This project was designed and developed by the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) with generous support from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation.

The *Parents + Schools = Successful Children* series is a project funded by Dollar General to develop bilingual materials to promote the importance of parent involvement and literacy support at home. In addition to these foto-novelas for parents, the project features a practitioners’ guide for teachers and tutors and audio-enhanced versions of the foto-novelas available free online (www.famlit.org/foto-novela) to provide additional language and learning support for parents who speak Spanish.

For information about NCFL or to find a family literacy program near you, visit www.famlit.org or call 1-877-FAMLIT-1.
Roberto, is something wrong?

My stomach hurts. Can I stay home today?

He’s afraid of his teacher. Scaredy-cat!

I am not! Mom, tell him to stop.

Jaime, stop teasing your brother. Roberto, what is going on? Do you have a test today?

Roberto, you look OK, and you don’t have a fever. Why don’t you eat some crackers? They’ll make you feel better. I don’t want you to miss school unless you absolutely have to. Remember, your teacher told me that the state testing is going to start in a few weeks.

I know. Ok, give me the crackers.

Here, put these with the rest of your lunch. Now, let’s finish getting ready. Daddy is going to walk you to school today.

Ok, Mom, thanks.

Have a good day.

Hmm, that’s the fourth stomachache Roberto has had in two weeks. Something is going on. I’d better call his teacher, Mrs. Porter, to find out what is happening at school. I am so glad she speaks Spanish, so I can discuss my concerns about my son.
Hello, Mrs. Porter. This is Celia Morales. Do you have time to speak with me?

Hello, Mrs. Morales. The children are in their music class right now so I have about 20 minutes before they come back. How can I help you today?

I wanted to find out if there is anything happening in class that might be upsetting Roberto. He has been having stomachaches, but I don’t think he’s really sick.

You know, Mrs. Morales, I’m glad you called. I have also noticed that Roberto is not his usual self. Why don’t you come in tomorrow before school starts so we can talk about it?

That would be fine. Thank you, Mrs. Porter. I’ll see you tomorrow morning.

Good morning, Mrs. Morales. Thank you so much for coming in.

Good morning, Mrs. Porter. It’s good to see you again. Is everything OK with Roberto in class?

In general, Roberto is doing fine. He is having some problems, however, in two areas.

What are they?

Well, I have noticed that he is struggling a bit with his reading in English. He is also not participating in some of our class activities. I think these issues may be related.

Oh my, Roberto has never said anything about this. Can you tell me specifically what the problem with his reading is and how I can help him at home?
Mrs. Porter’s Suggestions:

1. Make books, magazines and other reading materials in Spanish available for the whole family.

2. Play rhyming word games in the home language using multi-syllable words to make it more challenging for older learners.

3. Compare sounds across languages.

4. Make a family reading time, during which family members read silently or to each other in Spanish for 15 to 30 minutes a day.

5. Increase Spanish academic vocabulary by encouraging children to select a “word for the day” from the dictionary or their textbooks.

Although I never require Roberto to read out loud in class, I think he is afraid to participate. He may worry that his friends will laugh at him if he pronounces English words incorrectly.

I had no idea. Roberto is usually so confident.

I like the activity about comparing the sounds in Spanish and English. I’ll try that with my sons this afternoon. Maybe I can learn some new words, too.

Absolutely! You can help Roberto learn new words in Spanish and English. Being able to read and speak in Spanish will actually help your son read better in English, so it’s important you help him practice his Spanish at home.

Really? How can I do that??

Well, I have a number of suggestions and activities. Let me make a list for you.

The second problem may be that he really doesn’t understand what we are reading in English.

I had no idea. Roberto is usually so confident.

The second problem may be that he really doesn’t understand what we are reading in English.

Really? How can I do that??

Absolutely! You can help Roberto learn new words in Spanish and English. Being able to read and speak in Spanish will actually help your son read better in English, so it’s important you help him practice his Spanish at home.

Roberto was always good at reading in our country. But Mrs. Porter, you know I don’t speak English well. Is there anything I can do to help?

Absolutely! You can help Roberto learn new words in Spanish and English. Being able to read and speak in Spanish will actually help your son read better in English, so it’s important you help him practice his Spanish at home.

Really? How can I do that??

Well, I have a number of suggestions and activities. Let me make a list for you.

I had no idea. Roberto is usually so confident.

The second problem may be that he really doesn’t understand what we are reading in English.

I like the activity about comparing the sounds in Spanish and English. I’ll try that with my sons this afternoon. Maybe I can learn some new words, too.

Great! Let me know how it goes.
Later that afternoon...

Mrs. Porter, thank you for your time. May I come see you again in a few days to learn more ways to help Roberto with his reading at home?

I think I have a better idea, Mrs. Morales. When it’s convenient for you, I would like you to come to my class during one of our reading lessons. That way, you can see what we do and it will give you some ideas of what you can do at home when you read with your children.

That would be wonderful, thank you. I will come to your class next week.

Boys, would you like to play a game?

What kind of game, Mommy? Is there a prize?

Yeah, Mom, what’s the prize?

Oh, you boys! Must there always be a prize? I will tell you the prize…a better future!

Aw, Mom, you always say that. Is the game fun at least?

Yes, it is. Have you noticed how some words sound alike in English and Spanish, but some words sound very different? I’m going to give you a sound and you tell me some words that start with it. Whoever has more words is the winner. Maybe you can even teach me some more words in English.

Oh, we can do that! Right, Jaime?
I guess so. What's the sound, Mommy?

I know, banana! It's the same in English and Spanish.

The sound is 'b'.

And boat, which is bote. Jaime, what we're doing in this game will help you with your reading, too.

Really? But it doesn't always work that way--boy is niño and batido is milkshake.

Yeah, but you can recognize the "b" sound in English and in Spanish, so bank is banco...and beard is barba.

I think it sounds like the prize is for you, Mommy.

Not fair! Roberto knows more words.

Oh, don't be such a...

Baby! You always call me that. Hey, baby begins with the 'b' sound, right Mommy? And in Spanish, too.

Yeah, but you can recognize the "b" sound in English and in Spanish, so bank is banco...and beard is barba.

Really? But it doesn't always work that way--boy is niño and batido is milkshake.

It sounds like the prize is for you, Mommy.

Yes, that's right, bebé. Now both of you know many words that begin with "b". I have learned a lot about words today and some English ones, too.

Yes, it is, my son, yes it is.
Hello, Mrs. Morales, how are you? Welcome to our class. Please sit with Roberto. This is the book we are using today.

Good morning, Mrs. Porter. Thank you, I'm happy to be here.

Class, we have been working on the SQ4R reading strategy for the past few weeks. Today I want to show you a different way it can be used. First, who remembers what SQ4R stands for? Anna, you raised your hand first.

SQ4R…Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review and… I can't remember the fourth R, Mrs. Porter.

That's OK. Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review and what else, class?

Reflect, the fourth R is Reflect, right?

Excellent, you remember how to survey very well. Take a few minutes to survey Chapter 6 and then go to the next step, Question. Use the headings and subheadings to make questions to guide your reading. Be sure to write these in your notebook. I'll come around and check on your work.

Yes, very good, Jack. We have practiced this strategy with our reading books, but now it's time for you to see how SQ4R can be used with any book you read. Please take out your social studies book and turn to Chapter 6.

I don't understand. Are we going to use the social studies book for the reading lesson?

Roberto, you understood perfectly. Yes, we are going to use SQ4R to read this chapter. So class, what is the first thing we do?

We survey. So, we look at the headings and pictures or maps. We skim to get a general idea of what the chapter is about.

We also can look for a summary and read the questions at the end of the chapter, like we did in our reading book.
After reading the chapter...

Roberto, do you know what we are supposed to do?

Yes, Mom. We've done this before. Let's look through the whole chapter. OK, here are the headings. We have to read what's under the picture. You see?

Yes, we take the headings and turn them into questions. We need to look up this word in the dictionary. I'm not sure what it means and I can't figure it out looking at the rest of the sentence.

And the maps, too, right? Look at this one! I didn't know the settlers went so far west at that time. Son, do we have to answer the questions at the end of the chapter?

Not yet. We'll do that later. Right now we just have to look at them, so that we get an idea of what the chapter is about.

OK class, does everyone have questions? Great! We'll take 30 minutes for you to read the first half of the chapter. This is the first R of SQ3R, Read. Remember to look for the answers to the questions you wrote. If you see a word you don't understand, reread the sentence to see if you can figure it out using the context. If not, make a note of it so you can add it to your vocabulary notebook.

How are we doing here? Do you have any questions, Mrs. Morales?

No, Mrs. Porter, Roberto is showing me what we have to do.

No, Mrs. Porter. Roberto is showing me what we have to do.

Now we have to make the questions, right?

All right, then...

Class, please close your books. We're on Recite now, the second R in SQ3R. In your notebooks, write the answers to the questions you created before. Be sure to use your own words. If you don't remember something, go back and reread that section. We will do Review and Reflect in pairs once everybody finishes answering their questions.
Mrs. Porter, I have something to tell you.

All right, Roberto, I will be right there.

What's the matter, Roberto?

I couldn't finish the whole chapter. There are too many words I don't understand.

Well, that's OK. Did you get through the first section?

OK, this is what we'll do. Answer your questions for the first two sections. Then I'm going to have you work with Jack for the rest of the chapter when we work in pairs later. He can tell you about the third and fourth sections. You can write some notes on that and look up the unfamiliar words in your dictionary. Once you have done that, reread the chapter to see if you understand it better. Then you can answer your questions. Do you feel comfortable with that?

Yes, ma'am.

Should I go to Jack now?

Wait a few minutes until we're all in pairs. You can start looking up some of the words now while I talk to your mother.

OK.

Mrs. Morales, did you enjoy the reading lesson?

Oh yes, Mrs. Porter, it was wonderful. I learned so much by watching you. I am still worried about Roberto's reading. It's good that his friend can help him.

Yes, and the second one, too. I didn't understand the rest.

Oh yes, Mrs. Porter, it was wonderful. I learned so much by watching you. I am still worried about Roberto's reading. It's good that his friend can help him.

Sometimes it's better when the students explain something to each other. I think that Roberto's reading will improve as he learns more vocabulary and gets more comfortable with English.
**TIPS FOR READING WITH YOUR CHILD**

**PREVIEWING THE STORY, CHILDREN CAN**
- Identify the title and author
- Make predictions based on the title and pictures

**WHILE READING THE STORY, PARENTS CAN**
- Identify unfamiliar vocabulary
- Ask comprehension questions
- Check to see if the original predictions are correct
- Ask for more predictions about the story
- Have children summarize what has happened so far

**AFTER READING THE STORY, CHILDREN AND PARENTS CAN**
- Discuss what the story was about
- Describe the characters
- Talk about how things might have been different
- Draw new pictures related to events in the story
- Relate the story to their own lives
- Make a new ending for the story or write a sequel

---

**THAT EVENING...**

**DO WE HAVE TO? I WANT TO ENJOY THE TIME WHEN WE'RE TOGETHER, NOT DO MORE HOMEWORK. I ALREADY HAVE ENOUGH HOMEWORK!**

**ROBERTO, YOUR TEACHER GAVE ME SOME IDEAS OF THINGS WE CAN DO TOGETHER TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR READING. WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY SOME OF THEM?**

**I KNOW, SON, BUT THINK ABOUT IT. AS YOUR READING IN ENGLISH GETS BETTER, IT WILL BE EASIER TO FINISH YOUR HOMEWORK. BESIDES, READING IS NOT WORK, IT'S FUN! THINK OF ALL THE PLACES WE CAN VISIT THROUGH A STORY OR THE THINGS WE CAN DO BECAUSE WE READ ABOUT IT IN A BOOK.**

**SQ4R IS SUCH A GOOD STRATEGY. I CAN WORK WITH ROBERTO AT HOME USING THIS.**

**YES, YOU CAN. I ALSO HAVE THIS BILINGUAL HANDOUT FOR YOU WITH SOME GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR READING WITH YOUR CHILDREN AT HOME. YOU CAN SHARE IT WITH YOUR HUSBAND.**

**THANK YOU SO MUCH, MRS. PORTER. HAVE A NICE AFTERNOON.**

**SQ4R is such a good strategy. I can work with Roberto at home using this.**

**Yes, you can. I also have this bilingual handout for you with some general suggestions for reading with your children at home. You can share it with your husband.**

**Thank you so much, Mrs. Porter. Have a nice afternoon.**

**Roberto, your teacher gave me some ideas of things we can do together to help you with your reading. Would you like to try some of them?**

**I know, son, but think about it. As your reading in English gets better, it will be easier to finish your homework. Besides, reading is not work, it's fun! Think of all the places we can visit through a story or the things we can do because we read about it in a book.**
Ramon and Jaime are reading a book together...

Of course. Pick one of your favorites.

So tell me, son, what is this book?

It's a storybook with a lot of pictures. It doesn't have any words so I have to tell you the story.

Oh my, I think I like this book. So what is happening here on the first page?

This is the family on vacation. They are going on a boat. They want to go fishing.

Really? Where are they going fishing?

They're going fishing by the beach.

What are you two doing?

Jaimito is telling me about this book. What are you doing?

Roberto picked out a book and he's going to read it to me.

Wait, Mommy, I want to hear the book, too!

OK, can I pick the book?
OK, OK, Jaime can finish his story and then we’ll all listen to Roberto’s book. Jaimito was telling me about the family in this book. They’re on vacation and are going fishing by the beach.

They get the poles and they catch the fish. Then they eat the fish. I like to eat fish!

I like to eat fish, too. Is that the end of your story? Now I can read you my book. The title is “The Penguin’s Picnic.”

Who wrote the story?

Paula Santini

What do you think it will be about?

It’s probably about how to make a picnic on ice because it’s cold where the penguins live.

That’s a good prediction. Let’s find out if you are right.

Once upon a time, in a very cold place in the South Pole...

Do you know where the South Pole is?

Yes, here is a picture of it. Once upon a time, in a very cold place in the South Pole, lived a family of penguins...
A FEW WEEKS LATER...

OH CELITA, WE HAVE SUCH WONDERFUL BOYS.

AND THEY HAVE WONDERFUL TEACHERS. I SPOKE TO MRS. PORTER TODAY. SHE TOLD ME THAT WHAT WE HAVE BEEN DOING AT HOME WITH ROBERTO IS STARTING TO HELP HIM IN CLASS.

WHAT WILL YOU LEARN FROM YOUR CHILDREN AND THEIR TEACHERS?

SHE SAID THAT HE SEEMS MORE INTERESTED, AND HE IS NOT AS SHY WHEN THEY DO CERTAIN READING LESSONS. HE STILL NEEDS OUR SUPPORT, THOUGH, SO WE HAVE TO KEEP THE WHOLE FAMILY READING AND DOING ACTIVITIES AT HOME.

ME, TOO! I AM LEARNING MANY THINGS, THANKS TO OUR SONS AND THEIR TEACHERS. AND BEST OF ALL, ROBERTO HASN’T HAD A STOMACHACHE IN A LONG TIME!

WELL, I KNOW I HAVE ENJOYED SPENDING MORE TIME WITH OUR SONS.

OH, CELITA, WE HAVE SUCH WONDERFUL BOYS.

AND THEY HAVE WONDERFUL TEACHERS. I SPOKE TO MRS. PORTER TODAY. SHE TOLD ME THAT WHAT WE HAVE BEEN DOING AT HOME WITH ROBERTO IS STARTING TO HELP HIM IN CLASS.