

Family Engagement

Take-Home Packs

Activities PreK-Grade 1

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Dear Families,

You are your child's first teacher. You do not need special tools. You do not need a lot of time. You can help your child learn by reading, talking, playing, drawing, singing, and asking questions. These materials will help you support your child's learning.

Have fun. Smile. Talk. Listen. Every little moment helps your child grow!

Sincerely,
Dr. Palacios



TCM Teacher Created Materials

5482 Argosy Avenue
Huntington Beach, CA 92649
www.tcmpub.com

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How to Use This Guide

Inside this backpack, you will find *Being Your Child's Most Important Teacher*, written by Dr. Rebecca A. Palacios. This book is written for families with young children. There is also a set of alphabet flash cards, along with four picture books written by Dr. Palacios about a young girl named Ana. Ana learns at school, at home, and with her family. Your child can learn in the same ways.

Use this guide one page at a time. It is okay to repeat an activity. Young children learn by doing things again and again.

In her book, Dr. Palacios reminds families that children learn from everyday moments with the people who love them. You can use the Ana books and alphabet flash cards in many ways. Read a little, talk a little, play a little, and try an activity when you have time. There is no one right way to use these materials. Your child learns from you every day!



Every Time You Read!



Read Together

Look at the cover with your child. Read aloud the title. Read the story together. Stop and look at the pictures.



Talk Together

Ask simple questions about the book. Have your child answer with words, pointing, drawing, or acting.



Do Together

Choose an activity to do with your child. Keep it short and fun. Praise your child for trying.

Help Your Child Learn!

- Talk about what your child sees around them each day.
- Ask, "What do you notice?" and "How do you feel?"
- Let your child draw and tell you about their pictures.
- Say letters and sounds together.
- Count things around your house.
- Sing silly songs together
- Tell family stories to your child.
- Be involved in your child's school.
- Attend open houses and family meetings.
- Meet the people at the school who work with your child.
- Ask for the daily schedule so you know what your child does every day.

Alphabet Card Activities

Use the alphabet flash cards for quick games. Play with your child for 5 to 10 minutes. Stop before your child gets tired. Your child does not need to know all the letters at once.



Read Together

Pick one card with your child. Say the letter name. Look at the picture. Say the word. For example, "This is A. A is for *alligator*."



Talk Together

Ask the following questions as you show flash cards to your child:

- What letter do you see?
- Is it uppercase or lowercase?
- What does the picture show?
- What sound do you hear at the beginning of the word?
- Can you think of another word that starts with the same sound?



Do Together

Try these activities after you read a book together.

Letter Match

Place three uppercase cards and three lowercase cards on the table. Help your child match the letters. Start with only a few cards. Add more cards when your child is ready.

Letter Hunt

Pick one card with your child. Have them look around the room for something that starts with that letter. For example, if you pick B, they can find a *book, bag, bed, or ball*.

Draw the Letter

Pick one card. Have your child draw something that begins with that letter. For example, if you pick C, they can draw a *cat, cup, or cookie*.

Move and Freeze

Play music or clap a beat. Tell your child to dance or move. Hold up a letter card, and stop the music. Have your child say the letter or repeat it after you.

Quick Play Activities

- Hide five cards in the room. Tell your child to find and name them.
- Shuffle the cards, and have your child put them in alphabetical order.
- Pick a card, and help your child make the letter shape with their body.



Ana Gets to Go to School Activities



Talk Together

Ask the following questions before reading:

- What do you see on the cover?
- Who is the author? Who is the illustrator?
- What do you think this book is about?
- How do you think Ana feels?



Read Together

Read the book aloud. Stop to look at the pictures. As you read, have your child point to *Ana*, *her family*, *the school*, and *her friends*.

Ask these questions as you read:

- Who walks with Ana? (page 3)
- What does Ana want to do? (page 7)
- How does Ana feel about school? (page 16)
- Who helps Ana get ready? (page 24)
- What emotions does Ana feel? (page 28)



Do Together

Big Feelings

Say, "Ana has big feelings about school. You have feelings, too." Ask your child to make faces for these feelings. Then, help your child complete *My School Feelings* on page 5.

- happy
- nervous
- excited
- proud

Getting Ready

Have your child act out any of these activities they do to get ready for school. Then, help your child complete *I Can Get Ready* on page 6.

- sleep
- wake up
- get dressed
- eat
- brush teeth
- pack a bag
- travel to school
- say goodbye

Look Around

Take a short walk with your child around your home or outside. Talk about what your child sees, hears, and feels. Ask, "What would you tell Ana about what you see, hear, and feel at school?"



Have your child find the flash cards for the first letters in these words: *Ana*, *friend*, and *school*. Review the cards together.

Name: _____

*Ana Gets to
Go to School*

My School Feelings

Directions: Ana has feelings about school. Draw how you feel about going to school. Tell someone about your picture.



Joy
Friendship
Support

ANA GETS TO GO TO SCHOOL

by Dr. Rebecca A. Palacios, NBCT

illustrated by Virginia Allyn





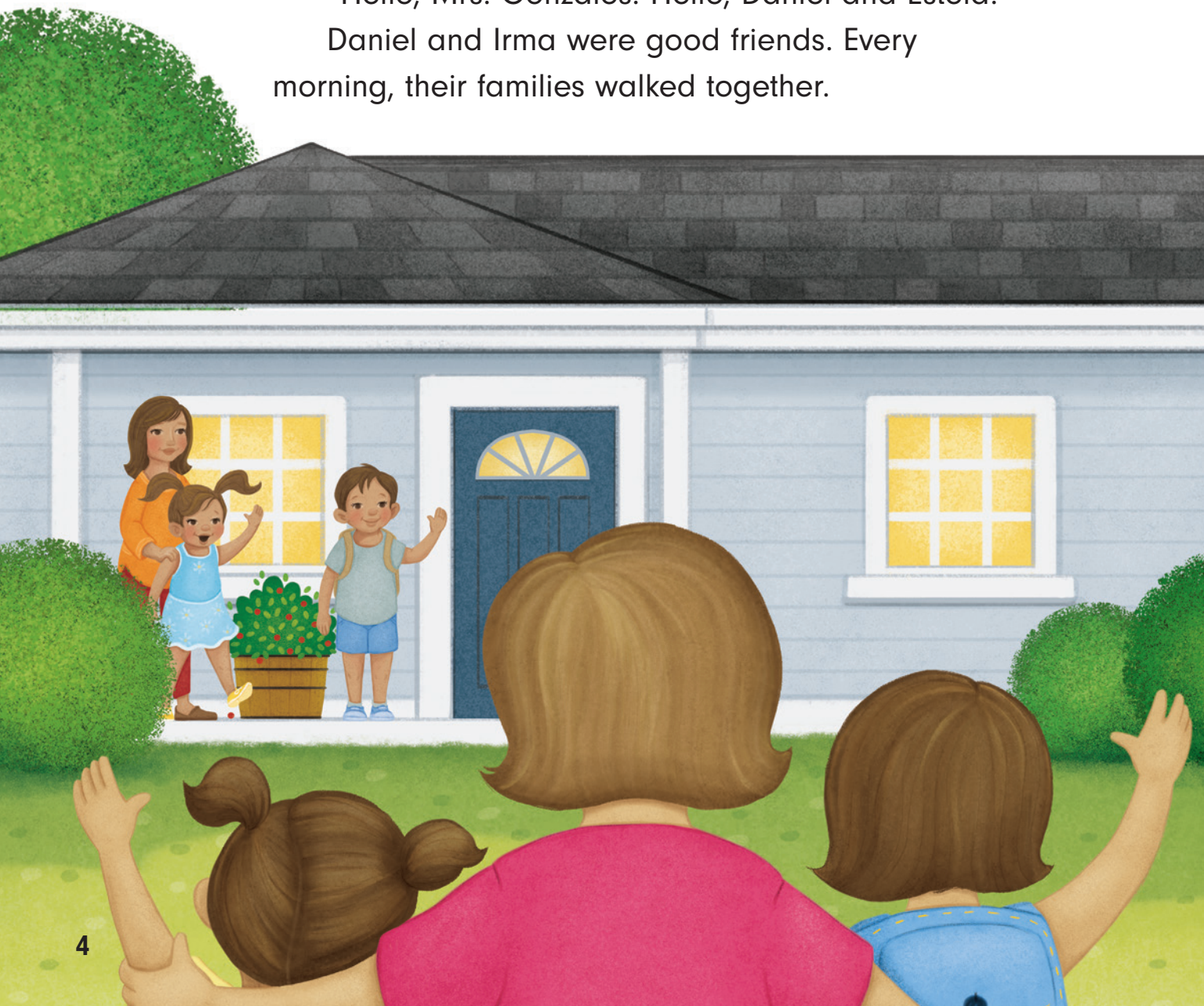
Ana Salinas loved walking with her big sister, Irma, and their Grandma Maria to the “big” school down the street every morning to take Irma to school. Grandma Maria always held their hands while they walked.

As they crossed the street to pick up the Gonzales family, Grandma Maria would often say, “School is the best part of growing up. You learn so much!”

Every day, Ana greeted her best friend's family warmly.

"Hello, Mrs. Gonzales! Hello, Daniel and Estela!"

Daniel and Irma were good friends. Every morning, their families walked together.



Ana and Estela grabbed hands.
"Estela, I love your long ponytails.
I want my hair to look like yours!" Ana exclaimed.



A colorful illustration of two young girls sitting on a green grassy field. The girl on the left is wearing a pink sleeveless dress with a white flower on the chest and has her hair in two pigtails. The girl on the right is wearing purple overalls with a yellow shirt underneath and a unicorn on the front; she also has her hair in two pigtails. In the background, there is a white dog sitting on the right and a black cat sitting further to the right. The landscape includes a large green tree on the left, a yellow sun-like shape in the center, and a purple bush. The sky is white with blue clouds. There are several yellow flowers and small bees scattered around the girls.

The two girls talked about different things every day: stories, games, hair, and clothes. They also talked about their pets and the latest silly things they had done. Ana had Santino, her little dog, and Estela had Peter, her cute cat.

The girls loved doing fun things with their families, especially reading picture books in English and Spanish and going places together. But most of all, they talked about and imagined what school would be like.

Ana exclaimed many times, "Estela, I want to go to school!"



Ana and Estela discussed what Irma had told them about the big school.

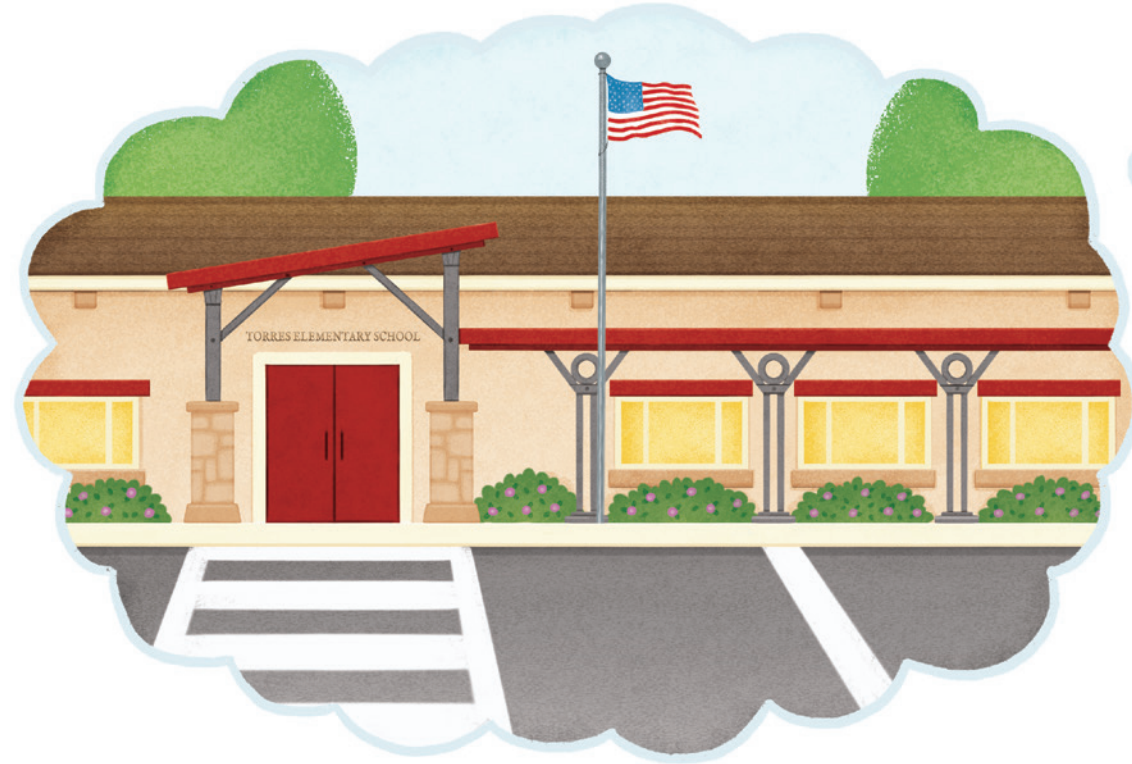
"At Torres Elementary, we have lots of teachers and a library with rows of shelves filled with books! When you go to school, you'll read books with your teacher, and you'll learn in English and Spanish."

Irma had described what it was like to eat with her friends in the cafeteria. She also said students had to follow rules. They lined up to go to different places, like the computer lab, the restrooms, and the cafeteria.



When they wanted to say something, they raised their hands for the teacher to call on them.





On August 18, Ana would be four years old. So the year after that, she could go to kindergarten. But it was more than a whole year away!

Ana dreamed of what those days would be like. Would she have new friends she could talk with like Estela? What would they eat? Where would they sit? Would she be in the same room as Estela?

