

After 3 years at school

The New Zealand Curriculum: Reading at school

Your child will be learning to:

- use the picture or the meaning of the story to work out unfamiliar words, or to understand the meaning
- notice when they have made a mistake and fix it up, most of the time
- find information that is clearly stated in the story, as well as some information that is hidden or suggested
- talk about the meaning of the story and tell you what they have learned from reading about a special topic, and check out if they know as much as the author when reading about an area of interest.

Reading at home - Make reading fun

- Have fun singing along to karaoke songs or playing board games together.
- Read to your child every day. You can use your first language.
- Have a pile of reading materials available – library books (non-fiction and fiction), kids' cookery books, simple timetables, newspapers and magazines, catalogues and any other reading that supports your child's current interest.
- Encourage your child to retell favourite stories or parts of stories in their own words.
- Play card games (you can make the cards yourself) and board games together.

TIP: When they are reading, your child will be working at solving unfamiliar words by themselves. If they need help you could ask them to work their way across the word looking for things they know that might help. At this level, reading involves bringing everything they know together to solve problems and build understanding.

If they can't work it out – tell them and carry on with reading.

Make it real

- Reading makes more sense if your child can relate it to their own life.
- Help them to make connections with other things they might have read and to their own and family experiences. For example, "that's a funny story about a grandad – what does your grandad do that makes you laugh?", "We saw a big mountain in that book, what is our mountain called, and where did the name come from?"
- Look for opportunities for your child to read wherever you are – signs, advertising billboards, junk mail, recipes.
- Show your child that reading is fun and important to you by letting them see you reading magazines, books, newspapers.

TIP: Help your child to link stories to their own life. Remind them about what they have done when a similar thing happens in the story.

Find out together

- Visit the library often and help your child to choose books about topics that interest them.
- Talk with older people/kaumātua in your family about interesting stories and people from your child's past that you could find out more about together.
- Ask your child questions (and support them to find the answers) to widen their reading experiences. For example, "What's the quickest biscuit recipe?", "What time is the next bus to town?"
- Help your child with any words that they don't understand – look them up together in the dictionary if you need to.

TIP: If you or your child starts to feel stressed by what they're reading, take a break and read the rest of the story aloud yourself – keep it fun.

The New Zealand Curriculum: Writing at school

Your child will be learning to:

- think about, record and communicate experiences, ideas and information
- organise their writing using a basic structure, eg writing a text with a beginning, a middle and an end
- write for a range of purposes that are linked to the curriculum, eg a report for social sciences
- write mainly simple (and sometimes complex) sentences that have different beginnings and lengths
- use some words that are specifically about the topic and chosen for the audience
- often correctly spell words they use, and use what they know about sounds in words to try to work out how to spell unknown words
- build on their knowledge of punctuation and use it more often.

Writing at home - Writing for fun

- Talk about interesting words with your child, especially ones that are fun to say, like "hippopotamus" or "ringaringa". Short and simple games could involve finding how many little words can be found in the word 'elephant'.
- Work together on the small word games found in the children's section (or word section) of the newspaper.
- Make up a story or think of a pakiwaitara (legend) or traditional tale and act it out with costumes and music, write down the names of the characters or tipuna (ancestors).
- Make up a play with your child. You could help your child to write the play down. Use puppets they design and make themselves to give a performance to the family.

TIP: Keep writing fun and use any excuse to encourage your child to write about anything, any time.

Writing for a reason

- Writing for a real purpose can help your child want to write. For example, sending thank-you cards, typing emails or writing and posting small notes.
- Personalising notes by cutting, decorating, sticking or stamping are great skills for coordinating fingers and being creative.
- Postcards are a good size for a sentence or two and they are cheap to post, too.
- Encourage your child to write what they need to pack for a holiday, to write out your shopping items or lists of jobs that you might need to remember.

TIP: Talk about what your child writes. Be interested. If you don't understand what your child's picture or story is about, ask them to explain.

Supporting your child's writing

- Talk to your child about what you are writing – let them see you making lists, writing emails, paying bills.
- Keep envelopes, banking slips, forms you don't need so that your child can do their own 'grown up' writing.
- Display your child's writing where others can admire and read it.
- Play with words. Thinking of interesting words and discussing new ones can help increase the words your child uses when they write – look words up in the dictionary or on the Internet or talk to family and whānau members to learn the whakapapa (origins) of the words.

TIP: Be a role model. Show your child that you write for all sorts of reasons. Let them see you enjoying writing. You can use your first language – this helps your child's learning, too.

The New Zealand Curriculum: Mathematics at school

Your child will be learning to:

- explore patterns in numbers up to 1,000
- use their basic facts to solve problems
- talk about fractions when sharing and exploring shapes and quantities
- organise objects and talk about what's different and what's the same
- create and describe patterns
- measure objects and time
- give and follow directions
- talk about the reasons why an event is likely to happen or not
- investigate a topic, display and discuss what they have discovered.

This is a small part of the skills and knowledge your child is learning in order to meet this standard. Talk to the teacher for more information about your child's learning.

Focus on number

During your child's third year at school, 60–80 per cent of mathematics teaching time will focus on number learning.

Mathematics at home - Talk together and have fun with numbers and patterns

Help your child to:

- find and connect numbers around your home and neighbourhood
- name the number that is 10 more or 10 less than before or after a number up to 100
- make patterns when counting in groups (skip counting) forwards and backwards, starting with different numbers (eg 13, 23, 33, 43..., ...43, 33, 23, 13)
- try making different types of patterns by drumming, clapping, stamping, dancing or drawing patterns that repeat
- find out the ages of family/whānau members
- do addition and subtraction problems in their heads using facts to 20 eg $10 + 4$, $15 - 7$

- use groups of 10 that add to 100 eg $50 + 50$, $30 + 70$.

TIP: Being positive about mathematics is really important for your child's learning – even if you didn't enjoy it or do well at it yourself at school.

Use easy, everyday activities

Involve your child in:

- telling the time – o'clock, $\frac{1}{2}$ past, $\frac{1}{4}$ to
- learning their 2, 5 and 10 times tables
- repeating and remembering telephone numbers they use a lot
- reading and sharing a book. Ask them questions about numbers in the story – use the number of pages as a way to practise number facts, too
- doing a shape and number search when you are reading a book or looking at art (like carvings and sculpture)
- helping at the supermarket – ask your child to get specific items (medium-sized tin of red beans, 2 litres of milk, 250g of mince).

TIP: Talk a lot to your child while you are doing things together. Use the language that works best for you and your child.

For wet afternoons/school holidays/weekends

Get together with your child and:

- play games – board games, card games and do jigsaw puzzles
- make your own advertising pamphlet – cut out and sort images to go on it, make pretend money to spend
- grow seeds or sprouts – measure the growth each week
- fold and cut out paper dolls and other repeating shapes
- trace over repeating patterns (eg kōwhaiwhai patterns)
- go on a treasure hunt – make a map with clues and see who can get to the treasure first
- dance to music and sing/clap to favourite songs – make up a dance sequence each – can you copy each other?
- both take turns closing your eyes and describing how to get from the front gate to the kitchen, from the kitchen to their bedroom, from home to school
- do timed activities. You hold the watch and they count how many times they can bounce a ball in a minute
- play guess and check games (use different shaped jars) – how many beans, buttons, pegs in the container?

TIP: The way your child is learning to solve mathematics problems may be different to when you were at school. Get them to show you how they do it and support them in their learning.