

Parents and Families Newsletter

Winter 2022

All content will be trans-adapted for a Spanish version of the newsletter.

Other languages are available through the S'more newsletter.

Dear Parents and Families,

The fall semester is almost over, which means that your child will soon get ready to prepare for assessments. Whether it's a class, district, or state test, it is important to remember that most tests are meant to guide instruction. This edition will help you and your children understand some basic steps you can take to ensure a positive learning and testing experience beginning with routines. Throughout this newsletter, we will also provide ideas on how you can help your child prepare for these tests at home.

Teaching Books



Routines for Success



Spiritual Self-Care



Don't forget to fill out a [quick survey](#) to share any information or suggestions you might have for the next newsletter. We value your input!

Announcements

Empowering Families through Helpful Resources

Wednesday, February 22, 2023
9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

At this family engagement event, families will have opportunities to learn about literacy services to improve their English language skills and engage in a training focused on learning new parenting activities.



Resource Center

At-Home Learning Sites for Students

The following sites can help you support your child in gaining skills that are important to have when completing assessments.



TeachingBooks®

[TeachingBooks](#)

Target Skills: Reading, Listening, Comprehension

Recommended Grade Levels: PK - 12

Find books and resources for comprehension in this statewide resource.

The easiest way to use this resource is to:

1. Open [TeachingBooks.net](#), and click on "Browse Our Resources."
2. Select the grade level your child is in by clicking "See All Collections."
3. Select a title to see the resources available.
4. Click on "Book Readings."
5. Listen to a story with your child, and discuss the plot. Discussing the characters, setting, problem, and solution with your children will help them understand story elements more easily.

Here is a story read by the author for you to start with, "[Not Exactly the Same](#)" by Grace Lin.



Khan Academy

[Khan Academy](#)

Target Skills:

Math, Reading, and Language Arts

Recommended Grade Levels: K-12

Find lessons and activities for all grade levels.

Khan Academy can help you tutor your children even when you don't know the content. Once you know what your child needs help with, you can search for the material on the website and learn together. Your support and guidance will boost their motivation. The easiest way to use this resource is to:

1. Open [Khanacademy.org](#), and click on "Courses."
2. Select the content and grade level you want to have your child review, and click "Get Started."
3. You and your child can go through the lesson together or you can have your child practice alone.

Here is a [3rd grade math lesson](#) to get you started.

[Typing.com](https://www.typing.com)



Target Skills: Typing, keyboard skills

Recommended Grade Levels: 2-12

Improve your typing speed to simplify computer use.

These days it is common for schools to use computers for classroom assignments and assessments, so helping your children type fluently will improve their digital writing skills and, as a result, benefit them academically. This website uses games and other strategies to guide your child from beginner to advanced skills. Getting started is easy.

1. Go to [Typing.com](https://www.typing.com), and click "Sign Up Now."
2. Select any username and password you can easily remember, and click "Sign Up."
3. Click on "Beginner" and watch the video before beginning your lesson.

At-Home Learning Strategies

Our parent survey responses last month indicated a concern for at-home learning strategies and test preparation. The web pages referenced above support digital learning that can easily be accessed at home. The next section will also address those concerns by providing some tips and ideas for integrating learning into your daily routines.

Routines for Success at School

The PBS article "[Setting a Routine for Success at School](#)," by Neetika Prabhakar, explains the importance of establishing and maintaining routines. The routines not only make the transition from home to school easier, but they also result in a positive attitude toward learning. The 3 routines that are described in the article are: Homework, Nighttime, and Morning routines!

Homework Routines

A routine that includes time for homework will ensure that your children complete it daily. Set some time aside either right after school or in the evening while dinner is being prepared. The goal is to make it a consistent, quiet time for your child to complete homework and read.

Nighttime Routines

Adults tend to develop routines without the help of their child. The article suggests including your child in planning the routine, which can include preparing the next day's clothes and packing homework for easy access in the morning.

Morning Routines

The article describes the importance of pacing out time so that children don't feel rushed or frustrated in the morning. Children who wake up at the same time daily, eat a reasonable breakfast, and get ready for school with little distraction can arrive at school on time and stress-free.

When routines are followed, they result in a better experience for all members of the family, even on stressful days. The three routines explained previously are just a few options, but one important factor in all of them is consistency. Children that are not accustomed to following routines will struggle if they are suddenly asked to follow one. Other important factors in establishing a routine are patience and practice. With these in mind, you'll be able to guide your child farther towards academic success.

TELPAS

One test that emergent bilingual students are faced with taking is the TELPAS (Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System). This is an annual test that evaluates a student's listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiency in English. Ideas we have shared with you in this newsletter are ways you can help from home to prepare your child for successful completion of this assessment. Here is an [information sheet](#) to answer questions you may have.

At-Home Activities

Prepare Lunch



Prepare lunch with your child and have them say the steps needed to make lunch. For example: First, we have to get the bread. Next, we will put the mayonnaise on the bread. After that, we will add the lunch meat, cheese, and pickles. This skill is important for children to learn so that they are able to describe the order of events using transition words such as *first*, *next*, and *last*.

Watch a Show

Watching a show with your child and having them retell it will help strengthen their comprehension skills when reading. Keep the discussion as simple or difficult as your child is comfortable with. Once they can retell the events in the show, have them pay closer attention to the characters, the conflict, and the resolution.

Drawing Your Thoughts

Sit with your child and have them describe a random location or item. As they speak, draw the location or item as close to their description as possible. This serves as good practice for using descriptive language and also utilizes oral language skills. The description and drawing can be as simple or difficult as your child wants. Don't forget to give your child the chance to draw an item or location you describe.



Self-Care Tips

This quarter, we are focusing on Spiritual Self-Care from the [8 types of self-care](#) for caregivers from the Daily Caring article. Spiritual self-care refers to the act of taking time to care for yourself by expressing your values and personal beliefs.

Many examples of spiritual self-care are listed in this article and include journaling, connecting with nature, practicing mindfulness, and expressing gratitude. The goal is to make it a daily habit to develop a strong sense of self.

Remember to check out our previous newsletter for advice on physical, emotional, and financial self-care.









Final Thoughts

Parental Engagement

You will always be your child's first teacher, helping them learn how to manage their emotions and stress through difficult times with love and support. As you guide your child through school, remember that your support matters at all grade levels.

Previous Newsletters

If you would like to access the previous Parent and Family Newsletters, click below!

	<p>Fall Newsletter Highlights</p> <p>Identify ways to team up with your child's teacher to support your child throughout the year.</p>
	<p>August 2022 Newsletter Highlights</p> <p>Learn about setting up good routines to prepare for school as well as suggestions on how to add in emotional self-care routines.</p>
	<p>July 2022 Newsletter Highlights</p> <p>Find out what to do if your child has changed schools, help your child develop some practical skills around the house, and get some tips for physical self-care routines.</p>
	<p>June 2022 Newsletter Highlights</p> <p>Learn about ways to keep your child engaged both mentally and physically. Also, check out numerous websites for local and digital adult English classes.</p>
	<p>May 2022 Newsletter Highlights</p> <p>Visit the Goodwill Community Foundation for free courses about various technology programs.</p>
	<p>February 2022 Newsletter Highlights</p> <p>Visit Go-Digital to enhance your technology skills. Also check out the TELPAS parent brochure on how to get your child ready for TELPAS.</p>

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Supporting English Learners in Texas



[TXEL.org](#) is a web portal that provides information and resources that are relevant, accessible, and impactful to support educational leaders, teachers, parents and families, and community partners to ensure the academic success of the State's English learners.

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