



Kindergarten Readiness

Fun Fact

Can you name the only letter of the alphabet not used in the name of any U.S. state?

See answer below.



Notable Quote

“Tell me and I forget.
Teach me and I
remember. Involve
me and I learn.”

—Benjamin Franklin



Tips for Parents

Give your child daily tasks, like setting the table for breakfast in the morning. This will teach your child to follow simple instructions.

Say a word to your child (“cat”), and ask him or her to find something that starts with the same sound (“coat”) and something that doesn’t (“book”).

Fun Fact Answer: Q

Interview with Patricia Lozano, MA, Educational Consultant

With more than 15 years of experience in the early childhood education field, first as a teacher and then as researcher, Patricia Lozano is a recognized expert on assessment and evaluation of early childhood education programs. Patricia Lozano has conducted extensive research and program evaluations of early care, education, and family programs with organizations such as UCLA’s Center for Improving Childcare Quality, First 5 Los Angeles, and Preschool California. She is currently engaged in multiple projects related to improving the quality of Early Childhood programs. She has been involved in the selection and adaptation of child assessment measures for English Language Learners across various research studies and is certified in Early Care Quality Rating scales such as the ECERS and the CLASS. Patricia is also an author of *Assessing Spanish-English Bilingual Preschoolers*, widely acknowledged as the industry’s pre-eminent guide to best approaches and measures of learning for young Spanish-speaking students.



Patricia Lozano, MA, Educational Consultant

Patricia Lozano was recently interviewed about Kindergarten Readiness.

What does Kindergarten Readiness mean, and why is it important to families?

Patricia Lozano: Put simply, Kindergarten Readiness refers to how prepared your child is to succeed in kindergarten. Kindergarten Readiness is not only about being ready in terms of academic knowledge (for example, knowing your ABCs and 123s), but also includes other important areas of learning and development (such as basic physical skills and social-emotional development).

Research shows that children who are well-prepared for kindergarten have a much better chance of learning the kindergarten skills they will need to be successful in first grade. This has a domino effect—success in first grade leads to success in second grade, and so on.

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Continued →

Understanding Kindergarten Readiness is especially important for families of children who aren't in preschool or pre-k classes—those families are on their own in making sure their children are prepared for kindergarten.

Are Kindergarten Readiness standards the same everywhere?

Patricia Lozano: Different states have different standards. Some states have very detailed and clear standards with examples and guidelines, while standards in other states are very general. There are states that have standards for every area of child development and states that do not.

However, certain Kindergarten Readiness standards are found in just about every state.

What is usually included in Kindergarten Readiness?

Patricia Lozano: Most experts and a majority of the states agree that Kindergarten Readiness includes a set of knowledge and skills in different areas, called domains. There are six domains:

- 1. Language:** This includes the ability to understand and use basic vocabulary words, being able to follow instructions, speaking in sentences, and so on.
 - 2. Literacy:** Literacy, or reading and writing, includes knowing the names of the letters and their shapes, knowing which letters stand for sounds in words (for example, the letter *d* stands for the beginning sound of the word “dog”), holding books right-side up, and so on.
 - 3. Cognitive (Knowledge) and Math:** Some examples of math skills are counting, naming numbers and shapes, comparing quantities (e.g., more or less), and understanding positional words (e.g., above, below, next to, beside, on top). Cognitive skills include problem solving,
- reproducing patterns (e.g., blue/red, blue/red), and organizing objects according to different characteristics, like size and color. Some states also have standards related to science or social studies knowledge, which would be classified in the cognitive domain.
 - 4. Physical Health and Motor Skills:** This includes personal routines (like toileting, washing hands, and getting dressed), knowing the difference between healthy (fruits and vegetables) and unhealthy foods (candy and sodas), and understanding safety rules (for example, don't play in the street). This domain also includes height and weight guidelines. Motor skills include gross motor movements (being able to run, skip, throw, and catch) and fine motor movements (such as using pencils or markers for drawing, buttoning clothes, eating with utensils, and cutting).
 - 5. Social-Emotional:** This area includes developing friendships, taking turns, sharing, seeking assistance from adults, following routines, and showing concern for others. Children should also be able to understand the feelings of others, express their own feelings, and have some self-control.
 - 6. Approaches to Learning:** Skills in this area include being curious; asking questions using who, what, how, and why; and expressing an interest in learning about new ideas. It also includes being able to stay interested in a project or activity until it is finished, and seeking help when next steps are unclear or difficult.

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ABCMouse.com Music Video:
The Letter H

ABCMouse.com Game:
All About Kk Memory Match

ABCMouse.com Game:
Seahorse Racing: Colors and Shapes

ABCMouse.com Game:
Seal Number Toss

How can families find out whether or not their child is on track to be ready for kindergarten?

Patricia Lozano: Here are some suggestions:

- Talk to your child's preschool/pre-k teacher to find out if your child is being evaluated, and ask about results and recommendations.
- If your child does not attend preschool or pre-k, you can talk to your pediatrician. He or she will have information on your child's physical development and may be able to give advice.
- Talk to other families and share your questions and concerns. Many times they have valuable information about resources. More importantly, you will see that you are not alone in this process.
- ABCmouse.com offers a Kindergarten Readiness tool to its members, which provides more information on Kindergarten Readiness standards. It also provides ways for families to compare their children's knowledge and skills to those standards.

Are there tests that my child will need to take before entering kindergarten?

Patricia Lozano: This depends on your child's school. The majority of kindergarten tests ask your child to name numbers, letters, and shapes; copy and draw models; count objects; and name animals. The assessments usually involve the skills expected for each domain of Kindergarten Readiness.

Schools are usually willing to share the test results. Contact the person in charge of assessments or testing and schedule a meeting to discuss if there are areas for improvement or practice.



ABCMouse.com Book:
Wash, Brush, Comb!

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Early Learning Research



A 2006 research study reported that self-regulation and social abilities (responsibility, cooperation, and independence) are positively correlated with children's reading and math scores between kindergarten and sixth grade. Defining *learning skills* as “behaviors, such as self-control, staying on task, organizing work materials, working independently, listening and following instructions, and participating in groups,” the authors reported that “results from the current study suggest that children's learning skills can be a valuable indicator of school success throughout elementary school.”

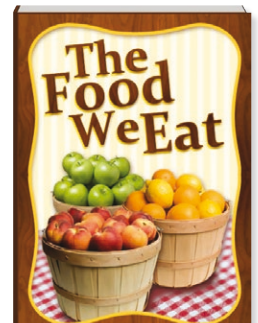
To read the complete report, visit:

http://people.oregonstate.edu/~mcclellm/ms/McClelland_Acock_Morrison_06.pdf

How can families help make sure that their children are ready for kindergarten?

Patricia Lozano: There are many ways to provide experiences at home that help prepare children for kindergarten:

- Talk to your child. Your words stimulate their language development.
- Read aloud and ask your child about the story as you are reading.
- Sing the alphabet song and any other songs your child likes.
- Provide opportunities to draw and scribble.
- Play counting games during meal times (count how many forks, carrots on your plate, glasses with milk, and so on).
- Trace your child's name in the dirt or the sand.
- Take a walk around the neighborhood and talk about signs, numbers, letters, etc.
- Give your child tasks around the house to develop independence.
- Go to places where your child can practice activities like running, climbing, and catching a ball.
- Teach your child about healthy and unhealthy foods, as well as about safety.



ABCMouse.com Book:
The Food We Eat

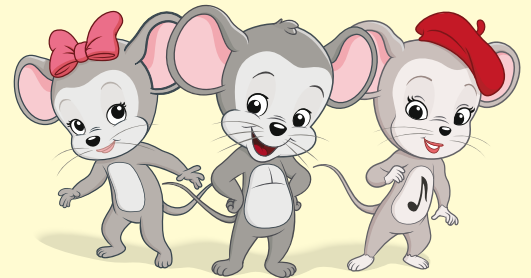
There are other things families can do to make the transition to kindergarten a little smoother for their children. For example, you can visit the kindergarten classroom with your child before school begins. Children generally like to visit the playground, and that way they will see something they are already familiar with when they arrive for the first day of school.

Another good idea is to organize a playdate with other children from your kindergarten before school begins. It can also help to talk with your child about the first day of kindergarten and what he or she is likely to see and experience. I also suggest that families let their child choose their own school supplies.

And of course, I always encourage families to use ABCmouse.com. It has thousands of learning activities that help children develop their language and cognitive skills, and many other features that support the growth of self-confidence, curiosity, and self-reliance. And just as important, children find out how much fun learning can be.

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For comments, feedback, or suggestions, please email us at newsletter@ABCMouse.com.



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ABCMouse.com Beginning Reader Series: Word Families

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The ABCmouse.com Beginning Reader Series: **Word Families** introduces young learners to the joys of reading through stories that emphasize word families (a word family is a group of words with the same ending sound and spelling, such as *hot*, *pot*, and *not*). Each story in the Beginning Reader Series is told in an engaging rhyming format in which words from the featured word family appear frequently.

All Beginning Reader Series books feature Parent Tips written in collaboration with child literacy experts. These tips describe things to do and talk about with young readers to develop their ability to relate letter combinations to the sounds that those combinations represent.

ABCMouse.com is an award-winning and comprehensive online curriculum for children ages 2–6, with more than 5,000 learning activities that teach reading, math, science, social studies, art, and music. Developed in collaboration with nationally recognized early childhood education experts, the ABCmouse.com website and related apps include books, games, songs, puzzles, art activities, environments, and printables—all designed to be highly engaging and fun for children.

To learn more, visit ABCMouse.com