



English Readiness Guidelines for Primary

Hypha's curriculum is taught mostly in English. We do not offer English as an Additional Language (EAL) support, which means that students in primary need to arrive with working proficiency at their year level. Students in preprimary would be working on acquiring the English proficiency necessary to move on to primary.

The guidelines below describe what that looks like in practice for each year group. We have categorized the guidelines by Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening. If your child is close but not quite there, we will help you identify a preparation path before your child starts.

English Readiness by Year Level

Year	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Listening & understanding
Year 1 Kindergarten	• Knows some phonetic sounds represented by the letters of the alphabet. • Enjoys being read to and can recall simple story events.	• Writes their own name and simple familiar words from memory. • Forms most uppercase and lowercase letters correctly. • Copies or traces short words or sentences. • Attempts to write words phonetically ("frend" for friend).	• Uses short sentences to share needs or feelings ("I want water," "I like red"). • Answers simple questions about themselves. • Participates in songs, greetings, and circle-time discussions.	• Understands simple 2–3 step instructions ("Open your book and write your name"). • Follows stories read aloud and retells basic details. • Understands everyday vocabulary (numbers, colors, animals, shapes).
Year 2 1st Grade	• Knows the phonetic sounds represented by the letters of the alphabet. • Blends individual sounds to read simple CVC words (cat, dog, sun). • Reads a small set of common irregular words on sight (e.g. the, I, my, no, go). • Enjoys being read to and can recall simple story events.	• Spells simple phonetic words independently. • Writes short descriptions ("I like my dog. He is big."). • Draws and labels with words or short phrases.	• Speaks in simple full sentences to describe daily routines ("We are going to math now"). • Asks and answers questions in class. • Expresses likes, dislikes, and simple opinions.	• Understands classroom instructions and routines with minimum support. • Follows multi-step directions and can recall them. • Understands vocabulary across core subjects including basic mathematical language (more than, fewer, equal to, half).

Year	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Listening & understanding
Year 3 2nd Grade	- Reads short stories independently. - Understands key ideas, sequence, and character. - Answers who, what, where, when questions about a text. - Applies phonics knowledge to decode unfamiliar words, including longer patterns (split digraphs, vowel teams).	- Writes 3–5 connected sentences with basic punctuation. - Uses common conjunctions ("and," "because," "then"). - Begins to use descriptive language ("The big brown dog ran fast"). - Spells most common words correctly.	- Participates in group discussions. - Expresses ideas clearly and answers in complete sentences. - Can explain how they solved a problem or completed a task. - Uses English in play and collaboration without translation.	- Understands classroom instructions and routines without support. - Follows multi-step directions and can recall them. - Understands vocabulary across core subjects including basic mathematical language (more than, fewer, equal to, half).
Year 4 3rd Grade	- Reads early chapter books independently. - Understands main ideas and supporting details. - Summarises stories and explains key points. - Reads and interprets simple word problems in maths.	- Writes a short paragraph (4–6 sentences) on a familiar topic. - Uses correct punctuation, capitalisation, and linking words ("because," "also," "then"). - Writes with logical order and basic structure. - Spells age-appropriate words accurately.	- Speaks confidently in class discussions. - Explains reasoning or describes a process ("I added because..."). - Asks thoughtful questions and contributes ideas. - Participates in partner and group work independently.	- Understands multi-step instructions and complex vocabulary. - Listens to longer lessons or stories and summarises key points. - Understands mathematical language used in word problems (e.g. altogether, remaining, times as many). - Engages without reliance on translation.
Year 5 + 4th Grade +	- Reads fluently and infers meaning beyond the literal text. - Understands themes, character motivations, and factual content. - Reads both fiction and non-fiction independently. - Reads and interprets multi-step word problems in maths, including problems requiring comparison or reasoning.	- Writes clear, organised paragraphs using topic sentences and supporting details. - Uses descriptive and comparative language. - Writes for different purposes (narrative, opinion, report). - Edits and revises for clarity and grammar.	- Communicates ideas fluently and with detail. - Uses subject vocabulary confidently. - Can present short projects or ideas to a group. - Adapts language for different contexts (formal and informal).	- Understands spoken English in academic and social settings. - Can take notes or summarise orally. - Follows discussions, presentations, and class instructions with ease. - Understands the precise mathematical language of the Singapore Maths curriculum (e.g. bar model language, part-whole relationships, "times as many as").

How We Assess Readiness

Before the start of school, we schedule a short, informal English session with your child to understand their current level. It is low-key and child-friendly, not an exam.

If your child is still developing some of the skills above, we will discuss a conditional offer and put together a preparation plan together. This may include tutoring activities and we will ask for regular updates from the tutoring agency to assess progress and admissions.

Supporting Your Child's Preparation

If your child needs preparation time before joining, the most effective approaches are:

- Daily reading and storytelling in English, even 10–15 minutes a day makes a measurable difference.
- Phonics or literacy tutoring for students joining Years 2–4 from non-English settings.
- Summer or holiday immersion programmes where English is the primary language spoken and most children are English speakers.
- Consistent conversation practice through playdates, games, or English-language media.

We are happy to recommend tutors or programmes suited to your child's age and year level.