

So You're Parenting a First Grader

Tips to help your child learn to read

Reading is an essential skill for learning in all subjects. The ability to read well leads to success in school and life. As the parent or caregiver, your involvement really helps your child become a confident student and lifelong reader. It's okay to explore the joy of reading together! The series "So You're Parenting..." gives you helpful activities and tips to prepare your child for Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee.



Cuyahoga Heights Public Library,
Library Snapshot Day

What is the Third Grade Reading Guarantee?

In 2012, the Ohio Legislature passed a bill that says that students who do not reach a passing score on the 3rd grade state reading test will receive additional support in order to advance to the required reading level.

Although it is called the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, your child will be assessed in reading at the beginning of each grade from kindergarten to 3rd grade. If your child is not at the required reading level, your school will tell you about services your child will receive.

There are also many ways you can help your child with reading. If you need more information, see the Family Resources on the Ohio Department of Education's website:

<http://tinyurl.com/ohiotgrg>

Reading in First Grade: Here's What to Expect

Four sets of skills are especially important for beginning readers in first grade:

Print concepts, which are the basic features of letters and words. In first grade, your child will learn the parts of a sentence, that the first letter is capitalized and that there is punctuation at the end.

Phonological awareness, which is learning and understanding sounds. Here are some examples:

- Your child will pronounce single syllable words (such as "cat" or "frog") and break them down into separate sounds, so he can say the three sounds "c-a-t" that make the word "cat."
- Your child will learn the difference between long and short vowels when spoken, such as the "a" in "cake" and the "a" in "cat."

Phonics (which is connecting sounds with letters) and **word recognition**. Here are some examples:

- Your child will be able to read words by sounding them out.
- Your child will learn sounds made by pairs of letters like "ai" and "br."
- Your child will use her understanding of letters and sounds to read two-syllable words like "braided."

Fluency, which is the ability to understand what is being read, and to read with flow. Here are some examples:

- Your child will be able to read first grade material aloud and understand what he is reading.
- Your child will be able to know when she says a word incorrectly, and go back and correct it.
- Your child will read aloud, not too slowly or too quickly, without stumbling.

Activities to do with your child to build reading skills

Reading on the Go

Reading can happen anywhere, anytime. You can do simple activities with your child at the grocery store or on a walk around the neighborhood.

Help your child understand how many syllables are in a word by **clapping** once for each syllable.

At a sporting event, ask your child to clap along with the announcer to count syllables.

When in the **car**, count the one-syllable words that you see on **roadside signs or billboards**. Encourage your child to say what the vowel is in each word.

In a **restaurant**, let your child choose what he would like to eat from the **menu**. Ask your child to find his favorite meal using his knowledge of letter sounds to **read the menu**. (“Cheeseburger” - “ch” blend, long “e” sound, etc.)

Reading for a Purpose

Reading can happen at home or in your local library, whether for fun or to find information. Here are some reading tips:

When reading aloud with your child, use different **voices and facial expressions** for fun and to model reading with expression.

Help your child identify **sentences on the page** as you read. Ask her to tell you how she knows each is a sentence.

Practice reading words that begin or end with pairs of letters that work together, like “**sh**” and “**th**.” Find **tongue twisters** to say with your child that make use of these pairs, like “she sells seashells by the seashore.”

Ask your child’s teacher for a list of irregular sight words (words that your child should know just by looking at them, like “could” or “once”) that you can practice reading at home with your child. Make up **your own story** using those words.

Community Support for Your Child’s Reading

As your child grows, create relationships with supportive community members who know a lot about reading.

- The **public librarian** will help you find enjoyable, easy books and can recommend strategies to help make reading a fun, healthy part of your everyday life.
- The **school librarian** will be your hero, as he or she will recommend great books and fun series that will keep your child involved in reading.
- The **school’s PTA** will help you connect with an active network of parents who care about education. Don’t be timid about talking with other parents and swapping ideas about age-appropriate reading activities that have worked for them.

Don’t let reading slide in the summer! Participate in your public library’s summer reading program, or just hang out at the library with your child and enjoy the books and activities that are free for your use.

Reading on the Screen

Handheld devices, televisions, and computers can be part of the reading experience for your child with these activities:

With your child, read an **e-book** that can be found in the PreK-5 section on the **INFOhio** website (<http://www.infohio.org>). Contact your child’s teacher or school librarian for the password. **Early World of Learning** has games that follow each book and will help students learn. In the play area, choose the **sorting games** where your child will distinguish between consonants and vowels.

Using your TV, select **closed captioning** and have your child read the text.

Using your phone or tablet, **download apps** or bookmark reading websites so your child can read anywhere, anytime.

Using your computer, have your child read words aloud on her **favorite website**.

“So You’re Parenting...” is a service of the Ohio Educational Library Media Association (OELMA), the Ohio PTA, INFOhio, and the State Library of Ohio.

For more information: <http://www.infohio.org/students/parents>

