

# Best Start literacy

## A parent's guide

The Best Start initiative provides support to our youngest students with literacy and numeracy during the first year of school.

It includes a new State-wide Kindergarten assessment that helps teachers identify the literacy and numeracy skills of each student at the beginning of Kindergarten.

Children start school with a range of early literacy knowledge, skills and understandings. Best Start: Literacy involves teachers finding out about each student's early literacy knowledge, skills and understandings by using a series of specially designed assessment tasks.

The Best Start literacy assessment will help teachers develop effective learning programs that build upon what students know and can do when they start Kindergarten.

### What will students do during the Best Start literacy assessment?

The literacy assessment tasks are designed to identify whether students can:

- recognise familiar print in the environment;
- recall details about a picture story book that has been read to them;
- write their name;
- understand how books work; and
- recognise and use sounds and letters.



**To determine if students can recognise familiar print in the environment the teacher may:**

- show the student a photo of a box with the word Lego on it and ask: 'What does the word say?'

By the end of Kindergarten most students should be able to read all or most of a simple reading book.

**To determine if students can recall details about a picture story book that has been read to them the teacher may:**

- read a story book to the child and ask: 'Now can you tell me the story that I read to you?'

By the end of Kindergarten most students should be able to give a short summary of a story that includes a beginning, middle and end.

**To determine if students can write their name the teacher may:**

- ask students to draw a picture about a book that has been read to them and say: 'Can you write your name on the picture?'

By the end of Kindergarten most students should be able to write a recognisable sentence.

**To determine if students understand about how books work the teacher may:**

- ask students: 'Where does the story begin?' when reading a picture story book.

By the end of Kindergarten most students should be able to point to the first word to read when beginning a story and know about full stops and capital letters.

**To determine if students can recognise and use sounds and letters the teacher may:**

- point to three pictures (a door, a dog, a cat) and say: 'Listen as I say these words. Tell me the words with the same first sound.'

By the end of Kindergarten most students should be able to provide the first sound of words.

It is important to remember that all children learn at different rates. Don't be concerned if your child can't answer all of these questions. The Best Start assessment is designed to provide teachers with information about each student's abilities so they can plan effective teaching and learning programs during the first year of school. It will also provide you with feedback about how you can support your child during the first year of school.