

Dear Family:

A new school year has been launched! This year, I will be using a program called Foundations® to teach some important basics of reading and spelling. However, I am going to *need your help*.

We know that when a child has a **“Coach”** in addition to a classroom teacher, the child makes significant progress. We will work together as a **“team”** – I shall be the teacher, and you the coach.

I will do my best to provide you with the necessary tools to take on that role. I shall keep you informed of “what is happening” in the classroom and provide suggestions and a guide as to “what can be happening” at home.

I look forward to a very successful year as we work together with your child in **Foundations**. We will have fun teaching and helping your child build a strong foundation for literacy!

In the next letter, I shall share with you Unit 1 and its related activities.

Once again *thank you* for your interest and cooperation.

Sincerely,





## Help Develop Oral Expression And Vocabulary

You can help your child develop oral language (the spoken word) with the following ideas. Do these anytime you are with your child:

**1. Encourage your child to answer "wonder" statements.**

Say such things as "I wonder why a dog barks." Or say, "I wonder if Grandpa likes spinach."

**2. Help your child expand his/her vocabulary by rephrasing.**

When your child says something such as, "He's scared," you could say, "Yes, the dog barks because he is frightened, you are correct!"

**3. Ask open-ended questions.**

Do not ask, "Are you raking leaves?" (The child would simply answer, "yes.") Instead, ask, "What are you doing with your rake?" The child will answer you and then you can rephrase the answer to further develop vocabulary (see # 2).

**4. Limit the amount of TV**

However, if your child watches a children's program, talk about it (see #'s 1, 2, 3).

**5. Provide household props that encourage pretend play.**

Use spoons/pans in the bathtub; cups/teapots/dolls; small rakes/shovels. While playing, be sure to talk through your actions (see #'s 1, 2, 3).

Verbally interacting with your child simply means taking every opportunity to talk with your child. With our busy lives, interactions between adults and children are often directive ("do this," "do that,") or negative ("stop hitting," "don't run.") Try to break this pattern whenever possible. Both you and the child will have pleasant experiences and you will be helping to develop oral expression and vocabulary.