

Phonics Guide for Parents of Nursery Children at St John's.

1. Reading together, benefits:

Reading to children helps expanding their use of vocabulary, sounds and phonetic awareness, as well as stimulating imagination, creativity and critical thinking skills. Also it fosters a strong emotional bond between parents and children through the shared experience of reading. Similarly, it helps developing attention span and focus as children get absorbed by the power of story.

Frequency: reading at least 5 stories per day. In Nursery we read between 4 to 6 books daily.

Impactful book types for Nursery: 1) Wordless books; 2) Poetry for children (i.e. by Michael Rosen et al); 3) Rhyming-rich books (i.e. by Julia Donaldson, author of 210 books, et al); 4) Factual books; 5) Maths-linked books (i.e. Mick Inkpen, Eric Carle, et al). These are just a few with much more to explore and discover in a magical place called **The Library**.

2. Play phonic game

Blind listening: the purpose of this game is to develop children's listening skills and awareness of sounds in the environment. You may need a blindfold and a selection of noisy objects such a food wrapper, a squeaky toy, a shaker, coins, keys, bells etc. First, show your child the selection of items, name them and demonstrate the sounds they make. Give your child the blindfold while sitting on the floor, pick up an object and make a sound. Can your child guess what object is it? For more a challenge, begin to add some new objects they haven't seen.

Listening Walk: the aim of this game is the same as above. First talk to your child about what a good listener is 'good listening ears, quiet lips, etc'. Take a walk with your child and stop at a 'listening point', encourage your child to close their eyes and listen carefully. Discuss the different sounds they can hear. You may begin with one 'listening point' and talk, and gradually extend to more. As children gain more confidence in their listening awareness and how to name them, they will respond accordingly.

Why this matters? Listening awareness may seem like a common-sense natural thing for us adults but for a young child it's different, given the little life experience they have to refer to. Thus, it is the first building block of literacy and it's important that we all support it. This step is followed others, such as musical instruments sounds, body percussion, rhythm and rhyme, voice sounds, oral blending and segmenting, and phoneme learning. All of which we will be exploring and developing during this year in Nursery and beyond.

3. Benefits of Singing and Reading Nursery Rhymes.

- Nursery rhymes are packed with a wide range of vocabulary and help children learning new words and understand sentence structure.
- They tell stories with a beginning, middle and end which can help children develop narrative skills and understand the concept of sequence.

- They help with memory development and the ability to recall words, phrases and sentences.
- The rhyming and rhythmic nature of nursery rhymes enhance phonemic awareness as children learn to hear and play with smaller sounds in words, as essential skill for reading and spelling.
- By fostering a love for language, stories and learning, Nursery rhymes lay the groundwork for later literacy skills, encouraging children to become enthusiastic readers and writers.

Where to start?

- Borrow or buy the book **The Listening Walk** by Paul Showers and Alike. It best illustrates the power of using listening walk for developing sound awareness in the environment.
- Ask for Nursery Rhymes at your local library
- Nursery Rhyme books we've sent home.
- Axel Scheffler's 'Mother Goose's Nursery Rhymes And How She Came To Tell Them'
- Michael Foreman's 'Mother Goose'
- Youtube
- We will be visiting the Canada Water Library on **Tuesday 3rd December at 10:00am** from where we will borrow books of children's interest.

4. Celebrating Success.

This goes beyond simply praising your child for making progress in their phonic skills. Success means - in my view - how much joy you gain from developing a home culture that promotes the above skills through sound recognition, reading, blending, segmenting and Nursery Rhymes all bundled up in a growing interest in books and story.

5. Sharing Your Experience With Us.

We would love to hear from you so please feel free to approach us at any time for any questions you might have or with feedback. We value your input as a key team player to support your children's enjoyment and development as confident readers and writers.

Look forward to hearing from you,

Kind regards

Mr Eric Sanguino

Class Teacher

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