

Helpful Tips

- Ages 4 to 7 is a critical time for learning to read.
- Read with your child for 20 minutes a day. Take turns reading, listening, and discussing.
- Sing songs about letter names and sounds. Make it fun.
- Write individual letters on a piece of paper. Tear or cut them apart and place them in a bag. Ask your child to pull out a letter and say the sound. Play together, taking turns.
- Play "I Spy." For example, "I spy something that starts with /b/" and your child may say "bird," "bag," or "bike."
- Teach your child how to spell a few special words like their name.
- Point out words that begin with the same letter as your child's name.
- Play word-building games using magnetic letters or letters on individual pieces of paper. Ask your child to build words for you to read. Play together, taking turns.
- Point out words and read them. Say each sound. Then say the word as you normally would. Ask your child to try.

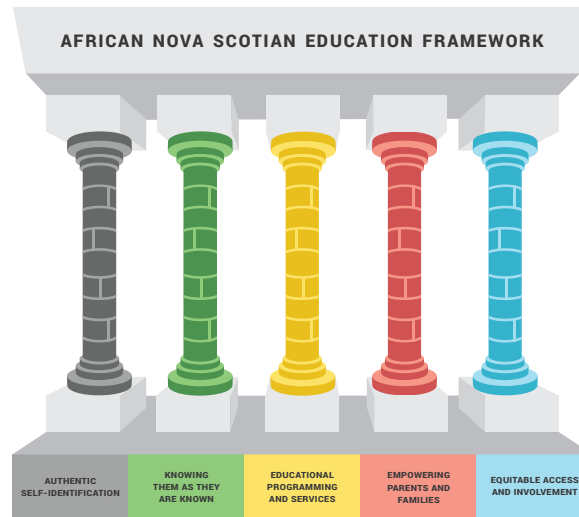
Questions to ask your child's teacher:

- What are my child's strengths?
- What skills do my child need to work on at home?
- How are you supporting my child in the classroom?
- When may we meet next to discuss my child's progress?

About the ACSB

ACSB is dedicated to collaborating across the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and with students, families, and the community to build a Nova Scotian education system that is equitable, culturally responsive, and a safe learning environment for all learners.

The pillars of the **African Nova Scotian Education Framework** outline the essential themes necessary to address the systemic barriers in education, allowing ANS/Black students to be heard, seen, inspired, and supported so they can reach their promise and potential.



For more information, contact:

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Empowering Parents and Families

Phonics



Dear Parents and Families,

Welcome to Inclusive Education! As your child's first teacher and advocate, we recognize the critical role you play in your child's education. For that reason, Empowering Parents and Families is one of the five pillars of the African Nova Scotian Education Framework.

Our actions are intentional. We strive to create opportunities to empower you, and your child's system of support, as essential decision makers regarding programming and supports for your child. This is achievable through an authentic and collaborative partnership between home, school, and the community that supports and strengthens your child's well-being and achievement. To achieve this goal, we provide information, tools, and training.

You can use this brochure to increase your awareness of grade-level reading benchmarks, and what reading behaviours to look for when reading with your child at home. A perforated edge has been added allowing you to easily separate the panels. You can place the helpful tips in a highly visible area, like the refrigerator door, as a reminder to read and have fun!

Yours in education,

African Canadian Services Branch (ACSB)

"Sankofa" is derived from the Akin Twi and Fante languages of Ghana, loosely meaning "to retrieve." The concept is represented by the Sankofa bird, with feet facing forward and head turned



SANKOFA

to retrieve an egg on its back. The symbol is presented on ACSB materials as a reminder that "in order to understand our present and ensure our future, we must know our past."

What is phonics?

Phonics refers to connecting sounds with their written letters and teaches children how to use this knowledge to read and spell.

As they learn to read and write, children explore new ways to interpret the world around them and build new ways to practice self-expression and creativity.



Phonics includes:

- building on name, sound, and formation of letters ("alphabet knowledge")
- understanding the relationship between written letters and spoken sounds
- using the sound of each letter to sound out what a word says
- using "decodable" books (simple books written for readers to apply their understanding of letter-sound relationships)
- using the knowledge of letters and sounds to write words ("encoding")
- reading high frequency and irregular words

Year-End Phonics in Grades Primary to 2

Primary

- recognizing the relationship between letters and sounds
- blending sounds to read simple words (e.g., "m" has the sound /m/ as in **mat**, "a" has the sound /a/ as in **apple**, and "t" has the sound /t/ as in **top**; saying each sound and then blending them /m/ /a/ /t/, "**mat**")

Grade 1

- recognizing combinations of two letters ("digraphs") put together to make one sound (e.g., **sh**, **th**)
- recognizing and reading grade-level high-frequency words (e.g., **at**, **is**) and irregular words (e.g., **was**, **are**)

Grade 2

- recognizing short and long vowel sounds in words (e.g., **at** – **ate**, **cut** – **cute**)
- reading words with common prefixes (e.g., **undo**, **redo**) and suffixes (e.g., **jumping**, **jumped**)

For more information about reading behaviours at different reading levels, visit the curriculum section of the EECD website:

<https://curriculum.novascotia.ca>



Other brochures in this series can be found in the Publications section of the ACSB website at www.ednet.ns.ca/acs/home.

