

Social and Emotional Skills

Most students ready for kindergarten can...

- Follow routines.
- Play cooperatively with others.
- Verbally express feelings and emotions.
- Try activities willingly.
- Be able to ask a grown up for help.
- Wait fairly and patiently for a turn to speak.
- Take care of personal needs such as toilet, hand washing, and clothing.
- Pay attention to a story or activity for ten minutes.

Try this to help your child get ready!

- ◆ Give your child chances to play with others. Notice how he/she gets along.
- ◆ Explain consequences of good and bad behavior.
- ◆ Be reasonable and loving, but follow through.
- ◆ Encourage children to try different activities and games. Arrange outings to the library, zoo, park or museum and talk about what you see.
- ◆ Limit screen time.
- ◆ Play games that require taking turns.
- ◆ Encourage children to talk about feelings.

Motor Skills

Most students ready for kindergarten can...

- Identify body parts, such as head, toe, elbow.
- Write your name from memory.
- Draw a vertical and horizontal line.
- Cut paper with scissors with both thumbs up.
- Hold a pencil using a tripod grip.
- Copy letters and shapes, such as circles and squares.
- Follow basic safety rules, such as looking both ways before crossing the street.

Try this to help your child get ready!

- ◆ Give many chances for your child to draw and print using markers, crayons, and pencils. Keep lots of paper handy too.
- ◆ Provide activities that build skills for small muscles in the hands, such as cutting out shapes with scissors or stringing beads.
- ◆ Let your child walk into the building, carrying own backpack to promote independence.

To help the first day of school go smoothly for both of you

- Practice lunch number.
- Visit the school playground during the summer.
- Practice the route to get to school (walk, ride, bus).
- Talk about the school routine (lunch, recess, stories).
- Ask about their questions and concerns.
- Visit the school and meet the teacher.
- Arrive on time, but not too early.
- Leave your child cheerfully. Your happy attitude will help them have a good start.
- At the end of the day, listen carefully to his/her concerns. Respect those feelings and show support.

Bismarck Public Schools

Getting Ready for Kindergarten

Ready?

Set?

Go!

We at BPS want to do everything we can to make the transition to kindergarten as smooth as possible. This brochure will give you some tips to help you and your child prepare for that first day. The information in this brochure is NOT meant to be a checklist of things to master. For that reason we ask that you:

- ◆ Use it as a reference and information tool
- ◆ Celebrate and encourage your child's unique talents and strengths

Our mission at BPS is to provide educational opportunities that challenge all students to reach their potential. We look forward to partnering with you to provide the best possible educational experience for your child!

Ready? As a parent or caregiver, you can help your child succeed in kindergarten.

Research shows that language development (speaking and listening) during early childhood is important for success in school. Children don't need to know how to read before kindergarten, but they should practice many skills to get ready. Repetition and hearing the same sounds and stories over and over will build strong pathways (bridges) in their brains to help learning. A good partner in this process is the local library, with access to free books, activities and advice.

You can help with two main activities – talking to your child and reading aloud. Children who hear a variety of words from adults recognize and understand important concepts when they begin to read.

Set?

Children's play is their work, and they learn by doing and experimenting. Fascinated by the world around them, they love to ask questions and talk about everything. You increase their curiosity by showing interest in what they are saying.

Preschoolers are learning about letters and sound, pictures and print. When you read to children, you teach them how letters and words work, how to hold a book and turn pages, listen and gain meaning from the written word. At this age, children also develop a basic understanding of numbers, can match and label shapes, identify colors and understand spatial concepts.

Go!

Most children entering kindergarten can perform the tasks listed in the following sections at least sometimes. Your child's development may be a little faster or a little slower in certain areas. Have patience, trust your judgment and don't be overly critical. If you make time for your child and have fun, the rest will follow.

Language and Reading

Most students ready for kindergarten can...

- State full name and parents' names.
- Identify labels or signs (McDonalds or stop signs).
- Know some letters and make letter-sound matches.
- Understand that writing carries a message.
- Enjoy listening to and talking about stories.
- Ask and answer questions related to a story.
- "Read" familiar books alone, often by memory, using picture cues.
- Understand that we read books from left to right, top to bottom.
- Notice words that rhyme and play word games making rhymes.
- Don't use "baby talk" when speaking with your child. Model proper speech.

Try this to help your child get ready!

- ◆ Read aloud to your child daily. Ask questions about the story or guess what might happen. Use different voices for characters to make the reading interesting. Let your child see you reading books, newspapers and magazines!
- ◆ Choose books and activities that are fun for both of you. Look for simple concepts (letters, numbers, shapes, and colors) easy plots, rhyming language, and nice pictures.
- ◆ Show your child many ways in which writing is used – signs, menus, lists, recipes, grocery store, street signs. Ask for help in finding letters and words.
- ◆ Sprinkle word and listening games with verbal cues throughout the day that help your child hear the differences in words – rhymes, names of things that start with the same letter (I Spy)
- ◆ Write or make up stories together. You can start a story, and your child can finish (or take turns). If you write it down, have your child draw the pictures. This is a first step in the understanding that thoughts and ideas are communicated through drawing and writing.
- ◆ Take a trip to the library, and start to visit regularly. Attend story times and choose books and participate in activities.

Math

Most students ready for kindergarten can...

- Count to 20.
- Recognize and name numbers 1-10.
- Write most numbers 1-10 (reversals are typical in kindergarten).
- Show "how many" up to 5.
- Identify shapes such as circle, square, rectangle, and triangle.
- Sort things by shape and color, like and unlike.
- Demonstrate positional words such as over, under, behind, in front, etc.
- Continue simple patterns using alternating colors such as red, blue, red, blue.

Try this to help your child get ready!

- ◆ Teach your child to count using everyday activities, e.g., counting blocks or cereal pieces, playing simple board games and counting the spaces, counting the number of forks and spoons needed for supper, etc.
- ◆ Find numbers in books, newspapers, and on signs and billboards.
- ◆ Let your child arrange/sort the family's canned foods, socks, shoes, etc. by size and color.
- ◆ Provide common household items for matching sets, e.g., pots with lids or grouping like objects.
- ◆ Provide materials such as play dough, crayons, markers, beads and sticks in different colors that your child can use to make his or her own patterns .