

# PRESCHOOL

## 4-YEAR-OLDS



Utah State  
Board of  
Education

Teaching  
and  
Learning

## Parent Guide to Student Success

Parents are important partners in achieving the Utah State Board of Education’s vision that “each student is prepared to succeed and lead by having knowledge and skills to learn, engage civically, and lead meaningful lives.” The purpose of this document is to help parents better understand what their children should learn, when a child may need more help or when a child would benefit from extra challenges. By using these resources, you may find more ways to advance your child’s learning at home while encouraging growth in their communication, critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

#### Essential Learning: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

- Follow two-step directions.
- Identify some letters, including the ones in their name.
- Recognize rhyming words, begin to recognize the beginning sounds of words, and progress towards recognizing ending sounds of words.
- Begin to count syllables, recognize beginning sounds of words, and blend (combine word parts) and segment (break apart) words.
- Print some letters and represent spoken words with written language using letter-like marks and scribbles.

Link to the **English Language Arts** Early Learning Preschool Standards:

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/utahcorestandards>

English Language Arts Strategies and Activities

<https://www.uen.org/core/prek/downloads/strategies-ela.pdf>

## ■ Home-to-School Connections: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

- Point out print that you see everywhere you go: environmental print (road signs, logos, store signs, billboards), magazines, books, etc.
- Sing a variety of songs and recite nursery rhymes including ones from different cultures, in other languages, and songs and rhymes that incorporate body movement and fun actions.
- Ask open-ended questions about what they are doing, seeing, feeling, reading, etc. (open-ended means there is not just one right answer but many different ways to answer). Use follow-up questions to extend conversations.
- Model writing in different ways such as writing down what your child says, labeling their drawings, making a menu, or writing a grocery list. Encourage your child to try writing letters, drawing, or scribbling with a variety of materials.

## FINE ARTS

### ■ Essential Learning: FINE ARTS

- With support, begin to work independently and cooperatively in dramatic play (also known as pretend play).
- With support, start, stop, and respond to musical cues.
- Participate in musical activities by listening to, singing, and creating music.
- Create works of art that reflect experiences using a variety of tools (crayons, play-dough, markers, scissors, etc.) and materials (clay, leaves, cardboard, etc.).

Link to the Utah **Fine Arts** Early Learning Preschool Standards:

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/utahcorestandards>

Fine Arts Arts Strategies and Activities:

<https://www.uen.org/core/prek/downloads/strategies-finearts.pdf>

### ■ Home-to-School Connections: FINE ARTS

- Explore with musical instruments, listen to a variety of music, and dance together!
- Have a special place in your house to hang up and display any creative work your child makes. Ask your child to tell you about their creative work.
- Engage in creative activities with your child. Let the child take the lead in creating art projects, creating games, and acting out stories you read or help create with your child.
- Acknowledge children's effort and persistence when they are being creative. Tell them "I love how hard you worked" or "I can tell you took a lot of time to add all of these colors."
- Use color and texture words wherever you go: "Wow, look at that blue bird!" "It's by the red shoe," "I spy something green," or "Feel how smooth this rock is!"

## HEALTH EDUCATION

### ■ Essential Learning: HEALTH EDUCATION

- Show independence in personal hygiene and care.
- With support, distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touch.
- Identify and practice how to make friends and be a good friend by developing and using friendship skills with peers and participating in cooperative play.
- Express, identify, and label emotions of self and others (for example, happy, sad, angry, afraid, frustrated, bored) and feelings (for example, thirsty, hungry, hot, cold, tired).
- With support, begin to demonstrate methods to calm down (for example, deep breathing, count to ten, mindfulness).
- With support, develop and practice self-control by regulating one's own impulses and feelings, (such as following simple directions, waiting for turns, transitioning between activities, and complying with limitations).

Link to the full Utah **Health Education** Early Learning Preschool Standards:

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/utahcorestandards>

Health Education Strategies and Activities:

<https://www.uen.org/core/prek/downloads/strategies-health.pdf>

### ■ Home-to-School Connections: HEALTH EDUCATION

- Play games that allow your child to practice different emotions such as Simon Says (Simon says make a sad face), and Guess How I Feel (make a mad face and have them guess which emotion it is).
- Practice breathing and other calming strategies with your child when they are calm and happy so that they are more likely to use it when upset.
- Encourage your child to participate in daily routines, including brushing their teeth, putting on pajamas, etc.
- Arrange playdates or visit play areas so that your child can interact with other kids their age and practice being a friend.
- Talk about food you are eating at mealtime and what healthy foods can do for our bodies.
- Read stories and talk about how the characters feel. Ask your child about a time they felt that way.

## LIFELONG LEARNING PRACTICES

### ■ Essential Learning: LIFELONG LEARNING PRACTICES

- Develop an increasing ability and willingness to continue with a task through challenges or difficulties.
- Begin to connect new information or experiences with previous knowledge through interactions with teachers, peers, and the environment.
- With prompting, display an increasing ability to engage in a variety of problem-solving strategies.
- Use appropriate communication or actions when social problems arise to identify the problem and explore basic solutions.
- Demonstrate awareness of one's own identity, including personal information, characteristics, preferences, and abilities; and participate in respectful discussions about similarities and differences with others.

Link to the **Lifelong Learning Practices** Early Learning Preschool Standards:

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/utahcorestandards>

Lifelong Learning Practices Strategies and Activities:

<https://www.uen.org/core/prek/downloads/strategies-lifelonglearning.pdf>

### ■ Home-to-School Connections: LIFELONG LEARNING PRACTICES

- Model what to do when you have a problem. You can say, "I have a problem and need to think of a solution. I could..."
- Praise your child when they show that they are responsible and helpful.
- Help your child brainstorm solutions to problems that come up. For instance, when they can't find something you could say, "We could look in the kitchen, the bathroom, and the bedroom. Where should we look first?"
- Arrange playdates or go to places where your child can practice interacting with other kids.
- Encourage your child to persist through experiences that consist of productive struggle (not too hard and not too easy).

# MATHEMATICS

## ■ Essential Learning: MATHEMATICS

- Count a number of objects from 0–10 and begin to associate them with a written numeral.
- Count two sets of objects up to 10 to determine which has more.
- Understand and represent addition up to five (adding to or putting together) and subtraction (taking from or taking apart) with concrete objects, fingers, movement, and simple drawings.
- Duplicate, extend, and create simple patterns (for example, create a pattern with colored blocks and, after identifying the beginning pattern, ask “What color comes next?”).
- Describe objects using vocabulary specific to measurable attributes (for example, length [long/short], weight [heavy/light], size [big/small], and distance [near/far]).
- Describe objects in the environment by using names of shapes and identify the relative positions of these objects using terms such as above, below, beside, in front of, behind, and next to.

Link to the Utah **Mathematics** Early Learning Preschool Standards:

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/utahcorestandards>

Mathematics Strategies and Activities:

<https://www.uen.org/core/prek/downloads/strategies-math.pdf>

## ■ Home-to-School Connection: MATHEMATICS

- While playing or during snacktime, you can practice counting, adding, and subtracting. At the beginning of a snack, for instance, you can count how many pretzels your child has, then after they have eaten one, ask how many they have now. Point out “You had five, then you subtracted one when you ate it. Now you have four!”
- Sing songs that include counting such as “Five Little Speckled Frogs,” and “Five Little Ducks.”
- While playing, you can add patterns to what you are doing. For example, when building with colored blocks, you can make a simple pattern. You can point it out to your child and ask them what color comes next.
- While playing, point out attributes such as what toy is longer, heavier, bigger, shorter, etc.
- Play hide-and-seek or scavenger hunt games that include shapes and position words. For instance, you can hide something and give clues like “It’s under a chair” or “It’s in front of something you sleep on.” You can also do a scavenger hunt in your house for different shapes (for instance, find 3 triangles, 4 squares, etc.)

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

### ■ Essential Learning: PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Begin to maintain personal boundaries while participating in movement activities.
- Demonstrate control and balance during movement that moves the child from one place to another (for example, walk forward in a straight line, hop, run and stop, change direction, and jump over low objects).
- Demonstrate control of large muscles to manipulate objects (for example, throw and catch a ball, use a club to move a ball, ride wheeled toys).
- Demonstrate eye-hand coordination (for example, pour from one object to another, strike a stationary object).
- Demonstrate eye-hand coordination by independently creating simple handwriting strokes such as straight and intersecting lines, circles, and other simple shapes using a variety of writing tools.

Link to the Utah **Physical Education** Early Learning Preschool Standards:

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/utahcorestandards>

Physical Education Strategies and Activities

<https://www.uen.org/core/prek/downloads/strategies-pe.pdf>

### ■ Home-to-School Connections: PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Set up an obstacle course that encourages your child to run, gallop, throw, catch, hop, kick, dance, jump, climb, pull, carry, stretch, bend, or twist to practice moving the whole body as well as isolated parts of the body.
- Practice building with large and small blocks, molding clay, using scissors or tongs, stringing beads, placing pegs in holes, assembling puzzles, using a computer mouse, and using a variety of writing utensils (pencils, crayons, markers) and art mediums (painting, printing, stamping).
- Praise your child when they maintain their own personal space and respect the personal space of others while playing or moving.
- Play games with a ball that encourages throwing, catching, bouncing, and kicking.

# SCIENCE

## ■ Essential Learning: SCIENCE

- Explore and describe patterns in weather and different seasons.
- Obtain and communicate information about the effect of water and food on living things, such as plants depend on water to live, and animals depend on water and food to live.
- Plan and carry out an investigation to determine the cause and effect of the speed or direction of an object when a push or pull occurs such as having a marble or other object move a certain distance, follow a particular path, or knock down another object.
- Plan and carry out an investigation using the five senses to determine the effect of sunlight on different surfaces and materials, such as determining if the effect is hot or cold or a light or dark surface.

Link to the Utah **Science** Early Learning Preschool Standards:

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/utahcorestandards>

Science Strategies and Activities

<https://www.uen.org/core/prek/downloads/strategies-science.pdf>

## ■ Home-to-School Connections: SCIENCE

- Allow children to explore their surroundings and ask questions while they are doing so, such as, "What do you think will happen if...?"
- Point out changes in children's environment including changes in the weather, seasons, etc.
- Provide children with language to describe what they see, hear, touch, taste, etc.
- Build ramps, forts, levers, etc. with children and let them discover what will happen when using them.

## SOCIAL STUDIES

### ■ Essential Learning: SOCIAL STUDIES

- Recognize differences and commonalities in culture, ethnicity, and abilities within the immediate communities (for example, language, family structure, traditions, disabilities).
- Demonstrate awareness of one's own identity including personal information, characteristics, preferences, and abilities (for example, name, age, gender, physical attributes, likes/dislikes, parent/caregiver, family members), and participate in respectful discussions about similarities and differences with others.
- Identify and follow safety procedures for school and various environments (for example, safety drills, crosswalks, seatbelts, helmets).
- Begin to demonstrate independence in interacting cooperatively with others by sharing, turn-taking, resolving conflicts, accepting consequences of actions, and recognizing others' needs.
- Identify the difference between basic needs (for example, food, shelter, clothing) and wants (for example, toys, games, treats).
- Recognize the importance of balancing media time with other activities.

Link to **Social Studies** Early Learning Preschool Standards:

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/curr/utahcorestandards>

Social Studies Strategies and Activities:

<https://www.uen.org/core/prek/downloads/strategies-socialstudies.pdf>

### ■ Home-to-School Connections: SOCIAL STUDIES

- Honor your family culture and maintain a respectful attitude when interacting with others who may have different cultural backgrounds. You can say, "We celebrate this way, but they celebrate that way. It's ok that we do different things!"
- Model behaviors that care for the environment. For example, pick up trash you see outside, turn lights off when you leave a room, put items in the recycling bin, etc.
- Explain the importance of safety and why that practice is important. Praise your child when they make safe choices.
- Provide children with choices as often as possible. For example, while dressing, let them pick between the blue shirt or the dinosaur shirt. When it's snack time, let them pick between a banana or a string cheese, etc.
- Model healthy use of technology. Help your child balance media time with other activities, such as encouraging them to play with other toys and items.



## **PARTNER WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER(S)**

Productive relationships between parents and teachers are essential to learning. You can facilitate development of a respectful relationship with your child's teacher(s) by:

- Introducing yourself.
- Asking about the best means to communicate effectively regarding your child's learning (e.g., email, notes, phone calls).
- Sharing anything that would be important to consider when planning for your child's learning experiences (e.g., strengths, areas for growth, goals, and/or any other special considerations).
- Attending parent teacher conferences and identifying ways you can support your child's development, growth, and learning.
- Asking your child about what they are learning and reinforcing their learning at home by maintaining focus on the learning process rather than outcomes while celebrating both successes and failures.
- Acknowledging the positive contributions of educators on your child's development, growth, and learning.

## **5Es FOR FAMILIES**

To support your child in developing the characteristics found in [Utah's Portrait of a Graduate](#), you will find [Utah's 5Es for Families](#) to be another helpful resource. By using the 5Es for Families, your home environment can support and enrich your child's learning.