



COCHRANE -FOUNTAIN CITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

At-Home Activities to support Advanced Phonics

Family Information: The goal of phonics instruction is to help children learn the alphabetic principle—the idea that letters represent the sounds of spoken language—and that there is an organized, logical, and predictable relationship between written letters and spoken sounds. Students learn that they can decode words by saying the sounds the letters represent and matching that to a word they know.

At Cochrane-Fountain City Elementary School, students are taught the relationships between letters and sounds in an explicit and systematic way using a scope and sequence to build from easier to more complex skills. In the Advanced Phonics stage, students build on existing knowledge and add new learning about:

- Vowel Teams such as ee, ea, ow, aw, oi, and igh
- Bossy R vowels ar, er, ir, or, ur
- Adding syllable types Bossy R, and Consonant-le to the 4 syllable types they have already learned to help sound out longer words

Check out [Reading 101 for Parents](#) to learn more about phonics. Students learn a lot of phonics in elementary school, and you do not need to be an expert in phonics to provide great support to your child at home. The activities below can help your child develop skills and stamina as a beginning reader by supporting the phonics learning they are doing at school.

Supporting Your Child While Reading:

- A daily routine of having your child read for 10 minutes on most days is excellent practice for phonics and sets up an important habit for years to come. If you're not able to sit down with your child to read, they can read aloud to you while you do household tasks.
- When students get stuck on a word or ask for help, focus their attention on the written letters with a series of prompts such as this:
 - Say "sound it out" while pointing to the word.
 - "Blend the sounds together."
 - "Does that sound like a word you know?"
 - If some words in the text are too hard for your child to read yet, tell them the word and let them keep going.
 - If many words in the text are too hard for your child to read yet, this is a great book to read aloud until your child is ready to try it on their own again.

Games:

- Card Games: Write words with patterns your child is working on on index cards. Make two cards for each word; then use the cards to play Go Fish or Memory.



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- Scavenger Hunt: Write a longer word down on a piece of paper and have your child read it and then go find that object in your home. Examples: remote, pillow, blanket, napkin, glasses
- Word Games: At this stage of reading development, some children start to enjoy playing word games such as Scrabble or Bananagrams.

Writing:

- Encourage your child to use their growing writing skills in meaningful ways, such as making lists or creating cards for friends or family. The key is that students try to write down all the sounds they hear in words using what they know about letter-sound relationships, and some unconventional spelling is still expected and appropriate.

Final Tips for Phonics Learning: Learning how to apply all of the letter-sound relationships in English takes a long time, so it's important to be patient and supportive. Short, daily routines are better than trying to do longer practice once a week. With consistency and positivity, your child will continue to grow in their knowledge and application of phonics in order to become an independent reader!

Reading Aloud to Your Child:

While your child is learning phonics, they also benefit from hearing books read aloud that are too complex for them to read on their own yet. This helps them build vocabulary, background knowledge about the world, and a love of reading. Fifteen minutes of reading—for example, each night at bedtime—can make a huge difference in your child's readiness for learning to read.

- Choose books that are appropriate for your child's age and interests. Children at this stage may be ready to listen to short chapter books. Reading a chapter book together over many days is a great way to bond over a shared funny or adventurous story.
- Allow your child to help pick out books they want to hear.
- Build vocabulary by explaining new words while you read. (Example: "gigantic" is another word for really big.)
- Ask questions about the story. "What do you think the character is feeling?" "What do you think will happen next?" "What would you do in this situation?"

[Click here](#) for more tips on reading aloud to your child.