

Dear Family:

A new school year has been launched! This year, I will be using a program called **Fundations® Level 2**. (You can learn more about it online at www.wilsonlanguage.com.) **Fundations** provides a systematic and explicit approach to reading and spelling with phonics. Research indicates that systematic and explicit phonics instruction is effective for all children. We will combine this phonics instruction with the reading of good literature, which is just as important for your child's development.

Research also proves that when a child has a "**coach**" in addition to a classroom teacher, the child makes significant progress. Let's be a "**team**" - I will be the teacher, and you the coach.

In order to take on that role, I will send you the necessary tools. You will be kept informed of what is happening in the classroom and given suggestions and a guide as to what you can be doing at home.

Please read the **Fundations** letters that I send home. These letters will contain updates, program information, and activity suggestions. Set aside time to do the home activities with your child. Monitor your child's progress and share successes as well as concerns with me. (This pack includes reference material which you will need for upcoming lessons.)

I look forward to a very successful year as we work together with your child!

Sincerely,





You are likely wondering, “What is Foundations®?”

Research indicates that **systematic** and **explicit phonics instruction** is effective for all children. Foundations provides a systematic and explicit approach to reading and spelling with phonics. We will combine this instruction with the **reading of good literature**, which is just as important for your child’s development.

Foundations is systematic

because it follows a very definite sequence for teaching and it follows a very definite procedure to teach those concepts.

Foundations is explicit

because this program does not leave room for guessing. It teaches all concepts directly. The children will learn sounds using keywords to help them remember. They will blend the sounds into words.

As the year progresses, Foundations introduces many aspects of word structure and sentence structure. I shall be sending home guides and activities for all of this.

You are also probably wondering, “How can I become a successful ‘Coach’ in this reading program?”

As a “Coach” you can:

- 1.** Read the Foundations letters that I send home. These letters will contain updates, program information, and activity suggestions.
- 2.** Set aside time to do the home activities with your child.
- 3.** Monitor your child’s progress and share successes as well as concerns with me.

I feel certain that you will find working with your child in Foundations very rewarding. Your child will treasure your involvement!



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.

Fundations® Six Types of Syllables in English

This year, I will review closed and v-e syllables and teach the six types of syllables in English.

Closed Syllable

- 1 This syllable can only have **one vowel**.
- 2 The vowel is followed by **one or more consonants** (closed in).
- 3 The vowel sound is **short**, marked with a breve (˘).
- 4 This syllable can be combined with other syllables to make **multisyllabic** words.

Examples

up hat ship last

Mark-up Sample

lăst
c

Vowel-Consonant-e Syllable

- 1 This syllable has a **vowel**, then a **consonant**, then an **e**.
- 2 The first vowel has a **long** sound, marked with a macron (ˉ).
- 3 The **e** is silent.
- 4 This syllable can be combined with other syllables to make **multisyllabic** words.

Examples

bike ape stove

Mark-up Sample

stōve
v-e

Open Syllable

- 1 This syllable has only **one vowel** which is the last letter in the syllable.
- 2 The vowel sound is **long**, marked with a macron (ˉ).
- 3 This syllable can be combined with other syllables to make **multisyllabic** words.

Examples

I be shy hi

Mark-up Sample

hī
o

R-Controlled Syllable

- 1 This syllable contains a single vowel followed by an **r** (**ar, er, ir, or, ur**).
- 2 The vowel is neither **long** nor **short**; it is controlled by the **r**.
- 3 This syllable can be combined with other syllables to make **multisyllabic** words.

Examples

start fir hurt art

Mark-up Sample

ar
r

Double Vowel - "D" Syllable

- 1 This syllable contains a **vowel digraph** or a **diphthong**. These are vowel teams.
- 2 This syllable can be combined with other syllables to make **multisyllabic** words.

Examples

beat feel eight new

Mark-up Sample

new
d

Consonant-le Syllable

- 1 This syllable has only three letters: a **consonant**, an **l**, and an **e**.
- 2 The **e** is silent. It is the vowel. Every syllable needs at least one vowel. The consonant and the **l** are sounded like a blend.
- 3 This syllable must be the last syllable in a **multisyllabic** word.

Examples

cradle little bubble

Mark-up Sample

bub ble
-le

Dear Family:

The first several units in Foundations® Level 2 will review concepts taught in Level 1 and also add new information. This is important as a key component of the program: we review and build upon the skills in place, strengthening previous concepts and giving students a base upon which to add new information. In Units 1-5, there will be a lot of emphasis placed on the **closed syllable** which makes the vowel short (ă in **apple**, ě in **Ed**, ĩ in **itch**, ō in **octopus**, ŭ in **up**).

A **closed syllable** is a word or part of a word that has one vowel closed in or followed by one or more consonants. The vowel does not need to have a consonant in front of it, but it needs to have at least one consonant after it. Examples of closed syllables include **at**, **mat**, **math**, **mast** and **clash**. The short sound of the vowel is marked by the breve sign (˘).

In Unit 1, I shall reinforce the following concepts taught in Foundations Level 1 within the closed syllable concept:

The **digraph**, two letters that make one sound as in **ship (sh)**.

The 2- and 3-letter **consonant blend**, as in **trip (tr)** and **strip (str)**.

The **digraph blend**, as in the word **lunch (nch)**.

Blending and segmenting up to 6 sounds in one word, such as **script**.

I will also teach students when to use **k**, **c** or **ck** when spelling words. Students will learn to use **c** most often at the beginning of words unless it is followed by **e**, **i** or **y**. They will learn to use **ck** at the end after a short vowel and **k** after a consonant.

Please work with your child to reinforce the above concepts by using the attached activity suggestions. If you have any questions, please write them down and I shall get back to you. I truly appreciate your partnership. You will find that working with your child is very rewarding and your child will treasure your involvement. **We are off!**

Sincerely,

