



¡Colorín
colorado!

AFT Toolkit for Teachers

Reaching Out to Hispanic Parents
of English Language Learners



A Union of Professionals

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

www.ColorinColorado.org

A service of WETA's
Reading Rockets project.





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FOREWORD

A strong partnership between schools and parents is essential to the academic success of students. When school staff and parents work together to reinforce high standards of achievement, the result is a school that “works,” a learning environment that promotes success.

Recent research shows that students benefit greatly when their parents are involved in their education. Children are more apt to enter school ready to learn, do their homework, and perform well in school when parents actively support their learning. Reaching out to parents of English language learners (ELLs) may be difficult because of differences in language and culture. The goal of this toolkit is to help you reach out to Hispanic parents and families effectively and make them a vital part of their children’s education.

Hispanic parents, like parents everywhere, want the best for their children. They see school success as very important for their children's future well-being. They often consider formal schooling essential to social and economic mobility, and they will usually make every effort to support schools' efforts to help their children succeed. However, some Hispanic parents may not be familiar with common conventions in the U.S. school system, such as the importance of attending back-to-school night or parent-teacher conferences. The key is to communicate with parents in a timely fashion and provide them with meaningful and “doable” suggestions for how they can help develop their children's literacy skills and encourage academic success.

Although this toolkit was developed with Spanish-speaking English language learners in mind (since they make up more than 70 percent of all ELL students in the United States), some of this information should also be helpful for students and families from other cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

This toolkit was developed for Pre-K-3 teachers and paraprofessionals by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and Reading Rockets, a national literacy initiative that is helping teachers and parents of struggling readers throughout the nation. Reading is the fundamental skill upon which all formal education depends. Through research-based classroom strategies and reinforced support from parents, children will become good readers early and thus be much more likely to flourish in school and in life.

The name of our initiative is “Colorín Colorado,” which is widely recognized in many Spanish-speaking countries around the world. It comes from a popular verse that children and adults say after reading a good story together: “¡Y colorín, colorado, este cuento se ha acabado!” (“Colorín Colorado, and that is the end of the story!”) They are playful words that bring back happy memories for generations of people from many different countries.

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Introduction to Toolkit and Background Information on Hispanic Families

It is no surprise that recent research shows that students benefit greatly when their parents are involved in their education. Indeed, you know better than anyone that when parents actively support their children's learning, their children are more apt to enter school with the early literacy skills they need — and more apt to do their homework and perform well in school. By recognizing parents' strengths and involving them deeply in their children's education, you have the opportunity to help create a more supportive learning environment for your students.

We recognize that reaching out to parents of English language learners may be especially challenging because of differences in language and culture. But once you let parents know how they can support their children's learning, you will find that many of them will be more than eager to become partners with you in helping their children succeed in school.

We have developed this toolkit to help you effectively reach out to Hispanic parents and families to make them a vital part of their children's education. As useful as these materials will be, we urge you to seek out the help and advice of an English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual teacher in your building or district. An ESL teacher can be an important ally and colleague and may have many of the suggestions in these pages already in place.

In this toolkit, you will find useful background information about Hispanic cultures and values, helpful suggestions for involving parents in your classroom and school activities, and concrete ideas for parent workshops that focus on literacy development. You will also find information about the five early stages of reading identified by the National Reading Panel and the No Child Left Behind Act, as well as research-based practices that schools are using to increase reading performance. If you do not have a strong background in reading, we encourage you to read the *Reading Rockets: Launching Young Readers Teachers' Guide* (enclosed in this toolkit) in order to become even more knowledgeable in this critical field.

A New Wave of Evidence[★]

According to a review of recent research published by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (2002), students with involved parents, no matter what their income or background, are more likely to:

- » Earn higher grades and test scores and enroll in higher-level programs.
- » Be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits.
- » Attend school regularly.
- » Have better social skills, show improved behaviors, and adapt well to school.
- » Graduate and go on to post-secondary education.

Furthermore, other studies show that families of all income and education levels, and from all ethnic and cultural groups, are engaged in supporting their children's learning at home. Encouraging greater involvement at school from all families may be an important strategy for addressing the achievement gap between high-literacy and low-literacy families.

When schools support parent involvement at home and school, students make greater gains. When schools build partnerships with families by responding to their concerns and honoring their contributions, they succeed in sustaining connections that are aimed at improving student achievement.

How Can You Put These Findings into Action?

Recognize that all parents — regardless of income, education, cultural background, and language — are involved in their children's learning and want their children to do well.

Embrace a philosophy of partnership and focus on developing trusting and respectful relationships with your students' families — relationships that will result in shared responsibility for your students' educational development.

*Excerpts from "A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement," by Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp (Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2002). To order the full report, go to www.sedl.org/connections or call 800-476-6861.

No Child Left Behind

The No Child Left Behind Act requires extensive parent involvement at the state, district, and local school level. Among other things, parents of English language learners can now expect to:

- »» Have their child learn English and other subjects such as reading, science, and math at the same academic level as all other students.
- »» Know if their child has been identified and recommended for placement in an English language acquisition program, and to accept or refuse such placement. (Please note that in some locations, state law supersedes this and parents cannot refuse to have their child receive ESL services.)
- »» Choose a different English language acquisition program for their child. (This, of course, only applies to school districts that have more than one English acquisition program.)
- »» Apply for supplemental services, such as tutoring, for children from low-income families if their child's school is identified as "in need of improvement" for two years.
- »» Have their child tested annually by their school district to assess his or her progress in English language acquisition.
- »» Receive information regarding their child's performance on academic tests.
- »» Have their child taught with programs that are scientifically proven to work.

Check www.aft.org, www.ed.gov/rights, and your school for more details about No Child Left Behind.

How to Reach Out to Hispanic Parents of ELLs

ELL students benefit just as much from their parents' involvement in their education as other students. Some Hispanic parents may feel apprehensive about getting involved because of their limited English skills, lack of familiarity with mainstream culture and the public school system in the United States, and other reasons. Here are some ways to reach out to parents of ELLs and increase the likelihood of their participation.

Use Their Preferred Language

This is an essential place to start. Without a common language, very little communication can take place. At home, your ELL students and their families communicate in the language they know best. Although there are regional and social variations, Spanish is one commonly understood language.

The more Spanish you know and can use as a teacher, the more you will be able to reach out to your Hispanic students and their families. Even a little Spanish can go a long way. Here are a few things you can do:

>> Find a fully bilingual interpreter.

Whether a school employee, parent liaison, family member, friend, or community member, this person can translate for parent-teacher conferences, back-to-school nights, PTA meetings, and regular communications. It is best to find an adult and not rely on the student as the translator, as this practice can disempower the parent.

>> Learn a few basic words and everyday expressions in Spanish.

Although it may seem like a small gesture, using Spanish phrases can mean a great deal to your students and their families. Making the effort shows that you respect and value their language.

>> Translate the written communications that you send home.

Find a way to send home personal notes and materials in Spanish. This will keep parents in the loop on issues such as report cards, school events, and homework. Try to offer complete translations in straightforward Spanish that parents can understand.

>> Put parents in touch with bilingual staff.

Give parents a list of names and phone numbers of bilingual staff in the school and district who they can contact to deal with educational concerns. Also encourage them to reach out to other parents who are bilingual or monolingual so they can share experiences and help one another.

>> Try taking a Spanish class.

Learning more Spanish will improve your communication with Hispanic students and their parents. And by going through the process of learning a second language, you will better understand the challenges faced by your students, who have to learn English and subject matter at the same time. You will also become more aware of effective strategies for teaching your students.

Learn About Your ELL Students' Family Background

Try to really learn where your ELL families come from. They may represent diverse languages and cultures from around the world. The majority of ELL families in the United States come from Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America. These Hispanic families may have many things in common, such as customs, foods, dances, values, and the Spanish language. However, there are also many rich cultural differences within and between countries like Argentina, Mexico, Cuba, and El Salvador.

Read about your ELL students' countries, regions, customs, histories, and languages. You can find information in books and articles and on the Internet. Even just looking in encyclopedias or travel guidebooks will give you basic overviews of their countries. The more you learn about where your students' families come from, the easier your job will become. This knowledge will help you support your students in the classroom and encourage more support from home. There are many ways to make their linguistic and cultural diversity a huge asset.

Be sure to invite your ELL students' family members to show-and-tell, story telling, food tastings, dances, and so on. Designing activities that encourage families to share

their culture will likely raise the self-esteem of ELL students and generate greater respect from their peers. Your efforts will go a long way toward making your ELLs' parents feel more welcome.

Learn About Your ELL Students' Family Values

Hispanic families often immigrate to the United States with high hopes for better educational opportunities for their children that can lead to economic improvement. Even if parents do not speak English or cannot read in Spanish, they often share some of the following values and beliefs about education:

>> High expectations

Hispanic parents in the United States tend to make big sacrifices for the future of their children. They often move far from home and work long hours so that their children can succeed in school and in life. So it is no surprise that these parents have high expectations and aspirations for their children's success in school.

>> Respect for the teacher and school

In Latin America parents tend to put teachers on a pedestal. They respect education. It is assumed that the teacher's job is at school and the parent's job is at home. Hispanic parents in the United States care deeply about their children's education, but they may not be used to taking an active role. It is up to you, the teacher, to explain that in the United States it is common for teachers to welcome and invite parents to be in touch, come in for conferences, help with reading and homework at home, and make decisions together with the school.

>> Family relationships

Family is often the cornerstone of the Hispanic social structure. Families have a strong sense of interdependence, mutual respect, and co-parenting. Grandparents, godparents, aunts, uncles, and older siblings may be helping to raise your ELL students. This extended family might live at home, visit frequently, or live nearby. Many Hispanics travel back and forth between their native country and the United States. Understanding this family structure might help you to gain trust and participation from both the immediate and extended family members.

Find Out About Your Students' Home Environment

Although you do not want to pry for information, the more you can find out about where your students come from, the better you will understand their strengths, needs, and real-life circumstances. One way to find out is to get to know their families — whether at school, in their home, or in the community. (Note: If a family is very reluctant to meet with you, respect their wishes and understand that they may have good reasons for this.)

Having answers to the following questions may help you work better with your students and their families:

- >> Who lives at home? Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, older siblings? How many of them speak English? How many know how to read in English and/or Spanish?
- >> How long have they been in the United States? Why did they come?
- >> How familiar are they with the U.S. school system?
- >> What is the child's prior educational experience?
- >> Has the child been formally instructed in English before? If so, for how long?
- >> Do they come from a big city or a rural town?
- >> Does your student have a quiet place to study? Is there someone to help with homework?

Most of this information can also be obtained by using a written "Getting to Know You" survey or through informal conversations.

Arrange Home and Community Visits

Visiting homes and communities is a way to establish a relationship with parents who are working during school and after-school hours or who may feel intimidated by the school setting. Before doing this, however, make sure that parents are receptive to the idea and that your school district and union allow home visits by teachers.

It is often easier to resolve difficult issues face to face as opposed to over the telephone or through written communication. This way, you and the parents can anticipate problems and agree on how to solve them. When organizing home and community visits, try to:

- >> Arrange for an interpreter to be present.
- >> Respect the family's time constraints and choice of location — whether in the home, a church, or a community center.
- >> Be prepared to share positive news about the child's work in school.
- >> Point out ways they can help with their child's language development, reading skills, and homework.

Educate Parents on the U.S. School System

To support their children's education, the parents of your ELL students need to understand how the U.S. school system and culture work. Listen to parents' concerns, answer their questions, and provide them with written materials in Spanish. Make sure that they understand things like:

>> How Your School Works

If necessary, review school hours, school holidays, school rules, school trajectory from pre-kindergarten through high school, and the school's administrative hierarchy.

>> Your School Curriculum, Standards, Benchmarks, and Materials

Consider that in many Latin American countries the curriculum is very centralized. There is often one set of books. Uniforms are usually required. And rules tend to be the same for all schools across an entire country.

>> Teacher and School Expectations

Explain that teachers hope and expect that parents will help with homework, find tutors, read books, tell stories, take their children to the library, visit the classroom, and become involved in the school.

>> Parent Rights

Make certain that your ELL parents know about their rights regarding access to interpreters and translated materials from your school, free lunch programs, your school's ELL curriculum, supplementary school services that may be available to their children, and anything else that parents at your school have a right to know. If your school receives federal funds, provide information on the No Child Left Behind requirements of schools and the rights of parents.

>> Language Programs

Work in collaboration with your school social service worker or guidance counselor, and explain the different language program options that your school has, why they work the way they do, and why the chosen program may be most suitable for their child. If parents have doubts, discuss their options and invite them to visit and observe the class.

You may also want to refer to and distribute the AFT's *Pathways to Success* parent brochure (available in English and Spanish), which highlights the important school issues parents should know about, including how the school system works and how parents can help their children succeed in school. For copies of the brochure, please visit www.aft.org/parents/index.htm

Welcome Parents Into Your School

Here are some ways to make Hispanic parents feel welcome at school:

>> Host a Spanish-language back-to-school night.

Host an evening event at the beginning of the school year for Spanish-speaking parents. Make sure ahead of time that a good interpreter will be in attendance. For this important first meeting, try to accommodate parents' requests for scheduling, transportation, and child care. Take this time to get to know them, communicate your expectations, and answer their questions. Also find out the best way to maintain regular communication with each of these parents.

>> Arrange a Spanish-language tour of the school library

(and, if possible, of the nearest public library, too). Although libraries are familiar institutions in the United States, many immigrants from Latin America may be unsure how libraries work. They may not know what materials libraries offer or that anyone can borrow them for free. Be sure to let parents know how easy it is to obtain a library card.

>> Recruit volunteers.

If parents are willing to volunteer their time, find out what their interests and skills are. ELL parents may be able to help with a variety of activities, such as cooking food for school-wide holidays, telling stories, teaching a dance, teaching a craft, or making a presentation.

>> Provide background information about U.S. cultural events and holidays.

Send home timely cultural explanations to educate parents on specific aspects of U.S. culture, such as Independence Day, Halloween, and Thanksgiving. Parents who understand what these holidays and events are about will feel more at ease with American traditions and customs.

Adult Learning Opportunities

Immigrant families may be unaware of the opportunities available to them. Another way to reach out to parents is to make them aware of learning opportunities for themselves. Somewhere in your community there are likely to be English and/or native language literacy classes for adults, family literacy projects, and parenting classes.

If your school has not compiled a list of these resources, ask your school administrators to do so. They should call your school district, city, county, library, park and recreation center, community college, and community-based organizations. Be sure to verify that families are eligible to receive the services offered regardless of immigration status. To be most effective, this list should be made available in Spanish and English and updated regularly.

Empowering Parents at Home

All parents can be helpful in their children's literacy development, regardless of their language, education, or literacy level. Parents who speak little or no English can contribute to their children's education in valuable ways. English language learners may benefit when they develop solid literacy skills in their first language before learning to read in a second one. Through Spanish, they are developing key language and literacy skills that may enable them to become excellent readers in English.

What If My Students' Parents Speak Only Spanish and Don't Know How to Read?

Even if your students' parents cannot read, there are many ways they can develop their children's oral language skills and support their literacy efforts. Here are a few ideas:

>> Tell stories.

In Hispanic families, oral storytelling is often more of a natural activity than reading a bedtime story together. By telling stories, parents are developing their children's vocabulary and oral language skills. Parents can also encourage children to add to stories or make up their own.

>> "Read" wordless picture books.

Wordless picture books tell stories through pictures. This can be a fun way for parents and children to sit down together with books and talk about stories. Children can learn how stories progress, make predictions, and develop a love for books.

>> Say rhymes and sing songs.

Rhymes, songs, and chants help develop oral language skills such as intonation and word stress.

>> Make frequent trips to the public library.

Taking children to the library once a week and letting them choose their own books is a great way to encourage young readers. Note that many immigrants from Latin America may not be familiar with the idea of a public library where anyone can check out books for free.

>> Engage in meaningful conversation.

For oral language development, it is important that parents engage their children in meaningful conversation. Whether at the dinner table or at the grocery store, parents should ask children questions that require more than a simple yes or no answer.

>> Watch closed-captioned TV.

By turning on the closed-captioned feature on their TV sets, children can read the words that the characters are speaking on the screen. This could also be a way for parents to practice their English.

What If My Students' Parents Speak and Read Only in Spanish?

If your ELLs' parents are fully literate in Spanish, there are many ways they can help their children learn to read. First of all, they can do everything listed on the previous page. In addition, they can:

>> Read books in Spanish.

Just as English-speaking parents read books with their children in English, Spanish-speaking parents read books with their children in Spanish. If some parents are not accustomed to reading with their children, introduce them to children's books and model different ways they can read together.

>> Read bilingual books.

Bilingual books are a great way for ELL students and their parents to enjoy books together. In addition, they can both improve their English along the way.

>> Homework Help

If parents do not speak English, they may feel powerless when it comes to helping their children with homework. Let parents know that there are a variety of ways they can help:

- **Keep tabs.**

Parents can keep in touch with teachers to make sure their children are finishing their homework. They can ask their children if they have any homework and make sure they set aside enough time to do it.

- **Provide good workspace.**

Let parents know how important it is for children to have a clean, quiet workspace to read or do their homework. Even if it is a simple table and chair, children will concentrate better with a defined place to study.

- **Find a tutor.**

If parents cannot directly help with homework, encourage them to locate a tutor to help their children and answer any questions. This may be an aunt, uncle, neighbor, older sibling, or volunteer from a local tutoring program.

However, there is likely to be a small number of families for whom homework completion will be an issue, because there is either insufficient space or help at home when needed. Schools can develop "safety nets" for these situations, such as homework clubs where children can go after school and complete (or at least begin) their homework in a suitable work environment.

Starting a Home Library

Regardless of their language or literacy level, parents can help their children develop a special collection of books at home. They can:

>> Pick a special place in the house.

Designate a book area so that the child knows where to find his or her books. Buy, make, or clear off an area for a simple bookshelf. Even a board or cardboard box will do.

>> Find quality books.

There are a number of ways to build up a home library. An obvious way is to make frequent trips to the public library. Parents can also buy books from bookstores and school book fairs. Point out that they can often find books for little cost at used bookstores, thrift stores, and garage sales. Another way to develop a collection is to encourage family members and friends to give books to their children as presents for birthdays and other occasions.

Building Communities of Learners

Frequent communication with parents, and sending home resources translated into Spanish, motivates parents of English language learners to understand and participate in the education of their child. The following are some suggestions for building a collaborative relationship with your ELL families:

- » Send home notes about student progress and flyers about school events.
- » Send home a schedule of each new unit of instruction or concept being taught.
- » Invite parents to help with literacy activities at school.
- » Send home activities for parents and students to do together.
- » Invite parents to share their culture as a literacy activity at school.
- » Praise students by sending home notes when they are doing well.
- » Provide reading lists in English and Spanish based on the students' reading level.
- » Gather parents for the purpose of explaining their children's progress in school. Discuss specific ways they can help their child at home.
- » Talk to parents about their children's abilities to read at home in Spanish and/or English.
- » Explain to parents that you welcome their questions, comments, ideas, and help. Try to overcome parents' reluctance to talk with teachers. Encourage two-way communication. Let them know you value their input.

Provide Incentives and Services to Facilitate Participation

Some parents of ELLs — particularly new immigrants — may be holding more than one job, often supporting an extended family in their homes or communities, as well as family in their home country. Consequently, time and financial resources are often limited. You and your school can enable parents to participate by offering a number of incentives and services including:

- » Giving away books for parents to start a home library through free book programs such as Reading Is Fundamental and First Book.
- » Sending supplies home to facilitate students' work there.
- » Providing supervised child care for younger children, so that parents can meet with teachers, attend meetings and events, and volunteer at your school.

These kinds of services will increase participation among all your students' families, not just your English language learners.

Workshops for Helping Parents Contribute to the Literacy Development of Their Children

You and your colleagues can help parents get more deeply involved in the literacy development of their children by conducting informal, short workshops throughout the school year. If you are fortunate, your school or school district employs bilingual parent liaisons who are actively working with Spanish-speaking parents. If not, recruit a bilingual teacher or parent who can help you conduct these workshops.

How to Get Parents to Attend Workshops and Other Events

Here are some suggestions on how to get a good turnout for your workshops:

- >> Recruit parent volunteers to help plan and promote the workshops to other parents.
- >> Schedule parent and family activities at least a month in advance, and try to schedule them at times that can accommodate most parents.
- >> List all events in the student calendar that is sent home.
- >> When possible conduct some of your workshops in your parents' neighborhoods — in churches, community centers, office building meeting rooms, etc.
- >> Provide parents with child care services at your school. This is an opportunity to treat their children to a fun literacy-based experience with games, food, activities, and free books, if your school can afford them.
- >> Provide transportation such as a taxi, school bus, or parent carpool. Often taxi and bus companies are willing to donate these services.
- >> Provide food that is quick and easy to put together, or organize a potluck that celebrates workshop participants' traditions and cultures.
- >> Announce that you will be raffling off school supplies (call local businesses for donations) and additional reading materials.
- >> Provide parents with corporate sponsorship incentives, such as discount coupons for restaurants or school supplies. Most local establishments are more than happy to sponsor workshops and other school events.

This is a lot to do by yourself. In addition to parents, recruit other teachers, paraprofessionals, school volunteers, and even older middle-school students. You may also want to contact your local union representative (school district level) to partner with you.

Handouts and Activity Sheets

We have included a number of handouts to go along with your workshops in both English and Spanish, but keep in mind that you will want to include information in your workshops for parents who do not read English or Spanish. If you cannot hold workshops, you may want to distribute

these handouts over the course of the year. You know your students and their parents best, so please do customize these materials.

Reading Rockets Video Clips

On the enclosed VHS tape, we have included Reading Rockets video clips that will enable you to show parents what you are teaching them. Three of the clips appear in both English and Spanish. Video Clip 4 is in Spanish only, but the English translation is available on page 47 in this toolkit. Each clip is between three and four minutes in length.

- >> Video Clip 1 Becoming Aware of Print**
In San Jose, California, three-year old Mira gets a head start on reading from her parents. Length: 3:30 minutes
- >> Video Clip 2 Maricely Doesn't Give Up!**
Maricely was told that she had to repeat the fifth grade. Born in Puerto Rico and a native Spanish speaker, she found it doubly hard to learn to read in English. She doesn't give up, though, and with the help of her family and teachers, Maricely graduates to middle school. Length: 3:30 minutes
- >> Video Clip 3 Finding the Right Book**
The library is a vital resource for one mom whose son's appetite for information — especially about dinosaurs — is growing as quickly as his shoe size. Length: 3:15 minutes

- >> Video Clip 4 Pat Mora Discusses Libraries (Spanish only)** Children's book author Pat Mora speaks directly to Hispanic parents about taking their children to the library. Length: 3 minutes

The enclosed DVD also has five 30-minute episodes from the Reading Rockets series (available in English only). The series is a great springboard for parent-teacher discussions.

Workshop Techniques

Try to make your workshops as interactive as possible so that they take on the tone of a family gathering rather than a lecture hall. The more at-home your parents feel, the more they will learn and want to learn. Here are a few techniques to use when you are explaining ways that parents can help their children with their reading and other language skills.

- >> Model some of the things they can do at home, such as reading aloud, asking predictive questions, relating words to things they can find in their homes, and accepting their children's ideas and opinions through praise and confirmation.**
- >> If possible, pair up bilingual parents with monolingual parents to practice partner strategies for reading together with their children, such as "my turn, your turn" strategies.**
- >> View the video clips in this toolkit and use them to demonstrate practices you want your parents to adopt.**
- >> Ask parents if they can think of additional things they can do at home to reinforce the skills you are asking them to help their children with.**

The Gift of Two Languages

Emphasize to parents that knowing two languages is a gift they can give their child. Many children lose the ability to speak and read in Spanish when growing up in the United States. With encouragement from parents, as well as from you, children can become fluent in not just one language, but two!

Workshop Topics

Here are just a few ideas of topics that you can cover in parent workshops. What you choose will, of course, depend upon what grade you teach and what skills you are working on with your students.

- >> Print Awareness
- >> Discovering the Library
- >> Teaching Your Child About Letters
- >> Teaching Your Child About Sounds
- >> Read-Aloud Techniques
- >> Vocabulary Building
- >> Identifying Cognates (words that are similar in Spanish and English and have similar meaning and spelling)
- >> Connecting Reading to Meaning
- >> Encouraging Your Child to Write

The following pages outline four workshops, each designed to last 60-90 minutes. The outlines include learning objectives, talking points and, in some cases, video clips that model some of the practices you may wish your parents to emulate.

Parent Feedback

You may want to send a simple survey in Spanish to parents in advance of your workshop, asking them what they would be interested in learning. At the end of your workshops, provide a feedback form to parents, so that they have an opportunity to ask questions, request follow-up resources, and provide ideas and suggestions for future workshops.

Workshop 1: The Roots of Literacy

- Recommended Use:** This workshop is recommended for parents of preschoolers and kindergartners.
- Objectives:** To help parents understand the importance of reading, listening, and talking to their children. To be able to identify early literacy behaviors and gain the knowledge to model positive adult-child reading experiences.
- Video Clip 1:** **Becoming Aware of Print.** Use Video Clip 1 on your VHS tape. Length: 3:30 minutes
- Materials:** Provide a collection of books appropriate for the age of the children you are teaching. Include bilingual, Spanish, and wordless books, if possible.
- Create a list of books parents can get from your school library or the local library, including bilingual books and books in Spanish.
- A list of wordless, Spanish, and bilingual books can be found in the resource section of this toolkit, beginning on page 85.
- Time Frame:** 60-90 minutes

Before the Video

Talking Points:

- >> It doesn't matter what language you use to help your child learn. Whether in Spanish or English, you can spend time reading, singing, and talking to your child every day. When you do this, you increase your child's ability to use language.
- >> If your Spanish is a lot better than your English, then speak, read, and sing to your child in Spanish.
- >> What kinds of things are you already doing with your child that you think might help his or her language development?
- >> Do you talk to your child whenever you're together? When you're making dinner, cleaning, or going somewhere? Do you ask questions and engage him or her in conversation?
- >> Do you sing songs to your child? What kinds of songs?
- >> What about telling stories? Do you tell stories about your family? Do you make up funny stories?
- >>> What about reading? How many of you read to your children? Even if you do not read Spanish or English, there's a lot you can do to help your child with his or her language development.

Prepare the Audience for the Video Clip

Talking Points:

- >> Now, we're going to look at a video clip that features three-year-old Mira and shows how her parents incorporate early literacy skills into their everyday lives. The specific focus is on Mira's efforts to gain print awareness.
- >> Print awareness is important for young children. It involves children's knowledge about print and how it is typically organized on a page.
- >> Children who are exposed to a "print-rich environment" are more likely to become proficient readers and achieve academic success than children who experience little or no exposure to print prior to beginning school. Libraries help build and sustain that print-rich environment!
- >> We can begin to prepare children to learn to read very early in life. Books can be read to children long before they understand what a book is — from birth onwards. From the children's perspective, they are sharing a pleasurable interaction with parents or other adults. From the parents' or other adults' perspective, they are helping their children develop an ear for language.
- >> Reading to your children in Spanish is a great way to help them develop their literacy skills in both Spanish and English. The main thing is to read to them every day.
- >> Shared reading on a regular basis will help set the tone — children will understand that reading is as much a part of your family's daily activities as eating and sleeping.

- » Children who learn to “read” product names from logos found on signs, boxes, containers, and wrappers may be motivated and inspired to seek out opportunities to participate in literacy-related activities. The self-confidence that accompanies early reading success tends to motivate children to practice their reading skills often enough to become proficient readers in Spanish and English.

After the Video

Talking Points:

- » You just watched a piece in which Mira’s mother reads to Mira and her baby brother. Mira’s mother plainly illustrates concepts that adult readers know and take for granted but that children must be taught in order to become fluent readers:
- There is a difference between words and pictures. (Point to the print on a page as you read to children.)
 - Words on a page have meaning, and these are what we learn to read.
 - Words go across the page from left to right. (Follow with your finger as you read.)
 - Words on a page are made up of letters and are separated by spaces.
- » Ask pre-reading questions, such as “What do you think this book will be about?” This lets children bring in background knowledge and keeps them interested in the story.
- » While reading the book, be sure to:
- Read the book with excitement. Use funny voices for dialogue.
 - Ask the child to predict what will happen next.
 - Talk about how closely the predictions matched the story.
 - Ask comprehension questions to be sure they understand what is happening in the story.
- » After reading the book, ask more questions, such as “What did you like most about the story?”

Ask a volunteer to model these techniques with one of the books you have brought to the workshop. Then ask parents to pair up, choose a book, and take turns reading. If you have parents who do not read in Spanish or English, show them how they can use picture books to engage in discussions about the story.

End the workshop by encouraging parents to take their children to the library as often as possible, so that they always have a good supply of books to read with their children.

Handouts:

“Helping Your Child Become Aware of Print”
 “Reading Aloud: Tips for Reading to Your Children”

Web Site:

For more information on reading and suggested books, direct participants to the bilingual Web site www.ColorinColorado.org.

Helping Your Child Become Aware of Print



Parents and caregivers are critically important in helping children learn to read. In fact, parents and caregivers are children's first and best teachers. Most children who begin first grade with the ability to read fairly well have grown up with lots of print around them and adults to share it with them.

Here are some suggestions to get you started:

- Talk to your children. Read to them. Listen to them read and talk to you.
- Read to children from the time they are first born. Although babies may not understand the words or meanings at this age, research suggests that even six- or seven-week-old babies get excited when adults read to them.
- Draw your children's attention to print in the world around them. Find print in books, product logos, signs, lists, and billboards. Point out letters that are familiar or have special meaning, such as a letter in their names.
- Keep books, newspapers, and other printed materials around the house. Let children see you reading. This will show them that you enjoy reading and that you think it's important.
- Set aside 15 minutes each day to read with your children, no matter how old they are.
- Encourage children to dictate made-up stories to you. Write down their words and then show them the words in their story as you read it back to them.
- Plan activities that include recognition of letters and words (such as word games, educational videos, alphabet cards, writing the child's name, etc.).
- Visit your library regularly. Get a library card. Check out books. Attend story times and other events.
- Reward your child with books. Buy books from book clubs, from garage sales, or from the library.

For more information, please visit www.ColorinColorado.org

Cómo ayudar a su niño a conocer el material impreso



(Helping Your Child Become Aware of Print)

Los padres y las personas encargadas de cuidar a su niño (cuidadores) juegan un papel importante en ayudar a los niños a que aprendan a leer. De hecho, los padres y los cuidadores son los primeros y los mejores maestros de los niños. La mayoría de los niños que empiezan el primer grado con la habilidad de leer bastante bien han crecido rodeados de mucho material impreso (libros, periodicos, etc.) y adultos con quien compartirlos. Para empezar, he aquí algunas sugerencias:

- Converse con sus hijos. Léales. Escúcheles leer y que le hablen.
- Léales a sus hijos desde el momento en que nacen. A pesar de que los bebés no entienden las palabras o sus significados a esta edad, los estudios demuestran que aún los bebés de 6 o 7 semanas de nacidos se emocionan cuando los adultos les leen.
- Dirija la atención de los niños hacia los impresos en el mundo alrededor de ellos. Encuentre impresos en libros, logotipo de productos, rótulos, listas y carteleras. Señáleles las letras que les son familiares o tienen un significado especial, tales como las letras en sus nombres.
- Mantenga libros, periódicos y otros materiales impresos alrededor de la casa. Permita que sus hijos lo vean leyendo a usted. Esto les demostrará que usted disfruta la lectura y que piensa que es importante.
- Separe 15 minutos cada día para leer con sus hijos, sin importar sus edades.
- Aliente a sus hijos a que le dicten cuentos inventados. Escriba sus palabras y luego muéstreles las palabras en su cuento mientras se los vuelve a leer a ellos.
- Planee actividades que incluyan el reconocimiento de letras y palabras (tales como juego de palabras, videos educativos, tarjetas del abecedario, escribiendo el nombre del niño, etc.).
- Visite su biblioteca de forma regular. Obtenga una tarjeta de la biblioteca. Saque libros prestados. Asista a la hora de cuentos y otros eventos.
- Recompense a su hijo con libros. Compre libros de clubes de libros, de ventas de garaje o de la biblioteca.

Para mayor información, visite www.ColorinColorado.org

Reading Aloud: Tips for Reading to Your Children



Before Reading

- Point out the front and back of the book.
- Read the author and illustrator names. Ask about their roles. (The author writes the story. The illustrator draws the pictures.)
- Talk about the cover of the book. Ask questions such as, “Why do you think the boy looks sad?”
- Ask questions such as, “What do you think this book will be about?” This lets children predict what will happen. Also, this kind of question usually requires more than a one-word answer.

During Reading

- Follow the words with your finger as you read.
- Read the book with excitement. Use funny voices for dialogue.
- Hold the book so that the child can see the print.
- Point out letters, punctuation marks, and pictures.
- Ask questions such as:

“What do you think the story is about?”

“What do you think will happen next?”

“Have you ever wondered about this?”

After Reading

- Ask children more questions that make them think, such as:
 - “What did you like most about the story?”
 - “What did you like least about it?”
 - “Were we right about what we thought the book was going to be about?”
- Have children write or dictate their version of the story.

For more information, please visit www.ColorinColorado.org

Lea en voz alta: Consejos para que les lea a sus hijos



(Reading Aloud: Tips for Reading to Your Children)

Antes de leer:

- Señálele las tapas de adelante y de atrás del libro.
- Léale el nombre del autor y del ilustrador. Pregúntele acerca de sus roles. (El autor escribe el cuento. El ilustrador hace los dibujos).
- Háblele acerca de la cubierta del libro. Hágle preguntas tales como, “¿Por qué piensas que el niño está triste?”
- Hágle preguntas tales como, “¿De qué crees que se trata este libro?” Esto les permite a los niños predecir que es lo que va a pasar. Generalmente, este tipo de preguntas también requiere una respuesta de más de una palabra.

Durante la lectura:

- Señálele las palabras con su dedo a medida que lea.
- Léale el libro con entusiasmo. En el diálogo, hable con voces divertidas.
- Sostenga el libro de manera que el niño pueda ver las letras.
- Señálele las letras, los signos de puntuación y las figuras.
- Hágle preguntas, tales como:

“¿De qué piensas que se trata el libro?”

“¿Qué crees que pasará luego?”

“¿Te has preguntado esto alguna vez?”

Después de la lectura:

- Hágales a sus hijos más preguntas que los dejen pensando, tales como:

“¿Qué fue lo que te gustó más del cuento?”

“¿Qué fue lo que te gustó menos?”

“¿Teníamos razón de lo que pensábamos que se trataba el libro?”

- Pídales a sus hijos que escriban o dicten su versión del cuento.

Para mayor información, visite www.ColorinColorado.org

Workshop 2: Using Rhymes for Oral Development

Recommended Use: This workshop is recommended for parents with children in preschool through third grade.

Objectives: To help parents of English language learners use rhymes in both languages.

Reading rhyming poems out loud is an effective strategy because it links rhyming words to phonemic awareness and oral language development. Rhyming can be used as a tool to build students' oral vocabulary in both English and Spanish, as well as build phonemic awareness for pre-literacy skills.

Materials: Select two rhyming poems — one in English and one in Spanish. You can either use the ones included or choose others that may be more suitable for your needs.

Time Frame: 60-90 minutes

Activity

- Begin by exploring some rhymes that are easy.

“Let’s talk about rhymes.”

“A rhyme is a poem or verse with the same sounds at the end of a line.”

- Give an example and relate it to the poem you have chosen, or use the one below.

My Baby Brother*

by Mary Ann Hoberman

My baby brother’s beautiful,
So perfect and so tiny.
His skin is soft and velvet brown;
His eyes are dark and shiny.

- Give another example or use this second verse of “My Baby Brother”:

His hair is black and curled up tight;
His two new teeth are sharp and white.
I like it when he chews his toes;
And when he laughs, his dimples show.

- Continue by exploring rhymes in Spanish:

“Let’s talk about rhymes in Spanish. Rhymes are *rimas* in Spanish. What rhymes in Spanish can we think about?”

- After some discussion, offer a rhyme such as the following:

Don Pepito el verdulero,
Se cayó en un sombrero.
El sombrero era de paja.
Se cayó en una caja.
La caja era de cartón.
Se cayó en un cajón.
El cajón era de pino.
Se cayó en un pepino.
El pepino maduró
Y don Pepito se salvó.

- Encourage parents to read rhymes to their children every day, so that they can relate the rhymes to print.

“You can familiarize your children with the words of the rhymes by pointing to the words in the book, while they read them out loud.”

- Use some more examples in English and/or Spanish, including nursery rhymes.
- End the workshop by reinforcing the strategy of reading rhymes aloud to develop vocabulary and oral development.

Handout:

“Teach Your Child About Sounds”

Web Site:

For more information on reading and suggested books, direct participants to the bilingual Web site www.ColorinColorado.org.

* From: Scott Foresman’s “ESL 1 – Accelerating English Language Learning” (1997).

Starting at age three or four, children can usually play rhyming and other sound games. Being able to hear the different sounds in words is an important step in learning how to read.

Here are some ways to learn about sounds:

- **Play with your child's name.**

Play around with the sounds in your child's name. Ask him or her to say words that begin with the same sound, such as José, *jugar*, and *jabón*.

- **Say tongue twisters.**

Tongue twisters are a fun way to practice sounds. Here are some you can try:

Cómelo, cosme

Cómelo, cosme,
cómelo con limón,
cómelo con melón
y con melocotón.

Compadre

Compadre, cómpreme un coco.
Compadre, coco no compro,
que el que poco coco come,
poco coco compra.
Yo, como poco coco como
poco coco compro.

Tres tristes tigres

Tres tristes tigres tragaban trigo,
en tres tristes trastos en un trigal.
En tres tristes trastos en un trigal,
tres tristes tigres tragaban trigo.

¿Cuántos cuentos?

Cuando cuentas cuentos,
cuenta cuántos cuentas,
porque cuando cuentas cuentos,
nunca sabes cuántos cuentos cuentas.



- **Practice vowel sounds.**

Here are some rhymes for practicing vowel sounds:

A

Mi gatita enferma está,
No sé si se curará,
O si al fin se morirá,
mi gatita enferma está.

I

Mi sombrero perdí,
Con un lazo de carmesí,
y un ramito de alhelí,
mi sombrero perdí.

U

Ayer cantaba el cucú,
En el árbol de bambú,
¿Dime si lo oíste tú?
Ayer cantaba el cucú.

E

A mí me gusta el café
No sé si lo tomaré,
o si, al fin, lo dejaré,
a mí me gusta el café.

O

Tengo un bonito reloj,
Mi papá me lo compró,
y ayer tarde se paró,
tengo un bonito reloj.

- **Say rhymes with your child.**

Say a word such as *gato* and ask your child to think of a word that rhymes with it (such as *pato*). Try *pata* and *lata* or *chico* and *rico*. Rhyme together whenever you can!

When you say a rhyme, stop before you get to the last rhyming word. Ask your child to fill in the blank. You could say, "Bate, bate, chocolate, tu nariz de _____ ." (cacahuete)

- **Use your child's toys to practice rhyming.**

Pretend the toy says something like, "My name is Marco. I like words that rhyme with my name. I am going to say some words and I want you to tell me if they rhyme with Marco. Ready? Does *barco* rhyme with Marco? Does *pelota* rhyme with Marco? Does *charco* rhyme with Marco?" Wait for your child to answer each question, yes or no.

For more information, please visit www.ColorinColorado.org

Cómo enseñarle a su niño los sonidos



(Teach Your Child About Sounds)

Por lo regular, los niños pueden jugar a rimar y otros juegos con sonidos desde los tres o cuatro años de edad. Poder escuchar los distintos sonidos de las palabras es un paso de gran importancia para su niño.

He aquí unas cuantas maneras útiles para aprender los sonidos.

- **Jueguen con el nombre de su niño**

Pídale decir palabras que comiencen con el mismo sonido, como: José, jugar, jabón.

- **Digan trabalenguas**

Los trabalenguas son una manera muy divertida de practicar los sonidos. He aquí unos cuantos con lo que podrán jugar:

Cómelo, cosme

Cómelo, cosme,
cómelo con limón,
cómelo con melón
y con melocotón.

Compadre

Compadre, cómpreme un coco.
Compadre, coco no compro,
que el que poco coco come,
poco coco compra.
Yo, como poco coco como
poco coco compro.

Tres tristes tigres

Tres tristes tigres tragaban trigo,
en tres tristes trastos en un trigal.
En tres tristes trastos en un trigal,
tres tristes tigres tragaban trigo.

¿Cuántos cuentos?

Cuando cuentas cuentos,
cuenta cuántos cuentas,
porque cuando cuentas cuentos,
nunca sabes cuántos cuentos cuentas.



- **Practiquen los sonidos de las vocales**

He aquí algunas rimas para decir, con las cuales podrán practicar los sonidos de las vocales:

A

Mi gatita enferma está,
No sé si se curará,
O si al fin se morirá,
mi gatita enferma está.

I

Mi sombrerito perdí,
Con un lazo de carmesí,
y un ramito de alhelí,
mi sombrerito perdí.

U

Ayer cantaba el cucú,
En el árbol de bambú,
¿Dime si lo oíste tú?
Ayer cantaba el cucú.

E

A mí me gusta el café
No sé si lo tomaré,
o si, al fin, lo dejaré,
a mí me gusta el café.

O

Tengo un bonito reloj,
Mi papá me lo compró,
y ayer tarde se paró,
tengo un bonito reloj.

- **Digan rimas con su hijo**

Diga una palabra como "gato" y pídale a su niño pensar en alguna palabra que rime con ella, (como "pato"). Diga por ejemplo, "pata" y "lata", o "chico" y "rico". ¡Rimen juntos cada vez que puedan!

Al decir rimas, deténgase antes de llegar a la última palabra que rime y pídale a su hijo que la diga. Por ejemplo: "Bate, bate, chocolate, tu nariz de _____". (cacahuete)

- **Use los juguetes o muñecos de su hijo para practicar la rima.**

Pretenda que el muñeco dice algo como lo siguiente: "Me llamo Marco y me gustan las palabras que riman con mi nombre. Voy a decir algunas palabras y quiero que me digas si riman con Marco. ¿Listo? ¿Barco rima con Marco? ¿Pelota rima con Marco? ¿Charco rima con Marco?" Espere a que el niño responda sí o no a cada pregunta.

Para mayor información, visite www.ColorinColorado.org

Workshop 3: Finding the Right Book

- Recommended Use:** This workshop is recommended for parents with children of all ages.
- Objectives:**
- To introduce parents to the school and/or public library and to motivate them to take their children there often.
 - To motivate and help parents build a print-rich environment at home.
- Video Clip 3:** **Finding the Right Book.** Video Clip 3 can be found on the enclosed VHS tape. Length: 3:15 minutes
- Video Clip 4:** **Pat Mora Discusses Libraries.** Video Clip 4 can be found on the enclosed VHS tape. (This clip appears in Spanish only. The English translation can be found on page 47 in this toolkit.) Length: 3 minutes
- Materials:** Use handouts from your school and local libraries listing the resources that will be of particular interest to the parents of your ELLs, especially resources in Spanish. Note that the resource section of this toolkit has a list of recommended books in Spanish, as well as a list of wordless books.

Location:

Try to hold this workshop in your school or public library, so that you can give parents a tour and show them where resources are located.

See if you can arrange for a librarian to read to the children while you conduct the workshops with the parents.

If a visit to the library isn't possible, invite local librarians to participate in your workshop.

Time Frame:

60-90 minutes

Before the Video

This video features a mother and her son, T.J. Their trip to the library illustrates how important the library can be in encouraging a child's appetite for books.

Talking Points:

- » Libraries offer children an opportunity to discover the type of books they enjoy best. Librarians can ask questions and make suggestions to guide children through the process of self-discovery needed to choose books that they find interesting and exciting.
- » Books are only the beginning! Libraries are filled with educational resources such as computers, Internet access, educational videos, educational games, and other tools.

- » Many libraries offer formal tours, or a librarian can walk visitors through the library to show what is available.
- » Some libraries offer book clubs or story times, which bring children together with their peers.
- » Libraries have an abundance of materials for both children and adults.

After the Video

Engage the group in a discussion about your library. Explain how parents can obtain a free library card for each member of their family. Bring applications for them to fill out.

Highlight some of the upcoming family events that might be happening in your school and community. Hand out flyers, booklists, and other appropriate library handouts.

If the workshop takes place in the library, take a short tour. If it takes place in another location, talk about when the participants could go to the library and meet the staff.

If you have access to computers, show parents how to log onto the bilingual Web site on reading, www.ColorinColorado.org, and give them a tour of the parent section of the site.

End the session by encouraging parents to create a literacy center at home where their children can study and where books and magazines can be located.

Second Video Clip Option

If you have some extra time, you may wish to also show Video Clip 4: Pat Mora Discusses Libraries. In Spanish only, children's book author Pat Mora speaks directly to Hispanic parents about taking their children to the library. (The English translation can be found on page 47 in this toolkit.) After viewing this video clip, it might be fun to help parents search for Pat Mora's books on library shelves.

Handout:

"Discover Your Library"

Web Site:

For more information, direct participants to the bilingual Web site www.ColorinColorado.org.

Discover Your Library



The public library is like a huge treasure chest, chock full of books, magazines, videos, computers, and programs — and it's all available free with a library card.

Here are just a few of the things you will find:

- Librarians who can help you find books about topics that interest your child and are at the right reading level.
- A special kid-friendly section designed just for children. Most libraries have good children's sections with books in both English and Spanish.
- Story times for young children. Ask your librarian for exact days and times. Books come to life during story time. It's a great way for you to share stories with your children.
- Information about child and adult reading programs and information about tutoring programs for children and adults.
- Computers for you and your child to use for free. You'll find a gold mine online. To get you started, visit the bilingual Web site www.ColorinColorado.org. You will find booklists and information to help you support your child's literacy development.

To obtain a free library card, bring in one proof of identification that has your current address, such as a driver's license or a phone bill. You do not need a social security number or card. With a library card, you can check out books and other materials for children and adults for a few weeks at a time. When you're done with those books, you can bring them back and exchange them for more.

For more information, please visit www.ColorinColorado.org

Descubra su biblioteca

(Discover Your Library)



La biblioteca pública es como un cofre inmenso de tesoros, repleto de libros, revistas, videos, computadoras y programas – y todo está disponible gratis con una tarjeta de la biblioteca.

He aquí sólo algunas de las cosas que encontrará:

- Bibliotecarias que lo pueden ayudar a encontrar libros sobre temas que le interesan a su hijo y que están a su nivel apropiado de lectura.
- Una sección infantil acogedora especial diseñada sólo para niños. La mayoría de las bibliotecas tienen buenas secciones infantiles con libros tanto en inglés como en español.
- La hora del cuento para niños pequeños. Pregúntele a su bibliotecaria por los días y horas exactas. Los libros cobran vida cuando llega la hora del cuento. Es un modo excelente para compartir cuentos con sus hijos.
- La información acerca de los programas de lectura para niños y adultos e información acerca de programas de tutoría para niños y adultos.
- Las computadoras libre de cargos para su uso y el de su hijo. Usted encontrará una mina de oro en línea. Para que empiece, visite la página Web bilingüe www.ColorinColorado.org. Usted encontrará listas de libros e información que lo ayudará a apoyar el desarrollo de alfabetización de su hijo.

Para obtener una tarjeta de la biblioteca gratis, presente una tarjeta de identificación que tenga su dirección actual, tal como una licencia de conducir o un recibo del teléfono. No necesita un número de Seguro Social o tarjeta. Con la tarjeta de la biblioteca, cada vez usted podrá sacar prestado libros y otros materiales para niños y adultos por varias semanas. Cuando termina con estos libros, los puede llevar de vuelta y sacar prestados otros más.

Para mayor información, visite www.ColorinColorado.org

Video Clip 4: Pat Mora Discusses Libraries

(English Translation)

"I hope that you take your children to the library — if not once a week, then at least once a month. It's free. You can go in, ask for a card, put your name and address on it, and have the privilege of checking out books. It doesn't cost anything. As I say, the library is a building full of treasures, and they are there for everyone. Almost all libraries today have a section in Spanish for adults and for children. ...

"In many libraries and bookstores in the United States, there is a tradition that is called 'story hour.' The librarian in charge of the children's section chooses one or more books. Then the children come in, maybe sit on the carpet, and the librarian reads them the book. In some libraries today the story hour is bilingual, which means that they read the book in both languages. But even if it's all in English, you can still go and listen. Sometimes they also have activities for the children. Maybe they'll read a book about rivers, fish, and frogs. And then maybe they'll make or paint little frogs, or something like that. Many times there are activities. Many times there are also songs. ...

"They can have fun there, without spending money and without getting into trouble. So, these libraries can be like a community center for the neighborhood. It didn't used to be that way. Before, the library would close around 5 in the afternoon. Today they close at 8 pm. I was in Fort Worth and at 8 at night the library was full of young people. Some were doing their homework, others were working on computers, and others were reading about different countries for their school projects. So, it's important for you to go to the library so that your children feel like, 'Oh, this is like my home. I can come here. I am safe. I can have fun, and I can read.'"

Workshop 4: Identifying Cognates

Recommended Use: This workshop is recommended for Hispanic parents with children of any age.

Objectives: To help Spanish-speaking parents learn to identify cognates, reinforce those words in both languages, and then recognize them in daily life. Cognates are words in Spanish and English that share similar meaning and spelling. Cognate awareness is the ability to use cognates in a primary language as a tool for understanding a second language.

Identifying cognates is an effective strategy because it bridges languages at the level of vocabulary. This workshop can be used as a tool to both build parents' vocabulary and increase their cognate awareness.

Materials: Choose a children's book with at least five cognates that you can explore together. A bilingual book in English and Spanish will make this activity much easier for you and the parents.

You will also need something to write on so that everyone can see. This could be a chalkboard or large easel pad of paper.

Time Frame: 60-90 minutes

Activity

>> Begin by explaining what cognates are.

Ask if any parent can think of words in English and Spanish that have similar meanings. If nobody can think of a word, then suggest a cognate in one language, such as *familia*.

>> Make two columns on the paper or chalkboard.

Write *español* at the top of one column and *inglés* at the top of the other. Write down one cognate such as *familia*. Ask if anyone knows the related word in English. Then write “family” in the English column.

>> Explain that cognates are related words in Spanish and English that share a similar meaning and spelling.

Point out that cognates can be very useful for learning English, both for parents and their children. Since there are thousands of related pairs in Spanish and English, suggest to parents that it’s worth taking a good guess!

>> Ask if anyone can think of more cognates. Continue the exercise until you have filled up both columns.

If you are stumped, here are some other cognates you can use:

animal – animal
bicicleta – bicycle
color – color
conversación – conversation
minuto – minute
necesario – necessary
no – no

>> Now try exploring some common false cognates.

Ask if anyone knows what the English word for *embarazada* is. Someone may say “embarrassed.” But this is a tricky false cognate, because *embarazada* means “pregnant,” not “embarrassed.” Strike a line through this example because it is a false cognate. Point out that although some false cognates do exist, they are the exception. It’s still best to guess!

Explain that false cognates are words that are similar in spelling and pronunciation in Spanish and English, but don’t have similar meaning. These words look alike but do not have the same meaning in English and Spanish.

Here is another example:

“Mayor” (of a city) in English means leader of a city.

“Mayor” in Spanish means “majority.”

“Alcalde” is the word in Spanish that refers to the English meaning of “mayor” (of a city).

>> Next, pull out the (bilingual) children’s book that you chose for the workshop.

Explain that you are going to read the story in Spanish and then in English. Ask parents to raise their hands whenever they think they recognize a pair of cognates.

Stop at each cognate and discuss. Erase the board or turn over a new piece of paper. Make the same two columns and write down the first pair of cognates. Continue reading the story in the same way, identifying the cognates and discussing.

For example, on the first page of the book *Supermarket*, by Kathleen Krull, the English words read:

Shopping carts clang.

Magic doors whiz open and shut.

Colors glow under bright white lights.

So many breakfasts, lunches, and dinners!

It's all at a special, necessary, very real place:

The supermarket.

After reading both the Spanish and English versions, you can write:

special – especial

necessary – necesario

supermarket – supermercado

>> When you finish the story, try quizzing parents on the cognates they just identified.

Turn it into a game. Cover up one of the cognates and ask parents if they can remember its other language pair. Go through the list once.

>> Encourage parents to apply this skill of identifying cognates.

Give them a word in English like “accident.” See if parents can guess its Spanish equivalent, *accidente*. Next, say a Spanish word like *bicicleta* and see if parents can guess “bicycle.”

Here are a few more word pairs:

invite – invitar

animal – animal

finally – finalmente

paper – papel

>> End the workshop by reinforcing the idea that identifying cognates can help parents and their children to learn more English.

Point out that this skill will help their children develop a richer vocabulary, which will improve their comprehension skills in both reading and academics in English. Encourage parents to check out a bilingual storybook and repeat this exercise with their children.

Handout:

“Cognates: A Bridge Between Spanish and English”

Web Site:

For more information, direct participants to the bilingual Web site www.ColorinColorado.org.

Cognates: A Bridge Between Spanish and English



Lots of words in Spanish and English are similar in meaning and spelling. These words are called cognates. You can help your child develop his or her awareness of these similar words by recognizing that these words can help transfer understanding from Spanish to English. Here are just a few examples.

Common Names for Professions

actor – actor
artista – artist
asistente – assistant
biólogo – biologist
capitán – captain
carpintero – carpenter
dentista – dentist
general – general
héroe – hero
mecánico – mechanic
novelista – novelist
policía – police
presidente – president
senador – senator
turista – tourist
tutor – tutor

Other Common Words

animal – animal
arco – arc
burro – burro
bicicleta – bicycle
capital – capital
color – color

error – error
familia – family
favor – favor
hospital – hospital
idea – idea
metal – metal
música – music
parte – part

Common Descriptive Words

ambicioso – ambitious
automático – automatic
conveniente – convenient
delicioso – delicious
expresivo – expressive
famoso – famous
fantástico – fantastic
final – final
hora – hour
horrible – horrible
húmedo – humid
importante – important
imposible – impossible
local – local
minuto – minute

necesario – necessary
negativo – negative
natural – natural
normal – normal
ordinario – ordinary
rápido – rapid
romántico – romantic
sólido – solid
terrible – terrible

Common Action Words

calcular – calculate
completar – complete
convertir – convert
insistir – insist
invitar – invite
dominar – dominate
organizar – organize
participar – participate
preparar – prepare
producir – produce
reducir – reduce

For more information, please visit www.ColorinColorado.org

Cognados: Un puente entre español e inglés



(Cognates: A Bridge Between Spanish and English)

Muchas palabras en español e inglés son similares en su significado y en su ortografía. Estas palabras se denominan cognados. Usted puede ayudar a su niño a desarrollar su conocimiento de estas palabras similares al reconocer que estas palabras pueden ayudar a transferir el entendimiento del español al inglés. He aquí algunos ejemplos.

Nombres comunes para las profesiones

actor – actor
artista – artist
asistente – assistant
biólogo – biologist
capitán – captain
carpintero – carpenter
dentista – dentist
general – general
héroe – hero
mecánico – mechanic
novelista – novelist
policía – police
presidente – president
senador – senator
turista – tourist
tutor – tutor

Otras palabras comunes

animal – animal
arco – arc
burro – burro
bicicleta – bicycle
capital – capital

color – color
error – error
familia – family
favor – favor
hospital – hospital
idea – idea
metal – metal
música – music
parte – part

Palabras comunes descriptivas

ambicioso – ambitious
automático – automatic
conveniente – convenient
delicioso – delicious
expresivo – expressive
famoso – famous
fantástico – fantastic
final – final
hora – hour
horrible – horrible
húmedo – humid
importante – important
imposible – impossible
local – local

minuto – minute
necesario – necessary
negativo – negative
natural – natural
normal – normal
ordinario – ordinary
rápido – rapid
romántico – romantic
sólido – solid
terrible – terrible

Palabras comunes de acción

calcular – calculate
completar – complete
convertir – convert
insistir – insist
invitar – invite
dominar – dominate
organizar – organize
participar – participate
preparar – prepare
producir – produce
reducir – reduce

Para mayor información, visite www.ColorinColorado.org

More Handouts and Activity Sheets

The following pages contain additional handouts that you can send home to parents or use at meetings and workshops.

| | |
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Note: These handouts, as well as those located in the workshops section of this toolkit, are also provided in Spanish.

“But What If I Don't Know English?”



If your Spanish is a lot better than your English, then speak, read, and sing to your child in Spanish. Whether in English or Spanish, you can spend time reading, singing, and talking to your child every day. Doing so will increase your child's ability to use language.

Here are some ways to build your child's literacy skills:

- **Encourage your child to read another book.**
Find ways to encourage your child to keep reading. If he or she likes one book, find another book with a similar subject or by the same author. Ask a librarian or teacher for book suggestions.
- **Take turns reading.**
Once your child can read, have him or her read aloud to you every day. You can take turns — you read one page and your child the next. You can read books written in either Spanish or English. If you do not read English, ask your child to read the book in English and then tell you about the book in Spanish.
- **Make connections to your child's life.**
Help your child make connections between what he or she reads in books and what happens in life. If you're reading a book about a family, for example, talk about how what happens in the story is the same or different from what happens in your family.
- **Give your child an incentive to read.**
At bedtime, encourage your child to read. Offer a choice between reading or sleeping. Most kids will choose to read, as long as you don't offer something more tempting (like TV).
- **Try different types of books and magazines.**
Encourage your child to read different types of books, articles, or stories. Some kids, especially boys, prefer nonfiction books. Others like children's magazines.
- **Turn on the closed-captioning feature on your television.**
When watching a television show with your child, try turning on the closed captions on your television. This shows the words the characters are speaking on the television screen. Some people find it's a good way to learn English!

For more information, please visit www.ColorinColorado.org

¿Y si no hablo inglés?

(But What If I Don't Know English?)



Si su español es mucho mejor que su inglés, hable, lea y cante con su niño en español. No importa la lengua que use para ayudarle a su hijo a aprender, usted podrá pasar tiempo todos los días leyendo, cantando y hablando con su niño en español o en inglés. Hacerlo, estimulará la capacidad del niño de usar el lenguaje.

He aquí algunas ideas de cómo desarrollar las destrezas de alfabetización de su niño.

- **Anime a su hijo a leer otro libro**
Encuentre la manera de animar a su hijo a leer. Si le gusta un libro, busque otro con un tema similar o del mismo autor. Pídale a una bibliotecaria o a una maestra que le sugieran libros.
- **Túrnense para leer**
Cuando su hijo sepa leer, pídale que le lea en voz alta todos los días. Ustedes podrán turnarse: usted lee una página y el niño la siguiente. Usted puede leer libros escritos ya sea en español o inglés. Si usted no lee inglés, pídale a su niño que le lea el libro en inglés y luego que se lo cuente en español.
- **Haga conexiones con la vida de su hijo**
Ayúdele al niño a conectar lo que lee en los libros con lo que ocurre en la vida. Si leen un libro sobre la familia, mencione por ejemplo en qué se parece o se diferencia lo que ocurre en el cuento a lo que ocurre en su familia.
- **Incentive al niño a leer**
Anime a su niño a leer a la hora de acostarse. Ofrézcale escoger entre leer o dormir. La mayoría de los niños elige leer, siempre y cuando no se les ofrezca algo más tentador (como la televisión).
- **Trate distintos tipos de libros y revistas**
Anime a su niño a leer distintos tipos de libros, artículos o cuentos. Algunos niños, especialmente los varones, prefieren los libros que no son de ficción. A otros les gustan más las revistas.
- **Encienda el circuito cerrado en el televisor**
Cuando vea un programa de televisión con su hijo, trate de hacer uso de la opción de circuito cerrado. Esto muestra en la pantalla del televisor las palabras que dicen los personajes. Algunos consideran que esta es una buena manera de aprender inglés.

Para mayor información, visite www.ColorinColorado.org

Even when your child is still a baby, there are things you can do to help him or her learn! The first three years of life are very important in developing your child's mind and abilities.

Here are some ways to give your child an early and strong start:

- **Talk to your child all the time.**

Beginning with the day your child is born, talk to him or her whenever you're together. When you're making dinner, cleaning, or going somewhere, let your child hear you talk about what you're seeing, doing, or thinking. As your child gets older, ask questions and engage him or her in conversation.

- **Say rhymes.**

Rhymes are fun to listen to and they help your child hear the different sounds in words. Say rhymes like this one:

Bate, bate, chocolate,
tu nariz de cacahuete.
Uno, dos, tres, CHO!
Uno, dos, tres, CO!
Uno, dos, tres, LA!
Uno, dos, tres, TE!
Chocolate, chocolate!
Bate, bate, chocolate!
Bate, bate, bate, bate,
Bate, bate, CHOCOLATE!

- **Sing songs.**

Children love to hear people sing. Songs have rhymes and rhythms that help them learn. Here is one lullaby:

Duérmete, mi niño
Duérmete, mi niño,
duérmete solito,
que cuando despiertes
te daré atolito.
Duérmete, mi niña,
duérmete, mi sol,
duérmete pedazo
de mi corazón.



- **Tell stories.**

Tell your child a story you already know — or just make one up! It could be a folk tale, a story about your family, a funny story, or any story you both like.

- **Give everything a name.**

Tell your child what different things are called and explain what they do. Say things like “This is a phone. We use it to call grandmother.” Or “This is a clock. We use it to tell the time.” When talking to your child, use the names of things instead of words like “it” and “that.”

You can also put labels on things in your home — the labels might say “Chair” or “Table” or “Doll.” You can also play games that involve naming things. Ask your child, “Where’s your nose?” and then, “Where’s Mommy’s nose?” Then touch your child’s nose and say, “What’s this?”

- **Point out words in the world.**

Show your child all the words you see while driving, walking, or taking the bus. Point out the word “stop” on a stop sign, for example. Ask your child to find a new word every time you go out. This helps your child notice words and letters.

- **Read together every day.**

Once your child is six months old, read to him or her for at least 15 minutes each day. Experts say this is one of the most important things you can do! Make reading together a warm and loving time.

- **Listen to your child, too.**

Pay attention to what your child says, even if he or she is just a baby. Look your child in the eyes and show that you’ve heard him or her. This encourages children to keep trying to use words.

For more information, please visit www.ColorinColorado.org

Cómo ayudar a su hijo a prepararse a leer



(Help Your Child Get Ready to Read)

Aunque su hijo aún sea un bebé, hay cosas que usted puede hacer para ayudarle a aprender. Los primeros tres años de vida son fundamentales para el desarrollo de las capacidades y el cerebro del niño.

He aquí unas cuantas maneras de ofrecerle a su hijo un buen comienzo.

- **Converse con su hijo cada vez que pueda**

Desde el día en que nazca su hijo, hablele cuando estén juntos. Cuando esté preparando la cena, limpiando o yendo a algún lugar, permita que su hijo le oiga hablar sobre lo que esté viendo, haciendo o pensando. A medida que crezca hágale preguntas e involúcrelo en conversaciones.

- **Digan rimas**

Las rimas son divertidas y permiten que los niños escuchen los diferentes sonidos de las palabras. Digan rimas como la siguiente:

Bate, bate, chocolate,
tu nariz de cacahuete.
Uno, dos, tres, CHO!
Uno, dos, tres, CO!
Uno, dos, tres, LA!
Uno, dos, tres, TE!
Chocolate, chocolate!
Bate, bate, chocolate!
Bate, bate, bate, bate,
Bate, bate, CHOCOLATE!

- **Canten canciones**

A los niños les encanta escuchar a las personas cantando. Las canciones tienen rimas y ritmos que les ayudan a aprender. He aquí una canción de cuna:

Duérmete, mi niño
Duérmete, mi niño,
duérmete solito,
que cuando despiertes
te daré atolito.
Duérmete, mi niña,
duérmete, mi sol,
duérmete pedazo
de mi corazón.



- **Cuente cuentos**

Cuéntele a su hijo un cuento que ya conozca o invente uno, ya sea tradicional, de su familia, algo gracioso o cualquier otro tipo de historia que prefiera.

- **Nombren todas las cosas**

Dígale a su hijo cómo se llaman las distintas cosas y explíquele qué hacen. Diga por ejemplo: "El teléfono lo usamos para llamar a la abuela", o "El reloj se usa para saber qué hora es". Al hablar con su hijo, use los nombres de las cosas, en lugar de decir "eso", "esto" o "aquello".

Otra alternativa es usar letreros en su casa. Por ejemplo, letreros que digan: "mesa", "silla" o "muñeco". También pueden jugar a nombrar las cosas diciendo, por ejemplo: ¿Dónde está tu nariz? Y, ¿dónde está la nariz de mamá? Después, toque la nariz del niño y pregúntele: ¿Qué es esto?

- **Señale las palabras en su entorno**

Muéstrele a su hijo las palabras que vea cuando caminen, viajen en auto o tomen el autobús. Por ejemplo, muéstrele las palabras en los letreros de las tiendas. Cuando salgan, pídale a su hijo que busque palabras nuevas. Esto le ayudará a prestarle atención a las palabras y letras.

- **Lean juntos diariamente**

A partir de los seis meses de edad, lea con su hijo por lo menos 15 minutos diariamente. Los expertos afirman que, de todo lo que usted puede hacer por él o ella, esto es algo de lo más importante. Convierta la lectura en un tiempo cálido y afectuoso.

- **Escuche también a su hijo**

Préstele atención a lo que diga su niño, aun cuando sea un bebé. Mírelo a los ojos para que vea que usted le escuchó. Así, estimulará al niño a seguir tratando de usar las palabras.

Para mayor información, visite www.ColorinColorado.org

Encourage Your Child to Write



Reading and writing are two skills that reinforce each other. Even when children are in kindergarten, they can start writing stories! Here are some ways to help your child practice writing:

- **Don't worry about spelling mistakes.**

When your child is first learning to write, it doesn't matter if he or she makes spelling mistakes. In kindergarten, children learn how to hold a pencil, that sentences begin with a capital letter, that you need spaces between words, and much more. For now, it's just important that your child tries to write and sound out letters and share his or her thoughts.

- **Find reasons for your child to write.**

As your child gets more comfortable with writing, try to think of reasons to write — ask him or her to write the grocery list, thank-you notes, or birthday cards. The more practice your child gets, the better!

- **Make a writing kit.**

Find a box or basket and fill it with paper, crayons, books, pens, and pencils. Have him or her add things to the box. This makes it easy to find all the things your child needs to practice writing.

- **Be your child's number one fan.**

Show you care about your child's homework and writing assignments. Ask your child to read aloud what he or she has written. Be an enthusiastic listener. Give your child encouragement. Writing is hard work! Give him or her the courage and motivation to keep trying.

- **Have your child create a book.**

Make a book by folding pieces of paper in half and stapling them together. By second grade, your child should be able to write his or her own stories, with different sentences on each page. Ask your child to add drawings to the book. Put it (and your child's other writings) where everyone can see them.

- **Read together every day.**

Read with your child for at least 15 minutes each day. This is one of the most important things you can do! Make reading together a warm and loving time.

For more information, please visit www.ColorinColorado.org

Estimule a su hijo a escribir

(Encourage Your Child to Write)



Leer y escribir son dos habilidades que se refuerzan mutuamente. Los niños pueden comenzar a escribir historias incluso desde que entran al kindergarten. He aquí unas cuantas maneras como sus niños pueden aprender a practicar la escritura.

- **No se preocupe por los errores de ortografía**
Cuando su niño está aprendiendo a escribir, no importa si comete errores de ortografía. En kindergarten los niños aprenden cómo agarrar un lápiz, que las oraciones comienzan con mayúscula, que entre las palabras se necesitan espacios y mucho más. Por ahora, lo importante es que el niño trate de escribir, diga las letras y comparta lo que piensa.
- **Encuentre razones para que su hijo escriba**
A medida que el niño se sienta más a gusto con la escritura, trate de pensar en distintas razones por las cuales escribimos. Pídale que escriba una lista de compras, una nota de agradecimiento o una tarjeta de cumpleaños. Entre más practique la escritura, mejor para él o ella.
- **Organice un estuche de herramientas de escritura**
Coloque en una caja o en una canasta papel, crayolas, libros, lápices y bolígrafos. Pídale al niño que le añada otros elementos a la caja. Así le será fácil encontrar todo lo que el niño necesite para practicar la escritura.
- **Sea el mayor admirador**
Demuéstrele al niño su interés por las tareas y la escritura. Pídale que le lea en voz alta lo que haya escrito y escúchele con entusiasmo. Bríndele estímulo, ya que la escritura exige un gran esfuerzo. Déle ánimo y mótvélo a continuar intentándolo.
- **Elaboren un libro**
Elaboren un libro, doblando hojas de papel por la mitad y pegándolas con ganchos. Para el segundo grado el niño podrá escribir sus propios cuentos con distintas oraciones en cada página. Pídale que haga los dibujos para el libro y colóquelo donde todos lo puedan ver (con otras muestras de escritura).
- **Lean juntos diariamente**
Lean juntos por lo menos 15 minutos diariamente. Los expertos afirman que, de todo lo que usted puede hacer por él o ella, esto es algo de lo más importante. Convierta la lectura en un tiempo cálido y afectuoso.

Para mayor información, visite www.ColorinColorado.org

Help Your Child Understand What He or She Reads



When children get to fourth grade, they no longer spend time in class learning how to read. Instead, they learn about science, social studies, and many other subjects. They read in order to understand.

Here are some ways to help your child with comprehension:

- **Explain things.**
Explain to your child how things work and what things are. Talk about music, politics, sports, history, or whatever interests you both. Conversations with adults help children build understanding.
- **Ask questions.**
Ask questions that make your child think about what he or she just read. Say something like, "Why do you think he did that?" or "What's happening now?"
- **Show your child new people, places, and things.**
As much as you can, give your child new experiences. Take him or her along with you to meet new people, go to different places, and see new things. Talk about what you see and do. Open up your child's experiences so he or she can draw on that knowledge when reading.
- **Talk about different word meanings.**
Play games with words. You can talk about how "jam" means something you put on toast as well as cars stuck in traffic. How many other words can your child think of that sound the same but have different meanings or spellings? When kids know what a word means, they have less difficulty when reading it.
- **Use a children's dictionary.**
Buy or borrow a children's dictionary. Show your child how to use it to look up the meaning of words.



- **Teach your child comprehension tricks.**

Show your child some tricks to better understand what he or she has seen or read. Four of these tricks are summarizing, predicting, looking at context, and monitoring. These techniques work best with books, but you may also be able to use them with a TV show or movie on video or DVD, since you can stop, ask questions, and rewind if necessary. For example:

- Ask your child to shorten a story by retelling it in just a few sentences (summarize).
- Ask him or her to guess what might happen next (predict).
- Show your child how to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word based on other words and pictures around it (context).
- Explain how to pause while reading in order to ask himself or herself whether he or she knows what is happening, and if not, to re-read the sentence again (monitor).

Knowing how to do these things will help your child better understand what he or she reads.

- **Read together every day.**

Read with your child for at least 15 minutes each day. Experts say this is one of the most important things you can do! Make reading together a warm and loving time.

For more information, please visit www.ColorinColorado.org

Cómo ayudar a su hijo a comprender lo que lee



(Help Your Child Understand What He or She Reads)

Cuando los niños llegan al cuarto grado, ya no dedican tiempo en clase para aprender a leer. En lugar de ello, leen sobre ciencia, estudios sociales y sobre muchos otros temas, y leen, con el propósito de comprender.

He aquí unas cuantas maneras de ayudarle a su niño a mejorar su comprensión.

- **Ofrezcáله explicaciones**

Explíquele al niño qué son las cosas y cómo funcionan. Hablen sobre música, política, deportes, historia o cualquier otra cosa que le interese al niño. Las conversaciones con los adultos ayudan mucho a que los niños comprendan cada vez más.

- **Hágale preguntas**

Hágale preguntas que le hagan pensar sobre lo que acaba de leer. Diga por ejemplo: "¿Por qué crees que hizo eso?" o "¿Qué está ocurriendo ahora?".

- **Muéstrele nuevos lugares, cosas y personas**

Ofrézcale al niño experiencias nuevas siempre que pueda. Llévelo a conocer personas, a distintos lugares o a ver cosas nuevas. Hablen sobre lo que vean y hagan. Amplíe las experiencias de su pequeño para que pueda utilizar este conocimiento cuando lea.

- **Hablen sobre los distintos significados de las palabras**

Jueguen juegos con las palabras. Ustedes pueden hablar sobre las palabras que suenan igual pero tienen varios significados como "ratón", que es un animal y también un aparato para usar con la computadora.

- **Usen un diccionario infantil**

Compre uno o sáquelo prestado de la biblioteca. Muéstrele al niño cómo buscar los significados de las palabras.



- **Enséñele a su hijo trucos de comprensión**

Enséñele algunos trucos para comprender mejor lo que haya visto o leído. Cuatro de estos trucos son: resumir, hacer predicciones, usar el contexto y supervisar. Estas técnicas funcionan mejor con libros, pero también puede usarlas con un programa de televisión o película en video o disco compacto, ya que puede parar, hacer preguntas y rebobinar la cinta si es necesario. Por ejemplo:

- Pídale al niño que le cuente otra vez un cuento en unas pocas oraciones (resumir).
- Pídale adivinar lo que va a ocurrir después (predecir).
- Muéstrole como descifrar el significado de una palabra desconocida basándose en las palabras y las ilustraciones alrededor (usar el contexto).
- Explíquele cómo detenerse al leer para preguntarse si sabe lo que está ocurriendo o no, y si no, pídale que lea de nuevo la oración (supervisar).

Hacerlo le ayudará a su niño a comprender mejor lo que lea.

- **Lean juntos diariamente**

Lean juntos por lo menos 15 minutos diariamente. Los expertos afirman que, de todo lo que usted puede hacer por él o ella, esto es algo de lo más importante. Convierta la lectura en un tiempo cálido y afectuoso.

Para mayor información, visite www.ColorinColorado.org

Practice Sounding Out Words



A big step in learning how to read is being able to figure out new words. This is hard work. Kids need a lot of practice. They also need a lot of encouragement from you.

Here are some ways to help your child practice reading:

- **Ask your child to read aloud.**
Ask your child to read aloud to you at bedtime or anytime. Bring a children's book or magazine any time you'll have to wait, such as at a doctor's office or on a bus. Give your child lots of practice reading.
- **Pick books that are age-appropriate.**
Help your child choose books that are recommended for his or her age. Your child should be able to figure out most of the words on the page. You want your child to have lots of success with reading. That way, he or she will want to read more. Books that rhyme, that repeat phrases, and that have predictable stories are good for new readers.
- **Encourage your child to "sound out" words.**
If your child is having trouble figuring out a word, use your finger to point to the first letter in the word. Ask him or her what the letter usually sounds like. This won't always work because some letters have more than one sound. In the long run, though, being able to sound out words is more valuable than being able to use other types of clues to figure out a word (like looking at the pictures or guessing).
- **Gently correct your child.**
When your child makes a mistake when reading aloud, gently point out the letters he or she overlooked or read incorrectly. Ask questions such as, "Do you remember what sound this letter stands for?" Many beginning readers will guess wildly at a word based on its first letter. Encourage your child to pay attention to all the letters in a word.



- **Be patient.**

Figuring out new words is hard work! When your child is trying to sound out a new word, give him or her time to do so. It might take a couple of tries.

- **Have your child re-read sentences.**

When your child has figured out a new word, ask him or her to re-read the sentence the word is in. Often, children are so busy figuring out a word that they'll forget what they've just read.

- **Read, read, and read some more.**

Encourage your child to re-read favorite books. He or she will probably be able to read the story more quickly and successfully the second or third time. Make reading together a warm and loving time.

For more information, please visit www.ColorinColorado.org

Cómo practicar la pronunciación de palabras



(Practice Sounding Out Words)

Un gran paso para aprender a leer es aprender a descifrar las palabras nuevas. Esto es un trabajo arduo y los niños necesitan no sólo mucha práctica, sino también de su constante estímulo.

He aquí algunas formas de ayudar a su niño a que practique la lectura.

- **Pídale a su hijo que lea en voz alta**

Pídale a su niño que lea en voz alta a la hora de acostarse o en cualquier otro momento. Cada vez que tengan que esperar, como en el consultorio del doctor o en un autobús, mantenga a mano un libro infantil o una revista y déle al niño la oportunidad de practicar la lectura.

- **Elijan libros que sean apropiados para su edad**

Ayúdele a escoger libros que sean apropiados para su edad para que él o ella pueda descifrar la mayoría de las palabras en la página, ya que usted deseará que experimente el éxito con la lectura. De esa manera, deseará leer más. Los libros que tienen rimas, que repiten frases y que cuentan historias predecibles son buenos para los nuevos lectores.

- **Estimule a su hijo a pronunciar las palabras**

Si su hijo tiene dificultad para comprender una palabra, señale la primera letra. Pregúntele como suena esa letra, pero tenga en cuenta que esto no siempre funciona porque algunas letras tienen más de un sonido. Sin embargo, a largo plazo, es más valioso pronunciar las palabras que usar otro tipo de pistas para descifrar una palabra (como mirar las ilustraciones o adivinar).

- **Corrija a su hijo con gentileza**

Cuando el niño se equivoque leyendo en voz alta, indíquele con gentileza las letras que haya visto o leído incorrectamente. Pregúntele algo como: "¿Recuerdas cómo suena esta letra?". Muchos lectores principiantes adivinarán la palabra con base en la primera letra. Anime a su niño a prestarle atención a todas las letras de una palabra.



- **Tenga paciencia**

Descifrar las palabras nuevas requiere de un gran esfuerzo. Cuando el niño esté tratando de deletrear una nueva palabra, déle tiempo para hacerlo ya que puede necesitar intentarlo varias veces.

- **Pídale a su hijo leer las oraciones nuevamente**

Cuando el niño descifre una nueva palabra, pídale leer de nuevo la oración en la que esté esa palabra. Por lo regular, los niños se ocupan en descifrar una palabra nueva y a menudo olvidan lo que acaban de leer.

- **Lean, lean y lean cada vez más**

Anime a su niño a leer nuevamente sus libros preferidos. Él o ella podrá leer el cuento mucho más rápido y mucho más exitosamente la segunda o la tercera vez. Así, podrán convertir la lectura en un tiempo cálido y amoroso.

Para mayor información, visite www.ColorinColorado.org

Simple Ways to Encourage Learning



Here are some simple things you can do at home to help your child read, learn, and succeed.

- **Let your child know you believe in him or her.**
Tell your child often that you believe in him or her. Let your child hear, starting at a very young age, that you believe in his or her ability to do well.
- **Talk, sing, and read with your child.**
Talk, sing, and read together as often as you can!
- **Involve your extended family.**
Ask all the people who care about your child — aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins, godparents, babysitters, neighbors, and friends — to encourage your child to do well in school and to read to him or her if they can.
- **Limit your child's TV watching.**
Try to control how much TV your child watches, whether he or she is with you, with a babysitter, or home alone. Children need to hear and talk to adults in order to build their language skills.
- **Have a positive attitude toward school and learning.**
Take an interest in how your child is doing at school so he or she will believe that learning is important. If you can, find ways to get involved at your child's school.
- **Make sure your child does homework.**
Look over your child's homework each night. Ask your child to explain what he or she is learning. Make sure that assignments are completed. If possible, find a quiet place for your child to study and set aside time each evening for homework.

For more information, please visit www.ColorinColorado.org

Maneras sencillas de estimular el aprendizaje



(Simple Ways to Encourage Learning)

He aquí unas cuantas ideas sencillas que podrá poner en práctica en el hogar para ayudarle a su hijo a leer, a aprender y a triunfar.

- **Déjele saber que cree en él o ella.**
Dígale con frecuencia que usted cree en él o ella. Permítale escucharle decir desde temprana edad que usted cree en su capacidad para triunfar.
- **Hable, cante y lea con su niño**
Conversen, canten y lean juntos, con tanta frecuencia como puedan.
- **Involucre a sus familiares**
Pídales a todas las personas que se interesen por su hijo — tíos, abuelos, primos, encargados del cuidado infantil, vecinos y amigos — que estimulen al niño a triunfar en la escuela.
- **Limite cuánta televisión ve su hijo**
Trate de controlar la cantidad de tiempo que el niño ve la televisión con usted, con alguien encargado del cuidado infantil o solo en el hogar. Los niños necesitan escuchar y conversar con los adultos para poder reforzar el lenguaje.
- **Mantenga una actitud positiva con respecto a la escuela y el aprendizaje**
Interésese por cómo le está yendo a su hijo en la escuela para que él o ella sepa que el aprendizaje es importante. Si puede, busque la manera de colaborar en la escuela de su hijo.
- **Verifique que su hijo haga las tareas**
Revise las tareas de su hijo todas las noches. Pídale explicarle lo que está aprendiendo. Verifique que haga todas las tareas. Si le es posible, designe un lugar silencioso para que su hijo estudie y dedique tiempo todas las tardes a las tareas.

Para mayor información, visite www.ColorinColorado.org

Children who know the letters of the alphabet before they go to kindergarten have a big advantage. Here are some ways you can help your child learn about letters.

- **Sing an alphabet song.**

Sing an alphabet song with your child so he or she will learn the names of the letters.

- **Buy or make alphabet letters.**

There are refrigerator magnets and puzzles you can buy that are in the shape of the letters A to Z. Or you can draw and cut out the letters on strong paper. Put the letters where your child can play with them.

- **Use the letters in your child's name.**

Say and spell your child's name often. Explain to your child the link between letters and sounds. Say things like, "José, the word *jugar* begins with the same sound as your name does. José, *jugar*. And they both begin with the same letter, J."

- **Make new words by changing letters.**

Write out a word like *lata*. Then change the first letter. Have your child sound out the word when it becomes *gata* and then when it becomes *pata*.

Next change the last sound, so the word changes from *pata* to *pato*. Then change the middle sound, so the word changes from *pato* to *palo*. Make a game of it!

- **Play guessing games with letters.**

Play guessing games with your child. For example, ask questions like "Guess a food that begins with the letter 'o'" or "an animal that begins with the letter 'e'."

- **Read together every day.**

Read with your child for at least 15 minutes each day. Experts say this is one of the most important things you can do! Make reading together a warm and loving time.

For more information, please visit www.ColorinColorado.org

Cómo enseñarle a su hijo las letras

(Teach Your Child About Letters)



Los niños que conocen las letras del alfabeto antes de entrar al kindergarten ya tienen una gran ventaja. He aquí unas cuantas maneras como usted podrá ayudarle a su hijo a aprender las letras.

- **Canten una canción del alfabeto**

Canten una canción del alfabeto para aprender los nombres de las letras.

- **Compre o elabore las letras del alfabeto**

Existen letras magnéticas y rompecabezas con las figuras de las letras de la A a la Z. Otra alternativa es dibujarlas en papel grueso y luego recortarlas. Colóquelas donde su hijo puede jugar con ellas.

- **Use las letras que integran el nombre del niño**

Diga y deletree con frecuencia el nombre del niño y explíquele la relación entre las letras y los sonidos. Diga por ejemplo: "José, la palabra jugar, comienza con el mismo sonido que tu nombre. Las dos palabras comienzan con la misma letra, la jota".

- **Inventen palabras intercambiando letras**

Escriba una palabra como "lata". Luego, cambie la primera letra y pídale al niño que diga la nueva palabra. Por ejemplo: "gata" y "pata".

Después, cambien el último sonido para que la palabra cambie de "pata" a "pato". Luego cambien el sonido del medio para cambiarla de "pato" a "palo" y conviértanlo en un juego.

- **Disfruten a juegos de adivinanza con letras**

Disfruten a juegos de adivinanza con su hijo. Por ejemplo, hágale preguntas como "Adivina una comida que empieza con la letra 'o' o 'un animal que empieza con la letra 'e'".

- **Lean juntos todos los días**

Lea con su hijo por lo menos 15 minutos diariamente. Los expertos afirman que, de todo lo que usted puede hacer por él o ella, esto es algo de lo más importante. Convierta la lectura en un tiempo cálido y afectuoso.

Para mayor información, visite www.ColorinColorado.org

More Resources

This section of the toolkit includes additional resources for your use.

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Ordering Additional Reading Rockets Tapes

To order online, please go to www.ReadingRockets.org/store.

Or phone, fax, or mail your order:

Phone: 800-343-5540

Fax: 845-774-2945

Mail: Reading Rockets Store
P.O. Box 2084
Harriman, NY 10926

Please include check, money order, credit card, or purchase order information with your order.

Reading Rockets: Launching Young Readers, an eight-part television series, is available for purchase on DVD or VHS tape.

Individual DVDs or VHS tapes \$19.95

Each DVD or videotape contains one 30-minute episode (see titles below) and a viewers' guide.

The Roots of Reading

Sounds and Symbols

Fluent Reading

Writing and Spelling

Reading for Meaning

Empowering Parents

Becoming Bilingual

Special Kids' Episode: ***Reading Rocks!***

Full Series Set \$119.95

One DVD contains the first five episodes listed above, plus bonus segments featuring additional interviews with reading experts, teachers, and others. You'll receive three additional DVDs, one each for *Empowering Parents*, *Becoming Bilingual*, and *Reading Rocks!* And you'll receive a viewers' guide and your choice of either the family guide or the teachers' guide.

Reading Rockets Resources

There is a wealth of material available from Reading Rockets to use for your own professional development or with parents. We hope that you will explore and use some of these resources. They are all research-based, so you can use them knowing they reflect the very best practices being used by teachers across the country.

The **comprehensive Reading Rockets Web site** at www.ReadingRockets.org provides articles, research reports, a daily news service, a monthly newsletter, and other resources. It helps educators and parents learn more about the basics of literacy and provides up-to-the-minute information about literacy work that is being done in communities across the country. You will also find monthly interviews with children's book authors and illustrators, thematic book lists, and a tool for searching for books by age or subject.

Just launched is a new area of the Web site devoted to reading disabilities. The new content will allow parents and teachers to understand different types of reading disabilities — including problems with phonemic awareness or phonological processing, auditory processing, language processing, visual processing, auditory/visual integration, memory, and attention.

Colorín Colorado is Reading Rockets' bilingual Web site in Spanish and English. You can find it at www.ColorinColorado.org. The site is geared to Spanish-speaking parents, as well as professionals working with children who are English language learners. We are in the process of expanding the site's education section for teachers of Hispanic English language learners. AFT and Reading Rockets together are developing this new content, which will be available in July 2005.

The bilingual **Reading Rockets Family Guide** in Spanish and English provides tips for parents and other adult caregivers on helping children get the most out of reading, pointers on working with schools and teachers, and great ideas for using libraries. It includes computer tips, valuable Web site addresses, and more. The guide is included in this toolkit. It is also available online at www.ReadingRockets.org.

Reading Rockets: Launching Young Readers is an eight-part television series that covers the foundations of literacy from preschool through third grade. It includes:

Program 1 - The Roots of Reading: Pre-Reading Skills
Looks at the earliest stages of literacy, offering practical advice and concrete suggestions for caregivers, and gives solid recommendations for teaching preschool and kindergarten students. Hosted by Fred Rogers.

Program 2 - Sounds and Symbols: Phonemic Awareness and Phonics

Spotlights teachers using innovative strategies for helping kids crack the code of reading. Hosted by Annette Bening.

Program 3 - Fluent Reading: The Ability to Decode Quickly

Highlights successful strategies for helping children become fluent readers and shows how early testing and intervention can help struggling readers. Hosted by Deborah Norville.

Program 4 - Writing and Spelling: Motivation and Vocabulary Building

Features activities that promote writing practice, vocabulary growth, and spelling proficiency in children. Hosted by Vivica A. Fox.

Program 5 - Reading for Meaning: Comprehension

Highlights effective strategies used across the country to help kids understand — and care about — what they read. Hosted by Frank McCourt.

Program 6 - Empowering Parents

Focuses on helping parents recognize reading problems early, as well as providing advice on where to turn for help. Hosted by Al Roker.

Program 7 - Becoming Bilingual

Offers a look into the world of children learning to speak and read in English — and shows some strategies that work in the classroom. Hosted by Rita Moreno.

Program 8 - Reading Rocks! A Show for and About Kids with Reading Difficulties

A fun program that motivates kids who are struggling with reading. It includes interviews with children who are overcoming their reading difficulties. Hosted by Nick Spano.

>> A **companion Web site** for the video series, www.pbs.org/launchingreaders, has been developed especially for parents. There are downloadable one-page tip sheets, which can be reproduced by schools and distributed to parents and other family members. The Web site also includes an overview of the five stages of reading, corresponding with each of the original five television programs in the *Launching Young Readers* series.

>> A **companion viewers' guide and a companion teachers' guide** for the video series are available. Both guides are included in this toolkit. They are also downloadable at www.ReadingRockets.org.

"A Tale of Two Schools" is a one-hour television documentary from PBS that looks at how two schools — and two dedicated teachers — take on the challenge of teaching young kids to read. Narrated by Morgan Freeman.

All of the television programs are available for purchase on VHS tape or DVD. Ordering information can be found on page 86 of this toolkit.

Recommended Books for English Language Learners

Wordless Books

Ah-Choo! by Mercer Mayer

The Angel and the Soldier Boy by Peter Collington

Ben's Dream by Chris Van Allsburg

A Boy, A Dog, and A Frog by Mercer Mayer

Changes, Changes by Pat Hutchins

Clown by Quentin Blake

Deep in the Forest by Brinton Turkle

Frog Goes to Dinner by Mercer Mayer

Frog on His Own by Mercer Mayer

Frog, Where Are You? by Mercer Mayer

Good Dog Carl by Alexandra Day

The Grey Lady and the Strawberry Snatcher by Molly Bang

The Hunter and the Animals by Tomie dePaola

The Midnight Circus by Peter Collington

Noah's Ark by Peter Spier

Pancakes for Breakfast by Tomie dePaola

Peter Spier's Christmas by Peter Spier

Peter Spier's Rain by Peter Spier

Rainy Day Dream by Michael Chesworth

Rosie's Walk by Pat Hutchins

Sector 7 by David Wiesner

The Silver Pony by Lyn Ward

The Snowman by Raymond Briggs

Time Flies by Eric Rohmann

Tuesday by David Wiesner

This list was excerpted by permission of the author, Jim Trelease, *The Read-Aloud Handbook*, 5th ed. (Penguin, 2001).

Books Recommended by ¡Colorín Colorado!

Arroz con Leche: Popular Songs and Rhymes from Latin America by Lulu Delacre

Barrio: José's Neighborhood by George Ancona

Chato's Kitchen by Gary Soto

De Colores and Other Latin-American Folk Songs for Children by Jose-Luis Orozco

From the Bellybutton of the Moon/Del ombligo de la luna by Francisco Alarcón

In My Family/En Mi Familia by Carmen Lomas Garza

The Most Beautiful Place in the World by Ann Cameron

The Rainbow Tulip by Pat Mora

Roadrunner's Dance by Rudolfo Anaya

Under the Royal Palms: A Childhood in Cuba by Alma Flor Ada

¡Fiesta! Books Recommended by Isabel Schon

¡Feliz cumpleaños Vivi! (Happy Birthday Vivi!) by Anke De Vries

¡Viva! ¡Una piñata! (Hooray, A Piñata!) by Elisa Kleven

La procesión de Naty. (Naty's Parade) by Gina Freschet

La Nochebuena South of the Border by James Rice

¡Qué montón de tamales! (Too Many Tamales) by Gary Soto

¡Qué sorpresa de cumpleaños! (Birthday Swap) by Loretta López

Mi primer libro de fiestas. (My First Party Book) by Angela Wilkes

For more book recommendations, visit www.ColorinColorado.org/books



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colorado!



A Union of Professionals

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO