

INTRODUCTION

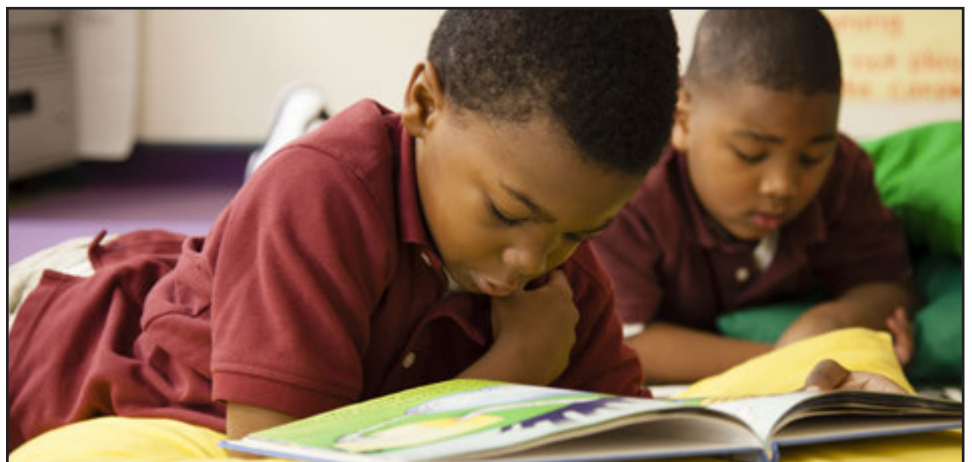
This guide outlines Pre Reading through the 12 stages. It will help you stay in tune with your child’s STEP level and developing reading skills.

The single most important activity you can do with your child is to read with your child and discuss the meaning of the story.

You will see that many strategies are introduced at one level and carried out over the next several steps until they are mastered. Many times a student is encouraged to try previously learned strategies at harder levels of text.

Also listed at each level is a “bottom line.” The “bottom line” is the goal to be accomplished at each STEP level.

Many activities and reading strategies are provided for you to work on outside of school. Monthly reading logs are provided so you can keep track of your child’s progress.



Bottom Line: Develop concepts of print (how to properly read a book) with your child.

Spelling Games

- Teach your child how to write and spell her first name. At this level, name recognition is highly meaningful to your child. You can make this more fun by using play dough or crayons.
- Once your child can do this, teach her to spell her last name.

Verbal Word Search

- Once your child can spell her name, see if she is able to hear or say these letters in other words.
- For example, pretend your child’s name is Patricia. Say: Are there any letters from your name in pumpkin or water?

Rhyming

- Pick a word your child knows, for example, ball. Model several words that rhyme with ball (fall, tall, small). Have your child continue this rhyme.

Concepts of Print: (How to Read Properly)

- Children learn best from seeing examples. Modeling reading will help your child learn how to navigate a book and learn to read.
- When you read, point and say: Let’s read the book from the start, point to the cover. Tell your child, When you read, start on the top, left.
- Read and point to the words during the story.

Comprehension

- Ask questions while reading to your child to help develop deeper understanding.
- Ask: What is this story about, why is the character doing this, what do you think will happen next?
- Talk about the story together when it is complete.

Text Selection

- Choose pattern-based, rhyming books, like Dr. Seuss stories.

Check off the activities you and your child complete.

Activity	Read Alone	Read with Parent	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Practice writing name					
Play word search game					
Play rhyming game					
Child “reads pictures” or “pretend” reads					
Model reading a book					
Read a new book and discuss text					
Read a favorite book and discuss text					
Other:					

STEP 1

Bottom Line: Help make concepts of print more concrete with your child.

Print/Sound Connections

- Learn the letters in the alphabet and the sounds each letter makes. Try this by playing a sound game. Say: bug, bear, bean, etc. What sound do you hear at the beginning?
- Your child will say: Buh. You reply: These words begin with what letter? Repeat this with other first letter sounds of words.

Concepts of Print (How to read properly):

- Modeling reading will help your child learn how to navigate a book and learn to read.
- Ask your child to point to the front, title, and first page of a book.
- Say: When you read, start on the left side of the page like this.
- Use your finger to point and say: The words go from left to right across the page like this.
- Place your finger under each word as you read. Take turns.

Comprehension

- Ask questions while reading to your child to help develop deeper understanding.
- Ask:
 - What do you think will happen next?
 - Tell me about your favorite part of the story.
 - What is this story about?
 - What happened in the story?

Text Selection

- Read patterned-based predictable books aloud to your child.

Check off the activities you and your child complete.

Activity	Read Alone	Read with Parent	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Practice writing name					
Play alphabet game					
Play rhyming game					
Child “reads pictures” or “pretend” reads					
Model reading a book					
Read a new book and discuss text					
Read a favorite book and discuss text					
Other:					

Bottom Line: Your child should begin to cross check (use both pictures and letter sounds) to solve unknown words.

Print/ Sound

- Help your child learn all the letters and sounds in the alphabet. Practice by reading ABC books or playing games with picture flash cards.
- Try segmenting words (separating out the individual sounds that make up simple words). Use 3 or 4 letter words, like cat, mop, or team.
- Try this with the word team. Ask your child to say all of the sounds in the word. Team has 4 letters, but you only hear these sounds: t, e, m.
- Ask your child to clap/tap while saying sounds that can be heard.

Concepts of Print

- Continue to help your child learn how to navigate a book. Say: When you read, start on the left side of the page like this.
- Model using your finger. Your child should point to each word.
- When your child comes to an unknown word, ask her to "cross-check" by looking at the picture on the page and the first letter of the unknown word.

Comprehension

- **Predictions:** Have your child make predictions based on illustrations or portions that you reread aloud to her.
- Story Parts: While reading, occasionally stop and ask: What do you think will happen next?
- **Retell:** After reading, talk about parts of the story (beginning, middle, and end). Ask: What is this story is about?

Text Selection

- Alternate between books your child can read independently and ones that you read to your child. Listening to complex stories helps develop comprehension skills.

Check off the activities you and your child complete.

Activity	Read Alone	Read with Parent	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Practice writing name					
Sound out word games					
Play rhyming game					
Child "reads pictures" or "pretend" reads					
Model reading a book					
Read a new book and discuss text					
Read a favorite book and discuss text					
Other:					

Bottom Line: Continue to develop word solving skills.

Print-Sound Connections

- Work with your child to practice segmenting (separating) 3-letter words into their separate sounds.
- Then move on to 4, or 5 letter words, like black or team. Have your child separate all of the sounds that can be heard
- Example: Black has 5 letters, but you can only hear 4 sounds b, l, a, ck. Ask your child to: Clap or tap as he/she says the sounds that can be heard.
- Practice writing and spelling the words. She should be able to write the beginning and ending sounds correctly. You may provide the vowel.
- “Word Crash” is a segmenting game.
- Say: T-o-a-s-t. When I crash the parts together, you make the word toast. Try another one. C-h-o-m-p. When you crash the parts together, you get the word chomp.
- Try others like: cast, bush, trot, stink, tan, best.

World Solving and Reading Strategies

- Work with your child to practice reading.
- When your child makes a reading error or comes to unknown word, she can word-solve by using the first letter in the word and by looking at the picture for support.
- Work on short vowel word families. Short vowel words do not say their name. Hug, pop, wag, snip, glug, pet, are short vowel words. A word family is a rhyme within that short vowel sound (hug, bug, jug) or (chat, sat, mat).

Fluency and Reading Rate

- Your student should reread favorite books. It reinforces word solving, sight-word accuracy, comprehension and fluency.
- Fluency means how accurately, smoothly and expressively your student reads a text.
- Reading rate is how quickly your child reads.

Comprehension

- Read more complex books aloud to your child.
- **Predictions:** Have your child make predictions based on illustrations or portions of stories that are read aloud to her.
- **Retell:** After reading, talk about parts of the story (beginning, middle, and end).
What is this story about?

Activity	Read Alone	Read with Parent	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Play segmenting word game					
Child practices word families					
Child reads book					
Parent models reading a book					
Child reads a new book and discusses text					
Child reads a favorite book and discusses text					
Other:					

STEP 4

Bottom Line: Develop self reliance (ability to help self).

Print-Sound Connections

- Help your child to learn how to write the initial, middle and ending sounds of 3 and 4 letter words.

Concepts about Print/ Word Solving & Reading Strategies

- When your child makes a reading error, or comes an unknown word, have her word-solve by focusing on the beginning, middle, and ending sounds.
- Identify unknown words that end in short vowel families (bat, cat, hat) or (bug, hug, jug).
- Practice learning sight words and high frequency words (words commonly used).
- When your child guesses at a word incorrectly, ask:
 - Did that make sense in the sentence that you read?
 - Does it match the letters you see?
 - Does it look right?
 - What can you do to help yourself?

Comprehension

Balance time between reading to your child and having your child read to you.

- **Predictions:** Have your child make predictions based on illustrations or portions of stories that are read aloud to her.
- **Retell:** After reading, talk about parts of the story (beginning, middle, and end).
What is this story about?
- **Cause & Effect:** After reading, talk about what made characters do or say certain things.
Why do you think that Bill lied to his mother? What clues make you think so?

Activity	Child Completed Alone	Child Completed with Parent	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Writing initial, middle and end word sound					
Practice word solving					
Find short vowel words					
Find sight words in text					
Parent models reading a book					
Child reads a new book and discusses text					
Child reads a favorite book and discusses text					
Other:					

STEP 5

Bottom Line: Strengthen endurance and interpretation skills.

Print-Sound Connections

Help your child match letters with sounds, use chunks of letters to decode words.

Concepts about Print, World Solving and Reading Strategies

- Encourage your child to figure out unknown words, self correct, or improve expression.
- Help your child learn word long vowel word families. Long vowel words say the name of the vowel. (Snake, bake, cage) and (mild, wild child, grind) are groups of long vowel word families.
- When your child guesses at a word incorrectly, ask:
 - Did that make sense in the sentence that you read?
 - Does it match the letters you see?
 - Does it look right?
 - What can you do to help yourself?

Fluency and Reading Rate

- Encourage your student to reread favorite books. This reinforces word solving, sight-word accuracy and comprehension.

Comprehension

- Make sure to balance time between reading to your child and having your child read to you.
- **Predictions:** Have your child make predictions based on illustrations or portions of stories that are read aloud to her throughout the story.
- **Retell:** After reading, talk about parts of the story (beginning, middle, and end). What is this story about?
- **Cause & Effect:** After reading, talk about what made characters do or say certain things. Why do you think that Bill lied to his mother? What clues make you think so?

Activity	Child Completed Alone	Child Completed with Parent	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Practices word solving					
Finds long vowel word families					
Finds sight words in text					
Child reads a new book and discusses text					
Child reads a favorite book and discusses text					
Other:					

Bottom Line: Read silently to develop understanding of words, not pictures.

Word Solving and Reading Strategies

- Have your child figure out unfamiliar, longer words by breaking them into syllables and chunks.
- Encourage your child should think about the whole sentence meaning when figuring out a new word, not just trying the word in isolation.
- When your child guesses at a word incorrectly, ask:
 - Did that make sense in the sentence that you read?
 - Does it match the letters you see?
 - Does it look right?
 - What can you do to help yourself?

Fluency and Reading Rate:

- Your child should begin to spend more time reading silently than reading aloud.
- Help your child make reading "sound smooth like talking."
- Read stories aloud to your child. This also provides your child with an example of how fluent reading with expression sounds. Practice with your child. Say: Read this part with me. Let's make it sound smooth like talking.

Comprehension

- **Building Memory:** Your child's text is growing in complexity. There are more characters, events to follow and the text is not as predictable. Pictures provide little support. As your child reads have her stop and recall important information from the story to aid understanding.
- **Higher Order Thinking:** While reading ask: Why do you think that is important? What in the story makes you think that?"
 - Retell:** After reading with your child, stop and ask: What happened in this story? Can you tell me what this story was about as if I never heard it before? Have your child put together details from pictures and text to make sense of the story.
- **Cause & Effect:** After reading, talk about what made characters do or say certain things. Why do you think that Bill lied to his mother? What clues make you think so?
- **Text to Self Connections:** Encourage your child to make connections between what has happened in the story and her own personal experience. Is there anything about this story that reminds you of something from your life?

Focus on silent reading to develop understanding of words, not pictures.

Activity	Child Completed Alone	Child Completed with Parent	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Practices word solving					
Determines unknown word by reading for overall sentence meaning					
Parent and child alternate reading aloud					
Practices reading to be smooth like talking					
Child reads a new book and discusses text					
Child reads a favorite book and discusses text					
Other:					

Bottom Line: Read silently to understand character development.

Word Solving and Reading Strategies

- When your child comes to an unknown word, say: Think about what you already know about the letters in this word. Can you find a part in the word you already know? This is called “chunking.”
- When your child guesses at a word incorrectly, ask:
 - Did that make sense in the sentence that you read?
 - Does it match the letters you see?
 - Does it look right?
 - What can you do to help yourself?

Fluency and Rate

- Help your child’s reading “sound smooth like talking.”
- Read stories aloud to your child. Tell your child: Read this part with me, let’s make it sound smooth like talking
- Ask 1-2 of the following questions before continuing to read the text she started the day prior:
 - What do you know so far about the characters?
 - What’s the story about?
 - What do you think might happen next?
 - Why do you think that?

Comprehension

- This develops through thought and conversation. Support your child’s comprehension by asking 1 or 2 questions from the below list. Be sure to use a conversational tone:
- **Retell:** Tell me about the story you read. Try and focus on the big ideas.
- **Character Motivation:** What does the character want or need (but does not yet have)? What makes you think that? How does the character feel at the beginning/ middle/ end?
- **Character Development:** Tell me about the main character in the story. Did that character change? How do you know?

Activity	Child Completed Alone	Child Completed with Parent	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Uses word chunks to determine meaning					
Determines unknown word by reading for overall sentence meaning					
Parent and child read a long book over several days					
Practices reading to be smooth like talking					
Child reads a new book silently and discusses text					
Child reads aloud					
Other:					

Bottom Line: Read silently to understand how the character changes from the beginning to the end.

Word Solving and Reading Strategies

- Help your child problem solve tricky words.
- When child comes to an unknown word say:
 Think about what would make sense.
 Can you find a part in that word you know?
 Do you know the beginning or ending of that word?
 Help your child notice when something she read does not make sense in context. Ask:
 Did what you say make sense in the story?
 Does it match the letters you see?"

Fluency and Rate

- Read stories to your child. This helps expand understanding. It also provides an example of how fluent reading with expression sounds.
- Practice with your child: Read this part with me; let's make it sound smooth like talking.

Comprehension

- Support your child's comprehension by asking questions. Be sure to use a conversational tone.
- **Retell:** Tell me about the story you read. Try and focus on the big ideas.
- **Summarize:** Help your child remember big ideas when reading a longer text over several days. Suggest that she keep a journal to record a few sentences about what she read thus far and any important facts.
- **Set The Purpose:** Read to find out about the main characters. What are they like at the beginning/ middle/ end?
- **Character Development:** Tell me about the main character in the story. Did that character change? How do you know?
- **Predicting:** What do you think will happen next? What clues from the story make you think this?

Writing

- Writing about reading helps your child to expand his/her comprehension.
- Keep a writing journal. Choose a question from above, either one you have had a conversation about or a new one. Encourage your child to write supporting, thoughtful responses, and to include examples from the story.
- The goal is a high quality of thought and ability to use clues from the text to support his/her thinking, not length.

Focus on silent reading to develop understanding of words, not pictures.

Activity	Child Completed Alone	Child Completed with Parent	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Uses word chunks and context to determine meaning					
Determines unknown word by reading for overall sentence meaning					
Parent and child read a long book over several days					
Practices reading to be smooth like talking					
Child reads a new book silently and discusses text					
Child reads aloud and discusses text					
Child write in journal					
Other:					

STEP 9

Bottom Line: Work toward increasing your child's stamina (ability to hold onto meaning while reading longer, more complex books).

Word Solving

- Help your child problem solve complex words
- When your child comes to a word with a prefix or suffix (e.g., unhappy) Say:
- Find the part you know.
- Think about how 'un' changes the meaning of "unhappy."

Fluency and Reading Rate

- Help your child make reading "sound right." The goal is for your child to demonstrate that she is able to comprehend what is read, not read as quickly as possible.
- Continue reading stories to your child.
- Have your child pick her favorite part. Then, re read that part to make it sound like the character is speaking.

Comprehension

- Support your child's comprehension by asking questions.

Summarize & Stamina:

- When your child is reading a long text over a few days, she may need help remembering the story. Develop this skill by keeping a journal to record a few sentences about the most important parts of the story.

Character Development:

Continue to focus on character motivation, change and perspective.

- Tell me about the problem the character had to solve?
- Do you think the character did a good job of solving the problem?

Critical Thinking:

- Tell me about how the beginning of the story is different from the end of the story?

Author's Message:

- Does this story have a lesson or moral? What is it? What clues from the story make you think that?

Writing

- Writing about reading helps your child to expand his/her comprehension.
- Keep a writing journal. Choose a question from above, either one you have had a conversation about or a new one. Encourage your child to write supporting, thoughtful responses, and to include examples from the story.
- The goal is a high quality of thought and ability to use clues from the text to support his/her thinking, not length.

Activity	Child Completed Alone	Child Completed with Parent	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Uses word chunks and context to determine meaning					
Determines unknown word by listening to how it sounds					
Parent and child read a long book over several days					
Practices reading to be smooth like talking					
Child reads a new book silently and discusses to show comprehension					
Child reads aloud and discusses text					
Child write in journal					
Other:					

Bottom Line: Work toward mastering the overall meaning of the text (connect different parts of the book).

Word Solving and Reading Strategies

- Help your child work through complex long words (3-4 syllables, e.g. electricity). Your child should solve 1-2 syllable words alone.
- Help your child build connections by asking if she can identify similar or opposite words to specific ones in the text (synonyms and antonyms).

Fluency and Reading Rate

- Read stories to your child. It helps expand comprehension and provides an example of fluent reading with expression.
- Have your child pick her favorite part. Then, re read that part to make it sound like the character is speaking.

Comprehension

- Support your child’s comprehension by asking questions.

Synthesis/ Overall Meaning:

- When you think about all the parts together, what do you think is the author’s message to the reader?

Critical Thinking:

- What do you think the author had to know to write this book?

Author’s Message:

- What did this book remind you of? What in the story made you think of that?

Writing

- Writing about reading helps your child to expand his/her comprehension.
- Keep a writing journal. Choose a question from above, either one you have had a conversation about or a new one. Encourage your child to write supporting, thoughtful responses, and to include examples from the story.
- The goal is a high quality of thought and ability to use clues from the text to support his/her thinking, not length.

Activity	Child Completed Alone	Child Completed with Parent	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Parent and child work together to solve 3-4 syllable words					
Practices reading to be smooth like talking					
Child makes favorite passage sound like the character’s voice					
Child reads reads silently and discusses text or writes in journal					
Parent and child read together and discuss text or writes in journal					
Other:					

Bottom Line: Recognize subtlety and flexibility in the text, this means to be thoughtful of the genre (non-fiction, science-fiction, fairytale, etc.) and vocabulary selection.

Word Solving and Reading Strategies

- Help your child think about the author’s word choice. Ask:
Find a place in the story where the author used interesting language?
How did the language the author choose to use impact you, the reader?
- Help your child to be aware of how they work through difficult words/parts of text. Ask:
What part was tricky to read?
What did you do to help yourself as a reader?

Fluency and Reading Rate

- Read stories to your child.
- Reread favorite parts from the book to make the characters come alive through expression.

Comprehension

- Support your child’s comprehension by asking questions.

Critical Thinking:

- How is this story different from your life?

Structure:

- How did the author organize the book? What might you find in another book this author wrote?

Main Idea:

- What is the most important part of this book?

Compare/contrast:

- Tell me about a book you have read that is similar to this book. How are they similar? How are they different?
- Which book do you like better? Why?

Writing

- Writing about reading helps your child to expand her comprehension.
- Keep a writing journal. Choose a question from above, either one you have had a conversation about or a new one. Encourage your child to write supporting, thoughtful responses, and to include examples from the story.
- The goal is a high quality of thought and ability to use clues from the text to support his/her thinking, not length.

Activity	Child Completed Alone	Child Completed with Parent	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Parent and child discuss author’s word choice					
Practices reading to be smooth like talking					
Child makes favorite passage sound like the character’s voice					
Child reads silently and discusses text or writes in journal					
Child reads aloud and discusses text or writes in journal					
Other:					

Bottom Line: Recognize subtlety and flexibility in the text, meaning be thoughtful of figurative language (idioms, metaphors, similes) and character perspective.

Word Solving and Reading Strategies:

- Help your child think about words. Ask:

Did the author choose interesting words to include in this book/text?
How did the words the author chose help you as a reader?

Fluency and Reading Rate

- Read stories to your child.
- Reread favorite parts from the book to make the characters come alive through expression.

Comprehension

- Ask questions to support comprehension development.

Author’s Craft:

- What kind of book is this (i.e. fiction or non-fiction)?
- How did the author help the reader to know that?

Synthesis:

- Did this book change your thinking about what you know or want to know? Why?

Critique:

- Do you want to read another book by this same author? “Why or why not?”

Writing

- Keep a writing journal. Choose a question from above, either one you have had a conversation about or a new one. Encourage your child to write supporting, thoughtful responses, and to include examples from the story.
- The goal is a high quality of thought and ability to use clues from the text to support his/her thinking, not length.

Activity	Child Completed Alone	Child Completed with Parent	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Parent and child discuss author’s word choice					
Practices reading to be smooth like talking					
Child makes favorite passage sound like the character’s voice					
Child reads silently and discusses text or writes in journal					
Child reads aloud and discusses text or writes in journal					
Parent and child read together and discuss text or writes in journal					
Other:					