



American School Elementary Parents Resource Packet

The staff of the American Elementary School regards you, the parents, as vital members of the educational team. We acknowledge your interest and contribution to the educational welfare of your child. To aid you in working at home with them, we have compiled a packet of methods which you may wish to use in order to support your child's learning in the classroom. These materials were developed by the Learn More Resource Center in the U.S. State of Indiana. The Indiana Schools' instructional package includes many of the methods that we are using, here, in the Elementary School. Therefore, these suggestions fit perfectly with our program. With their permission, we have reproduced them below.

We look forward to working with you as a cohesive team for the benefit of your child.

Ready-for-School Checklist

The following checklist can help as you prepare your child for school each day. Think of the items as everyday routines or activities that you plan with your child at home. If your child lags behind in some areas, don't worry. Remember that children grow and develop at different rates.

Good Health and Physical Well-Being

My child:

- Eats a balanced diet
- Gets plenty of rest
- Receives regular medical and dental care
- Has had all necessary immunizations
- Runs, jumps, plays outdoors and does other activities that develop large muscles and provide exercise
- Works puzzles, scribbles, colors, paints and does other activities that help develop small muscles

Social and Emotional Preparation

My Child:

- Is learning to explore and try new things
- Is learning to work well
- Has many opportunities to be with other children and to cooperate with them
- Is curious and is motivated to learn
- Is learning to finish tasks

- _____ Is learning to use self-control
- _____ Can follow simple instructions
- _____ Helps with family chores

Language and General Knowledge

My Child:

- _____ Has many opportunities to talk and listen
- _____ Is read aloud to, every day
- _____ Has access to books and other reading materials
- _____ Is learning about print and books
- _____ Has television viewing monitored by an adult
- _____ Is encouraged to ask questions
- _____ Is encouraged to solve problems
- _____ Has opportunities to notice similarities and differences
- _____ Is encouraged to sort and classify things
- _____ Is learning to write name and address
- _____ Is learning to count and plays counting games
- _____ Is learning to identify and name shapes and colors
- _____ Has opportunities to draw, listen to and make music, and dance
- _____ Has opportunities to get first-hand experiences to do things in the world - to see and touch objects, hear new sounds, smell and taste foods and watch things move

Support Your Child's Learning

Help Your Child Learn and Succeed

Your child looks up to you and listens to what you have to say. That is why now, is a great time to communicate that you care about learning and that you want to help your child do well in school. You also will want to take care of any health or other issues that could make it harder for your child to study or pay attention in school.

Here are ideas and resources you can use to help your child do well now and get ready for what's ahead:

Quick Tips: What can any parent do to help growing children become better students?

Build relationships with your child's teachers. Find out what each teacher expects and how you can help your son or daughter prepare to meet those expectations.

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1. **Read.** Reading is the foundation for all learning - and helping your child develop good reading habits and skills is one of the most important contributions you can make to your child's education. Read to your young child, encourage your older child to read to you and spend time together as a family reading.
2. **Practice writing at home.** Letters, journal entries, e-mail messages and grocery lists are all writing opportunities. Show that writing is an effective form of communication and that you write for a variety of purposes.
3. **Make math part of everyday life.** Paying bills, cooking, gardening and even playing games are all good ways to help your child understand and use mathematics skills. Show that there may be many ways to get to the right answer and encourage your child to explain his or her method.
4. **Expect that homework will be done.** Though the amount of homework has lessened, discuss with your child, any completed work they may have done. Ask questions about their studies in the classroom, including not just what, but also how and why.
5. **Use the community as a classroom.** Feed your child's curiosity about the world 365 days a year. A visit to the central market can help your child picture Tegucigalpa's traditions. Take your young child to zoos and parks and your older child to museums and workplaces to show how learning connects to the real world.
6. **Encourage group study.** Open your home to your child's friends for informal study sessions. Promote outside formal study groups through church or school organizations or other groups. Study groups will be especially important as your child becomes older and more independent. The study habits learned now will carry over into college and beyond.
7. **Spend time at school.** The best way to know what goes on in your child's school is to spend time there, as a volunteer. If you're a working parent, this isn't easy, and you may not be able to do it very often.
8. **Promote high standards for all.** To ensure the academic success of our children, everyone must work toward the same goal. Discuss academic expectations with parents and other people in your community. Use your school and employee newsletters, athletic associations, booster clubs, a PTA or PTO meeting, or just a casual conversation to help other parents understand what academic standards mean for them, their children, and their school. Share your tips for helping your own son or daughter succeed in school and encourage others to share their suggestions as well.

Learning Styles: People learn in different ways: by hearing, by seeing, or even by moving. How can you find out your son or daughter's learning style? And how can you make sure that your child has the chance to learn at his or her best at school and at home?

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Everyone uses their senses to gather information, but some people use one sense more than others to really comprehend information. Students can succeed in the classroom when they understand their preference for visual (seeing), auditory (hearing) or tactile (touching) learning. Usually, students will find that they have more than one preference when it comes to gathering information.

Visual learners

Visual learners relate most effectively to written information, notes, diagrams and pictures. Seeing something on paper or on screen is the best way for these people to absorb information.

Study tip: Take notes always, even when given handouts.

Auditory learners

Auditory learners relate most effectively to the spoken word and sounds. They tend to listen to a lecture closely and only take notes after it's completed. Auditory learners are often good speakers as well.

Study tip: Read assignments aloud.

Tactile learners

Tactile learners prefer the hands-on approach, learning through touch and movement. The best way to absorb information for these people is to imitate and practice.

Study tip: Try typing notes, reading or acting out assignments, using real objects and role-playing.

Good Habits: How can you help your child learn good work and study skills?

Build a Good Foundation for Life

Good personal and study habits are the foundation for lifelong achievement. Now is the time to teach your child the self-discipline and other skills that help children be more effective and feel good about themselves, their learning and other areas of their lives. Here are some ideas and resources that can help your child learn these important tools.

Self-Management: Using personal discipline and responsibility to become a successful student and good citizen.

- **Responsibility.** Helping your child earn independence by meeting obligations, being trustworthy and respecting himself or herself - and others.
- **Persistence.** Sticking to the job until it is done. Here's how your child can learn to go the extra mile.
- **Punctuality.** Showing responsibility - and not missing out - by being on time for classes and appointments.

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- **Effort.** Your student doesn't have to be a genius to get ahead. Success often goes to the people who know how to get the job done and are willing to do what it takes.
- **Focus.** In this information age, your child may have to juggle many tasks at once - and be able to give each one full attention. Here are ways you can help.

Study Skills: Using today's learning tools, asking useful questions and setting aside time to learn.

Set Goals

- **Work on big goals first.** Help your child to create positive, precise and realistic goals. Write them down. Goals should be not too difficult but not too easy.
- **Break down the big goal into manageable parts.** Have your child write down the smaller steps or mini-goals needed to reach the larger goal. Set up deadlines and discuss your child's progress often.
- **Create a plan to tackle the mini-goals.** Explain the value of practice and training in meeting goals. Work with your child to schedule time for study rather than cramming for tests or assignment deadlines. Help your student form a study group as well as set aside time for uninterrupted time for homework.

Get Organized

Good organization sharpens your student's study skills. Different colored file folders and assignments and notes filed in a class-specific notebook are signs of organization.

- **The Notebook.** Notebooks make learning materials easy to find. Folders and binders with dividers are great to organize notes, assignments and test results. Encourage your student to have separate, labeled notebooks for each class.
- **Assignments.** Suggest writing down assignments for all classes in one designated place. Include due dates and important information for each one. Encourage your student to ask the teacher to explain unclear assignments and keep records of the grades received. Notice the types of assignments that need more work and make sure your student asks teachers for help.

Create a Study Environment

Real learning takes time and attention. Reinforce a consistent approach to learning by creating a specific place and routine time for studying. Don't forget to allow for breaks!

- **Set a Place.** Choose a place that is quiet with few distractions and that has pens, pencils, paper, a dictionary and a ruler at hand. Study space should be well lighted and have music if it helps your child concentrate.
- **Set a Time.** Designate study time when your child is alert, fresh and relaxed and, ideally, at the same time daily. Don't forget short breaks to refresh the mind and schedule the first one before studying begins. During the break, suggest a walk outdoors or deep breathing exercises. Research studies show that physical well-being promotes mental well-being and renewed energy.

Time Management: Organizing the work, setting priorities and making choices.

Managing time is one of the most important and useful skills you can help your child learn. Dividing the semester, week and day into manageable sections helps your student track assignments, deadlines and activities.

Develop a Time Schedule

A time schedule helps your student worry less about deadlines and see the big picture in terms of goals, commitments and time.

Make a master schedule with your child for the semester

1. List the following items:
 - study times
 - all required school activities
 - after-school activities
 - family obligations
 - blank spaces for activities not yet scheduled
2. Write down deadlines for major projects on a blank calendar.
3. Review each project to estimate how long it will take to complete. Add a bit more time, then enter project start dates on the calendar.

Make a weekly schedule.

1. Make a short list of major events, activities and assignments each week. Refer to the master schedule.
2. Note important deadlines.

Make a daily schedule.

1. Suggest and review a "to do" list every day.
2. Check off items as they are completed.
3. Note any tasks that were not completed and help your student find ways to finish them.

Review the schedule.

After a few weeks, get feedback from your student on how well the schedule is working. Ask the following questions:

1. Are you getting your schoolwork finished on time?
2. Are you getting more done?
3. Do you feel you are in control of your time?
4. Do you have enough time to socialize and relax?

If the answers are "yes", then the schedule is helping your student to manage time. If there are problems, review the schedule and see how it can be improved.

Good Reading Skills

Help Your Child Become a Good Reader

Good reading skills are your child's strong foundation for success in school and in life. As a parent, you can help your child become a good reader by making books and language important in your home. Talk and read to your younger child every day and encourage him or her to read to you. Have lots of books and other reading material around the house and encourage your child to read for pleasure - both with you and alone. Keep track of how your child is reading in school. If he or she is falling behind, find out what help is available from the school and what you can do to help your student become a successful reader.

How Parents Can Help with Reading: Suggestions to help encourage your child to learn to love to read and become a more successful reader.

Read aloud often to your children at every grade. Leave out a word and ask your child to supply it. Stop at suspenseful points and ask your child to predict what happens next. Point out new words.

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1. **Have your child read every day.**
2. **Make reading fun.** Leave notes to your child. Have after-school scavenger hunts where your child must read and seek written clues. Write letters and send email. [More](#) ideas for reading and word games...
 - Speak in different ways. Use the same consonant for all the words in a sentence "Li Love Lou" or speak in Pig Latin "Iay Ovelay Oulay."
 - Feed your child letters and words - literally! Use alphabet noodle soup, ABC cereal and pretzels, Popsicles with riddles on the sticks, printed Pringles, etc. Food boxes provide great reading practice and are a source of new words.
 - Find riddles, puns and jokes that rely on word play to share with your child.
 - Create a "word of the day."
 - Play "Guess the Covered Word." Cover a word with a sticky note. Uncover it letter by letter. Play other word games such as Scrabble, Spill-n-Spell, Boggle and Memory. Work on easy crossword puzzles.
 - Make magic happen. Show your child how you can change one letter at a time to change the meaning of a word. Example: pig - fig - fix - fox.
 - Have your child mark the text of their books with different color removable stick-it flags or sticky notes. Use red for unknown words or concepts, green for known words and concepts, and yellow for those words which your child only partially understands.
3. **Take turns reading (partner reading).** Read together at the same time (choral reading).
4. **Help your child choose reading materials.** Children are more apt to want to read if they feel they have choice in their reading materials. If your child needs help choosing a book, allow your child to re-read his or her favorite books. Let your child choose between three books you consider appropriate then let them choose other materials. Go over the reasons why you chose the three books to help your child learn to evaluate reading materials on his or her own.
5. **Ask your child questions about the book he or she is reading.** Here are some [suggested questions](#) to ask...
 - **Ask your child his or her opinion of what they are reading.** Rather than simply repeating the text, your child will begin to think about what he or she is reading. You can help the process along by asking questions such as, "Would you consider Jack (from 'Jack and the Beanstalk') a good son -- why or why not?"
 - **Ask questions that help your child relate personally to the reading.** Questions like, "Which character in the story is most like you?" or "Can you imagine this story taking place in a different setting - where?"

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- **Help them connect the story to his or her world.** If the story is about dinosaurs, use questions like: "What did dinosaurs look like? Were dinosaurs bigger than horses? When did they live? Do you think there could be dinosaur bones in our backyard? Why aren't there any dinosaurs alive today?"
 - Asking questions about comprehension helps your child make connections between their readings and their world.
6. **Give books as prizes and presents.**
 7. **Describe to your child the behaviors that help focus on reading** - looking at the page, trying to make sense of and sounding out the words, making notes, etc.
 8. **Encourage all types of reading:** magazines, comics, recipes, game cards, poetry, instruction manuals, cereal boxes, joke books and baseball cards.
 9. **Turn on close-captioning when your child is watching TV** - it helps your child see and read words as they listen.
 10. **Increase your child's vocabulary.** Use a word from a story in your daily speech. For example: "What a 'substantial' sandwich you ate."
 11. **Make connections to reading.** Act out a scene from a story, visit a place in a story, write to the author.

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