

Skills Focus For Kindergarten Readiness



1. Practice writing his/her first name

- a. Use a variety of tools such as a Magna Doodle, crayons, pencils and markers. Check that your child is holding the tool correctly.
- b. Cut apart the letters of your child's name (or use magnetic letters) and have him/her put them back in the correct order saying the name of each letter while doing so.
- c. Label your child's door or other objects so his/her name can be seen in print.

2. Practice recognizing and writing the numbers 0 to 10 (or higher)

- a. Read counting books together.
- b. Point out numbers in license plates, in the store, in your home, and all around you.
- c. Use magnetic numbers to have your child practice naming them. Have your child put the numbers of your phone number in order saying each number while doing so.
- d. Practice writing numbers with a variety of materials such as pencils, crayons, markers, sidewalk chalk, etc.

3. Practice counting out loud and practice counting to 25 (or higher)

- a. Have your child count his/her own snacks such as pretzels, goldfish crackers, grapes, etc.
- b. Count the number of stair steps in your house or the number of steps from your car to the store.

4. Practice naming and writing the letters in the alphabet

- a. Read and enjoy alphabet books together.
- b. Help your child recognize letters of the alphabet in everyday life (i.e., restaurants, road signs, store signs, cereal boxes, etc.).

5. Practice book handling skills

- a. Discuss how to open a book from the front cover. Point out the front and back of the book. Discuss how the front is where the story begins and the back is where it ends.
- b. Discuss how to hold a book so it is not upside down and where to start reading.
- c. **Read with your child on a daily basis.**

6. Practice recognizing the eight primary colors

- a. When your child is coloring, ask what colors are used.
- b. Have your child draw a picture and ask him/her to color the objects in certain colors.
- c. Have your child sort objects by color such as clothes, blocks, Skittles, M&Ms, or Fruit Loops while naming the colors.
- d. Discuss colors of things in the world around you such as the sky, the grass, cars, clothing items, etc.

7. Practice naming and drawing the six basic shapes (circle, triangle, square, oval, diamond, rectangle)

- a. Point out objects in your environment that have the basic shapes such as doors, windows, clocks, can tops, kites, etc.
- b. Have your child draw the shapes on chalkboards, papers, etc., then cut them out while naming each shape.

8. Practice personal information such as first name, last name, parents' names, phone number and address

- a. Have your child practice important phone numbers on a play telephone.
- b. Make up a rhyme or song to go along with your phone number that your child can remember. Practice it regularly.

9. Use classroom tools appropriately

- a. Allow your child opportunities to explore using pencils, glue, scissors, markers, crayons, etc.
- b. Discuss rules and set expectations for using the tools (i.e., "crayons are for writing on paper, not the wall" or "you may cut paper when you are sitting at the table" or "if you leave the cap off the marker, it will dry out.")
- c. Remember your child needs time to explore with the tools before performing tasks such as writing letters or cutting on a line.

10. Practice self-help skills

- a. Your child should practice buttoning, snapping, tying and zipping his/her clothes.
- b. Teach your child how and when to blow his/her nose and wash his/her hands.
- c. Your child should be able to go to the bathroom independently.

Tips for Reading to Your Child

1. Read to your child for at least fifteen minutes **each day**. Pick a time when your child wants to listen and when there are no distractions. Bedtime is usually a good time.
2. Sit next to your child and hold the book so that the child can see it.
3. Allow your child to choose some of the books she/he wants you to read aloud.
4. Look at the book cover before reading. Point out the title, author and illustrator.
5. Your child may want to hear the same story over and over again. Repetition builds knowledge in beginning reading. Encourage your child to finish predictable phrases or rhymes.
6. Allow the child to interrupt you and ask questions or comment on the story. Ask what might happen next, or what she/he might do in the same situation; this strengthens thinking skills. Some helpful questions:
 - a. What happened at the beginning, middle, or end of the story?
 - b. What do you think will happen next?
 - c. Why do you think the character did that?
 - d. What would you have done if you were that character?
 - e. What was the best thing about the story?
7. Encourage children in your family or neighborhood to read to each other. This is good for both the reader and the listener.
8. Try to relate stories to things your child has seen on television, in the movies, or in the course of his/her daily life. This will give more meaning to the reading.
9. Draw attention to the pictures as part of the story.
10. Don't stretch your child's attention span to the breaking point when you are reading aloud. Fifteen minutes is about the maximum time for a beginning reader.
11. Poetry is excellent for reading aloud because rhyming is very important in learning to read.
12. Make sure your child sees you as a reader: reading a newspaper, enjoying a good book, reading a catalog, etc.
13. Consider giving books as a present so they become associated with a pleasurable experience and have special meaning.

See you in Kindergarten! ☺