

Phonics (Handout)

Phonics is the component of reading in which children connect sounds to symbols (letters or letter combinations) and put sounds together into syllables and words (decoding). Students need repetitive and consistent practice with phonics to achieve success in reading.

Ideas that you and your child can do at home to increase phonics skills:

1. Practice phonograms (oral and written) a few minutes each day.
2. Make a visual connection between letters and words by using the phonogram cards to build and sound out words. Talk about rules that govern the sounds, such as adding an e to cap, or why you have to use k for the beginning of kind and not c.
3. Look for phonograms in books, cereal boxes, signs etc.
4. Underline or highlight multi-letter phonograms in words to aid in sounding out new words.
5. Put together alphabet puzzles or play alphabet games together. Discuss the letters and the associated sounds.
6. Read a variety of alphabet books to your child.
7. Read simple sentences or decodable books that focus on specific phonograms or vowel sounds
8. Say an initial sound and have your child match the sound to a picture or object that starts with that initial sound.
Example: Say /b/ and have your child find a ball or book.
9. Cut apart words: Kids enjoy having letter cards to move and manipulate.
10. As you have your child rhyme words, write them on note cards. Cut the words apart by compound words, syllables, phonograms, or prefix/suffix and see if they can put them back together.
11. Have your child write everyday. Sounding out words to write will improve their phonics skills. Have your child:
 - a. Write the words they made with the phonogram cards, sounding them out as they write them.
 - b. Draw pictures and then write a few sentences about the picture.
 - c. Write grocery lists or notes to family members.

The key is a little bit of practice every day. Help your child become aware of the print around them and use every opportunity to model or practice decoding skills with that print.

(Some content pulled from the Pikes Peak Literacy Strategies Project)