

**Austell Elementary School**

**Family Engagement Workshop**

# Helping Your Child Get Ready to Read



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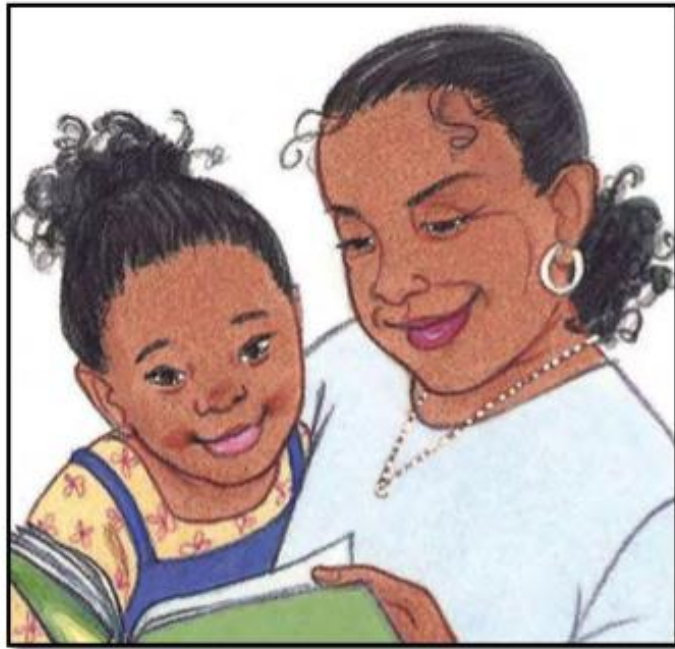
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# Reading to Your Child

## Benefits of Reading to Your Child

1. Develops listening and language skills
2. Helps increase attention span
3. Stimulates imagination and helps develop curiosity and creativity
4. Expands vocabulary
5. Develops an understanding of the printed word
6. Sparks interest in books, stories, and reading



## When to Start Reading to Your Child

- Starting from infancy . . . and on, but it's never too late
- At least once a day
- 20 to 30 minutes a day
- At a regularly scheduled time

If you have to skip a day once in a while, don't worry.

## How to Read to Your Child

1. Sit together in a comfortable, well-lit place.
2. Hold the book so your child can easily see the pictures and words.
3. Before reading, talk about the topic and what the book might be about.
4. Read with expression to make the story come alive.



## After Reading

1. Have a short discussion about the story.
2. Ask open-ended questions about the story or subject of the book. For example, rather than asking something like "Where did John go?" ask "Why do you think John wanted to go to the park?" And rather than "Do you think John was excited to go to the park?" ask "How do you think John felt about going to the park?"
3. Help your child make connections to her world or another story or book. For example, "Do you remember when something like that happened to you?"
4. Be willing to read the same book multiple times.



# Phonemic Awareness

## What Is Phonemic Awareness?

- The ability to hear, identify, and manipulate the individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words
- The knowledge that spoken words can be broken into smaller segments of sounds (phonemes)

## Why Phonemic Awareness?

- It provides the foundation for the learning of letter-sound relationships and phonics.
- It will make the process of learning to read faster and easier for your child.

## Phonemic Skills

1. Counting
2. Rhyming
3. Beginning and ending sounds
4. Blending
5. Segmenting

## Activities to Practice Phonemic Skills

- You can do simple and fun activities with your child to help support each skill.
- It doesn't take any extra time during your day .
- You can do most of these activities anytime and anywhere.
- For example: while helping your child to get dressed, walking the dog, driving the car...

## Counting

### Skill:

The ability to clap the correct number of words in a sentence, syllables in a two-syllable word (*cowboy, carrot*), or sounds in a one-syllable word (*me, jump*).

### Activities:

**For a sentence.** Count the number of words in a sentence, clap while saying them, and then count them again. For example, say "Sentences are made up of words. Here is a sentence: *Boys jump*. This sentence has two words. *Boys* [clap one time] and *jump* [clap one time]. *Boys jump* is two words." Now say a few short sentences, two to five words long, and then expand to longer sentences of six to ten words. Then expand to sentences with multisyllabic words. Remember to clap one time for each word and then count the words.

**For syllables.** Count the number of syllables in a word, clap while saying them, and then count them again. For example, say "Words are made up of parts. Here is a word with one part: *moose* [clap one time while saying the word]. One. Here is a word with two parts: *cowboy* [clap once while saying each syllable]. Two."

**For sounds.** Count the number of sounds in a one-syllable word. For example, say "Words are made up of sounds. The word *me* has two sounds." Repeat the word and stretch the sounds as in *mmmm eeee*. Lift one finger for each sound, so raise one finger for the /m/ sound, and raise the second finger for the /e/ sound. Then say the number two. Continue with words with two, three, and four sounds.

## Rhyming

### Skill:

The ability to create word families with rhyming words, e.g., *all, call, fall, ball*.

### Activities:

**Thumbs Up.** Say "Put up your thumb if these two words rhyme." Say *ball* and *call* and look for thumbs up. Say *ball* and *soccer* and look for thumbs down.

**Rhyming Oops! Wrong Rhyme.** Show your hand and say "This is my *sand*. Oops! Wrong rhyme! This is my \_\_\_\_." Your child offers the word *hand*.

**Rhyming Stand Up!** Create rhyming prompts to complete actions. First, ask your child to say a particular word. Then, provide an action prompt for a word that rhymes with that word (without saying the rhyming word). Your child performs the action and says the rhyming word. For example, you say "Say *pup*." Your child says the word *pup*. Then you say "Now stand \_\_\_\_." Your child stands up and says the word *up*. Another example: "Say *band* (*band*). Now raise your...(*hand*)." Or, "Say *south* (*south*). Now point to your \_\_\_\_" (*mouth*). Or, "Say *low* (*low*). Now find your (*toe*)." Continue with similar prompts for actions or other parts of the body.

## Beginning and Ending Sounds

### Skill:

The ability to determine if two words begin or end with the same sound.

### Activities:

**I Spy!** "I spy something in this room that begins with the /w/ sound (*window*). I spy something in this room that begins with the /p/ sound (*pencil*)."

**I Am Thinking.** "I am thinking of something that begins with the /m/ sound (*mouth*). I am thinking of something that begins with the /t/ sound (*teeth*)."  
Sometimes you may have to give additional clues. For example, "I am thinking of something that begins with the /t/ sound, something you might have to brush in the morning before going to school and at night before going to bed." (*teeth*)

**Creating tongue twisters.** Provide silly sentence-starter prompts that emphasize a beginning sound. Your child says one or more words to end the sentence. For example, say "Sally's silly shoe sank slowly in the \_\_\_\_\_ (*slime, snow, sap*)."



## Blending

### Skill:

The ability to blend adjacent sounds together.

### Activities:

**I Spy!** Say "I spy something in this room that begins with the /r/ sound, then the short /u/ sound, and then the /g/ sound. What is it?" *Rug.*

**I Am Thinking.** Say "I am thinking of something that begins with the /m/ sound, then the short /a/ sound, and then the /p/ sound. What am I thinking of?" If necessary, repeat the sounds /m/, /a/, and /p/. Stretch the sounds, then slowly blend the sounds together, and then blend the word.

**Create some sentences with words that need to be blended.** For example, say a sentence, but just say the sounds of one of the words: "The boy reads a /b/ /oo/ /k/." Then ask "What does the boy read?" Answer: A book.

## Segmenting

### Skill:

The ability to verbally isolate the syllables or sounds in a word.

### Activities:

**First I Heard.** Choose a simple three-sound word. Say "Here is the word *fin*. First I heard /f/, then I heard the short /i/, and then I heard /n/." If necessary, stick out three fingers and point to the first finger when you say the first sound, the second finger when you say the second sound, and the third finger when you say the third sound. Ask your child to say the separate sounds. (Other example words: *lip, men, nap, rod, sun.*) This activity can also be made into a game by providing the individual sounds in order and then asking what the word is.

**Head, Waist, and Knees.** Stand up facing your child. Choose a simple three-sound word, like *lip*. You and your child should touch your heads and say the /l/ sound, touch your waists and say the /i/ sound, and touch your knees and say the /p/ sound. Repeat with other three-sound words.



## From Phonemic Awareness to Phonics

**Phonemic awareness** is an *understanding* of the sounds and patterns in *spoken* language. Children who are phonemically aware can tell that *bat* and *bird* start with the same sound, and that *bat* and *rat* rhyme.

**Phonics** is instruction in the *relationship* between **letters and their respective sounds**. Children who have been taught to read using phonics instruction know that when they sound out and blend together the written letters “b,” “a,” and “t,” they can read the word *bat*.

### Beginning Phonics—Letter Names

#### **Skill:**

Alphabetic knowledge, also known as alphabet recognition, involves knowing the shapes, names, and sounds of letters, and progresses from letter names to shapes to sounds.

#### **Methods:**

**Sing the alphabet song.** Point to the letters while singing.

**Memory game.** Write each letter on two plain three-by-five-inch cards (only one letter on each card), so you have two sets of 26 cards. Shuffle all the cards together, and place them face down. The first player turns over one card and says the letter, then turns over a second card and says the letter. If the cards match, the player takes those cards and continues to play. If they don't match, both cards are turned over, and it's the next player's turn.

**Tic-Tac-Toe.** Play the traditional game, but use other letters instead of “X” and “O.”



## Beginning Phonics—Letter Sounds

### Skill:

The alphabetic principle refers to the systematic relationship between letters and sounds. Children who understand that the (sequence of) letters in written words represents the (sequence of) sounds in spoken words and who know letter-sound correspondences can use this knowledge to decode both familiar and unfamiliar regular words.

### Methods:

**Introducing letter sounds.** Start with /s/, /t/, /m/, /p/, /h/, /a/, and /i/. These letter sounds can be used to create many different words. Teach these letters and sounds first.

**Memory game.** Play the Memory game (see Alphabetic Knowledge), but players say the sound of the letter as well as the letter name. In addition to letters, consider playing with letter combinations and short phonetically decodable words. (It is also a good game for practicing sight words.)

**Writing names.** Teach children how to spell their names. Write the names on pieces of paper. Ask children to trace over their name, first with a finger and then with a pencil or crayon, and then to copy their name onto another piece of paper. Remind children to say the letter sounds as they trace or copy.

**Alphabet Soup.** Cut two-by-two-inch squares from paper or cardboard. Give each child squares equal to the number of letters in his or her name. Children write the letters of their name, with one letter on each square. Place the letters into a pretend pot of soup and stir the soup. Children take turns taking a letter out of the pot. If the letter is in the child's name, that child keeps the letter. If not, he puts the letter back into the pot. Stir again. Play continues until everyone can make their names.

# Reading With Your Child

## What Is Reading Together?

1. You read aloud to your child.
2. Your child reads aloud to you (though when you start, your child may not really be "reading").
3. You talk about what you are reading.



## When to Start Reading Together?

You can start when your child:

1. Knows letter sounds
2. Is starting to sound out words or guess words from picture clues
3. Can recite from memory some words or phrases in his favorite book

## Why Read Together?

- 1. Opportunity for practice and supportive feedback.**  
Reading with your child provides an opportunity for your child to practice and for you to provide helpful, supportive feedback.
- 2. Enjoyable experience, fostering a love of reading.**  
Reading with your child can provide an enjoyable, bonding experience, helping to foster a love of reading. Many children do not view reading as enjoyable; in fact, some find it unpleasant and frustrating. Others feel fearful or insecure about reading. You can change that and create a reading experience that is enjoyable and fun for your child.
- 3. Accelerates development of vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency.**  
As you read together, you will accelerate your child's development in three key areas of reading: vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency.
  - **Vocabulary:** You have the opportunity to talk about new vocabulary words that you or your child reads.
  - **Comprehension:** When you read, you have the opportunity to help your child better comprehend the story or nonfiction material. This increase in comprehension helps your child, as he reads, to connect better with the meaning of what is being read.
  - **Fluency:** As you model reading fluently and with expression, your child will become a more fluent and expressive reader.
- 4. Transition to independent reading.**  
Reading with your child provides an excellent transition to independent reading.

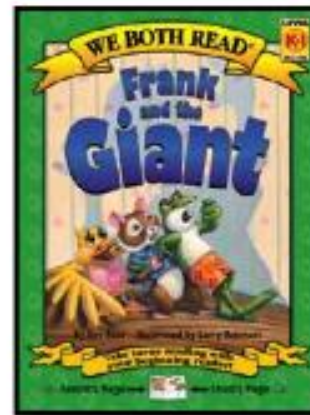
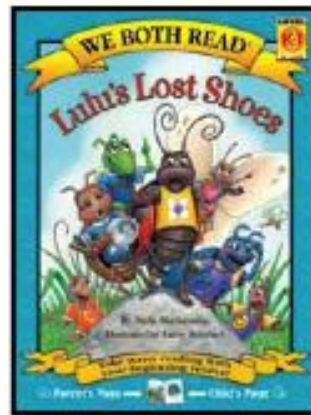
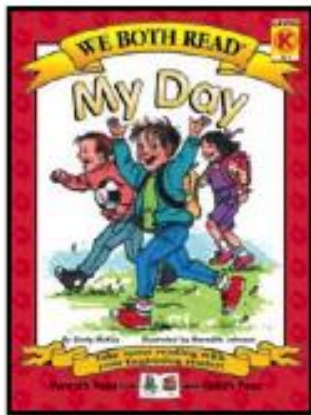
**The bottom line:** Reading together will help your child to read sooner and better—and help develop a love of reading.

## What to Begin Reading Together

1. Choose books you have read so often your child almost has them memorized.
2. Choose books with repetitive text or short, simple sentences.
3. Consider “read together” books that have been specifically designed for reading together, such as the We Both Read series or You Read to Me and I’ll Read to You books.
4. Always choose books that your child is interested in.

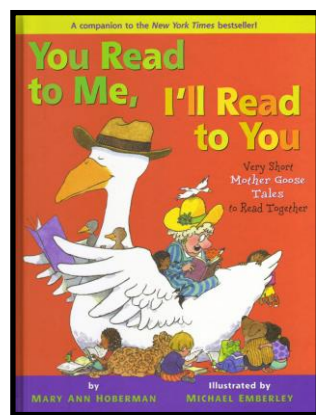
### We Both Read

Published by Treasure Bay



### You Read to Me, I'll Read to You

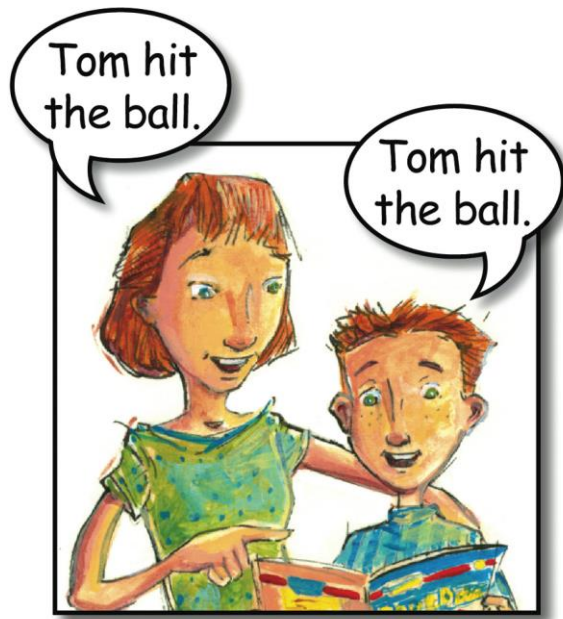
By Mary Ann Hoberman



## Read-Together Formats

### Echo Reading

1. Take turns reading the same text.
2. Read a sentence, making your reading as fluent and expressive as possible.
3. Then ask your child to read the same sentence.
4. Run your finger under the text as each of you reads.
5. Continue until your child starts to read with expression and fluency.



## Shared Reading or Paired Reading

1. Take turns reading aloud, with each of you reading different parts of the text, switching back and forth as you read the book.
2. Agree on signals for switching. For example, say "Now it's your turn" or "Can you read now?" Another option is choosing a hand signal to communicate when it's time to switch, such as a gentle tap.
3. Watch for sentences, phrases, or words that are easy enough for your child to read.
4. Nudge your child to read the next word, sentence, or page. You can say things like "Can you read this word?" or "Would you like to read the next sentence?" or "Would you like to read the next page?"
5. Allow your child to signal your turn to read again.



## While You Are Reading Together

### While *You* Are Reading

1. Read with expression—make the story come alive. Your reading should sound like you are talking or having a conversation about something quite interesting or exciting. Make sure your voice conveys the meaning and important points of emphasis in each sentence.
2. Point out rhyming words.
3. Stop and discuss new vocabulary words.
4. Talk about how you might understand a new word from looking at the surrounding context or from a picture on the page.
5. Ask open-ended questions about the story and questions that do not have a right or wrong answer. For example, ask “Why do you think Jack wants to go to the zoo?” instead of “Where is Jack going?”



### While *Your Child* Is Reading

1. Encourage your child to mimic the way you read to gain fluency.
2. Help your child use context and pictures to figure out unknown words.
3. If your child might be able to sound out a word or starts to sound one out, give some encouragement. Remember that not all words can be sounded out.
4. If your child struggles with a word for five seconds, provide the word.