

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.

Primary Literacy Vocabulary

Terms Commonly Used in Primary Grades

Chunk-Find beginning, middle or ending part of word that you know

Blending- Put the letters and sounds in together to read it the way it sounds

Expression- Read the text or passage the way the character would say it

Fluency/Phrasing- Read the text or passage smoothly, the way we speak, while attending to punctuation marks

Onset- all the sounds in a word that come before the first vowel, ex.) -st in stick

Rime (not rhyme) - first vowel in a word and all sounds that follow, ex.) -ick in stick

Sight Words/High Frequency Words- Words that do not follow phonetic rules, ex.) *where, should, was, their, have*

Stretching- Stretch out the sound in a word so the child can hear them

Word Families- Words that share a rime or actually rhyme

Story Elements

Using example of *Three Billy Goats Gruff*

Setting ~ Where and When the story happens?	In a meadow, near a bridge, on a given day.
Characters ~ Animals, people or things that act out the story	Three billy goats named <i>Gruff</i> and a troll
Problem ~ What happens to the characters in a story? The event that they have to confront or solve. Sometimes, there is not a story problem.	The goats <i>Gruff</i> were hungry. They ate all of the grass on the near side of the bridge. They had to cross the troll's bridge in order to find more grass to eat. The troll did not want anyone crossing his bridge.
Solution ~ How is the problem solved?	The goats decided to work together to trick the troll in order to make their way across.
Main Idea ~ What is the story mostly about?	
Summary ~ most important parts of the story in order	

<u>Good Readers...</u> <u>From Educational Associates</u>	<u>Good Writers...</u> <u>From Educational Associates</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use their eyes to make the words match. • use pictures as clues. • get their mouth ready. • think of a chunk or part they know. • ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Does it look right?" ○ "Does it sound right?" ○ "Does it make sense?" • look for hard parts and fix them. • reread from the beginning of the sentence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a beginning capital. • use finger spaces between words. • use end marks. • use complete thoughts to make a sentence. • capitalize special names and places. • make the text and pictures match.

Oral Language Development

Oral language development refers to the ability to speak and communicate effectively. There is a strong and important link between oral language and reading comprehension. Being able to share, compare, question, and discuss demands that your child engages in thinking and activates understanding. Through conversation, successful readers can consider the meaning of a passage, clarify thoughts, and reflect on their perceptions in comparison to the understandings of others. When you engage in conversations about reading, you allow your child to examine their own understanding of what they are reading. In the process, oral language is expanded, elaborated and stretched.

Listening skills are also vital to conversation and reading comprehension. Good listeners: have eye contact with the storyteller, listen carefully, think about parts of the retell without talking out loud, are ready to say something positive about the retell, and save questions for the end.

The following are strategies to develop and improve oral language:

- The best way to increase a child's vocabulary is to read to them often. Reading helps to develop vocabulary, good sentence structure and proper grammar.
- Parents should also take every opportunity to talk with their child. Engage your child in meaningful conversations about experiences or their thoughts. You can also play games and certainly talk with your child about the books he/she is reading.
- Set up a "play date" with another child.
- Activities like team sports or Scouts will give your child another opportunity and audience with which to engage in conversations.

Read Alouds

Read-a-louds are an opportunity for you to read out loud to your child, while modeling good reading strategies, including fluency, expression, and comprehension. Reading aloud to children is said to be the single most important activity for creating the motivation and background knowledge essential for success in reading. This practice involves children in reading for enjoyment and demonstrates reading for a purpose. It increases understanding of written text, vocabulary, and promotes oral language development. Through listening to stories, children begin to build a sense of the structure of written language. They learn how texts are put together in fiction or how to look for information they need in non-fiction texts. Older children develop in-depth knowledge of characterization and complex plots. Children respond to pictures, meaning, and language, during this experience. Reading aloud to your child helps promote many good habits. Most importantly, it fosters a LOVE of reading which creates a foundation for lifelong learning.

The following are strategies for reading alouds at home:

- Only an individual book is needed.
- In selecting books for reading aloud, choose a good balance between fiction and non-fiction. Reading aloud from a variety of books-(easy books, challenging books, one-sitting books, chapter books, mysteries, biographies, rhyming books, poetry, and all kinds of informational books), will help your child realize there are books out there they can't wait to read.
- While you are reading aloud, encourage your child to track the print with his/her eyes.
- Shared reading, when it's appropriate, is another way to expose your child to more challenging text while not making it overwhelming. As the adult, you read a page, and then your child reads a page.
- Remember to stop and ask questions while you're reading to make sure your child understands and is paying attention.
- Ask them to ask the meaning of any words they don't know. Look back in the text and if the text gives them clues to the meaning, instead of just "telling" them what the word means, show them how the text around it gives "clues" to the meaning of the new word.
- Use the thinking/reading icon. While you are reading, encourage your child to hold up the book icon. When you stop periodically to talk about your thoughts regarding what you are reading, have your child switch icons to the thinking icon. This will help your child understand that good readers also stop and think about what they are reading to fully understand.



READING



THINKING

Word Study

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.

Word Study or Spelling is made up of several components-

- Phonological Awareness- Identifying, thinking about or manipulating the individual sounds (phonemes) in words.
- Graphophonemic Knowledge- The recognition of the letters of the alphabet and understanding of sound-symbol relationships-spelling.
- High Frequency Words- words that do not follow typical letter/sound rules, such as: would, their, of, the, was, have

The following are strategies to improve phonemic awareness:

- Ask, "Do these words rhyme?"
 - fun - fan (no) cat-hat
- Which word does not belong?
 - sun, sad, sip, tab (tab)
- How many syllables do you hear in bicycle? = 3 syllables
- What word do you have when you join these sounds together?
 - /str/ /eet/ = street
 - /m/ /a/ /p/ = map
- What's the beginning sound in toe?
- What's the middle sound in big?
- What's the end sound in plane? = /n/
- Which sounds do you hear in the word "play?" = /p/ /l/ /a/
- What word would you have if you added /b/ sound to the beginning of "low?"

The following are strategies to improve graphophonemic knowledge:

- Pre-select specific letters or words, share them with your child, choose a book and encourage your child to go on a Word or Letter Hunt in the text.
- With a set of plastic letters, choose a word family, such as cat. Direct your child to spell the word cat using the letters. Ask your child to spell subsequent words in the family by dictating words such as fat, sat, pat, spat, splat. Ask your child to describe how the word changes each time. Also, choose a word like hat, guide your child to change just the middle sound.
- Using your child's spelling words or words you select from a story, guide your child in sorting the words. Make sure he/she can explain their thinking.

The following are strategies to improve sight word knowledge:

- Using sight words play *Memory* or *Bingo*.
- Direct your child to choose five sight words and build them using plastic letters. Next, have your child write those words on an index card, keep and add to and review often.
- Choose five sight words. Write them on index cards and ask your child to read them. You choose one word to focus on and give your child five clues in order for him/her to "read your mind."

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.

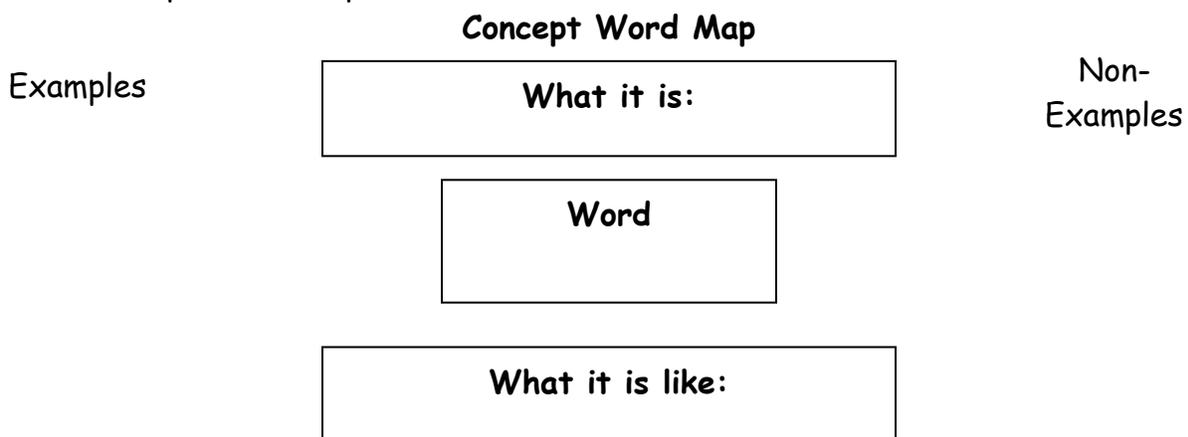
- **Contextual** - synonyms, antonyms, definitions, explanations, descriptions, multiple meaning words and figurative language.
- **Structural** - root words, prefixes, suffixes and inflectional endings

The following are strategies to improve vocabulary at home:

- Talk with your child. Talk about things that are meaningful and engaging. Talk about observations and experiences. When you take the time to do this, it provides a simple, but rich foundation that directly affects reading. Reading daily is one of the best ways to increase vocabulary. Read challenging material and help students look up words they don't know.
- Have students create a vocabulary booklet adding new words that they learn. Students write the word and the definition, and then draw a picture.
- Make up songs, rhymes and chants to help students remember words.
- Play games such as *Scrabble*, *Bingo*, *Boggle* and *Pictionary* using new vocabulary words.
- Create crossword puzzles with new vocabulary words. www.puzzlemaker.com
- Read from a word book frequently such as the Weighty Words Book.
- Make flash cards of new vocabulary words and practice with your student. Next, encourage your child to find a way to sort the words.
 - For example: plane, mushroom, content, wagon, melancholy, root, could be categorized in the following concept sort:

Transportation	Food	Emotion or feeling
plane	mushroom	content
wagon	root (like a carrot)	melancholy

- Use a Concept Word Map to define a word.



Sentence:

Comprehension

Comprehension -the ability to understand what you have read and to answer questions about the context of the reading. Instructional reading involves activities that take place in three phases: **before, during and after** reading a text that is at the student's instructional level. When asking questions, always ask your child to explain his or her thinking!

Comprehension Strategies:

- Story Elements: for use with fiction text
 - Setting - the time or place the story occurs
 - Characters- people, animals, or things that act out the story
 - Problem- the event in the story that the characters are trying to work out
 - Solution- the resolution to the story's problem
- Main Idea: the most important point the author is making in the text
- Inference: drawing a conclusion: take information directly read from the text, add it to what you know in your head (from life experiences)
- Cause and Effect: one event makes another occur
- Sequence of Events: the order in which things happen in a story or text
- Summary: the most important events that happen in the story including the main idea and the most important details
- Predictions- Make a realistic guess regarding what will happen, based upon what you know about the book.

The following are strategies to improve comprehension:

- Illustrations Anyone?- Encourage your child to illustrate an event from the beginning, middle, and end of a story. Allow your child to retell the story using the pictures they have drawn.
- Retell- Read a book/story to your child and have your child identify and retell the beginning, middle, and end of a story in order, describe the setting, and identify the problem and the resolution of a problem.
- "Get the Gist" (find the main idea) - In 10 words or less....
 - 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.
 - Create Questions: Use the 5 W's: who, what, where, when, why

Before Reading:

- Set purpose
- Build background knowledge
- Develop vocabulary (discuss new words)
- Make predictions- "What do you think will happen?" "Why do you think that?"

During Reading:

- Stop periodically for reactions, comments, questions, predictions

After Reading:

- Discuss:
 - important ideas in text
 - focus on themes
 - make inferences
 - focus story elements
 - make connections to self, world, and other text
 - identify new information learned

Fluency

Fluency - consists of three components: **rate, accuracy, expression or prosody**, (which means intonation, stress and pauses). Students develop fluency by reading and rereading words, phrases, or texts at their independent/instructional.

The Minimal target rate for fluency is:

- Kinder- no minimum
- 1st - 60 correct words per minute (CWPM)
- 2nd - 90 correct words per minute (CWPM)

The following are strategies to improve fluency at home:

- What's Your Interest?- Find books that interest your child (cars, animals, sports, etc.) so they will want to read them over and over again.
- Be the Teacher- Give your child the opportunity to be the teacher.
 - Let your child read a book to you (the parent is the student).
 - Have your child arrange several stuffed animals around them on the floor and read to the animals (students).
 - Have your child read a text once for information, twice for expression, and the third time in their teacher voice (or another voice; ie. deep voice, high voice, whisper voice, loud voice, etc.)
- Timed Reading- Set a timer while your child reads. Stop the timer when your child stops reading. Write down the time. Now have your child reread the same text again and see if he/she can read the text faster. Do this procedure three times. Make sure your child gets all the words correct!
- Invitation Only- Invite your child to read with you! Modeling fluent reading will help students become fluent readers.
- Play Favorites- Read your child's favorite book over and over again.
- Recording Star- record your child reading and then talk about how he/she could make it smoother and with expression as you both listen.
- Echo read- Read a sentence or line. Encourage your child to imitate your exact style, pitch and rate of reading. Helpful Hint: As the adult reader, you might want to adjust your pace a bit.
- Choral Read- You and your child read together. Instruct your child to do his/her best to keep up with your rate of reading. (Again, you may want to slow down a bit especially for younger readers).

Written Expression

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 for thinking about reading and the expression of thoughts or information learned from reading. Written expression is the ability to communicate ideas and information in a written form, (using sentences, correct grammar and spelling) such that the intent of the author is clear and can be understood by others. It does not refer to the physical task of producing written text, so much as the ability to communicate one's thoughts and point of view.

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

The following are 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 underscores 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.
- Direct your child to choose a favorite story. Either read it to your child or allow your child to read it to you. Discuss the ending of the story. Direct your child to make up a new and different ending to the story and encourage them to write it!
- Help your child select a special family activity. Write a letter to a friend that explains how to do this activity.
- Create a special place for your child to write about daily experiences. This can be done in a special journal with fun pens or pencils.
- As you read with your parent, both of you write down your thoughts about your reading on sticky notes. Pick a stopping point and go back and have a discussion about your thoughts about what you read.