

Try this!

- ★ Give many chances for your child to draw and print using markers, crayons and pencils. Keep lots of paper handy, too.
- ★ Provide activities that build skills for small muscles in the hands, such as cutting out shapes with scissors or stringing beads.
- ★ Use building blocks to show form, color and groups.
- ★ Tell positive stories, not scary, to explain safety issues.
- ★ Point out different shapes in your house, as you travel, in a store. A stop sign is an octagon, a price tag is a rectangle, the traffic light has circles.
- ★ Talk about the world and things in it, like spring comes before summer.

Important Notes:

- ★ Proper food, exercise, up-to-date shots (immunizations), and good health prepare a child for kindergarten. For Colorado information on health, mental health, family environment and other topics on early childhood, visit Qualistar Early Learning at www.qualistar.org, (303) 339-6800.



- ★ Concerned about your child's development or emotional health? Your local school district is required to provide free screening and initial assistance for children three years and older. Contact your local district's Child Find office or see the CDE directory at www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/download/pdf/CF_Directory.pdf.
- ★ To be able to learn, children need trust and stability, times of quiet and peacefulness. Turn off the television and electronic gadgets; share family periods.
- ★ Other early literacy information from Colorado Libraries for Early Literacy (CLEL) can be found at www.clel.org.

The 6 Components of Early Literacy

These six basic skills help children move easily into reading. Practice these with your child.

- ★ **Print motivation:** interested in and enjoy books
- ★ **Phonological awareness:** hear and play with smaller sounds of words
- ★ **Vocabulary:** know the names of things
- ★ **Narrative skills:** describe objects and events and tell stories
- ★ **Print awareness:** notice print, hold a book the right way, follow words on a page
- ★ **Letter knowledge:** know letter names, sounds, shapes

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Download or order this brochure at: www.ColoradoStateLibrary.org/kindergarten_readiness.htm

Early literacy is what children know about reading and writing before they can actually read and write.

Parents are children's first teachers and an early literacy storytime at a public library is a **time for parents and children to have FUN.**

Public libraries provide the opportunity for children to interact with books. Many public libraries provide baby, toddler, and pre-school storytimes.

Contact your local public library to find out about their **storytime schedule.**



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Getting Ready for Kindergarten

Ready? Set?

Go!



Ready?

As a parent or caregiver, you can help your child succeed in kindergarten.

Research shows that language development (speaking and listening) during early childhood is important for success in school. Children don't need to know how to read before kindergarten, but they need to practice many skills to get ready. They love repetition and hearing the same sounds and stories over and over. This builds strong pathways or bridges in their brains to help learning.

You can help with two main activities—talking to your child and reading aloud. Children who hear a variety of words from adults recognize and understand important concepts when they begin to read. Your partner in this process is your library, with free books, activities and advice.

Set?

Children's play is their work, and they learn by doing and experimenting. Fascinated by the world around them, they love to ask questions and talk about everything. You increase their curiosity by showing interest in what they are saying.

Pre-schoolers are learning about letters and sound, pictures and print. When you read to children, you teach them how letters and words work, how to hold a book, turn pages, listen and gain meaning from the written word. At this age, children also develop a basic understanding of numbers, can match and label shapes, identify colors and understand spatial concepts.

Go!

Most children entering kindergarten can perform the tasks listed in the following sections at least sometimes. Your child's development may be a little faster or a little slower in a certain area. Have patience, trust your judgment and don't be overly critical. If you make time for your child and have fun, the rest will follow.

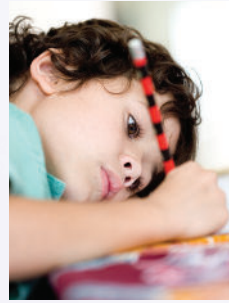
Language and Reading

Most kindergarteners can:

- State their names, home addresses and telephone numbers.
- Identify some labels and signs (like McDonald's or stop sign).
- Know some letters and make letter-sound matches.
- Understand that writing carries a message.
- Enjoy listening to and talking about story books.
- Ask and answer questions related to the story.
- "Read" familiar books alone, often by memory, using picture cues.
- Understand that we read English from left to right, top to bottom.
- Speak clearly and understandably.

Try this!

- ★ Read aloud to your child daily. Ask questions about the story or guess what might happen. Use different voices for characters to make the reading interesting.
- ★ Choose books and activities that are fun for both of you. Look for simple concepts (letters, numbers, shapes, and colors), easy plots, rhyming language, and nice pictures.
- ★ Show your child many ways in which writing is used—signs, menus, lists, recipes, grocery store, street signs. Ask for help in finding letters and words.
- ★ Use games (for example, pretend to be a mail carrier) to teach the child his address and phone. Play listening games with verbal clues and directions (I Spy...).



- ★ Help your child get a library card and visit the library regularly. Attend storytimes. Choose books and participate in activities.
- ★ Write or make up stories together. You can start a story, and your child can finish. Or take turns. If you write it down, have your child draw pictures for the story.
- ★ Sprinkle word games throughout your day that help your child hear differences in words—rhymes, names of things that start with the same letter, compound words.
- ★ Be a good example. Let children see you reading the newspaper, magazines, recipes, anything!, as well as writing (a grocery list, letters, notes).

Social and Emotional Skills

Most kindergarteners can:

- Follow classroom routine.
- Play cooperatively with others.
- Label and express feelings and emotions.
- Try new activities willingly.
- Stand up for themselves but know that bullying and violence are wrong.
- Wait fairly patiently for a turn or to speak.
- Take care of personal needs such as toilet, hand washing, clothing.
- Pay attention to a story or activity for ten minutes.



Try this!

- ★ Give your child chances to play with others. Notice how he gets along.
- ★ Explain consequences of good and bad behavior.
- ★ Be reasonable and loving, but follow through.
- ★ Encourage children to try different activities and games. Arrange outings to the library, zoo, park or museum.
- ★ Talk about what you see.
- ★ Play games that require taking turns and paying attention, such as children's board games with easy-to-follow instructions.
- ★ Encourage children to talk about feelings. Share books that explore emotions.



General Knowledge and Motor Skills

Most kindergarteners can:

- Identify body parts, such as head, toe, elbow.
- Draw a vertical and horizontal line.
- Cut paper with blunt scissors. Hold a pencil correctly.
- Copy letters and shapes, such as circles and squares.
- Understand the ideas of numbers, days of the week.
- Follow basic safety rules, such as looking both ways before crossing the street.
- Group items according to form, color and use.
- Have some understanding of how the world works (grandpa is older than a child; an umbrella is used when it rains).
- Know basic colors and numbers up to twenty.