



## Is your child ready for Kindergarten?

Kindergarten may be the first big step beyond the home for your child and you! It may be the first time your child will face a routine. It may also be the first time your child will be with other children for an entire day.

What will your child need to know for that first time at school? Here are some suggestions:

1. **How to listen and follow directions.** Directions can be taught at home by always calling your child by name and having him or her follow two- or three- step instructions, such as “Laura, get the crackers and put them in a bowl, please.”
2. **Location words.** Words such as “on, under, in, out, beside, behind, in front” can be taught in many everyday activities. For example, “Look under your bed.”
3. **Size and shape words.** Words such as “big, little, tall, and short” or “circle, square, and triangle” are important details in many conversations. For example “I want the blue shirt.” or “I cut a square.”
4. **Time and quantity words.** A family calendar helps your child to learn about the “number of sleeps” before an event. Counting cutlery while setting the table, or counting the number of shoes in the closet, are some ideas for learning quantity. Other examples are, “Let’s put more gas in the car.” “We ate all the potatoes.”
5. **Colour and description words.** Introduce one colour at a time when your child is first learning colours. Try using colours to describe objects of interest to your child. Teach textures with a touch-and-feel book. You can also ask your child to compare the textures of different objects found in your house.

Together, you can make a scrapbook of your child’s new words. The scrapbook will help your child learn by encouraging him or her to use these new words in his or her everyday life.

### The First Day at School

Your child’s first day at school will be very exciting, but possibly frightening. Knowing how to do the following activities will make that first day much easier:

1. Telling an adult his or her first and last name, and his or her parents’ names.
2. Telling an adult his or her phone number and address.
3. Knowing the way to school or what bus to get on.
4. Printing his or her name.
5. Tidying up toys after playing with them.
6. Clearing his or her dishes from the table.
7. Going to the bathroom, flushing the toilet and washing his or her hands.
8. Putting on his or her shoes and tying the shoelaces.
9. Taking off his or her sweater or jacket, and then putting it back on, and zipping or buttoning it.
10. Listening quietly while someone reads.

## **Reading Skills**

Although your child is not expected to be able to read when he or she gets to kindergarten, you can teach your child some reading skills that will make it easier to learn to read. Here are some basic ideas:

1. Your child should be able to recognize rhyming words, and play rhyming games with you. Reading books with lots of rhymes is a good way for your child to learn about rhyming.
2. Your child should be able to recognize some letters, such as the beginning letter of his or her name, or the first letter of some familiar words.
3. Your child should be able to “read” some short stories, for example repeating a favourite story as you read it or telling you a personal version of the story as you flip through the book.
4. Your child should recognize the front and back of a book, and have it right side up when he or she reads.

For more information, contact the Manitoba Speech and Hearing Association.