

# Suggestions for Parents

The following suggestions are broken down by your child's grade level.

## In Early Grades K–2

- Talk with your child a lot.
- Read different types of books. Read every day, and talk with your child about the story.
- Help your child learn sound patterns of words. You can play rhyming games and point out letters as you read.
- Have your child retell stories and talk about his day.
- Talk with your child about what you do during the day. Give her directions to follow.
- Talk about how things are the same and different.
- Give your child chances to write.

## In Later Grades 3-5

- Keep your child reading. Find books and magazines that interest your child.
- Ask your child what he thinks about what he hears or reads. Connect what he reads to events in his life.
- Help your child connect what she reads and hears at school, home, and other events.
- Talk out loud as you help your child read about and solve problems.
- Help your child recognize spelling patterns. For example, point out the beginnings and endings of words, like "pre-" or "-ed."
- Get your child to write letters, keep a diary, and write stories.

## Your Child's Communication: Kindergarten

By the end of kindergarten, your child should be able to do the following tasks in each area.

## Listening

- Follow 1–2 simple directions in a row.
- Listen to and understand stories.
- Follow a simple conversation

## Speaking

- Speak clearly enough so that most people understand what he says.
- Answer simple yes/no questions.
- Answer questions like, "What did you have for lunch today?"
- Retell a story or talk about something he did.
- Take turns talking and keep a conversation going.
- Show interest in and start conversations.

## Reading

- Know how a book works. For example, we read from left to right and top to bottom in English.
- Understand that sounds make up words.
- Pick out words that rhyme, like *cat* and *hat*.
- Tell you the first sound in words, like *mmm* for milk.
- Says the sounds for some letters, like *buh* for B.
- Identify upper- and lowercase letters.
- Recognize some words by sight.
- "Read" a few picture books from memory.

- Pretend to read by talking about pictures in a book.

## **Writing**

- Print her first name.
- Draw a picture that tells a story. Write about the picture. Your child may write a letter or word to stand for a whole sentence or idea.
- Write upper- and lowercase letters. They may not be clear or neat.
- Write or type letters in no set order, like *Mu zEos lx*.

## **Your Child's Communication: First Grade**

By the end of first grade, your child should be able to do the following tasks in each area.

### **Listening**

- Remember what they hear.
- Follow two- to three-step directions in a row.

### **Speaking**

- Speak clearly so that anyone can understand him.
- Answer harder yes/no questions.
- Tell and retell stories that make sense.
- Share her ideas using complete sentences.
- Use most parts of speech, or grammar, correctly.
- Ask and answer who, what, when, where, and why questions.
- Stay on topic and take turns in conversation.
- Give directions.

- Start conversations.

## **Reading**

- Say words that rhyme.
- Name all sounds in short words.
- Put sounds together to make words.
- Match spoken words with written words.
- Point to letters, words, and sentences.
- Sound out words when reading.
- Read 100 common words by sight.
- Read grade-level books.
- Understand what he reads.

## **Writing**

- Write about her ideas.
- Print clearly.
- Spell words that he uses a lot.
- Begin each sentence with capital letters. End sentences with periods or question marks.
- Write stories, journal entries, or notes.

# **Your Child's Communication: Second Grade**

By the end of second grade, your child should be able to do the following tasks in each area.

## **Listening**

- Follow 3–4 directions in a row.

- Understand direction words, like *here*, *there*, *over*, *next to*, *before*, or *later*.
- Answers questions about a second grade-level story.

## Speaking

- Speak clearly.
- Answer harder yes/no questions.
- Ask and answer who, what, when, where, and why questions.
- Use more complex sentences.
- Explain words and ideas.
- Give directions with 3–4 steps.
- Use words to inform, persuade, and entertain.
- Stay on topic, take turns, and keep eye contact during conversations.
- Start and end conversations.

## Reading

- Know how letters make sounds in words, called phonics.
- Recognize many words by sight.
- Use clues when reading to figure out words. For example, looking at pictures or titles to help read a word.
- Reread parts of a story and fix mistakes.
- Find information to answer questions.
- Explain important points of a story, like the main idea, characters, and plot.
- Use personal experiences to guess what might happen next in a story.
- Read and retell a story in the correct order.
- Read grade-level stories and poetry silently and out loud smoothly.

- Read on his own.

## **Writing**

- Write clearly.
- Use different sentences to write essays, poetry, or short stories.
- Use basic punctuation and capitalization.
- Organize writing with a beginning, middle, and an end.
- Spell words correctly that he uses a lot.
- Stop spelling by sound and start spelling correctly. For example, she may move from "grl" to girl."

# **Your Child's Communication: Third Grade**

By the end of third grade, your child should be able to do the following tasks in each area.

## **Listening**

- Pay attention in groups.
- Understand grade-level information.

## **Speaking**

- Speak clearly. Know when to talk with a soft or loud voice.
- Ask and answer questions.
- Be a part of conversations and group discussions.
- Use words related to school subjects. For example, math, science, or history words.
- Stay on topic, use eye contact, and take turns in conversation.
- Summarize a story.

- Explain what she learned in school.

## **Reading**

- Understand phonics, or how sounds and words go together.
- Use word analysis skills. This means knowing root words, prefixes, and suffixes. For example, he can add the prefix "bi" to the root word "cycle" for "bicycle." Or, he can add the suffix "ist" to the root word "cycle" for "cyclist."
- Use clues from a story to help understand what she reads.
- Predict and explain what will happen next in stories. Compare stories and tell how stories are different.
- Ask and answer questions about what he reads.
- Use what she knows to learn about new topics.
- Read grade-level books with few mistakes.
- Reread and correct errors.

## **Writing**

- Plan, organize, revise, and edit.
- Write stories, letters, and short reports.
- Use details in writing. Spell simple words correctly. Correct most spelling without help. Use a dictionary to correct spelling.

# **Your Child's Communication: Fourth Grade**

By the end of fourth grade, your child should be able to do the following tasks in each area.

## **Listening**

- Listen to and understand information.
- Form opinions based on what she hears.

- Listen for specific reasons, such as to learn, enjoy, or convince.

## **Speaking**

- Use words correctly in conversation.
- Use language for many reasons, like asking questions, arguing, and joking.
- Understand some figurative language. This is language that uses words in new or different ways. For example, "This classroom is a zoo!"
- Take part in group discussions.
- Give correct directions to others.
- Summarize ideas in his own words.
- Organize information so it is clear.
- Give clear speeches.

## **Reading**

- Read for specific reasons.
- Read grade-level books smoothly and with few mistakes.
- Use what he knows to understand new material.
- Follow written directions.
- Take brief notes.
- Link what she learns in one subject to other subjects.
- Learn meanings of new words by looking at word origins, synonyms, and other meanings.
- Use reference materials, like a dictionary.
- Talk about the author's reason for writing a story and about the writing style.
- Read and understand different types of writing, like fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.



- Make inferences from texts. This means that she guesses what a writer means when it is not stated clearly. She uses clues in the story and what she knows from her life to guess.
- Talk about what she reads in her own words, called paraphrasing.

## **Writing**

- Write stories and explanations. Write many paragraphs about the same topic.
- Develop a plan for writing that includes a beginning, a middle, and an end.
- Organize writing around a main idea.
- Edit final copies for grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

# **Your Child's Communication: Fifth Grade**

By the end of fifth grade, your child should be able to do the following tasks in each area.

## **Listening**

- Listen and draw conclusions in different classes.

## **Speaking**

- Make planned speeches. She should know her audience and include information for that group.
- Deliver a speech. He should keep eye contact and use gestures and a loud voice.
- Take part in class discussions.
- Summarize main points.
- Report about information from group activities.

## **Reading**

- Read grade-level books smoothly and with few mistakes.

- Learn meanings of new words by looking at word origins, synonyms, and other meanings.
- Decide what information is important when reading.
- Read different types of text, like fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.
- Describe how a character and a plot develop.
- Talk about poetry and what poems might mean.
- Study an author's language and style.
- Use reference materials to support opinions.

## **Writing**

- Write for a variety of reasons.
- Use many different words when writing.
- Vary sentence structure.
- Revise writing to make it clearer.
- Edit final copies.