



# Kindergarten to Grade 3

Help Your Child Master Sounds,  
Letters and Smooth Reading

*This parent guide of sample ideas was designed to help you grow your child into a strong reader. You don't have to be a teacher or a reading specialist. But start as early as you can, even before kindergarten begins, and practice often. And don't hold back from making it fun.*

*If you want help or more ideas, visit [Readby4th.org](http://Readby4th.org) and ask your child's teacher to partner directly with you to support your child's reading adventure.*

## Kindergarten

### Sounds

### "Phonological Awareness"

#### CHILD CAN:

- 1 Tell if words rhyme. Bat, mat: YES! Bat, ball: No.
- 2 Say words that rhyme. Hears "hop" and says words like: stop, shop, cop. Hears "day" and says words, like: say, play, sleigh.
- 3 Hear a word and make just the first sound of that word. Hears "pup" and then makes the sound /p/. Hears "hamburger" and makes the sound /h/.
- 4 Hear a word and make just the last sound of that word. Hears "bad" and then makes the sound of /d/. Hears "drum" and then makes the sound of /m/.
- 5 Hear a simple three-letter word, and make just the middle sound. Hears "bad" and then makes the sound of /a/. Hears "hop" and then makes the sound of /o/.

## Grade 1

### Sounds

### "Phonological Awareness"

#### CHILD CAN:

- 1 Hear the number of syllables in a word. One syllable: cat. Two syllables: tiger. Three syllables: elephant.
- 2 Hear the difference between short- and long-vowel sounds. Child can say:
  - ▶ Short "a" vowel sound in cap and the long "a" vowel sound in cape
  - ▶ Short "e" vowel sound in pet and the long "e" vowel sound in meat
  - ▶ Short "i" vowel sound in bit and the long "i" vowel sound in light
  - ▶ Short "o" vowel sound in hop and the long "o" vowel sound in snow
  - ▶ Short "u" vowel sound in up and the long "u" vowel sound in cube
- 3 Put sounds together to make a word. Child can hear:
  - ▶ Three separate sounds, /p/ /i/ /g/, and says "pig."
  - ▶ Three separate sounds, /ch/ /o/ /p/, and says "chop."
  - ▶ Four separate sounds, /s/ /l/ /i/ /p/, and says "slip."
- 4 Make the middle sound in words with three sounds. Hears "lap", and then says the short-vowel sound /a/. Hears "rope" and says the long-vowel sound /o/.

### Letters and Words

### "Phonics"

#### CHILD CAN:

- 1 Recognize and name all of the letters
- 2 Write all of the capital and lower-case letters.
- 3 Read and spell simple three-letter, short-vowel words (by the end of the kindergarten school year). Reads and spells words, like: cat, met, sip, hop, and hug.
- 4 Read and spell simple long-vowel words (by the end of the kindergarten school year). Reads and spells words like: rake, bite, and cute.
- 5 Say the sound each letter makes. Adult points to, or writes, a letter and child makes the sound of the letter (including short and long vowel sounds).
- 6 Read kindergarten-level high-frequency sight words that may not follow rules like: I, the, and was.

- 5 Break apart words with three or four sounds into individual sounds. Hears "ride" and says the sound /r/, then the long-vowel sound /i/, then the sound /d/. Hears "flat" and says the sound /f/, then the sound /l/, then the short-vowel sound /a/, then the sound /t/.

### Letters and Words

### "Phonics"

#### CHILD CAN:

- 1 Read and spell words with digraphs (two letters with one sound), such as: wh, th, sh, ch, ck. Sample words with digraphs: chin, check, thud, thick, ship, which.
- 2 Read and spell words with initial blends (two consonants next to each other that make two sounds), such as: slip, drag, flop, step, trip, grin, stun.
- 3 Read and spell long-vowel words with digraphs and initial blends, such as: plate, chime, spoke, shine, she, cry, and fly.
- 4 Read words with double vowels, such as: rain, meet, meat, read, and heat.
- 5 Read and spell two-syllable words with short-vowel sounds, such as: rabbit, bandit, and suntan.
- 6 Read first-grade-level, high-frequency sight words that may not follow rules like: what, could, and said.

## Grade 2

### Letters and Words

### “Phonics”

#### CHILD CAN:

- 1 Use a final “e” to make the vowel sound long, adding a final “e” to change words, such as: cap/cape; fin/fine; cut/cute; and not/note.
- 2 Read two-syllable words with long vowels, such as: baby, pancake, happy, combine, and refine.
- 3 Read and write common contractions, for example in rewriting the following words as contractions: “can not” to “can’t” and “I have” to “I’ve.”
- 4 Read words with common prefixes (beginning of word) and suffixes (end of word), such as:
  - ▶ Prefixes: re (recycle, replay, remind); dis (dislike, disrupt, disappoint); un (unpack, unhappy, undo); and pre (preheat, preview, premade)
  - ▶ Suffixes: s, es (rabbits, boxes, brushes); ed (jumped, cried, folded); and ing (ringing, reminding, standing)
- 5 Read second-grade-level, high-frequency sight words that may not follow rules like: know, through, and because.

## Grade 3

### Letters and Words

### “Phonics”

#### CHILD CAN:

- 1 Read and understand words with common prefixes (beginning of word) and suffixes (end of word), such as:
  - ▶ Prefixes: im (impossible, impression, immature); mis (mistake, misrepresent, misread) and il (illustrate, illogical).
  - ▶ Suffixes: ly (lovely, happily, gladly); er, or (player, writer, visitor); ion (champion, action, vacation); able (dependable, readable, reasonable); ible (visible, audible); and ment (department, amazement, compartment).
- 2 Read multisyllable words that increase in length, such as:
  - ▶ Compound words: playground, handshake, snowman, and highway.
  - ▶ Two-syllable words: rabbit, tiger, and donkey.
  - ▶ Three-syllable words: misconduct, rectangle, and gentleman.
- 3 Read third-grade-level, high-frequency sight words that may not follow rules like: thought, enough, and together.

## Smooth Reading “Fluency”

### ALL CHILDREN AT EVERY GRADE LEVEL CAN:

- ▶ Find a book that they enjoy and can easily read most (95%) of the words.
- ▶ Practice reading aloud the same book with expression, and saying the words correctly.
- ▶ Read aloud with a speaking voice.
- ▶ Read a lot of books on different topics.
- ▶ Enjoy adults reading books to them.

*For more playful learning ideas and family resources that encourage early literacy, visit [ReadingPromise.org](https://www.readingpromise.org).*



#### YOUR CHILD’S LOVE OF READING BEGINS WITH YOU.

- Team up with teachers. Bring this flyer to your parent meeting.
- Help your child get to school every day on time. Reading is taught in the morning.