



PDX Reading Specialist

Building Strong Readers at Home

Simple, effective practice for building literacy skills.

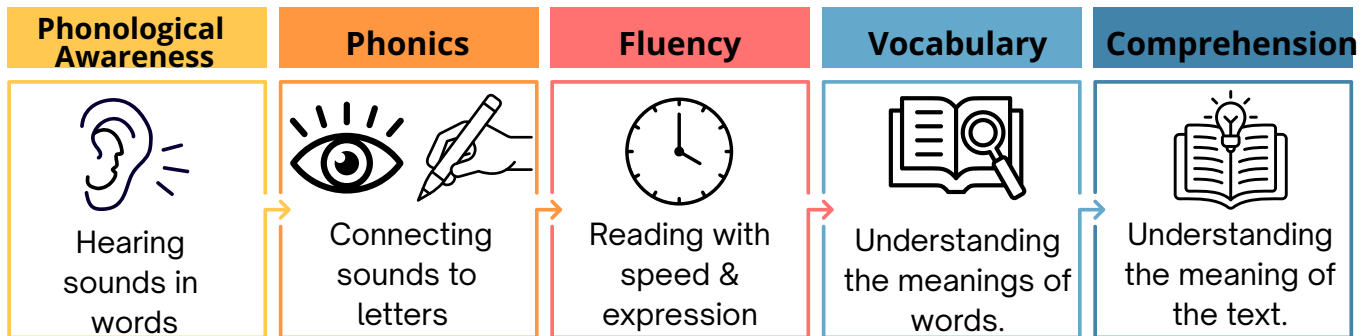


Dear LCSD Families,

Lebanon Community School District is working to help every child become a strong, confident reader. I'm excited to partner with your child's teachers and school—and you are an important part of the team!

Your child is learning to read using teaching practices based on the Science of Reading. This guide gives you simple ways to support that learning at home.

You'll find activities for the five important areas of reading:



You don't need to be a reading teacher! Just practice what your child is already learning at school.

- ✓ Keep It Simple.
- ✓ Keep It Short.
- ✓ Focus on Accuracy
- ✓ Practice What They Know. (Work on skills your child has already learned at school.)

A Few Things to Remember...

- Practice, don't test. If your child doesn't know something, help them. The goal is to learn and build confidence.
- Look at the word. If your child reads a word incorrectly, help them look at the letters and sounds. Don't encourage guessing from pictures.
- Read aloud. Reading to your child builds vocabulary, knowledge, and a love of reading—at every age.
- Keep it positive. Notice effort and growth. If your child gets frustrated, it's okay to stop.
- Ask the teacher. Not sure what to practice? Your child's teacher can tell you which skills will help most.

We're in This Together!

When families and schools work together, children get more chances to practice, learn, and succeed. Together, we can help your child become a confident, capable reader.



Phonological & Phonemic Awareness



These activities build awareness of the sounds in spoken words. For sound-only activities, put the letters away at first and focus on what your child hears. As children become ready, connect sounds to letters.

CLAP THE SYLLABLES

Beginning

- What you need: No materials
- What to do: Say a word. Clap once for each syllable. Then have your child repeat the word and clap it with you.
- Example: tiger → ti-ger → 2 claps; dinosaur → di-no-saur → 3 claps

FIRST-SOUND HUNT

Beginning

- What you need: Objects around the house
- What to do: Choose a sound and hunt for objects whose names begin with it. Say the sound, not the letter name.
- Example: Find things that begin with /m/: mug, marker, mitten.

STRETCH AND BLEND

Developing

- What you need: No materials
- What to do: Say a short word by stretching or separating its sounds. Ask your child to blend the sounds and say the whole word. Begin with words that are easy to stretch.
- Example: /mmm/ /aaa/ /p/ → map; /sss/ /uuu/ /n/ → sun

PUSH A COUNTER FOR EACH SOUND

Developing

- What you need: 3–5 coins, buttons, or small counters
- What to do: Say a word. Have your child repeat it slowly and push one counter forward for each sound they hear. The number of sounds is not always the number of letters.
- Example: ship → /sh/ /i/ /p/ → 3 counters; clock → /k/ /l/ /o/ /k/ → 4 counters

SOUND SWITCH

More Advanced

- What you need: No materials or counters
- What to do: Say a word and ask your child to change one sound to make a new word. Model the change when needed.
- Example: Change the /m/ in map to /t/ → tap. Change the /i/ in sit to /a/ → sat.

Phonics: Reading & Spelling Words



Phonics connects speech sounds to print. Use the sound-spelling patterns your child has already been taught at school. Encourage your child to look through the whole word and use the letters—not pictures or guessing—to read it.

SOUND–LETTER MATCH

Beginning

- What you need: Letter cards or magnetic letters
- What to do: Say a sound and have your child choose the letter that represents it. Reverse the task by showing a letter and asking for its sound.
- Example: You say /f/ → child selects f.

CONTINUOUS BLENDING

Developing

- What you need: A short list of decodable words
- What to do: Point under each letter from left to right while your child says the sounds without stopping between them, then says the word.
- Example: map: /mmmmaap/ → map; ship: /shhhiip/ → ship

MAP THE SOUNDS TO LETTERS

Developing

- What you need: Counters plus letter tiles or paper
- What to do: Say a word. First, push one counter for each sound. Then replace each counter with the letter or letters that spell that sound. Read the finished word.
- Example: chat → /ch/ /a/ /t/ → ch | a | t

WORD CHAINS

Developing

- What you need: Magnetic letters, letter tiles, or paper
- What to do: Build one word. Change only one sound/letter at a time and read the new word after every change. Ask your child what changed.
- Example: map → mat → sat → sit → sip

SAY IT, BUILD IT, WRITE IT

Developing

- What you need: Letter tiles and paper
- What to do: Say a word containing a pattern your child knows. Have your child repeat it, segment the sounds, build it with letters, read it, then write it from memory.
- Example: float → /f/ /l/ /ō/ /t/ → f l oa t

SORT BY SPELLING PATTERN

More Advanced

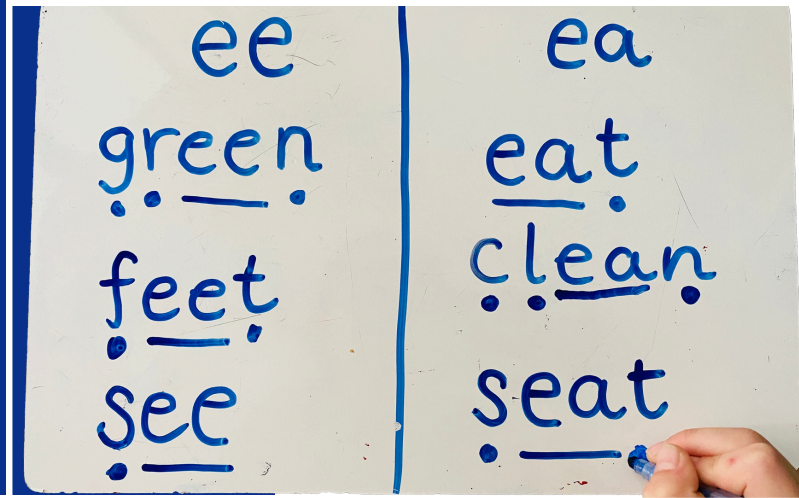
- What you need: Word cards
- What to do: Choose two or three spelling patterns your child has learned. Read each word and sort it by its spelling pattern. After sorting, reread each column.
- Example: long a: a_e (cake), ai (rain), ay (play)

READ LONGER WORDS BY PARTS

More Advanced

- What you need: Multisyllabic word cards
- What to do: Help your child identify manageable parts—syllables, prefixes, suffixes, or familiar spelling patterns. Read each part, then blend the whole word.
- Example: sunset → sun + set; replaying → re + play + ing

Building Automatic Word Reading



The goal is for words and familiar word parts to become quick and effortless—but accuracy comes first. Repeated practice should use words your child can decode or has been explicitly taught.

READ-COVER-READ

Beginning/Developing

- What you need: 5–10 previously taught words
- What to do: Have your child read each word accurately. Cover it, uncover it, and read it again. Mix the cards and reread. Keep the set small enough for success.
- Example: Use words with the week’s phonics pattern.

MAP A TRICKY HIGH-FREQUENCY WORD

Developing

- What you need: Paper and pencil
- What to do: Say the word and stretch the sounds. Write the word and identify which letters spell each sound. Point out any part of the spelling your child needs to remember “by heart.”
- Example: said: /s/ is s, /d/ is d; the spelling ai for /e/ is the part to remember.

QUICK REVIEW—NO RACING

All Levels

- What you need: A small stack of mastered word or sound cards
- What to do: Have your child read the cards accurately at a comfortable pace. Repeat the same small set across several days. Notice when reading becomes smoother and easier rather than emphasizing a timer.



Morphology & Word Building

Morphemes are meaningful parts of words. Learning common bases, prefixes, and suffixes helps children read, spell, and understand increasingly complex words.

COMPOUND WORD DETECTIVE

Beginning

- What you need: No materials or everyday print
- What to do: Find compound words and identify the two smaller words inside each one. Talk about how the two meanings help explain the whole word.
- Example: raincoat = rain + coat; playground = play + ground

ADD AN ENDING

Developing

- What you need: Base-word and suffix cards
- What to do: Start with a familiar base word. Add an ending and discuss what changed in meaning or grammar. Read and spell the new word.
- Example: jump + ed = jumped; help + ful = helpful

BUILD A WORD FAMILY

More Advanced

- What you need: Index cards
- What to do: Choose a base and build related words with prefixes and suffixes. Discuss how each added part changes the meaning.
- Example: act → action → active → react → inactive

MORPHEME HUNT

More Advanced

- What you need: A book or school text
- What to do: Choose a common prefix or suffix. Find words containing it, underline the meaningful parts, and discuss what the parts contribute.
- Example: unhappy → un + happy; rereading → re + read + ing

Reading Fluency



Fluent reading is accurate, reasonably automatic, and expressive. Choose text your child can read with a high level of accuracy. If your child is struggling to decode many words, use an easier text.

ECHO READING

All Levels

- What you need: A short passage or book
- What to do: Read one sentence or short phrase aloud with natural expression. Your child rereads the same part, trying to match your phrasing and expression.

READ TOGETHER

All Levels

- What you need: A short passage or book
- What to do: Read aloud at the same time. Keep your voice steady and supportive. Gradually lower your voice when your child is reading confidently.

REPEATED READING

Developing

- What you need: A short, familiar passage
- What to do: Have your child read the same short passage several times across a few days. Give brief help on difficult words and notice improvements in accuracy, smoothness, and expression.

PHRASE-SCOOP READING

Developing

- What you need: A printed passage and pencil
- What to do: Mark natural phrase boundaries with curved lines or slashes. Model reading the sentence in meaningful phrases, then have your child reread it.
- Example: After dinner / we walked to the park / with our dog. //

Vocabulary & Oral Language



Vocabulary grows through conversation, reading aloud, and explicit attention to interesting words. Children can learn sophisticated words through listening even when they cannot yet read those words independently.

INTERESTING WORD OF THE DAY

All Levels

- What you need: A word from conversation or a read-aloud
- What to do: Explain the word in child-friendly language, give an example, and use it several times during the day. Invite your child to use it too.
- Example: enormous = very, very large. “That truck is enormous!”

MULTIPLE MEANINGS

Developing

- What you need: No materials
- What to do: Choose a familiar word with more than one meaning. Discuss and act out or draw the different meanings.
- Example: bat: an animal; a baseball bat

DESCRIBE IT THREE WAYS

All Levels

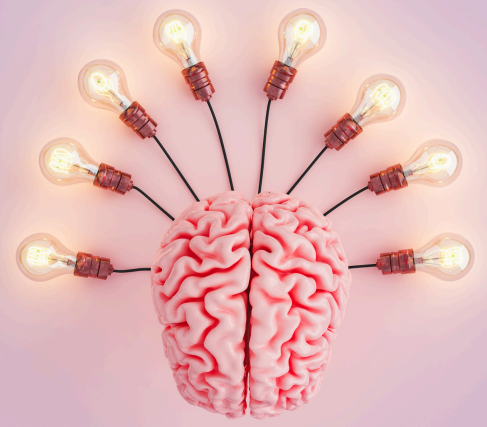
- What you need: An object, picture, or person
- What to do: Ask your child to describe something using three precise words. Expand their language by offering a more specific word when appropriate.
- Example: Instead of “nice dog,” try playful, gentle, energetic.

WORD-PART MEANING

More Advanced

- What you need: Words with familiar prefixes/suffixes
- What to do: Break a word into meaningful parts and use the parts to predict its meaning. Confirm the meaning in the sentence.
- Example: unhelpful → un + help + ful → “not helpful”

Comprehension: Understanding What We Read



Comprehension can be developed through books children read themselves and through books adults read aloud. Read-alouds are especially valuable because children can think and talk about ideas that are more complex than the text they can yet decode independently.

BEFORE–DURING–AFTER TALK

All Levels

- What you need: Any story or informational text
- What to do: Before reading, preview the topic. During reading, pause occasionally to clarify or wonder. After reading, ask your child to tell the most important ideas in their own words.

RETELL THE STORY

All Levels

- What you need: A story
- What to do: Ask your child to retell what happened using a simple structure: Who? Where? What was the problem or goal? What happened? How did it end?

MAIN IDEA + KEY DETAILS

Developing

- What you need: A nonfiction book or article
- What to do: Ask: “What is this mostly about?” Then identify two or three details that teach something important about that topic.

TEXT EVIDENCE TALK

Developing/Advanced

- What you need: Any text
- What to do: Ask a question that requires your child to return to the text. Have them point to the words or part of the story that helped them answer.
- Example: “What makes you think the character was worried? Show me the part that helped you know.”

Your child doesn't have to be able to read a book independently to learn from it.