

ABCs of Reading

Help Your Child Become A Great Reader

(NAPSA)—Getting a head start on reading can help your child get a hop, skip and a jump on success in school. Many parents wonder, however, how do you get started?

Phonics programs are considered by many educational experts to be a great way to teach reading, since the system gives children an understanding of how to sound out words.

A National Reading Panel report released in 2000 defines the five essential components of early reading instruction: understanding that words are made up of sounds and letters, helping children make these associations, fluency, vocabulary and understanding text.

“Understanding letters and their sounds are the most vital building blocks of literacy,” said Robert Calfee, Ph.D., Dean of the Graduate School of Education, University of California, Riverside and Professor Emeritus, Stanford University School of Education. “Effective phonics programs provide a focused learning experience that includes single letter sounds, letter combinations, as well as reading stories and engaging in other reading activities. A child who masters phonics can handle anything he or she wants to read.”

The key, experts say, is finding a program that makes learning to read seem like fun, rather than a chore. That way children will be motivated to keep learning, even if they occasionally find the experience challenging.

Experts also discern that the best programs of this kind incorporate a step-by-step method or series of books. A program should be simple for children to understand, so they can work on their



Now read this: Phonics Programs that make learning fun encourage children to develop skills.

reading skills alone, as well as with a parent. Fortunately, these programs have become easier to use and more fun for children.

For example, the LeapPad™ Phonics Program is a step-by-step series of 10 lesson books and four practice books, starting with the basics of letters and their sounds and graduating to more advanced concepts like compound words. The program was developed by LeapFrog’s team of educational experts to align with national and state standards for early literacy.

LeapFrog’s Phonics Program is designed to work with the popular LeapPad Learning System. “The fun characters, music and activities in the LeapPad really bring reading to life for both of my children,” said Vicki Greenfield, mother of two. “They’re having a blast while they learn, and I can see their confidence growing as their reading abilities improve.”

By introducing reading and other important subjects to children in a fun and intuitive way, parents can help foster an early love for books and learning.