

Literacy Parent Handbook

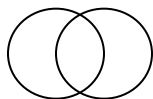
Purpose - to provide parents with resources and strategies to help their students at home with reading and language arts. When parents, teachers, and students are using the same terms and vocabulary, the children are set up for success.

Helpful Hints - As you use this resource guide, here are some helpful hints for you to consider:

- Contact your child's teacher to request books on your child's reading level from the literacy library.
- Use the Aldridge library for books you can read to your child and books your child can read at home and at school.
- Check out the Aldridge Website and your child's teacher's www.mypisd.net webpage for additional resources.
- Create a set homework spot for your child. This special spot could be his/her desk or the kitchen table.
- Keep it quiet. Although some children do well with soft background music, most do their best when televisions are off and other family members are not too loud.
- Ensure that supplies are within reach. Try keeping things like paper, pencils, erasers, crayons, etc. in a box or basket.
- Set a time. Your child should know that homework needs to be done before television or the computer or the phone. Give your child 15-30 minutes to unwind and then homework can begin.
- Monitor progress. Younger children may need help understanding directions. Older children may need time reminders in order to organize their assignments.
- Offer guidance, but don't do the work for your child. Instead, point out small ways to improve the work - "Count how many times you used the word 'good.' Think about other words to use or check the thesaurus."
- Encourage: Let your child know when you see effort and improvement. Don't look for perfection.
- Be consistent. If you set up a homework plan and stick to it, you and your child will be more relaxed. Then homework can be seen for what it's meant to be: a time to practice skills and develop strong study habits.

Reading and Language Terminology

- **Antonym**- a word that has the opposite, or nearly opposite, meaning as another word
- **Author's Purpose**- the reason an author writes a story, to entertain, to inform, or to persuade
- **Author's Point of View**- how the author feels about the written subject
- **Cause and Effect**- one event makes another occur; key words are since, because, therefore, as a result of
- **Compare/Contrast**- how things are alike and different
- **Composition**- any writing on a particular subject (examples: narrative, how-to, persuasive, compare/contrast, expository)
- **Context Clues**- discovering word meaning based on the way the word is used in the sentence and the clues in the sentences around it
- **Drawing a Conclusion**- an answer based on information you learned from reading
- **Elaboration**- taking a main event and writing 3 or more supporting details about this main event
- **Fact**- a statement that is true and can be proven
- **Generalization**- read details in a story and make broad statements about these details
- **Graphic Organizer**- a visual representation used to organize information (Venn Diagram, Word Web, T-Chart, Flow Chart)
- **Inference**- drawing a conclusion or making a generalization based on the text using life experience as a point of reference or clues from the text
- **Main Idea**- what is the most important point an author is trying to make
- **Metaphor**- a comparison that doesn't use "like" or "as"
- **Opinion**- what someone thinks, feels, or believes; cannot be proven true
- **Passage**- a section of a story or small story just read by the student
- **Prefix**- a group of syllables or a word added to the beginning of the base (root) word that alters the meaning of the base word
- **Prewriting**- the thinking and planning stage considered by many the most important part of the writing process
- **Sequence of Events**-the order in which things that happen in a story occur
- **Setting**- the time or place the story occurs
- **Simile**-a comparison using the words "like" or "as"
- **Suffix**- a group of syllables or a word added to the end of the base (root) word that alters the meaning of the base word
- **Supporting Details**-small details that enhance, elaborate, describe, and support the main idea throughout the paragraph or story
- **Summarize**-the most important events that happen in the story including the main idea and most important details
- **Synonym**-words meaning the same thing
- **Venn Diagram**- comparing and contrasting information through the use of a graphic organizer



Word Study - Spelling

Word Study is the ability to decode (read) words by breaking them down into patterns and the ability to encode (spell) words correctly based upon phonics knowledge.

Stages of spelling development, as defined by *Words Their Way*:

- Emergent- ages 0 to 5 years, characterized by random marks or random letters, children who are not yet reading conventionally
- Letter Name Spellers- ages 4 to 7 years, characterized by use of names of letters in combination with letter sound rules, children who are being taught how to read
- Word Within Word Pattern-ages 7 to 10 years, typically have a sight word vocabulary of 200-400 words, and automatic knowledge of letter sounds and short vowels.
- Syllables & Affixes- ages 9 to 14 years, typically spelling most one syllable short and long vowel words correctly.
- Derivational Relations- ages 14 and up, builds on and expands vocabulary, learning to spell most words correctly, developing a deeper understanding of how words work

The following are a few ways you can improve word study and spelling at home:

- Sort words into categories. For example, the focus can be: pattern of the week, number of syllables, prefixes, suffixes, etc. Extend the sort by encouraging your child to add new words that fit the pattern.
- Children can keep track of the sorts and their growing knowledge of phonetic rules by keeping a word study journal. Encourage your child to replicate sorts in this journal and write what he/she knows about the pattern. Refer back to it often.
- Use letter tiles or magnetic letters to spell words.
- Direct your child to write his/her spelling words on index cards, find like patterns and highlight them.
- Have your child go on a word hunt: pick a favorite story and see how many spelling words of the week your child can find, or words with the same pattern.
- Practice putting the words in ABC order.
- Encourage your child to write or tell you a story using their spelling words.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary - encompasses all the words we must know to communicate effectively. Comprehension is greatly affected by vocabulary. You can greatly affect your child's vocabulary by engaging them in meaningful conversations.

- **Contextual Vocabulary** - synonyms, antonyms, definitions, explanations, descriptions, multiple meaning words and figurative language.
- **Structural Vocabulary**- root words, prefixes, suffixes and inflectional endings (-ed, -ing, -es).
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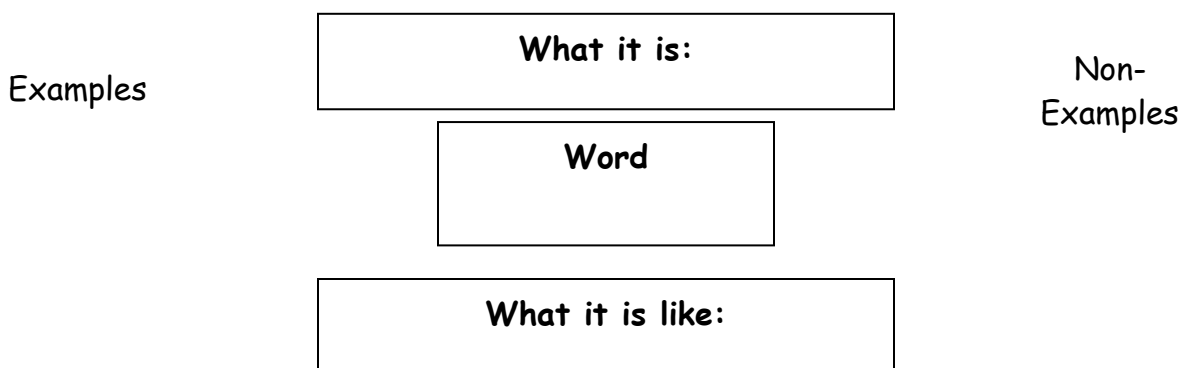
The following are two strategies which support vocabulary development.

Strategies for Inferring Unknown Words

When I come to an unknown word,
I will read to the end of the sentence and ask: Is this important to my understanding of the text?

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|---|--|
| Not Important to My Understanding: | Important to my Understanding: |
| I will read on and continue to ask: "Does this make sense to me?" | First, I will try using the context clues. |
| | Next, I'll look for base words, prefixes or suffixes that I know. |
| | If I still don't know the word, I'll try breaking it down using what I know about phonics. Does it sound familiar? |
| | I will reread to check the meaning. |

Concept Word Map



Sentence:

Comprehension

Comprehension is the ability to understand what you have read, and answer questions about the context of the reading. Instructional reading involves activities that take place in three phases: **before**, **during** and **after** reading. Other comprehension strategies might include the following: making inferences, main idea, and sequencing, exploring higher levels of thinking, such as application of information or synthesis of information. When asking questions, always ask your child to explain his or her thinking, and provide evidence from the text.

The following are ways to improve comprehension at home:

Strategies to develop better understanding of written material:

- Read the text.
- Circle important words.
- Reread the text.
- Look for clues and make inferences.
- Ask yourself what was the main idea of each paragraph and page.
- Prove your answers with text evidence.

How to get "Get the Gist" OR find the Main Idea:

- Decide if the chunk of text is about a *who* or *what*.
- Tell the most important thing about the *who* or *what*.
- Tell the most important idea (main idea) in ten words or less.

Making an Inference:

- What did I read in the text?
- What do I know in my head?
- What are the conclusions I can draw about what I read in the text and what I know from my experience?

Stop to Think: From *Stop to Think Strategies*, developed by Educational Associates

- Predict what you think will happen and tell why.
- Ask a question or say, "I wonder..." and explain your thinking.
- Connect the text to an experience or feeling from your life.
- Define a new word by using clues in the text and what you know.
- Reread to check your understanding.
- Describe the picture the words paint in your mind.
- Retell the important parts in sequence.
- Summarize what the text is mostly about.

Before Reading:

- Set purpose
- Build background knowledge
- Develop vocabulary (discuss new words, make predictions)

During Reading:

- Stop periodically for reactions, comments, questions, predictions

After Reading:

- Discussions help:
 - determine important ideas
 - draw conclusions
 - make inferences
 - focus on story structure
 - focus on themes
 - make connections

Fluency

Fluency refers to reading text with speed, accuracy and proper expression; not hurried reading. It consists of three components: **rate** (speed), **accuracy** (reading words correctly), **expression or prosody**, (which means intonation, stress and pauses). Students develop fluency by reading and rereading words, phrases, or texts at their independent/instructional reading level.

The **minimal** target rate for fluency is:

- 3rd - 100 correct words per minute (CWPM)
- 4th - 120 correct words per minute (CWPM)
- 5th - 135 correct words per minute (CWPM)

The following are strategies to improve fluency at home:

- Timed Reading- Child begins reading from the same point in the text each day, for one minute time, then graph the number of words or sentences they are able to read correctly in that amount of time (the number should increase). As your child becomes more comfortable, discuss the number of correct words per minute. Ask your child to be thoughtful and set a realistic goal to increase the number of correct words read per minute.
- Partner Reading- involves adult and child splitting up the text in chunks (think sentences, paragraphs or pages) and each taking a turn to read aloud. Take the opportunity to retell the sequence of the story. You might want to ask some questions like: "What did you learn?" "What would you do differently if you had been a character in this story?" This can increase fluency and maximize your child's engagement with the text.
- Echo Reading- adult models fluent reading, child reads the same text and attempts to match speed and smoothness (fluency) of adult's reading. Helpful Hint: As the adult, you might want to adjust your pace a bit to make it realistic for the child.
- Choral Reading- child reads along with adult
- Tape-Assisted Reading- child reads along as he/she listens to tape
- Readers' Theatre- Choose books with *Readers Theater* scripts, or check out the following web sites. This incorporates performance.

<http://www.teachervision.com/lesson-plans/lesson-6527.html>

<http://scriptsforschools.com/>

<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/drama.htm#D>

Written Expression

Written Expression is the ability to communicate one's thoughts, feelings and point of view. This can be based upon information acquired through reading, personal experiences or a combination. Writing goes hand in hand with reading. *Good writers tend to be good readers and good readers tend to be good writers.* Writing is a tool which allows us to think about reading and the expression of thoughts or information learned from reading.

Six Traits of Excellent Writing:

- Ideas - main idea or theme of writing
- Organization - plan or pattern the writer chooses
- Voice - a personal stamp on the writer's paper- feeling
- Word Choice - painting a clear picture in reader's mind
- Sentence Fluency - sentences make sense and flow
- Conventions - grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization

Writing Terminology

- Action words- express an act or event.
- Adjectives- modify nouns, add detail.
- Adverbs- modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.
- Conversation- the actual words spoken by a person; dialogue
- Definition- a statement of the meaning of the word.
- Hyperbole- a major exaggeration.
- Personification- giving life like qualities to inanimate objects.
- Superlatives- state descriptions to the highest degree.
- Onomatopoeia-using words that make a sound like pop, buzz, and boom.

The following are some strategies to encourage your child to write at home: (These activities allow children to have an authentic context in which to write, as well as underscoring the importance of writing).

- Your child can keep a journal or create a blog (with parent permission and supervision, of course!)
- Encourage your child to email grandparents or other family members.
- Allow your child to create your family's grocery list.
- Support your child in setting and writing personal and school based goals.
- As you read with your child, both of you write down your thoughts about your reading on sticky notes. Next, pick a stopping point and go back and have a discussion about your thoughts on what you read.