

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Subject	Page
Literacy tips	2
Technology tips	3
Math tips	4
Science tips	8
Spanish tips	9
Phonics tips	10

LITERACY TIPS

Spelling and Vocabulary: Circle on Sight

Sight words are high-frequency words that may or may not be easily decodable—meaning, some sight words can be sounded out but others need to be learned “by heart” because of irregular spelling. Help your child practice recognizing sight words by looking for and circling specific words on cereal boxes, magazines, newspapers, or junk mail.

Guide them to look for one sight word at a time from this list:

- the
- a
- I
- to
- and
- was
- for
- you
- is
- of
- my
- are
- he
- she
- go
- in
- it
- with



Reinforce this learning by pointing out sight words in books you read together or on signs you see in the world.

Phonics: Rhyme all the Time

Rhyming is a skill that helps to strengthen a child’s phonological awareness, the ability to work with sounds in spoken language. Supporting your child’s phonological awareness also gives them the building blocks to become a reader.

When you are at a store or in the car, point out and name an item. Then, ask your child for a word that rhymes with that item. For instance, say, “I see a tree. What rhymes with tree?” Once they’ve given you a word, it’s their turn! Have them pick something out and ask you for a rhyming word. Silly rhymes are encouraged!

ABCs: What's that Letter?

In kindergarten, children learn the alphabet, practice writing letters, and learn the difference between capital and lowercase letters. They might not learn the letters sequentially from A to Z, and at this age it's helpful to support letter recognition in any order.

Finding letters outside is a great way for children to practice their ABCs while they get to know their world a little better. Start close by with familiar signs and places. Engage your child while on a walk or when you travel to a store, school, the library, and more.

Ask questions like:

- What letter is at the beginning of our street sign?
- What is the name of the grocery store? Does its sign have capital or lowercase letters?
- What letters are written on this sign?



TECHNOLOGY TIPS

Press the Button!

Build your child's foundation in computer science by familiarizing them with the names and functions of simple technological tasks and computer hardware.

Next time you interact with technology around your child, ask for help with simple tasks like turning the TV on or off, starting the microwave, or returning to the home screen on a tablet. Tell your child the name of the button that performs each task (like the power button or home button) and explain its function.

This helps your child understand that buttons on technology have a purpose and that similar buttons have similar functions ("the power button turns the phone, computer, or tablet on and off"). To continue this conversation, ask your child, "What other buttons can you find? What do you think these buttons do?"

MATH TIPS

Patterns: Clap, Clap, Slap!

You can practice sound patterns using your hands and knees. While sitting cross-legged, clap your hands together twice and then slap your knees. Repeat that sequence four times so your child can identify the pattern, and then challenge them to repeat it. If they need more prompting, ask them, “What sound comes next?” as you repeat the pattern. Keep going until you are repeating the pattern together at the same speed and rhythm.

Your child can then create their own pattern with claps and slaps, and have you repeat it. Once they become proficient with simple patterns, make the sequences more challenging by adding more claps and slaps, or by adding silly noises and actions like touching your nose and saying “boop!”

Time and Money: My Day

On paper or poster board, make a school-day schedule with your child by listing their daily routines and activities and what times they occur. Encourage your child to draw pictures of the activities or decorate the schedule with stickers. Include routines and activities like:

On paper or poster board, make a school-day schedule with your child by listing their daily routines and activities and what times they occur. Encourage your child to draw pictures of the activities or decorate the schedule with stickers. Include routines and activities like:

- Wake up
- Eat breakfast
- Get dressed
- Go to school
- After-school class or activity
- Eat dinner
- Reading time
- Bedtime

Hang the schedule where your child can see and revisit it throughout the day. Make connections between the schedule and digital or analog clocks that show those times. On Saturdays and Sundays, talk about how the weekend differs from school days. Ask your child which activities they do and don't do on the weekends, and to think of special weekend-only activities. Relate times to visuals of clocks whenever possible.

Matching and Sorting: Sort the Socks

Matching and sorting are important skills for children to develop because they help kids categorize information and pay attention to detail. The next time you fold a load of laundry, have your child match clean socks by identifying the patterns or colors on the socks. Other times, challenge them to sort out their clothes from all of the other clothes. It'll build their capacity to reason and make laundry go a little faster!

Counting: Give me Five!

Give your child a handful of counters (small objects that are easily countable like buttons, beans, etc.) and ask them to count the items. Say, "Give me five!" and ask them to count out five counters from the total group. Then ask how many are left and guide them to count the remaining counters. Keep playing by starting with a different total number of counters in each round.

This activity teaches your child cardinality, the mathematical understanding that the last number word said when counting tells how many in all. It also lays the groundwork for early subtraction by introducing the concept of "taking away."

Numbers through 5: Make Five

Gather 5 small items that can fit in your hand like beans, gummies, or coins. Count them with your child. Turn around and divide the items between your two hands. Turn back around and open one of your hands to show your child the items. Have your child count the items they see and figure out how many are in your other hand to make the 5 you originally had.

Numbers through 10: Number Hopscotch

Draw a hopscotch pattern on the ground with numbers through 10. As you play hopscotch, say the name of the numbers out loud when you step on them. Have your child play this way as well. Once your child is counting to 10 comfortably, challenge them to play in reverse, starting at 10. You can further challenge them by using a beanbag to

cover up a number. For this, get your child to throw the beanbag over a number. They must skip this number as they play. Encourage your child to say the number out loud as they jump over the number to help them practice counting through 10 and back.

Numbers through 15: Mold the Numbers

Gather playdough, modeling clay, or modeling foam of different colors. Guide your child to model each numeral from 0 to 15 with the material and encourage them to say the number out loud as they mold the number.

Play a game in which you call out a number up to 15 and your child molds that number. Make it more competitive by playing too and see who can form the numbers the fastest. This sensory activity will help develop their motor skills and strengthen their number recognition.

Numbers through 20: Hide and Seek with Numbers

Have your child write the numbers 1 through 20 on index cards. Hide the cards around the house and challenge your child to find them. Encourage your child to call out the number each time they find a card. Once they find all the cards, ask them to place the cards in numerical order.

Order and Position: Play “Simon Says”

As your child learns about order and position, introduce them to this vocabulary by incorporating positional words, such as “inside” and “over,” and ordinal numbers from first through fifth into the classic game of “Simon Says.” Alternate between using commands with positional vocabulary, like, “Simon says stand beside the couch,” and commands with ordinal numbers, like, “Simon says pick up the third stuffed animal in the line.”

Adding: Jump to the Number

Using chalk, draw a number line with numbers 1 to 10 on the ground. Have your child practice additions by starting at one number and jumping a few spots to a bigger

number. Using chalk, draw a number line with numbers 1 to 10 on the ground. Have your child practice additions by starting at one number and jumping a few spots to a bigger number. For example, a child may start at the number 5 and jump three spots to end up on the number 8. After, help your child to relate their actions to an addition sentence, like, $5 + 3 = 8$.

Once your child is comfortable with this, call out simple additions and have your child jump spots to get to the answer.

Subtracting: Subtraction Bowling

Gather 10 toys, such as stuffed animals, figures, or building blocks, as well as pieces of paper or index cards. Count the toys with your child and then take away some of the toys. Ask your child how many they have left and work with them to write the subtraction equation on a piece of paper. This will help your child to practice modeling subtraction as well as help familiarize them with written subtraction sentences.

Create with Shapes

Gather pattern blocks, magnetic tiles, or other shape toys. Go over the names of the shapes with your child. Get your child to create pictures or patterns using the toys. You can give them specific pictures to create, such as a car, a house, or a flower, or have them come up with pictures on their own. After your child has created a picture, ask them to name the shapes they used.

Measure Nature

Next time you are walking outside, have your child pick up two of the same item, like leaves or rocks. Encourage your child to compare the items by size, weight, or length. Challenge your child to use words like “bigger,” “shorter,” and “heavier” to compare the objects.



SCIENCE TIPS

Classifying: Living or Nonliving?

One of the first classifications that kindergarteners learn is living or nonliving. Ask your child how to know whether something is alive. Encourage them to share their thoughts, and then explain that an object is alive if it:

- grows
- breathes
- eats

Explain that living things need food, water, and air to stay alive, and that all living things change and grow. Ask, “Are you living or nonliving?”

Take a walk in your neighborhood and point out objects like vehicles, trees, animals, flowers, and buildings. For each object ask: “Does it eat? Does it need water? Does it breathe?” Have your child categorize the object as living or nonliving based on their answers.

You can extend the activity at home with an object sort. Cut or print out 5–10 images of living and non-living objects. Encourage your child to pick up each picture and classify it as either living or nonliving. Remind your child to ask for each object: “Does it eat? Does it need water? Does it breathe?” to help them make their determination.

SOCIAL STUDIES TIPS

Community: Thanks to All!

Studies show that the practice of gratitude is linked to increased happiness in people, including children as young as five years old. Help your child learn to cultivate a grateful outlook by talking to them about the people in your community who work hard to make where you live great.



Build social skills and show gratitude by encouraging your child to say thank you to the community helpers they interact with, like librarians, volunteers, delivery people, postal workers, and babysitters. Help them learn the names of these community helpers. Point out how these people help you and your family. If your child is interested in or is friendly with a particular helper, guide them to make a thank you card or picture. The next time you and your child see the helper, encourage your child to hand deliver the card. You will be contributing to your child's positive mental health and possibly making a community helper's day!

SPANISH TIPS

Play with Spanish Colors!

As your child learns colors in Spanish, explore them at home, in the car, or wherever you are. Ask questions about the colors of their toys or the clothes they are wearing.

Create a simple game by asking:

- ¿De qué color es? (What color is it?)

Pronunciation: Deh keh koh-lohr ehs?

- Busca algo rojo. (Search for something red.)

Pronunciation: Boo-sca ahl-go roh-ho

- ¿Cómo se dice blue en español? (How do you say blue in Spanish?)

Pronunciation: KOH-moh seh dee-seh blue en eh-spa-nyol



Greet en Español!

Incorporate simple Spanish greetings into your daily routine, such as when waking up (¡Buenos días!), leaving the house (¡Adiós!), or going to bed (¡Buenas noches!). This helps reinforce basic conversational phrases.

Uno, Dos, Tres

Count everyday items with your child, such as steps on the staircase, pieces of fruit, or toys. Start with “Uno, dos, tres,” and gradually increase the numbers as your child becomes more familiar.

Spanish Pronunciation Guide

Visit [this page](#) for our pronunciation guide and example audio files!

PHONICS TIPS

Choosing Books to Read

Encourage children to pick their own books! When children are encouraged to pick their own books, they’re able to explore their own curiosity. They’re more invested in reading and in return, learn even more! Lots of different types of books are good for kids, whether it’s a nonfiction book about dinosaurs, a picture book about a silly dinosaur, or a book from their favorite television show about dinosaurs. What matters most is encouraging children’s interest in reading, which will then lead to a love of reading.

Benefits of Rereading Children’s Favorites

“This book again?” While reading the same book over and over again might not be your favorite activity, rereading books with children can have a lot of important benefits. When children are already familiar with a story, they’re more able to pay attention to other details. They also get more practice at reading quickly and accurately. Consider these ideas for when you reread familiar books:

1. Point out high-frequency words – these are words that are most commonly used in written text and include she, he, I, and, but, and is.
2. Point out word families in rhyming books, such as cat, hat, bat, sat.
3. Point out new vocabulary. For example, you might draw attention to scientific words, silly words, or sound words.

Incorporate Phonics into Games

You can reinforce phonics skills throughout your day. When you're waiting in line, riding in the car, or going for a walk, you can play simple games and sprinkle in phonemic awareness and phonics. Try these!

I Spy:

I spy something that...

starts with b

ends with the /p/ sound

rhymes with cat

How Many Can You Name?

How many animals can you name that start with t?

How many words can you think of that rhyme with "fun"?

How many compound words do you see?

This or That?

Which one starts with f: fry or rice?

Which one has the long o sound: slow or fast?

Which one has the short u sound: sun or moon?



Utilize Environmental Print

"Environmental print" is the print we see in our everyday lives. It includes words on signs, logos, maps, menus, advertisements, packaging and labels. Draw children's attention to the print they see around the home, school, town, and in community places.

For example, while walking or driving around, you can see high-frequency words such as: stop, here, there, please, do, and not. You can decode or sound out words on food menus or in grocery stores. During holidays and special events, you can point out repetitive words and phrases such as "Trick or Treat" "Happy Birthday!" "Back to School" and "Spring Fling."

Invite children to look out for words they see over and over again!

Listen and Learn

Phonological awareness and phonemic awareness—the ability to recognize and manipulate individual sounds—are essential building blocks to learning how to read. It may not be an obvious connection to reading, but listening to music with lyrics can provide lots of opportunities to practice reading-related skills such as rhythm, intonation, and fluency.

Listening to and repeating rhyming lyrics is not only entertaining, it can also provide opportunities for children to practice identifying and manipulating sounds. In your everyday routines driving to and from school, preparing meals, or cleaning up, listen to music together! Ask your child if they can hear and understand the lyrics. Can they repeat and sing along?