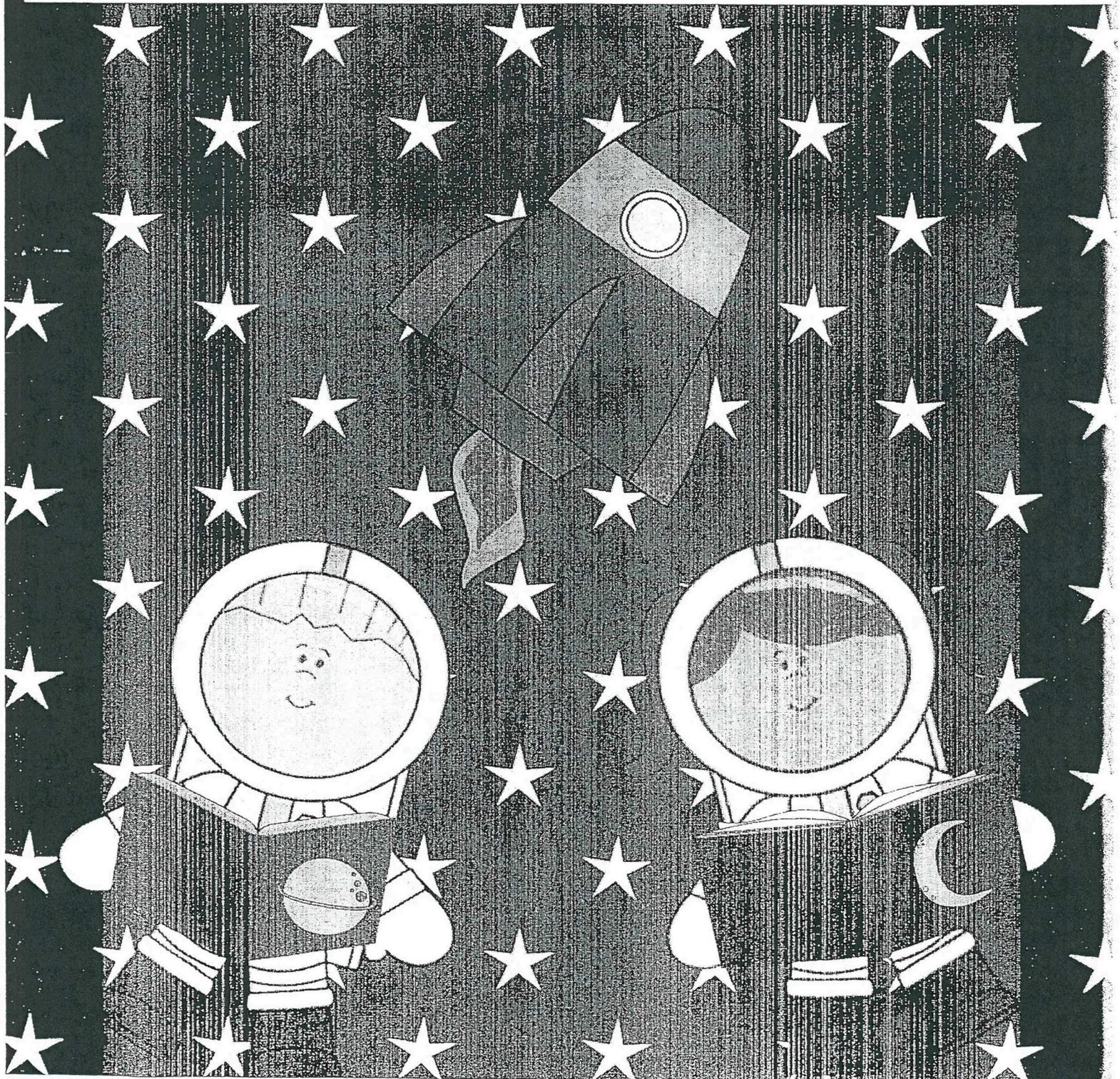


# Help Your Child Be Among the Stars!

A Parent Guide for Promoting Literacy Skills



## Tips for Parents: Oral Language Development

Oral language development is the first step in a child's literacy development. By engaging your child in oral language activities, you are laying the foundation for your child to learn to read and write. Research tells us that children with strong oral language skills will most likely have strong reading and writing skills. Here are a few ideas that promote oral language development:

- \* Talk to your child whenever possible. Children enjoy talking about friends, families, or favorite activities.
- \* Teach your child to look at you when you are speaking. Making eye contact is very important. The child needs to see your facial expressions, and hear your voice clearly. Do the same when your child speaks. This sends a clear message that you are listening and care about what your child is saying.
- \* Talk about what you are doing. Simple daily activities give wonderful opportunities for language development. It encourages conversational skills and helps the child to acquire general vocabulary.
- \* Encourage your child to sing songs, say rhymes, tell stories.
- \* Tell your child stories about when you were growing up, things from the past or things that will be happening in the future. You can use prompts such as, "What happened next?" or "When did that happen?"
- \* Read books together. Picture books are a great way to increase vocabulary and get children talking.
- \* Stuffed animals and puppets are great tools for getting children to speak and use dialogue. Use the puppet or animal to share information, tell a story, or sing songs.

From: NWT Literacy Council



## **Specific Grade Level Literacy Activities**

From: Florida Center for Reading Research [www.fcrr.org/curriculum/curriculumForParents.shtml](http://www.fcrr.org/curriculum/curriculumForParents.shtml)

Listed below are some general suggestions for things that parents can do to help support the reading growth of their children. These are general suggestions, meant to be useful for almost any child. All of these suggestions come from research on the way children learn to read. If you do some of them regularly in a motivating and supportive way, they will help your child make faster progress in learning to read. Many of these activities, such as those that build vocabulary and teach children to think while they read, will also help your child ultimately be a much better reader than he or she might otherwise become.

### **Kindergarten:**

1. Create a special workspace and schedule daily quiet time for your child to do his/her homework. Be sure this is a time you are available to help if needed.
2. Schedule 15 minutes of special time every day to read to your child. Before you read each book, read the title and look at the cover and pictures inside. Ask your child what he/she thinks the book may be about (prediction). After reading the book, review the prediction. Was the prediction right? If not, what happened instead?

## Second Grade:

1. Create a special workspace and schedule daily quiet time for your child to do his/her homework. Be sure this is a time you are available to help if needed.
2. Schedule 15 minutes of special time every day to listen to your child read.
3. Go to the school library, public library, or to the local bookstore once each week and read a new book together. Read the title then look at the cover and pictures inside. Ask your child to predict what the book is about. After reading the book, review the prediction, then ask about the characters, setting, problem and solution.
4. Fact or Opinion Game: The parent says a sentence to the child then asks whether it is a fact or opinion.  
Ex: The weather is nice. (Opinion) A dog can bark. (Fact)
5. Encourage reading fluency by having your child read and reread familiar books. It can also be helpful to have your child read a short passage over several times while you record the time it takes. Children often enjoy seeing if they can improve their time from one reading to the next, and the repeated reading helps to establish a habit of fluent reading.
6. Pick out a new vocabulary word from one of the books you are reading with your child. Talk about what it means then make up a sentence with the new word. Try to use the word again that week.

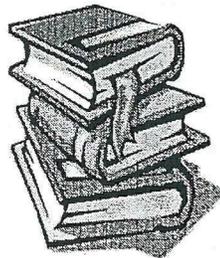
## Third Grade:

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3. Go to the school library, public library, or to the local bookstore once each week and read a new book together. After you read each book, ask your child what the main character did or felt like at the end of the story. Ask if he/she has ever felt like the main character in the book. Why or why not?
4. Encourage reading fluency by having your child read and reread familiar books. It can also be helpful to have your child read a short passage over several times while you record the time it takes. Children often enjoy seeing if they can improve their time from one reading to the next, and the repeated reading helps to establish a habit of fluent reading.
5. Highlight or underline words that you can sound out from the day's "junk mail." Ask your child to read these words.
6. Make a simple recipe with your child, allowing him/her to read each direction to you step by step so you'll "know what to do."

- \* Play Bingo games! You can purchase or make bingo games...Alphabet, Picture, Sight Words, Rhyming, Homonym, Synonym, Syllable, Vowel, or Vocabulary Bingo.
- \* Give your child a sound...have him/her say or write as many words as they can with that sound. You can make it even more challenging by timing his/her response time.
- \* Get out that cookie sheet and some magnetic letters! This is a great way to review spelling words, sequencing letters, making rhyming words.
- \* Go on a nature walk. Use a resource book to identify birds, trees, flowers, etc. Your child can record the information in a journal and/or take photos. You can make your own family story book about your nature walk.
- \* Create family journals for family reading. Your child can illustrate the cover, write the title and author of the book, then write a short summary about the book. Also, did he/she like or dislike the book? They could write their opinion and reasons to support that opinion.
- \* Play "I Spy" game wherever you are! Have your child name everything that he/she can see that has a specific sound. This is a great activity while you are standing in line waiting in the car.
- \* Visit the library. Make sure each family member has their own library card.
- \* Make a bookmark after reading a book together. Your child can draw his/her favorite character or scene on an index card, or create one on the computer. The child can type the name of the book, the setting, the characters, or the problem/solution of the book.
- \* Write the weekly shopping list. Have your child write or type out your shopping list. What a great way to increase vocabulary and keyboarding skills all at the same time.
- \* Write letters or create cards to send to family members or friends. Everyone still loves to receive mail!
- \* Take books everywhere! Have books in the car! Take books with you wherever you go! There is always time to read a few lines while the family is waiting at the doctor's office or a restaurant!

From: A-Z Family Literacy Activity Ideas, Idaho Reads! VISTA

Reading is Fundamental (RIF)-www.RIF.org



## Tips for Teaching High-Frequency Words

### The Importance of Teaching High-Frequency Words

Although there are more than 600,000 words in the English language, only a small number of these appear frequently in the materials we read. In fact, studies have shown that there are only 13 different words that make up 25 percent of the words we read, and there are 100 words that make up 50 percent of the words we read. These words are called high-frequency words.

There are several reasons why students should be explicitly taught high-frequency words. One is that many of these words, such as *the*, *is*, *to* and *are*, do not follow commonly taught phonics rules and cannot be sounded out. The only way a child can read these words is to recognize them by sight. A second reason is that knowing the most commonly used words by sight will make a student a faster and more fluent reader. Students who need to pause and attempt to figure out most of the words they read tends to overload their memory. As a result, their understanding of what is read suffers. A third reason for teaching high-frequency words is that while many of these words alone don't carry much meaning, they do affect the meaning of a sentence and help make it understandable.

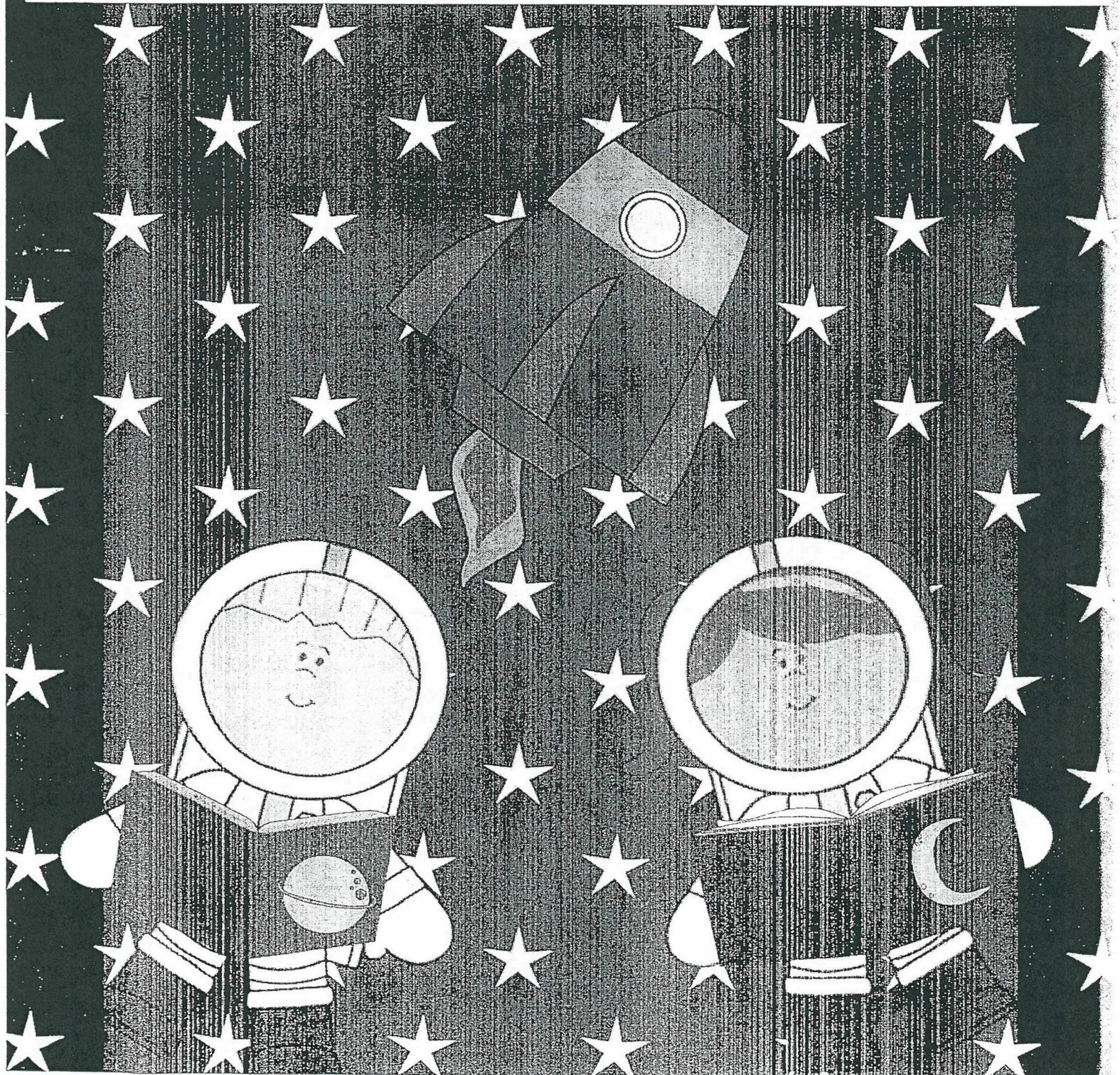
The high-frequency lesson plans are designed to introduce 1 – 4 high-frequency words per lesson. In addition to practicing the words in isolation, students also practice reading the words in the context of an accompanying book. Each book contains high-frequency words focused on in the lesson, as well as high-frequency words learned in previous lessons.

### Tips for Teaching High-Frequency Words

- ❑ Introduce the high-frequency words in a meaningful way. For example, write on a piece of paper a simple sentence using a high-frequency word such as *saw*: *I saw a boat*. Underline the word and discuss its features—the sound it starts with, the number of letters in the word, etc. Next, have the student spell it as you point to each letter, for example, *saw*: *s, a, w*. Then have the student write it in the air with her or his finger or on the palm of her or his hand before writing the word on paper.
- ❑ Some words are commonly confused: *of/for/from*; *was/saw*; *on/no*; *there/then/them/their*; and *when/where/what/with*. As you introduce and teach each word that might be confused, take time to point out differences between the words. For example, say: *The word “saw” starts with /s/. What does the word “was” start with? Come up and show me the word “was.”*
- ❑ Encourage the student to create a personal dictionary in which to add new high-frequency words.
- ❑ Reading-tutors.com provides two sets of flashcards that correspond to the high-frequency word assessments. These flashcards can be utilized in a variety of ways, including: to provide an initial assessment of student high-frequency words students are currently learning in the lessons and to provide a cumulative review of all high-frequency words learned. Spend a few minutes with the student each day practicing the words. Show the cards, one at a time, and have the student read the words as quickly as possible. If the student hesitates on a word, say the word and have him/her repeat it while looking at the card.
- ❑ Although practicing high-frequency words in isolation is beneficial, it is just as important to allow students to practice reading these words in context. Write short phrases or sentences that contain high-frequency words for students to read aloud. If the student hesitates on a word, say the word and have him/her repeat it while looking at the card. Then have the student repeat the entire phrase or sentence aloud.

# Help Your Child Be Among the Stars!

A Parent Guide for Promoting Literacy Skills



Dear Parents,

There is increasing evidence that parental beliefs and attitudes about reading and the opportunities parents provide their children in reading can greatly influence children's reading development. Parents provide practice in the foundational skills that young children need when they begin formal reading instruction in school. Parents can promote their children's literacy learning in many ways. They can involve them in different play activities that increase their child's awareness of language and print. Talking and singing to children during early infancy encourages them to try to imitate the sounds that they hear. Talking with adults is a child's best opportunity for learning new words and ideas. How parents read aloud to their children can significantly affect children's learning experiences and opportunities. When parents combine reading out loud with asking and responding to questions, children increase learning and comprehension. When parents are shown how to become more responsive when reading and "dialogic" (dialoging back and forth about the content) during shared reading, gains in their children's skills have been noted.

### **Reading Must Be Taught**

While acquiring language comes naturally for most children, learning to read does not. It is a skill that must be taught. Children who already know about their world and the purpose of language will be better prepared to learn how to read when they enter school. Parents can help their children prepare by providing a print-rich environment in the home. Magazines, newspapers, and a collection of high-quality children's books provide material that parents can read aloud to their children.

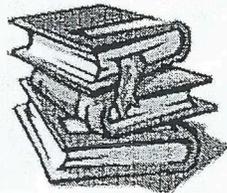
### **Emergent Reading**

As children become more familiar with the stories that are being read to them, they will attempt to pretend to read. This is known as emergent reading. Children are not actually reading from the books, but reciting the stories as they remember them. Encourage this retelling since it promotes the value of reading as a highly desired skill. Certain toys are also useful in promoting literacy skills such as alphabet blocks and magnetic letters that can be manipulated to make words. Children become familiar with the letters of the alphabet and with their shapes and sounds through these activities. Dolls and puppets can be used to act out stories.

### **Using Neighborhood to Foster Skills**

The local neighborhood is a print-rich environment that offers many opportunities to expose children to words, symbols, and logos, which will increase their general knowledge. Supermarkets are particularly good for increasing literacy skills. Parents can have their children assist in creating a shopping list, looking at coupons from flyers and talking about the letters and signs in the store that often are paired with a picture. Parents can also help children make selections from restaurant menus, point out words on signs and read the schedules of buses, subways, and trains. These are just a few of the ways that parents provide the foundation for building their children's literacy skills. Providing print-rich environments, engaging children in meaningful discussions with proving questions, and teaching children about letters and words will better prepare the child to learn how to read when they enter school. Perhaps most important of all is modeling that reading is fun and is part of the everyday activities that the whole family enjoys.

From: <http://www.justreadflorida.com/promote.asp>



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2. Schedule 15 minutes of special time every day to read to your child. Before you read each book, read the title and look at the cover and pictures inside. Ask your child what he/she thinks the book may be about (prediction). After reading the book, review the prediction. Was the prediction right? If not, what happened instead?

3. Plan to go to the school library, public library, or the local bookstore once each week and read a new book together. After reading each book, talk to your child about what happened at the beginning, the middle, and the end of the story.
4. Play rhyming games. Say two words that rhyme (e.g. cat, sat) and ask your child to say a word that rhymes with your words. Take turns. Ask your child to say a word and then you respond with a rhyming word. For example, child says "cat", parent says "hat"; child says "chair", parent says "pair".
5. Take turns thinking of two words that begin with the same sound. Examples: mom, moon; dog, door; fun, fast; paper, pet.
6. Play the "say it fast" game. Say a word, one sound at a time and have your child say the word at a normal rate. For example, you say each sound in the word cat, "/c/ /a/ /t/." Then your child says the word at the normal speed, "cat." Play this game with about five to ten short words (e.g. am, is, it, in, on, sit, pan, sun, top, net, fin) each day.
7. Take every opportunity you can to help increase your child's vocabulary. You can do this by pointing to things and asking the child to tell you what they are, or you can stop and explain the meaning of any words in your reading that the child may not understand. The more you talk to your child, the faster their vocabulary will grow.

#### **First Grade:**

1. Create a special workspace and schedule daily quiet time for your child to do his/her homework. Be sure this is a time you are available to help if needed.
2. Schedule 15 minutes of special time every day to read with your child. Take turns reading a page at a time. Or, read a sentence and then have your child reread that same sentence until you read through the whole book.
3. Plan to go to the school library, public library, or the local bookstore once each week and read a new book together. After each story is read, ask her to retell the story to you. Go back to the story to reread sections if she needs help retelling the story in sequence.
4. Play the "say the word slowly" game. Say a word at normal rate and then have your child say that same word slowly, one sound at a time. For example, say the word, "mat." Then your child will say that same word slowly, one sound at a time, "/m/ /a/ /t/." Play this game using about five to ten short words each day.
5. Fold a piece of paper into three parts. Let your child draw a picture of something he/she did in sequence. Then help your child write one sentence under each picture explaining what he/she did first, next and last.
6. Take turns thinking of two words that end with the same sound. Examples: mom, some; dog, rug; fun, ran; paper, feather.
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## Second Grade:

1. Create a special workspace and schedule daily quiet time for your child to do his/her homework. Be sure this is a time you are available to help if needed.
2. Schedule 15 minutes of special time every day to listen to your child read.
3. Go to the school library, public library, or to the local bookstore once each week and read a new book together. Read the title then look at the cover and pictures inside. Ask your child to predict what the book is about. After reading the book, review the prediction, then ask about the characters, setting, problem and solution.
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6. Pick out a new vocabulary word from one of the books you are reading with your child. Talk about what it means then make up a sentence with the new word. Try to use the word again that week.

## Third Grade:

1. Create a special workspace and schedule daily quiet time for your child to do his/her homework. Be sure this is a time you are available to help if needed.
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3. Go to the school library, public library, or to the local bookstore once each week and read a new book together. After you read each book, ask your child what the main character did or felt like at the end of the story. Ask if he/she has ever felt like the main character in the book. Why or why not?
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5. Highlight or underline words that you can sound out from the day's "junk mail." Ask your child to read these words.
6. Make a simple recipe with your child, allowing him/her to read each direction to you step by step so you'll "know what to do."

### Fourth-Fifth Grades:

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3. Go to the school library, public library, or to the local bookstore once each week and read a new book together. After you read each book, talk about how it is similar to other books you have read together.
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5. Have your child read a book to a younger sibling (or even to a pet), perhaps playing "teacher" and asking the brother or sister 'good' questions as he/she reads.
6. Have your child tell you a new word he has learned every single day. This word could be from a book he/she is reading, something you or the teacher said, or even a conversation that he/she heard at school. Talk about what it means then make up a sentence with the new word. If needed, use the dictionary to figure out what the word means. Play a game where each of you will need to use the word in a sentence at least twice that day. Try to use the word again that week. Maybe add the words to a "my new vocabulary word list" and post it on the refrigerator.



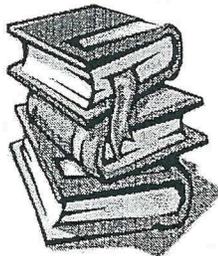
### More Tips for Parents: Reading and Writing

- \* Bake/cook your favorite meal. Have your child read the recipe. Talk about the ingredients. Have your child retell the sequence of ingredients. This is a great time to use specific adjectives that will describe the food you are making.
- \* Play board games together (e.g. Scrabble, Pictionary, Monopoly, Uno, Memory games). Turn one night into Family Game night!
- \* Organize a scavenger hunt where children seek out items that begin with certain letters of the alphabet (Alphabet Hunt).
- \* Can you read 25,000 pages in 80 days? This is called Around the World in 80 Days because it's nearly 25,000 miles around the world. Set a goal for you and your family. How many pages can your family read in 80 days?

- \* Play Bingo games! You can purchase or make bingo games...Alphabet, Picture, Sight Words, Rhyming, Homonym, Synonym, Syllable, Vowel, or Vocabulary Bingo.
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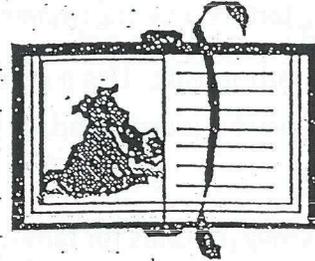
From: A-Z Family Literacy Activity Ideas, Idaho Reads! VISTA

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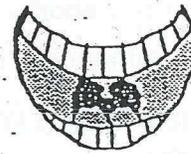


## My Reading Strategies

Look at the pictures.



Get my mouth ready.



Think about what makes sense.



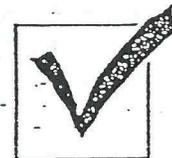
Does it look right?



Find chunks I know.

(S i t)

Reread to check it again.



## Tips for Teaching High-Frequency Words

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There are several reasons why students should be explicitly taught high-frequency words. One is that many of these words, such as *the*, *is*, *to* and *are*, do not follow commonly taught phonics rules and cannot be sounded out. The only way a child can read these words is to recognize them by sight. A second reason is that knowing the most commonly used words by sight will make a student a faster and more fluent reader. Students who need to pause and attempt to figure out most of the words they read tends to overload their memory. As a result, their understanding of what is read suffers. A third reason for teaching high-frequency words is that while many of these words alone don't carry much meaning, they do affect the meaning of a sentence and help make it understandable.

The high-frequency lesson plans are designed to introduce 1 – 4 high-frequency words per lesson. In addition to practicing the words in isolation, students also practice reading the words in the context of an accompanying book. Each book contains high-frequency words focused on in the lesson, as well as high-frequency words learned in previous lessons.

### Tips for Teaching High-Frequency Words

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