading.
- When your child finishes reading a book or story, find time for her/him to tell you and other family members about it. (This may be done in child's primary language.)
- Set aside a special time during the week for everyone in the family to read. Turn off the television and enjoy the quiet. This lets your child know that reading is important and pleasurable for everyone in the family.