



FASTalk Direct Weekly Messages

Preschool

Week	Message 1	Message 2
1	Experiment with shaping letters out of different materials. Together, make letters out of rocks, string, or sticks. Say the letter names.	Continue creating letters together. Say a word starting with that letter sound. Ask: Can you think of another word starting with that sound?
2	Emotion skills are especially important now. Talk about emotion clues we get from body language (ex: ask if a smile means someone is happy or sad.)	Keep building key skills by describing body language & naming feelings (ex: I see your clenched fists, you look like you may be angry).
3	Practice rhyming with your child. Sing or say a poem (in any language!) that you love. What words rhyme? Clap them with your child.	Sing another poem or song together! Create actions to it. Acting is a fun way to help your child understand poems, songs, & stories.
4	Young children love to help! This week, find ways your child can help around the house (ex: setting the table, putting away toys).	Keep finding ways your child can help (& give them lots of praise!). Your child will feel proud of what they have done to help the family.
5	This week, ask your child to retell a favorite story. Sharing key details in the right order is an important skill - thanks for practicing!	Ask your child: what came first, next, last in the story? Ask them to hold up a finger when sharing an important part.
6	Play a "guess what will happen" game with your child. Ask: what will happen if we add hot & cold water at the same time?	Ask your child to guess what will happen next when reading together. You're helping build key thinking & problem-solving skills at home!
7	Introduce a new feeling word each day. (Hint: book characters' & family members' feelings can help give ideas for new feeling words!)	Encourage your child to use a variety of words when sharing how they feel. A strong emotion vocabulary helps children talk about feelings.



FASTalk Direct Weekly Messages

Kindergarten

Week	Message 1	Message 2
1	Try Stomp and Spell! Give your child 3 letter words: PAN, HOP, TIN. Ask them to say each letter as they stomp.	Stomp and Spell: HOT, FIG, CAP! Make sure your child pays attention to the vowel sounds.
2	Labeling & expressing feelings can help to manage them. Ask your child how they feel & reflect back what you hear ("I hear you saying...").	Help your child name their feelings. "It sounds like you're feeling..." Is that right? Keep checking in about your child's emotions this week.
3	Retelling stories helps Kindergarteners learn to organize & describe events. It also helps them understand what they have read.	Practice retelling by having your child tell you steps of a game they play. See if they can tell the steps in order and not leave any out!
4	After reading, we talk & write about new things we have learned. Sharing new info (through talking or writing) is an important K skill!	Practice at home: tell your child about an activity you like doing. Have your child share or write something new they learned from you.
5	Help build social skills this week! Point out ways that your child, a family member, or book character is giving or generous to others.	Notice (and name) the positive feelings that come with giving & helping. You're helping your child see the positive impact of generosity.
6	Sounds form the foundation of written & spoken language. Sound out new words - in any language! Count the number of sounds together.	Knowing letter sounds is important! Point to a banana & apple & ask which starts with the "b" sound. (Practice with any objects at home!)
7	Encourage your child to draw & write about themselves – especially when feeling excited, worried, or sad. Write the words together!	You're helping your child begin to share thoughts through writing! Any spelling is OK – don't worry about correcting it.



FASTalk Direct Weekly Messages

Grade 1

Week	Message 1	Message 2
1	Pretend play can help with writing. When you see your child playing pretend, ask them to write a short story (or draw a picture) about it.	Writing down or drawing out pretend play games can help with fiction writing. Ask your child for details about their pretend characters.
2	Take time this week to ask your child how they're feeling. Show you're paying attention by repeating what you hear & asking for more details.	Respond with curiosity when your child shares their feelings. Asking questions shows your interest in understanding their experience.
3	The setting of a story is where it takes place. When you read a story together, ask your child to describe the setting in detail.	Ask your child to draw the setting of a favorite story. What details can they remember that they can add to the drawing?
4	This week, practice recognizing different feelings. Ask what a person's face looks like when they feel JOYFUL. What about DISAPPOINTED?	Take a selfie with your child as you both make a JOYFUL face. Now try DISAPPOINTED. Add new feelings like SURPRISED and SCARED.
5	Ask your child what TRADITION means to them. Explain that a tradition gets passed down from grandparents to parents to children.	Ask: what are some special things our family does that are a tradition? Keep talking about different kinds of traditions this week!
6	Check in on YOUR emotions. How are you feeling during this difficult & uncertain time? What calming strategies have helped you in the past?	Naming emotions is an important first step before figuring out the right strategy to help manage them. Try it this week (you & your child)!
7	What is your child's favorite song? Help them learn the words (and practice their writing) by writing them down. Offer to help, if needed.	Keep encouraging writing! Can your child help with a grocery list or letter? Encourage them to write the sounds they hear for each word.



FASTalk Direct Weekly Messages

Grade 2

Week	Message 1	Message 2
1	Many kids love to put on a show. Make an audio recording of your child reading a story or poem. (Tip: use your phone to record!)	Let your child listen to the recording. What do they like about it? What would they change next time? If they want, make a new recording.
2	Your child is likely experiencing a range of emotions as their routines shift. Take time to listen & show you understand how they feel.	Acknowledge feelings & show you understand: "It makes sense you're feeling disappointed that you can't see friends - I feel that way too."
3	Group discussions are an important part of 2nd grade. We learn how linking comments to what others say shows that you're listening.	Use phrases with your child that show you're listening: Tell me more about... I like how you said... I heard you say...& want to add...
4	The 2nd graders have a lot in common with each other, but they are also each UNIQUE. Ask your child what makes them UNIQUE (one of a kind).	Ask your child to think of a friend & then talk about what they have in common and how they are different. Why are differences important?
5	2nd graders practice backing up opinions with reasons. Practice at home by asking your child "why?" when they share a viewpoint.	Ask your child for their opinion on a few things this week (a book or show, a meal, an activity). Make sure they back it up with reasons.
6	Finding ways to care for yourself during this stressful time is important (& can be hard!). Your well-being is important for your family.	You're a powerful role model. Children can learn important tips & ideas from you about ways to feel calmer during a difficult time.
7	2nd graders are learning to write about their experiences. We look for their explanations to be in the right order and with details.	Ask your child to draw a picture about a fun day they had. Next, ask them to explain it using words like first, then, next, finally.



FASTalk Direct Weekly Messages

Grade 3

Week	Message 1	Message 2
1	Try this writing game: Both you and your child write 2-3 detailed sentences about a place. Then read your clues aloud & guess the places.	Together, look online or on your phone for information about a place of interest. Ask your child to teach you something new they learned.
2	Your child likely feels many different emotions now (ex: happy for time with family, sad to miss friends at school). Ask them to share.	Connect with your child's experience by sharing examples of times when you've had similar feelings & what you did to feel better.
3	When reading nonfiction text, students learn WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY & HOW about a topic. Use these question words when reading together.	Have your child write & read 5 questions they have for you about your 3rd grade year. (Reading the list aloud will help them find mistakes & fix them!)
4	Talk with your child about what you both like & don't like about staying home during this time. Listen & acknowledge their thoughts & feelings.	Find out your child's point of view on other topics. Ask them to review a book or movie. What do they like best? What could be better? Why?
5	Time for a grammar game! See who can point out nouns (people, places, things) & verbs (action words) first while reading together.	Your child can look for nouns & verbs in the world around them. They can find parts of speech in any text: in books, or even on food packaging!
6	Sending postcards to friends and family is a great way to practice writing. Plus it's fun to get mail when they write back!	Cards can also be written for people in the home or neighborhood. The writing is the important part!
7	Kids aren't the only ones experiencing a range of emotions during this difficult time. Take time this week to check in on how YOU'RE feeling.	Make a list of activities that help you during a difficult time. Is it staying connected to friends & family? Extra rest? Exercise?



FASTalk Direct Weekly Messages

Grade 4

Week	Message 1	Message 2
1	Play "Draw it!" Have your child look at a plant or animal (or picture of one) & describe it to you. Try to draw it based on the description.	Take turns playing & writing down the descriptions! Be sure to share key details so that your picture & writing will be more accurate!
2	Check how your child is feeling & empathize with their experience when you can. Ex: "I know how you're feeling, I've felt that way too."	Lots of change can be stressful for all. By connecting with your child around their emotions you'll help them feel seen & understood.
3	Build conversation skills by asking & answering questions together this week. Ask: Who is a famous person you would like to meet? Why?	Take turns doing "interviews." Ask: if you could be anywhere, where would you be, what would you do? (Record the audio or video on your phone!)
4	Research an earth-related topic that interests your child: weather, a specific habitat, climate change. Read an article together to learn more!	Ask your child questions about the article. When they answer, ask them to refer to parts of the text that support their answer.
5	Practice synonyms (words with similar meanings) by choosing a word (ex: tired, happy) & taking turns naming synonyms. How many can you think of?	Next, practice naming antonyms (opposites). When reading together, stop on certain words & name their antonyms (ex: brave/cowardly).
6	Fluency (reading smoothly) is an important 4th grade skill. Ask your child to reread their favorite part from a book or poem to the family.	Keep rereading! Find a section of a book that has dialogue & read it with expression. Then ask your child to read it back to you.
7	As you support your child during these difficult times, don't forget to take care of yourself. Helping yourself helps your family stay strong.	Identify calming activities or strategies that can help YOU. Some may need to be adapted (ex: use tech to connect with friends & family).



FASTalk Direct Weekly Messages

Grade 5

Week	Message 1	Message 2
1	5th graders practice paying attention to the theme of a text when reading. Themes are the central message or the big idea that repeats.	Together, listen to a song you & your child like. Ask: What is the theme? What big ideas does the song writer want us to think about?
2	Validating your child's emotions can strengthen your relationship. (Ex: "You're really frustrated about...I would feel the same way if...")	Taking time to listen, reflect back ("I hear you saying...") & show you understand your child's feelings can help you feel close & connected.
3	Ask your child: Are video games good for kids? Why or why not? Make sure they give reasons. (Consider doing research to look up new reasons!)	Keep asking your child to give opinions and be convincing with their reasons. Ask: Should 5th graders have cell phones? Why or why not?
4	Ask your child to write a review of their favorite books, shows or movies & why they like them. Are there any you both like?	List family members' favorite movies & songs. Are there any repeats? (Underline movie titles & put quotes around song titles in the list!)
5	5th graders practice important conversation skills like asking questions, listening, & summarizing key information. Practice at home!	Have your child ask you questions about what 5th grade was like for you. Next, ask them to summarize your response.
6	Proverbs are short phrases of wisdom (ex: "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder"). Point them out when reading & ask what they mean.	Another proverb is, "Actions speak louder than words." Talk with your child about what it means. What are other proverbs your family says?
7	While it can be hard, try to take time to care for yourself during these difficult times. Your well-being benefits the whole family.	Get new ideas by talking to family or friends about what they do to take care of themselves. Share your successful strategies with them too!