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Ages and Stages of Reading Development – First Grade

This is an exciting time for your child. She is learning about the meaning of stories, pictures, words, and language. At this age, your child is focusing on letters and the sounds they make. She will point to letters and words on the page while she reads aloud. You will want to encourage her newfound skills by finding opportunities for her to read books and other reading materials. This doesn't have to cost a fortune...you can join your local library, participate in your school's book clubs, or share books with neighbors, friends, and relatives.

Milestones

Your first grader should:

- Better understand the way letters work together to create the sound of words;
- Use letter sounds, sentence meaning, and word parts to identify new words;
- Write short sentences and attempt to use some punctuation and capitalization;
- Read and retell familiar stories in her own words;
- Want to engage in a variety of literacy activities (choosing books she wants to read, making up short stories, etc.)

You can try this:

- Change your reading routine. Read *to* your child one day, and read *with* your child the next. Take turns reading each page. Then you can listen as your child reads to you.
- Read nonfiction books on topics that interest your child (such as animals, transportation, or history). This will help your child develop the vocabulary he needs to talk about the world around him
- Help your child write to a relative who lives in a different city or country. This is a great way to not only practice reading and writing but also to learn about family and heritage.
- Turn daily activities into learning moments! Point out print in your home and community, talk about what you are doing whether it's cooking or simply riding the bus.
- Encourage your child to share what she is learning about writing and reading in school. Let your child pick her favorite books and display them around your home.
- Share with your child's teacher examples of how your child can read and write. Discuss any concerns you may have. Ask how you can support your child's classroom learning at home.

When choosing books for your first grader look for:

- Simple and short stories that your child can read on her own;
- Classic stories such as fairytales, myths and legends;
- Books about other countries and cultures;
- Poetry books;
- Audio books with read-along texts;
- Simple dictionaries with illustrations and photographs.