

Reading Readiness Checklist for 4-6 Year Olds

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This is a screening tool only. It is designed as a guideline for parents to determine if their child is ready for formal reading instruction. It will help to identify areas that require further development. [Assessment](#) by a Certified Practising Speech Pathologist is recommended if your child does not yet meet criteria.

Administration guidelines: The *italic* print indicates the instructions you provide your child. For the purpose of this screening tool, we are focusing on ‘sounds’ as opposed to ‘letters’. (E.g. Ben starts with a “buh” rather than a ‘bee’, cat starts with a “kuh” rather than a ‘cee’). If your child uses the name of a letter, you can say, “*That’s the name of the letter. What sound does it make when we say it?*”

Materials you will need:

- A short story book
- Some counters
- An egg carton

<p>Print Awareness Using a picture book, ask your child to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the cover 2. Identify the title 3. Point to a word 4. Point to a letter <p>Can your child:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognise their name? 2. Write their name? 	<p>Rhyme Identification <i>These words rhyme – fill, will, bill. They rhyme because they sound a bit the same. They have the same sounds at the end. Do these words rhyme?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. neat, lime yes/no 2. pot, cot yes/no 3. chair, bear yes/no 4. tall, wait yes/no 	<p>Rhyme Production <i>Sat and mat rhyme. Another word that rhymes with them is cat. Can you tell me another word that rhymes with these words?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. fun, sun.... 2. tree, bee... 3. moat, coat... 4. light, bright....
<p>Sentence Segmentation <i>(Word Awareness)</i> <i>We can clap out the words in a sentence. Like this: Amy jumped (clap for each word). Now it’s your turn to clap the words.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Come here now. (3) 2. Where is Sam? (3) 3. The dog ran home. (4) 4. Jackson walked to school. (4) 	<p>Semantic Awareness <i>(Word Awareness)</i> <i>Tell me if these are real words, like words you would hear in a story, or if they are silly words.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. bunny real / silly 2. to real / silly 3. ptib real / silly 4. went real / silly 5. ish real / silly 6. mesap real / silly 	<p>Word Segmentation <i>We can break words into smaller parts, like kangaroo ‘kan ga roo’ (clap out each syllable). Kangaroo has 3 beats (syllables). Can you clap it with me? How many beats do you hear in these words?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engine (2) 2. Computer (3) 3. Helicopter (4) 4. Hippopotamus (5)
<p>Sound Blending Take out the egg carton and counters. Drop a counter into a segment of the egg carton for every sound you make. <i>I’m going to stretch out a word and I want you to tell me what the word is. Like this: m...a...n is man. Try these for me:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. sh...oe 2. l...ea...f 3. t...a...ke 4. b...e...n...d 5. s..p..i..n 	<p>Sound Segmentation <i>Now it’s your turn to stretch out a word. Put a counter in a segment of the egg carton for every sound you say. Let’s try sun. S..u..n. The word sun has three sounds. How many sounds are in these words?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. beach (3) 2. mug (3) 3. like (3) 4. spoon (4) 5. train (4) 6. scratch (5) 	<p>First Sound Identification <i>The word bath begins with a ‘buh.’ Tell me the sounds you hear at the beginning of these words.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. fast (f) 2. game (g) 3. leg (l) 4. run (r) 5. shop (sh) 6. cheek (ch)

<p>Last Sound Identification The word <i>pet</i> ends with a 'tuh' sound. What sound can you hear at the end of these words?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. pen (nnn) 2. feed (duh) 3. mash (sh) 4. sock (kuh) 5. light (tuh) 6. tube (buh) 	<p>Vowel Identification The word <i>mug</i> has an 'uh' sound in the middle – m..u..g. Tell me the sound you hear in the middle of these words.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. pan 2. lid 3. beg 4. hot 5. feet 6. shark 	<p>Sound Manipulation I'm going to say a word and I want you to copy me. Popcorn. Now, let's say it again without the 'corn' (-corn). 'Pop'. Great! Now you try some more.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. beanstalk (-bean) stalk 2. gate (-g) ate 3. feet (-f) eat 4. shape (-sh) ape 5. tent (-final t) ten 6. spin (-s) pin 7. split (-l) spit
<p>Rapid Naming Now I'm going to ask you to tell me the names of some things. You need to tell me as many as you can think of in one minute. Set a timer for one minute per category. Record how many items your child can name in the following categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. animals 2. things that are red 3. things you can find at the beach 4. types of shoes 	<p>Recalling Digit Spans I'm going to say some numbers and I want you to copy me. Say exactly what I say.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5 2 2. 7 3 3. 7 4 9 4. 4 9 2 5. 6 8 2 3 6. 9 6 1 5 7. 8 5 3 4 1 8. 3 7 2 5 8 9. 3 1 8 9 5 7 	<p>Non-word Repetition I'm going to say some silly words. I want you to copy exactly what I say. Mark off the parts of the words that your child leaves out or does not say clearly.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. dreg 2. stamble 3. cumblebap 4. effoleep 5. undlebreena 6. beegonumato 7. printogeedoloomug
<p>Sound-Letter Matching Can your child:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Say the alphabet? 2. Point to letters when asked? E.g. Where's the emm? 3. Identify letters by sounds? E.g. Can you find the 'buh'? 4. Say the sounds that the letters usually make? E.g. the letter D makes a 'duh' sound. 	<p>Narrative Structure Choose a short story. We're going to read a story together. When I've finished reading it you, I'm going to get you to 'read' it to me. Is your child's story clear? Did they use the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reference characters 2. Provide setting details 3. Sequence events 4. Speak clearly 5. Would someone who didn't know the story be able to understand your child's version? 	<p>Auditory Tracking Use the egg carton and counters. Place one counter in an egg carton segment for each sound. We're going to play with some sounds in words. The word 'mug' has three sounds.. m..u..g. Which part would we change if we wanted to make the word 'bug'? Take away the first counter and replace it with one of another colour. Now we have b..u..g, bug. Can you turn...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. bug to but 2. but to bit 3. bit to sit 4. sit to sip 5. sip to sap 6. sap to rap

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Interpreting your Results 4-5 Year Olds

Add up the number of correct responses for each skill section.

0-1 items correct – this skill is ‘Unknown’

2-3 items correct – this skill is ‘Emerging’

4+ items correct – this skill is ‘Known’

Skill	Unknown 1 or unable to complete	Emerging 2-3 Correct	Known 4 or more correct
Print Awareness			
Rhyme Identification			
Rhyme Production			
Sentence Segmentation			
Semantic Awareness			
Word Segmentation			
Sound Manipulation	Syllables First sounds		
Narrative Structure			
Rapid Naming			
Recalling Digit Spans			
Non-word repetition			

By 5 years of age, your child should have skills in the ‘Emerging’ to ‘Known’ categories.

My child is not ready. What should I do?

If your child is struggling with one or more of these pre-reading skills, we are [here to help](#). Our team of Speech Pathologists can assess your child and provide you with face-to-face intervention through our online service. Our assessment will identify the areas where your child is experiencing a breakdown in acquiring literacy. We’ll work with you to develop a personalised plan to support their reading, spelling, story telling and vocabulary skills. [Book an initial consultation](#) to find out how Speech Online can be part of your home education team.

My child has these skills, but is struggling with reading and writing. What should I do?

If your child has mastered these skills but is not making progress with reading or spelling, they will require further assessment to discover the nature and extent of their literacy difficulties. We can provide a detailed assessment of reading and spelling that will identify the specific area of breakdown your child is experiencing. This assessment will consider language, vocabulary, further phonological processing skills and include a specific spelling and reading assessment. [Book an initial consultation](#) to find out how Speech Online can be part of your home education team.

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Interpreting your Results 5-6 Year Olds

Add up the number of correct responses for each skill section.

0-2 items correct – this skill is ‘Unknown’

2-3 items correct – this skill is ‘Emerging’

4+ items correct – this skill is ‘Known’

By the age of 6, your child should have acquired these skills and results should fall within the ‘Known’ category.

Skill	Unknown 1 or unable to complete	Emerging 2-3 correct	Known 4 or more correct
Print Awareness			
Rhyme Identification			
Rhyme Production			
Sentence Segmentation			
Semantic Awareness			
Word Segmentation			
Sound Manipulation	Syllables First sounds Final sounds Clusters		
Narrative Structure			
Rapid Naming			
Recalling Digit Spans			
Non-word repetition			
Sound – Letter Matching			
Auditory Tracking			

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