

PARENT GUIDE SERIES

Building Phonics Skills at Home

Fun ways to practice letter sounds with your child



For Parents & Caregivers

Dr. Chase Young · LiTerrific Reading
lfcreading.com · thebestclass.org

What Is Phonics?

Phonics is the connection between letters and the sounds they make. When children learn these patterns, they can sound out new words while reading and spell words while writing. You don't need special training — just a few fun activities.

Make It a Game, Not a Drill

Research shows children learn best when activities are active, creative, and meaningful. Here are some ideas inspired by what teachers do in the classroom:

Silly Commercials

Pick a sound your child is learning (like /ir/ in bird, girl, shirt). Brainstorm words with that sound, then invent a ridiculous product and create a commercial. "The World's First Dirt Skirt! Only \$5!" Your child can perform it, record it, or draw an ad.

Tongue Twisters

Make up tongue twisters using words with the target sound: "The first twirly bird chirps in a dirty shirt." Take turns making them up.

Spooky Stories

Working on silent letters (like the silent B in lamb, climb, tomb)? Write a short spooky story using as many of those words as possible. Let your child illustrate it.

Word Hunts

Pick a sound pattern and go hunting: in books, on signs, on cereal boxes, in the car. Keep a running list on the fridge.

Tips for Parents

- Keep it short: 10–15 minutes is plenty
- Keep it fun: stop before your child gets frustrated
- Let them be silly: the absurdity is what makes it stick
- Write together: even a silly sentence counts as writing practice
- Perform together: reading aloud with expression builds fluency