

SquareTales: Parent Guide








Before we start, here's a link to the meanings and explanations of words in this document - should you need them. Now, let's go!

Glossary

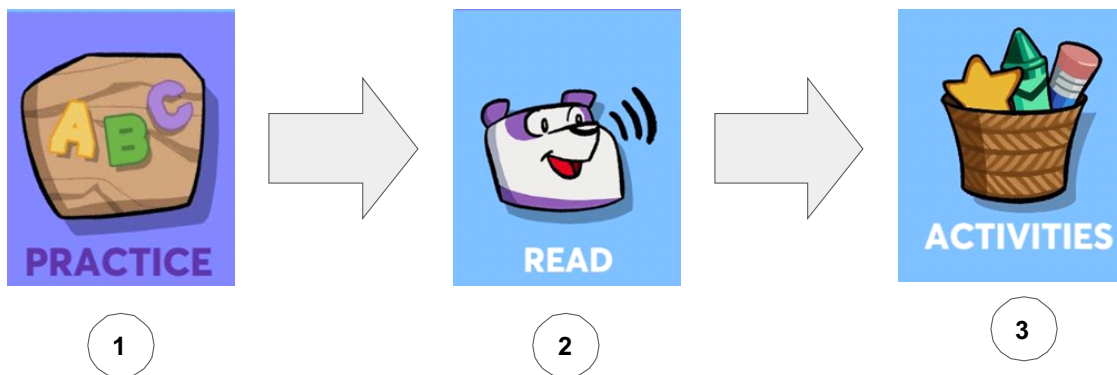


Develop Your Child's Skills

Here's what to expect if you're reading one book per week, for 10-15 minutes a day, everyday. While all these skills are built in every book, this is what is reasonable to expect each week:

BOOK 1 	BOOK 2 	BOOK 3 	BOOK 4 	BOOK 5 
Digital literacy and Letter sounds	Letter sounds	Comprehension (Story retell)	Blending letter sounds	Reading words (and perhaps even sentences!)

We recommend one book per week to get optimal results. Going through multiple books at once may get confusing for your child! It is also recommended that your child read the books in the order provided, i.e. Book 1, 2, 3, etc., and start from the 'Practice' section, then go to 'Reading' and then 'Activities'.



Use the Kids' Library resources from the Square Panda website, to enhance your learning experience. Follow the link below!

www.squaretales.in

Find out exactly how to develop the skills listed here:

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EXPLORE THE KIDS LIBRARY

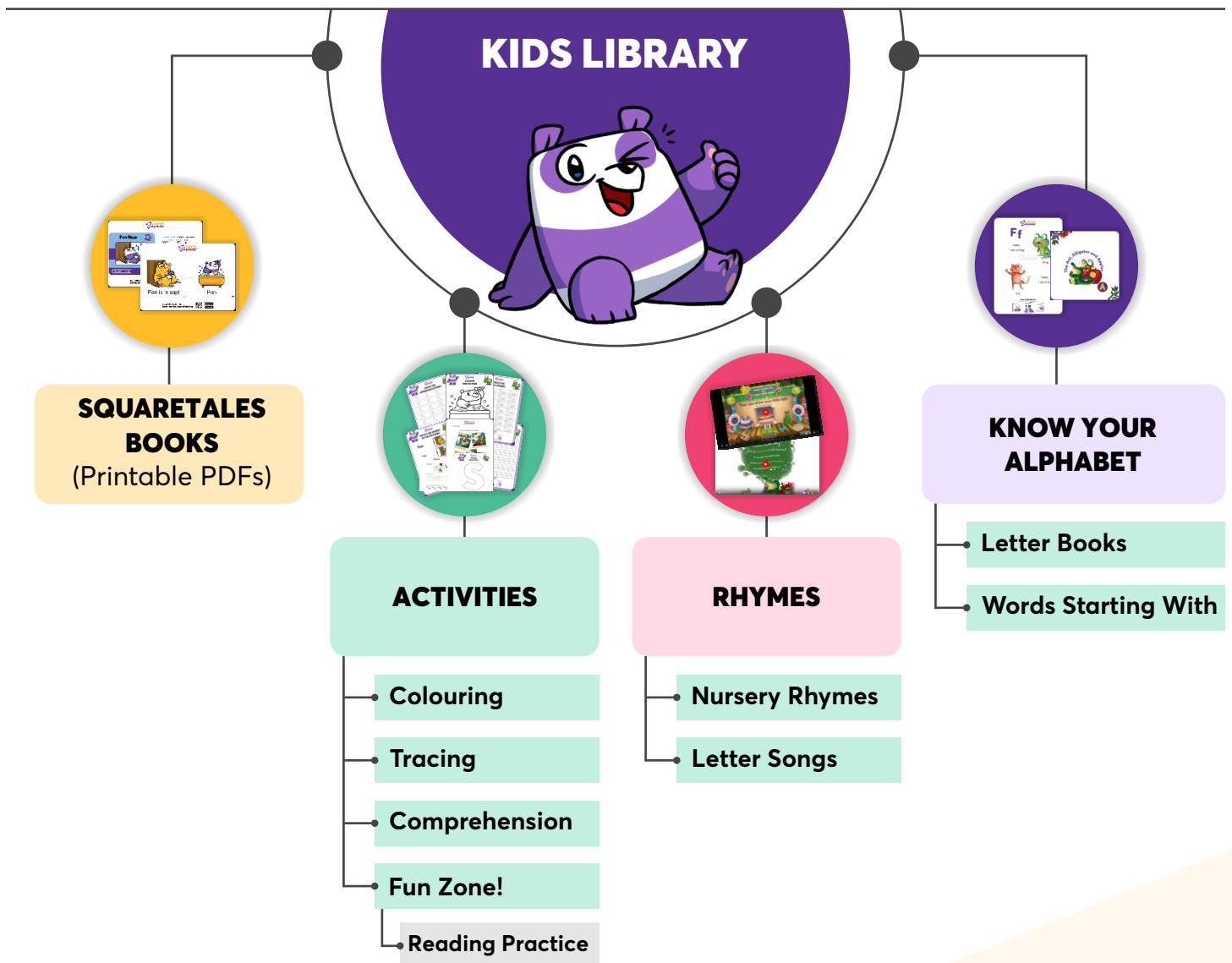


The Kids Library is a section of our official India website where you can find a variety of content for your kids.

The Kids Library contains:

1. SquareTales books: printable copies of digital books
2. Rhymes: nursery rhymes and letter songs
3. Activities: quick and fun printables activities to do with your child!
4. Know Your Alphabet - read about individual letters

Every week, the Kids Library is updated with brand new content related to the book for that week.



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GET THE FULL EXPERIENCE

Reading the digital books (inside the app):

Read the book of the week with your child.

Go through every section of the book and complete the activities!

1. When the app opens up, you will find yourself at the bookshelf. Pick the first book to start reading.
2. As the book opens up, you will find that there are three sections on the right hand panel: Practice, Read and Activities
3. Go to the 'Practice' section first.
4. Here, you will encounter the words that will be used in the story that you will encounter soon! Use this section to practice reading the words.
5. Tap on each letter to hear the letter sound. Drag the arrow below the word to hear these letter sounds being blended into each other and form the word.
6. This is called 'blending letter sounds'. If a child knows the individual letter sounds of some letters, they can then build this skill of blending the sounds into words.

NOTE: This skill of blending is a **separate and higher** skill than simply knowing the sounds of individual letters. It is what allows children to pronounce words as a whole and bridges the (often wide!) gap between reading letters and reading words.

Use the SquareTales blending system to teach your child this skill. For revision, ask them the letter sounds of any three letters (e.g. P.a.n.): say, 'puh', 'ah', 'nuh'. Then ask them to blend these into a word: 'Pan'.

7. Once you have finished practicing all the words in the 'Practice' section, then go to 'Read', on the right hand panel.
8. Now read the story, page by page! Help your child read every word in these sentences.
9. For difficult words (or if you simply want a more exacted experience), tap on each word in the sentence to practice reading just that word. This will take you to a practice exercise like in the 'Practice' section above.
10. This helps your child understand exactly how to read every word in a sentence - and then, as a result, how to read the sentence itself!
11. Make sure you refer to the images on each page of the story to help your child understand what is happening in the story.
12. Finally, once you're done reading the story, complete the activities in the 'Activity' section. Listen to the instructions and follow!

How to use the Kids Library:

Check the Kids Library to see what content is up!

Practice tracing the pre-strokes, letters, and words for this book.

Then, help your child do the comprehension activities to make sure they have understood the story.

When you're done, have fun colouring the letters and pictures of the book!

Remember, all these activities can be done simultaneously while you and your child explore the digital books.

How to further enhance your child's learning!:

Spend time with your child doing some more activities on your own - keep reading for ideas!



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HOW TO DEVELOP THE SKILLS LISTED ABOVE:

BOOK 1:

	Skill of the Week: <u>Digital Literacy</u>
Digital book (inside the app)	<p>Read Book 1, 'Pan Naps', with your child according to Step 1 above</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Open the game on the tablet and give the tablet to your child to explore.- Observe your child and note where he/she is finding difficulties in terms of navigations and following the instructions of the game.- Use these notes to guide your child in following the flow of the game.- Now with your guidance take your child through book 1. Follow the sequence (practice, read, activities) of the book.- Ensure that your child is able to navigate through the game and also knows the different functions of the game.- Now, ask your child to go through the game again - are they able to go from page to page and section to section, on their own? Are they able to tap on letters to hear the letter sounds and drag the arrows to hear the words aloud?
Activities (Kids Library)	Colour pictures
Other activities	Explore your device with your child - teach them how to switch it on/ off, how to open the app and pick their book from the bookshelf!

At the end of this week, your child should be able to:

1. Go through the game on their own - go from page to page and section to section, on their own, tap on letters to hear the letter sounds and drag the arrows to hear the words aloud.

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BOOK 2:

	Skill of the Week: <u>Letter Sounds</u>
Digital book (inside the app)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tap on each letter to hear the sound.- Repeat each sound along with your child.- Make sure they can hear and understand each individual sound and are repeating it as best as they can.- Gently correct them if they are getting any pronunciations wrong!- Do this for all the words in the 'Practice' section- Feel free to do this in the 'Read' section also!
Activities (Kids Library)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Listen to songs about each letter sound in the 'letter songs' section, under the 'Rhymes' tab in the Kids Library.- Practice colouring, teaching and reading each of the letters learnt through sorted activities in the Kids Library. Go to the 'Fun Zone' here to do other interesting letter-based activities.- Remember to also say the sound of each letter aloud while colouring or tracing them!
Other activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Revise letter sounds: Show your child physical versions of the letters they've just learnt digitally, (you could make fun cutouts or simply write the letters down) and ask them what sound the letter makes.

At the end of this week, your child should be able to:

1. Go through the game on their own - go from page to page and section to section, on their own, tap on letters to hear the letter sounds and drag the arrows to hear the words aloud.
2. Get comfortable with letter sounds. Your child should now be able to repeat at least 2-5 of the letter sounds they have learnt in the past two weeks. Easiest ones to repeat are the letter sounds of 'S', 'A', 'P', etc.

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BOOK 3:

	Skill of the Week: <u>Comprehension (story retell)</u>
Digital book (inside the app)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Go through the books read so far and read the stories again, page by page.- Explain to your child, in any language, what is happening in the story, on each page- Ask your child to guess, in any language, what is happening at every point in the story, based on the images on each page.- At the end of each story book, ask your child, 'So, what happened in this story?'- They should be able to tell you the story in any one language.
Activities (Kids Library)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Under the activities section in the Kids Library, finish the Comprehension activities for all the books read so far.- Is your child able to remember the stories? Do them book by book, not all at once!
Other activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Story critique: Discuss the story you've just read. Ask your child to tell you what happens in the story and ask them questions (Who is Pan? Where does he nap?). Go wild with your imagination and ask questions even if there's no direct answer in the book (Do you think Pan LIKES to nap?).- Story-making: Help your child make up new stories around Pan and any other character they like. Or, ask them to change the ending of the story they just read! They can even try to find reason behind particular scenes, or figure out the words. Let their imaginations go wild!

At the end of this week, your child should be able to:

1. Go through the game on their own - go from page to page and section to section, on their own, tap on letters to hear the letter sounds and drag the arrows to hear the words aloud.
2. Get comfortable with letter sounds. Your child should now be able to repeat at least 2-5 of the letter sounds they have learnt in the past two weeks. Easiest ones to repeat are the letter sounds of 'S', 'A', 'P', etc.
3. Your child should now be able to retell at least 2 of the stories (in their own words and language) from the system.

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BOOK 4:

	Skill of the Week: <u>Blending Letter Sounds</u>
Digital book (inside the app)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Once your child is comfortable with reading each letter and repeating the letter sounds, ask them to blend each word by dragging the arrow underneath the word.- Repeat the word heard.- Now, try blending slowly (the button with the snail on it). Repeat what you hear.- Now try blending at normal speed again. Repeat what you hear.
Activities (Kids Library)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Get familiar with the words by tracing them using the tracing activities.
Other activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Blending practice: Say out loud two to three different letter sounds. Now, ask your child to blend them into a word. For example, you could say: 'cuh', 'ah', 'puh'. Now, they must blend it into 'cap'.- Brainstorm words: Note what word family the book they are currently learning from, is teaching. Suppose it is 'ap' i.e. the book teaches words like Nap, Sap, Tap, etc. Ask your child what other words end in 'ap'. Cap? Lap? Hap? Brainstorm some other words and even try making 'nonsense' words like 'fap', 'vap'!

At the end of this week, your child should be able to:

1. Go through the game on their own - go from page to page and section to section, on their own, tap on letters to hear the letter sounds and drag the arrows to hear the words aloud.
2. Get comfortable with letter sounds. Your child should now be able to repeat at least 2-5 of the letter sounds they have learnt in the past two weeks. Easiest ones to repeat are the letter sounds of 'S', 'A', 'P', etc.
3. Your child should now be able to retell at least 2 of the stories (in their own words and language) from the system.
4. Your child should now be clear about what blending is. It is when you blend the various letter sounds in a word to form the sound of the word (e.g. blend 'puh', 'ah', 'nuh', to form the sound 'pan'). Your child should now be able to predict some of the blends in the system, after they've heard the individual letter sounds, without dragging the arrow on the blending engine.

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BOOK 5:

	Skill of the week: <u>Reading words (and perhaps even sentences!)</u>
Digital book (inside the app)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Once your child has understood the concept of blending, ask them to drag the arrows under the practice words and repeat what they hear.- Then, repeat what they hear for each sentence in the stories (Read) section.
Activities (Kids Library)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Practice reading words using the letter books.- Practice reading using the 'Reading Practice' section in the 'Fun Zone'.
Other activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Practice reading words with the following letters: SMAPTFIN.- Make up words they haven't yet encountered.- Try reading anything lying around the house - old books, pamphlets, etc.

At the end of this week, your child should be able to:

1. Go through the game on their own - go from page to page and section to section, on their own, tap on letters to hear the letter sounds and drag the arrows to hear the words aloud.
2. Get comfortable with letter sounds. Your child should now be able to repeat at least 2-5 of the letter sounds they have learnt in the past two weeks. Easiest ones to repeat are the letter sounds of 'S', 'A', 'P', etc.
3. Your child should now be able to retell at least 2 of the stories (in their own words and language) from the system.
4. Your child should now be clear about what blending is. It is when you blend the various letter sounds in a word to form the sound of the word (e.g. blend 'puh', 'ah', 'nuh', to form the sound 'pan'). Your child should now be able to predict some of the blends in the system, after they've heard the individual letter sounds, without dragging the arrow on the blending engine.
5. Your child should now be able to read at least any ONE story without the help of the system. Try testing them using the cutout books they've made!

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RECOMMENDED LESSON PLAN

(where every book is read for a week):

	BOOK 1	BOOK 2	BOOK 3	BOOK 4	BOOK 5
Digital Book (in app)	Pan Naps!	Pan and the Mat	Pan Sips	Pan and the Fin	Sit and Sip
Kids library	Colour the picture Trace the strokes	Listen to letter songs (rhymes section) Trace the letters Fun Zone activities	All comprehension activities	Trace the words Know your alphabet - words starting with ____	Letter books Reading practice (Fun Zone!)
Other activities	Explore the app!	Revise letter sounds	Story critique and retell	Blending practice, brainstorm words	Read everyday things!

Some other questions:

Q. If these children are just starting to read, why do we teach them the letters SMAPTFIN first? Why not the traditional order of ABCD..?

A. SMAPTFIN have easy to pronounce letter sounds. They also look and sound different enough from one another so that it's not easy to get confused between them! In addition, these letters occur frequently in commonly used words/sentences in English, so it's useful to start with them.

Q. If a child knows letter sounds, they should automatically also know blending, right?

A. Not really - blending is a different concept that needs to be taught to children specifically. This means that it is possible to know all the letters sounds of letters but still not be able to blend them to make words/new sounds.

Q. My child knows letter sounds but it's not able to read words. What are they missing?

A. Blending!

Q. My child is not able to remember all the letter sounds in the alphabet. How do I teach them to read?

A. It is not at all necessary to remember all the letter sounds to start reading. Square Panda says start small! Our first set of books requires you to know only eight letter sounds to read five stories. Our next set will introduce four more letters and so on. This helps children understand the concepts of blending and reading so they can start to read stories and build up their letter sounds skill in this fun way, rather than memorise all 26 letter sounds at the start.