

Kindergarten

Knowing the essential skills and strategies your kids will be learning in school helps us know how to support them all year. Find out, by subject, what your kids will be learning this year and read on for strategies to help them be successful students.

Reading at School:

- Naming upper- and lower-case letters, matching those letters with their sounds, and printing them.
- Comparing the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories, such as fairy tales and folktales
- Retelling familiar stories and talking about stories read to them using details from the text.
- Asking and answering questions about key details in stories or other information read aloud.

Support Reading at Home:

Read with your child every day.

The public library allows you to have books checked out for up to three weeks. If you build a library visit into your weekly or monthly routine, hundreds of books (and reading opportunities) can pass through your child's hands - for free!

Try these things to help reinforce the learning your child is doing in kindergarten:

- Point out information on book covers including illustration, title, and author
- Use your finger to follow along as you read
- Engage in word play included in so many children's books
- Talk about the story together
- Ask questions that get your child to think and talk



Speaking and Listening at School:

- Taking part in classroom conversations and following rules for discussions (e.g., learning to listen to others and taking turns when speaking)



- Speaking clearly to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas including descriptions of familiar people, places, things, and events.

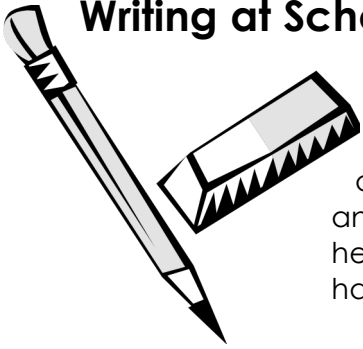
- Understanding and using question words (e.g., *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, *how*) in discussions.

Support Speaking and Listening at Home:

Being able to talk to people is an extremely important skill. Listening for information and direction is also very important. Some ways you can work on building these skills at home include:

- Talk about what happened through the day in a sequential way
- Listen to your child talk about their day
- Look your child in the eye when you are speaking and listening
- Restate what you hear and press your child to be clear
- Give clear directions and help your child complete them

Writing at School:



- Using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to describe an event, including his or her reaction to what happened.

- Stating an opinion or preference about a topic or book in writing (e.g., “My favorite book is...”)
- Learning to recognize, spell, and properly use those little grammatical words that hold the language together (e.g., *a, the, to, of, from, I, is, are*)

Support Writing at Home:

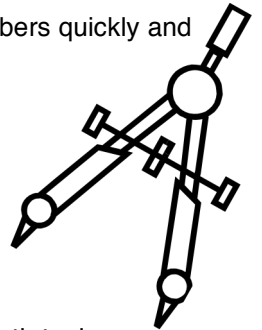
There are two major considerations for writing at the kindergarten level – using words accurately to tell a story or give a message, and having the fine motor skills to hold and use a pencil.

You can grow skill in these areas with your kindergartner by:

- Modeling storytelling – read books, talk to your child about your day
- Encourage your child to talk – to tell stories, to share ideas, to communicate about their day
- Paint with brushes and fingers
- Draw with crayons, chalk, and markers
- Scribble with pencils – until motor skill is strong enough to begin forming scribbles into letters
- Write stories your child tells – read them together and create pictures that reinforce the main ideas in the story

Math at School:

- Counting objects to tell how many there are
- Comparing two groups of objects to tell which group, if either, has more; comparing two written numbers to tell which is greater.
- Acting out addition and subtraction word problems and drawing diagrams to represent them.
- Adding with a sum of 10 or less; subtracting from a number 10 or less; and solving addition and subtraction word problems.
- Adding and subtracting very small numbers quickly and accurately (e.g., $3+1$)
- Correctly naming shapes regardless of orientation or size (e.g., a square oriented as a “diamond” is still a square)



Support Math at Home:

While understanding numbers is a key math tool, mathematical thinking includes much more than numbers. Time, money, shapes, patterns, similar and different are all concepts of math. Introducing and playing with these concepts with your kindergartner can be very beneficial.

- Do puzzles together
- Play with blocks: create or find patterns with them
- Find and name shapes and colors in everyday objects
- Count things (socks in the laundry, peas on the plate, birds on the branch...) often
- Relate value in understandable terms (Would you rather have 5 or 10 M&M's? Why?) and build in words like more, less, equal

Science:

Kindergarten science students learn about the living and non-living things in the natural world. They compare and contrast characteristics of plants and animals and examine the way things move. They identify changes in things they can see in the sky, and learn that the sun warms Earth.

Explore with your kindergartner. Point out similarities and differences in plants and animals and encourage them to ask as many questions as possible. This will build a strong foundation for scientific inquiry.