

# The Kindergarten Chronicles

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## Parent Engagement from A-Z

**Project Appleseed** is a non-profit, national campaign that is working with schools, families, employers and community organizations to develop local partnerships that support a safe school environment where students learn to challenging standards. The website contains family engagement activities from A-Z. For example, **Week 21 is Use** - Use a variety of verbal and face-to-face communication methods, such as the Internet, phone calls to home, automated phone system messages, parent-teacher conferences, meetings, school events, radio station announcements, local access television, television public service announcements (PSAs), conversations at school, and regular parent seminars to communicate with parents about health topics and issues. This [link](#) contains ideas to share with parents, prior to conferences, so they can get the most out of their parent-teacher conference. Each A-Z activity listed contains helpful links to additional resources.



## Making the Most of Parent-Teacher Conferences

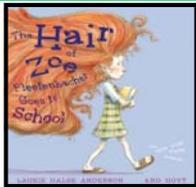
Parent-teacher conferences are an important component of on-going home-school communication and family engagement in your classroom. Both teachers and parents have the same goal: You both want the child to do well and learn! As you prepare for your upcoming conferences, keep these principles in mind for a great conference experience.

### “BE HEARD”

- B**est intentions assumed
- E**mphasis on learning
- H**ome-school collaboration
- E**xamples and evidence
- A**ctive listening
- R**espect for all
- D**edication to follow-up



More parent-teacher conference tips from the Harvard Family Research Project can be found [here](#). Check out this informative [article](#) from ASCD on ideas for successful conferences. This is especially helpful for new teachers!



## The Hair of Zoe Fleefenbacher Goes to School

The Fleefenbachers think their daughter Zoe’s hair is wild and beautiful. Zoe’s kindergarten teacher thought Zoe’s vivacious tresses were a comfort. But Zoe’s about to start first grade, and her new teacher doesn’t feel the same way... With exuberance and humor, Laurie Halse Anderson and Ard Hoyt, the New York Times bestselling author and illustrator, tease up a terrific tale of hairy hijinks, classroom chaos, and the importance of teachers, parents, and students learning to work together.

RL.K.9 - With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories.

## Goodies Gone Wild

### Different Versions of The Gingerbread Man



December is the perfect time to explore standard RL.K.9 with different versions of The Gingerbread Man. But have you read *The Runaway Rice Cake* or *The Matzo Ball Boy*? No matter what part of the world you are from, the basic ingredients of the story remain the same: a baked good darts out of the oven, runs or rolls away, and escapes a series of pursuers before being eaten. The details are what change across different cultures to give each story a whimsical and unique personality, just like the baked good, who is the main character. Finding similarities and differences when reading fairy tales from around the world develops students’ critical thinking skills and helps them to focus on details. Click [here](#) to see a list of Gingerbread Men Stories from Around the World. For additional and digital versions of The Gingerbread Man, as well as an anchor chart idea, click [here](#).

## Rhyme-Away Poems

Rhyme-Away Poems are an engaging way to develop and reinforce phonemic awareness with your kindergarteners. The teacher draws the picture on the whiteboard. Students orally provide the missing rhymes and then erase the corresponding portions of the picture. Scholastic has a similar [lesson](#) titled “Erase-a-Rhyme” that helps students recognize and produce rhyming words (RF.K.2a) using Jim Aylesworth’s book, *The Gingerbread Man*, and a gingerbread [poem](#). For additional Rhyme-Aways, check out the book, *Phonemic Awareness*, by Creative Teaching Press.



“At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child’s success is the involvement of parents.”

-Jane D. Hull



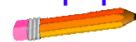
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