

First Grade

Resources for Parents

Jaja & Katherine



Our Mission:

Friends Seminary educates students from kindergarten through twelfth grade, adhering to the values of the Religious Society of Friends. We strive to build a diverse school where students exercise their curiosity and imagination as they develop as scholars, artists and athletes. In a community that cultivates the practices of keen observation, unhurried reflection, critical thinking, and coherent expression, we listen for the single voice as we seek unity. The disciplines of silence, study, and service provide the matrix for growth: silence opens us to change; study helps us to know the world; service challenges us to put our values into practice. At Friends Seminary, education is rooted in the Quaker belief in the Inner Light – that of God in every person. Guided by the testimonies of integrity, peace, equality, and simplicity, we prepare students to engage in the world that is and to help bring about a world that ought to be.

Adopted December 2015

First Grade Reading Tips

1. In First Grade, children should practice their reading at home for at least 15 minutes a day. Help them choose books that are at a “just right” reading level. If your child reads a page and makes fewer than 3 mistakes, it is likely a “just right” reading level for them (see just right reading sheet below).
2. Read to your child regularly. Support your child’s vocabulary by reading books that are on a higher reading level than what they can read on their own. By making reading a special time together, your child will have positive associations with reading. When you read with your child, try to make predictions, ask questions about the story, discuss the characters, and read with expression.
3. Point out words in the environment and encourage your child to read them (e.g. signs, menus, restaurants, stores, cereal boxes, etc.)
4. Model good reading habits. Whenever possible let your child see you reading. Make sure that books are readily visible and accessible in your home.
5. Pair reading with learning songs. Structure activities that allow your child to see, hear and touch objects and the associated letters and words. Also have fun with books that have rhymes and songs so that your child can “sing along”.
6. Play games such as:
 - A) Go Fish, Bingo, and Memory with “Sight Words”
 - B) “I Spy” with letters, numbers and words
 - C) Use magnetic letters or alphabet cards to make words

7. Always include children in simple reading tasks like letting them “read” and complete a recipe.
8. Be responsive to your child's reading desires. Allow your child to choose the book. Also, if one book is a favorite and your child wants to have it read 100 times, do so. Memorizing story lines is one of the first steps to reading.
9. As you read books and study words, point out phonetic patterns that are similar or that repeat like “sh” or “th.” Practice rhyming with your child and play rhyming games.
10. When reading together, let your child be the “expert” about the book. Before reading a book, have them “preview” it and see if they can infer anything about the story or characters. Then, pause as you're reading and see if the child can guess what will happen next. For stories that your child knows, change the story as you read and let them correct you.
11. Praise your child as they learn and use language. You may also want to offer special reading incentives, like “reading hugs.”
12. Encourage writing about reading even if the child is only “play writing,” drawing or collecting pictures about things they have read. Discuss what your child has written and how it relates to the story to encourage the child's personal connections to reading materials.
13. Ask your child what they would like to read about then create a book and read it together. You can use magazine pictures as illustrations or your child can illustrate the book for you.

14. Play word and letter games like Scrabble, Slam, Bananagrams, and Boggle.
15. When your child begins to read, let them read to you even if the child can only read part of the story. If the child gets stuck, read together for awhile then let them read alone again. Do not correct every error as they read aloud. Only correct errors made repeatedly or errors on major words. When you do correct errors, let the child finish reading first. Then go back and have them “relook” at and not re-read where they made mistakes to see if corrections are made. If not, read the words together then have the child re-read the same part.
Remember to always make reading fun and important in your home!

A Guide for Action When Helping Children Read

IF CHILDREN...

Make a miscue (mistake) and correct the error...

- Offer praise or support for their self-correction.
- “That was great! I like the way you did that all by yourself.”
- “I noticed what you did then. You fixed it up. Good readers do that.”
Come to a word they don't know and pause...
- Wait 3-4 seconds to give them time for problem solving—no longer or they may lose meaning.
- If they're successful, encourage them to read on to maintain meaning— don't interfere too often if successful.
- If meaning is lost you can ask them to go back to the beginning of the sentence (“Try that again”).

- Ask a question that will give a clue to the meaning OR Ask them to predict a word that would make sense (“What do you think it will be?”)
- If the word is not likely to be known, then say it quickly and encourage reading on to maintain fluency.

Make a miscue (mistake), that does not make sense...

- Wait 3-4 seconds to see if it self-corrected and offer praise if it is.
- If there is no self-correction, ask “Does that make sense?” OR Ask a question that will give a clue to the meaning of the sentence (e.g. “What do you think is going to happen?”)
- Do nothing until the child has finished, but when the child has finished you can go back and say, “Something’s not quite right. Can you find it?”
- The helper re-reads the passage with the miscue. “You said...” and emphasize the error with your voice and ask, “Is that right?”
- ***If the reader makes more than 1 uncorrected miscue in every 10 words (90% accuracy or less), then the text is probably too challenging for independent reading.

5 Minute Activities/Games to Reinforce Literacy Skills

- **Rhyme Game** - Pick a word family (-at, -ag, -in, etc.) and using an alphabet chart or magnetic letters as a prompt say as many words as you can. (For example, using the word family -ag -- bag, sag, tag, lag, gag, snag, etc.). For an extension, you can write the words down. Then verbally make up some sentences using two, three or four words from the same word family. They can be silly! (For example, for the word family -in, "I grin when I spin.") You can also pick your favorite sentence and write it somewhere for another day. Then you can write the sentence on paper and illustrate it.
- **Bingo** - Make up a bingo board and write a sight word in each square. Then using index cards, on each card write a sight word from the bingo board. To play, shuffle the index cards, pick up an index card and say the sight word, cover the matching word on your board. Try to get three in a row or go for "black out" by covering all the words.
- **Concentration** or **Go Fish** - Use index cards, choose 10 short vowel words and make up 20 cards (every word must be written on two different index cards so you can find matches).
- **Letter Blending Game** - Think of a word and then say each sound in the word, the other person has to blend it together to figure out the word; take turns thinking of a word and giving each sound in a word because separating sounds and blending sounds are both important parts of decoding (ex. f - i - sh = fish. For an extension, the words have to all belong to a particular category that has to be guessed.
- **Make a New Word** - Start with a three or four letter word and take turns changing one letter, removing one letter or adding one letter to make a new word. Continue until you have 10 new words. (For example, cat, hat, chat, chap, clap, lap, map, sap, snap, snip)
- **Scavenger Rhyming Hunt** - Choose a one syllable word, go around the house looking for as many rhyming words as you can find. Write them in a notebook or dry erase board and share your rhymes.
- **Blending Game** - Have two sets of index cards. For the first pile of index cards write a consonant or blend (pl, sn, cr, etc.) in red on each card. On the other pile of index cards write a common word family (-at, -ill, -in, etc.) on each card using a blue pen. Pick a beginning letter(s) index card and then a word family index card. Blend the two cards together. Did they make a word? If not, try again. Every time you make a word, write it down.
- **Journal Writing** - Write in a journal for 5 minutes. You can write about anything but the trick is you have to keep writing for 5 minutes.

- **Object Writing** - Find an object and describe it in writing (what does it look like, feel like, smell like, sound like, taste like, what does it do). Can someone guess what it is from your description?
- **Word Detective Game** - Before reading, find words on the page that you don't know and decode them ahead of time.
- **Readers' Theater**: turn a book into a play (not to be done in one sitting) - Rewrite a story into a play form. Next draw the characters and cut them out. The drawings can then be taped or glued onto popsicle sticks. Practice reading the lines with inflection and then perform.

Too Easy



I can read the words very easily and quickly.

I do not have to think about what I am reading.

Staying Cool in the Library

Too Hard



There are many words I do not know.

I have to go back and re-read what I just read.

I do not understand what I am reading.

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Just Right



There are only a few words I do not know.

I understand most of what I am reading.

I like what I am reading.

Staying Cool in the Library

5 Finger Rule

Find a book you want to read

Open the book to any page

Make a fist with your hand and begin to read

Put up one finger for every word you do not know

When you get to the end of the page, how many fingers do you have up?

0-1 fingers: Too Easy
2-3 fingers: Just Right
4 fingers: A Little Hard
5 or more fingers: Too Hard



Staying Cool in the Library

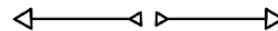
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Choose a just right book

Too Easy:
I can read the words very easily and quickly. I do not have to think about what I am reading.



Too Hard:
There are many words I do not know. I have to go back and re-read what I just read. I do not understand what I am reading.



Just Right:
There are only a few words I do not know. I understand most of what I am reading. I like what I am reading.



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Beginning Reader Books

The Wright Group

www.wrightgroup.com

- Sunshine/Nonfiction Level 1
- Sunshine/Emergent Readers
- Sunshine/Fiction Level 1
- Story Box/Emergent Readers

Scholastic

www.scholastic.com

- Time-to-Discover
- Learning Center/Emergent Readers
- Science Readers/Emergent Readers
- Welcome Books

Educators Publishing Service

www.epsbooks.com/

- Primary Phonics/Sets 1 and 2
- The Alphabet Series
- Spire Series

Bob Books for Beginning Readers

www.bobbooks.com or any local bookstore



eeny meeny miny mo

Tips for helping your child pick a book!

Ask 'What'

What are you interested in reading about? Would you like a fiction book or a nonfiction book? Ask which genre they'd like to try. Let your child's interests guide them!

Ask 'Why'

It's important to establish the purpose of reading, even if that purpose is for enjoyment! Ask your child what seems interesting about their book selection.

Browse

Check out local libraries, book stores or our digital library catalog! It's a great way to find fresh new ideas about different topics; your child may discover a whole new topic of interest!

Say "Yes" as Often as Possible

Even if a book looks too easy, too short or too long. It's important that children feel in control of their reading choices- even if that means just looking at the pictures!

Read Alouds & Read Alongs

If your child is interested in a book that is developmentally appropriate but above their reading level, read it to him/her/them or you can read it together!

Birds of a Feather Flock Together

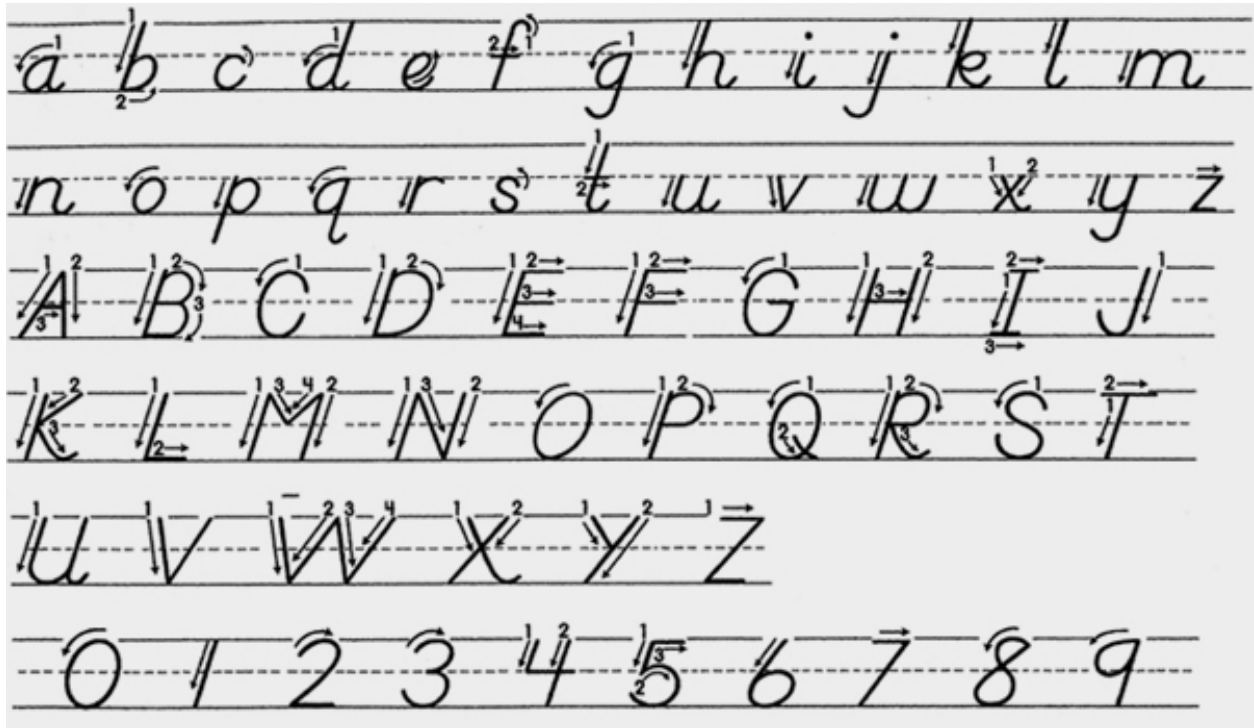
Has your child fallen in love with a book? Check to see if it's part of a series or a collection. If not, maybe try another book by the same author.

Talk to Friends

Getting in the habit of talking about our reading experiences with friends is a great way to discover books about shared interests!

Talk to Paula!

Paula is the LS Librarian and she loves talking about books! Stuck for ideas? Come by before or after school!



First Grade Writing Tips:

1. Provide your child with many different fine motor activities such as cutting, pasting and playing with puzzles.
2. Make writing part of your family's everyday life.
3. Write a letter (to friend or family member who lives far away, etc.)
4. Make lists (holiday/birthday wish list, shopping list for the grocery store, etc.)
5. Keep a journal.
6. Leave notes for your child in their backpack or in their bedroom.
7. Keep a D'Nealian alphabet strip on your child's desk.

Printable d'nealian
alphabet strip for
writing at home

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm
Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

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100 Most Common Words

Words 1-25

Words 26-50

Words 51-75

Words 76-100

the	or	will	number
of	one	up	no
and	had	other	way
a	by	about	could
to	word	out	people
in	but	many	my
is	not	then	than
you	what	them	first
that	all	these	water
it	were	so	been
he	we	some	call
was	when	her	who
for	your	would	oil
on	can	make	its
are	said	like	now
as	there	him	find
with	use	into	long
his	an	time	down
they	each	has	day
I	which	look	did
at	she	two	get
be	do	more	come
this	how	write	made
have	their	go	may
from	if	see	part

Common suffixes: *-s, -ing, -ed, -er, -ly, -est*



Supporting your Child's Math Learning at Home

September 29, 2022

Dear Parents,

To reinforce the math experiences your child is having in school, we encourage you to ask them about math in their classroom. The act of describing an activity or discussing a new idea is a great way for students to review and consolidate their understanding of concepts.

We also suggest that you visit the Lower School Mathematics Blog at <http://blogs.friendsseminary.org/lsmathematics/> (password: friendscommunity). There you can find our list of suggested games, apps, and websites along with many fun math challenges!

It is beneficial for your child to attempt all math problems independently before seeking help. There is no replacement for the time that a student sits on their own to explore a concept. The "struggle" to understand is an important part of the learning process, and without it students will not achieve the depth of understanding necessary to apply concepts to alternative situations.

Attached are some tips to help guide mathematical conversations with your child.

Hilary Berliner & Monica Witt
Math Specialists

The following is adapted from *Michigan State University, Connected Mathematics Project*:

One goal in helping children learn is to assist them in figuring out as much as they can for themselves (e.g., constructing meaning). Ask questions that guide, without telling what to do. Good questions and good listening will help children make sense of mathematics, build self-confidence, and encourage mathematical thinking and communication. A good question can help students clarify a problem and support different ways of thinking about it. You do not need to know how to do the problem to support your child's learning.

Here are some questions you might try; notice that none of them can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." By using these questions, you will be building on in-class experiences and contributing to your child's success.

Solving a Problem

Getting Started on the Problem

- Are there words you do not understand?
- What is the problem about? Can you tell me in your own words?
- What do you need to find out?
- What do you know?
- Have you solved similar problems that would help you get started?

While Working

- Can you tell me what you know so far?
- How can you organize the information?
- Can you make a diagram or picture to help you get started?
- What might you need to do next?
- Do you see any patterns so far?
- Can you make a prediction?
- Explain to me what you were thinking when you did this...?

Reflecting about the solution

- Has the question been answered?
- Does your answer make sense? Is it reasonable?
- How did you arrive at your answer?
- How can you convince me your answer makes sense?
- What did you try that did not work?
- Can the explanation be made clearer?

Responding (helping your children clarify and extend their thinking)

- Can you explain it in a different way?
- Is there another possibility or strategy that would help you get to the same solution?
- Are there any questions you want to ask your teacher?

Doing More Math at Home

Two important goals for all students are that 1) they learn to value mathematics and 2) they become confident in their ability to do mathematics. Parents can help children develop a "can do" disposition toward math by nurturing their children's natural curiosity and providing support and encouragement. The following ideas were taken from the Administrative Notebook for Middle School Mathematics, Plano Independent School District, Plano, Texas.

Math is everywhere, yet many children don't see it. Look for ways to point out and reinforce math skills at home. For example:

- talk about how you use math at work or in the home
- involve children in tasks that require computing, measuring, estimating, building, following directions, problem solving and reasoning
- look for activities that require children to use their math skills such as building scale models, cooking, planning trips, and playing logic games

Look for games and activities that teach and/or reinforce math and thinking. For example, look for games that:

- require and develop skill with mental computation and estimation
- require players to use their math skills
- involve the development of strategies
- require players to think about the probability of certain events occurring
- require the use of spatial visualization skills
- require logical thinking

When you see articles that have data that might interest your children, share them and talk about what the numbers mean.

Share your problem-solving strategies and techniques, mental computation strategies, and estimation strategies. Have your children teach you some of theirs. Work on the same problem, then compare strategies as well as answers.

Invite your children to explain what was learned in math class or have them teach it to you. It provides an opportunity for children to help clarify their thinking, to practice new skills, and to practice communicating mathematically.