GREATER SASKATOON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Literacy at Home: Parent/Caregiver Handbook

The ability to read—and enjoy reading—is a lifelong journey that begins well before a child shows signs of reading and comprehension. It's important that parents and caregivers spend some time each day reading to or with their child to encourage a love of reading that will last a lifetime.

When reading with your child:
- be sure to make it a warm, positive interaction
- give your child choices of what to read
- read and re-read books your child is interested in
- respond to your child's reading with enthusiasm and praise for a job well done
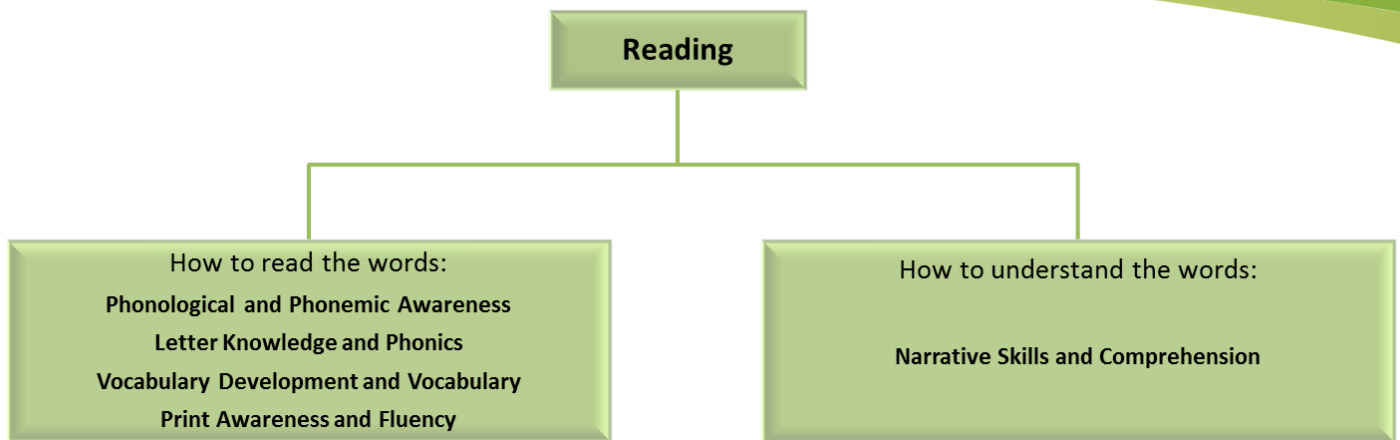- correct your child's mistakes in a positive and constructive way

These **suggested activities** will help your child practice reading and build his/her confidence in reading:

Modeled Reading	Shared Reading	Independent Reading
Read aloud the first few pages so your child gets comfortable with the pace and smoothness. Then have your child read the same pages or carry on reading after you.	Read the selection together and point to the words as you read. Continue reading until your child feels comfortable reading independently.	Encourage your child to look at books and read on their own.
Echo Reading	**Repeated Reading**	**Choral Reading**
Read aloud one sentence at a time. Your child reads the same line immediately afterwards.	Have your child re-read a passage (4 times for maximum benefits) to obtain a fluent rhythm.	Read aloud with your child, almost chanting the words. Reread the selection and eventually fade out to let your child read independently.

Adapted from *Orchestrating Success in Reading* by Dawn Reithaug

These **suggested strategies** will help your child solve unknown words:

Use the pictures. Do the words and pictures match?	Get your mouth ready. Say the first sound.	Sloooowly stretch each letter sound then reread more quickly.	Break the word into chunks.
Try to re-read the sentence. Think "What makes sense?".	Skip the tricky word. Read to the end. Go back and try again.	Flip the vowel sound. Try long and short sounds.	Trade a word/guess a word that makes sense.

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                          │     Reading     │
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┌─────────────────────────────────┐   ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│      How to read the words:     │   │   How to understand the words:  │
│  Phonological and Phonemic Awareness │                                 │
│    Letter Knowledge and Phonics │   │                                 │
│ Vocabulary Development and Vocabulary │ Narrative Skills and Comprehension │
│    Print Awareness and Fluency  │   │                                 │
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We hope you find these following **suggested activities for use at home** helpful.

Phonological and Phonemic Awareness
- Play telephone at the dinner table.
- Say a word and make the sound of each letter. Encourage your child to do the same, or to say another word that starts or ends with the same letters.
- Hand-clapping games: clap for each word or syllable you hear.
- Use beads and string: Say a word, then have your child string one bead for each sound they hear in the word.
- "I spy with my little eye, something that has the sound ___ in it!".
- "I spy with my little eye, something that starts with___.".
- Sing popular songs and change the first letter of each word (e.g., Bary bad ba bittle bamb).
- Make sentences with alliteration and have your child identify the most-used sound (e.g., The cat cooks corn and cake).
- Provide four words, three of which rhyme, and identify the odd one out (e.g., cat, hat, tag, rat).
- Draw rhyming sentences (e.g., draw a frog on a log, a dad that is glad).
- Read nursery rhymes and rhyming books (e.g., Dr. Seuss).
- Complete the last word of a rhyming pair (e.g., Ten cats have ten hats).

Letter Knowledge and Phonics
- Point out words and identify the letters together (e.g., fridge magnets, street signs, store names).
- Read alphabet books (e.g., Chicka Chicka Boom Boom, Dr. Seuss's ABC, Eric Carle's ABC, I Stink!).
- Make words together:
    - Make 26 letter cards that include all the letters of the alphabet.
    - Ask your child to locate one or two vowels that you choose (e.g., *a, e*) and three or more consonants depending on your child's level (e.g., *b, s,* and *t*).
    - Say a word that can be spelled with the identified letters and ask your child to spell it.
    - Together, make as many words as you can by using the identified letters.

- While reading:
    - ask your child to find letters from their own name on the page
    - highlight the names, shapes, and sounds of letters
- While cooking:
    - spell words with alphabet soup or cereal
    - read recipes
- While shopping:
    - make grocery lists together
    - read aisle and product names

Vocabulary Development and Vocabulary
- Develop and expand vocabulary through reading:
    - re-read books or passages so your child becomes familiar with the words
    - ask your child to repeat new words, retell what they read, and/or engage in activities related to the words' meanings
- When teaching the meaning of a word:
    - provide a simple definition
    - give an example from your child's life
    - have your child give an example
    - use your body/arms/hands to act out the meaning of the word and encourage your child to do the same
- When expanding your conversations about vocabulary:
    - have your child act out the meaning of words after defining them
    - have your child tell you stories to explain themselves while they are playing

Print Awareness and Fluency
- Choose a sign during a walk or car trip. Have your child read the sign and talk about what the sign means and the purpose of the sign.
- Ask your child to find common words on every day grocery items (e.g., cereal boxes, cans). See if s/he can find other words that they know.
- Let your child know where on the page you will be reading (e.g., "I'm going to read the words that go around the picture. Watch my finger point to each word as I read it").
- Point out differences in print to your child (e.g., "This *H* is an uppercase letter. See how it is bigger than these lowercase letters?").
- Bring your child's attention to print features (e.g., "This is the word *the*. It appears very frequently in this book. Can you help me find other places where the word *the* appears?").
- Practice sight words to improve automaticity.
- Re-read passages to improve fluency.

Narrative Skills and Comprehension

- Play Show-and-Tell and have your child make a story with their item (e.g., their stuffed animal is going to the zoo).
- Ask questions to engage your child in creating a story together (where, what, when, why, who and how). Expand upon your child's response while continuing to develop the story together.

Before reading:
- Make predictions of what your child thinks they will be reading about by doing a book look (looking at the title, pictures, headings, etc.).

During reading:
- Make connections to life experiences (e.g., "That reminds me of when ...").
- Make predictions and inferences (e.g., "What do you think will happen next?" or "Why do you think the Lion is mad?").
- Repeat and expand upon the child's response (e.g., "You think the lion is sad. I think so too because his friend won't dance with him").
- Identify the important information of a text such as characters, setting, key events and main ideas.
- Visualize (form mental pictures) while reading.
- Clarify confusing aspects by re-reading content, looking at diagrams/illustrations, and looking up the meaning of unknown words.
- Ask questions while reading (e.g., where, what, when, why, who and how sentence starters).

After reading:
- Have your child retell the story back to you. After they have retold the story, get them to change one aspect (e.g., they are going to the park instead of the castle) and come up with a new ending.
- Ask questions about what was read and have your child answer them.
- Your child may enjoy drawing activities related to what they have read. They can draw characters, what happened, or extend past the story to think about what might happen next (after the story ends).

Opportunities to Write

- Encourage your child to engage in letter scribblings. Ask your child questions about it (e.g., "What does it say?").
- Engage your child in writing by showing your child how to print letters and words (e.g., "See, these are the letters that make up your name!" or "This is the letter P").
- Have your child write the letters or words in tactile substances such as sand or rice.

Print Motivation

- Use different voices when reading storybooks to give characters life and emphasize punctuation and/or text features.
- Ensure topics are interesting to your child.
- Relate what you are reading to your child's own experiences.

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