



Reading and Writing Resources

See below for a list of helpful resources for the families of K-12 students, along with a short description of what each site offers! This list is adapted from “7 Great Online Reading Resources for Parents and Learning Coaches” by Ben Werrell.

Helpful Websites:

→ **AdLit.org** (<http://www.adlit.org/>)

AdLit.org, or All About Adolescent Literacy offers information on college readiness and awareness. Another highlight is the “Ask the Experts” page, which allows you to submit questions about students and reading so a team of experts can help you find answers.

→ **K12 Reader** (<https://www.k12reader.com/>)

This site offers free reading instruction resources for teachers and parents. If you’re looking for practice materials for your child, you can find worksheets and detailed program supplements for reading, spelling, sight words, grammar, phonics, comprehension, writing, and more.

→ **Oxford Owl** (<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/>)

This is a reading and math website that helps children ages 3 to 11. The “Expert Help” tab of the website’s Reading portion offers resources on helping struggling readers, encouraging reading, and working on issues including phonics, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Check out the ideas Oxford Owl suggests for games and activities.

→ **PBS Parents**

(<http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/reading-language/>)

PBS Parents offers two reading-related sections under the “Education” tab. The age range extends from infancy to third grade. The “Reading Activities”



section lists great ideas for reading on the go, making it easier for you to fit in practice throughout the day. If you're looking for book recommendations, the "Bookfinder" feature is an excellent tool that allows you to search by age, book theme, keyword, and whether your child intends to read aloud or silently.

→ **Reading Rockets** (<http://www.readingrockets.org/>)

On Reading Rockets, visit the "Helping Struggling Readers" page if your child is having trouble learning to read. Click on "Start the Target the Problem!" activity to open a tool that defines a variety of reading difficulties, such as fluency and comprehension, and explains how kids, parents, and teachers can recognize signs of the difficulty. This tool also links to a "How to Help" page, which offers tips to both children and their parents regarding how they can work on the issue.

→ **ReadWriteThink**

(<http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/>)

The International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English are a couple of the partners sponsoring ReadWriteThink, a website that offers resources for grades K–12. Under the "Parent & Afterschool Resources" tab, visit the podcast section to find book reviews for different age groups. You can also find links to the "Activities & Projects," "Games & Tools," "Tips & How-To's," and "Printouts" pages.

→ **Scholastic** (<https://www.scholastic.com/parents/home.html>)

In the "Parents" section of Scholastic, look for resources under the "Books & Reading" tab, such as Reading Resources & Help for Ages 8–10. A new feature that stands out is the e-reader app, Storia.



Kindergarten Readiness

Below is a list to help prepare your student for their transition to kindergarten, compiled from icanteachmychild.com, getreadytoread.org, and scholastic.com. Skills are broken down by developmental areas, with ideas for practice.

This is *not* a list of what your child must be able to do; rather, this is a guideline to help you determine their overall preparedness and find what area(s) your student may need to focus on.

Social and Emotional Development

Your child...

- Can identify their gender
- Knows their first and last name, birthday, address, and phone number
- Knows their parent/ guardian's first and last names
- Can say how old they are
- Takes care of their own basic needs (using the toilet, washing hands, dressing)
- Adjusts to new situations on their own

How to help them in this area:

- Play board games to help practice patience and being a good sport
- Set up playdates with your child's friends
- Encourage your child to approach problems with curiosity, not frustration. If they need your help encourage them to ask calmly (and politely) for your assistance
- Allow them to stay with a trusted adult for several hours, so they can practice being in the care of someone other than their parent/ guardian
- Practice going to Kindergarten and pretend to go to school (waking up, getting dressed, traveling, saying goodbye). If you can, bring them to their school and introduce them to their teacher so they are familiar before the first day
- Celebrate when they do/ learn something independently with positive reinforcement (e.g. brushing their teeth, putting on shoes, washing hands, zipping jacket, buttoning shirt, etc.)



Language Development

Your child...

- Can speak in complete sentences
- Can follow directions with at least 2 steps
- Can say or sing familiar songs and rhymes
- Can recognize common sight words, like 'stop', 'no', 'yes'
- Can identify some letters of the alphabet
- Can identify rhyming words (e.g. cat and hat, house and mouse)

How to help them in this area:

- Take time every day to listen and talk to your child. Some good times to do this are during transit, at mealtimes, and before bedtime
- Encourage them to use language to express their ideas
- Involve them in games and activities that require listening and following directions
- Set aside a special time each day to read books with interesting characters and simple plots to them every day for at least 20 min. total. Then, talk to them about the plot afterward (beginning, middle, and end)
- Give them plenty of opportunities to draw (without coloring books)
- Teach them uppercase and lowercase letters (especially the sounds those letters make)

Learning and Thinking (Cognitive Development)

Your child...

- Can match two pictures that are alike
- Can tell things that go together (e.g. fork/ spoon, fish/boat)
- Can classify objects according to their color, size, and shape (practice with household items)
- Can match, recognize, and name at least 5 colors
- Can repeat a pattern you start (e.g. step, step, jump, step, step, jump or red, blue, red, blue)
- Can put three pictures in order (e.g. planting seeds, flower growing, picking flower)

How to help them in this area:

- Collect objects that go together and have your child sort them
- Create activities where your child puts pictures in order. You can use pictures of them at different ages or pictures from a magazine/ newspaper



- Fold laundry with your child, letting them sort and match socks/ clothes by color or size
- Have simple puzzles for your child to play with. You can cut up the front of a greeting card or cereal box into puzzle sized pieces
- Create simple patterns for your child to continue. Colored dot stickers or craft pom-poms work well for this
- Go on a shape hunt. Point out triangles, squares, circles, etc. while taking a walk or going grocery shopping
- Talk about positional and directional concepts like up/down, over/under, in/out, behind/in front of, top/bottom, beside/between, off/on, stop/go
- Talk about opposite words (antonyms) like hot/cold, big/little, slow/fast

Beginning Reading

Your child...

- Can make simple predictions and comments about a story
- Can tell a simple story back to you after listening to it
- Can recognize their first name in print
- Can hold a book right side up and turn the pages one at a time from front to back
- Can match a letter with the beginning sound of a word (e.g. 'B' for 'banana')

How to help them in this area:

- Set aside a special time each day to read books with interesting characters and simple plots to them every day for at least 20 min. total. Talk to them about the story and characters
- Get a set of letter magnets and put them on the fridge or on a cookie sheet for your child to play with
- Make a name card for you and your child, display them in a special place, and talk to them about the names of letters
- Use pictures from a magazine, real objects, &/or magnetic letters to practice matching pictures to the correct beginning sound

Beginning Writing

Your child...

- Can express ideas through pictures they draw
- Can correctly hold and use pencils, crayons, and other writing/ drawing supplies
- Can copy and draw a line, circle, X, and +
- Is beginning to write some of the letters in their first name



How to help them in this area:

- Let your student use tools such as child-sized scissors, pencils, washable markers, and crayons. Put these tools in a special box that your child can decorate and have access to
- Encourage your child to explore with drawing materials and use them to express ideas
- Show your student examples of how written words are used in everyday life. Make grocery lists together, write notes to friends and relatives, decipher street signs together
- Label your child's belongings with their name. Let them write their name on some of their things too, like a notebook, folder, or crayon box.

Mathematics

Your child...

- Can count to 10
- Knows that written numerals correspond to numbers and quantities (e.g. '3' means three things, like three pencils)
- Can add and subtract small numbers of familiar objects (e.g. "I have four apples. I give you two. How many apples do I have now?")
- Can put written numbers in order from 1 through 5

How to help them in this area:

- Collect materials to help your child practice counting (e.g. bottle caps and pictures)
- Use real objects to do "more" and "less" (addition and subtraction) practice
- Use number words, point out numbers that you see, and involve your child in counting games
- Read, tell stories, sing songs, and say poems to your child that involve counting. Try to use stories that involve characters that are added and subtracted throughout the story (e.g. *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*, by Eileen Christelow and *Roll Over! A Counting Song* by Merle Peek)

Physical Development (Gross and Fine Motor Skills)

Your child...

- Can correctly hold and use pencils, crayons, and other writing/ drawing supplies
- Can copy and draw a line, circle, X, and +
- Can run, hop, throw, catch, and bounce a ball safely and with control



How to help them in this area:

- Bring your child to a park and play with them outside
- Practice skipping
- Play with playdough/ clay
- Let your child trace a round plastic lid or some large cookie cutters
- Use empty plastic bottles for bowling pins
- Pick up a hula hoop, a child-sized basketball hoop, &/or a beach ball for them to play with