

Getting Your Pre-K Child Ready for Reading

Sending your child off to Kindergarten is both an exciting and scary transition for parents. This is especially true for parents who have concerns about their child's readiness for the new challenges that Kindergarten will present. In addition to playing well with others and showing a desire for independence, there are some important milestones that your pre-school child should be exhibiting if the road to reading is going to be a smooth one. Identifying problems early and providing the enrichment and support your child may need is a key factor in overcoming any struggles.

The following are early-literacy milestones during the pre-school years.

4-5 years

- Says rhyming words and words that begin with the same sound.
- Understands that you are reading words and not just talking about pictures in books.
- Recognizes where words start and stop by pointing to spaces between words.
- Pretends to read a book by telling the story from memory.

5-6 years

- Realizes that words can be broken into smaller parts, like ba-by, cup-cake, rainbow, or counts syllables in a word.
- Names printed letters in the alphabet from A to Z and numbers from 1 to 10.
- May know that letters have sounds and may know the sound that some letters make like buh for B and sss for S.
- Says first sounds in spoken words, like ball begins with b sound.
- Begins to point to specific letters on a page.
- May read some unfamiliar words.

All children learn to talk, understand and read at different times. Research shows that one of the best predictors of later reading success is a well-developed oral vocabulary in kindergarten. That means reading to your child, discussing what's on the page, and making 'games' out of the skills mentioned above are important steppingstones towards reading readiness. A speech language pathologist, also called an SLP, can help if you have any questions or concerns about your child's language, pre-literacy and kindergarten readiness.