

# Checklist

FOR PARENTS OF FIRST GRADERS

*These skills usually develop during first grade. Talk with your child's teacher if you have questions.*

- My child knows all the letters of the alphabet.
- My child knows the difference between letters and words, and knows there are spaces between words in print.
- My child knows that written words represent speech and can show how words are represented by letters arranged in a specific order.
- My child knows some punctuation marks and where sentences and paragraphs begin and end.
- My child is beginning to understand and explain why people read.
- My child can put together (blend) and break apart the sounds of most one-syllable words and can count the number of syllables in a word.
- My child can sound out words he doesn't know, and recognize some irregularly spelled words, such as have, said, you, and are.
- My child reads first grade books aloud, and can tell when she cannot understand what she is reading.

(over)

- My child reads and understands simple written instructions.
- My child uses what he already knows to enrich what he is reading.
- My child predicts what will happen next in a story
- My child asks questions (how, why, what if?) about books she is reading and can describe what she has learned from a book.
- My child uses invented spelling in his writing and also understands that there is correct way to spell words.
- My child uses simple punctuation marks and capital letters.
- My child writes for different purposes—stories, explanations, lists, letters—and reads and revises her writing.
- My child uses language with more control, speaks in complete sentences, and uses more formal language at school than at home and with friends.
- My child is curious about words and uses new words when he speaks and writes.
- My child is beginning to see that some words mean the same thing (synonyms) and some mean the opposite (antonyms).
- My child is learning that words play different roles in sentences—that nouns name things and verbs show action, for example.

This checklist is adapted from *A Child Becomes a Reader—Birth Through Preschool*. Get a free copy at [www.nifl.gov](http://www.nifl.gov).