

A parent and carer guide
to supporting your child in

English Kindergarten



Scan the QR code to
find out more about the
English K–10 syllabus
or visit:
[curriculum.nsw.edu.au/
learning-areas/
english/english-
k-10-2022/overview](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/english/english-k-10-2022/overview)

This guide can help you support your Kindergarten
(Early Stage 1) child at home in the learning area of English.

Oral language and communication

Focuses on:

- developing speaking, listening and interacting skills.

You can help your Kindergarten child at home by:

- sharing and discussing stories from your own and other cultures
- retelling familiar and made-up stories
- modelling listening skills by taking turns when speaking with your child and waiting for them to respond
- engaging in rich discussions, encouraging your child to extend their sentences. This can be done by asking open-ended questions. For example, *Tell me about a book you read today, or How did you make that artwork?*
- building the number of verbal instructions for your child to follow, from a single direction to 2 directions, then up to 3 directions. For example, *pack your bag, brush your teeth and put on your shoes.*
- repeating words and phrases in the correct manner to model correct language usage
- demonstrating and explaining forms of non-verbal communication. For example, explaining the meaning of a STOP sign.

Vocabulary

Focuses on:

- developing knowledge of words and word meanings
- understanding and using words when speaking, listening, reading and writing.

You can help your Kindergarten child at home by:

- creating a sense of fun about learning new words
- encouraging your child to use descriptive words for people and objects when engaging in conversations. For example, instead of saying *Look at that dog going for a walk*, say *Look at that enormous brown dog going for a walk with our neighbour.*
- discussing the meaning of new words that come up in everyday conversations with your child. *Chris is going to reverse the car now. The word 'reverse' means to go backwards.*
- introducing new words for known words. For example, your child may say, *I'm hungry* and you can respond with, *You're starving, are you? Let's get you something to eat so you're not starving anymore.*
- talking about objects that your child shows particular interest in, to build on and deepen their vocabulary knowledge. For example, *That butterfly has such delicate wings, but they are also incredibly strong.*

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Phonological awareness

Focuses on:

- hearing/identifying and manipulating phonemes (the smallest units of sound in English) within spoken words, eg 'a' as in apple, 't' as in tip, 's' as in sat; or syllables (a unit of sound within a word that contains a vowel phoneme, eg a 3-syllable word such as won/der/ful) and rhymes.

You can help your Kindergarten child at home by:

- clapping or tapping the syllables they can hear in words when reading together. For example, dog (one syllable – one clap), e/mu (2 syllables – 2 claps) and kan/ga/roo (3 syllables – 3 claps)
- playing rhyming games such as starting with a base word and taking turns to say a new rhyming word. For example, the base word of hat, can be rhymed with bat, sat, mat and flat. Made-up words can also be used such as blat, lat and zat
- playing I Spy. Make sure you use the phoneme or letter sound (and not the name of the letter) identifying the initial letter and phoneme of familiar names, places and things. For example, Carly – 'C', Bill – 'B', park – 'p'
- reading aloud, listening to and joining in known nursery rhymes, songs and poetry.

Print conventions

Focuses on:

- knowing how books and written language work. For example, the difference between a letter, a word and a sentence
- understanding how to use books correctly. For example, holding a book correctly when reading and turning the pages one at a time. Knowing to begin reading from the top of the page, and to read each line from left to right.

You can help your Kindergarten child at home by:

- running your finger under the words as you are reading with your child
- making sure your child can see how your finger moves from the end of a line to the beginning of the next line in a 'return sweep'
- using different voices to show different characters are speaking when you see speech marks (" ") identifying and commenting on the purpose of punctuation when reading
- pointing to and reading print in the immediate environment. For example, the signage at a restaurant.

Phonic knowledge

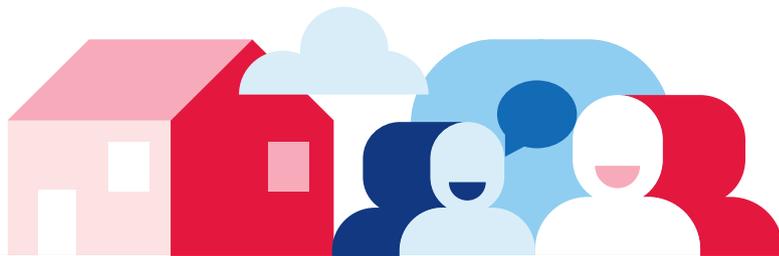
Focuses on:

- understanding and recognising that letter symbols represent the letters of the alphabet (known as graphemes)
- knowing that graphemes represent phonemes. For example, a single sound phoneme such as /b/ as in ball, or a digraph which is 2 graphemes representing one phoneme, such as /ea/ as in meat.

You can help your Kindergarten child at home by:

- stretching some simple words into sounds, such as mat can be broken into /m/ /a/ /t/, while you are reading and writing together. Be sure to say the phoneme (sound) not the letter name (grapheme)
- modelling and reinforcing the pronunciation of each phoneme as your child writes each corresponding grapheme
- encouraging your child to read their decodable texts daily to apply and consolidate knowledge of learned grapheme-phoneme-correspondences (ie letter-sound correspondences)

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- practising matching known lower-case and upper-case letters to their corresponding sounds
- modelling the process of listening to a sequence of separately spoken sounds and then combining them to form a recognisable word (called blending). For example, /c/ /a/ /t/ says cat.

Reading fluency

Focuses on:

- recognising words automatically when reading
- accurately reading words
- reading in a smooth and expressive way.

You can help your Kindergarten child at home by:

- using a steady speed and expressive voice when reading with your child
- re-reading favourite books and poems with your child to encourage confidence and instant recognition of familiar words
- encouraging your child to join in familiar refrains when re-reading a favourite story. For example, *Not by the hair of my chinny-chin-chin!*
- reading a variety of everyday materials with your child, such as street signs, shop names, food labels or shopping lists.

Reading comprehension

Focuses on:

- reading and understanding words and sentences that are read
- recalling information from text about characters, events and ideas
- using background knowledge to support understanding of the text.

You can help your Kindergarten child at home by:

- talking about the front cover, title and illustrations before reading begins
- asking questions about a story while you or your child are reading. For example, *Why do you think that happened?* or *What might happen next?*
- drawing pictures together about the main events in a story in order
- retelling the story in sequence after reading
- discussing the meaning of new words found in books.

Creating written texts

Focuses on:

- writing texts using simple sentences.

You can help your Kindergarten child at home by:

- talking about what they want to write about first
- encouraging them to first draw what they want to write about to gather their ideas
- asking them to read their writing to you and talk about their thoughts and pictures
- writing new stories together, identifying simple sentences within passages of text
- using a writing journal daily to write and draw.

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Spelling

Focuses on:

- combining knowledge of speech sounds (phonology), letter patterns and generalisations (orthography), and meaningful word parts and how they can connect (morphology).

You can help your Kindergarten child at home by:

- modelling and explaining the process of syllabification. For example, the word *fantastic* can be broken into 3 syllables, /fan/ /tas/ /tic/
- identifying and segmenting phonemes, for example, /d/ /o/ /g/ spells *dog*
- encouraging your child to spell high frequency words (ie words that appear often in written texts)
- arranging and rearranging letters to make words. For example, arrange the fridge magnet letters /o/ /t/ /p/ to make the word *top* and then rearrange the letters to make the word *pot*
- talking about how some words can be made plural by adding the letter 's' at the end. For example, *dog/dogs, car/cars*
- investigating words which sound the same but have different spellings and meaning (homophones). For example, *meet/meat, stare/stair, bear/bare*
- exploring words which look and sound the same but have different meanings (homonyms). For example, *bark* on a tree, or *bark* the sound a dog makes; *rose* a flower in a garden, or *rose* to stand upwards; *right* to be correct, or *right* the opposite of left.

Handwriting

Focuses on:

- producing all lower-case and upper-case letters correctly and legibly.

You can help your Kindergarten child at home by:

- encouraging your child to write with the hand that feels most comfortable and to use a grip that is efficient
- developing their fine motor skills by engaging them in activities such as threading a shoelace through a pattern, using scissors to cut out shapes and playing finger games, using pegs to hang paper or material on a line
- assisting your child to correctly write the letters of the alphabet and to write simple words using a variety of materials or supplies. For example, using brightly coloured pens and pencils on paper.

Understanding and responding to literature

Focuses on:

- developing understanding of texts that are read with others, or as an individual
- responding to texts that are read through thoughts, opinions and writing.

You can help your Kindergarten child at home by:

- reading aloud to your child every day, using books that are fun and interesting for your child
- discussing and comparing your favourite characters in books you've read together
- discussing the morals and ideas behind a story, why the story was written and what the author wishes to convey to readers
- recalling some interesting facts from texts, such as how tall a Tyrannosaurus Rex was, or naming the parts of a bicycle
- reading chapter books aloud to your child over a period of time, encouraging them to sustain their interest in the text.

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Teachers should make decisions about learning goals and curriculum options for your child together with you, their caregiver.

Find out more by scanning the QR code or visiting:
curriculum.nsw.edu.au/about-the-curriculum/diversity-of-learners

Supporting all learners

We develop syllabuses that are inclusive of the learning needs of all students, to ensure opportunities to access and progress through the NSW curriculum.

Aboriginal students

For success at school, teachers should support students to maintain and further develop their Cultural identities by building on their understanding of students' Cultural and Community needs, and respect for Aboriginal Cultural Knowledge.

Parents and carers, families and Aboriginal Communities are important partners in teaching and learning about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Cultures, Histories and Languages.

Students learning English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D)

Communicating, reading and writing in their home language or dialect can help EAL/D students to develop proficiency in Standard Australian English and to learn subject content.

Gifted and talented students

Gifted students and students with high ability or talent in a subject can be challenged by diving deeper into content within and across subjects.

Students with disability

Schools are obligated to provide reasonable adjustments for students with disability. If your child has a disability, speak to your school about the different options for accessing the curriculum, including drawing from outcomes from previous stages of schooling or using content specifically developed to support students with significant intellectual disability who are working towards Early Stage 1 outcomes.