



Getting Ready for School

Ideas to try at home with your child



1 Book Reading: Share a book with your child every day.

Reading books together helps your child learn new words and sentences. It also helps them learn to understand and think about other people's experiences. Book reading supports your child's early reading and writing skills too!

Reading the words on the page is great. You can also share books with your child by:

<p>Commenting and waiting</p>	<p>Talk about something on the page e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - what's happening, - how someone is feeling - guess what will happen next! <p>... wait and see what your child says!</p>
<p>Asking questions</p>	<p>Ask questions about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - here and now (e.g. what your child can see on the page or hear in the story) - past or future (e.g. what your child will need to guess or remember) <p>You can tell them the answer</p>
<p>Responding with a little more.</p>	<p>Repeat and add more to what your child says. You can add details of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - where - what - how - why

"Wow – look at that tall tower!"

"Oh dear- the frog looks frustrated!"

"How does the frog feel now?"

"What happened before the tower fell?"

Child: "There's a cat!"

You: There's a cat with a new toy!"



It's also great to help your child:

- Point to words while you read.
- Find familiar letters (focus on the ones in their name)
- Work out where to start reading

Your child **does not** need to know how to read before they start school.



Link to developing early literacy:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vvj2pU_VLS0&t=1s

2 Take time to talk

Children learn by listening and practicing to communicate. Talking with your child will help them to learn new words, to make longer sentences and to share their experiences.

Make time to talk about activities:

- You do together (like going to the shops, playing a game together or even hanging out the washing!)
- You do during the day (like cooking or tidying up the yard)
- Your child does on their own (like playing, watching their favourite TV show or going to the park)



Tips for talking with your child:

You: "You need a uniform for school! Uniforms are special clothes that match everyone else."

Child: "There's a dog!"
You: "There's a dog with a blue collar!"

Child: "I runned to the car!"
You: "Yeah – you ran to the car!"

You: "Do you want to play with trains or play with the blocks?"

Use and define new words	Use lots of different words. Explain what they mean when you're using them. Use words your child knows.
Add more to what they say	Repeat and add more details to your child's talking. Add details of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What it looks like - Where you find it - What it's doing - Why you need it - How it works
Repeat what they say by changing their mistakes	Repeat and fix your child's sentences in play when your child misses a word, or uses a word in the wrong way.
Offer choices	Offer choices in sentences to help your child say more
Practice remembering what happened	Re-tell small things that happen with and to your child. Try to link events together using words like "first" "next" "then" or "last"

Practicing listening and talking skills will support your child's ability to read, write and spell when they get to school!

3

Encourage Independence

It is important for children to have the opportunity to learn independence skills in preparation for kindergarten. Focus on activities the child will have to do on their own at school. These include

- Going to the toilet without help
- Washing their hands
- Getting dressing in the morning
 - Putting on a jumper/jacket with zippers
 - Pulling undies/pants up and down for toileting.
 - Taking shoes on/off (consider Velcro shoes)
- Managing food items your child will have for lunch
 - e.g. opening lunchbox/containers/water bottles, unwrapping sandwich or pulling open chip packaging.
- Establish packing away routines with toys and encourage your child to help with simple tasks around the home to develop responsibility.
- Label your child's belongings for school to help them find and organise their own bag/clothing/pencil case etc.



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Learning to draw and write

Handwriting starts with scribbling and drawing then moves on to forming letters and words. Your child will need to combine different fine motor skills like hand and finger strength, pencil grasp and visual skill to copy and trace.

Provide lots of opportunities for your child to draw at home. This will prepare them for more advance writing at school.

Tips for drawing and writing:

- Build strength in their hand muscles to prepare them for drawing
 - Pinch, roll and squash playdough
 - Squeeze sponges and spray bottles
 - Peg on the clothes line
 - Pinch and peel stickers



Link to video on pencil grasp:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ruf1m26q3vQ>

- Use thick markers or short crayons. This will encourage your child to use their fingertips and thumb to hold the marker/crayon. It is important to develop the correct grasp in preparation for writing.



- Encourage your child to trace simple shapes – this is the foundations of learning how to write letters!
 - top-to-bottom and left-to-right lines → ↓
 - anticlockwise circles ○
 - Intersecting lines e.g. + and X
 - Square or triangle



Try to use fun ways of practicing these shapes e.g. with chalk, shaving cream or paint.

- Practice drawing a person with face, body, arms, legs.
- Help your child recognise and trace their name. Place their name around the house and have them find their name. You may need to help them to trace their name.

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Learning to Cut

At school your child will frequently use scissors for cutting worksheets during class. Now is a good time to practice using scissors and learn to use their two hands together in a coordinated way.

- Encourage your child to use both their hands in play e.g. dominant hand is their 'doing' hand and the other is their 'helping' hand which stabilises. This includes:
 - Threading beads
 - Lego blocks
 - Nuts and bolts
 - Hammer toys



- Teach your child how to hold their scissors correctly. Thumb in the top loop and fingers in the bottom loop.
- Teach your child how to stabilize the paper. Your child may need your help to hold and turn the paper.
- Practice making snips on the paper then progress to long straight lines, squares and then circles.

