

# “De-Stressing Homeschool for Non-school-aged Children”

Chellie and Jennifer

Homeschooling your little ones who are not yet of “school-age” (meaning 5 years and under) can be intimidating, but it doesn’t have to be! Let our experienced mom (Jennifer) and educator (Chellie) help you navigate this new season by demonstrating how easy it can be done in your home in less time than you think!

## Chellie’s Takeaways:

1. Don’t overthink it – at this age, children learn most from interactions not rote memorization
2. Focus on the most essential skills and don’t stress about the rest
3. Established routine is your friend

## Jen’s Takeaways:

1. There are many great curriculums on the market but you don’t *need* them. Preschool at home can be simple and affordable.
2. Life is the best classroom. Be observant during everyday activities and be intentional in your conversation with your little ones.
3. You can find reading, math, social studies, science, and discipleship principles EVERYWHERE!
4. Be creative with your time. Don’t try to re-create a classroom but establish a home that inspires learning at every age (moms and dads, too) and at any time.

## Quality Questions for Quality Interactions

One of your greatest tools is your interactions with your child. **You are interacting with them constantly throughout the day, but how can you take those thousands of interactions and turn them into learning? Ask quality questions.** Here are some examples of questions you could ask your child throughout the day that could lead to discussion. These back and forth discussion will help your child develop social skills, language skills, and build their knowledge about the world around them. In my classroom, I have questions like these on post it notes or cards all over my room so that if I need a little help, I can look up and see it. You could do something similar in your home.

### When reading together:

- What do you think might happen next?
- What does this remind you of?
- Why do you think he/she did that?
- What would you do if you were story character?
- How do you think the character is feeling? Why do you think they feel that way? How do you know they are feeling that way?

### When playing:

- Why/How do you think \_\_\_\_\_? (the trampoline bounces up and down, the bugs are flying around the plants, the plants grew so tall, the battery isn't working anymore on your toy, etc.)
- How could you \_\_\_\_\_? (problem solving and plan making – could be social with siblings or solving a problem with a toy or material not working or trying to figure out how to build/create or pretend something)
- What made you decide to \_\_\_\_\_? (as your child is playing, building, or creating something, this question will cause them to think about their thinking [metacognition] and explain it out loud.)

### All Day:

- Keep the words “why”, “how”, and “tell me about” in mind and see how you can integrate those kinds of questions into whatever you're doing throughout the day. Those may be the phrases you choose to put on post-its throughout your home or work area.

# Pre-K Essential Skills Checklist

The skills below are the most essential skills for your child to master by the end of the year.

Letter Identification (highlight the box when they know that letter – they won't need to learn them in order)

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z

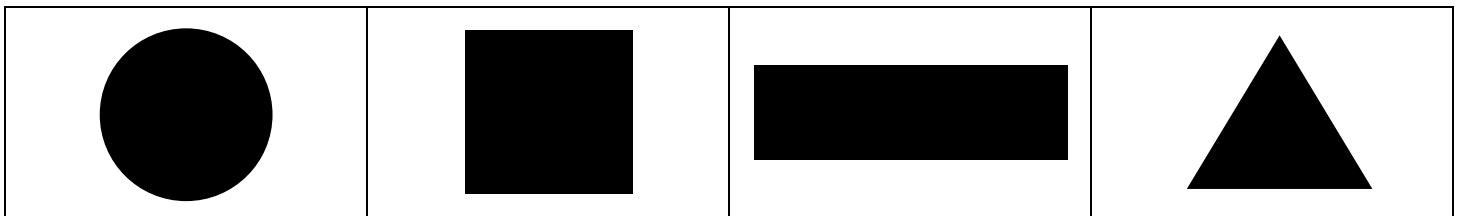
Letter Sounds (highlight the box when they know that sound)

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Number Identification (highlight the box when they know that number – they need to know at least to 10)

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

Shape Identification (highlight the box when they know that shape)



Counting (highlight the box when they count to that number – **should be counting to at least 20 by end of year**)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

Other Important Skills:

- Recognizing their name written out
- Writing first name legibly
- Holding a pencil using a tripod grip (not fat pencils or crayons, use regular pencils or golf pencils)
- Answering questions about a story (see Quality Questions for Quality Interactions sheet)
- Recognizing and producing words that rhyme
- Telling what the beginning sound of a word is
- Sorting objects into two groups
- Making simple AB or AABB patterns (can use cereal, toys, blocks, crayons, beads etc)
- Using positional words (over, under, in front of, behind, beside, etc.)
- Measuring using non-standard units (ex: how many paperclips tall is my doll)

# Essential K Skills

Based on the Louisiana Student Standards – see [louisianabelieves.com](http://louisianabelieves.com) if you'd like more in-depth expectations

This list isn't as specific as the Pre-K list. If your child hasn't mastered all the skills on Pre-K checklist, start there first before considering the skills below. This is a lot more than the Pre-K checklist because they cover more skills in K. Don't get overwhelmed and don't be afraid to ask questions. You may also have a more structured curriculum for K than you would for Pre-K and you would follow the flow of that curriculum instead of focusing on this. This is just a summarized version of the Louisiana Standards. This may only truly be useful to you if you are planning for your child to return to public school after this year

## Reading:

- Identify all letters
- Produce rhyming words
- Recognize what a word is (spoken words represented by written language made up of letters – can you say “point to a word on the page” and then point to a word)
- Follow words from Left to right, top to bottom, page by page (start by having your child track words with their finger as you read, then they track words on a page as they pretend to read the words, then they track words on the page as they read early readers)
- Understand words are separated by spaces
- Count, segment and blend syllables in spoken words
- Read high-frequency words by sight (sight words)
- Telling which sound is first, in the middle, and last in CVC words (consonant, vowel, consonant – ex: dog, cat) (they will likely be able to identify the first sound, then learn to identify the last sound, and it may take time for them to be able to identify the middle sound)
- Change beginning sound of a word to make a new word. (ex: replace d in dog with l to make log; replace c in cat with r to make rat) (you may see this called “word family” work)
- Identify/produce long and short vowel sounds (usually initially taught by adding e to CVC words – car becomes care, bit becomes bite, etc)
- Read emergent-readers (early readers) and understand them

## Writing:

- Write first and last name
- Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces (ex: My favorite book is...), informative/explanatory texts (ex: Polar bears have fur to keep them warm.) and narratives (ex: I went to the park and played with my friends.)
  - o Connected to reading skill of identifying beginning, ending and middle sounds of words. They will initially just dictate and you will write, then they will be able to write the first letter of each word, then they will add the ending sound, and later in the year you will notice them beginning to add middle sounds)
- Answer questions and take suggestions to strengthen writing.
  - o Ex: Your child writes “M f b i R F.” and tells you it says “My favorite book is Rainbow Fish.” You could ask questions and make suggestions to help them build that sentence by adding ending sounds if they're ready. Then it might read “Mi ft bk is Rnbw Fs.”
- Use digital tools to publish writing (ex: type with help and print)
- Recall information or gather information about a topic or question they have. (early research, lots of support from parent)

## Speaking and Listening:

- Participate in collaborative conversation. (listening and appropriately responding to something someone else says. Taking turns talking)
- Ask and answer questions about a text/story
- Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and provide details when prompted
- Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas

## Language:

- Write many upper and lowercase letters.
- Use frequently occurring nouns and verbs when speaking and writing.
- Form plural nouns orally by adding /s/ or /es/.
- Understand question words (who, what, where, when, why, how).
- Use most frequently occurring prepositions (to, from in, out, on, off, for, of, by, with).
- Use complete sentences when speaking.
- Capitalize first word in a sentence the pronoun I.
- Recognize and use punctuation.
- Write a letter or letters for sounds pronounced (If I say /a/ they write a or A).
- Spell simple words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships. (may not be anywhere near correct spelling)
- Continue to expand vocabulary
- Sort common objects into categories
- Demonstrate understanding of frequently occurring verbs and adjectives by relating them to their opposites
- Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.

## Math:

- Count to 100 by ones and by tens
- Count forward beginning from a given number (instead of having to begin at 1)
- Write numbers from 0-20. Represent a number of counted objects with a written numeral
- Count objects one at a time saying correct number for each objects in the sequence
- Understand the last number name said tells the number of objects counted
- Count objects and answer "How many?" questions
- Identify whether the number of objects in one group is greater than, less than, or equal to the number of objects in another group
- Compare two numbers between 1 and 10 presented as written numerals
- Represent addition and subtraction with objects, fingers, mental images, drawings, sound, acting out situations, verbal explanations, expressions, or equations
- Solve addition and subtraction word problems within 10
- Break numbers less than or equal to 10 into pairs in more than one way (ex:  $5 = 2 + 3$  and  $5 = 1 + 4$ )
- For any number from 1 to 9, find the number that makes 10 when added to given number. (ex: give student 8 cubes and ask how many more they need to have 10 cubes)
- Fluently add and subtract within 5
- Understand that the numbers 11-19 are composed of ten ones and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, or nine ones
  - o Compose and decompose numbers 11-19 using place value (ex: using objects or drawings)
  - o Record each composition or decomposition using a drawing or equation (ex: 18 is one 10 and 8 ones)
- Describe and compare measurable attributes
- Classify objects and count the number of objects in each category
- Identify and describe shapes (squares, circles, triangles, rectangles, hexagons, cubes, cones, cylinders, and spheres)
- Analyze, compare, create and compose shapes