

SUPPORTING READING PROGRESS AT HOME: ***Focused activities, tools & behavioral strategies for parents***

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KEY POINTS

Reading, spelling and writing can be tiring for children with dyslexia so...

1. Activities need to feel **MANAGEABLE**
 - You want children to feel a sense of accomplishment, good energy, and success. If they don't feel this, they will not want to do the activities again.

2. The work needs to be given in **SMALL CHUNKS**
 - **Time limit per day on each literacy skill:**
 - Age 5-7 y.o.: 5-10min on activity
 - Age 8-10 y.o.: 10-15min on activity
 - Age 11-13 y.o.: 20-30min on activity
 - Age 14-15 y.o.: 30-45min on activity

 - **Total time per day for Literacy skills (in addition to reading)**
 - Age 5-7 y.o.: 10-30min/day
 - Age 8-10 y.o.: 20-45min/day
 - Age 11-13 y.o.: 40min-1.5hrs/day
 - Age 14-15: 60min-2.25hrs/day

NOTE: You can use an online visual countdown timer for each activity, if this helps your child.

Why is it small chunks of time for each activity? So students feel success, and don't burn out. The consistency and daily practice of literacy skills is what is most important. Think of literacy skills as a muscle, the more you practice, the stronger the muscle gets! It is better to do 5 min/day, than 1hr/week.

3. Use a **CHECKLIST** so children can see what they have accomplished and can check off themselves !

a) Example of checklist for younger children, ages 5-7: Make it visual!

Activity	Have I completed this?
Reading/Read Aloud: (20-30min): Picture of Child Reading a book	
Phonological Awareness: (10min) Picture of an Ear	
Phonics: (10min) Picture of A, B, C	
Writing/ Spelling: (10min) Picture of child writing in a book	

b) Example of checklist for older children, ages 8-10

Activity	Have I completed this?
Reading (30min): Picture of Child Reading a book	
Reading Fluency: (10min)	
Reading Comprehension: (15 min)	
Writing/ Spelling: (15min)	

c) Example of checklist for Middle school, ages 11-13:

Activity	Have I completed this?
Reading (30min): Picture of Child Reading a book	
Reading Fluency: (10min)	
Reading Comprehension: (20-45 min)	
Writing/ Spelling: (20-45min)	

NOTE: You can give a small reward once a student has checked off all the steps for that day. (Ex. For a younger child, a sticker if he/she likes stickers.)

4. Give **POSITIVE FEEDBACK and ENCOURAGEMENT: FIND THE GOOD!**

There is always something positive you can find, no matter how small.

Examples: When a child makes an error, you can say...

- “You did a good job with _____ (the consonants in this word). Let’s look at the _____ (vowel sound) again.”
- “You came up with strong ideas for _____ (reasons for your persuasive letter). Tell me more about _____ (why this first reason is so important?). Good, write a sentence for what you just said.”

NOTE: If a child is stuck, use your judgement...(here is what I would do):

- 1) See if they can find the answer on their own and if they can’t....
- 2) give them the answer, sometimes this is the best so the lesson can continue and you don’t get resistance.

At the end of week, look back and reflect with your child, with encouragement....

For example you can say:

- “What a good week you’ve had, you really spent time on those vowel sounds! Next week it will be easier to read those words.”
- “Your concluding sentence in your persuasive paragraph was so inspiring and well written!”

5. Give **MOVEMENT BREAKS**: Movement breaks help the brain focus. You can do these between literacy activities.

Examples:

- For Younger Child: Ex. Animal Box (pick one): Jump like a kangaroo, leap like a frog, move around like a monkey, etc.
- For Older Child: How many jumping jacks/push ups/sit ups can you do in a minute? How long can you hold a plank? (Use a timer for these).

6. **WHAT IF MY CHILD DOESN'T WANT TO DO THESE ACTIVITIES?**
YOU CAN... Build literacy skills into day-to-day activities.

Examples with a younger child:

- Let’s make a list of all the friends/people we want to zoom with this week. Ask child: What is their name? What sound does their name start with? What letter makes that sound? Child makes a list with just the first letter of each of the people’s names.
- Make an obstacle course and hide letters in the obstacle course, once you come to a letter you need to give the name and sound letter. (This gets them moving too!)

Example with an older child:

- Find something your child is passionate about.
- Have your child write you a letter as to why this is so important.
- Tell your child to give at least 3 reasons.
- For each reason, your child should write 2 elaborating sentences, answering WHY or HOW.
Ex. Your child wants a phone: write you a letter that tries to persuade you to get him/her a phone.

Literacy Activities:

READING:

The most important activity you can do with your child is **READ!**

- Read with your child every day - try to do this when you are in a good 'head space', so you are relaxed and it is a positive experience for your child.
- Set aside a time to do this, it doesn't need to be more than 20-30 min.
- Use 5 finger rule to choose a book for your child (if there are more than 5 words on page that child missed, the book is too hard).
- **Reading Strategies:**
 - **Choral reading** (you read together aloud)
 - **Echo reading** (you read sentence and your child repeats it)
 - **Read and then stop midway in a sentence**, child fills in word or finishes the sentence. Take turns doing this on each page.
 - Ask **comprehension questions**: Factual: Ex. "Where does Little Red Riding Hood live?" Inferential: Ex. "Why do think the gingerbread man was so afraid?"

Resources:

Online Books:

<https://www.uniteforliteracy.com/>

- Provides free digital access to picture books, including a variety of fiction and informational text, for children to read. There is also an option for the text to be narrated.

<https://portal.flyleafpublishing.com/>

- Decodable books online (free)

Digital [decodable readers](#):

- This type of book is recommended for reading practice for children who are still learning to sound out and read simple words.

<https://stories.audible.com/start-listen>

- Read Alouds: Audible (free):

<https://accounts.learninga-z.com/accountsweb/marketing/trial.do?campaign=rkCOVID19Trial>

- Sign up for a free 3 month trial for access to lots of books your child can read or have read to them.

https://improvingliteracy.org/kidzone?fbclid=IwAR19HLTBLfY_t7fadC4gzWGo3J_pbDrBlE2OrwTbEv7il8lndaOmzoIO70

- Offers books to read and books to listen to

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS & PHONEMIC AWARENESS Activities:

- **What is Phonological Awareness?**
 - *Phonological Awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate sounds at the sentence, word, syllable, and phoneme (sound) level.*
- **What are some examples of Phonological Awareness activities?**
 - Rhyming (Ex. sit/mit)
 - Counting the number of words in sentence
 - Counting number of syllables in word (Ex. rab/bit = 2 syllables)
 - Identifying the beginning, middle and ending sound in a word
 - Segmenting a word into its individual sounds (Ex. den = /d/ /e/ /n/ - 3 sounds)
- Many children who struggle with reading also struggle with phonological awareness. This is a prerequisite skill necessary for reading. A child does not need to be able to read or write to do phonological awareness activities. You can do it with the lights off in a room!
- **5-10min/day is enough! Keep these short** to hold your child's interest.

Activities:

- **Rhyming Game:**
 - Give your child two words (ex. "Mat and sat") and ask him/her if the words rhyme. Your child can give a thumbs up or thumbs down.
- **Pound or Jump a Beat (Syllables):**
 - Segment syllables and/or speech sounds. Let's say you want your child to isolate the syllables in the word *beginning*. Pause as you say each syllable—be-gin-ning—and have your child pound their fist on the table or their

lap for each syllable. You can also get your child up and moving by stomping or jumping with each syllable.

- **Guess the Word (Blending/Segmenting):**
 - Tell your child that you will say some sounds with a very brief pause in between. He/she has to guess the word. For example, “Listen to these sounds and tell me the word /r/-/ă/- /b/- /ī/- /t/. What is the word? The word is *rabbit*.”
 - You can switch roles and use the game to help your child practice segmenting. Have your child choose a mystery word and break it into individual phonemes for *you* to guess. For example, if your child picks the word *plate*, he/she would say, “I see a /p/- /l/- /ā/- /t/.” You would then blend the separate sounds together to guess the word.
- **Word Change (Changing initial, ending, middle sound):**
 - (Only move to this skill once you know that your child can blending and segment.) Explain to your child that you are changing sounds in words and he/she must listen carefully and tell you the new word. This can be done with the first, last or middle sound.
 - a. **Initial Sound:** Say “chat.” Now change /ch/ to /s/. What does it say? “sat.”
 - b. **Ending Sound:** Say “slap”. Now change /p/ to /b/. What does it say? “slab.”
 - c. **Middle Sound:** Say “wait.” Now change /ai/ to /ī/. What does it say? “wit.”

(These activities were found on <https://www.childrensdyslexiacenters.org/resources/>)

Resources:

- Phonemic Awareness (free)
<https://www.hegerty.org/download-assessments-and-resources>
 - Download the English Primary E-Learning Lessons
 - Click on “Learn More” at the top of the page to see video demonstrations on how to give the lessons.
- Phonological Awareness Activities: Supports child’s knowledge of sounds which is the main underlying skill of successful reading. (These are free games online)
<https://www.ateachableteacher.com/online-phonemic-awareness-games/>
http://www.professorgarfield.org/parents_teachers/instructions/phonemic.html
<https://www.education.com/games/phonological-awareness/>
- Phonemic Awareness + Phonics Worksheets (free)

Lakeshore learning:

<https://www.lakeshorelearning.com/resources/free-resources/printables>

PHONICS Activities (letters + sounds):

- **Names of letters:**
 - Have cards for each letter of the alphabet. Can your child name the letters?

- **Names and Sounds of letters: MAKING SOUND CARDS!**
 - Children can make their own sound cards:
 - How to make sound cards:
 - Put a letter on front of an index card and a key word on back with a picture of a key word. Your child can draw the key word. (Key word represents the sound of the letter makes.
 - Ex. For the letter C:
 - FRONT of card: letter C
 - BACK of card: picture of a cat. Child then uses sound cards as flash cards and says "C says /k/ as in cat."

- **Sounds of letters: TREASURE HUNT!**
 - Find an object in the house that starts with each letter of the alphabet.
 - Do 5 letters and objects a day, so that chunks are manageable
 - Each day: once child has found 5 objects, parent mixes up 5 objects and 5 letters and child tries to match the object with the letter
 - Can do this activity over several weeks so you are giving time for letters and sounds to solidify.

- **Names + Sounds of Letters: MOVEMENT ACTIVITY!**
 - Make an obstacle course and hide letters in the obstacle course, once you come to a letter you need to give the name and sound letter. (This gets them moving too!)

Resources:

Sound Cards:

- Online: OG Card Deck:
<https://apps.apple.com/us/developer/mayerson-academy/id709418435>
 - This is information about a card deck app to practice letters and sounds. It is only available to download on iPhones or iPads.
- Actual Cards to purchase:

<https://store.heggerty.org/abc-letter-cards/>

Quite nice cards but a little expensive. You can also make your own!

DECODING Activities

- Be patient: When your child is trying to sound out an unfamiliar word, give him or her time to do so. Prompt your child to look closely at the letters in the word and use the strategies they have learned.
- Chunky monkey (older children 10 and up): When your child comes to an unknown word, encourage him or her to break the word into known parts, such as prefixes, suffixes, roots, and base words.

Resources:

Software programs that teach reading skills to children, you need to pay:

- **Lexia Learning:** <https://www.lexiaforhome.com/>
- **Nessy:** <https://www.nessy.com/us/>
- **Reading Horizons:** <https://www.readinghorizons.com/>

FLUENCY Activities

- **Repeated Readings:** Once is not enough! Encourage your child to re-read favorite books and poems. Re-reading helps children build fluency, speed, and accuracy. Re-reading is a one of life's great pleasures.
- **Reading to others:** Have your child read to a younger child; this sets a purpose for reading and encourages your child to read with expression. If a younger friend or sibling is not available, then your child can read into a recording device, to Grandma over the phone, or Facetime or even to a dog. If your child likes theatre, have them be a character and read as if they were a witch, a sorcerer, a fairy, an airline pilot, anything they choose! You could also have them read with an emotion such as happy, sad, angry, jealous, etc.
- **High Frequency Words:** Encourage your child to read high-frequency word lists, such as Fry sight words.

Resources:

Fry Word list: <https://www.k12reader.com/worksheet/fry-words-complete-list/>

READING COMPREHENSION/UNDERSTANDING Activities

- **Dig deeper into the story:**

Ask your child a mixture of factual and higher-level questions about the story you've just read:

- Factual Questions (the what): Ex. "In what city did the story take place? "How many siblings did Emily have?"
- More complex Higher-level Questions (the why and the how): Ex. "Why do you think Charlie did that? What else could he have done? Why do you think the author set the story in New York City?"

- **Retell:**

- It is useful when you ask your child to retell what has happened. This sequencing of key events can be done either at the end of the story or at the end of each chapter.

- **Look at text features**

- With your child, turn the chapter and heading titles into questions. Then, read the text for the answers.

DEVELOPMENT OF ORAL LANGUAGE (precursor to writing)

- **Role playing:** Make up scenarios with your child and play them out. Give yourself names and roles. Young children love doing this.

Vocabulary:

- **Tell Family Stories** (tell stories about You and Your Family when you were Younger) : Children love to hear stories about their family. Talk about a funny thing that happened when you were young and include descriptive words to build vocabulary.
- **Talk, talk, talk!** Talk with your child every day about things going on around the house. Include some interesting words into the conversation, and build on words you've talked about in the past.
- Listen to a book together, a play, watch a movie together and then talk about it!

Resources:

<https://www.prekinders.com/category/literacy/phonological-awareness/>

- Sorting and categorizing skills help develop oral language and are necessary for identifying main ideas and supporting details for reading comprehension and writing composition.

<https://freelanguagestuff.com/category/>

- Lists category skills by ages.

<http://www.speechtx.com/pdf/category.pdf>

- Printable activities for oral language skills

https://busyteacher.org/classroom_activitie-vocabulary/describing_people_and_things/describing_things-worksheets/

- **FREE Describing Things Worksheets:** The ability to describe something is an important aspect of English language learning. This is an important skill needed for oral communication and written composition.

WRITING/SPELLING Activities:

- **Tracing letters** - use lentils, beads, sand in a tray while saying name of letter. This is a multisensory activity that young children love.
- Use **thick pencil**, or thick marker when tracing letters on paper (younger students)
- **Writing Toolbox** (ages 7-10): Fill a box with drawing and writing materials. Find ways for your child to write, for example writing a shopping list, thank you notes, or birthday cards.
- **Parent/Child Journal** (7-on): Get a notebook and write to your child. Put it under his/her pillow. Encourage your child to write back. Continue to write back and forth to each other regularly. (Yes, even teens like this!)
- **Persuasive Paragraphs** (for older 8yrs-on):
 - Examples of prompts:
 - Do you think children should have more screen time during COVID-19?
 - Would you rather have a Chromebook or an Ipad?
 - Do you think children should wear uniforms to school?
 - Do you think teenagers should have a curfew?
 - At what age should students have their own cell phone and why?

- Use the steps below to break down a writing assignment into manageable chunks:

- **Steps: Use the acronym POWER**

1. **Plan:** Brainstorm (15-20 min)*
2. **Organize** ideas onto graphic organizer (15-20 min)*
3. **Write** draft (20-30 min)
4. **Edit** Using CHOPS (20-30 min) (see below)*
5. **Rewrite/Revise:** Make edits on computer or paper (20min)

* There are templates for these under “Resources” on my website.

To edit work use CHOPS:

- C (capitals): Check beginnings of sentences + proper nouns.
- H (handwriting): If handwritten, is my writing neat?
- O (oral reading): Read the paragraph aloud; do my sentences say what I want them to?
- P (punctuation): Check for commas, periods, etc.
- S (spelling): Have I spell checked?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Basic Reading Skills from the Florida Center for Reading Research:

- Preschool:

https://fcrr.org/resources/resources_vpk.html?fbclid=IwAR1NfcvQqbnMlb7C8Y9D4Nd_RdMX8a YO2_GLFoE-zdzBVxD8dL9FMA1MODQ

- Kindergarten-Grade 1: https://fcrr.org/resources/resources_sca_k-1.html

- Kindergarten-Grade 5:

https://fcrr.org/resources/resources_sca.html?fbclid=IwAR3RGjIWnIYtR4VXyR8vBW6Fr0q1fSW HQD9zmygckjsvNujuYWI64U8Q9cc

Assistive Technology Tools for writing + reading : (very inexpensive)

- **Co:Writer** (speech to text and more): <https://cowriter.com/>
- **Snap&Read** (text to speech and more): <https://snapandread.com/>

Two helpful links to explain these tools:

<https://learningtools.donjohnston.com/elearning/elearning-accommodations-parents-guidehttps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KottpLDwaNI> (Webinar on etools for children with LD)

Multiple Areas of Literacy:

<https://www.nessy.com/us/product/nessy-reading/>

- Click on “free trial” to sign up.

<https://pbskids.org/>

• PBS Kids has great educational media for children ages 2-8, including over 35 apps. You can see descriptions of each app and download them

<https://pbskids.org/apps/>.

<https://teach.starfall.com/>

- Free resources for language/reading and math.

Authors/Actors/Astronauts reading books:

<https://www.romper.com/p/famous-people-reading-childrens-books-is-one-good-thing-during-the-coronavirus-shut-in-22621288>

- Favorite authors and illustrators, from Josh Gad and Mac Barnett to Oge Mora, Annie Barrows, Eva Chen, Sophie Blackall, Rowboat Watkins, and Jan Brett have taken to reading/performing stories online.

https://coolprogeny.com/2020/03/operation-storytime/?fbclid=IwAR3enux7T6DKh_acuvMv1Alm7g0qidoG1I5fGuldVEapKo51HZ5Z7FYLoE

- Children's book authors are now doing virtual storytimes!

<https://growingbookbybook.com/online-literacy-resources/?fbclid=IwAR3DY9avRbJ5zQGYiNofTThQxo8rGWjsRsv35bN0V0-QwfSCc19QcSZfRU>

- Virtual Storytime

https://www.katemessner.com/read-wonder-and-learn-favorite-authors-illustrators-share-resources-for-learning-anywhere-spring-2020/?fbclid=IwAR3H2lgvfdp1wyTwGexbXthrpt_XmubD_XerM38OgAetYMFqkx8-V1Am4Y

- This is a library of resources for kids, families, teachers, and librarians to make sure that reading & learning can happen anywhere this spring.

<https://storytimefromspace.com/books-2/books-approved-for-launch/>

- Astronauts on various missions in space read popular children's books while floating about, and the videos are edited and shared with kids way down on Earth. This is fantastic!

<https://www.youtube.com/studiojjk>

- Jarrett J. Krosoczka—children's author & illustrator; videos on illustrating and him reading/discussing his books

<https://www.storylineonline.net/>

- Stories read by movie stars