

Home Schooling a Child with Down Syndrome: Kindergarten Resources

Preschool level material would
be for Down Syndrome
children about ages 5-8+

*Skill Sample
for this age group:*

*Auditory discrimination
Initial consonant sounds
Knows vowels and short
sounds
Reads short vowel words
Reads sight words
Reads simple sentences
Names shapes
Tells time to the hour
Identifies coins
Adds simple numbers
Developing fine and gross
motor*

- ❖ **Brigance Inventory of Basic Skills (Pre-K-grade 9)** (See the *Early Inventory* pamphlet for the number to call for this resource.)

The *Inventory of Basic Skills* is a diagnostic manual similar to the *Inventory of Early Development* but covers grades pre-k through nine. You might consider purchasing the *Inventory of Basic Skills* if your child can complete skills on the K level or grade 1 and you need a checklist of skills.



**Woodbine House
Special Needs Collection
6510 Bells Mill Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
(800) 843-7323**

- ❖ **Teaching Reading to Children with Down Syndrome** by Patricia Logan Oelwein (This book is also carried in many local bookstores such as *Barnes and Noble*)

This resource is starred because it is the number one resource that all families teaching a child with Down Syndrome ought to have, read, and implement even if you use some other resources for a K5 program. The first half of the book teaches you how children with Down Syndrome learn. The second half of the book teaches you in very clear steps how to teach reading to your child using a sight method. The author suggests learning about 50-100 sight words first and then moving into phonics. Even as you begin phonics, phonics and sight should be taught simultaneously. The basics are given to get started with phonics. Pat's philosophy is to teach children with Down Syndrome to read before they enter the public schools so that they would be seen as competent by their peers. So she will get you started with phonics using word families, but you will need to find a basic

phonics program that makes sense for you and your child.

After teaching your child 50-100+ sight words in Pat Oelwein's book, you can choose to begin phonics using Pat's book or find a kindergarten curriculum that teaches the short vowel words. Many children with Down Syndrome have been able to learn phonics. This will help them become more independent readers and spellers. Those that remain with a sight approach will always need someone to teach them words that they do not know, and spelling will be very limited. If your child seems to have good receptive skills, he may be able to learn some basic phonics.

Here are a few general principles to remember when you are looking for a kindergarten curriculum.

- ∞ Most curriculums are designed for normally developing children.
- ∞ No matter what program you choose, you will need to adapt. There may be one lesson for the sound of /b/ but you may need to create enough activities for the /b/ lesson to last a week or more.
- ∞ The workbook pages may be too cluttered, the print size too small, or not enough space for writing.
- ∞ Focus on the letter sounds more than you do the letters' names.
- ∞ Ignore the themes in curriculums if they do not interest your child. Find books that interest him and read to him. Ask one question per page. Allow him to point to the picture to answer if he cannot answer verbally.

Resources

Remember that even though others have used a resource, it may not work for you. Borrow resources to try before purchasing when you can.

Educators Publishing Service
31 Smith Place
Cambridge, MA 02138-1089
(800) 225-5750

- ❖ **Get Ready for the Code A**
- ❖ **Get Set for the Code B**
- ❖ **Go for the Code C**

The books teach consonant sounds and how to write them. Manuscript writing is used. You may choose to skip the writing pages if it is not the type of font you want your child to learn. You can also white out the letter and write in the letter style you want your child to practice. The set that follows these books is the *Explode the Code* Series.

- ❖ **The Three R's** by Ruth Beechick
CBD Home School (978) 977-5055

(other distributors also carry this resource.)

This set covers basic skills needed for grades K-3 and includes the following three booklets. The booklets give ideas to guide you in teaching skills at this level, however, some families may need more guidance than what these books cover:

- ∞ *An Easy Start in Arithmetic*
- ∞ *A Home Start in Reading*
- ∞ *A Strong Start in Language*

Math Curriculums

Look for curriculums that are hands on and activity oriented. If your child cannot write, just skip the pages that include number writing for now. You can also have him tell you the answers and you write them until he is ready to

write the answers himself. Adjust directions that say to “color” to “circle” instead if coloring is too difficult.

- ❖ **Touch Math (1-800-888-9191)**

web sight: <http://www.touchmath.com>

One-2-one Kindergarten Counting and Addition Workbooks (set of 4) This program uses a strategy of dots that are placed on the numbers to aid in the learning of addition facts. This has been used successfully by several families when their child could not memorize the facts. However it is not a complete kindergarten program.

- ❖ ***BJU Press K5 Math:** This multi-sensory curriculum has a fun farm theme. There are many hands-on activities and visuals.
- ❖ **Saxon K math:** This is a plain black and white program, but it is hands on.

Supplemental Resources

Carson-Dellosa Instructional Materials

www.carsondellosa.com

See your local teacher-supply store (You may find many helpful items in their catalogue.)

The following 7 x 9 inch **Home Workbooks** usually have simple pages and can supplement any program you are using to give additional practice in many areas. Below are some sample titles

- ∞ *Alphabet Sounds and Pictures*
- ∞ *Capital and Lowercase Letters*
- ∞ *Color Words*
- ∞ *Shapes*
- ∞ *Scissor Skills*
- ∞ *Dot-to-Dot Numbers*

A note here about cutting and gluing pages. If your child cannot cut, you do the cutting and allow your child to do the gluing part.

The following two companies also have workbooks and games appropriate for this level.

School Zone
PO Box 777
Grand Haven, MI 49417
www.schoolzone.com

Frank Schaffer
Instructional Materials

See your local teacher-supply store or call 1-800-421-5565 for a catalogue

How long will Kindergarten take?

While each child is unique, most children that I have come in contact with usually take about two years. It is important to keep school fun and successful at this level even if you have to spread lessons out over several days. If your child feels successful, he will want to wake up and beg you to do “school” the next day.

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