Reading is an essential skill for learning in all subjects. The ability to read well leads to success in school and life. As the parent or caregiver, your involvement really helps your child become a confident student and lifelong reader. It’s okay to explore the joy of reading together! The “So You’re Parenting...” tipsheets for grades PreK-3 give you helpful activities and ideas to prepare your child for Ohio’s Third Grade Reading Guarantee.

**What is the Third Grade Reading Guarantee?**

In 2012, the Ohio Legislature passed a bill that says that students who do not reach a passing score on the 3rd grade state reading test will receive additional support in order to advance to the required reading level.

Although it is called the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, your child will be assessed in reading at the beginning of each grade from kindergarten to 3rd grade. If your child is not at the required reading level, your school will tell you about services your child will receive.

There are also many ways you can help your child with reading. If you need more information, see the Family Resources on the Ohio Department of Education’s website: tinyurl.com/ohiotgrg

**Start helping your child before kindergarten**

Your child is not expected to be able to read yet. You can help your child develop important pre-reading skills so she will be ready to begin to learn to read in kindergarten and through 3rd grade.

Research shows over and over again that children learn better in school when caregivers talk and read with them, give them books, and do activities together with words and letters from birth through kindergarten.

The National Early Literacy Panel’s landmark report, *Developing Early Literacy*, found that reading and writing skills that are developed in the years from birth to age 5 have a clear, consistently strong relationship with later literacy skills.

**Activities to do with your child to build pre-reading skills**

*Five simple practices - talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing - will help you develop language and pre-reading skills in your child.*

**Talking**

- Ask your child open-ended questions (that cannot be answered with yes/no).
- Ask questions that start with what, when, how. I wonder what would happen next or happen if. Encourage conversation by waiting for your child to respond.
- Build vocabulary and background knowledge by telling your child what you know about a variety of topics.
- Encourage your child to describe familiar people, places, things and experiences - this helps him build speaking, vocabulary, and narrative (sequence of events) skills.

*Developing Early Literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel. lincs.ed.gov/earlychildhood/NELP/NELPreport.html*
Activities to do with your child to build reading skills

Singing

Sing songs together. Singing helps children hear sounds within words because the words are drawn out. Children hear each syllable with a different note. Many songs have words not heard in everyday conversation, so singing helps to build vocabulary (for example, “fetch” in “Jack and Jill,” “twinkle” in “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”). Use a songbook or printed lyric sheet to follow along, and point out words in the chorus or repeated lines.

Reading

When reading a book, tell your child what the author and illustrator do as you say their names. After sharing a favorite story, ask your child questions about the story, and encourage him to identify and comment about characters and major events in the story.

Read informational (fact-based) books to your child, encouraging her to tell you what she knows about the topic.

Register your child for a library card at your public library. Ask the children’s librarian for tips on reading together and recommendations of books and media your child will enjoy.

Writing

Regularly give your child paper and pencil or crayons. “Write” letters and words together. Your child may use a combination of drawing, scribbling, and actual letters.

Engage in pretend writing and reading with your child. Encourage your child to scribble a “story” or “shopping list”, then read it to you.

Pretend to go shopping together using your child’s list, or bring it when you and your child go to the grocery store.

Playing

Play with blocks, puzzles, and sorting or matching games together. Use foam, magnet, or block letters in play.

Visit INFOhio’s Early Learning Portal (www.infohio.org/early-learning) to find World Book Early Learning and other quality websites and apps featuring books and learning games chosen to help preschool students be kindergarten ready. You can visit the Early Learning Portal at your public library or anywhere internet access is available.

Encourage imaginative or “pretend” play, which helps children make decisions, cooperate, carry on a conversation, and explore real-world situations.

Community Support for Your Child’s Reading

As your child grows, create relationships with supportive community members who know a lot about reading. Enjoy the public library and meet the children’s librarian beginning now, and get to know the school librarian and PTA when your child starts kindergarten.

● The public librarian will help you find enjoyable, easy books and can recommend strategies to help make reading a fun, healthy part of your everyday life.

● The school librarian will be your hero, as he or she will recommend great books and fun series that will keep your child involved in reading.

● The school’s PTA will help you connect with an active network of parents who care about education. Don’t be timid about talking with other parents and swapping ideas about age-appropriate reading activities that have worked for them.

Don’t let reading readiness slide in the summer! Participate in your public library’s summer reading program, or just hang out at the library with your child and enjoy the books and activities that are free for your use.

“Reading ‘Round the Clock” is a service of the Ohio Educational Library Media Association (OELMA), the Ohio PTA, INFOhio, and the State Library of Ohio.

For more information: www.infohio.org/goto/RRtC

Reading Activity Videos

Reading on the Go dvc.infohio.org/51601
Reading for a Purpose dvc.infohio.org/51600
Reading on the Screen dvc.infohio.org/51602

“Reading ‘Round the Clock” is a service of the Ohio Educational Library Media Association (OELMA), the Ohio PTA, INFOhio, and the State Library of Ohio.

For more information: www.infohio.org/goto/RRtC