



Middle School

Read-At-Home Plan for Student Success



Student _____

Grade _____ Teacher _____

THIS GUIDE INCLUDES

Activities to help your child excel in the six components of reading

- Oral Language
- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics
- Fluency
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension

Wakulla County Schools' Read-at-Home Plan, Middle School

Parents fill a critical role in student success. They are the first and most influential teachers, and they understand the importance of their student's achievement in school.

Reading is the foundational skill, which opens all doors of learning. Even when a child has mastered reading basics in the primary years, continued effective instruction and practice in reading strategies is necessary in order for progress and achievement to be maintained. As students move up in school, they are required to read more and more complex texts from which to gain content knowledge. Without effective support and practice, they can lose ground.

This Read-at-Home plan is provided to assist parents in providing reading support and practice at home. In addition to working to engage your student in reading independently at least 20 minutes per day outside of school, the enclosed strategies can be used to support them in their identified area(s) of need. Parents are encouraged to communicate with the classroom teacher if there are questions or additional support is needed.

Read-At-Home Plan

Date _____ Current Level of Intervention (Tier 1 Tier II Tier III)

Student's Data:

Assessments	Beginning of Year	Middle of Year	Grade Level End-of-Year Target
Star Reading			
iReady			
Other			

Current Classroom Intervention: _____

Identified Area(s) of Need: (Check all areas that apply.)

- Oral Language
- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics
- Fluency
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension

The Read-at-Home Plan is organized by these areas. Specific suggestions for support may be found in each section.

Basic Support to Provide at Home

Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• with your child daily. Talk about current events, or watch nature shows and have conversations about the subject matter.• Work toward having your follow more and more complex directions. He/she should be able to manage multiple steps such as “take out the garbage, wash your hands, and be ready for us to eat dinner in ten minutes”. If your child has trouble with this, have him/her restate the directions in order before moving to complete them.• Pick a topic to talk about at the dinner table. For example: “I heard that some students were caught cheating in class. What do you think about that?” or “I saw a deer on the way to work this morning. Why do you think we are seeing more deer on the roads?”• Model answering questions in complete sentences. For example: “How was your day today?” Instead of accepting “fine” or “rotten”, ask for a detail. “My day was good today, because we were able to play outside for 20 minutes.”• If your child is watching television, talk about what is happening and why? Have your child explain the rules of the video game s/he is playing.• Schedule ‘technology free’ time to encourage face-to-face communication. This may include having set hours that the phone will be off.
Read Aloud	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your child needs to hear the vocabulary in books that he/she is not yet able to read independently. Reading aloud and talking about the information in the book will help them develop an ear for the language. It is important to continue reading aloud even after your child learns to read independently. Once your child is in middle school, you may want to take turns reading aloud.• Choose a few words from each book to focus on and try to use it in your talk during the week. You can even post it on the refrigerator as a reminder. It is okay not to know what a word means; talk to your child about what you do when you see a word that you don’t know.• Be sure to visit the public library and take advantage of the opportunities it holds for your child.
Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• board games. These games can promote language and following direction skills. They also help children develop social skills, as they relate to the other players in the game. Some good ones for this age group include Monopoly, Scrabble, Boggle, Password, Uno, Scattergories, and Sorry, but any game that has you talking with your child will work. Thrift stores and garage sales are great places to find these games without spending a lot of money.• outdoors. Middle school students (and adults) need fresh air and sunshine. While this may include organized sports, some free time outside is encouraged. Running and climbing develop muscle coordination and strength. The mind works better when the body is strong. This may be a good time to have students learn to garden or complete other outside chores if they are not already doing this.• games with words. “Run is to person as fly is to a _____.” “How are the words ‘glisten’, ‘shine’, and ‘sparkle’ related?” Ask your child to think of other related words.
Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• with your child. Children this age should have chores to complete. This is important in teaching them to follow directions and to stick to a task until it is finished.• Some chores may include<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ folding clothes.▪ setting the table and washing dishes.▪ keeping a room neat and clean.▪ helping pack lunches.▪ taking out the garbage.▪ vacuuming, sweeping, or mopping.▪ preparing a simple meal for dinner.▪ cleaning the bathroom.

Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reading. When your child sees you reading, it helps him/her connect with the importance of reading in everyday life. It is not just something we do at school. • Read environmental print. Wherever you are, look for words. You may see store names, street signs, directions in the doctor’s office, prices and labels in stores, etc. Ask your child to read and follow the directions to a destination.
Remember	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic entertainment does not build effective communication skills, so limit the video games, social media, and television. (https://www2.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/2008conferences/language.pdf)
Ensure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that your child is rested and in attendance at school each day. Students who miss over ten days of school each year are much more likely to have trouble developing strong reading and learning skills.

The following pages provide more specific ideas for each of the areas of reading.

Oral Language

Oral language is the ability to speak and listen. The development of thinking and reading abilities is closely linked to the development of oral language. "Speaking to learn" is the vehicle for increasing and deepening knowledge.ⁱ Oral language skills and proficiency continue to impact a student's ability to comprehend text after they have passed the elementary grades. The ability to talk about and explain ideas and concepts precedes and supports the student's ability to write coherently. Rich conversation is foundational to ongoing reading success. The more experience that a student has with words in conversation, the more likely s/he is to understand vocabulary in complex text.

Middle School, Grade 6 - 8

Review the basic support on page 2.

- Read a sentence and have your child repeat it back to you. Give him/her a point for every correct word. Use longer and longer sentences. Allow your student to test you as well. Keeping score can make it a competitive game.
- Ask your child to restate (put in his/her own words) something you have said.
- Practice telling family stories. What happened first, next, last? Add as much detail as possible.
- Have your child restate directions. Ex. Tell me what you need to do while I am gone. *"I need to clean my room, including under my bed, dry and put away the dishes, read at least ten pages and be ready to tell you about what I read."*
- Ask your child specific questions. Instead of "what did you do at school today", ask "tell me about one friend you talked with today" or "what made you smile today"? When they say "no one" or "nothing", ask "why didn't you talk with a friend today" or "why didn't you smile today".
- Model and expect precise language. Instead of using filler words like 'thingy' or 'that thing', use the correct name of the object. Instead of saying "I don't feel good", ask your child to tell you specifically where or in what they he/she feels poorly. In return, answer their questions specifically, giving as much detail as possible.
- List a category, like 'habitats'. Each person adds items that fit in the category. Keep the list going as long as possible.
- Play games that require the players to think of 'complicated' ways to say common things. For example, instead of saying "I have to go." a player might say "it is imperative that I depart from this vicinity immediately". Players get a point for each word used in the new sentence.
- Visit a museum or library, either in person or virtually. Choose a piece of art. See who can provide the most detailed description of the artwork.
- Link to other oral word games: <https://www.write-out-loud.com/free-word-games.html>

Phonemic/Phonological Awareness

Phonemic awareness is the ability to manipulate and comprehend sounds in words that are spoken, and the connection between sounds and actual words. In middle school students must focus on word parts when breaking down words. They develop skill with syllables, prefixes, and suffixes. They learn to listen and chunk large words for writing.

It is important to note that these activities should be done in conjunction with phonics, vocabulary, and authentic reading.

Middle School, Grades 6 – 8
<p style="text-align: center;">Review the basic support on page 2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Have your child practice the pronunciation of new words for accuracy.▪ Ask your child to watch you as you pronounce new words.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ How many parts (syllables) does the word have?○ Say each part.○ What are the sounds in each part?○ Example: <i>procrastinate</i>; 4 parts;▪ Continue and expand on activities from fourth grade.▪ Take apart (segment) more difficult words: “How many sounds do you hear in ‘regards’ /r//e//g//ar//d//s/ (6). /i//n//d//e//p//e//n//d//e//n//t/? (11) Other words: gravitate (8) ambulance (8) high (2). Use the spelling words for the week. Remember that this is all oral.▪ Emphasize, describe, segment, and pronounce individual speech sounds if similar sounding words are confused (e.g., flush/flesh/fresh; entomologist/etymologist; gorilla/guerilla; thin/then/than; pin/pen; poor/pour; flaunt/flout; advice/advise; accept/except; affect/effect; aural/oral; etc.)
<p>Phonological Awareness Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Read aloud poetry. Talk about the rhythm and rhyme used in the poems. There are poetry books in the library, or you can find them online - https://www.poetrysoup.com/famous/poems/top_100_famous_poems.aspx▪ Listen for examples of rhythm and rhyme in song lyrics and television commercials.▪ How many words can you think of the end with /shun/? Ex. Transportation, aggravation, situation, complication; keep going as long as possible. Then start a new game – “How many words can you think of that begin with /act/? Ex. Action, actually, actor, acted, etc.▪ A good article to help with this may be found at: http://www.readingrockets.org/article/phonological-instruction-older-students

Phonics

Phonics is the ability to understand the relationship between letters and the sounds they represent. This includes:

- Recognizing print patterns that represent sounds;
- Syllable patterns:
- Word parts (prefixes, suffixes, and root words).

Your child will be learning more content vocabulary, like science and social studies words. These words may have common prefixes and suffixes that you can help your child understand. Ex. Millimeter; millennium, millipede, milliliter – milli means 1000.

Handwriting continues to be an important task for your child. He/she has been taught to write in manuscript (print) and in cursive. Even though keyboards will be used often, the act of writing can help your child remember information. When your student writes, look for the following:

- The pencil or pen should be held in a way to make writing quick and legible. Correct positioning of the paper may also help with cursive.
- Always move from left to write.
- If your child struggles, ask for help from the teachers.

Like phonological awareness, phonics is taught in the context of vocabulary and authentic reading.

Sixth – Eighth Grades

Review the basic support on page 2.

- If your student does not recognize a word, ask him/her
 - Is there a part you know?
 - How many vowels are there, and how are they grouped in the word?
 - Do you see any small words?If he/she continues to struggle, say the word and have your student repeat it. Write it down to review later.
- If your student reads very slowly, he/she may be struggling to figure out the words. You can read aloud with your child to help with this.
- Here are some important things to know as you work with your child:
 - Good readers pay attention to all the letters in a word, even if it has become so automatic they don't realize it.
 - Good readers have internalized the patterns of English spelling, so that reading a word is automatic. For instance, when they see 'ph' at the beginning of a word, they automatically think /f/. Even though there may be exceptions to a pattern, the pattern is important.
 - Good readers automatically group letters that go together. For instance, when they see 'application', they immediately know that 'tion' is pronounced /shun/, so they don't try to say each letter individually. An efficient reader would see the word as /app//li//ca//tion/. As this becomes automatic, the efficient reader just says the word.
- Help your child look for 'chunks' in words –
 - Prefixes
 - Suffixes
 - Syllables
 - Small words within larger words (ex. 'app' in 'application' or "so' in 'absolute')
 - Look for similarities between words: (ex. Combine, complication, complacent, common. The commonality here is the prefix 'com'.)
- Make noticing words a priority. Look for unusual or new words. Make lists of words with similarities. Break apart spelling and vocabulary words to determine how they are alike and different.
- Play word games. How many words can you write that begin with 'st'? end with 'ing'? rhyme with 'squeal'?
- Commercial Games: *UpWords, Scrabble, Boggle, Smarthmouth, Zingle, Letter Tycoon*. While there are many online word games, playing the board games with your child will help build vocabulary and oral language while working on word skills.

Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read with enough speed to support understanding. This includes:

- Automatic word recognition
- Accurate word recognition
- Use of expression when reading

Sixth – Eighth Grades

Review the basic support on page 2.

- Fluency builds on the automaticity of reading words. It means that the student does not have to stop to break apart every word when reading.
- Fluency also includes an understanding of the rhythm and flow of language, so the reader reads with expression.
- A reader with good fluency realizes that the speed of reading may vary based on his/her familiarity with the content. In other words, one will read a science book more slowly than a novel, because the concepts are more difficult. The end goal of all reading is understanding (comprehension).
- The strategies for building fluency are the same, but the difficulty of the reading material increases as the child moves up in school.

Ways to build fluency:

- Rereading
 - When reading with your child, read the same passage or story several times. This helps practice word recognition and build word knowledge. To motivate rereading, you may keep a chart of correct words read or time spent reading. Also, it may be easier to use paragraphs or poems when rereading.
- Assisted Reading
 - To practice assisted reading, you will need to be looking at the same passage or story as your child. You may each have a copy, or you may look on together.
 - Read out loud together. As your child begins to read more easily, drop out. If your child stumbles, do not correct him/her but just join back in reading with him/her.
 - You are helping your child maintain a consistent, reasonable rate of speed and supporting your child with accuracy.
- Echo Reading
 - If the passage is more difficult, you may read a phrase or line and then have your child read the same phrase or line.
 - While this method moves more slowly, it is important that your child actually practice the reading. Having you read a phrase or line first supports your child in reading. You might use this with science or social studies text instead of just reading it to your child.
- Reader's Theatre
 - You can use this if you are reading a story with a lot of dialogue.
 - Each of you takes a part to read, and then you read the story like a play.
- Reading Poetry
 - Reading poems over and over again can help build fluency.
 - The rhythm of the poem supports the reading.
 - They are often short and easy to reread.
- Reading Aloud
 - We are never too old to be read to. Middle school students should help pick out the books that will be read aloud.
 - When you read aloud to your child, you are modeling fluent reading. This helps your child internalize the structure of language and the language of books.
 - Read aloud books that your child is interested in but that are above your child's reading level.
- Having Your Child Read His/her Writing Out Loud

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is knowledge of and memory for word meanings.

This includes:

- Receptive vocabulary – the words that we understand when read or spoken to us
- Expressive Vocabulary – words we know well enough to use in speaking and writing

Sixth – Eighth Grades

Review the basic support on page 2.

- Building vocabulary requires that you and your student be ‘word noticers’. Notice and talk about new words.
 - Don’t skip over unknown words. Look them up and talk about why the author used that word.
 - Keep a list of new words when reading a book. Where else do you see or use these words?
 - Use the new words in your conversation daily. Your child learns words he/she uses. The vocabulary you use with your child will help prepare him/her for reading success.
- Continue to read aloud books that are above your child’s reading level and talk about the words that are new or unknown.
- Play categories. You may choose one from science or social studies to help with studying those subjects. Examples: habitats, famous Americans, landforms, energy sources, etc. You can liven this up by tossing a ball between members of the family or group, having the person who catches the ball name the next word. The person with the most words gets to name the next category.
- Have family members be on the lookout for interesting words that they can share. At dinner or bedtime, each person shares a word they collected that day and what they think it means.
- Look at prefixes and suffixes in words. Talk about what you know about the word based on the prefix or suffix. (Example: What does ‘centi’ in the word centimeter tell you?) You can find a list of affixes (prefixes and suffixes) here:
<http://site.iugaza.edu.ps/wamer/files/2014/10/Common-Affixes.pdf>
- Printable vocabulary games that you may find helpful:
<https://www.sadlier.com/school/vocab-gal/17-printable-vocabulary-building-games>
- Commercial games that support vocabulary development: *Pictionary, Taboo, Scattergories, Fitzit, In a Pickle*

Comprehension

Comprehension is the ability to understand and draw meaning from text. A child is not truly reading until they can comprehend the meaning of what they read.

This includes:

- Paying attention to important information to follow a story or retrieve knowledge from text;
- Interpreting specific meanings in text;
- Identifying the main idea and key (important) details;
- Verbal responses to questions;
- Making connections between texts and between experiences and text.

Sixth – Eighth Grades

Review the basic support on page 2.

When students enter the middle school grades, they are using reading to learn content. This means they must be able to independently read more and more complex text to get information. As a student moves up in school and into life outside of school, the ability to read text with understanding becomes a major tool in learning and performing tasks successfully.

- Read and compare the information in articles from your student’s assignments, newspapers, magazines, or from online sources. You can even use ‘Letters to the Editor’ for this. Here are some questions to discuss:
 - What is the central or main message of the text? What is the author trying to get across?
 - What is the author’s viewpoint? How do you know (evidence)?
 - Do you agree with the author? What evidence do you have for your viewpoint?
 - How does the author support his/her viewpoint?
 - How do the articles differ? How are they the same?
 - Which one do you agree with? Why?
 - How can you support your opinion?
 - What other questions does the author need to answer for you to fully understand this topic?
 - What new words did you find? What do they mean? (Vocabulary supports comprehension.)
- Read a book, and then watch the movie of the book. Talk about how they are different and why. Discuss why the information may have been presented differently in the book and movie.
- When reading a book or passage, stop often and ask your child to summarize what has happened so far or what information has been presented so far.
- Always ask your child to tell you if the book or passage is an informational text or a fictional text.
- When reading informational texts, be sure to look at the graphics and captions. Notice all the print on the page. Is any print in bold type? Why? Are there sections in the text? How are they organized?
- Notice figurative language, like ‘the sun bronzed the leaves as the day ended’, or ‘the transparent water showcased the circus of life below the surface’, and ask your child what the expression means. Have him/her put it in his/her own words.
- When reading a novel, talk about how the main character changes over the course of the story. How does that affect the story? Does anything in the story remind you of something in life?
- After reading a passage or story, talk about it again the next day. What do you remember about what we read? What questions do you have?
- In fiction, talk about the problem, the characters, the setting, the resolution to the problem in the story. How did the author help you understand these?

Resources:

Florida Center for Reading Research - <http://www.fcrr.org/curriculum/curriculumForParents.shtm>:

Activities and support for helping your child with reading

Department of Education - <https://www2.ed.gov/parents/read/resources/edpicks.jhtml>: Ways to help your child with reading

11 Ways Parents Can Help Their Child Learn to Read - <http://www.readingrockets.org/blogs/shanahan-literacy/11-ways-parents-can-help-their-children-read>

Helping Struggling Readers - <http://www.readingrockets.org/helping>

Helping Your Child Understand - <https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/partnering-with-childs-school/instructional-strategies/6-tips-for-helping-your-child-improve-reading-comprehension#slide-1>

ⁱ <https://www.palmbeachschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/OralLanguageDevelopmentActivities.pdf>