Introduction

The road to becoming a reader begins the day a child is born and continues through the end of third grade.

Learning to read and write starts at home, long before children go to school.
The goal of this presentation is to help you help your child at home by:

• Providing an understanding about **how children learn to read**

• Providing **ideas and activities** that you can do at home with your child

• Providing an understanding of **literacy at home**

• Providing **resource books** to read, and **organizations** to contact for more information
Keys to Reading

According to research, becoming a reader involves the development of important skills, including:

- Using language in conversation
- Listening and responding to stories read aloud
- Recognizing and naming the letters of the alphabet
- Listening to the sounds of spoken language
- Connecting sounds to letters to figure out the “code” of reading
- Reading often so that recognizing words becomes easy & automatic
- Learning and using new words
- Understanding what is read
The Building Blocks of Reading

1. PHONEMIC AWARENESS
2. PHONICS
3. VOCABULARY
4. FLUENCY
5. COMPREHENSION

Five skills children need to be readers by third grade
Research tells us that children need five skills to become confident readers by third grade.

1. Phonemic Awareness

- Every spoken word is a series of sounds.
- Before a child is able to read, s/he needs to become aware of how sounds work.
- Build spoken language by talking and listening.
- Learn about the sounds of spoken language.
1. Phonemic Awareness – What to do at home

- Play word games; talk about the letters and the sounds they make.
- Read a story or poem and ask your child to listen for words that begin with the same sound.
- Sing or say a nursery rhyme or song.
- Talk with your child often... every day as you eat together, go shopping, and ride in the car.
1. Phonemic Awareness – What to do at home, cont’d

- Encourage your child to draw pictures and use his/her words to describe what the pictures are about.
- Listen to your child’s questions patiently and answer them just as patiently.
- Talk about books that you’ve read together.
- Pay attention to how much TV your child is watching.
2. Phonics

- The leap from talking to reading happens when a child starts to see how written letters stand for the sound of speech.
- Learn about the letters of the alphabet
- Be read to and read on their own
- Learn to understand and use letter-sound relationships and be able to recognize words when they see them.
2. Phonics – Strategies for Home

- Show your child how books and print work.
- As you read with your child, talk about how a book works – that it has a front and back cover, and a title.
- Talk about the author’s and illustrator’s names and tell what they do.
- Point to the words as you start reading on a page.
- Talk about the connections between the print and pictures as you read.
- Help them predict what will happen next and point out the details in the pictures.
3. Fluency

- Fluency is the ability to read accurately, quickly, and naturally – with expression.
- Fluent readers recognize lots of words without having to sound them out.
The Building Blocks of Reading

3. Fluency – What to do at home

• Read to your child and then listen to your child read the same text to you.

• Listen to your child read the same pages repeatedly until your child is able to read smoothly without having to stop to sound out the words.

• Does your child have a favorite book that s/he likes to read over and over? Re-reading these favorite books – as you’ve been doing all along – is a great way to help make your child a fluent reader.
4. Vocabulary

- Learn new words and build knowledge of what words mean
4. Vocabulary – What to do at home

• Read to and with your child every day.

• Start early – the names of colors, animals, family members, and other things around the house.

• Children learn most words by hearing them and then repeating the sounds and words that they hear.
4. Vocabulary – What to do at home, cont’d

• Explain new ideas and words to your child. Encourage him/her to ask questions about what you are reading.

• Use and repeat important words, such as names of buildings, parks, zoos, cities, and other places that you visit.

• Help your child develop an interest in the world.
The Building Blocks of Reading

5. Comprehension

• Getting meaning and understanding what is read.
• Build knowledge of the world.
• Build their ability to understand what they read.
5. Comprehension – What to do at home

• Talk about new words that your child reads and hears.

• Help your child use the dictionary or thesaurus to check on the meaning of new words.

• Help your child become aware of the beginnings and endings of words.
5. Comprehension – What to do at home, cont’d

- Show your child how to use the sentences, words, and pictures around an unfamiliar word to figure out the word’s meaning.

- As you read a book with your child, stop now and then to talk with him/her about the meaning of the book. Ask open-ended questions (that don’t have a “yes” or “no” answer).

- Encourage your child to ask questions and to tell in his/her own words what the book is about.
Some helpful terms to know

- Alphabetic knowledge
- Big books
- Blending
- Developmental spelling
- Emergent literacy
- Environmental print
- Experimental writing
- Invented spelling
- Literacy
- Phonemes

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonological awareness
- Pretend reading
- Print awareness
- Segmentation
- Spoken language
- Syllable
- Vocabulary
  - Oral vocabulary
  - Reading vocabulary
Resources for Parents

The Partnership for Reading
National Parent Information Network
National Institute for Literacy
No Child Left Behind website
Reading Rockets
PBS Parents
The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans
The American Federation of Teachers
Parents as Teachers National Center
Parents – **YOU** can make the difference!

Spending time with your child talking, reading, and having fun together helps build a strong relationship and also helps promote a love of learning!