

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a child's drawing on a piece of paper. A purple marker is at the top, a pink marker is on the left, and an orange marker is at the bottom. There are faint purple and pink drawings on the paper, including a stick figure and a circle.

Ready, Here I Come!

A Solid Foundation Course for Parents

School Readiness

Session **3**

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a child's drawing on a white surface. A purple marker is at the top, a pink marker is on the left, and an orange marker is at the bottom. A simple stick figure is drawn in purple, with a pink circle around its head and a pink line for its arm. The text is overlaid on this image.


Ready, Here I Come!

A Solid Foundation Course for Parents

School Readiness

Session **3**

Name _____



Above all we urge parents to
support their children first with
love, then with language.

Ernest Boyer
“Ready to Learn: A Mandate for the Nation”
Young Children



WELCOME BACK!

Ready, Here I Come!

A Solid Foundation Course for Parents

Session 3

Did everyone sign the sign-in form?

Name tags in place? Great!

Activities From Last Session

At the last session, we agreed to complete activities with our children. As I read the tasks, check the ones you completed.

Check if tried:

- _____ 1. I used **Help•Check•Praise** to start my child on a large-muscle habit such as putting toys away.
- _____ 2. I helped my child become a *Kitchen Helper* or *Garage Helper* to use fine-motor skills.
- _____ 3. I used *Stories* and/or *Books* to encourage my child's interest in words, language, and stories.
- _____ 4. I used groceries or other objects to help my child see *alikes* and *different*s.
- _____ 5. I used an everyday series of objects or events to exercise my child's short-term memory.
- _____ 6. I helped my child memorize important names and numbers.

At the end of the last session, we made a commitment to try the activities from the list above. I will tell you about my experience with each activity I tried. Then each of you will share your experience. Tell the group how you did with the activities. If you had a great success, share your excitement with the group. If you had problems, maybe the group can give you suggestions. Our activities with our children between sessions are the most important part of this course, so let's take time to discuss our progress and be helpful to one another.

Group Leader: Allow about 15 minutes to report and discuss progress on activities from last session.



**TELL THE
GROUP**

Ready for School

In sessions 1 and 2 we learned that many of the skills children need when they begin school can be developed through play and everyday activities in the home. We also were reminded that the parent-child relationship during this time of skill development contributes greatly to the child's learning. In this session, we will discuss the child's preparedness for school. Our goal will be to increase our children's enthusiasm for school, their interest in school, and their comfort with the idea of going to school. Some of our preschoolers may not begin school for a few years, and others may already be in programs that are very much like school. Still, they can all benefit from *our* discussions with them about school and *our* interest in their preparation for school.

Our goal will be to increase our children's enthusiasm for school.

Lesson 1: Big Muscles for Big Fun

Session 3

The chance to play with other children is one of the attractions of school. Preschoolers eye with envy the playground equipment in school yards. They can't wait to be a part of school—the place where kids play together and get to use the playground every day. Or so it seems to the preschoolers. This wonderful anticipation of school is what we want to encourage. So how about a visit to the school playground?

There are two good times to visit a school playground:

- when our preschoolers can watch school children play, and
- when our preschoolers can play.

We will want our preschoolers to visit playgrounds at both of these times. When school children are playing, our preschoolers grow in their excitement for the wonders of school. On weekends, during the summer months, and in the evenings when school is not in session, our preschoolers can not only see the playgrounds, they can sample a bit of the wonders that await them.

Walks to school, when the school is in the neighborhood, are good times to talk about school with our preschooler. When the school is not in the neighborhood, a drive or bus ride to the school can be followed by a walk around the school and through the playground.

Now what does all of this have to do with big muscles? Well, don't just look at the swing sets, slides, and monkey bars! Let your preschooler sample the pleasures of school while you talk about how great school days will be!

EXERCISE: PLAYGROUND MEMORIES



EXERCISE

What is your favorite playground memory from your childhood?

Share your favorite playground memory from your childhood with the group. First, I'll tell my favorite playground memory, then each group member will do the same.



TELL THE GROUP

Lesson 2: Small Muscles for School

Playing *school* helps children grow in their anticipation of the big day when they will go to school. It also acquaints them with some of the routines of school. When children use scissors, glue, crayons, pencils, paper, erasers, rulers, and books, they are learning to use the tools of school. They also are exercising their eye-hand coordination in ways that will be useful in school.

What can parents do to encourage children to play *school*? The following list of suggestions may help:

1. Keep a School Kit supplied with the tools of school—scissors, glue, crayons, pencils, paper, erasers, rulers. Your child can help decorate the box that holds the tool kit. You can help him letter “School Kit” on the outside of the box.
2. Show your preschooler how to set up a play *school*. Use a table for the teacher’s desk, with chairs for a few students facing it. What goes on the teacher’s desk? That is a good question for discussion with your preschooler. Don’t forget the apple!
3. Play *school* with your preschooler and a couple of his friends or siblings. Show them how to take turns being the teacher. The teacher gets to tell the students what to draw on their paper. Participate in the play.
4. When your preschooler is alone with you, use the School Kit to teach her to use the tools of school.

When children use scissors, crayons, pencils, paper, erasers, rulers, and books, they are learning to use the tools of school.

EXERCISE: PLAYING SCHOOL



EXERCISE

How might a preschool or kindergarten classroom differ from a traditional fifth-or sixth-grade classroom?

*I'll share my thoughts and then ask each group member to do the same.
We can keep notes of helpful ideas below:*



TELL THE GROUP


Notes:

Lesson 3: The Language of School

Children love to learn new words, so why not teach them the vocabulary of school? The following is a list of school words that children will enjoy learning:

Recess	Flag	Rules
Bell	Teacher	Assignment
Announcements	Chalk	Books
Graduation	Dictionary	Library
Penmanship	Friendship	Alphabet
Arithmetic	Numbers	Read
Science	Write	Color
History	Art	Principal
Geography	Gym	Cafeteria
Auditorium	Hall	Calendar

TAKING IT HOME

 Try introducing new school words as your child plays school or when you are talking about school with your child. Talk about the word. Look for the word in books. Listen for the word. Help your preschooler pronounce the word. Explain its meaning. Explain how the word applies to school. Encourage your preschooler to use the word in a sentence. Encourage your preschooler to use the word in conversation with a family member. Some of the words listed above are pretty big for preschoolers to get their tongues around, but they will have fun trying.

EXERCISE



EXERCISE: SCHOOL WORDS

List three “school words” that do not appear above:

TELL THE GROUP



I'll share my three “school words,” then each group member will do the same.

Lesson 4: What's in a School Room?

Session 3

A school room is filled with objects. Preschoolers can talk about the objects found in a school room, draw the objects in a school room, and draw a school room with objects in it. The objects found in a school room are good subjects for word games that require the child to use concepts of size, similarity, color, texture, weight, and function.

1. What's in a school room? Begin making a list of what is in a school room. The preschooler can imagine what may be in a school room. The preschooler can also ask family members and friends for suggestions. Each time a new object is suggested, write it on a list.
2. Draw pictures of school room objects. You draw one first, then your child.
3. Draw a big, rectangular school room and then draw objects in it. Where does the teacher's desk go? Where is the flag?
4. Play word games by asking:

What objects in a school room are too heavy to lift?

"I see a desk that is too heavy to lift. What do you see that is too heavy to lift?"

What objects in a school room are smooth to touch?

"I see a globe that is smooth to touch. What do you see that is smooth to touch?"

What objects in a school room are red?

"I see a red stripe on the flag. What do you see that is red?"

What objects are in a school room? I will name an object, then the group member to my left will name one. We can keep a list below:



**TELL THE
GROUP**

Lesson 5: Remembering a Day at School

A visit to school is the most exciting adventure of all for a preschooler. Of course it is a good idea to call the school first to let the principal know you are coming. The school may provide a tour for visiting preschoolers and their parents, or the principal may just invite you to walk the halls and look around. Most preschoolers have been in schools before, but probably it was for an event or to see a sibling. Some preschoolers are already participants in programs at school. So *this* visit to school must be for a special reason. This visit is for the preschooler to observe school. If this is the school your child will actually attend some day, so much the better. Prepare the preschooler for the special visit by talking about it. This way the child knows that the visit is a special activity just for him or her. While visiting, the parent should keep the focus of attention on the preschooler, allowing the child to ask questions, encouraging the child to talk about what she is seeing.

Recalling the day at school will provide a memory exercise for time to come. “Remember the special day we visited school? What did we see first?” In remembering and talking about the visit to school, a preschooler exercises memory, uses words, and becomes more and more comfortable with the prospect of attending school.

EXERCISE



MEMORY OF SCHOOL

What is your earliest memory of school? Do you remember your very first day in school? Do you remember events from kindergarten or first grade?

TELL THE GROUP



I'll tell one of my earliest school memories, then each member of the group can do the same. Maybe we would like to share some of our early school memories with our children.

Lesson 6: Things to Know

Session 3

When children begin school, it is helpful if they know:

How to print their name.

The alphabet.

How to count objects up to ten.

How to identify colors.

WHAT SHOULD CHILDREN KNOW?



EXERCISE

Think of one other thing that would be helpful for children to know when they begin school.

I'll name one thing I think children should know before they begin school, then I'll ask each group member to do the same.












TELL THE
GROUP

Notes:

Key Points

Let's review the key points from this session:






-  Our goal is to increase our children's enthusiasm for school.
-  Children benefit from our discussions with them about school and our interest in their preparation for school.
-  The chance to play with other children is one of the attractions of school.
-  There are two good times to visit a school playground: when preschoolers watch school children playing and when preschoolers can play.
-  Playing "school" helps children grow in their anticipation of the big day when they will go to school.
-  Children love to learn new words, so why not teach them the vocabulary of school?
-  Preschoolers can talk about the objects in a school room, draw the objects in a school room, and draw a school room with objects in it.
-  While visiting school, we should keep the focus of attention on the preschooler, allowing the child to ask questions, encouraging the child to talk about what he or she is seeing.
-  Recalling the day at school will provide a memory exercise for time to come.

Taking it Home

Session 3

It is time to put our learning into practice. Listed below are the activities for the week. Because this is the final session of *Ready, Here I Come!*, these and the other activities we have learned in *Ready, Here I Come!* may be continued as part of our family life.

ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

-  Visit the school playground with my preschooler. On one visit we will watch school children play, and on another visit my preschooler will play.
-  Make a “School Kit” with my preschooler and help him/her learn to play “school” using the techniques I learned in this session.
-  Keep a list of “School Words” in a visible place, asking my preschooler to suggest new words for the list and to use a new word each day.
-  Help my preschooler learn the objects in a school room, draw objects, and play word games about objects in a school room.
-  Visit a school with my preschooler for the sole purpose of allowing my preschooler to observe and talk about the school. Later, we will enjoy recalling the events of the visit.

Closing the Session

We can take home this manual to remind us of *Ready, Here I Come!*.

The next page in this manual is a tear-out to help us remember our activities for the week.

It is now graduation time. **CONGRATULATIONS!**

APPLAUD



APPLAUD FOR A GREAT SESSION!

Objective: Every parent in America will be a child's first teacher and devote time each day helping his or her preschool child learn.

National Governors Association
"Every Child Ready for School"

Ready, Here I Come!

Activities for Week #3 and after

**Visit the
school play-
ground**

School Kit

**School
Words**

**Objects in a
school room**

Visit a school

Academic Development Institute

Founded in 1984

The Academic Development Institute (ADI) works with families, schools, and communities so that all children may become self-directed learners, avid readers, and responsible citizens, respecting themselves and those around them. ADI's vision is of an American landscape filled with distinct school communities reflecting the hopes and dreams of the people intimately attached to them. To this image of the school as a community, ADI is devoted. When the school functions as a community, its constituents (students, parents, teachers, staff) associate with one another and share common values about the education of children. At the root, members of the school community assume responsibility for one another. Those children become our children, and parents are not external agents, but full partners in the education of their children and of each other's children. Teachers are not isolated practitioners of pedagogy, but professionals integrated into the web of community and buoyed by common purpose.



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