

Gulf District Schools



Comprehensive Read-at-Home Plan

Letter to Parents

Parents/Guardians,

You are your child's first and most important teacher, playing an integral role in your child's academic success. Reading with your child, even for just 20 minutes a day, is a proven way to promote early language and literacy. We encourage you to implement a few simple strategies at home daily to make a positive impact on your child's success in school.

Gulf District Schools is dedicated to helping children reach their maximum potential as lifelong learners and proficient readers by third grade. To support language and literacy acquisition at home, the District has developed a Read-at-Home Plan. The purpose of the read at home plan is to provide parents/guardians with guidance and resources needed to help ensure their child is successful in school. This Read-at-Home Plan includes reading and multisensory strategies you can implement at home as part of your daily routine or on-the-go to make a positive impact on your child's success in school. Multisensory strategies that integrate visual, auditory, tactile (touch), and kinesthetic (movement) learning are included to assist students with understanding new information, learning ways to remember the information, and having more ways to recall it later on.

Sincerely,

Gulf District Schools

PARENT GUIDES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

The Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards for English Language Arts (ELA) are literacy standards for Florida students that will shape their education and make Florida the most literate state in the nation. The B.E.S.T. Standards will pave the way for Florida students to receive a world-class education and prepare them for a successful future. Parent Guides have been developed to help families learn more about the new B.E.S.T. ELA Standards.

[Parent Guides for English Language Arts \(fldoe.org\)](http://fldoe.org)

SUPPORTING READING AT HOME

Learning to read begins at home through everyday interactions with children, long before they attend school. Supporting literacy development as children enter elementary school and progress through grades positively affects their reading ability. The Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast (REL-SE) provides family activities with easy-to-follow instructions to help children practice foundational reading skills at home. Foundational skills include oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Phonological awareness, alphabetic skills and language skills are the best predictors of early reading success (B.E.S.T., Appendix E, p. 206). There are short family videos for tips and support on how to use the activities to help children grow as readers. Using the family activities at home can help children develop language, link sounds to letters, blend letters and word parts to read and write the words and ultimately read for understanding.

[Supporting Your Child's Reading at Home \(ed.gov\)](http://ed.gov)

Research suggests reading at home helps your child learn to use spoken language, build vocabulary, enhance listening skills, and improve critical thinking. Becoming a proficient reader requires practice. Studies show the more time a child spends reading, the more he/she will achieve in school. The table below provides some simple suggestions you can implement when reading with your child at home to support your child in becoming a proficient reader.

Before You Read	While You Read	After You Read
Draw your child's attention to the title.	Point out specific words in a text.	Ask your child to share what they remember.
Discuss what the text might be about.	Draw your child's attention to the print.	Talk about your favorite parts.
Look through the text and discuss the pictures.	Read out loud to your child	Talk about what you have learned from the reading.
Find a warm comfortable spot to read together.	Echo read (you read a line, and they repeat).	Help connect the reading to your child's life or other books they've read.
Open the book wide to show the pictures.	Read together at the same time.	Have your child retell the story.
Make predictions about the text.	Talk to your child about the reading.	Discuss with your child how the story could be extended.

The classroom teacher will determine if a child is struggling in reading. The teacher will consult with the parent/guardian to implement a progress monitoring plan (PMP). The PMP is designed to provide the child with appropriate interventions that meet the child's specific need(s). A copy of the plan is sent home with the child to ensure parents/guardians are aware of the intervention(s) their child is receiving.

We encourage you to schedule a time to visit your child's teacher to further discuss the identified needs as well as the plan to address his/her deficiencies. Your child's teacher will also share strategies you can use to support your child at home. Our goal is to work in collaboration to ensure that your child reaches his/her full academic potential.

Below are some suggestions to help build your child's reading skills*:

Kindergarten

- Read predictable books to your child. Teach him to hear and say repeating words, such as names for colors, numbers, letters and animals. Predictable books help children to understand how stories progress. A child easily learns familiar phrases and repeats them, pretending to read.
- Practice the sounds of language by reading books with rhymes and playing simple word games (i.e. *How many words can you make up that sound like the word "bat"?*)

First Grade

- Point out the letter-sound relationships your child is learning on labels, boxes, newspapers and magazines.
- Listen to your child read words and books from school. Be patient and listen as he practices. Let him know you are proud of his reading.

Second & Third Grade

- Build reading accuracy by having your child read aloud and point out words she missed and help her read words correctly. If you stop to focus on a word, have your child reread the whole sentence to be sure she understands the meaning.

**Taken from the U.S. Department of Education "Helping Your Child Become a Reader" and The Partnership for Reading "Put Reading First" publications.*

Multisensory strategies integrate visual, auditory, tactile (touch), and kinesthetic (movement) learning to assist students with understanding new information, learning ways to remember the information, and having more ways to recall it later on. At times, taste may also be used. These different methods of learning stimulate different parts of the brain. This helps students discover their unique learning style and which techniques work best for their learning. Multisensory strategies are effective for all learners and help break down barriers to learning. Several strategies through the Read-at-Home plan incorporate multisensory strategies. Here are a few more for each different method of learning below.

Visual

- Use painting, posters, video, creative visual design elements, and visual aids.
- Play tic-tac-toe with words.
- Create word flip books.
- Point out letters and words in real life situations and the environment.
- Use graphic organizers to assist with comprehension and retelling stories.

Auditory

- Use music, singing, rhymes, audio tones, lyrics, clapping, and conversations.
- Integrate rhyming into your daily routines.
- Read poetry and rhyming books.
- Play around with Tongue Twisters.
- Read aloud. Repeat readings. Recording your child's reading.
- Model reading with expression.
- Listening to books on CDs.
- Go on a sound walk and record all the sounds that you hear.

Tactile (touch)

- Use letter tiles, coins, dominoes, sand, raised line paper, textures, and finger paints.
- Write letters and words in shaving cream, oatmeal, or cornmeal.
- Spell and stamp words with/in playdough.
- Use sandpaper, chalk, and Legos to create letters/words.

Kinesthetic (movement)

- Use air and sand writing.
- Write letters with your finger on your child's back and have them guess the letter.
- Use body movements such as jumping rope for sounds and clapping in rhythm.
- Manipulate letters and/or words with blocks, beads, bingo chips, magnetic letters, letter tiles, stamps, or puffy paint.
- Act out a story after listening to it.
- Use puppets to re-enact the story or a scene to build fluency.
- Create a comprehension ball with a beach ball. Write Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How on the ball. Throw it to your child and have your child answer questions one at a time.
- Play Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes with sounds. Say a word and have your child touch his/her head for the first sound, shoulders for the second sound, and knees for the third while saying each sound.

Taste (Caution: Please consider any allergies your child may have.)

- Use scented play dough, markers, bubble bath to draw or create letters/words.
- Find food that starts with particular letters of the alphabet you're working on. For example: *m* is for mango, muffin, macaroni, mushrooms, and milk.
- Use crackers and write letters on them using canned cheese. Combine them to spell names, sight words, and phonics patterns.



Oral Language is the means in which children communicate their thoughts, ideas and emotions. It is a child’s most powerful learning tool. Children internalize new knowledge through discussion with their peers. They learn how words work through listening to, talking about, and working with them.

Oral Language Activities (K-1)

- Practice using proper speech that is simple and clear for your child to model.
- Build vocabulary by introducing a new word and discuss its definition. Practice using the word in a sentence that is easily understood. For example, you could say “I think I will drive the *vehicle* to the store. I am too tired to walk.”
- Talk about spatial relationships (first, middle, and last; right and left) and opposites (up and down; on and off).
- Offer a description or clues, and have your child identify what you are describing. For example, say “We use it to sweep the floor.” (a broom). “It is cold, sweet, and good for dessert. I like strawberry.” (ice cream).
- Help your child follow two- and three-step directions like, “Go to your room, and bring me your book.”
- Encourage your child to give directions. Follow his or her directions as she/she explains how to build a tower of blocks.
- Practice naming everyday items. For example, you can name utensils while in the kitchen.
- Talk about the characters in a story. Are they happy or sad?
- Act out a scene of a story together, and make up a different ending.

Oral Language Activities (Grades 2-3)

- Practice reciting short poems and songs with your child.
- Have your child practice using language from stories and informational texts when retelling or making a prediction.
- Practice using descriptive words to describe a character or setting of a story.
- Engage in role play with your child.
- Help your child perform plays using puppets.
- Play games with your child such as “house”. Exchange roles in the family, with you pretending to be the child.
- Build vocabulary by introducing a new word and offer its definition, or use it in a context that is easily understood. For example, say “I think I will drive the *vehicle* to the store. I am too tired to walk.”
- While shopping for groceries, discuss what you will buy, how many you may need, and what you will make. Discuss the size (large or small), shape (long, round, square), and weight (heavy or light) of the packages.
- Discuss the foods on a menu, their color, texture, and taste.

Oral Language Activities (Grades 4-6)

- Practice conversational turn taking with your child.
- Use descriptive language when talking about this topic.
- Model how to listen to others respectfully and responsibly.
- Have your child recall or restate what he/she reads in their own words.
- Have your child practice using language from stories and informational texts when retelling a story or making a prediction.
- Encourage your child to elaborate on his/her ideas or opinions.
- Tell jokes, riddles, puns to demonstrate how language can be used for the purpose of humor.
- Encourage your child to talk more by asking questions such as “What do you think?” “Do you agree?” “Why or why not?”
- Engage in conversations during dinner, and limit distractions such as the television, cell phones, or loud music.

Phonemic awareness refers to the specific ability to focus on and manipulate individual sounds in spoken words. Hearing individual sounds within a word allows the learner to connect letters to sounds. Phonological awareness includes identifying and manipulating parts of oral language such as words, syllables, and onsets and rhymes. Rhymes, repetitions, and songs are all examples of how a child can practice phonological awareness.

Phonemic/Phonological Awareness Activities Grades K-1

- Practice the alphabet by pointing out upper- and lower-case letters wherever you see them and by reading alphabet books.
- Help your child think of a number of words that start with any specific sound. For example, words that start with the /m/ or /p/ sound (*mat, paper*).
- Make up silly sentences with words that begin with the same initial sound. For example, you could say “Nobody was nice to Nancy’s neighbor.”
- Play simple rhyming or blending games with your child, such as taking turns coming up with words that rhyme (*go – no*) or blending simple words (/d/, /o/, /g/ - *dog*).
- Use clapping games with names of family members, common objects found around the house, or places you are going or have been.
- Find any opportunity to sing to and with your child. You can do this in the car on a long trip, or even on the way to school. Create songs on the spur of the moment about wherever you are going. For example, to the rhythm of the song “*This is the way we wash our hands*” you can sing “This is the way we go to school”.
- Encourage word play using poems, rhymes, or songs. You might begin by saying “What rhymes with Matt?” Make up silly rhymes, such as, “Did Matt sit on the cat?” Or try working together to tell a little story about a cat chasing a fat rat.
- Seek out high quality rhyming books.
- Play word games that connect sounds with syllables and words. For example, you could ask “If the letters p-e-n spell *pen*, then how can you spell *hen*?”

Phonemic/Phonological Awareness Activities Grades 2-3

- Use computer software programs that focuses on developing phonological and phonemic awareness skills. Many of these programs use colorful graphics and animation that keep your children engaged and motivated.
- Help your child practice solving words by removing prefixes and suffixes to break them apart.
- Hunt for words. Choose a blend (for example *bl*), and have your child hunt for five items beginning with the blend. As each object is found, help your child write the words in a list (*blanket, blue pen, etc.*).
- Practice syllables using clapping games with names of family members, names of common objects found around the house, places you are going or have been.
- When reading aloud, say words slowly and repeat words if necessary. Pronouncing a word slowly makes it easier to hear the individual sounds within the word.
- Buy or make flashcards with letters on them so your child can practice making words.
- Practice segmenting and blending words (for example c-a-t for *cat*).

Phonemic/Phonological Awareness Activities Grades 4-6

- Practice clapping out words with three or more syllables (*fish/er/man; par/a/graph; el/e/va/tor*).
- Ask your child to find objects around the house that are compound words (*football, headboard, watermelon*). Help your child write a list of the words, and break them apart to show the two parts of the word.
- Hunt for words. Choose a blend (for example *bl*), and have your child hunt for five items beginning with that blend. As each object is found, help your child write the words in a list (*blanket, blue pen, etc.*).
- Model how to break apart unfamiliar words when reading aloud to your child.



Phonics is the understanding of how sounds correlate with letters in an alphabetic system. This includes recognizing print that represent a sound, syllables, and word parts.

Phonics Activities Grades K - 1

- Use sand or playdough to create letters and match their sounds.
- Teach your child to match the sounds to his/her name.
- Write letters on cards. Hold the cards up and have your child practice saying the sounds.
- Use alphabet books to play games. For example, say “I am thinking of something that starts with the letter “t”.
- Have your child find objects around the house with the same initial sounds. For example, have your child find items that begin with /b/.
- Use magnetic letters or letter cards to build words.
- Teach your child to recognize the letters in his/her name.
- While at the grocery store, ask questions like “Can you find something that starts with the letter C?”
- Have your child identify and cut out letters he/she recognizes from magazines or newspapers.
- Talk about the difference between upper- and lower-case letters.
- Have your child practice categorizing letters by its feature. For example, list all the letters with a curve such as *b, c, a*, etc.

Phonics Activities Grades 2 - 3

- Help your child sound out unfamiliar words by saying the first sound in the word, and using pictures cues to guess the word.
- Write letter clusters on cards (*gl, pr, spr*). Hold up the cards one at a time and have your child practice reading the sounds. Have your child find words with the letter clusters in a book.
- Have your child find objects in the house that begin with a digraph (*ch, th, sh*) such as a shoe, chair, or thermos. Help your child write a list of objects found and underline the digraph.
- Use magnetic letters to build more complex words.
- Have your child practice categorizing words that have a similar ending (*branch, rock, dash, both* are words that end in digraphs).
- Play a phonics race by setting the timer and competing to come up with the most words with a blend (*cl, pr, bl*) in one minute. Compare your word lists and play again. Your child will be eager to beat his/her last score.
- Writing is a great way to reinforce phonics skills. Send your child notes in his/her backpack or have a relative/friend send a letter or email to your child. Have your child write back and sound out the words.

Phonics Activities Grades 4 - 6

- Have your child look through a magazine, or newspaper to find objects that make up a compound word (football, headboard, etc.).
- Sort words with the same letter clusters, by varying sounds (for example, *ch – cheese, machine, school, choir, yacht*).
- If your child has difficulty spelling a word, have him/her break the word into syllables to write them (*to/ge/th/er*).
- Practice reading and writing high frequency words. The more fluent your child is with high frequency words, more attention can be focused on comprehension.



Fluency in reading is the ability to read continuous text with appropriate momentum, phrasing, attention to conventions, and stress. Fluency in word solving is the ability to quickly and accurately solve words.

Fluency Activities Grades K-1

- Read aloud to your child to provide an example of how fluent reading sounds.
- Read aloud and have your child match his voice to yours.
- Have your child practice reading the same list of words, phrases, or short passages several times.
- Point out punctuation marks/conventions (commas, periods, exclamation points). Demonstrate how our voice changes as you read for each.
- Model reading with expression.
- Use different voices when reading familiar stories.
- Invite your child to read along with you during familiar parts of a story.
- Engage in repeated readings. Read a familiar passage several times, inviting your child to read along with you to figure out any tricky words.
- Give your child books with predictable vocabulary and clear rhythmic patterns so your child can "hear" the sound of fluent reading as he or she reads the book aloud.
- Use recorded books and have your child follow along in a print copy or on a digital screen.

Fluency Activities Grades 2 - 3

- Say a sentence to your child and ask him/her to repeat it to you.
- Provide opportunities for your child to read to different audiences (family members, siblings, friends, neighbors, grandparents). The story/text should have been read several times before reading it to an audience.
- Record the reading. Use a cell phone or other device to record your child's reading. Once recorded, invite your child to listen to his/her reading and follow along in the book.
- When reading to your child, remember to model fluency by using appropriate expression, speed and accuracy so your child knows what fluent reading sounds like.
- Invite your child to mimic your phrasing and expression while you are reading.

Fluency Activities Grades 4 - 6

- Engage in repeated readings. Read a familiar passage several times, inviting your child to read along with you to figure out any tricky words.
- Read aloud to your child to show your child what fluent reading sounds like. Make sure read with a lot of expression, and appropriate phrasing.
- Read certain lines of a text with various voices, and invite your child to read along and mimic your expressions.
- Alternate reading the favorite lines of a poem with your child. Have your child mimic your phrasing and expression.
- To increase fluency speed, use a stopwatch to set a timeframe to read any given passage or text. Have your child record their time, and encourage him/her to read the passage again to beat the last time.

Vocabulary is the knowledge of words used in language and their meaning. As children begin to read more difficult texts, they must learn vocabulary outside of their oral language.

Vocabulary Activities Grades K - 1

- Select a new word each week to learn and use in every-day language. Create a point system with family members on who uses the word the most in a given week.
- Post vocabulary words all over the house (bathroom mirror, fridge, doors).
- Before reading, preview the book and discuss words you think are interesting or potentially confusing.

- Play *Hot Potato* with synonyms. Choose a word and a family member has to think of another word that means the same thing. Take turns until no one can think of another word. Try the same game with antonyms (opposites).
- Act out a word and have other family members try to guess what the word is. Take turns acting out a new word. For example, if the word is *pensive* act like you are in deep thought by sitting down and putting your hands on your head.

Vocabulary Activities Grades 2 - 3

- Discuss ordinal words such as first, last, beginning, middle, etc.
- When taking a trip to the grocery store, discuss what you are seeing as you go through the store. For example, you can say “I am here at the bakery. This is where I can find cakes, cookies, and bread.”
- Use flashcards to practice word associations. For example, if the subject is parts of a plant, you could place words such as plant, leaf, seed in one category.
- Select a new word each week to learn and use in every-day language. Create a point system with family members on who uses the word the most in a given week.
- Post vocabulary words all over the house (bathroom mirror, fridge, doors).
- Before reading, preview the book and discuss words you think are interesting or potentially confusing.

Vocabulary Activities Grades 4 - 6

- Play *Hot Potato* to categorize words under more complex topics such as The Revolutionary War, astronomy, or math terms.
- Preview words before reading to or with your child. Discuss the meaning of words that may be interesting or confusing to your child.
- Play a word collection game with family members by having each family member collect as many interesting words they read about or came across that day. At the dinner table, have each family member go around and share their word. Discuss the meaning, and practice using the word in spoken language.



The ability to process and draw meaning from text(s) on many levels. Students must understand and make meaning of information read in various texts to expand their knowledge of the real world.

Comprehension Activities Grades K - 1

- Hold a conversation and discuss what your child has read. Ask probing questions and connect the events to his or her own life.
- Ask your child who, what, when, where, why and how.
- Help your child make connections between what was read to similar life experiences and events that occurred in another book.
- Help your child monitor his or her understanding by asking if he/she understands what was just read.
- Help your child go back to the text to support his or her answers.
- Discuss the meanings of unknown words, both read and heard in story.

Reading Fiction:

- Ask your child to summarize the beginning, middle and end of a story.
- As you are reading, stop every once in a while, to ask questions about a story’s character, problem and solution.
- Have your child share their favorite part of the story and why.
- Encourage deeper thinking by asking “If you could write the ending of the story, how would you change it?”
- Ask your child’s opinion about the events/characters in a story. Ask questions like “Do you think the character did the right thing?” “What would you have done differently if you were the character?”

Reading Nonfiction:

- Read material in short sections, making sure your child understands each step of the way.

- Before reading, preview the title and flip through the book. Ask your child “What do you think you will learn about in this book?” “What do you already know about (topic)?”
- Discuss what your child has learned from reading informational text.
- Practice looking at the text features (table of contents, captions, charts, diagrams) to learn about the topic.
- After reading, ask your child “What do you still want to know about this topic?”

Comprehension Activities Grades 2 - 3

- Hold a conversation and discuss what your child has read. Ask probing questions, and connect the events to his or her own life.
- Ask your child who, what, when, where, why and how.
- Help your child go back to the text to support his or her answers.

Reading Fiction:

- Ask your child to summarize the beginning, middle, and end of a story.
- As you are reading, stop every once in a while, to ask questions about a story’s character, problem and solution.
- Have your child share their favorite part of the story and why it is their favorite.
- Encourage deeper thinking by asking “If you could rewrite the ending of the story, how would you change it?”
- Ask your child’s opinion about the events/characters in a story. Ask questions like “Do you think the character did the right thing?” “What would you have done differently if you were the character?”
- After you or your child has read a few pages, ask “What do you think will happen next?”

Reading Nonfiction:

- Read material in short sections, making sure your child understands each step of the way.
- Before reading, preview the title and flip through the book. Ask your child “What do you think you will learn about in this book?” “What do you already know about (topic)?”
- Discuss what your child has learned from reading informational text.
- Practice looking at the text features (table of contents, captions, charts, diagrams) to learn about the topic.
- After reading, ask your child “What do you still want to know about this topic?”

Comprehension Activities Grades 4 - 6

- Have your child refer back to the text to support his/her answer.
- Use comic strips to practice sequencing stories in the correct order.
- Hold a conversation and discuss what your child has read. Ask probing questions, and connect the events to his or her own life.
- When coming across an unknown word during reading, encourage your child to determine the meaning using pictures and other clues in the story. Discuss the meaning of the word.
- Ask your child who, what, when, where, why, and how questions about what they are reading.

Reading Fiction:

- When asking questions, use words related to the story such as *characters*, *problems*, and *solution*. For example, you could ask “How did the characters try to solve the problem they came across in the story?”
- Ask your child to make predictions about what will happen next based on the events that have taken place in the story.
- Help your child connect the events or characters in a story to their personal experiences, or other books read.

Reading Nonfiction:

- Have your child write captions for family photos taken on vacation.
- Draw attention to captions, headings, sidebars, to gain more information about the topic. Ask deeper questions like “Why do you think the author included a diagram on this page?” How does the diagram help you as a reader?”
- Have your child refer to the text when answering questions.
- Help your child take notes on the most important information in the text.

NEW WORLDS READING INITIATIVE

The New Worlds Reading Initiative gives hundreds of thousands of eligible students the chance to build personalized libraries that reflect their unique interests and backgrounds, at no cost to families or schools. Eligible students include kindergarten through fifth grade students in public and charter schools who have a substantial reading deficiency or who scored below a Level 3 on the prior year's Florida Standards Assessment in English Language Arts (FSA ELA). The University of Florida (UF) Lastinger Center has been designated by the Florida Department of Education as the administrator of the New Worlds Reading Initiative. The UF Lastinger Center is excited to partner with each school district to ensure that all eligible families are informed of the program, have the opportunity to enroll, and receive books and supporting materials each month

[New Worlds Reading Initiative](#)

OVERVIEW OF ASSESSMENT TYPES

As students progress from kindergarten through third grade, they should be steadily developing the skills they need to become grade level readers. While students are learning to read, educators and parents can monitor students to see if they are on track to become successful readers. Florida uses four types of assessments to monitor students' progress in reading.

[Assessment Terms Used in Reading](#)

Screening – The purpose of screening is to identify the probability of risk or success in reading achievement. Progress

Monitoring – The purpose of progress monitoring, also called interim or formative assessment, is to determine whether students are learning the skills taught and/or meeting benchmarks throughout the school year.

Diagnostic – The purpose of a diagnostic assessment is to identify a student's strengths and weaknesses for students identified at-risk on a screening assessment.

Summative – The purpose of summative, or outcome, assessment is to evaluate students' performance relative to a set of content standards generally administered at the end of the school year.

STATEWIDE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) ASSESSMENTS

All Florida students participate in the state's assessment and accountability system. The primary goal of these assessments is to provide information about student learning in Florida, as required by Florida law: [Statutes & Constitution :View Statutes : Online Sunshine \(state.fl.us\)](#)

The Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) is administered to all public school kindergarten students within the first 30 instructional days of each school year. The results of this screening provide valuable information about a child's readiness for school, help teachers develop lesson plans to meet each child's needs and offer useful information to parents. The FLKRS assessment instrument is the Star Early Literacy[®] assessment, which consists of 27 items that assess early language, literacy, and number skills. [Frequently Asked Questions \(fldoe.org\)](https://fldoe.org/parents/early-literacy/faq)

The Florida Standards Assessment in English Language Arts (FSA ELA) is administered to all public school students in 3rd-10th grade. The FSA ELA measures literacy achievement and learning gains. Scores are categorized into five achievement levels to describe student performance, which is provided on student reports so that students, parents and educators may interpret student results in a meaningful way. [2021-22 Florida Grade-Level Assessments Fact Sheet \(fldoe.org\)](https://fldoe.org/parents/assessments/fact-sheet)

The Florida Standards Alternate Assessment (FSAA) is designed for 3rd-10th grade students whose participation in the general statewide assessment program is not appropriate, even with accommodations. The FSAA is based on the Florida Standards Access Points (FS-Aps), which are academic expectations written specifically for students with significant cognitive disabilities. [Florida Standards Alternate Assessment \(fldoe.org\)](https://fldoe.org/parents/assessments/fsaa)

SUPPORTS FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement is extremely important for supporting the education of all students, including students with disabilities. For students who have difficulty learning, the Florida Department of Education provides a variety of supports to assist parents in being involved in the educational decision-making process.

[Parent Information \(fldoe.org\)](https://fldoe.org/parents/involvement)

[Dispute Resolution Systems \(fldoe.org\)](https://fldoe.org/parents/involvement/dispute-resolution)

EVALUATING AND IDENTIFYING A STUDENT FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION

Mastering the ability to read, spell, and write is fundamental to achieving academic success. Students with a variety of learning disabilities, including dyslexia, dyscalculia and dysgraphia, struggle with those skills despite receiving the same classroom instruction that benefits most students. Gulf District Schools is committed to providing students identified with learning disorders with instruction that is effective and personalized in order to improve student outcomes. In order for students with disabilities to meet high academic standards and to fully demonstrate their conceptual and procedural knowledge and skills in mathematics, reading, writing, speaking and listening (English language arts), their instruction must incorporate supports and accommodations

When a parent, teacher or caregiver suspects a student may have a disability, there are important steps that are necessary to know and take. A diagnosis of a medical condition alone is not

sufficient to establish eligibility for exceptional student education. Consistent with Title 34, Section 300.306 of the Code of Federal Regulations, the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) team must consider multiple sources of data and information to determine not only if the student is a student with a disability, but also that the student requires special education and related services. If a parent submits documentation from a licensed professional under chapter 490 which demonstrates that a K-3 student has been diagnosed with dyslexia, evidence-based interventions must be provided based on the student’s specific areas of difficulty as identified by the licensed professional (see Section 1008.25(5), Florida Statutes). The Bureau of Exceptional Student Education (BESE) has many resources to guide parents, teachers and caregivers through the process of evaluating and identifying a student who is suspected of being a student with a disability requiring exceptional student education.

Evaluations for Special Education Services: [0070088-idp.pdf \(fldoe.org\)](http://fldoe.org/0070088-idp.pdf)
 What is Exceptional Student Education for Children with Disabilities: [ESE \(fldoe.org\)](http://fldoe.org/ESE)
[BESE Resource & Information Center \(fldoe.org\)](http://fldoe.org/BESE-Resource-Information-Center)

CHARACTERISTICS OF SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY

Specific Learning Disability (SLD) is a term that describes an Exceptional Student Education (ESE) eligibility category, which refers to learning disorders that can affect a student’s ability to read, write, listen, speak, reason and do math.

[Specific Learning Disabilities \(SLD\) \(fldoe.org\)](http://fldoe.org/Specific-Learning-Disabilities)
 Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Specific Learning Disabilities:
[dps-2009-177.pdf \(fldoe.org\)](http://fldoe.org/dps-2009-177.pdf)

LEARNING DISABILITY	TYPICAL CHARACTERISTICS
<p>Dyslexia: A learning disability affecting primarily reading</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in learning to read, write, spell and do arithmetic • Difficulty with learning letters and their sounds • Difficulty in following oral and written instructions • Cramped or illegible handwriting • Difficulty reading quickly enough to comprehend and persisting with longer texts • Easily distracted, difficulty in retaining information • Confusion in sequence of letters and symbols • Delayed spoken language • Confusion about directions in space and time, right and left, north and south, yesterday and tomorrow • More than average test taking anxiety
<p>Dysgraphia: A learning disability affecting primarily writing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variably shaped and poorly formed letters, excessive erasures and cross-outs in writing • Poor spacing between letters and words

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter and number reversals beyond early stages of writing • Awkward, inconsistent pencil grip • Heavy pressure and hand fatigue • Slow to write and copy with legible or illegible handwriting
<p>Dyscalculia: A learning disability affecting primarily mathematics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty counting backwards • Extreme difficulty in performing simple calculations, difficulty with mental arithmetic skills • A poor sense of numbers and estimation • Difficulty in understanding place value • Addition is often the default operation • High levels of mathematical anxiety
<p>Development Aphasia: A learning disability affecting primarily language and communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor comprehension skills • Difficulty in forming words and sentences, speaking and word recall • Trouble understanding speech • Difficulty in reading and writing • Leaving out words like 'the,' 'of' and 'was' from speech • Speaking only in short phrases that are produced with great effort • Putting words together in the wrong order

For English Language Learners (ELLs) to advance in becoming literate in English at a normal rate, they need instruction that is different in focus and intensity from the instruction provided for native English speakers. ELLs require much more oral language development with a focus on listening and speaking. ELLs require instruction that provides ample opportunities for them to hear and discriminate the words and sounds of English, to increase their vocabulary, and to practice their oral English skills. English language learners need opportunities to build background knowledge. Pre-reading activities can be used to identify gaps in students' knowledge and to introduce new concepts and vocabulary. There needs to be a focus on the development of formal or academic English as a key instructional goal for English learners, beginning in the primary grades.

IMPORTANCE OF ATTENDANCE

Students that attend school regularly beginning in kindergarten can be 5 times more likely to have grade level proficiency in 3rd grade than students that miss just 2 days per month in the first two years of school.

Chronic Absenteeism: Missing 10% of school days in a school year. This can be as little as 1 or 2 days per month.



Who Can Read on Grade Level After 3rd Grade?

Less than 1 in 5 students with chronic absenteeism in kindergarten and first grade were reading at, or above, their grade level.

SOURCE: Attendance in Early Elementary Grades: Association with Student Characteristics, School Readiness and Third Grade Outcomes. Applied Survey Research. May 2011.

STRATEGIES FOR GOOD ATTENDANCE

- Set a regular bed time and morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before school.
- Don't let your child stay home unless they are truly sick. (Temperature higher than 100.4 °F, throwing up or having diarrhea, eyes are pink and crusty)
- If your child seems anxious about school, talk to teachers, school counselors, school social workers, or other parents for advice on how to make them feel comfortable and excited about learning.
- Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor, or another parent.
- Avoid medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session.

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

Reading Begins at Home

Strong parental involvement is a key component of the **Just Read, Florida!** initiative. Other than helping your children to grow up happy and healthy, the most important thing that you can do for them is help them develop their reading skills. Here are some sources to get you started:

Florida Department of Education - www.fl DOE.org

- Just Read, Florida! - <http://www.fl DOE.org/academics/standards/just-read-fl/>
- Celebrate Literacy Week - <http://www.fl DOE.org/academics/standards/just-read-fl/celebrate-literacyweek/>
- Parent Resources - <http://www.fl DOE.org/academics/standards/just-read-fl/parents.shtml>
- Read to Learn - <http://www.fl DOE.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/readtolearn.pdf>
- Summer Literacy Adventure - <http://www.fl DOE.org/academics/standards/just-read-fl/summerlit-adventure.shtml>

Clifford Reading Tips for Parents

<http://www.fl DOE.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/clifford.pdf>

Clifford the Big Red Dog has some great tips for parents about the five essential components of reading. Thanks to our partnership with Scholastic, we are happy to share these with you.

Reading Intervention Curriculum -

<http://www.fl DOE.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/manual.pdf>

Whether reading mentors or classroom teachers, this curriculum is a great guide that includes an overview of current reading research and weekly lessons for intermediate struggling readers.

Parent Tips – Reading suggestions and tips for parents of school age students.

<http://www.fl DOE.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/Parent-Tips.pdf>

Helping your Child Become a Reader - A guidebook on how to promote reading at home.

<https://www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/reader/part3.html#note>

Summer Reading Activities Kit - Great tips for reading over the summer!

<http://www.fl DOE.org/core/fileparse.php/7539/urlt/kit.pdf>

Tips and Resources - The Partnership

<https://www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/partnership-tips.html>

Florida Public Libraries - <http://www.publiclibraries.com/florida.htm>

Florida Reading Association: Family Literacy – Suggested websites for family literacy-related resources. <http://www.flreads.org/Family-Literacy/links.htm>

50 Activities to Promote Digital Media Literacy - <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/16290/urlt/50APDMLS.pdf>

Keyboarding to Support Active Reading Strategies – Students can type information into word processing documents or editable pdfs for the following reading activities:

Note-Taking: Summarizing, Skeletal Notes, Cornell Notes, Double-Entry Journal

Comprehension: Charting the Text, Charting Verbs List, Cite Textual Evidence, Story Elements, Text Features/Structures, SQ3R, Graphic Organizers

<http://edtech.canyonsdistrict.org/keyboarding-and-literacy.html>

LITERACY RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

The Grocery Store: Have your child help create and monitor your shopping list or match coupons to the products in each aisle.

ABCya: Practice keyboarding and other skills in a game-based environment.

<http://www.abcya.com/>

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association: Suggestions for parents by grade level to support listening speaking, reading, and writing.

<http://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/suggestions/>

Barnes & Noble: See website for free events at a store near you.

<http://stores.barnesandnoble.com/stores?searchText=33301&view=list&storeFilter=all>

Colorin' Colorado!: Easy ways for parents to help kids become successful readers in eleven languages.

<http://www.colorincolorado.org/reading-tip-sheets-parents>

Florida Center for Reading Research

http://www.fcrr.org/resources/resources_sca.html

<http://www.fcrr.org/curriculum/curriculumForParents.shtm>

Florida Standards: Student and Parent Resources provided by the Florida Department of Education.

<http://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/florida-standards/student-family-resources.stml>

Just Take 20: The Florida Department of Education campaign to provide K-12 Florida families with practical, easy-to-implement reading activities that establish literacy as a lifelong value. www.justtake20.org

Newsela: Read articles and take quizzes on the go. Access through Broward’s Single Sign-On Launchpad. (Grades 2-5).

PBS Kids: Play reading games with your favorite characters. <http://pbskids.org/games/reading/>

Poetry Sites: Find your inner poet. <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/>

Poetry 4 Kids: Play along with children’s poet Ken Nesbitt. <http://www.poetry4kids.com/>

Reading is Fundamental: Activities to learn and play. <http://www.rif.org/books-activities/activities/by-topic/age-1/>

Reading Rockets: Reading related videos and parent resources. <http://www.readingrockets.org/>
<http://www.readingrockets.org/reading-topics/reading-aloud>

South Florida Parenting: Tips for parenting and information on different local events for children. <http://www.sun-sentinel.com/features/south-florida-parenting/>

Spelling City: Use an existing list or practice your own words on this online platform. <http://www.spellingcity.com/>

Storytelling: Build a foundation for your child’s future with stories of your past. <http://www.scholastic.com/parents/blogs/scholastic-parents-learning-toolkit/storytelling-children>

Starfall: Free site to teach the basics of reading. Features interactive books and phonics games. www.starfall.com

ThinkReadWrite: A collaboration of the International Literacy Association and the National Council of Teachers of English. Check out their dedicated “parent” page. <http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/>

Tumble Books: Get the Broward password from your school’s Media Specialist. www.tumblebooklibrary.com

Wonderopolis: An interactive site for all of those who ‘wonder’. Opportunities to get the whole family involved. <http://wonderopolis.org/>

REFERENCES

Resources from the following organizations and websites were used to develop this Read-at-Home Plan.

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association: Activities to Encourage Speech and Language

<http://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/Parent-Stim-Activities/>

Broward County Schools

Colorin' Colorado!

<http://www.colorincolorado.org/reading-tip-sheets-parents>

Florida Center for Reading Research

<http://www.fcrr.org/curriculum/curriculumForParents.shtm>

Get Ready to Read

<http://www.getreadytoread.org>

Put Reading First

<https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/PRFbooklet.pdf>

Reading Partners

<http://readingpartners.org/blog/5-easy-ways-parents-can-increase-their-childs-reading-fluency>

Reading Rockets

<http://www.readingrockets.org/audience/parents>

Scholastic

<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/more-reading-resources/reading-tips-parents>