

## THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN HOME-BASED TEACHING OF READING AND NUMERACY

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In early childhood and primary education, two fundamental skills lay the foundation for future learning: reading and numeracy. While formal schooling certainly plays a major role in teaching these skills, parents play an equally essential role at home. Research consistently shows that children who receive parental support and guidance in developing reading and numeracy skills at home perform better academically. In this article, we'll explore the critical roles parents play in these areas, strategies for engaging children effectively, and ways to foster a love for reading and numbers.

### 1. Creating a Literacy and Numeracy-Rich Environment

For children to develop reading and numeracy skills, they need exposure to them in everyday life. Parents can support this by creating a literacy-rich and numeracy-rich environment at home, which includes having books, magazines, and age-appropriate puzzles, as well as math-related games or toys.

Parents can:

Fill the home with engaging books, storybooks, and simple math puzzles.

Use numbers, shapes, and patterns in daily conversations.

Include calendars, counting games, or grocery receipts to demonstrate everyday applications of math.

This exposure, especially when engaging and non-intimidating, fosters a natural curiosity about reading and numbers.

## 2. Engaging in Daily Reading Activities

Daily reading is one of the most effective ways to improve children's literacy. By reading aloud to children, parents help build vocabulary, comprehension, and listening skills, which are the cornerstones of literacy. This time also strengthens the parent-child bond, making reading a pleasurable and comforting experience.

Some strategies for reading at home include:

Reading picture books, rhyming books, and interactive stories together.

Asking questions during and after reading to improve comprehension and encourage critical thinking.

Making regular trips to the library or bookstore to allow children to pick books of their choice.

Consistency is key, as even 10–15 minutes of daily reading can make a significant impact on a child's reading abilities.

## 3. Modeling Positive Attitudes Toward Math and Reading

Children learn a lot from observing their parents' attitudes and behaviors. When parents show an interest in reading and math, children are likely to develop a positive attitude towards these activities too. Parents who make reading and problem-solving a regular part of their day-to-day routine serve as powerful role models for their children.

Parents can:

Show enthusiasm about reading their own books, doing puzzles, or tackling practical math problems.

Use math in daily activities, like measuring ingredients while cooking or comparing prices while shopping, to show its usefulness in everyday life.

Express excitement and encouragement when their children succeed in reading or math activities, as this reinforces the idea that learning is both valuable and enjoyable.

#### 4. Supporting Numeracy Development Through Everyday Activities

Numeracy is not just about learning to count; it encompasses understanding quantities, patterns, and basic arithmetic. Everyday activities provide excellent opportunities to teach numeracy. For instance, parents can involve children in cooking to teach fractions and measurements, or they can play board games to teach counting, strategy, and problem-solving.

Here are some simple ways to incorporate numeracy into daily life:

Playing counting games, like counting objects during a walk or counting the steps they take.

Using household chores, such as dividing laundry or arranging toys, to teach sorting and categorization.

Working with money, such as counting change or understanding price tags, to give real-life context to numbers.

## 5. Setting Goals and Tracking Progress

Setting small, achievable goals helps children stay motivated. By setting reading and numeracy goals, parents can help children feel a sense of accomplishment and build confidence in their abilities. Progress tracking doesn't have to be formal; it could be as simple as keeping a reading log or marking off a calendar when they complete a reading or math activity.

Ways to set goals include:

Encouraging children to finish a certain number of books per month or read a chapter every day.

Setting goals for solving a certain number of math problems or practicing multiplication tables.

Celebrating these small victories to maintain motivation and enthusiasm.

## 6. Encouraging Independent Learning and Critical Thinking

As children grow older, it's important for parents to foster independence in learning. While parental involvement is critical, over-dependence can hamper a child's ability to think critically or solve problems independently. Parents should guide rather than dominate these learning activities.

Encouragement of independence might include:

Letting children pick out books on topics that interest them.

Allowing children to figure out solutions to simple math problems on their own, offering hints rather than direct answers.

Encouraging children to explain how they arrived at a solution or interpretation, fostering analytical skills.

## 7. Partnering with Teachers

The partnership between parents and teachers is vital in creating a seamless learning experience for children. By keeping in touch with teachers and staying informed about their child's progress in school, parents can understand the areas where their child might need extra support. This collaboration helps reinforce concepts being taught in school and allows parents to address any struggles or gaps in learning.

Parents play a pivotal role in the home-based teaching of reading and numeracy by creating a supportive learning environment, engaging in regular reading and math activities, and fostering positive attitudes towards learning. By modeling behaviors, setting achievable goals, and encouraging independent problem-solving, parents can lay a solid foundation for their child's lifelong literacy and numeracy skills. Ultimately, the time and effort invested at home in these critical areas not only improve academic performance but also help children develop a love for learning that extends well beyond the classroom.

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