

READING IS IMPORTANT

- Reading is fundamental to learning and is woven into the broader definition of literacy—the ability to read, write, understand, and communicate information and ideas.
- Educators often say: children first learn to read, then they use reading to learn. So, how well children read affects how well they do with the rest of their schooling and after they finish school.
- Reading is a vital tool for success in American society.
- Children are expected to come to school with basic skills that teachers can build on. These basic skills for reading are learned at home.
- Unfortunately, far too many Latino children are coming to school (entering kindergarten) without these basic pre-reading skills. It is hard for them to catch up, so they end up struggling with reading often throughout their education.



GETTING READY TO READ

- Children begin learning how to communicate the day they are born. They experiment with communication through sounds, language and symbols.
- Babies listen to sounds around them and make sounds to communicate their needs.
- When babies smile, coo, point and babble, and family members respond to them, they are practicing the basics of communication.
- As parents, family members and caregivers talk, sing, tell stories, and read to babies and young children, they help them begin to make sense of the different sounds of language.
- This helps them learn to talk and respond to talk. As they get older, this progresses to an understanding of words and the different meanings of words and using language to communicate.
- When children are very young, they understand that print (symbols) has a message, and they make attempts to read and write.
- It is important for families to read aloud to them often, to help them recognize print (words, letters, printed material) in their surroundings, and to provide them with opportunities to play with reading and writing.
- All of these basic developments should happen from birth to age four. That is when children's brains are most rapidly developing. These are important years in children's early learning lives.



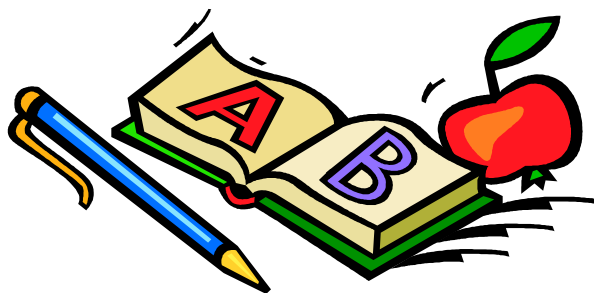
BASIC SKILLS FOR READING

The process of learning how to read is a lengthy one and it starts early in life, as soon as children are born.

The following are some of the early literacy skills your child will need to have in order to read. You are probably already doing things with your children to support these skills.

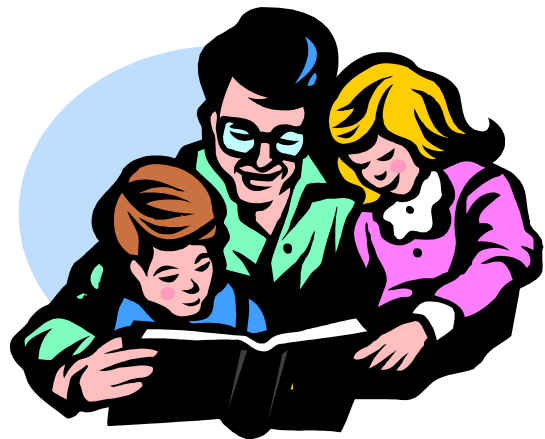
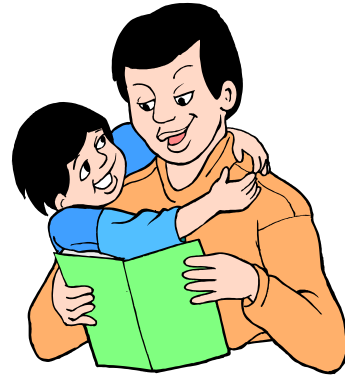
- By “**oral language**” we mean talking and listening. Children who hear a lot of talk and who are encouraged to talk and make “talking sounds” from the earliest age will likely make good readers.
- Some words rhyme or begin with sounds or have parts called syllables. Noticing and understanding these things about the sounds of spoken language is called “**phonological awareness**.”
- Knowing the names and shapes of letters of the alphabet is called “**letter knowledge**.” Children who go to kindergarten already knowing this will have an easier time learning to read.
- How we hold a book, turn pages, and read from left to right are important parts of knowing how to read and write. These are called “**concepts of print**.” The different kinds of printed material we read and how meaning is presented by print are also included.

All of these skills are learned through the everyday activities and interactions that touch children’s lives.



READ ALOUD TIPS

- Get cozy —When reading with your small children, place them on your lap so they can experience the bonding that comes through reading.
- Set the stage — Ask questions to engage children in the story they are about to hear. It can be a question based on the title of the book cover, or some hint about what may be happening in the story that will help younger children anticipate what is to come.
- Ham it up — Reading aloud is a kind of performance, so give different characters different voices. Focus on keeping the children engaged and involved in the story.
- Involve children in the story — Stop from time to time during the story, without interrupting the flow, and ask questions. Ask what they think is going to happen, or why they think the characters did what they did. Invite them to chime in on books with a refrain or repeated phrase.
- Reflect and connect — Help children connect the story to their own lives by thinking and talking about it. Ask children what they think about it. Ask if the ending surprised them. Would they like the story to go differently? Does the story remind them of anyone they know or anything they have ever done? These questions help bring books and reading to life for younger children.
- Books that have pictures and are shorter in length lend themselves well to being read aloud.
- Finish the story — Children like a sense of completion so make sure you read a book that you can finish — and allow children time to talk about the story when you are finished.



FUN THINGS TO DO AT HOME

- Talking and listening to children
- Reading to children
- Singing songs
- Oral storytelling



- Adults being reading role models (children see adults reading or writing)
- Children drawing
- Children playing with blocks with letters on them
- Pointing out print in the environment (pointing to words on a cereal box, computer screen, etc.)
- Attending a library read aloud with a storyteller
- Visiting the library, checking out books
- Attending a reading festival
- Parent and child writing a letter



- Family trip to the grocery market (parent pointing out print)
- Dad fixing the car using a book (pointing out print)
- Grandmother in the kitchen cooking dinner with grandchildren (using recipe book)



WORKSHOP AGENDA

HOW LATINO PARENTS CAN PREPARE THEIR CHILDREN FOR SUCCESS IN READING

1. Introductions
2. Review goals of workshop
 - Increase parents' understanding of pre-literacy skills
 - Recognize and build on family traditions that develop early literacy skills
 - Offer hands-on activities for parents to practice new skills
3. Why is reading so important?
 - How are Latino children doing? Understanding the statistics
 - Why do parents play such an important role?
 - Understanding how children become readers
4. Early literacy skills and what you can do as a parent to support the development of these skills
 - Identify key early literacy skills
 - Discussion of activities you can do to support your child
 - Recognize and build on family traditions
 - Story telling as a means to support early literacy skill development
5. Hands-on activity: Creating your own story
6. Identify at least three activities that parents will commit to doing with their children
7. Questions and Answers
8. Book give away

