



# School Readiness Kit

## Preparing Children for Kindergarten



Interactive Activities for Adults and Preschool Children

### Unit 2 Reading, Retelling and Comprehension

#### What is it?

Children’s development of reading and writing occurs through a progression of experiences with stories, connections to real life, seeing books, and using symbols to represent thoughts (print). Comprehension is necessary to be successful in school. Developing an understanding of events, stories and observations requires guided practice.

#### How can I help my child develop Comprehension Skills?

- Talk with children, engage them in conversation, give names of things, show interest in what a child says.
- Read and reread stories with predictable texts to children. Ask the child what will happen next in a familiar story.
- Encourage children to recount experiences and describe ideas and events that are important to them.



- Visit the library regularly. Select stories, poems, informational text (how things work or books on a topic area).
- Provide opportunities for children to draw and print, using markers, crayons, and pencils
- Point out repetitive words or pictures.



### When You Read to Your Child

#### What’s Really IMPORTANT

*Get and hold the child’s attention*

- Keep the child close - on your lap or right next to you.
- Use some expression as you read.
- Encourage the child to hold the book and turn the pages.
- Talk about the book—pictures on the cover, possible content.

*Help the child understand and interact with the book*

- Ask questions about the story and/or the pictures.
- Point out words or pictures that would help in understanding.
- Relate the pictures and/or story to the child’s life.
- Stop to answer the child’s questions.

#### What’s Really NOT IMPORTANT

- Getting through the whole book
- Reading every page—in order
- Complete attention from the child

*-Vi Anderson*

**Parent Tips:**

Re-reading favorite books helps children to learn about language and “book talk”.



#### Items Needed for the Activities:

- ♦ Materials for hand puppets (paper bag, markers, paper)
- ♦ Flannel Board Supplies
- ♦ Felt (size of cereal box)
- ♦ Empty Cereal Box
- ♦ Magnet Strips
- ♦ Metal Baking Sheet
- ♦ Three Little Pigs Cut-Outs

## Activities for Adults and Child



Have your child select a favorite stuffed animal or action figure. Tell the child that the toy will be able to accompany him/her on the travels for the day. At the end of the day, ask the child where the toy went and what happened there. Encourage the child to use descriptive language which includes places, sequences of events, description of other people involved, and feelings.

### Kit Activity

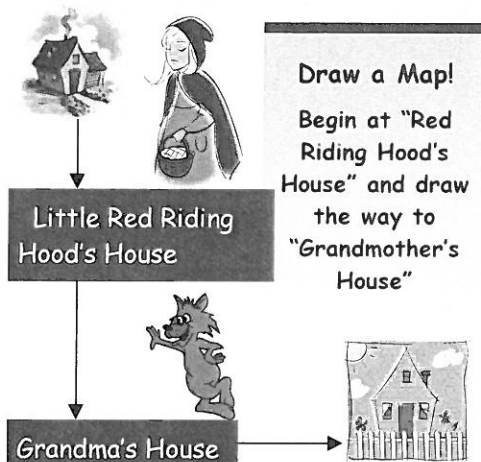
*Parents and child can create a journal, using paper and yarn. Write down simple headings of what happened. The child can draw pictures. The child can then retell the journey of the toy over a period of days. Encourage the child to retell the journal to others.*

### What? When? Where? Why?

Ask questions that require more than a “yes” or “no” answer.



## Map IT



### Adult Tip:

- *This will help your child learn to use pictures to tell a story, including the setting and characters of the story.*

### What You Will Need:

- Book or story
- Paper, pencil and crayons
- Drawing tools

### Let's Go!

- Read together a story or book.
- Look at the pictures again.
- Ask, “Where did the story take place?” “Can you name the characters in the story?”
- Draw a map and show the places the characters went in the story.
- Label it.
- Retell the story using the map.

*Adapted from Family Fundamentals  
Michigan Department of Education*

## Activities That Develop Comprehension

Children are active learners. Allowing them to create and retell stories using props or figures makes learning fun and will keep them focused on the topic. Hand puppets can be used to retell a story from a character’s point of view. Simple hand puppets can be created using paper lunch bags.

*Use the materials in the kit to create a hand puppet.*

Have your child re-read a familiar story with you and let the child speak the dialog of a main character, acting as a ventriloquist for the puppet.

Allow children to draw upon language and recollection of the story line. It is not necessary to read or say the words exactly as they are in the book. Encourage descriptive words (colors, sizes, feelings) to describe the characters and events.

Adults can aid children in creating flannel board characters for use in retelling a story.

*Help your child make flannel board characters using materials in the kit.*

Familiar tales of *The Three Little Pigs* or *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* can be retold with flannel

boards. Encourage children to use different voices for the different characters.

Another variation on this technique is to have children color simple characters drawn on paper or found in coloring books. Cut out the figures. Attach a small piece of magnetic strip (*provided in kit*) to the back of the figure. Retell stories using a metal cookie sheet as a surface to hold the figures.



# Literacy-Related Props for Dramatic Play

## Parent/Teacher Tips:

Children are eager to do what grown-ups do. Just seeing how reading and writing twine through adults' work and leisure activities is, in itself, compelling. But when a child takes on the part of a grown-up in play, she steps into the active role of reader and writer. For the child's future in reading and writing, this is strong stuff.

Adults can ensure that children have many such experiences. The dramatic play themes, props, and materials suggested here are only a fraction of what's possible. Different settings will be suggested in future issues of the School Readiness Kits. Dramatic play areas should be changed periodically to keep the area inviting.

The Flint Children's Museum has a number of dramatic play areas developed. Adults and children can play and imagine together!

## Create a Pretend Library

- ♦ Library book return cards
- ♦ Stamps for dating return cards
- ♦ Wide variety of children's books
- ♦ Bookmarks
- ♦ Pens, pencils, markers
- ♦ Paper of assorted sizes
- ♦ Sign-in/Sign-out sheet
- ♦ Stickers
- ♦ ABC index cards for card file drawers
- ♦ Telephone
- ♦ Telephone books
- ♦ Calendars of various types
- ♦ Posters of children's books
- ♦ File Folders



## Great Parents - Great Start

*The Great Start initiative encourages adult caregivers to read aloud to their child for at least 30 minutes each day. By reading 30 minutes each day from birth until kindergarten, it will equal a whole year of school! Even older children enjoy hearing good books and experiencing them with the adults in their lives.*



## Finger Plays and Rhymes

*(Practice the rhyme often so that the child will be able to act out the poem from memory.)*

### Safety

#### Red says STOP

*Hold right hand in "stop" gesture.*

#### And green says GO.

*Extend right arm with index finger pointed.*

#### Yellow says WAIT,

#### You'd better go SLOW!

*With index finger extended, wave right hand across body from right to left.*

#### When I reach a crossing place

*Cross arms at wrists.*

#### To left and right I turn my face.

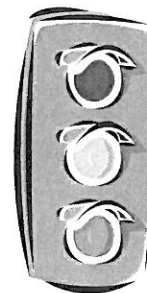
*Turn head to left; then right.*

#### I walk, not run, across the street,

*Demonstrate walking or use index and middle fingers to show first walking, then running.*

#### And use my head to guide my feet.

*Point to head; then feet.*



Genesee Intermediate School District  
2413 West Maple Avenue  
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Celebrating 50 Years  
of Service



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Funded through grants by the Early Childhood Investment Corporation, the Michigan Department of Education (ASAP-PIE, Great Parents-Great Start), Community Foundation of Greater Flint, United Way of Genesee County, Merkle Trust, Target, and Macy's, in partnership with Genesee Intermediate School District, area health and human service agencies, and Genesee County school districts.



*The mission of the Great Start Collaborative is to assure a coordinated system of community resources and support to help all Genesee County families provide a great start for their children from pre-birth to age five.*



The School Readiness Kits are designed for children who will enter kindergarten the following school year. The activities in the kit will provide a foundation for curriculum and assessments that children will continue to work on in kindergarten. The kits provide parent/teacher information on literacy development and activities that parent/preschool teachers and child may do together.

## Kindergarten Grade Level Content Standards

The State of Michigan has established Grade Level Content Standards for kindergarten in English and Language Arts. The new standards are rigorous and align the curriculum with the national standards.

Children entering kindergarten with a good vocabulary and the experience of discussing stories and events will be well prepared for the learning that will occur in kindergarten.

Throughout the kindergarten year, children will have activities that require them to remember facts or experiences related to an area of study and discuss how their experiences relate to the topic. They will be asked to hear a story and remember three events in the story using their own words.

Children will be asked to predict what they think will happen in stories using cues about the characters and events.

Children will be introduced to math, science and social studies materials. Children should be ready to remember facts from the new information and apply the knowledge to projects.

For more information on the standards, visit:  
[www.michigan.gov/mde](http://www.michigan.gov/mde).

