

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO RAISING AN AVID READER

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Message From ADEK

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

The love of reading is one of the greatest gifts we can impart to our children. The ability to communicate our ideas and learn from the ideas of others is a critical part of the human experience, and the ability to read will open endless doors for your child.

This month, as the UAE celebrates the National Month of Reading, ADEK has compiled a guide for you based on international research into reading development.

This guide will provide key information and simple strategies that you can use to support the reading journey of children from birth until early adolescence. As you go through this guide, it would be useful to remember that every child has a unique, individual reading journey, and that we can make this journey enjoyable and productive with encouragement and gentle guidance.

We hope that you will find this resource useful in helping your child become an avid reader.

Happy reading!

The ADEK team



Reading Matters

Reading benefits your child in many ways, and these benefits last a lifetime. Here are some ways that reading helps:

- Reading strengthens the brain: A growing body of research indicates that reading activates our brain and increases connectivity between its different parts.
- Reading builds empathy: Research shows that people who read fiction show a greater ability to understand other people's beliefs and feelings, allowing them to build better social relationships.
- 3. Reading builds vocabulary: Children who read books regularly develop a large vocabulary, which is critical to communicating effectively and with impact and can influence many areas of their academic and professional life in the future.
- 4. Reading reduces stress: 30 minutes of leisurely reading are as effective in relieving psychological distress as yoga and laughter.
- 5. Reading improves academic performance: Children who read for enjoyment every day perform better in reading tests at schools. They also build general knowledge which has a positive impact on their learning at school.
- Reading builds imagination and fosters creativity: Reading allows your child to build their imagination by visualizing new worlds, characters and understanding new perspectives.
- Improving reading outcomes leads to better economic opportunities. Global studies have concluded that better readers are more likely to obtain better paying jobs compared to their peers.



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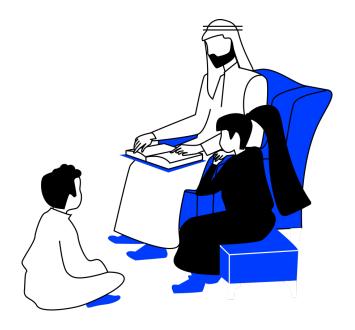
Sources: <u>Healthline</u>, <u>Pearson</u>, <u>Huffington Post</u>

Reading at Home with Your Child Matters

You may wonder: As a parent or caregiver, how much of an impact can I have on my child's reading?

The short answer: A lot! Even newborn babies are receptive to voices and sounds that form the building blocks of language, and eventually, reading. It is never too early to start, and a few minutes a day will go a long way in making your child an avid reader. Here are some ways in which reading helps your family and child:

- 1. Relationship building: Reading helps to develop and strengthen a bond between you and your child. It allows you to spend time together and provides a common interest that you share with one another.
- 2. Increases your child's self-esteem: When you take a few minutes out of a busy day to read to, or with, your child, they will enjoy the undivided attention they receive from you.
- 3. Children read more, and better: The research is conclusive. Children who read at home are better prepared for school, and have greater reading achievement, language comprehension and expressive language.



Source: National Literacy Trust

Building a Culture of Reading in Your Home



- Make books a part of your family life: If children grow up with easy access to books, they will read whenever they have a chance.
- Visit your local library: The Abu Dhabi Children's Library
 (https://culturalfoundation.ae/en/childrenslibrary) has a wide variety of print and digital resources for children of all ages, and a rich reading environment. Your child can get their own library card, which may foster a sense of ownership and interest.
- Be a role model: Children who see adults reading and enjoying reading will try to imitate this behavior and have more positive attitudes towards reading.
- For younger children, point out words everywhere around them: Encourage them to try to read billboards, cereal boxes, grocery lists, anything! This enables the development of context-based reading and bridges the connection between letters and a child's first efforts to read.
- Read with your child every day:
 - Read aloud to your child or listen as he/she reads to you.
 - Keep reading aloud even when your child can read independently.
 - Listen to audiobooks or podcasts during the day to expose your child to new vocabulary.
 - Always ensure you have a book with you when you leave the house.
 You can take the opportunity to read with your child at any time. For example: When you are waiting at the doctor's office or a café.
- Make reading fun:
 - Provide a special reading spot or cozy reading nook in your home.
 Create a special, easily accessible space for their books or build a small home library.
 - Provide your child with a wide variety of reading material. Books, comics, graphic novels and magazines to encourage him/her to read anything of interest.
- Take an interest in what your child is reading: Ask questions about the book and read it together to connect with your child.

Sources: Pearson, Hanover Research

- Reduce distractions: This is true for children and parents. Make time for reading and try to frame reading as a fun activity rather than a less interesting alternative to screen time.
 - One way to do this is to have DEAR time. DEAR stands for Drop Everything And Read. Through DEAR, the whole family can set aside a time in the day where, no matter what each family member is engaged in, they "drop" what they are doing, and all read at the same time.

Choosing What to Read



Encourage your child to read by exposing them to a variety of books in the library, bookshop and online. You can help your child to engage with books and build their reading skills in the following ways:

- Remember that children's reading interest and imagination may be caught by specific topics or books. Encourage them to engage with those as they'll naturally develop a love of reading through them. Do not show disapproval if your child wants to re-read their favorites.
- Many websites, such as <u>Love Reading for Kids</u>, have recommended reading lists by age and topic. You can look through these lists to find ideas about good books to introduce to your child.
- Alternatively, ask your child's teacher or school librarian for advice and recommendations.
- Another way of selecting books at your child's reading proficiency is through using "leveled books". A levelled book simply means a book that has been evaluated by experts and declared to be appropriate for a specific age group or reading ability. Many websites, such as Reading A-Z, Love Reading, Scholastic, Oxford OWL, Cengage etc., provide suggestions for books based on reading levels, age or grade level.
- For older children, typically, you would expect a child to read a book with 90-95% accuracy if they want to read it independently.
 - Use the "Rule of Five" with older children. Ask them to read the first couple of pages of a book, and for every word they are unable to read, they should put a finger up. If they get to five fingers by the end of the first or second page, the book may be too difficult for them to read independently. You can support them by reading aloud with them or helping them read difficult words.

Source: Pearson



SUPPORTING READING FOR CHILDREN AT DIFFERENT AGES

How Do Children Learn to Read?

- Ohildren develop oral language before they learn to read: Before they begin to understand and interpret words or text on paper, children already understand thousands of spoken words, and also speak several words. Oral language (speaking and listening) helps set the stage for future reading.
- Before children formally begin reading, they often "pretend" to read. This means that they can recognize signs and stories previously read to them on a page and can therefore point them out and exhibit an understanding of the content.
- As they grow up, children build on their existing oral language skills by learning about the relationship between letters and sounds. At this stage, they typically begin using this knowledge of letter sounds to read simple words and make sense of what they read. This is not a naturally acquired skill, and generally happens through direct instruction of phonics1 at school or any other learning setting.
- Next, children begin to read easy, familiar texts through decoding, i.e., using their knowledge of phonics to enunciate words, and through contextual clues in the text, and by recognizing words that occur frequently in the text but may not be read through decoding.
- With sustained practice and reading opportunities, young readers achieve **fluency**, i.e., the ability to read with speed, accuracy and appropriate expression.
- As children move to more complex texts and books, vocabulary is an essential component of their ability to read. Knowing words and their meaning allows children to quickly recognize words in context and comprehend texts.
- Finally, comprehension involves constructing meaning that is reasonable and accurate by connecting what has been read to what the reader already knows. Comprehension occurs at all ages for children: Even the youngest "readers" comprehend by looking at images in a book or contextual cues in their environment.
- While these skills build upon each other, they are not exclusive for different ages or stages. For example: Fluent readers also decode complex words using their knowledge of phonics, and emergent readers also comprehend and build their vocabulary even if they are not "reading" words.

^{1:} For a brief explanation of Phonics, see page 25 Source: Chall's Stages of Reading Development

Supporting Reading

For Babies (0 - 18 Months) >>>>>>>>>>

THINGS TO KNOW

Oral language is the building block for reading. The first steps in helping your child become a happy and confident reader are to help develop their language in the early stages of their life.

Babies begin learning language by hearing your voice and your response to their sounds, smiles and expressions.

TYPICALLY, YOUR CHILD AT THIS STAGE WILL...

- Use his/her voice to express themselves. For example: Laughing, crying.
- Imitate speech by making simple sounds.
- Look at books.
- Begin saying some simple or self-made words.
- Understand several simple phrases.
- Beyond one year, can say one or more words.
- Enjoy looking at books and other printed material with familiar people.
- Handle books with interest and manipulate them.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT

Talk to your baby: Repeat nursery rhymes, sing songs, describe things to them as you go about your day. This includes Self-talk - narrating your own actions as you do them-, for example, Mommy's brushing your hair, brush, brush brush and parallel-talk -narrating what your child is doing-, for example, Oh, you have a truck! A yellow truck! Let's make it go! Vroom!.



Note: Children develop at their own rates, and in their own ways. The development statements in this guide are only indicative.

Source: Raising Strong Readers, Harvard Usable Knowledge



- Encourage your baby's sounds: Gurgles, babbles and coos are early attempts at speech. Encourage them by responding to them when they make these noises.
- Get baby-friendly books: Books with bright illustrations are easier for young babies to see and attract their attention. Look for books made of cloth, soft plastic, or hard cardboard that babies can touch and manipulate.
- Read to your baby: As part of a sleeping routine or during playtime, hold your baby and read one of their books to them. They will associate the soothing feeling of being held and hearing your voice with reading.

For Toddlers (18 Months - 3 Years) >>>>>>

THINGS TO KNOW

Toddlers are usually quite active and enjoy movement. You can encourage language development by talking to them, introducing new words, and encouraging them to speak. You can also spark their interest in books and reading by incorporating movement and playful activities into reading activities.



TYPICALLY, YOUR CHILD AT THIS STAGE WILL...

- Say common rhymes (bat-cat-sat), imitate the tone and sounds of adults speaking.
- Enjoy listening to predictable, familiar books and join in when it is time to say a simple word or phrase that gets repeated in the story.
- Have some favorite stories, songs or rhymes.

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Source: Raising Strong Readers, Harvard Usable Knowledge

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT

- Talk to your toddler: See tips about self-talk and parallel talk on page 10 to learn more.
- Allow your child to move: Your toddler may not sit still to have a book read to them. Allow him/her to move around, act out stories or jump or skip as you read.
- Encourage your toddler to hold the book, turn the pages and point to pictures on the pages.
- Choose engaging books:
 - Books about animals or machines naturally invite making sounds or movement.
 - Books with various textures and sounds or music may also help engage your toddler.
 - Toddlers may also relate to books about toddlers and their daily activities: Dressing, eating, napping and playing.
 - Find books that indulge their interest such as toy cars, elephants for example, and re-read stories and books many times to help increase their attention span.
- Encourage play that involves communication: Ask toddlers to name objects and describe things. For example: Set up a zoo with their stuffed toys.
- As you read repetitive passages or phrases in the book, encourage your child to read these familiar parts along with you.
- Read a little bit, several times a day: If your child isn't enjoying reading, try changing the book or time of reading. At this stage, the focus should be on creating positive reading experiences and not on 'finishing'.
- Ask questions about what they see in their books, or while they are playing, and listen to their thoughts and opinions. Do not worry about "correct" answers. Focus on giving them opportunities to speak and think.



Note: Children develop at their own rates, and in their own ways. The development statements in this guide are only indicative.

Source: <u>Raising Strong Readers, Harvard Usable Knowledge</u>

For Pre-schoolers (3 - 5 Years) >>>>>>>

THINGS TO KNOW

Becoming familiar with more words at a young age helps children become readers for life. At this stage, reading is also an important tool to introduce them to features of print and writing. This helps prepare them for writing at school.

TYPICALLY, YOUR CHILD AT THIS STAGE WILL...

- Identify words that rhyme or have the same beginning sound.
- Hold a book the right side up, turn pages, and understand the direction in which to read (depending on the script/language).
- Show interest in illustrations and print in both books and his/her environment.
- Look at books independently.
- Make predictions about a story based on their knowledge or scanning the images.

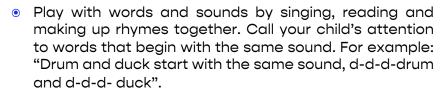
HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT

- Point out print everywhere: Point out words and signs they see around them. Ask your child to identify familiar letters, numbers or words that they see on a billboard, or a menu.
- Talk about writing as you read: Point out how words in their books are separated by spaces, and how we read from left to right (English) and right to left (Arabic) and top to bottom.
- Give everything a name: Build your child's vocabulary by teaching them interesting words. For example: "Look at the train. See the place where the smoke is coming out of? It's called a chimney. Have you seen chimneys anywhere else?"



Note: Children develop at their own rates, and in their own ways. The development statements in this guide are only indicative.

Source: Raising Strong Readers, Harvard Usable Knowledge





- At this stage, refrain from teaching children the "names" of letters. Instead, focus on the sound of letters. For example: Instead of saying "snake begins with the letter "S", say "what sound does snake start with? S-s-s-s".
- Ask your child to look at the pictures on the page to help them decode the words using contextual clues.
 Ask your child to retell a story by using the pictures.
- Ask questions as you read: Again, the objective here is not to "finish" a particular book or chapter, but to have your child engage with the characters or objects, relate them to things he/she has seen or experienced.

THINGS TO KNOW

Positive reading experiences encourage more reading. The more children read, the better they'll get at it. Give your child opportunities to read aloud and practice. Focus on the ultimate goal of reading: Understanding and responding to the text.

TYPICALLY, YOUR CHILD AT THIS STAGE WILL...

- Have strong phonics knowledge (see page 25) and be developing comprehension skills.
- Be learning to read complex words using phonics.

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Sources: Raising Strong Readers, Harvard Usable Knowledge, Understood.org, Oxford Owl

- Read words and simple sentences and make predictions while reading, using knowledge, pictures and text in context.
- Keep increasing the number of words he/she can recognize by sight.
- Connect what he/she is reading to personal experiences and other books he/she has read.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT

- Read and re-read: Encourage your child to re-read favorite books and poems. This allows him/her to read more quickly and accurately by recognizing sight words and re-reading familiar words in the text.
- Create a relationship between screen-time and reading: Help him/her choose videos/programs that build new knowledge. If he/she develops interest in a topic, try to see if you can find him/her books about
- Dig deeper into stories: Ask questions that enables your child to think about the book in more depth. Instead of asking questions like "What color is the hen?", try asking questions that begin with "how" and "why". For example, ask "Why do you think the hen left the farm?".
- Talk about pictures, too: Do not limit yourself to the text in a book. Encourage your child to use the pictures to understand the text and talk about what is happening in the images.
- Keep practicing phonics: As you read, if your child gets "stuck" on a word, try to ask him/her to sound it out first, by saying the letter sounds and blending them together. If he/she is really stuck, then it's best to tell him/her the word and move on.
- When your child comes across a new word while reading, talk together about what the word might mean. Encourage your child to use the other words and sentences around the new word to try to predict

the meaning. Talk about other ways you could use the word.

Note: Children develop at their own rates, and in their own ways. The development statements in this guide are only indicative.

Sources: Raising Strong Readers, Harvard Usable Knowledge, Understood.org, Oxford Owl





For 8 - 11 Year Olds >>>>>>>>>>>>>

THINGS TO KNOW

The words we use in conversation are different from the words that children are exposed to in academic texts. To succeed in reading at school, children need exposure to this academic language.

TYPICALLY, YOUR CHILD AT THIS STAGE WILL...

- Develop into an increasingly fluent and independent reader. While the focus at this stage is comprehension, your child may still use their phonics skills to tackle new words.
- Use his/her knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes to work out the meaning of words.
- Make inferences ("read between the lines") by using clues from the text and prior knowledge.
- Comprehend a variety of age-appropriate texts and discuss their opinions and thoughts about the content with others.

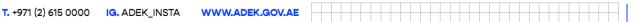


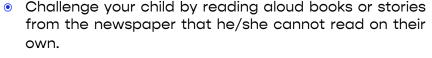
HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT

- Listen to your child reading: At this age, your child may start to prefer reading independently. To give them confidence and support their reading ability, you can take the role of a listener, and help your child with unfamiliar words, as well as talk about the book to help with comprehension.
- Hang maps, word-filled posters, or other schoolwork he/she has completed around the house to expose him/her to more words and to show that you value their effort.

Note: Children develop at their own rates, and in their own ways. The development statements in this guide are only indicative.

Sources: Raising Strong Readers, Harvard Usable Knowledge, Oxford Owl





- Introduce your child to new topics and genres in reading to expand their exposure to real-world texts. Your child may enjoy series of books, books by the same author, as well as books in which they can relate to and follow the characters.
- Keep materials around your house that your child enjoys reading, such as child-friendly magazines, or materials about his/her hobbies.
- Encourage your child to jot down words he/she may not understand as they read. After reading, encourage your child to look up the words in a dictionary and talk to you about what the words mean.
- As your child reads more difficult books, there might be times when he/she struggles and may not want to continue. You can help them through this by reading together.
- Speak to your child's teacher to understand how you can best support his/her reading at home.



THINGS TO KNOW

Children may develop interests in electronic devices, sports or other hobbies during this stage. Finding material that captures their interest can help support their transition to becoming an avid reader.

Vocabulary growth is critical to preparing children for the complex reading level of high-school textbooks.

Your child may also need extra support over time as reading requirements become more demanding.

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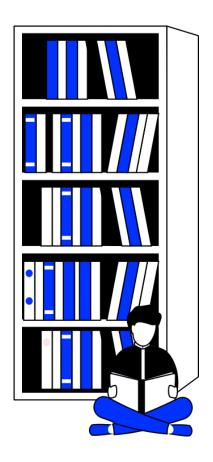
Note: Children develop at their own rates, and in their own ways. The development statements in this guide are only indicative.

Sources: Raising Strong Readers, Harvard Usable Knowledge, Adolescent Literacy



TYPICALLY, YOUR CHILD AT THIS STAGE WILL...

- Keep expanding their vocabulary and read more complex texts.
- Determine themes of text and compare points of views and ideas from different books on the same topic.
- Discuss how new information builds on his/her current knowledge.
- Use evidence from the text to support analysis.
- Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate ideas from the text.



HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT

- Talk to your child about what is in the news, or what is happening at school or your workplace.
- If your teen is a less engaged reader, your goal should be to prevent him/her from shutting down about reading altogether. Do not criticize his/her book choices, especially if they do not align with your own. Allow your child to read what he/she likes: magazines, comic books, blogs, books about games or TV series, etc.
- Connect reading to your teen's passion: For example,
 If your child wants to work with animals, show them
 how important reading will be to study veterinary
 science, or expose them to increasingly complex
 materials related to the topic.
- Provide reading opportunities not limited to school: As school reading becomes linked to exam pressures, teens can begin to see reading as less fun than it used to be. Encourage your child to read materials unrelated to school to support the joy of reading.
- Set an example: Let your child see you reading for pleasure.

Note: Children develop at their own rates, and in their own ways. The development statements in this guide are only indicative.

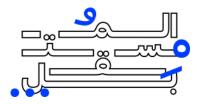
Sources: Raising Strong Readers, Harvard Usable Knowledge, Adolescent Literacy



SUPPORTING CHILDREN WHO STRUGGLE WITH READING

Supporting Children Who Struggle with Reading

- Remember that children develop at different rates, and if your child finds reading challenging, it is not necessarily an indication of special needs.
- From time to time, your child may find reading difficult. While this productive struggle is a sign of effort, reading shouldn't cause anxiety. Support and encouragement from home and school goes a long way in helping children overcome anxiety about reading.
- Children may find reading difficult for a range of reasons. However, if your child experiences persistent reading difficulties, you may consider the following possibilities:
 - Difficulties with reading can occur in children who begin talking later than their peers or who have difficulty pronouncing certain words or sounds.
 - A sensory impairment may be presenting an issue, and therefore getting your child's hearing and vision checked might be worthwhile.
 - Children with difficulty maintaining attention and concentration can find reading difficult.
- Some areas to look out for when your child is reading are:
 - Difficulty spotting rhyming patterns.
 - Missing words out in a sentence.
 - Difficulty in learning the alphabet, recognizing letters or numbers.
 - Maintaining concentration.
 - Forgetting what they've read.
 - Difficulty following verbal instructions.
- If you feel your child is struggling to read and this is causing increased anxiety, it is worth raising your concerns with your child's teacher. Professionals in your child's school may also provide advice and interventions to support your child.



If your child already has a diagnosis of an additional need that may challenge their reading ability, it may be worthwhile considering what accommodations you can make to support him/her. These include:

- Changing the font size and font style of the text or providing a colored overlay as described here.
- Reading with your child, reading at their pace and supporting their acquisition of new vocabulary.
- Using a reading ruler or guide to help your child maintain their place in the text.
- Using read aloud software.
- Reading for shorter intervals with greater frequency.
- Providing a reading environment that is comfortable for your child, with reduced distractions or background noise.
- Choosing books with plenty of visuals/pictures that support your child's comprehension and can be used to explore his/her understanding.
- Looking for 'high/low' books high interest content with lower level of challenge. These will engage readers who struggle to read at an age-appropriate level. Some examples of high/low books can be found here.

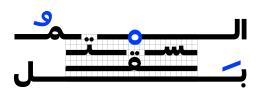




STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING EMERGING READERS

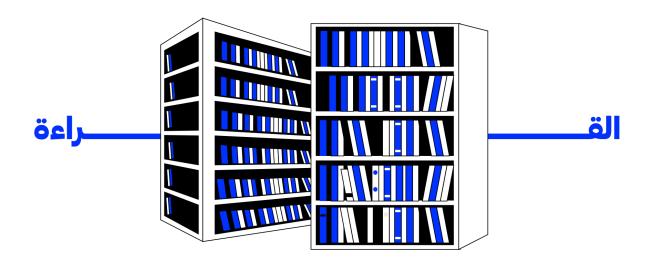
How to Read to, or With Your Emerging Reader

- Depending on the purpose and the complexity of the book, there are different ways in which you can read to, or with your child, such as:
 - Reading aloud, usually used for younger children, or when reading a book that is significantly above your child's reading level. In a readaloud, the parent/caregiver usually reads all or most of the text, and models skilled reading behavior and enjoyment, while the child listens and observes.
 - Shared reading, when the parent/caregiver introduces the text and reads aloud once. As the child becomes more familiar with the text, they assume more control, particularly at repetitive sections or when rhyme and rhythm are present.
 - Guided reading, where the child takes the lead in reading the text while the parent/caregiver listens and helps as needed. This is often used when the child can comfortably read a large portion of the text independently.
- The best way to read is to read interactively, by asking questions and discussing the book so that children can comprehend the text and develop a deeper connection to it.
- Irrespective of how you read to your child, here are some things you can do before, during, and after reading to help their comprehension:
 - **Before:** Your goal is to help your child understand the purpose of what he/she is about to read. Look at the book's cover: Ask questions such as: "Where/What is the title of the book?", "Who is the author?", "Do you know any other books that were written by this author?" "What do you think this book might be about? Why? Can you make some predictions?" Guide your child through the pages, discuss the pictures, and brainstorm what might happen in the story. Talk about any personal experiences your child may have that relate to the story.



Sources: Learning at the Primary Pond, Reading Rockets, Victoria State Government

- **During:** Your goal is to help your child be an active reader. Talk about what's happening as you read. Stop and discuss any interesting or tricky vocabulary words. Talk about any surprising or sad passages and help them visualize parts of the story. Ask your child questions such as, "What's happening here? What do you think will happen next?" If your child seems unsure, stop, go back and re-read if necessary. Discuss any confusing parts. For young children, you can also draw attention to print in the book. You can help them notice things such as the author, the illustrator, the direction of reading, etc. For example, you can say "this is the top of the page. This is where I'll begin reading" to help him/her understand that we read top to bottom. As another example, you can point to a speech bubble to show that these are the words spoken by the character.
- After: Your goal is to help your child reflect on what he/she has read. Summarize and share your favorite part of the book. Have your child rate the book on a scale from 1 to 10 and say why. Have your child reread their favorite part or act it out.
- <u>This video</u> from Raising Readers provides an example of how you can use these strategies as you read with your young child.



Source: Reading Rockets, Child Development

A Simple Introduction to Phonics

We encourage you to reach out to your child's school to learn more about their phonics program and how you can best support your child.

However, below is a quick and simplified introduction to phonics for parents. This introduction is not comprehensive, and we encourage you to seek advice from your child's teacher to learn how to best support his/her reading.

In simple terms, with phonics, children are taught to read by:

- Recognizing that individual letters or combination of letters represent sounds. For example: 't' represents the sound /t/ as in ten and the letter combination 'ch' represents the sound /ch/ as in chair, and then learning these sounds.
- 2. "Blending" the sounds of individual letters or letter combinations together to "sound out" words. For example: Reading simple words such as tip, sat, pin by blending the individual letter sounds together to make the whole word.
- 3. Breaking down or "segmenting" words into their individual letters or letter combinations, such as recognizing that the word cat has three sounds: /c/, /a/ and /t/.
- 4. Using blending and segmenting skills to identify and replace beginning and ending sounds in simple words.
- 5. Reading words that do not follow the phonics "rules", such as once, was, have, the, my, are, etc. These are usually called "tricky words", but you may also hear teachers refer to them as "sight" words or "high-frequency words". Over time, children will be able to recognize these words straight away as they read.
- 6. Visit this link for a basic introduction to phonics.

Sources: Phonics Hero, Pearson

The Parent List of Do's and Don'ts for Phonics



Do your research: Find out which phonics system your child is learning at school. Depending on the system used in your child's school, they may learn sounds such as /s/,/a/, /t/, /p/, /i/, /n/ in a non-alphabetical order.

Learn to say the sounds correctly: Watch <u>this video</u> and learn to say the correct sound for each letter or groups of letters. This way, you can reinforce your child's phonics knowledge.

Practice: Give your child multiple opportunities to practice. You can do this through flashcards, playing games where they can look at words and sound out the letters that they see around them. This video introduces you to basic techniques for blending. For more ideas, see the resources page at the end of this guide.

Remember to keep activities light and fun. Children in their early years learn best through play, not through drills. See some activities here for ideas about how to embed phonics-based learning in play.

Pause to allow your child time for reading a word. If they're stuck, help by providing them a clue. For example: "What is the first sound?" rather than reading the complete word.

Source: Pearson



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Do not teach children phonics too early on your own. Let their teacher introduce them to phonics at the appropriate time. Instead, please refer to the previous section to learn how you can help your child's reading development at every age.

When your child is introduced to letter sounds initially, do not say the letter names. This may confuse them and hinder their sounding out/blending skills. For example, when they see 'd', utter the sound /d/ and not /deee/. At a later stage, their teacher will introduce them to the names of the letter as well.

Do not add an /uh/ sound to consonants when saying them out loud. For example, the sound for t is /t/, not /tuh/.

Do not expect young children to be able to read word for word. Sometimes, they will "pretend-read" or tell a story as they read. Allow this, and gradually use the strategies in the previous section to help them read.



Source: Pearson

Helpful Resources

- <u>This</u> article by Edutopia on play-based activities that strengthen your child's reading readiness.
- <u>This</u> website for parents by Reading Rockets that introduces you to key concepts in reading and gives a range of further tips and tricks.
- This article with some suggested educational apps to support your child's reading.
- This article on teaching your child phonics.
- This website that has a catalogue of 2500+ books organized by reading levels.
- <u>Parent Guide</u> to the Song of Sounds method for phonics and <u>this</u> guide to the Jolly Phonics method.
- Reading Rocket's resource page for struggling readers.
- Resources for children and families on the following websites:
 - Reading partners
 - Reading is fundamental
 - Read Write Think
 - RAZ Kids
 - Starfall
- Books and resources in Arabic and other languages:
 - 100 Books in Arabic by IBBY Europe
 - A wide collection of books in 53 languages at Little Linguist
 - International Children's Library book collection
 - Visual storybooks in Arabic in the Abu Dhabi Children's Library
- Arabic-specific literacy resources at:
 - I Read Arabic
 - Nahla Wa Nahil
 - Alef Ba Ta
- Visit the Abu Dhabi Children's Library:
 - See the online collection <u>here</u>
 - Or Plan a Visit

