

# So You're Parenting a Kindergartener

## Tips to help your child learn to read

Reading is an essential skill for learning in all subjects. The ability to read well leads to success in school and life. As the parent or caregiver, your involvement really helps your child become a confident student and lifelong reader. It's okay to explore the joy of reading together! The series "So You're Parenting..." gives you helpful activities and tips to prepare your child for Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee.



Cuyahoga Heights Public Library,  
Library Snapshot Day

### *What is the Third Grade Reading Guarantee?*

In 2012, the Ohio Legislature passed a bill that says that students who do not reach a passing score on the 3rd grade state reading test will receive additional support in order to advance to the required reading level.

Although it is called the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, your child will be assessed in reading at the beginning of each grade from kindergarten to 3rd grade. If your child is not at the required reading level, your school will tell you about services your child will receive.

There are also many ways you can help your child with reading. If you need more information, see the Family Resources on the Ohio Department of Education's website:

<http://tinyurl.com/ohiotgrg>

## Reading in Kindergarten: Here's What to Expect

Four sets of skills are especially important for beginning readers in kindergarten:

**Print concepts**, which are the basic features of letters and words. Here are some examples:

- Your child will learn that words in English go from left to right and top to bottom.
- Your child will understand that spoken words are related to printed words.
- Your child will recognize and name all the letters of the alphabet in uppercase ("A") and lowercase ("a").

**Phonological awareness**, which is learning and understanding sounds. Here are some examples:

- Your child will recognize and come up with rhyming words, such as "cat," "mat," and "hat."
- Your child will be able to pronounce each sound that makes up a short word, such as the "c" sound, the short "a" sound, and the "t" sound that make up "cat."

**Phonics** (which is connecting sounds with letters) and **word recognition**. Here are some examples:

- Your child will learn to read many common short words, such as "the," "you," and "she," just by looking at them.
- Your child will be able to tell the difference between words that look similar, such as "hat" and "hot," by recognizing the sounds of the different letters.

**Fluency**, which is the ability to understand what is being read, and to read with flow. Your child will be able to read kindergarten level material aloud and to understand what he is reading.

# Activities to do with your child to build reading skills

## Reading on the Go

*Reading can happen anywhere, anytime. You can do simple activities with your child at the grocery store or on a walk around the neighborhood.*

In the **car**, point out **road signs** to your child, read the words, and talk about their meaning.

At the **grocery store**, have your child find his favorite cereal and **look for familiar letters** on the box, or count the number of words on the box.

In a **restaurant**, have your child look at the **pictures on the menu** and find the word(s) that name the food, or have her tell you about the picture.

In an **office**, have your child find **words on door signs**, nametags, or on magazines or books.

On the **sports field**, have your child read the numbers on the back of players' shirts, or in the sports program, look for familiar letters or **find sport-specific words** such as bat, strike, touchdown, and goal.

## Reading for a Purpose

*Reading can happen at home or in your local library, whether for fun or to find information. Here are some reading tips:*

Ask your child about a **favorite subject** - dance, football, animals - and find books about it in your local library or bookstore.

Set a **special reading time every day** - after dinner, before bed - and hold each other to the time.

Ask your child **questions about characters** and events in the story.

As you read, point to the letters from left to right, or have your child **point to the letters** he recognizes.

Read the words aloud, especially in **rhyming books**, and encourage your child to repeat them.

### Community Support for Your Child's Reading

As your child grows, create relationships with supportive community members who know a lot about reading.

- The **public librarian** will help you find enjoyable, easy books and can recommend strategies to help make reading a fun, healthy part of your everyday life.
- The **school librarian** will be your hero, as he or she will recommend great books and fun series that will keep your child involved in reading.

- The **school's PTA** will help you connect with an active network of parents who care about education. Don't be timid about talking with other parents and swapping ideas about age-appropriate reading activities that have worked for them.

Don't let reading slide in the summer! Participate in your public library's summer reading program, or just hang out at the library with your child and enjoy the books and activities that are free for your use.

## Reading on the Screen

*Handheld devices, televisions, and computers can be part of the reading experience for your child with these activities:*

Help your child click the pages of an **e-book** that can be found in the PreK-5 section on the **INFOhio** (<http://www.infohio.org>) website. Contact your child's teacher or school librarian for the password. **Bookflix** and **Early World of Learning** include books that are appropriate for children at all reading levels.

Using your TV, select **closed captioning** and have your child identify words or letters.

Using your phone or tablet, **download apps** or bookmark reading websites so that your child can read anywhere, anytime.

Using your computer, spend time with your child on her **favorite website** and have her point to words that she recognizes, or ask her to read the words aloud.

"So You're Parenting..." is a service of the Ohio Educational Library Media Association (OELMA), the Ohio PTA, INFOhio, and the State Library of Ohio. For more information: <http://www.infohio.org/students/parents>

