

Hamlin Kindergarten...



Here I Come!

Class of 2035

WELCOME TO HAMLIN ELEMENTARY

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Kindergarten Readiness Checklist

While there is no perfect formula that determines when children are truly ready for kindergarten, you can use this checklist to see how well your child is doing in acquiring the skills found on most kindergarten checklists.

Check the skills your child has mastered. Then, recheck every month to see what additional skills your child can accomplish easily. Young children change so fast. If they cannot do something this week, they may be able to do it a few weeks later.

- Listen to stories without interrupting
- Recognizes rhyming sounds
- Pay attention for short periods of time to adult-directed tasks
- Understand actions have both causes and effects
- Show understanding of general times of day
- Cut with scissors
- Trace basic shapes
- Begins to share with others
- Start to follow rules
- Be able to recognize authority
- Manage bathroom needs
- Button shirts, pants, coats, and zip up zippers
- Begin to control oneself
- Separate from parents without being upset
- Speaks understandably
- Talk in complete sentence of five to six words
- Look at pictures and then tell stories
- Identify rhyming words
- Identify the beginning sound of some words
- Identify many letters of the alphabet
- Recognize some common sight words like “stop”
- Sort similar objects by color, size, and shape
- Recognize groups of one, two, three, four, and five objects
- Count to ten (at least)
- Bounce a ball

If your child has acquired most of the skills on this checklist and will be at least five years old before September 1, he/she is probably ready for kindergarten. What teachers want to see on the first day of school are children who are healthy, capable, and eager to learn.

Most Frequently Asked Questions by Kindergarten Parents

Q. My child has a late birthday. Should we wait another year before we send him/her to kindergarten?

In almost all cases, we recommend that children start school if they are five years old on or before September 1st of that year. Our kindergarten program is developmental in nature and provides a wonderful opportunity for children to grow emotionally, physically, socially, as well as academically. We see it as our responsibility to be ready for your child, rather than your child's responsibility to be ready for us. The caution is that the requirements for academics have increased dramatically from the State of Michigan. Rochester Community Schools does offer a Transitional Kindergarten program for those families who feel as if this is a good fit.

Q. Is childcare available for my child when he/she is not attending school?

Yes! School Aged Care provides care for children from 7:00 AM until the beginning of morning kindergarten and from the end of afternoon kindergarten until 6:00 PM. Registration information is available by contacting Community Education at 248-726-3022.

Q. How are teacher assignments made?

We strive to create classes that are balanced for gender, number of children, known academic/behavior issues, and special needs identification. We are asking parents to provide us with an email address and information about your child. With this information, we will build balanced classrooms.

Q. What is the anticipated class size?

Historically, our kindergarten classes have varied in size between 18 and 24 students.

Q. What can I do to help my child make a successful transition to elementary school?

Helping children foster independence is an important first step. This would include learning to take care of their own belongings (such as taking their own coat on/off instead of having mom or dad do it for them) and taking care of personal hygiene whenever possible. Research shows that reading to your child is the single most important factor in ensuring your child's success in school. Read to your child on a daily basis and encourage him/her to "read" the pictures and talk the story. Always ask your child a lot of questions – when traveling in the car, at home, at museums, about the day at camp, etc. The "W" questions (who, what, when, where, and why) make great question starters.

The 3 R's of Kindergarten!

RHYME!

Read rhyming books with your child, play with words and rhymes, make up nonsense rhymes, write rhymes together. A child who can rhyme learns to READ!

RECOGNITION!

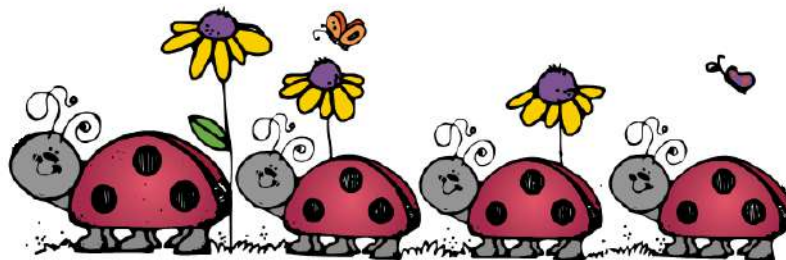
Help your child learn to recognize shapes, letters, rhymes, and numerals. Play recognition games, point out letters, etc. in real life situations, write letters and numbers. A child who can recognize letters and numbers is learning to READ!

READ!

Read to your child EVERYDAY and more! You can read to your child. They can “read” to you. Have an older sibling or relative or friend read to them. A child who is read to becomes a READER!

YOU are your child's 1st teacher!

Working together we can build a strong foundation for YOUR kindergartner's education!



WHAT PARENTS CAN DO TO HELP PROMOTE THEIR CHILD'S READING AND WRITING SUCCESS

- ; TAKE A LITTLE TIME EACH DAY
 - As little as 15-20 minutes can make a huge difference. GUARD THIS TIME! You are helping to create the root system for a good reader.

- ; DRENCH YOUR CHILD WITH LANGUAGE:
 - Discuss vocabulary
 - Make predictions
 - Discuss pictures
 - Ask your child what he/she thinks
 - Share your thinking
 - Talk, talk, talk to your child

- ; TELL THEM STORIES ABOUT YOU

- ; READ TO YOUR CHILD EVERY DAY
 - Any type of reading materials are good, especially those which contain lots of rhymes.
 - Help your child "read the pictures" and talk about the story.

- ; POINT OUT THE PRINT IN YOUR ENVIRONMENT
 - Look for alphabet letters on stores and signs.

- ; THINK ABOUT THE BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE YOU HAVE
 - Talk about what you already know before you read.

- ; ASK YOUR CHILD'S OPINION AS YOU ARE READING
 - "What do you think will happen next in the story?" "Why did he say that?"

- ; CONTINUE TO ASK QUESTIONS AS YOU ARE READING
 - "I wonder what this book is going to be about." (As you look at the cover.)
 - Have your child come up with his/her questions as well.

- ; MAKE CONNECTIONS
 - "That reminds me of"

- ; TALK ABOUT FACTS IN A STORY THAT ARE INTERESTING AND
 - THOSE THAT ARE IMPORTANT

- ; ENCOURAGE A STANDARD PENCIL GRIP WHEN YOUR CHILD WRITES, DRAWS, OR EATS

- ; SHOW YOUR CHILD HOW TO PRINT HIS/HER NAME
 - Show your child how to use a capital letter at the beginning of their name and lower case letters for the rest.

Literacy Activities to Do at Home

- Young children like to see their name written down and have a great desire to know the letters in their name. Have children start with the letters in their own name when attempting to recognize and name letters.
- Use the beginning sound of their name for building sound recognition. For example, if your child's name starts with J, find other items that start with J, like jelly, jump, jar, etc.
- Practice writing the child's name by letting them write in sand, a small tray of rice, shaving cream, pudding, finger paint, glitter crayons, sidewalk chalk, shape play dough into the letters, etc.
- It is helpful to teach the first letter of their name in uppercase, and all the other letters in lowercase.
- Use the print which is all around for him/her to notice and make literacy connections. Some print is already meaningful to your children, such as names of favorite cereals, restaurants, toys, stores, etc. Make it a fun learning game in which you play "I spy"..."I spy something with my little eye, something that starts with the letter K (say the sound that K makes) depending on the developmental level of your child.
- Place magnetic letters on the refrigerator at your child's eye level, so they can manipulate letters to form their name or group like letters together.
- Create a letter book with your child. For each page, write the upper and lowercase letter. Have children hunt for pictures, small objects, environmental print, etc. that begins with a certain letter. Make sure to include photos of their friends too.
- Let your children see you writing. For example, letters, checks to pay the bills, a grocery list, etc. Give them their own paper and let them write out their own list using kid writing. It is all right if you cannot read it at this point. You are modeling for them uses/reasons for writing and reading which is much more important at this stage.
- Create a writing box to store fun writing utensils, different types of paper, envelopes, stickers, etc. for your child to have their own writing materials to encourage writing.
- Read, recite, sing, and act out nursery rhymes.
- Do a lot of language play – Jump rope, rhymes, silly songs, finger plays, and riddles.
- Create new silly names. If your child's name is Pat, his name could turn into Cat, Mat, Sat, Hat, etc.

Math Activities to Do at Home

- Focus your child's attention on the colors, shapes, and numbers seen all around. Ask them to help you read the numerals on signs, to point out the shapes of items in the grocery store, and find colors all around.
- Let your budding chef assist you in the kitchen. Let them help pour, mix, measure, roll, etc.
- Encourage sorting skills while folding laundry, putting toys away, playing with colored blocks, and eating their favorite candies, like M & M's!
- For number practice, make two flash cards of each numeral (0-5 to start and then adding higher numerals as skill increases). Play "Go Fish" and match the numerals, go around the house and place the numeral card next to sets of that many objects, play Memory, Bingo, etc. You can create simple games like this for shapes and colors too.
- Refer to the date on the calendar frequently. Talk about days of the week, the month, and count the number of days left until an upcoming event.
- There are objects all around your home to practice counting (toys, books, shoes, shirts, pens, etc.). Have your child touch and move each item forward as he/she is counting.
- Play board games in which children have to roll dice and count how many spaces they get to move.

Social and Safety Skills to Practice at Home

- Have your child practice stating their personal information in case of emergencies (full name, parents' names, address, telephone number).
- Let your child tie, snap, button, and zip their own clothing. This is a great fine motor skill accomplishment.
- Show and encourage good hygiene: Washing hands, covering mouth when coughing, covering nose when sneezing, brushing teeth, combing hair, etc.
- Have your child get in the habit of always cleaning up their toys after playing.
- Provide opportunities for your child to spend time with other children playing and talking.
- Encourage your child to share and to take turns with others.
- Give small chores or jobs to your child, so they may experience responsibility and a sense of accomplishment.
- Get into a daily routine now so the transition to those early school days will go easy.
- Talk and model how to express feelings appropriately and with self-control.
- Remind your child to listen when others talk (looking into the speaker's eyes, waiting their turn to speak, etc.).

Things You Can Do to Help Your Child Play “Better”

- Limit the amount of television your child watches. Your child is a passive rather than an active participant when he/she watches TV.
- Limit the amount of time your child spends playing video/computer games. Even though these activities give your child a more active role, they focus on one goal and do not help imagination or creativity.
- Read to your child as often as possible; have your child read to you or tell you their stories.
- Encourage your child to play by providing he/she with props, costumes, blocks, and space. Provide them with new materials like paper, boxes, cans, etc. to stimulate creativity.
- Encourage your child to play by being genuinely interested in what they are doing. Ask questions at appropriate times, do not disrupt their play.
- Join in their play when they invite you. Take on a minor role and let them direct the action. When you stop playing, make it clear to them that you are Mom and Dad again.
- Mix unrelated toys together, such as building blocks in a kitchen area or using paints outside.
- Rotate playthings. Remove some items and bring them out at a later time. This renews interest in an “old” toy(s) and also saves money.

By taking the time with your child, you are showing them that they are just as much a priority as a job deadline, household chore, or anything else that occupies your time. In showing an interest in their interests, you create a togetherness in which joint problem solving can occur. Doing this now will lay a foundation for understanding and open communication as they mature into your adults.

Recommended Commercial Products:

1. Rhyming books, poems, and games
2. “Fridge Phonics” by Leap Frog upper case letters and lower case letters
3. Leap Frog DVD’s such as:
 The Letter Factory
 Making Words
4. Board Games and Card Games
5. A LARGE backpack
6. Clothing and shoes that can be put on independently by your child.

Thoughts at the Bottom of the Beanstalk

Once upon a time there was a little boy named Jack who was about to climb his very first beanstalk. He had a fresh haircut and a brand-new backpack.

Even though his friends in the neighborhood had climbed this same beanstalk almost every day last year, this was Jack's first day and he was a little nervous. So was his mother.

Early in the morning she brought him to the foot of the beanstalk. She talked encouragingly to Jack about all the fun he would have that day and how nice his giant would be. She reassured him that she would be back to pick him up at the end of the day. For a moment they stood together, silently holding hands, gazing up at the beanstalk. To Jack it seemed much bigger than it had when his mother had pointed it out on the way to the store last week. His mother thought it looked big, too. She swallowed. Maybe she should have held Jack out a year....

Jack's mother straightened his shirt one last time, patted his shoulder and smiled down at him. She promised to stay and wave while he started climbing. Jack didn't say a word.

He walked forward, grabbed a low-growing stem and slowly pulled himself up to the first leaf. He balanced there for a moment and then climbed more eagerly to the second leaf, then to the third and soon he had vanished into a high tangle of leaves and stems with never a backward glance at his mother.

She stood alone at the bottom of the beanstalk, gazing up at the spot where Jack had disappeared. There was no rustle, no movement, and no sound to indicate that he was anywhere inside.

"Sometimes," she thought, "it's harder to be the one who waves good-bye than it is to be the one who climbs the beanstalk".

She wondered how Jack would do. Would he miss her? How would he behave? Did his giant understand that little boys sometimes acted silly when they felt unsure? She fought down an urge to spring up the stalk after Jack and maybe duck behind a bean to take a peek at how he was doing.

"I'd better not. What if he saw me?" She knew Jack was really old enough to handle this on his own. She reminded herself that, after all, this was thought to be an excellent beanstalk and that everyone said his giant was not only kind but had outstanding qualifications.

"It's not so much that I'm worried about him," she thought, rubbing the back of her neck. "It's just that he's growing up and I'm going to miss him."

Jack's mother turned to leave. "Jack's going to have lots of bigger beanstalks to climb in his life," she told herself. "Today's the day he starts practicing for them.... And, today's the day I start practicing something too: cheering him on and waving good-bye."

~Author Unknown



Ready for Kindergarten

Write first name	Practice phone number	Practice address	Recite birthday
Identify patterns	Identify colors	Practice scissor skills	Identify some shapes
Practice writing letters	Match uppercase to lowercase letters	Identify lowercase letters	Identify uppercase letters
Count to 20	Rhyme familiar words	Practice writing numbers to 10	Count objects
Read a book with mom or dad	Use comparative (big/small) words	Identify position/direction concepts	Put 3-4 pictures together to tell a story