

How Can I Help My Child Learn English?

You do not have to speak English at home to show that you *value* learning English. Your first language is the best language to speak with your family. The development of relationships and intellectual processes requires using your best language. Doing the activities listed below are a much more effective way to show you value English. If you know English, use it to help translate homework to your child.

Tips:

- Encourage your children to **play with English speaking friends** during recess.
- **Set aside time** to practice English
- Invite English-speaking friends home to play. This is a common custom in the United States.
- Provide a [Picture Dictionary](#)
- **Practice** the alphabet and numbers with your children, if these are new concepts. Help your child label objects in the household.
- [Read books in English](#) to your children, and encourage them to read in English if they can. It does not matter if your accent is not American.
- [Question your children about the meaning of a story](#). For example, ask them to name the characters, the setting, the problem, and the events in the story. Talk together about why things happened. You can talk about the meaning in your first language.
- Encourage your children to **write in English**. At first, they can just draw a picture and write names of things in English. Encourage children to say the words aloud and guess the spelling themselves. Perfect spelling is not a goal of informal writing. More important is their effort to hear and write the sounds themselves.
- **Listen to the radio, play games or sing songs** in English
- Encourage your child to do the regular classroom homework. ELL students should try to do the regular classroom homework, but will not be expected at first to complete it to the same standards as their classmates. They will learn by trying to do what they can. **DO NOT** do it for them. If you know English, help your children understand the directions and the vocabulary.