



HAWAI'I STATE



# EARLY LITERACY GUIDE 2024

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

---

*‘Ike i ke au nui me ke au iki.*

*Know the big currents and the little currents.*

– ‘Ōlelo noeau # 1209

---

The Hawai'i State Early Literacy Guide is grounded in the following philosophical principles, which are underpinned by both practical and scientific knowledge about high-quality early childhood literacy education.

## Philosophy of Children, Families, and Place

Children have a powerful, central hold on our collective work. Children must be the first priority in all early literacy practices, with a critical focus on each individual child as unique members of their home, sociocultural communities, and classroom. Therefore, children have the right to: (a) develop at their own pace, (b) experience individualized, responsive instruction that considers their needs and interests, and (c) enjoy genuine appreciation and consideration for their individual identities.

Children have strong grips on the hearts of their families and communities. Children's families must be considered their first teachers, and early literacy practices must uplift the central role that families play in children's lives. Therefore, children have the right to: (a) socially, culturally, and linguistically just literacy experiences, (b) inclusive literacy early learning settings, practices, texts, and attitudes, (c) opportunities to experience diverse perspectives, ideas, and ways of knowing through literacy, and (d) literacy experiences that create opportunities for family engagement and participation.

## Philosophy of Literacy and Language Learning

All children, at all developmental stages, are ready for rich, varied language and literacy experiences. Though they are small, their capacity to learn is large, and educators have the responsibility to examine their beliefs about oral language and literacy instruction in order to best serve each child. Therefore, children have the right to: (a) respectful, developmentally appropriate assessments that provide information about strengths and next steps in language and literacy, (b) opportunities to learn needed skills/knowledge without judgment, and (c) access to extended resources and supports based on individual strengths and needs.

Small literacy events about small literacy skills build up to long-term literacy outcomes for young children. We know that early literacy is composed of multiple skill and knowledge strands, and that each deserves attention in order for children to grow; we also know that small bursts of contextualized, play-driven teaching is most meaningful for big literacy learning. Therefore, children have the right to: (a) developmentally appropriate language and literacy instruction that focuses on critical content, (b) play-driven, language-rich experiences that focus on authentic reading, writing, speaking, and listening tasks, and (c) complex, scaffolded experiences that honor children's curiosity, intelligence, and voice.

---

**Lead Author: Lauren Padesky**

---

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

---

We would like to extend our thanks to the following individuals and groups for their time and effort in the writing and publishing of this document as well as those who have served as reviewers at different points in the journey. While many hold prestigious degrees and titles, we have not listed these.

This effort has been supported through generous funding from the Executive Office on Early Learning, Hawai'i Department of Education, and Hawai'i P-20 Partnerships for Education.

## Writers & Publishers

**Robyn Chun**, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Education

**Kim Guieb**, Hawai'i P-20

**Ku'ulei Kaluhiokalani**, Executive Office on Early Learning

**Theresa F. Lock**, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Education

**Coleen Momohara**, Executive Office on Early Learning (retired)

**Lauren Breckenridge Padesky**, HIDOE, Office of Curriculum & Instructional Design

**Charis-Ann Sole**, Hawai'i P-20

**Leslie Stiller-West**, HIDOE, Office of Curriculum & Instructional Design

**Germaine K. Tauati**, INPEACE

**GG Weisenfeld**, Consultant

## Reviewers

**Yuuko Arikawa-Cross**, Executive Office on Early Learning

**Verna Chinen**, HIDOE, Office of Student Support Services

**Kauinohea Correa**, HIDOE, Office of Student Support Services

**Petra Schatz**, HIDOE, Office of Curriculum and Instructional Design

**The Hawai'i State Literacy Coalition**

# PURPOSE OF THE HAWAI'I STATE EARLY LITERACY GUIDE

In 2020, the *Hawai'i State Literacy Plan* was released. The aspirational plan was designed to create a common language and provide guidance for all of the state's stakeholders in developing instruction and programs as part of a comprehensive literacy system. Specifically, the plan could:

- Help coordinate literacy efforts,
- Support and expand partnerships within and across communities,
- Build knowledge of the best literacy practices and learning opportunities for keiki, adults, and families, and
- Ultimately increase literacy and reading outcomes for Hawai'i's people.

The *State Literacy Plan* was not designed as a final and complete document, but a springboard for additional literacy plans. Thus, we used the same definition of literacy from the International Literacy Association:

***“The ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, compute, and communicate using visual, audible, and digital materials across disciplines and in any context.”***

Similar to the *State Literacy Plan*, we reviewed the current literature on both supporting children's early literacy, but also the principles of child development and learning, brain science, and pedagogy. We also spent time identifying and articulating the important role children's culture and values has on their development and learning. Our conversation also acknowledges and honors that Hawai'i embraces two official languages, Hawaiian and English, and celebrates all languages as an asset. This guide focuses on literacy in the English language.

We understand the overarching foundation the *State Literacy Plan* created, but also recognize the needs of the early childhood community and thus the impetus for the *State Early Literacy Guide*.

Early childhood is defined as beginning with infancy and continuing through 3rd grade (approximately age 8). We consider this a critical time period of development. In addition, there are multiple and varied environments in which children develop, learn, and grow during these early years, including one's home with a family member or Home Visitor, Family Child Interaction Learning (FCIL) programs, Family Child Care (FCC) homes, center-based private programs, public schools, Head Start classrooms, and more! We believe that Hawai'i would benefit from having a specific and detailed guide for early literacy.

Some of the unique characteristics of this early childhood period include:

- Critical periods of brain development happen during the first five years of life.
- Young children's rates of physical, motor, and language development outpace growth rates at all other stages.
- Young children's needs may not be as well understood by adults.
- The role of the adult is different in the early years.
- It can be difficult to assess a child's cognitive ability accurately/reliably and successfully before age six.
- During the early childhood years, children learn primarily through play.



## Audience & Intended Uses

Similar to the *Hawai'i State Literacy Plan*, this guide provides guidance to a variety of stakeholders including families, educators and teachers, curriculum coordinators, preschool directors and school administrators, coaches, and all those who support young children's curiosity, learning, and development.

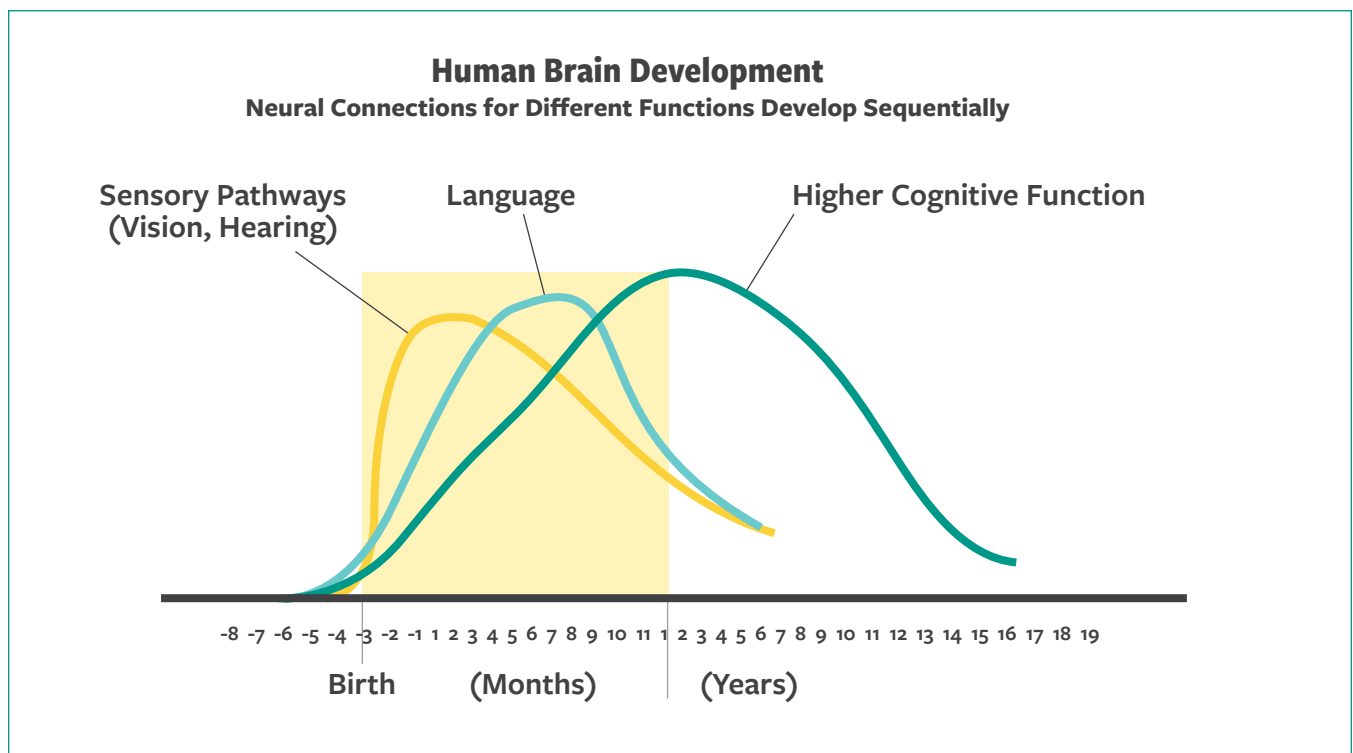
This *State Early Literacy Guide* should be used in conjunction with the *State Literacy Plan* to build a comprehensive literacy system in the state of Hawai'i. It can be used to:

- Make decisions and provide guidance on curriculum and instructional practices,
- Develop a common language and understanding on early literacy quality practices informed by research,
- Plan for professional learning,
- Support workforce preparation and ongoing learning,
- Identify and disseminate research-informed literacy resources,

- Support families as a child's first teacher, and
- Increase literacy outcomes for keiki across Hawai'i.



Photo credit: UH Community College System



Source: Nelson, C.A. (2000). Center on the Developing Child

# HOW IS THE HAWAII STATE EARLY LITERACY GUIDE ORGANIZED?

There are many authors who wrote and contributed to the writing of the *Hawai'i State Early Literacy Guide*. We honor all of the contributions, including personal voices, word choice, and incorporation of Hawaiian words. The diversity of this guide not only represents the many theories and values of early literacy but also underlines the diversity of the place of Hawai'i.

The *Hawai'i State Early Literacy Guide* is meant to be read as one complete guide. It may also be separated into individual, stand-alone sections or chapters. The following is a brief summary of the sections of the guide.

The guide begins with *Guiding Principles & Values* followed by the Purpose of the *Hawai'i State Early Literacy Guide*. Both of these documents explain how this piece expands upon the earlier work of the *Hawai'i State Literacy Plan* and fits within the context of Hawai'i.

*Considering Different Contexts of Language and Literacy* briefly traces young children's language and literacy development within sociocultural learning contexts. It describes the importance of an adult's or educator's relationship with children and the role each plays in valuing children's voices, experiences, and the context(s) both adults and children bring within themselves. This section is followed by *Experiencing Picture Books Together*, which explores how reading aloud to and with children and engaging together during these read-alouds can be a highly valuable approach when promoting language and literacy learning.

Children's learning within and beyond specific academic areas involves more than the content of specific discipline areas. *The Learning Competencies and Dispositions* chapter identifies and defines the capabilities that enable children to engage in, navigate through, and sustain learning, thereby strengthening their confidence as language and literacy learners.

Decades of studies show that play is vital to young children's healthy development, learning, and well-

being. In *The Importance of Play*, children's play and early literacy experiences is defined and the connection between the two is explored using research.

*The Five Concepts that Support Early Literacy Development* section provides a theoretical structure for the *Hawai'i State Early Literacy Guide*. These five concepts, which inform children's literacy development and are crucial to the birth-preschool developmental continuum, are defined and explained as to how they connect and expand as children transition from preschool to kindergarten through 3rd grade. To understand how language and literacy are developed across time, review the *Developmental Continuum with Implicit versus Explicit Acquisition Processes* section. The *Developmental Continuums* section explains the rationale for using a continuum.

The next six chapters present practical guidance to support children's early literacy development. We begin with language development via *Feedback Loops*. Definitions and examples are then presented in both *Phonological Awareness: Defining Terms* and *Phonemic Awareness: Defining Terms*. The *Print Awareness: Setting up a Literacy-Rich Environment* section identifies considerations for setting up a preschool or kindergarten classroom that supports children's early literacy. In *Writing: Adults Role in Taking Dictation*, techniques on how to extend children's thinking and deepen their understanding via dictation are presented. *Supporting Language & Literacy Development in Infants & Toddlers: A Familial Perspective* illustrates the importance of responsive relationships with children and provides an activities guide to support both parents and caregivers in engaging in language activities. We conclude by presenting a variety of *Resources* including position statements by national organizations and research on early literacy practices.

It is our hope the *Hawai'i State Early Literacy Guide* will help enhance your understanding of children's development and learning, as well as strengthen your knowledge of how to best support children in growing their love of literacy.

# CONSIDERING DIFFERENT CONTEXTS OF LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

*An individual's development is affected by the environment in which she lives - including not only the family and other close relationships and circumstances but also the larger contexts in which families and communities are situated. ... Understandings of race and ethnicity, cultural values, historical perspectives, modes of communication, and the importance attached to different kinds of knowledge and skill are just a few of the topics that have been examined and reexamined as researchers have sought to understand the complex dynamics between culture, context and learning.*

*... learning is the product of a complex, interactive system of physical processes, which also interact with the complex systems and environments in which individuals live.*

*... every individual's learning is profoundly influenced by the particular context in which that person is situated. Researchers have been exploring how all learners grow and learn in culturally defined ways in culturally defined contexts. While humans share basic brain structures and processes, as well as fundamental experiences such as relationships with family, developmental stages, and much more, each of these phenomena is shaped by the individual's precise experiences. Learning does not happen in the same way for all people because cultural influences pervade development from the beginning of life.*

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2018). How people learn II: Learners, contexts, and cultures. The National Academies Press, pp. 21-22.

As described in the quotes, learning and development are two processes that occur and are inexorably intertwined and interconnected. This section attempts

to briefly situate young children's language and literacy development within sociocultural learning contexts - including early learning setting environments and within relationships. It also briefly describes the importance of an adult's or educator's role and responsibility in keeping the child and her experiences in the early learning environment in mind when planning for, teaching, and implementing language and literacy practices and curricula.



All humans are steeped in sociocultural processes from the moment they are born: social relationships, cultural practices, and contextual factors are forces which influence an individual's development and which, in turn, individuals also influence.

These processes are embedded in the earliest relationships - understandings about life, relationships, cultural practices and norms, as well as beliefs and values are gleaned, internalized (or rejected), and are then, in turn, (re)enacted and reinforced in everyday life. In any environment, humans are experiencing, learning, and participating in the processes above. Sociocultural processes are bi-directional and continue throughout the lifespan of an individual.<sup>1</sup>

Development and learning are contextualized processes embedded in a wider sociocultural environment. The sociocultural view of learning includes the “social, emotional, motivational, cognitive, developmental, biological, and temporal contexts in which learning occurs.”<sup>2</sup> Learning is a social process profoundly shaped by culture, social interactions, and language.<sup>3</sup>

While the early childhood field recognizes families as the primary context for children’s development and learning<sup>4</sup>, the field also recognizes early learning setting environments are no exception to contextualization. Early learning settings have the unique privilege of supporting the young child’s learning in a formalized way. Entering an early learning setting might be the first experience a young child and her family may have with formal schooling and all that it entails. As a result, the context of such a setting is another environment in which young children and their families must learn to navigate.

## Early learning settings and environments help to shape young children, and in return are shaped by each individual child.

When children enter a formal or informal early learning setting, they bring with them internal and invisible structures based on the totality of their experiences and learnings thus far. As a child interacts

with such environments, these internal structures within each child widen and deepen in response to the experiences she is having. In return, the early learning setting should be supportive and responsive to the young child. As a result of this interaction, the context of the early learning setting also widens and deepens in response to each individual child.<sup>5</sup>

In order for learning to happen with young children, creating connections to others is paramount. It is the adults’ or educators’ responsibility to create an atmosphere of connection within the early learning setting and to build relationships and connections with every child in their care (see Appendix: Sociocultural Processes Considerations for Literacy Activities).

Establishing and maintaining a connection to others is built upon relational safety and security.<sup>6</sup> Warm, respectful, loving, and responsive relationships with others create a sense of belonging; this, in turn, creates a space in which the child feels valued and accepted. A connection to others and a relationship to self are bi-directional and interconnected processes.<sup>7</sup> Having connections with others helps to build a sense of self and a sense of belonging in an individual. In young children, as language is developing, relationship building typically occurs simultaneously. Indeed, development is typically an intertwined and interwoven process and learning is threaded throughout. This process of simultaneous development gives purpose to building language skills, as it is one of the vehicles which helps build connections with others.<sup>8</sup> Foundational to language and literacy is the sense that communication connects us to each other, and to ourselves. Eventually, language may become one way in which an individual builds connection within herself.

---

1 Rogoff, B. (2003). *The Cultural Nature of Human Development*. Oxford University Press, Inc.

2 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2018). *How people learn II: Learners, contexts, and cultures*. The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/24783>, p. 22.

3 The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). (n.d.). *Advancing equity in early childhood education position statement*. NAEYC. [https://www.naeyc.org/system/files/equity\\_statement\\_2-28-19\\_0.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/system/files/equity_statement_2-28-19_0.pdf).

4 NAEYC. (n.d.).

5 Bronfenbrenner, U., & Ceci, S. J. (1994). Nature-nurture reconceptualized: A bio-ecological model. *Psychological Review*, 10 (4), 568–586. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57309137ab48de6f423b3eec/t/59aea54d4c0dbfd7d6e43622/1504617811640/Bronfenbrenner%26Ceci1994.pdf>.

6 Bowlby, J. (1982). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 1. Attachment*. Hogarth Press. (Original work published in 1969).

7 Bronfenbrenner, U., & Ceci, S. J. (1994).

8 Vygotsky, L. (1962). *Thought and language*. (E. Hanfmann & G. Vakar, Trans.). MIT Press. <https://doi.org/10.1037/11193-000>.

Children’s experiences within an early learning setting environment can teach them to value the experiences and learnings they carry inside of themselves - or it can teach the opposite. As the child participates and takes part in their own specific sociocultural context(s), she is building an awareness of her own familial, cultural, and linguistic identity. How children see themselves and their identities is influenced by their experiences. Young children are learning about who they are and where they come from - not only in relation to those they interact with, but also in regard to their ancestral and cultural heritage. It is the adults’ or educators’ role to embrace the diversity of the children in their care and create a culture in the early learning environment which helps to support each child’s budding self-identity. It is also the adults’ or educators’ task to create a culture in the early learning setting where children know their voice will be heard and to communicate that each child’s stories and lived experiences are important and worth sharing. This can be achieved through a myriad of ways through language and literacy learning opportunities, and each child’s voice needs to be valued - by adults and educators, as well as by the children themselves.

Adults or educators must keep in mind equity happens when children’s learning is facilitated in teaching practices, curricula, and learning settings environments which build on children’s strengths and are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate for each child.<sup>9</sup> When early childhood educators use inclusive teaching approaches, they demonstrate their embrace of and respect for diversity as they value all children’s strengths.<sup>10</sup>

**Valuing each child’s voice and giving her the agency and encouragement to share her developing identity and internal state(s) is a way of embracing equity and diversity within early learning environments.**



Photo credit: Hawai'i State Literacy Plan

**Language is not only important for relationship building; language and communication is a part of the foundation of the entire learning process.<sup>11</sup>**

In conclusion, children’s language and literacy development occur within sociocultural learning contexts. The adult’s or educator’s relationship with children play an important role in valuing children’s voice, experiences, and the context(s) each brings within themselves.

---

**Lead Author: Charis-Ann Sole**

---

<sup>9</sup> NAEYC. (n.d.).

<sup>10</sup> NAEYC. (n.d.).

<sup>11</sup> NAEYC. (n.d.).

# APPENDIX: SOCIOCULTURAL PROCESSES CONSIDERATIONS FOR LITERACY ACTIVITIES

This section suggests ways adults (parents or caregivers) or educators can pay attention to and consider sociocultural processes when thinking about introducing early literacy components and planning activities with young children. In the first two sections, questions are specifically aimed at adults (i.e., parents or caregivers) who care for young children and educators. The last section has general questions for everyone to consider but might be helpful for those in administrative or higher education roles who support educators in teaching the content area of literacy.

## Sociocultural Perspective Questions

### Parents / Caregivers:

- As a parent, what would you like to pass down, dream, or wish for your child's future?
    - How do you communicate your thoughts and desires about your child to other adults that interact with your child (i.e., adults in early learning settings, family members, etc.)?
    - If you are concerned about your child, to whom do you talk?
  - As a parent, do you have a community of people to reach out to for support or information?
  - In what ways were you taught about language and literacy that you would like to recreate or re-enact with your children? What are some new ways in which you would like your children to experience language and literacy activities?
    - For example: telling nightly bedtime stories, singing in the car, re-telling important cultural legends and stories, etc.
  - In what ways would you like your child to have early literacy experiences?
    - For example: music & songs, books/print, storytelling, etc.
- How are you facilitating these experiences for your child?
    - For example: Would you like your child to experience music/song in other/multiple languages? Would you give your child the opportunity to make marks on paper or draw with a writing implement?
  - How are you engaging with your child to listen to their ideas, stories, songs, and experiences?
    - For example: making time to talk-story with your child, asking him/her questions about his/her day (even if they are unable to respond with words), play pretend with him/her, etc.

### Educators:

- Considerations for Social Experiences with Literacy
  - To what extent is literacy considered a social experience in your setting? In what ways is literacy viewed as a social experience from the perspective of the children?
  - In what ways are children and adults participating in collaborative conversations about the literature and information they read, the pieces they write/draw, and the topics and events they engage in?
  - How are children engaged in sharing their observations, wonderings, and thinking as they engage with books?
  - How does the quality of relationships impact the quality of language & literacy learning? How does the quality of language & literacy learning impact the quality of relationships?
  - How are children's experiences, representations, and perspectives welcomed and integrated into literacy activities? How are children's identities as writers and artists nurtured?
- Considerations for the Classroom / Environment and Literacy

- What might visitors notice in your setting that speaks to the social context and interactions when children and adults are engaged in reading, writing, and conversations/discussions?
- How are children engaged in sharing their observations, wonderings, and thinking as they engage with books?
- Considerations for Teachers' Exploration and Thoughts Surrounding Literacy
  - How are your lived experiences, knowledge base, and social identities guiding and shaping your interactions and work with the children, families, and communities you serve?
  - How do the social processes, norms, values, expectations, and atmosphere of your current context fit into your work with children in literacy?
  - As you communicate with families and your school community, in what ways do you seek to better understand the diversity of values, experiential backgrounds, decisions, and actions?
  - How do you approach ways to embrace and celebrate the diversities, while building a caring, equitable community of learners who share common values and purpose?
  - What is the content of your relationship with the children within the arena of literacy? What does it say or not say about your values, beliefs, and perspectives related to children, families, literacy, and learning within a caring, equitable community?
  - How are the children's family culture and background considered in and contribute to lesson planning for literacy activities?
- How do social processes influence the way early literacy is being experienced by children in the setting you are currently situated in?
- How are adults enacting reading, writing, and oral language with children? How are they enacting these things with other adults? How are, or how can, the children enact the same components with each other?
- How are children able to express themselves and their inner experiences? Are the children recognized for what they bring within themselves? How is this done within the context of early literacy?
- Cultural Practices
  - What norms and practices are valued in a particular community? What norms and practices are not valued? What evidence can you see of each?
    - Within the early learning setting as a whole (school, organization, etc.)?
    - Within the smaller unit of the setting (class or classroom, playgroup, home, etc.)?
  - Are the different contexts in which children come from valued? For example, the children's experiences, history, background, and heritage?
    - In what ways are these experiences brought into the environment?
    - To what extent are families' stories, knowledge, or perspectives experienced by the children?
- Contextual Factors:
  - How, when, and where are literacy practices experienced by children?
  - What is the environment (physical, emotional, psychological, etc.) that literacy practices and learning happens for young children?
  - How might the environment be altered to provide other opportunities and experiences surrounding early literacy?

### **General Questions:**

The following are questions for everyone to think about when embedding sociocultural perspectives in teaching language and literacy practices for young children. The questions could be helpful for program administrators and/or higher education faculty involved in supporting educators in the content area of literacy.

# EXPERIENCING PICTURE BOOKS TOGETHER

From wordless books to ones with attractive pictures accompanied by simple text to those with complex text and intricate illustrations, picture books are incredibly diverse and speak to the young and old. We encounter rhythm and rhymes to play with, stories that connect us, knowledge worth sharing, ideas to explore, perspectives that enlighten, and issues to examine.



Picture books, at first, are novel objects for young children that gradually evolve into intriguing forms of print and art media. As such, quality picture books capture children’s curiosity and imaginations, inviting them to play with words, ideas, information, and stories created by authors and illustrators.

Reading aloud to and with children and engaging together during the read-aloud is highly valued when promoting language and literacy learning. The focus is generally on its value for young children. Yet there is something magical about picture books when children experience with adults the interactive processes embedded within read-alouds and conversations. Reading (and re-reading) picture books with young children allows adults to personally connect with literature in ways that move beyond the reading aloud of words. Quality picture books embody literature that speaks to all, not only to young children. They are not only venues for language and literacy learning; literature paints a social-cultural context for children and adults to situate themselves within as they engage in a shared literary experience. Particularly for children in kindergarten and the primary grades, shared literature experiences deepen their understanding of the literary pieces and influence their developing craft

as writers and their growth as readers. The picture books evolve into “mentor texts” that inspire and support their language and literacy learning.

## A Shared Literature Experience

When children and adults are “present” in the moment with each other, they are sharing the experience of interacting with the contents of the picture book (e.g., the words and pictures; the story line and its characters; information, big ideas, and key details within the words and illustrations). Their conversations extend beyond the contents to the author’s and illustrator’s purpose, craft, and perspectives. They flow through interchanges sharing their connections, interpretations, and insights. In addition to individually connecting with picture books, they are connecting with each other through picture books. These shared experiences invite children and adults to co-construct their understanding and appreciation for the literature that lives within the picture books, especially through ongoing re-readings. They are able to look at the text and illustrations through each other’s eyes thereby expanding their own understanding and perspective. Although individual backgrounds, experiences, and presence shapes



the way each person experiences the literature, the collective experience between the pair influences each individual's experience, as they make sense of what they are reading together.

Of importance within these literature experiences is sharing their thinking with each other – how they are trying to make sense of things, what resonates with them, what they are being led to think, what they notice and how it influences their thinking, and what they are learning. The opportunities to take part in and contribute to such rich and meaningful conversations position children to not only engage in back-and-forth dialogue with adults (while also building their language skills), but to collaborate in revisiting and reflecting on the literary experience as they move towards a shared understanding of the picture book. Together, they put forth relevant information, respond to and build on what each other says, examine similarities and differences, and analyze and synthesize ideas. They both, children and adults alike, experience gradual changes and shifts in what and how they think.

---

*Through others we become ourselves.*  
- Lev Vygotsky

---

## Children and Adults as Collaborators

Thinking and learning together creates spaces for children to share their observations, wonderings, and meaning-making strategies. Children's strengths as thinkers with their unique experiential background and expertise are recognized. This enables children to see themselves as literary artists – storytellers; holders and translators of knowledge; readers and writers of literature. Furthermore, by infusing their ideas, perspectives, and insights into the ebb and flow of the experience, children make possible what adults could not have encountered on their own. Children's participation changes the experience for adults; their voices matter.

For adults, sharing in the experience with children can be both humbling and empowering as they realize how amazing children's capacities are and recognize their own capacities to provoke and nurture learning opportunities for children through



quality interactions. Drawn into these processes as models and facilitators, adults reap the benefits of learning more about children as individuals as well as furthering language and literacy learning for children. Adults model, provide specific feedback, pause and listen attentively, paraphrase, ask thoughtful and thought-provoking questions, and engage in multiple perspective thinking. They share in curiosities, including their curiosity behind children’s thinking. They inspire through their words and actions, while appreciating what children bring into the experience.

At the core of language and literacy learning are the human connections that are formed through respectful, responsive, reciprocal relationships. Fond memories of stories and books emerge through the meaningful and nurturing interactions surrounding the experiences

with literacy and books. They define the quality and content of child-adult relationships with regard to literacy. They provide children with the “feel” and “culture” of reading. Together, children and adults create shared experiences as they live within the pages of quality picture books. Picture books are the venue; engaging together within, around, and beyond the literature through multiple readings and interactive conversations enable children and adults to learn and grow from, with, and through each other.

---

**Lead Author: Coleen Momohara**



# LEARNING COMPETENCIES AND DISPOSITIONS

Critical to guiding and supporting young children in the realm of language and literacy learning, as well in all academic disciplines, is the respect for what they bring as incredible thinkers and learners. Their capacity to closely observe people and their physical world, reason using the knowledge they possess, and generate and sustain inquiries, in part, speak to how amazing they are. Young children, from birth, actively construct their understanding of the world they live in; they construct their knowledge of language and literacy, in addition to their understanding of how to learn.

*Learners who focus on learning rather than performance or who have intrinsic motivation to learn tend to set goals for themselves and regard increasing their competence to be a goal. Teachers can be effective in encouraging students to focus on learning instead of performance, helping them to develop a learning orientation.*

Source: National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2018). *How People Learn II: Learners, Contexts, and Cultures*. The National Academies Press., p. 110)

Children’s learning within and beyond specific academic areas involves more than the content of specific discipline areas. Learning competencies and dispositions such as executive function, self-regulation,

reasoning, problem-solving, motivation,<sup>1</sup> initiative, and persistence are required as well.<sup>2</sup> “Learning is supported by an array of cognitive processes that must be coordinated for successful learning to occur.”<sup>3</sup>

Learning competencies and dispositions are defined here as **capabilities that enable children to engage in, navigate through, and sustain learning, thereby strengthening their confidence as language and literacy learners**. They are required and develop one’s inner thinking and engagement throughout the communication, reading, and writing processes.

- Curiosity about their physical and social environment
- Intrinsic motivation to explore, understand, and develop skills, particularly through play-based learning (with positive feedback)
- Reasoning, multiple perspective taking, and problem-solving
- Using strategies to memorize, conceptualize, reason, and solve problems
- Planning (prioritizing tasks, setting and achieving goals), assessing, and self-reflecting
- Focusing attention while filtering out distractions
- Keeping track of or being cognizant of intentions and purpose (including instructions or procedures)
- Incorporating ways to resist impulsive actions and responses

1 Learn more about motivation at Harvard’s Center on the Developing Child, *5 facts about motivation that are often misunderstood* (<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/5-facts-about-motivation-that-are-often-misunderstood>). Once their basic needs are met, most young children are motivated intrinsically by exploration, active involvement in play, and achieving mastery or success in a task; Healthy motivation system is best built through the combination of internal (intrinsic) drivers supported by positive feedback.

2 National Research Council. (2000). *How people learn: brain, mind, experience, and school: Expanded edition*. The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/9853>; Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. (2015). *Transforming the workforce for children birth through age 8: A unifying foundation*. The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/19401>; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2018). *How people learn II: Learners, contexts, and cultures*. The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/24783>; Duke, N., & Cartwright, K. B. (2021). The science of reading progresses: Communicating advances beyond the simple view of reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 56(S1), S25 – S44; Pearson, P. D., Madda, C. L., & Raphael, T. E. (2023). Current issues and best practices in literacy instruction. In L. M. Morrow, E. Morrell, & H. K. Casey (Eds.), *Best practices in literacy instruction*. (7th ed, pp. 3-40 ). The Guilford Press.

3 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2018). p. 69.

- Persisting through challenges
- Adjusting and responding to changing demands or expectations
- Prioritizing and focusing on learning goals over short-term performance tasks

*Readers play a central role in making reading happen. In addition to acquiring necessary word-reading and language comprehension knowledge and skills, readers must learn to regulate themselves, actively coordinate the various processes and text elements necessary for successful reading, deploy strategies to ensure reading processes go smoothly, maintain motivation, and actively engage with text.*

Source: Duke, N., & Cartwright, K. B. (2021). The science of reading progresses: Communicating advances beyond the simple view of reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 56(S1), S25 – S44, p. 6.

These capabilities<sup>4</sup> are enhanced through language and literacy experiences that are embedded within:

- nurturing and responsive relationships;
- social environments that build caring, equitable learning communities where children develop a sense of belonging and purpose;
- physical spaces with access to a rich array of materials and elements that support exploration, investigations, and discoveries with each other;
- myriad of play experiences that enable children to develop agency and learn collaboratively; and
- interactions that acknowledge children’s perspectives, promote observation and inquiry, challenge and extend thinking.

As they strengthen, these capabilities continue to enhance learning in all domain and discipline areas. They are **essential to learning and when one engages in identifying, understanding, interpreting, creating, computing, and communicating - the processes involved in literacy.**



Photo credit: UH Community College System

*“Learn” is an active verb; it is something people do, not something that happens to them. People are not passive recipients of learning, even if they are not always aware that the learning process is happening.*

Source: National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2018). *How people learn II: Learners, contexts, and cultures*. The National Academies Press. p.12.

**Lead Authors: Coleen Momohara & Ku'ulei Kaluhiokalani**

<sup>4</sup> Many capabilities listed here are part of two key processes that support learning: *Executive Function and Self-Regulation*. Read more about Executive Function & Self-Regulation at Harvard’s Center on the Developing Child (<https://devhcdc.wengine.com/science/key-concepts/executive-function/>). Also refer to the following references: Diamond, A. (2013). Executive Functions. *Annual Review of Psychology*. 64:135- 168; Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. (2015); National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2018); National Research Council. (2000).

# THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

## Play Promotes Joyful Learning

Play is at the heart of childhood. Decades of studies show that play is vital to young children’s healthy development, learning, and well-being. Children’s active engagement through play, exploration, and inquiry support their physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and language development. “Play develops young children’s symbolic and imaginative thinking, peer relationships, language (English an-or additional languages), physical development, and problem-solving skills.”<sup>1</sup>

*Play promotes joyful learning that fosters self-regulation, language, cognitive and social competencies as well as content knowledge across disciplines. Play is essential for all children, birth through age 8.*

NAEYC, 2020.

Play is a natural, spontaneous, and creative activity. Play characteristics include fun, pleasurable, suspension of reality, active involvement, voluntary, and internal coherence.<sup>2</sup>

Play in its various forms (e.g., solitary, parallel, social, cooperative, onlooker, object, sociodramatic, physical, constructive, or games with rules) is foundational in early childhood curriculum. However,

over the past two decades, there has been a growing belief that learning is serious, even urgent academic work, and play is the opposite of learning. This has led to play being non-existent in primary grades, vanishing from kindergarten, and being squeezed out of preschools.<sup>3</sup> In part, this play versus learning false dichotomy in education<sup>4</sup> has its basis in older perceptions of play and learning. More recent research has brought play-based learning back by reframing the debate as learning via play or playful learning, which emphasizes how play and learning are mutually supportive of one another.<sup>5</sup>

Playful learning is recentering play as pedagogy, which is a systematic approach to how playful learning can have a central role in school. The pedagogy of play identifies three overlapping categories to describe the quality of the learners’ experience as they build knowledge and competencies. These categories are choice (children’s decisions to engage in play, to set the play direction and continuation), wonder (children’s continued engagement as they explore, gather information, test hypotheses, and make meaning), and delight (children’s joy and laughter associated with the pleasure of the activity, making discoveries, and achieving new things). When these three categories intersect with one another playful learning occurs.<sup>6</sup>

## What is Playful Learning?

Playful learning is the context for high- quality developmentally appropriate content instruction.<sup>7</sup>

- 1 National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). (2022). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs: Serving children from birth through age 8 (4th edition)*. NAEYC.
- 2 Kostelnik, M., Soderman, A., Whiren, A., & Rupiper, M. (2015). *Developmentally Appropriate curriculum: Best practices in early childhood education* (6th edition). Pearson.
- 3 Bassok, D., Latham, S., & Rorem, A. (2016). Is kindergarten the new first grade? *AERA Open*, 1(4): 1–31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858415616358>; Christakis, E. (2016, January/February). The new preschool is crushing kids. *The Atlantic*, 317(1): 17–20. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/01/the-new-preschool-is-crushing-kids/419139/>
- 4 Hirsh-Pasek, K., & R.M. Golinkoff. (2008). “Why play = learning.” In Tremblay, M, Boivin, M., & R.D. Peters, R.D. (Eds). *Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development* [online]. Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development and Knowledge Cluster on Early Childhood Development. [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Kathy-Hirsh-Pasek/publication/237108843\\_Why\\_Play\\_Learning/links/0c9605260113d2d675000000/Why-Play-Learning.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Kathy-Hirsh-Pasek/publication/237108843_Why_Play_Learning/links/0c9605260113d2d675000000/Why-Play-Learning.pdf).
- 5 Zosh, J. M., Gaudreau, C., Golinkoff, R.M., Hirsh-Pasek, K. (2022). The power of playful learning in the early childhood setting. *YC young children*, 77(2): 6-13. <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/summer2022/power-playful-learning>
- 6 Mardell, B., Wilson, D., Ryan, J., Ertel, K., Krechevsky, M., & Baker, M. (2016). *Towards a pedagogy of play*. Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education. <https://pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Toward%20a%20Pedagogy%20of%20Play.pdf>
- 7 National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). (2022).

Playful learning is a continuum, with self-directed play or free play at one end of the continuum; guided play in the middle of the continuum; and games with rules at the other end of the continuum. The variables that determine the degree to which an activity can be considered playful learning, include 1) the level of adult involvement; 2) the extent to which the child is directing the learning; and 3) the presence of a learning goal.

- **Self-directed play** or free play is defined as play that is initiated and directed by children. When children are engaged in self-directed play, either when playing alone, with a peer, or in a small group, they have the freedom to choose what they want to play with. For children to engage in self-directed play, the teacher carefully sets up the physical environment with age-appropriate materials and gives ample time for children to engage in meaningful self-directed play and steps back only intervening to settle disputes or provide other materials. Children independently engage in social interactions and conversations, problem-solving, and motor development through self-directed play.
- **Guided play** is directed by the child while the teacher guides the child's play towards targeted learning objectives or the teacher might initiate the play sequence, but the children direct their own learning within the play context.<sup>8</sup> Guided play is most effective when the teacher observes and assesses what the child knows and can do and then determines whether or not it is appropriate to intervene during play or decide if instruction at another time would be better. If it is appropriate to intervene, the teacher strategically makes comments, adds objects or materials, and asks probing questions that gently nudges the child toward their specific goals in various content areas. The teacher does not take over the play activity or even direct it. Guided play allows teachers to focus children's active engagement in play toward high-level learning objectives related to specific standards-based learning goals. Guided play is a

collaboration between the child and adult.

- **Games with rules** is similar to guided play, where children are provided with support but continue to lead their own learning, except instead of the teacher scaffolding children toward learning goals, the game itself supports and guides children in reaching their learning goals that are both challenging and achievable.<sup>9</sup>

---

*Guided play takes place in a purposeful environment that's been carefully planned to stimulate and support children's curiosity and creativity.*

Source: Dinnerstein, R. (2016). *Choice Time: How to deepen learning through inquiry and play, preK-2*. Heinemann. p.3.

---

## Playful Learning and Early Literacy

Research has shown that playful learning, especially enriched sociodramatic or constructive play, maximizes language and literacy development in young children from preschool to third grade, in the areas of 1) language development, including phonemic awareness, vocabulary, decontextualized language, and oral narrative competence; 2) functional literacy behaviors, including planning and writing; and 3) integrating technology and literacy, including mediating play as a multimodal literacy.

### Playful Learning and Phonemic Awareness

Guided play and games with rules can increase children's phonemic awareness development. Phonemic awareness is the "awareness that the speech stream consists of a sequence of sounds – specifically phonemes, the smallest unit of sound that makes a difference in communication" and "the ability to manipulate those small units."<sup>10</sup>

---

8 Weisberg, D. S., Hirsh-Pasek, K., & Golinkoff, R. M. (2013). Guided play: Where curricular goals meet a playful pedagogy. *Mind, Brain, and Education*, 7, 104–112. doi:10.1111/mbe.12015, p.105.

9 Cavanaugh et al. (2017) found that kindergarteners scored significantly higher on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) when they played a game about literacy concepts (p. 92 in DAP).

10 Yopp, H. K. & Yopp, R. H. (2000). Supporting phonemic awareness development in the classroom. *The Reading Teacher*. 54(2): 130-143, pp. 130-131. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20204888?origin=JSTOR-pdf>

Phonemic awareness activities include a focus on rhyme, syllables, or phonemes. A rhyme activity could be word rhymes (e.g., Let's think of something that rhymes with cow [now]) or name-play rhymes (e.g., Willoughby Wallaby Woo). Syllable unit or syllable manipulation activities might be clapping to syllables in children's names (e.g., Clap twice for Austin's name, Aus[clap] – tin [clap]) or whole group clapping, skipping and ball bouncing charts and songs (e.g., Down by the Bay). A phonemes manipulation activity might be a chanting and slapping game called "Going on a Word Hunt". This starts with the teacher reading *Going on a Bear Hunt*<sup>11</sup> then explaining to the children that the class is going on a word hunt. Children sit on the floor with their feet together and their knees bent up. First, the teacher begins with a single-syllable word (i.e., light, six, man) and asks children to sound out the word, while slapping toes and then slapping knees with the beat of the chant. Next children echo back the single-syllable word chant, while slapping their toes and knees with the chant. Everyone keeps the rhythm going throughout the chant.<sup>12</sup>

## **Playful Learning and Language Development**

Since the 1990's, researchers have found that oral language development in early childhood is foundational to reading in later years. Furthermore, recent research on language development and playful learning has focused on three reading skills: vocabulary, decontextualized language, and narrative discourse.<sup>13</sup>

## **Playful Learning and Vocabulary**

Researchers examined the studies on vocabulary development and early literacy and posited that educators should focus on how vocabulary is used and whether it is contextualized in children's lived worlds rather than on the number of words

children recognize. Studies found that playful learning expanded children's vocabulary skills when educators combined teacher-directed and scaffolded interactive book reading with enriched child-directed sociodramatic or constructive play sessions based on the book and the target words. These enriched play sessions included a theme, props, and adult intervention to promote children's use of materials and target words. Through these play sessions, children who enacted the story with related props, expanded their vocabulary. For example, the teacher might read an informational book, such as *My Magical Foods*<sup>14</sup>, to introduce the children to less common vegetable names such as avocado, spinach, broccoli. Next, the teacher could encourage children to engage in a "grocery story-themed sociodramatic play session with props and signs to practice these new vocabulary words. Children who played outperformed children who had received more intense direct vocabulary instruction but did not play."<sup>15</sup>

Teachers can broaden and build vocabulary by expanding children's background knowledge with well-planned community field trips that are linked to the children's sociodramatic play centers. When teachers integrate field trips into the curriculum, this allows children to actively see, touch, listen, taste, hear, and smell, which expands their lived experiences. When teachers record the field trip through live video and later have children view the video in the classroom, children will be able to revisit the experience virtually and recall the sensory aspects of this experience. In addition, bringing back or obtaining actual artifacts and props related to the field trip and adding them to a themed sociodramatic play center will encourage children to apply freshly learned vocabulary in play situations, as they intuitively replay their visit to the community site. Sociodramatic play centers can be filled with familiar objects from homes and communities to support all young learners, especially emergent

---

11 Rosen, M. (1989). *We're going on a bear hunt*. Walker Books.

12 Wohlwend, K. (2022). Serious play for serious times: Recovering play in early literacy classrooms. *The Reading Teacher*, 76(4), 478-486; Yopp, H. K. & Yopp, R. H. (2000).

13 Dickinson, D.K., Golinkoff, R.M., & Hirsh-Pasek, K. (2010). Speaking out for language: Why language is central to reading development. *Educational Researcher*, 39(4): 305–310. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27764601>; Rand, M. K. & Morrow, L. M. (2021). The contribution of play experiences in early literacy: Expanding the science of reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 56(s1): S239-S248. <http://doi/abs/10.1002/rtrq.383>

14 Cummings, B. & Svobodova, Z. (2020). *My magical foods*. Free Kids Press.

15 Han, M., Moore, N., Vukelich, C., & Buell, M. (2010). Does play make a difference? How play intervention affects the vocabulary learning of at-risk preschoolers. *American Journal of Play*, 3(1): 82–105; Rand, M. K. & Morrow, L. M. (2021).

bilingual learners, in developing meaningful language.<sup>16</sup> Vocabulary development can be enhanced through games with rules. One study demonstrated how preschoolers engaged in storybook reading and then played a modified *Snakes and Ladders* game, which was embedded with target vocabulary words. The results of this research found that young children who participated in the game with the embedded target vocabulary words performed significantly better.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, this study showed that rather than teaching words in isolation, educators should contextualize vocabulary in children’s lived worlds, which can be accomplished through play.<sup>18</sup>

### **Playful Learning and Decontextualized Language**

Researchers have found that an important factor in children’s play experiences is the use of decontextualized language. Young children use decontextualized language, which is also called extended discourse, when they move from talk that is focused on the “here and now”, to talk about the past and future. As children play and talk about the past and the future they need to imagine what would happen in a situation. This contributes to children’s comprehension skills because the ability to comprehend relies on imagining what will happen in the story.<sup>19</sup>

One study that was conducted on children, ages 5 to 8, began with children listening to a story and then participating in either sociodramatic play, discussion, or drawing. The results showed that children who listened to a story followed by sociodramatic play with the story’s topic or theme were able to use more

explicit language when retelling the story to a listener who had not heard it before. The researcher of this study pointed out that as children negotiate different roles and use symbolic transformations of the props these actions help them practice encoding meaning through their language.<sup>20</sup>

Other studies have focused on metaplay, which is the communication that children use outside of the play frame to assign, manage, and negotiate the roles and actions of the play, such as “Let’s pretend we’re sleeping”. Besides directing what will happen, metaplay also includes discussing the storylines and assigning rules. A study found that play, metaplay, and the ability to produce language influenced kindergarten children’s ability to comprehend familiar and unfamiliar stories.<sup>21</sup>

Researchers observed that the use of metalinguistic verbs, such as “say, talk, speak”, was more frequent among preschoolers during their self-directed play. Metalinguistic verbs represent another type of decontextualized language. The usage of metalinguistic verbs during play predicted both children’s concepts of print and their emergent reading scores.<sup>22</sup>

### **Playful Learning and Oral Narrative Competence**

Children’s oral narrative competence, which includes retelling and creating original stories, is linked to reading comprehension and writing narrative texts. When children are engaged in sociodramatic play, they use elements of story structure, such as setting, character roles, and plot episodes, which helps them generate oral narratives and the ability to understand

---

16 Bengochea, A., Sembiente, S. F., & Gort, M. (2018). An emergent bilingual child’s multimodal choices in sociodramatic play. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 18(1): 38–70. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1468798417739081>; Wohllwend, K., Qu, P., Scott, J. A., & Medina, C. L. (2022). Bilingualities at the train table: Supporting young emergent bilinguals through play and multimodality. In S. Brown & L. Hao (Eds.), *Multimodal literacies in young emergent bilinguals: Beyond print-centric practices*. De Gruyter: Multilingual Matters.

17 Rand, M. K. & Morrow, L. M. (2021).

18 Wohllwend, K. (2022). Serious Play for Serious Times: Recovering play in early literacy classrooms. *The Reading Teacher*, 76(4), 478-486. <https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.2157>

19 Rowe, M. (2013). Decontextualized language input and preschoolers’ vocabulary development. *Semin Speech Lang*, 34 (04): 260–266.

20 Pellegrini, A.D. (1984). The effect of dramatic play on children’s generation of cohesive text. *Discourse Processes*, 7(1): 57–67. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01638538409544581>

21 Williamson, P. A., & Silvern, S. B. (1992). “You can’t be grandma; you’re a boy”: Events within the thematic fantasy play context that contribute to story comprehension. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 7(1): 75–93. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0885-2006\(92\)90020-Y](https://doi.org/10.1016/0885-2006(92)90020-Y)

22 Galda, L., Pellegrini, A. D., & Cox, S. (1989). A short-term longitudinal study of preschoolers’ emergent literacy. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 23(3): 292–309. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40171148>

stories.<sup>23</sup> As they retell and create original stories and enhance their oral narrative skills, these skills are used in comprehending and writing narrative texts.<sup>24</sup>

Studies done with kindergarten through second-grade children found that after children listened to a story and then experienced a thematic-pretend play activity, all of them could recall more story events and sequences. In addition, children who took on more active roles in the play scenarios recalled more events. Kindergarten and first-grade children's comprehension and storytelling skills were most improved. Researchers credited the increase in ability to retell the stories to their active engagement and the perspective-taking they needed when coordinating roles during their play.

Storytelling combined with story-acting sessions has been found to improve children's narrative competence. When children develop their narrative competence and their listening comprehension, they are strengthening their skills for reading comprehension.<sup>25</sup> In addition, storytelling and story acting expose children to a wide range of ideas and vocabulary and give them opportunities to express their own ideas and words in authentic ways. "Story telling and story acting serve as a bridge between the dominant language of early childhood and the more abstract language of literacy. As research has confirmed, narrative development is a strong predictor of success in reading and writing."<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, storytelling and story acting can also increase print and phonemic awareness. This is seen during story dictation when children observe the writing of their words and focus on features of letters, their sounds, and the spelling of words. Seeing a meaningful purpose for print supports children's motivation to be writers.<sup>27</sup>

## Play and Functional Literacy Behaviors

Preschoolers practiced more functional literacy behaviors during self-directed sociodramatic play centers, especially when these play centers were focused on familiar themes - such as kitchen, office, post office, library, and school - with appropriate common literacy materials, multiple options for activities, and feedback from other people.

- Children were able to enact purposeful real-world situations that engaged them in book and paper handling, pretend reading, and writing activities that encouraged them to use markers, pencils, and crayons.<sup>28</sup>
- Literacy skills increased when kindergarten children were given opportunities to create literacy games. As they invented these literacy games, they made up stories about the objects, demonstrated pleasure, and used their creativity and imagination.<sup>29</sup>

## Playful Learning and Planning and Writing

When children are taught more explicitly how to plan their sociodramatic play in the early childhood setting, they can achieve quality in their play and develop their early literacy skills. Play planning occurs when teachers provide young children with time, space, and materials, to think about, draw, and write out a plan about their play scenario before they engage in play. Teachers can start by asking children what they want to play or what they want to be, encouraging children to discuss the choice of roles with their peers, and then asking them more specific details of their future play scenarios, including props and whether they need to assume a different role. In play planning, children do this orally, by drawing or pretending to write. Planning can also occur when children change the scenario,

23 Eckler, J.A., & Weinger, O. (1989). Structural parallels between pretend play and narratives. *Developmental Psychology*, 25(5): 736-743. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.25.5.736>

24 Pinto, G., Tarchi, C., & Bigozzi, L. (2015). The relationship between oral and written narratives: A three-year longitudinal study of cohesion, coherence, and structure. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 85(4): 551-569. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12091>

25 Pellegrini, A. D., & Galda, L. (1982). The effects of thematic-fantasy play training on the development of children's story comprehension. *American Educational Research Journal*, 19(3): 443-452. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312019003443>; Pellegrini, A. D., & Galda, L. (1993). Ten years after: A reexamination of symbolic play and literacy research. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 28(2): 162-175. <https://doi.org/10.2307/747887>

26 The Strong. (2014 Winter). Storytelling, story acting, and literacy in the Boston Public Schools: An interview with Jason Sachs, Ben Mardell, and Marina Boni. *American Journal of Play*, 4(2): 173-189, p. 176.

27 The Strong. (2014 Winter).

28 Neuman, S.B., & Roskos, K. (1997). Literacy knowledge in practice: Contexts of participation for young writers and readers. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 32(1): 10-32. <https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.32.1.2>

29 Cavanaugh, D. M., Clemence, K. J., Teale, M. M., Rule, A. C., & Montgomery, S. E. (2017). Kindergarten scores, storytelling, executive function, and motivation improved through literacy-rich guided play. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, (45):831-843. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-016-0832-8>

props, and roles. Eventually, children advance to writing a play plan by making a line for each word and spelling each word on the line (e.g., I am going to make a castle). With daily practice in writing a play plan, children’s developmental writing is supported, as they progress from making marks to making words, from producing pre-alphabetic to alphabetic word spellings<sup>30</sup> and as they plan the future, children utilize decontextualized language and build their comprehension skills.<sup>31</sup>

### **Integration of Playful Learning, Technology and Literacy**

To stay relevant and meet the challenges and possibilities of early literacy in contemporary childhoods, playful learning, technology, and literacy can be integrated in the curriculum. Furthermore, when playful learning is used by children to create stories with digital media, children learn to create, communicate, and collaborate through multiple modes.

### **Mediating Children’s Play as a Multimodal Literacy**

Research has shown that in our contemporary children use play as a multimodal literacy or core literacy when they are engaged in creating their own multimedia productions and are critically interpreting messages they receive in popular entertainment.

The *Literacy Playshop* is a curricular framework that integrates arts, technology, science, and literacy and engages children in playful, collaborative learning. The *Literacy Playshop* gives kindergarten and primary-grade children opportunities to learn to use digital cameras to create live-action videos of their favorite popular media characters. Children use play as a multimodal literacy in producing multi-media products. Through this type of play, children’s literate identities as readers, writers, and designers are further developed.<sup>32</sup>

The *Literacy Playshop* then led to the creation of the *Design Playshop*, which added science and the arts to teach children such concepts, as electronics when

they created circuitry boards using playdough’s conductivity to activate colorful light-emitting diodes. The playshop curricular model helped teachers reconfigure play as a core component of the curriculum so all children could access rigorous learning that was built upon their prior experiences and cultural knowledge. *Literacy Playshop* can be an effective approach for creative and collaborative storytelling among players. “In a world where literacies are participatory, digitally connected to global networks, and essential to full participation in modern life, play is a serious issue for early literacy and beyond.”<sup>33</sup>

In conclusion, there is a strong case for why educators should adopt and utilize a developmentally appropriate play-based curriculum approach in supporting children’s early literacy development.



---

**Lead Author: Theresa F. Lock**

---

30 Leong, D. J., & Bodrova, E. (2012). Assessing and scaffolding make-believe play. *Young Children*, 67(1): 28-34.

31 Mielonen, A. M. & Paterson, W. (2009). Developing literacy through play. *Journal of Inquiry & Action in Education*, 3(1).

32 Wohlwend, K. (2008). Play as a literacy of possibilities: Expanding meaning in practice, materials, and space. *Language Arts*, 86(2): 127-136. <https://hdl.handle.net/2022/3253>; Wohlwend, K. E. (2013). *Literacy playshop: New literacies, popular media, and play in the early childhood classroom*. Teachers College Press.

33 Wohlwend, K. E. (2013), p. 484.

# FIVE CONCEPTS THAT SUPPORT EARLY LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

The *Hawai'i State Early Literacy Guide* is structured around five concepts that inform children's literacy development and are crucial to the birth to preschool

developmental continuum. These concepts are described in Table 1.

<b>Table 1</b>	
<b>Language Development</b>	<p>Acquired naturalistically, language begins to develop in utero and continues to develop quickly and vastly from birth forward. While the large majority of children develop consistently and meet language milestones by age, some children do demonstrate alternative language development trajectories, such as autistic children. Many children also acquire more than one language in early childhood, and may demonstrate diverging language development trajectories, as well.</p> <p>Sign language and use of augmented communication devices to speak are also valuable language development processes for many children.</p>
<b>Phonological Awareness</b>	<p>Acquired both naturalistically and through instruction, phonological awareness is the ability to parse language into increasingly smaller units of sound. Phonological awareness is fostered through language exposure first, and is tied to a child's overarching language development. (See page 37 for a detailed description of phonological awareness).</p> <p>Early difficulties with both language and phonological awareness prior to kindergarten are important to identify, as they can indicate the presence of language-based disabilities, including dyslexia.</p>
<b>Print Awareness</b>	<p>Acquired both naturalistically and through instruction, print awareness is the knowledge that printed text carries meaning, and is a separate concept from other visuals with meaning, such as illustrations and photographs. Book handling is also considered a print awareness skill.</p>
<b>Emergent Phonics</b>	<p>Acquired predominantly through instruction, emergent phonics begins with the <b>alphabetic principle</b> - the association of individual letters with units of sound (<b>phonemes</b>). Children in this phase also begin to learn individual letter names, differentiate uppercase and lowercase letters, and differentiate whole words and individual letters.</p> <p>Difficulties learning letter names and sounds, even prior to kindergarten entry, can be indicative of dyslexia or other disabilities.</p>
<b>Emergent Writing</b>	<p>Acquired both naturalistically and through instruction, emergent writing also relies on <b>print awareness</b> and <b>emergent phonics</b>. As children develop both their artistic expression (through drawing, painting, and other methods of image-making) and fine motor skills, children also begin to approximate streams of writing and letter-like shapes. With instruction, this formalizes into letter, word, and sentence writing across time.</p> <p>Difficulties with shape and letter formation, as well as difficulties with pencil grip and pincer grasp, can be indicative of dysgraphia or other disabilities.</p>

## Transitioning from Birth-Preschool into Kindergarten-3rd

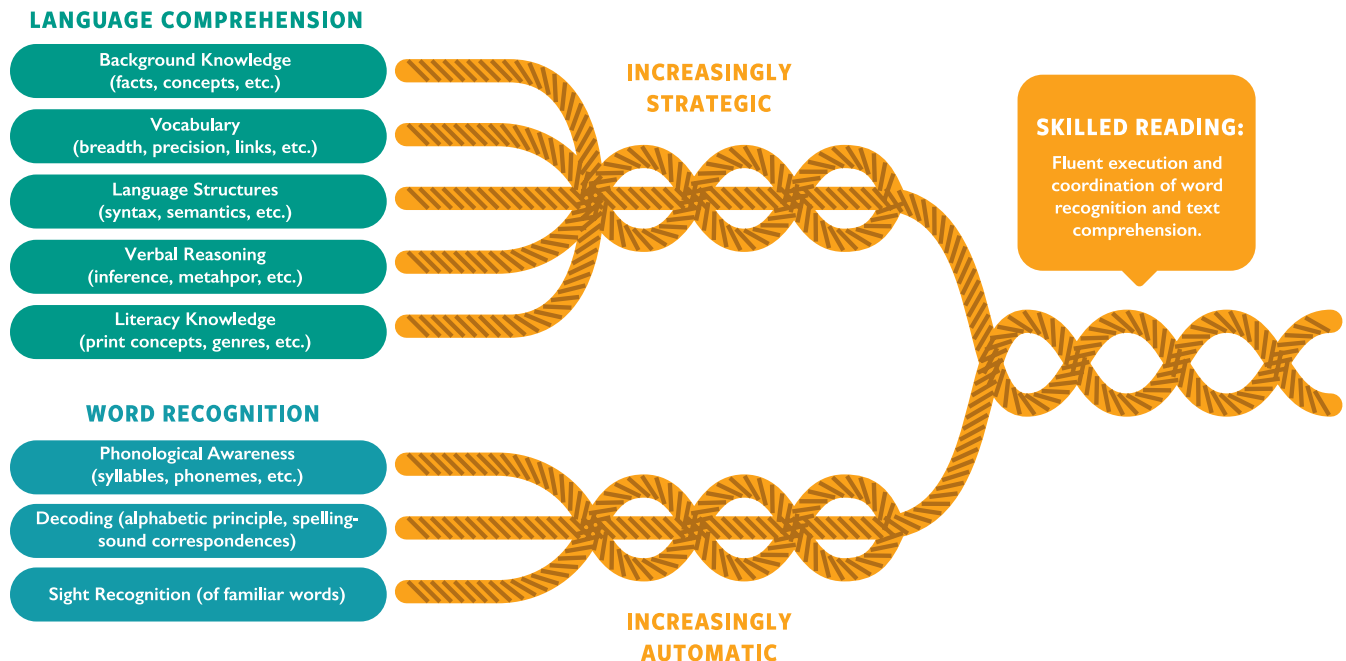
As children consolidate their skills in these emergent literacy areas, they are also socially, emotionally, and physically developing on the path to kindergarten entry. The kindergarten curriculum is based on the premise that the child has already developed the precursory emergent literacy skills defined above. In other words, the kindergarten curriculum was designed to build upon the language and literacy foundations children have been developing for the past five years. This means that literacy instruction in kindergarten and beyond becomes intentionally more specific and complex as children become increasingly more masterful with the speech/sign-text relationship.

From kindergarten forward, learning to read hinges on the enmeshment of multiple skill sets that have been researched for decades, and perhaps best depicted through Scarborough’s Reading Rope<sup>1</sup> as seen in Figure 1.

As you can see in the image below, becoming print literate is a multifaceted process of combining complex linguistic skills with specific print knowledge. In essence, there is no separation between reading for meaning and learning how to read through the mastery of individual sounds. Even though it feels “basic” to us, learning to read an alphabetic language, like English, is a complicated task from the beginning!

Furthermore, literacy development is not only informed by singular mastery of each category in the figure depicted below. There are related social emotional and executive functioning abilities that play equally impactful roles in the child’s overall literacy development, and attending to these needs is also critically important for ensuring success in literacy-specific skills. Figure 2 shows the Active View of Reading<sup>2</sup> which aims to encompass all of the skill sets defined in the literacy research base with all of the developmental skill sets defined in related fields such as psychology, neuroscience, and early childhood development.

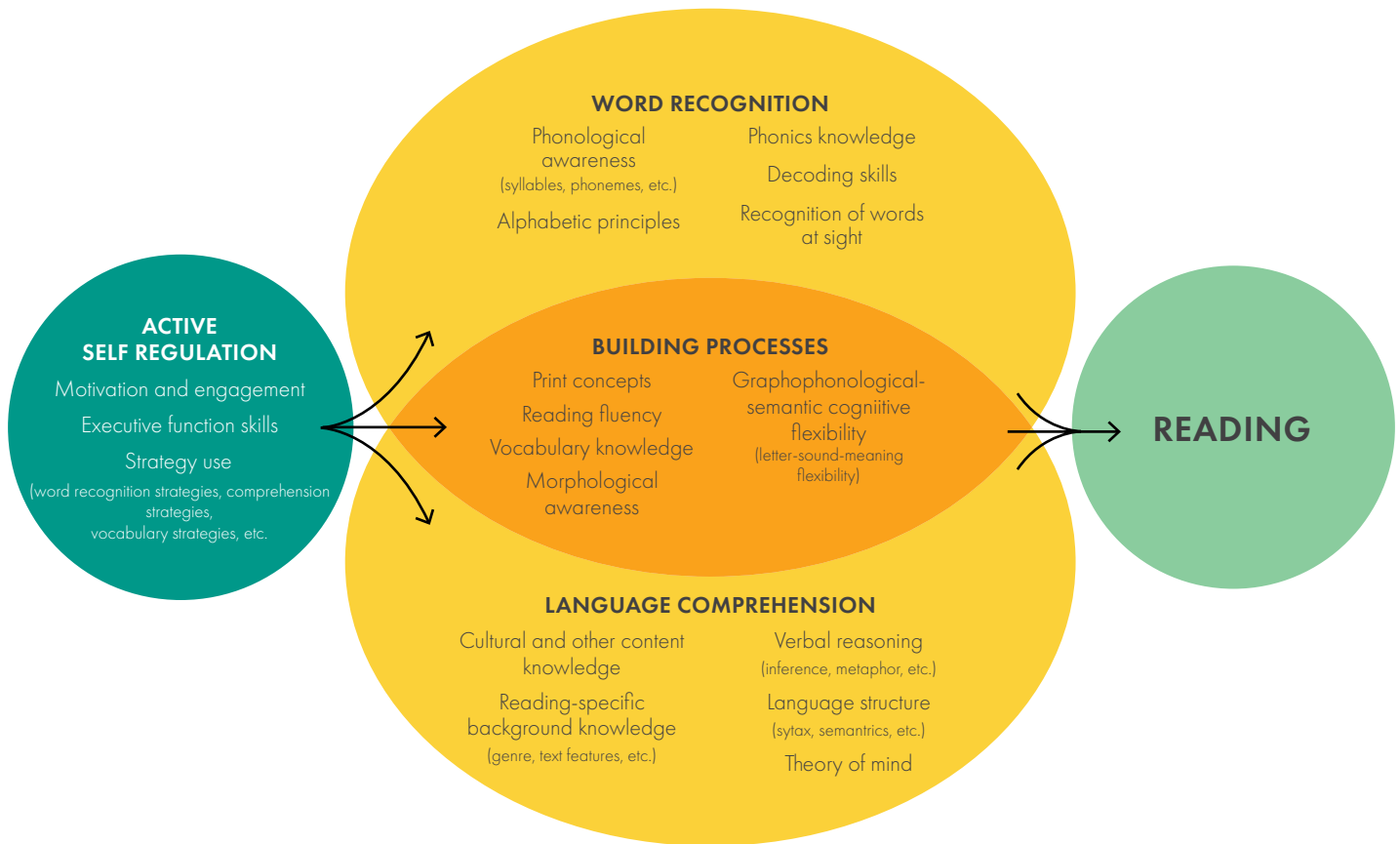
**Figure 1. The Many Strands That are Woven into Skilled Reading**



1 Scarborough, H. (2001) Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis) abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. pp.97-110 in S. B. Neuman & D. K. Dickinson (Eds.) *Handbook of Early Literacy*. Guilford Press.

2 Duke, N. K., & Cartwright, K. B. (2021). The science of reading progresses: Communicating advances beyond the Simple View of Reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 56(S1), S25-S44. <https://ila.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/rrq.411>

**Figure 2. The Active View of Reading Model**



Source: Duke, N. K., & Cartwright, K. B. (2021). The science of reading progresses: Communicating advances beyond the Simple View of Reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 56(S1), S25-S44. <https://ila.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/rrq.411>

As demonstrated within the Active View of Reading, the literacy-specific skills needed to **recognize words and comprehend language** are not separate from the child’s ability to **actively self-regulate**. As teachers and caregivers, we cannot select just one area of literacy that will receive our attention, either. All of these skills must be fostered through environmental and instructional processes across the spectrum of early childhood until children become fully literate - which generally takes 7 to 10 years from birth for typically developing children!

Learning to write has been conceptualized through Sedita’s Writing Rope, as depicted in Figure 3. Like Scarborough’s Reading Rope in Figure 1, Sedita’s Writing Rope summarizes the research base regarding what children master across time to develop writing proficiency.

**Figure 3. The Strands That Are Woven Into Skilled Writing**

### Critical Thinking

- Generating ideas, gathering information
- Writing process: organizing, drafting, writing, revising

### Syntax

- Grammar and syntactic awareness
- Sentence elaboration
- Punctuation

### Text Structure

- Narrative, informational, opinion structures
- Paragraph structure
- Patterns of organization (description, sequence, cause/effect, compare/contrast, problem/solution)
- Linking and transition words/phrases

### Writing Craft

- Word choice
- Awareness of task, audience purpose
- Literary devices

### Transcription

- Spelling
- Handwriting, keyboarding



**Source:** Sedita, J. (2019). *The strands that are woven into skilled writing*. Keys to Literacy. <https://keystoliteracy.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-Strands-That-Are-Woven-Into-Skilled-WritingV2.pdf>

Notice that many of the language comprehension skills that inform children’s reading development also inform children’s writing development! Children’s exposure to and explicit knowledge of language structures, functions of print, and literal word meanings all influence how well children comprehend, as well as how well children can write. Similarly, children’s ability to spell is explicitly influenced by children’s phonological awareness, phonics knowledge, and letter identification and formation - which also influence their word reading abilities. In short, learning to write is a reciprocal relationship with learning to read!

## It’s Normal to Need Teaching and Time

Isn’t it marvelous how babies just seem to blossom in front of our eyes? How they seem to just thrive on the presence of supportive caregivers who talk to them (mostly in nonsense with exaggerated faces), cuddle them, and feed them? In this natural coziness, language is born.

Reading and writing are not that way, cognitively speaking. Unlike language, and its underpinning of nurturance and human connection, literacy has not had enough evolutionary time to be a natural acquisition process.<sup>3</sup> Reading and writing are only

3 Kuhl P. K. (2010). Brain mechanisms in early language acquisition. *Neuron*, 67(5): 713–727. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuron.2010.08.038>

about 5,000 years old,<sup>4</sup> which is not enough time for our brains to have evolved into “just knowing” how to learn to read and write. Language, meanwhile, is at least 50,000 years old, giving our brains enough evolutionary time to develop predispositions for language acquisition in our neural pathways.<sup>5</sup>

In other words, most baby brains can just pick up language through exposure and human connection - no teaching necessary. But literacy requires modeling, teaching, coaching, support, and practice for almost all child brains. It’s just not natural. Language is to literacy as learning to walk is to learning to ride a bike.

It’s normal to need to be taught, clearly and in small digestible bites, how to read and write. In fact, children are performing complex cognitive feats when they learn that A says /a/. That is not decontextualized knowledge for the child who is still developing language proficiency and print awareness, and it is not at all a “basic” concept. We should think of our foundational skills instruction as appropriately complex relative to the vast amount of knowledge that a child needs to master in order to read and write.



4 Dehaene, S. & Cohen L. (2007). Cultural recycling of cortical maps. *Neuron*, 56: 384–398.

5 Poulos, G. (2022, December 11). When did humans first start to speak? How language evolved in Africa. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/when-did-humans-first-start-to-speak-how-language-evolved-in-africa-194372>

# DEVELOPMENTAL CONTINUUM WITH IMPLICIT VERSUS EXPLICIT ACQUISITION PROCESSES

In Table 1, we model how language and literacy are developed across time, focusing on whether the acquisition relies on implicit or explicit processes,

and what children can be generally expected to demonstrate relative to these skill areas.

<b>Table 1. Language and Literacy Developmental Continuum (infants through 3rd Grade)</b>						
	<b>Language &amp; Vocabulary</b>	<b>Phonological Awareness</b>	<b>Phonics</b>	<b>Fluency</b>	<b>Comprehension</b>	<b>Writing</b>
<b>Infants</b>	Implicit	Implicit				
<p>In Infancy, we anticipate that children will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coo, babble, laugh, and otherwise vocalize</li> <li>• Respond to caregiver facial expressions, vocalizations, and/or signs</li> <li>• Experiment with phonemes</li> <li>• Reach for and grasp desired objects</li> <li>• Attend to caregiver book reading, particularly illustrations and/or sensory material</li> </ul>						
<b>Toddlers</b>	Implicit	Implicit				Implicit
<p>In toddlerhood, we anticipate that children will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak or sign new words and phrases</li> <li>• Express wants and needs verbally and/or non-verbally</li> <li>• Respond to caregivers' questions, prompts, and directions</li> <li>• Attend to caregiver book reading, including supplying words for pictures, pretend reading, and narrating or repeating familiar story parts</li> <li>• Generate drawings and scribbles with a large grasp (fist, five-finger)</li> </ul>						

**Table 1. Language and Literacy Developmental Continuum (infants through 3rd Grade) (continued)**

	<b>Language &amp; Vocabulary</b>	<b>Phonological Awareness</b>	<b>Phonics</b>	<b>Fluency</b>	<b>Comprehension</b>	<b>Writing</b>
<b>Preschool-ers</b>	Implicit & Explicit	Implicit & Explicit	Implicit & Explicit		Implicit & Explicit	Implicit & Explicit
	<p>In preschool, we anticipate that children will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak or sign complete, multiple sentences, including new words and phrases</li> <li>• Engage in multi-exchange conversations with teachers, caregivers and peers</li> <li>• With support, use distancing language, such as talking about past experiences or “not right here” objects (e.g., My toy dinosaur at home...)</li> <li>• Attend to caregiver book reading, including conversations about characters thoughts and feelings, and retell stories with the book illustrations and/or related props</li> <li>• With caregiver modeling and exposure, attend to rhyme and alliteration, such as predicting rhyming words in a rhyming texts or sorting objects or words by first sound</li> <li>• With caregiver modeling and exposure, identify many uppercase and lowercase letters, particularly those in one’s own name</li> <li>• With caregiver modeling and exposure, form letters in one’s own name</li> <li>• With caregiver modeling and exposure, draw and “write” stories with letters and letter-like formations, using a small grasp (developing pencil grip), including dictating narration to an adult</li> </ul>					
<b>Kindergart-eners</b>	Implicit & Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit
	<p>In kindergarten, we anticipate that children will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak or sign complete, multiple, complex sentences, including new words and phrases</li> <li>• Engage in multi-exchange conversations with teachers, caregivers, and peers</li> <li>• Use distancing language, such as talking about past experiences or “not right here” objects (e.g., My toy dinosaur at home...)</li> <li>• Ask and answer questions about grade-appropriate texts read aloud, including literal and inferential concepts</li> <li>• Retell grade-appropriate stories read aloud with story grammar elements</li> <li>• Identify all uppercase and lowercase letters, and produce corresponding sounds</li> <li>• Blend and segment phonemes in Consonant-Vowel-Consonant (CVC) words</li> <li>• Decode CVC words in isolation and in text</li> <li>• Write all uppercase and lowercase letters with a visual model</li> <li>• Illustrate and label stories with appropriate pencil grip, including dictating narration to an adult</li> <li>• Write a complete sentence with appropriate pencil grip and basic sentence elements</li> </ul>					

**Table 1. Language and Literacy Developmental Continuum (infants through 3rd Grade) (continued)**

	<b>Language &amp; Vocabulary</b>	<b>Phonological Awareness</b>	<b>Phonics</b>	<b>Fluency</b>	<b>Comprehension</b>	<b>Writing</b>
<b>1st Graders</b>	Implicit & Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit
	<p>In 1st Grade, we anticipate that children will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak or sign complete, multiple, complex sentences, including new words and phrases</li> <li>• Engage in multi-exchange conversations with teachers, caregivers, and peers</li> <li>• Use narrative and inferential language to discuss grade-appropriate abstract topics (e.g., What would it be like to see a lion in the wild?)</li> <li>• Ask and answer questions about grade-appropriate texts read aloud and read independently, including literal and inferential concepts</li> <li>• Retell grade-appropriate stories read aloud and read independently with story grammar elements</li> <li>• Blend and segment phonemes in X-X phoneme words</li> <li>• Decode X-X phoneme words in isolation and in text</li> <li>• Write all uppercase and lowercase letters fluently without a visual model</li> <li>• Write, illustrate, and label multi-sentence texts with appropriate pencil grip</li> <li>• Write multiple complete sentences with appropriate pencil grip and basic sentence elements</li> </ul>					
<b>2nd Graders</b>	Implicit & Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit
	<p>In 2nd Grade, we anticipate that children will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak or sign complete, multiple, complex sentences, including new words and phrases</li> <li>• Engage in multi-exchange conversations with teachers, caregivers, and peers</li> <li>• Use narrative and inferential language to discuss grade-appropriate abstract topics</li> <li>• Ask and answer questions about grade-appropriate texts read aloud and read independently, including literal and inferential concepts</li> <li>• Retell grade-appropriate stories read aloud and read independently with story grammar elements</li> </ul>					
<b>3rd Graders</b>	Implicit & Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit
	<p>In 3rd Grade, we anticipate that children will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak or sign complete, multiple, complex sentences, including new words and phrases</li> <li>• Engage in multi-exchange conversations with teachers, caregivers, and peers</li> <li>• Use narrative and inferential language to discuss grade-appropriate abstract topics</li> <li>• Ask and answer questions about grade-appropriate texts read aloud and read independently, including literal and inferential concepts</li> <li>• Retell grade-appropriate stories read aloud and read independently with story grammar elements</li> </ul>					

# DEVELOPMENTAL CONTINUUMS

---

## Defining

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), early childhood is defined as “The first period of child development, beginning at birth. Although developmental periods do not rigidly correspond to chronological age, early childhood is generally defined as including all children from birth through age 8.”<sup>1</sup> This period from birth through age 8 represents a developmental continuum with approximate age groupings. These age groupings are typically categorized as infants from birth to 1 year; toddlers from 1 year to 3 years; preschoolers from 3 years to 5 years; kindergartners from 5 years to 6 years; and primary grade children from 6 years through 8 years.<sup>2</sup>

## Importance of it

During these first eight years, there is significant growth and learning across all domains of development. During this period, children’s experiences affect the development of the brain’s architecture, which provides the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health.<sup>3</sup> Research has shown that there are commonalities or general processes of child development and learning that apply to all children within age groupings. Educators can use this knowledge to predict what learning experiences most children within a given age range can do to reach both achievable and challenging goals. In addition, all evidence of a child’s development and learning is embedded within and affected by social and cultural contexts. As social and cultural contexts vary, so do processes of development and learning. Therefore, it is important to evaluate how general knowledge of children’s development and learning is now recognized as contextually influenced.<sup>4</sup>

## Not all children develop at the same pace

Within any age group of children, there are individual differences among children. Each child needs to be recognized as an individual, having characteristics and experiences distinct and unique to who the child is, within the context of their family and community.<sup>5</sup> The social and cultural contexts of development and learning are both one’s personal cultural and linguistic context which is the complex set of ways of knowing the world that reflect one’s family and other primary caregivers and their traditions and values; and the broader multifaceted and intersecting (for example, social, racial, economic, historical, and political) cultural contexts in which each of us live.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, “all children learn language through social interactions, but there are important distinctions in the process for monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual children.”<sup>7</sup>

## Aligned with child assessment

It is vital for educators to know as much as possible about the developmental period of early childhood, from birth through age 8; each child as an individual; and how young children learn and develop within relationships and within multiple contexts. Furthermore, educators need to know how to closely observe and document each child’s development and learning by using appropriate assessment approaches and tools to make informed decisions to plan the learning goals, curricula, and teaching strategies that promote positive outcomes for each child.<sup>8</sup>

---

**Lead Author: Theresa F. Lock**

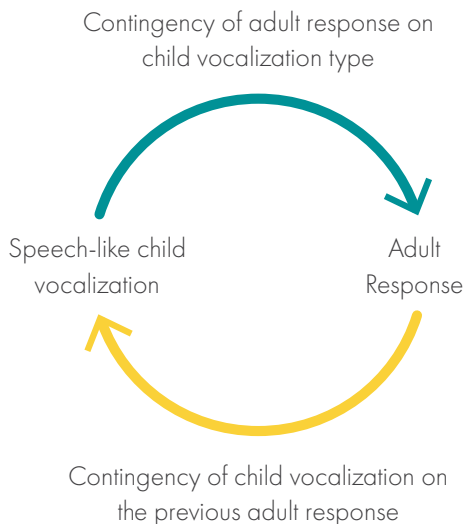
- 1 NAEYC. (2020). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs: Serving children from birth through age 8* (4th edition). NAEYC, p. 317.
- 2 Charlesworth, R. (2017). *Understanding child development* (10th ed.) Cengage Learning.
- 3 Center on the Developing Child. (2007). *The science of early childhood development (InBrief)*. Center on the Developing Child. [www.developingchild.harvard.edu](http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu)
- 4 NAEYC. (2020). *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs: Serving children from birth through age 8* (4th edition). NAEYC, p. 19.
- 5 NAEYC. (2020). *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs: Serving children from birth through age 8* (4th edition). NAEYC, p.xxxi.
- 6 For more information, see *Considering Different Contexts of Language and Literacy* section of the **Hawai'i State Early Literacy Guide**.
- 7 NAEYC. (2020). *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs: Serving children from birth through age 8* (4th edition). NAEYC, p.xxxiv.
- 8 NAEYC. (2020). *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs: Serving children from birth through age 8* (4th edition). NAEYC, p.xli.

# FEEDBACK LOOPS

## What Are Feedback Loops?

“Feedback loops,” “back-and-forth exchanges,” and “serve and return” are terminologies we use to describe a type of interaction between a young keiki (child) and a caregiver (i.e., kupuna, makua, kumu/educator, or other family member). It involves back and forth meaningful conversations or “exchanges” makua have with their keiki to expand their language and learning. Similar to a tennis or volleyball game, a conversation “ball” is served and returned “when an infant, (toddler), or young child babbles, gestures, cries, or (comments), and a caregiver responds appropriately with eye contact, words, or hugs.”<sup>1</sup> This exchange continues until both the keiki and makua “reach the next level” and move onto a different conversation.<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 1. Feedback Loop**



Source: Warlaumont, A. S., Richards, J. A., Gilkerson, J., & Oller, D. K. (2014). A social feedback loop for speech development and its reduction in autism. *Psychological Science*, 25(7), 1314-1324. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797614531023>

From birth, keiki have a natural desire to communicate their thoughts, ideas, needs, and feelings with others. Pēpē (infants), for example, communicate through babbling, facial expressions, and gestures. When a makua responds positively with the same kind of vocalizing and gestures, this encourages pēpē to reply with similar utterances. Figure 1. Feedback Loop visualizes this back-and-forth exchange that occurs between the keiki and makua. These individual interactions accumulate over time and contribute to the development of language and social skills in keiki.<sup>3</sup>

*When caregivers’ responses are contingent on infant vocalizations being speech-related (non-cry, non-laugh, and non-vegetative) the result is more frequent speech-related child vocalizations.... Even if parents increase their responsiveness indiscriminately to all types of infant vocalizations, including crying, fussing, babbling, singing, and speech, this can be expected to increase child overall vocalization rates, thereby increase the number of social feedback loop iterations, or learning opportunities, the child experiences.*

Source: Warlaumont, A. S., Richards, J. A., Gilkerson, J., & Oller, D. K. (2014). A social feedback loop for speech development and its reduction in autism *Psychological Science*, 25(7), 1314-1324.

**Lead Author: Kim Guieb**

1 Harvard University Center on the Developing Child. (n.d.). A guide to serve and return: How your interaction with children can build brains. <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/guide/a-guide-to-serve-and-return-how-your-interaction-with-children-can-build-brains/#:~:text=You%20may%20have%20heard%20the.and%20reach%20their%20full%20potential.>

2 Croasdale, N. (2016, May 11). Feedback loops and tootsie pops they might have more in common than you'd think. TeachStone. [https://info.teachstone.com/blog/feedback-loops-and-tootsie-pops-they-might-have-more-in-common-than-you-d-think.](https://info.teachstone.com/blog/feedback-loops-and-tootsie-pops-they-might-have-more-in-common-than-you-d-think)

3 Warlaumont, A. S., Richards, J. A., Gilkerson, J., & Oller, D. K. (2014). A social feedback loop for speech development and its reduction in autism. *Psychological Science*, 25(7), 1314-1324. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797614531023>

## Why Are Feedback Loops Important?

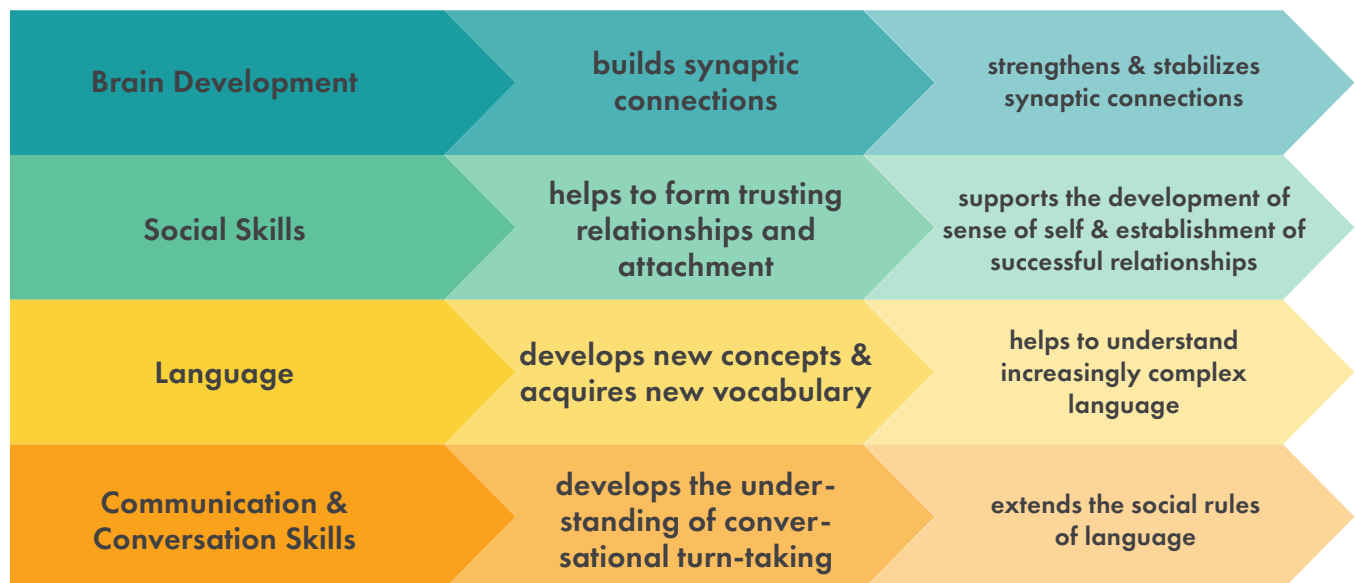
The back-and-forth interaction “includes communicating between children and encompasses much more than understanding language and developing literacy skills.”<sup>4</sup> This repeated feedback loop process is, not only essential for the **healthy development of the brain** - especially in the earliest years, but also builds and reinforces the pathways to synaptic connections, “enabling them to become stronger and more complex. These complex neural pathways form the foundations for learning, relationships, and many other important skills.”<sup>5</sup>

- When makua respond positively, a warm, supportive pilina (relationship) is developed, creating **a trusting bond and securing attachment** between the keiki and their caregivers – at and outside of the home. This attachment supports “children as they develop a sense of self and begin to understand their emotions... (and

helps to) ...lay the foundation for establishing successful relationships at later ages.”<sup>6</sup>

- As they interact with their makua in back and forth exchanges, while conversing, responding to questions during story read-a-loud, and actively engaging in play, the keiki are focusing their attention and listening with a purpose. They are “connect(ing) what they hear with their background knowledge and experiences... (and) develop(ing) new concepts and acquire(ing) new vocabulary that helps them to understand increasingly complex language.”<sup>7</sup>
- As they progress from babbling and one-syllable words to more complex language during conversational exchanges, the keiki develops **turn-taking skills**, where the “listener and speaker roles are exchanged back and forth.”<sup>8</sup> Turn taking “encourages cooperation, creates a sense of order, and ultimately fosters a sense of fairness, compassion and respect for others.”<sup>9</sup>

**Figure 2. The benefits of repeated feedback loops**



4 Galinsky, E. (2020). *Mind in the making: The seven essential life skills every child needs*. Harper Studio.

5 Better Brains for Babies. (n.d.). *Serve and return interactions*. <https://www.bbbgeorgia.org/serve-and-return-interactions>

6 Talukder, S. (2017, February 13). *Quality 101: Identifying the core components of a high-quality early childhood program*. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/quality-101-identifying-the-core-components-of-a-high-quality-early-childhood-program/>

7 Burts, D. C., Berke, K., Heroman, C., Baker, H., Bickart, T. S., & Tabors, P. O. (2016). *Objectives for development & learning: Birth through third grade*. Teaching Strategies.

8 CST Academy. (n.d.). *Why is turn-taking important in speech and language development?* CST Academy. <https://cstacademy.com/articles/why-is-turn-taking-important-in-speech-and-language-development/>

9 Autism Center for Excellence. (2021, April). *Communication & social skills toolkit*. Autism Center for Excellence. [https://vcuautismcenter.org/documents/communicationandsocialskills/Skill\\_10\\_Turn\\_Taking.pdf](https://vcuautismcenter.org/documents/communicationandsocialskills/Skill_10_Turn_Taking.pdf)

## What Do Feedback Loops Look Like?

Makua provides a language-rich environment, where keiki are surrounded by talking, singing, and reading and have many opportunities throughout the day to socialize with others and engage in back-and-forth interactions. Makua is present and attentive to the keiki’s verbal and non-verbal communication prompts and behaviors in order to provide a meaningful

feedback loop experience. Makua facilitates language development when they describe daily events; mimic or initiate words or sounds; encourages keiki to use language about what they are doing/ learning; and talks about their lives at and outside of home and school, their family members, and activities they are engaged in. “Serve” up a conversation starter (such as making an eye contact and asking an open-ended question) and wait for their “return.”

## Repeat and extend child’s language

(Adapted from Teachstone CLASS Dimension Guides: Infant, Toddler, Pre-K, and Elementary K-3<sup>10</sup>)

When...	Makua...
A pēpē (infant) makes a sound like “ba-ba.”	Repeats the sound and adds, “Ba-ba... bottle. You have a green bottle.” Follows up with “mum, mum” and waits for the pēpē to produce the sound back.
A pēpē points to an animal and says, “moo.”	Repeats and adds, “Moo. That’s right. It’s a cow and the cow says, ‘moo.’” Then waits for the next gesture/sound.
A kama’iki (toddler) says, “I go zoo.”	Repeats and adds, “You went to the zoo? The zoo has lots of animals.” Follows with “What animals did you see at the zoo?” and waits for the kama’iki to respond.
A preschool keiki tells kumu (teacher), “I drew a flower.”	Repeats and extends, “You drew a flower. It has yellow petals. It looks like a plumeria. What else did you draw?” and waits for the keiki to respond.
A keiki in elementary school says, “the square and rectangle look the same.”	Repeats and extends, “Yes, the square and rectangle look the same. They both have four sides and four angles. They are called quadrilaterals. Can you name other shapes that are quadrilaterals?” Waits for the keiki to respond.

<sup>10</sup> Teachstone. (2014). Infant CLASS dimension guide. Brookes Publishing; Teachstone. (2012a). Toddler CLASS dimension guide. Brookes Publishing; Teachstone. (2011). Pre-K CLASS dimension guide. Brookes Publishing; Teachstone. (2012b). Elementary K-3 CLASS dimension guide. Brookes Publishing.

## Follow up on children’s responses and actions

(Adapted from Teachstone CLASS Dimension Guides: Infant, Toddler, Pre-K, and Elementary K-3<sup>11</sup>)

When...	Makua...
A pēpē reaches for a rattle.	Says, “Do you want to play with the rattle?” Helps the pēpē hold the rattle, and says “shake, shake, shake.” Waits for the pēpē to follow the action.
A kama’iki is washing his hands.	Watches the kama’iki and maps his actions with language, “I will turn on the faucet for you. Let’s put some soap.” Sings the alphabet song as the kama’iki washes his hands. When the song ends, turns off the faucet. “You did it! You washed all the germs away and now we can eat our snack.” Follows up with “Where do you want to sit today?”
A preschool keiki says, “I don’t know how to do it” while working on a puzzle.	Says, “You are almost done. Let’s look at a space and look for a clue. This looks like it needs a green piece. Can you find a puzzle piece with lots of green color?” Encourages and says, “Turn, turn, turn the piece. You got it! You found the green piece. Let’s look at the next space. What clue should we use to fill this space?”
A keiki in elementary school misspells a word.	Says, “You are sounding the word out loud to help you spell. What sounds do you hear in the word?” Follows with “I can tell you are thinking and working hard on your journal.”

## Ask children to explain their thinking

(Adapted from Teachstone CLASS Dimension Guides: Infant, Toddler, Pre-K, and Elementary K-3<sup>12</sup>)

When...	Makua...
A pēpē points to a mouse, while reading <i>Goodnight Moon</i> with her makua.	Maps her action and asks, “You are finding the mouse. I wonder how you know where they are. Where’s the mouse on this page?”
A kama’iki picks up her bag and says, “My bag.”	Acknowledges and asks, “It is your bag. How do you know it’s your bag?” Waits for the kama’iki to answer and affirms her response.
A preschool keiki says, “When there is danger, the ants go into the grass.”	Asks, “How do you know that there is danger?” Waits for the keiki to respond to how he defines danger and extends the language of the keiki.
A keiki in elementary school says, “it’s an opinion” when talking about facts and opinions.	Asks, “Why is it an opinion?” Waits for the keiki to respond and extend his language.

11 Teachstone. (2014); Teachstone. (2012a); Teachstone. (2011); Teachstone. (2012b).

12 Teachstone. (2014); Teachstone. (2012a); Teachstone. (2011); Teachstone. (2012b).

## Using Dialogic Reading Strategies to Engage Keiki in Feedback Loop Exchanges

Dialogic Reading is a method of reading strategy developed by the Stony Book Reading and Language Project and involves keiki and makua having a conversation around the text they are reading together.<sup>13</sup> The techniques in dialogic reading are designed to provide an opportunity for “a more engaging and productive alternative” than simply reading a story.<sup>14</sup> The PEER sequence and CROWD prompts are strategies that are applicable not only

with book reading, but also with other activities (i.e., talking story or working on an activity) to create the feedback loop experiences between the keiki and makua to foster children’s language and literacy skills.

The PEER Sequence is a short interaction between keiki and makua. The CROWD are five types of prompts that are used to begin the PEER sequences.

The **PEER** Sequence:

- P** = Prompt
- E** = Evaluate
- E** = Expand
- R** = Repeat

The **CROWD** Prompts:

- C** = Completion
- R** = Recall
- O** = Open-ended
- W** = Wh- questions
- D** = Distancing (at home & school)

Examples of prompts (conversation starters)

	Reading a Book	While Playing	With Experiences #1	With Experiences #2
<b>Completion</b>	The keiki played with his (dog)_____.	You built a (fort)_____.	We went on a (field trip)_____.	You went to the (zoo)_____.
<b>Recall</b>	What did the keiki do?	Tell me how you built it.	Where did we go on our field trip?	What did you see at the zoo?
<b>Open-ended</b>	Why did the keiki have a sad face?	Why did you decide to build it that way? How can you make it taller/ stronger/ smaller/ fit something?	What did we do on the field trip to the fish pond?	What other animals might you see at the zoo?
<b>“Wh” questions</b>	Where did the dog go?	Why did you use those materials? What do you think would happen if _____?	What did you find at the fish pond? What did you talk to your mom about?	Why didn’t you see the lions?
<b>Distancing</b>	Think of a time when you lost something. How did you feel and what did you do?	Have you ever built/ saw something like that before? When? Where?	What did you do when you went home from the field trip?	Would you want to be a zookeeper? Why?

<sup>13</sup> Whitehurst, G. J. (n.d.). *Dialogic reading: An effective way to read aloud with young children*. Reading Rockets. <https://www.readingrockets.org/topics/early-literacy-development/articles/dialogic-reading-effective-way-read-aloud-young-children>. For more information see: WWC | Dialogic Reading. (n.d.). Institute of Education Sciences. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/EvidenceSnapshot/135>

<sup>14</sup> Folsom, J. S. (n.d.). *Dialogic reading: Having a conversation about books*. Reading Rockets. <https://www.readingrockets.org/topics/comprehension/articles/dialogic-reading-having-conversation-about-books>

Examples of PEER strategies when reading a book, talking story, or doing an activity with pēpē, kama'iki, and preschool and elementary-age keiki.

(Adapted from Folsom, J. S. (n.d.). *Dialogic reading: Having a conversation about books*. Reading Rockets. <https://www.readingrockets.org/topics/comprehension/articles/dialogic-reading-having-conversation-about-books>)

M = Makua; K = Keiki			
PEER	When reading a book	When talking story	When doing an activity
<b>P</b> rompts the child to say something	M: What did the other fishes want from the Rainbow fish? (Recall prompt) K: A scale.	M: What did you eat for breakfast this morning? (Distancing prompt) K: A Spam musubi.	M: Which one will float if you put it in the water? (Wh- prompt) K: The boat
<b>E</b> valuates the child's response	The makua thinks to self, "Yes, it was a scale, but we can add more to that response."	The makua thinks to self, "She had a spam musubi but we can add more to that response."	The makua thinks to self, "Yes, the boat will float but we can add more to that response."
<b>E</b> xpands the child's response	M: Yes, the other fishes wanted his shiny, multi-colored scales.	M: You had a Spam musubi. That must have been delicious.	M: Yes, the boat will float because it's made out of plastic and is light. The plastic boat does float.
<b>R</b> epeat the prompt	M: What kind of scale did the other fishes want from Rainbow fish? K: His shiny, multi-colored scales.	M: What else did you have for breakfast? You had a Spam musubi and _____. K: I had Spam musubi and orange juice.	M: Which one will float on the water? K: The plastic boat will float because it's light.
<b>P</b> raise and <b>A</b> pply the child's response	M: That's right. The other fishes wanted the shiny, multi-colored scales from Rainbow fish. You have a great memory! Hmm. I wonder what would you do if your friends wanted something you have? K: (answers will vary). I will share with them. They are my friends.	M: You had Spam musubi and orange juice for breakfast. Your tummy must be happy and you have energy to play today. What else do you eat to give you energy? K: (answers will vary). I drink milk sometimes.	M: That's right. The plastic boat will float because it's light and less dense than water. When you go to the beach, can you float? K: (answers will vary). Yes, I lay down backwards and put my arms out to float.

When makua notices and responds immediately and positively to keiki's verbal and non-verbal prompts by supporting and acknowledging emotions, providing comfort and assistance, naming words and actions, and asking open-ended questions,

- keiki know that their thoughts and feelings are heard and understood;
- keiki learn to take turns, which helps them to develop self-control and how to get along with peers;
- keiki develop words to use to create their own ideas and build their confidence;

- keiki know what to focus on; and
- adults learn about the keiki’s abilities, interests, and needs.

Check out Project Zero’s Thinking Routines Toolbox as conversation starters. <https://pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines>. A thinking routine is a set of questions or a brief sequence of steps used to scaffold and support student thinking. Project Zero researchers designed thinking routines to deepen students’ thinking and to help make that thinking “visible.” Thinking routines help to reveal students’ thinking to the teacher and also help students themselves to notice and name particular “thinking moves,” making those moves more available and useful to them in other contexts.

## Feedback Loop to Expand on “Serve and Return” for Older Keiki

The purpose of feedback in the assessment and learning process is to improve the student’s performance. Feedback assists all keiki in understanding the subject matter and provides an opportunity for deeper learning and growth. The feedback experience should be positive and nurturing such that the keiki is motivated to continue to be engaged in the learning and not be discouraged. Similar to “serve and return,” highly effective feedback is built on the quality of pilina (relationship) between the keiki and kumu.<sup>15</sup>

Fisher and others<sup>16</sup> identified the “**GREAT**” feedback framework<sup>17</sup> which consists of five facets:

- **G**rowth oriented: focused on improvement and not on criticism
- **R**ead: is honest, specific, targeted, and actionable beyond what’s correct and incorrect
- **E**mpathetic: combines critique with care using “I” and “we” statements and for mutual understanding
- **A**sks for: encourages the keiki to ask questions and seek feedback
- **T**imely: delivered when feedback is connected with the learning moments

## Try it Out!

The following is a survey created by a kumu to gather keiki’s feedback about how they feel about their learning experience:

[https://mcusercontent.com/894a109d7fa842a3a684f9488/files/c1eebaba-214d-65df-0a94-658de301840a/Pages\\_from\\_Fisher\\_Teaching\\_Students\\_to\\_Drive\\_Their\\_Learning\\_2\\_.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/894a109d7fa842a3a684f9488/files/c1eebaba-214d-65df-0a94-658de301840a/Pages_from_Fisher_Teaching_Students_to_Drive_Their_Learning_2_.pdf)

## Resources

5 Steps for Brain-Building Serve and Return: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/5-steps-for-brain-building-serve-and-return/>

CLASS Teacher: <https://info.teachstone.com/teacher-tips-connecting-with-prek-learners>

Quality of Feedback: the Hows and Whys: <https://info.teachstone.com/ebooks/quality-feedback-the-hows-and-whys>

“Serve and return” interactions between an adult and a baby help shape the developing brain: [https://www.bbbgeorgia.org/docs/poster\\_20\\_for\\_web.pdf](https://www.bbbgeorgia.org/docs/poster_20_for_web.pdf)

Talking is Teaching Posters: <https://www.nysparenting.org/posters>

Project Zero’s Thinking Routines: <https://pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines>

<sup>15</sup> Fisher, D., Frey, N., Ortega, S., & Hattie, J. (2023). *Teaching students to drive their learning: A playbook on engagement and self-regulation, K-12*. Corwin Press.

<sup>16</sup> Fisher, D., Frey, N., Ortega, S., & Hattie, J. (2023).

<sup>17</sup> For more information: [https://mcusercontent.com/894a109d7fa842a3a684f9488/files/c1eebaba-214d-65df-0a94-658de301840a/Pages\\_from\\_Fisher\\_Teaching\\_Students\\_to\\_Drive\\_Their\\_Learning\\_2\\_.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/894a109d7fa842a3a684f9488/files/c1eebaba-214d-65df-0a94-658de301840a/Pages_from_Fisher_Teaching_Students_to_Drive_Their_Learning_2_.pdf)

# PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS SKILLS

As defined by David A. Kilpatrick<sup>1</sup>, phonological awareness is “having awareness of sounds in spoken words, whether syllables, onsets, rimes, or individual phonemes” (sounds). When students engage in phonological awareness instruction and practice, they identify and manipulate the sounds in spoken words. Phonological awareness is auditory and does not require the presence of printed words or letters. Students skilled in phonological awareness possess the ability to orally identify and manipulate chunks in spoken words. Phonological awareness skills include: identifying words in a sentence; identifying

and producing words that rhyme; identifying, segmenting, blending, and manipulating the onset and rime in spoken words; and identifying, isolating, segmenting, blending, and manipulating individual phonemes in words (phonemic awareness). The development of phonological awareness serves as the foundation for reading and is a prerequisite skill for decoding. Parents of young children can support the development of phonological awareness by reading stories aloud, singing nursery rhymes, and playing oral word games.

<p><b>Words in a Sentence:</b></p>	<p>The ability to identify individual words in a spoken sentence by counting the number of words.</p> <p>Example: Teacher says, “How many words are in the sentence <b>‘I see a happy pig.’</b>” Students repeat, <b>‘I see a happy pig.’</b> while holding up 1 finger for each word. Students respond, “Five”</p>
<p><b>Rhyming</b></p>	<p>The ability to identify words that rhyme and odd words out (words that don't rhyme) when presented with words orally.</p> <p>Example: Teacher says, “Show thumbs up if the two words rhyme and thumbs down if they do not rhyme. <b>Pig, wig.</b>” Students respond with a thumbs up.</p> <p>Example: Teacher says, “Which word does not rhyme? <b>Pig, hug, mug.</b>” Students respond, “<b>Pig.</b>”</p> <p>The ability to produce a rhyming word when presented with a word orally.</p> <p>Example: Teacher says, “Name a word that rhymes with <b>pig.</b>” Students respond, “<b>Fig.</b>”</p>
<p><b>Alliteration</b></p>	<p>The ability to identify words shared orally with the same beginning sound, or identify a word in a group of words shared orally that does not have the same beginning sound as other words in the group.</p> <p>Example: Teacher says, “Which words have the same beginning sound? <b>Pig, puff, duck.</b>” Students respond, “<b>Pig, puff.</b>”</p> <p>Example: Teacher says which word has a different beginning sound than the others? <b>Pig, puff, duck.</b>” Students respond, “<b>Duck.</b>”</p>

<sup>1</sup> Kilpatrick, D. A. (2015). *Essentials of assessing, preventing, and overcoming reading difficulties (essentials of psychological assessment)*. John Wiley & Sons.

<b>Identifying Syllables</b>	The ability to hear the separate syllables in a word. Example: Teacher says, "How many syllables are in <b>watermelon</b> ?" Students respond by holding up 1 finger for each syllable as they repeat the word, <b>wa - ter - mel - on</b> .
<b>Syllable Blending:</b>	The ability to hear the separate syllables in a word, put the syllables together, and say the whole word Example: Teacher says, " <b>cup-cake</b> " Students respond, " <b>cupcake</b> "
<b>Syllable Segmentation:</b>	The ability to hear a word and separate it into its syllables Example: Teacher says, " <b>backpack</b> " Students respond, " <b>back-pack</b> "
<b>Syllable Addition:</b>	Syllable addition involves adding a syllable to a given single-syllable word to produce a new word. Example: Teacher says, " <b>cake</b> ." Students repeat, " <b>cake</b> ." Teacher says, "Add ' <b>cup</b> ' to the beginning." Students respond, " <b>Cupcake</b> ."
<b>Syllable Deletion:</b>	Syllable deletion involves deleting a syllable from a given word to produce a new word. Example: Teacher says, " <b>backpack</b> ." Students repeat, " <b>backpack</b> ." Teacher says, "without ' <b>pack</b> '." Students respond, " <b>back</b> ."
<b>Syllable substitution:</b>	Requires that a student knows how to both delete and add syllables. Example: Teacher says, " <b>rainbow</b> ." Students repeat, " <b>rainbow</b> ." Teacher says, "Change ' <b>bow</b> ' to ' <b>coat</b> '." Students respond, " <b>raincoat</b> ."
<b>Onset and Rime Identification</b>	The ability to distinguish the beginning sound or sounds of a single-syllable word spoken orally and the vowel plus all sounds following the vowel sound (e.g., cat, onset = /c/, rime = at; stump, onset = /st/, rime = ump). Example: Teacher says, "What is the onset in <b>pig</b> ?" Students respond, "/p/"
<b>Onset and Rime Blending</b>	The ability to hear the onset and rime of a word, put them together, and say the whole word. Example: Teacher says, "/m/ - <b>ess</b> " Students respond, " <b>mess</b> "
<b>Onset and Rime Segmentation</b>	The ability to hear a word and separate it into its onset and rime. Example: Teacher says, " <b>dream</b> " Students respond, " <b>dr - eam</b> "
<b>Phonemic Awareness</b>	See Phonemic Awareness Skills Definition

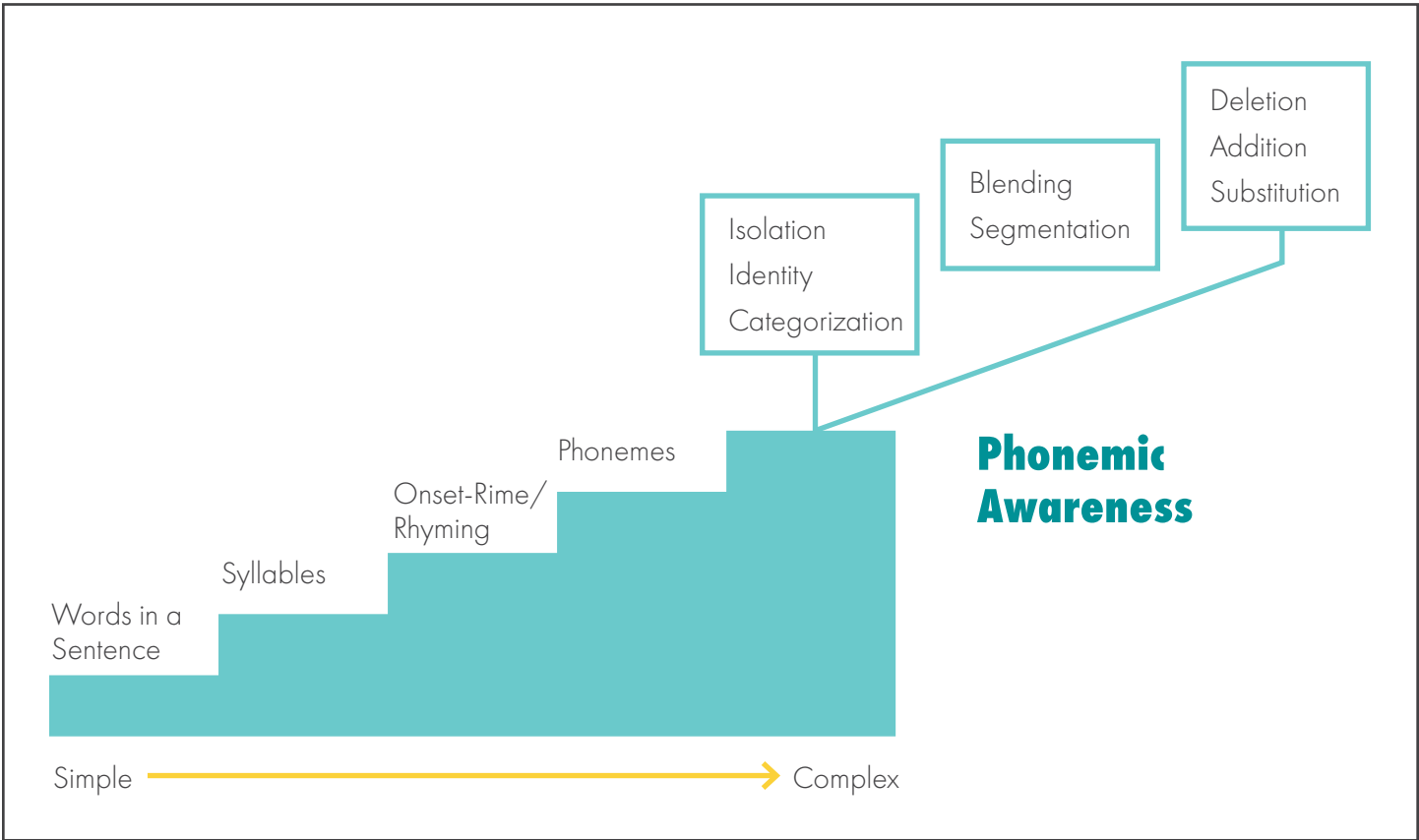


Image borrowed from 95% Group. Hall, Susan, Ed.D. (2017) *How to get the best results from your literacy MTSS*. 95 Percent Group.



Lead Author: Leslie Stiller-West

# PHONEMIC AWARENESS SKILLS

Phonemic awareness involves the ability to hear individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Phonemic awareness instruction and practice are conducted orally without print. The act of reading requires phonemic awareness.

<b>Phoneme Isolation:</b>	The ability to identify a phoneme in a specific position in a word Example: Teacher says, "What is the medial sound in <b>cat</b> ?" Students respond, "/ă/."
<b>Phoneme Identification:</b>	The ability to recognize the same sound in different words Example: Teacher says, "What is the last sound you hear in <b>him, time, jam</b> ?" Students respond, "/m/."
<b>Phoneme Categorization:</b>	The ability to pick out the word that does not belong from a small sequence of similar words; tasks often referred to as oddity tasks Example: Teacher says, "Which word has a different initial sound- <b>bat, pig, ball</b> ?" Students respond, " <b>Pig</b> ."
<b>Phoneme Blending:</b>	The ability to hear the individual sounds in a word, put the sounds together, and say the whole word Example: Teacher says, "/m/ /a/ /p/" Students respond, " <b>map</b> "
<b>Phoneme Segmentation:</b>	The ability to hear a word and separate it into its individual sounds Example: Teacher says, " <b>map</b> " Students respond, "/m/ /a/ /p/"
<b>Phoneme Addition:</b>	Phoneme addition involves adding phonemes to a given word to produce a new word. Example: Teacher says, " <b>we</b> ." Students repeat, " <b>we</b> ." Teacher says, "Add /k/ to the end." Students respond, " <b>week</b> ."
<b>Phoneme Deletion:</b>	Phoneme deletion involves deleting a phoneme(s) from a given word to produce a new word. For example, starting with the word <b>card</b> and deleting the phoneme /d/ from the end turns the word into <b>car</b> . Example: Teacher says, " <b>card</b> ." Students repeat, " <b>card</b> ." Teacher says, "without /d/ at the end." Students respond, " <b>car</b> ."
<b>Phoneme substitution:</b>	Requires that a student knows how to both delete and add phonemes. In a phoneme substitution exercise, a student might be asked to change /g/ to /k/ in the word <b>great</b> . The new word is <b>crate</b> . Example: Teacher says, " <b>great</b> ." Students repeat, " <b>great</b> ." Teacher says, "Change /g/ to /k/." Students respond, " <b>crate</b> ."
<b>Phoneme Reversals:</b>	Students reverse the phonemes in a word, so <b>cat</b> becomes <b>tack</b> .

# PRINT AWARENESS: SETTING UP A LITERACY-RICH ENVIRONMENT

*Each classroom has a voice, and the position of the furniture, the materials, what's on the walls— everything, really—speak and tell the children whom and what you value.*

Source: Dinnerstein, R. (2016). *Choice Time: How to deepen learning through inquiry and play, preK-2*. Heinemann: Portsmouth, NH, p. 22-23.

The layout of a literacy-enriched play-based environment, both indoor and outdoor, needs to be intentional, attractive, and organized. Some things to remember:

- The space is typically **organized into areas or centers**, such as dramatic play, library or language arts area, constructive play, manipulatives, science, snacks and meals, shared reading or circle area, and outdoor garden.
- There should be an **ample supply** of developmentally appropriate books, multimedia, writing tools, paper, signage, and labels in play areas.
- There should be **adequate space for storage**, display, and maintenance.
- There should be **opportunities** for drawing, writing, decoding, reading, and tapping into and extending their background knowledge, language, and early literacy skills.

In **play areas**, there should be materials and writing tools at hand to encourage diverse, everyday literacy experiences. The environment should support a variety of activities: drawing, decoding, reading, and writing—extending communication and expression with varied and complex material and resources that engage children in symbolic representation, literacy, and the visual arts.

More complex materials with multiple parts, multiple modes (visual, auditory, and tactile), and multiple uses make the materials more compelling—they hold children's attention and challenge their thinking.

It is helpful to assess the environment by looking at the space from the children's perspective:

- Space and furnishings should be comfortable for them to talk to friends and adults.
- A place where they can read and write their names regularly and comfortably.
- In the dramatic play area, the space should encourage children to try out new roles, new media, and new ideas.
- All play areas should urge children to explore reading and writing with all their senses and to express their playful selves in this place.

There are numerous ways the early learning environment can be enhanced to support early literacy. Some examples include:

## **Language Arts (Library) Area/Center.**

In this area of the room, provide materials for listening, viewing, writing, and reading. Place picture books on shelves that display the front covers of books. Use soft pillows or comfortable seating. Display alphabet and written materials at the child's eye level. Provide some books that continue over time and new books related to themes.

## **Literacy-Enriched Dramatic Play Area.**

Studies have shown that classrooms with a well-defined literacy-enriched dramatic play area will inform and increase literacy behaviors. The dramatic play area should be set off from the rest of the classroom with ample literacy objects and materials, such as pencils, markers, paper, and notepads. Incorporating a topic or theme related to the overall

integrated curriculum unit will also enhance learning. At least 30 minutes should be given for small groups of children to participate in dramatic play so they can engage in well-planned, sustained play episodes. Teachers and other peers should be nearby to facilitate and guide the play with questions and comments. There needs to be connections between play themes and the rest of the academic curriculum.

### **Indoor and Outdoor Learning Environment.**

According to Moon and Reifel<sup>1</sup>, to address literacy learning in a diverse language classroom, language and literacy learning does not only take place in pretend play and block play but can also

happen throughout the indoor and outdoor learning environment when children pretend to be a teacher holding a book or point to letters with toy pointers. Other opportunities to encourage the use of home language include asking children to tell picture book stories, using Korean menus in pretend play, and encouraging family members to read to their children in their home languages.

---

**Lead Author: Theresa F. Lock**



Photo credit: UH Community College System

---

1 Moon, K. & Reifel, S., (2008). Play in Literacy Learning in a Diverse Language Classroom. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 9(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.2304/ciec.2008.9.1.49>

# WRITING: ADULT'S ROLE IN TAKING DICTATIONS FROM CHILDREN

*Learning does not begin when we feel the need to teach the children. Rather, when the children feel the need to render their communications conventional (shareable), they become ready to learn to write in a very short time. They are ready to construct by themselves (with our support) all the rules of the written code.*

Source: Rubizzi L, Bonilauri S (2012) From messages to writing: Experiences in literacy. In: Edwards C, Gandini L, Forman G (eds), *The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Experience in Transformation*. ABC-CLIO, p 221.

As children share about their experiences, what they know, their perspectives, and their stories, educators are offered valuable opportunities to record the children's words in written form.

## Playing Off the Strengths of Dictations

Taking dictations from children has its history in the Language Experience Approach,<sup>1</sup> which emphasized using children's personal oral language translated into written form as a means to support children's understanding of the code behind the printed word. Children's words are written for them by adults. We include it here because, as one of many approaches, it can play a significant role in supporting young children's learning to read and write. Language and literacy learning is a complex process; language and literacy instruction is no less complex.

**Capturing children's words and language through dictation is significant because it allows children to share their experiences, thoughts, knowledge, perspectives, and stories.**

**Dictation is defined as children's words written for them by adults.**

For the child, sharing inner experiences with an adult and having an adult engage in a talk-story conversation with them:

- Provides a context for quality interactions that are essential for individual learning,
- Couches learning in a relationship building process, and
- Allows the adult to promote the child's agency and autonomy by providing recognition and acknowledgement of the child's world and thought processes.

In addition, dictation requires the child to utilize his/her developing executive function and self-regulation skills to participate in the process of reconstructing and conveying what they want to say through words. In return, as the child expresses him/herself, the adult engages and responds to the child with questions to provoke thinking, provides feedback to extend or deepen understanding, and mediates critical and reflective thinking. This multi-step process includes:

1. Writing words down for children,
2. Reading their words back to them,
3. Jointly noticing and analyzing the words, and
4. Providing key pieces of information about the sounds in words, letters, letter-sound relationships, and patterns in words.

<sup>1</sup> Allen, R. V. (1976). *Language experiences in communication*. Houghton-Mifflin; Stauffer, R. G. (1970). *The language-experience approach to the teaching of reading*. Allyn & Bacon; McGee, L. M., & Richgels, D. J. (2012). *Literacy's beginnings: supporting young readers and writers*. 6th ed. Allyn & Bacon.

When embedded within a respectful and responsive context, this process supports meaningful word knowledge experiences. The ultimate goal of these steps is to be done within a respectful and responsive context which provides meaningful word knowledge experiences. The process described above allows young children to create a text that is relevant and personally significant. It also allows the child to access information about letters, words, and the written text by utilizing the adult's knowledge base, while simultaneously pulling from their own experiential background. The adult facilitates, scaffolds, and explicitly shares with the child, at the same time keeping the language and literacy outcomes and the individual child in mind.

The written word is more than just a written word. A child's sense of self and life experiences are embodied within the written word.

## The Interactive Process of Taking Dictations from Children

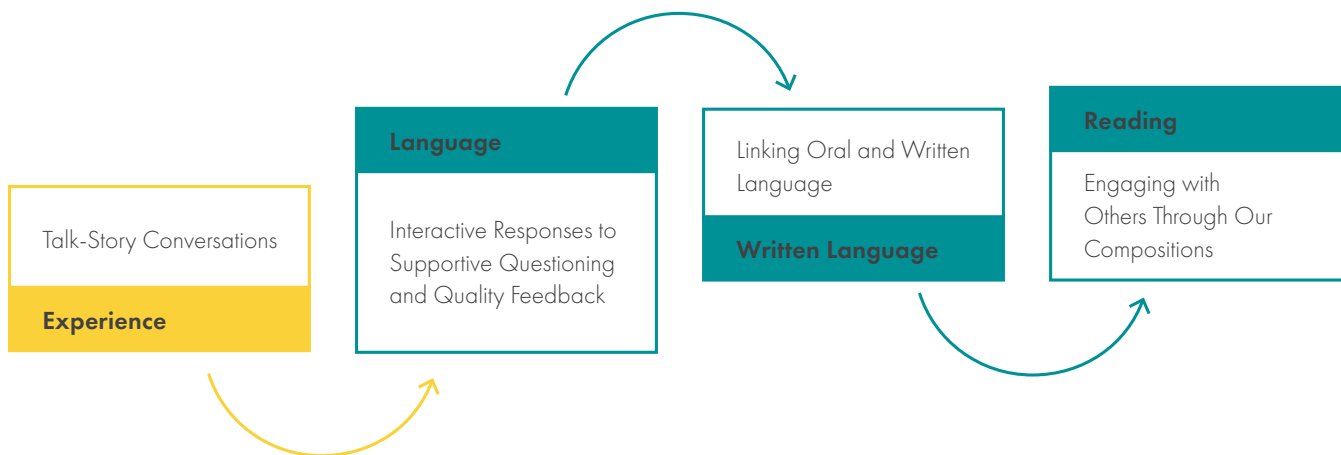
Whether it is sharing about their play, an event, a representation, or creation, take the time to talk with children about their experiences. Approach all of these conversations with a curious mindset. This is an opportunity **to see the experience through the eyes of the child and for you to support the child in elaborating on his/her description or explanation, in addition to extending his/her thinking and deepening understanding.** This back-and-forth conversation rests on your respect for the child's perspective, your thoughtful observations and questions, and the quality of your feedback. Other helpful suggestions include:

- **Offer to write down** the child's words or take advantage of the child's request for you to write the child's words.
- **Establish a physically close proximity to the child.** While recording his/her exact words, the child should be able to see his/her words being written from the same point of view as you to the fullest extent possible.

- **Write the child's words as spoken.** The number of words you record, how to model the writing of the words, and what aspect of the written language you emphasize depends on the child's understanding of the written word (awareness of print, print concepts, phonological awareness, alphabetic principle and phonics, and ability to readily recognize words they frequently encounter). Considerations as to where to write the child's words include the function or purpose of the words being written, availability of materials, area or space available, and (most importantly) the child's preference. Some options:

- Record labels or captions or signage, phrases, full statements, or paragraphs for the child's block structure, magna tile construction, play scenario, insect observation, clay art piece, drawing, easel painting, photograph, or book.
  - Say each word as it is written down (which means restating what the child has just shared and then writing it down).
  - Write and say in sync of the whole word, in syllables, or in individual sounds (phonemes). This depends on the child's knowledge of the written word and the child's zone of proximal development.
  - Write as the child is sharing and then read it back after the recording is completed. Stopping to record the words and saying each word as written may interrupt the child's train of thought while sharing a detailed story.
  - If appropriate during the writing of the words, invite the child to assist in determining how to write a particular letter or spell a word, or do the actual transcribing of a letter or word from talk to print. This allows him/her to access his/her knowledge of letters, sounds, or word parts (moving into what is often called interactive writing).
- Upon completion of recording his/her words, the written piece is read back to the child, shared with others, and reread over a period of time.
    - Read aloud the piece (with the child's assistance or participation in a meaningful way) to others.

- Highlight or draw attention to words, letters, sounds, and the content. Invite perspectives from the child and other children.
- Consider means of displaying or preserving dictation.
- Depending on the child’s word knowledge development, consider words that can be included in the child’s collection of words (i.e., word banks, special words).



## Why do dictation experiences matter for young children?

Engaging in the process of dictation with a caring, knowledgeable, and skilled educator affords numerous pathways within the language and literacy learning journey for young children. Dictation experiences:

- Enhance the development of child-authored text based on the child’s life, resulting in intrinsically motivating and engaging reading opportunities, validating the value and lived experiences of each child.
- Support children’s word knowledge development as writers and readers.
- Enable children to access the writing process to be writers/authors while engaging in high-level thinking.
- Provide assistance for children whose compositions would demand the writing skills they are still developing.
- Present the adult with a means to assess the child’s knowledge and skills and develop plans for meaningful learning experiences.
- Afford opportunities for adults to model the thinking,

knowledge, and skills involved in writing and working with words and language.

*When we adults envision what children are doing as real reading, we interact with them differently and see the richness in what they are doing. When children envision what they are doing as real reading, they see themselves differently.*

Source: Collins, K., & Glover, M. (2015). *I am reading: Nurturing young children’s meaning making and joyful engagement in any book*. Heinemann, p. 11.

## Supportive Environments for Dictations

As is the case for any process or strategy (especially for young children whose learning is dynamic and interactive), the context within which it is embedded influences its impact. Dictations thrive in environments that respect and appreciate children. These environments include:

- A knowledgeable, competent, and trusted adult who:

## As interactive learning experiences, dictations promote valuable outcomes for young children.

### Social-Cultural Connection and Context

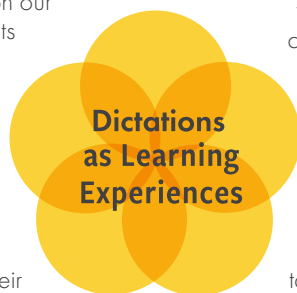
What we do and think speaks for who we are, where we come from, and how we see our world. Our experiences and thinking are of interest to others and worth being represented and documented.

### Learning Competencies & Dispositions

As we reconstruct and share meaningful experiences, we keep important information in mind, stay focused on our purpose and intentions, and make adjustments as necessary. We are curious and observe carefully as our words are written. Our questioning provokes our investigation of how words work.

### Language (unwritten)

Generating the words to describe or explain our thinking and listening to the adults share their thoughts and feedback about what we share allows us to connect with adults and build trust in their intentions. Talking story with adults helps us to better understand things, notice things we never noticed before, and generate questions to inspire us to extend our experiences to learn even more.



### Writing Process

Writing (including drawing) is a way to interact and connect with others. We can read, enjoy, and learn with each other through our written pieces. We decide whom we are composing for, what is important to communicate, how we want to convey it, and what revisions to make. Sharing our piece with others allows us to get their feedback so we can reconsider what and how to communicate through our piece.

### Written Language

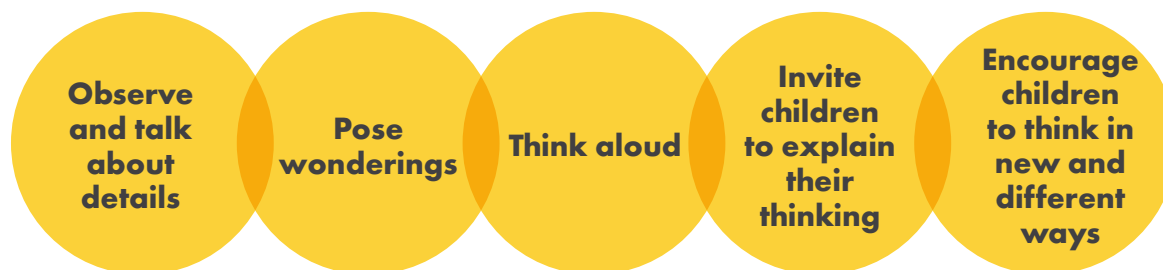
Letters and words are amazing codes to use in place of talking or singing. They are put together to share our ideas, messages, and stories. Letters represent the sounds of our language. Letters work together as words to represent the word sounds and meaning. There are rules and patterns to figure out. As adults write for us, we try to take notice of how letters and words work. This piques our interest in playing with and making sense of them.

- Establishes a caring, responsive adult-child relationship that is respectful of each child's perspectives and his/her social-cultural context.
- Intentionally designs experiences that are grounded in children's capabilities to construct their learning and recognize the importance of individualized learning paths.
- Quality interactions that facilitate meaningful engagement with others and strengthen a sense of belonging and purpose within a community of learners.
- Asset-based (strength-based) and culturally sustaining pedagogies, promoting agency and self-efficacy.
- Inquiry-based opportunities to build shared experiences and understanding with others, providing foundation for communication through language.
- Planned environment designed with meaningful language and literacy experiences and goals.
- Ongoing opportunities to observe the intentional use of written language or print within their environment.
- Ongoing opportunities to play and interact with and make sense of words and text.
- Ongoing opportunities to observe, examine similarities and differences, analyze, question, and investigate.
- A collection of and thoughtfully displayed child-authored text.
- Quality literature and songs for children to enjoy during personal self-initiated moments, interactive read-alouds, and other participatory group experiences.
- Quality literature that embraces the social and cultural context children and families bring to learning to read and the way they engage in making sense of texts; literature respectful of childhood and their community.
- Quality materials to play and work with in representing experiences, understandings, perspectives, imagined ideas, and creations.

---

**Author: Coleen Momohara**

## Creating Opportunities for Observation and Inquiry Throughout the Dictation Experience



### Resources

Allen, R. V. (1976). *Language experiences in communication*. Houghton-Mifflin.

Bear, D. R., Invernizzi, M., Templeton, S., & Johnston, F. (2020). *Words their way: Word study for phonics, vocabulary, and spelling instruction* (7th ed.). Pearson.

Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L., & Cocking, R. R. (Eds.). (1999). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school*. National Academy Press.

Christakis, E. (2016). *The importance of being little: What young children really need from grownups*. Penguin Books.

Collins, K., & Glover, M. (2015). *I am reading: Nurturing young children's meaning making and joyful engagement in any book*. Heinemann.

Doyle, M. A. (2019). Marie M. Clay's theoretical perspective: A literacy processing theory. In D. E. Alvermann, N. J. Unrau, M. Sailors, & R. B. Ruddell (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of literacy* (7th ed., pp. 84 – 100). Routledge.

Duke, N., & Cartwright, K. B. (2021). The science of reading progresses: Communicating advances beyond the simple view of reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 56(S1), S25 – S44.

Fountas, I. C., & Pinnell G. S. (2022). *Leading for literacy: What every school leader needs to know*. Heinemann.

Fountas, I. C., & Pinnell G. S. (2021). *Literacy beginnings: A prekindergarten handbook* (3rd ed.). Heinemann.

Meier, D. R. (2020). *Supporting literacies for children of color: A strength-based approach to preschool literacy*. Routledge.

McGee, L. M., & Richgels, D. J. (2012). *Literacy's beginnings: supporting young readers and writers*. 6th ed. Allyn & Bacon.

Morrow, L. M., Dougherty, S. M., & Tracey, D. H. (2023). Best practices in early literacy. In L. M. Morrow, E. Morrell, & H. K. Casey (Eds.), *Best practices in literacy instruction*. (7th ed., pp. 89 – 115). The Guilford Press.

Nicholson, J., Maniates, H., Yee, S., Williams, T., Ufoegbune, V., & Erazo-Chavez, R. (2022). *Principals as early learning leaders: Effectively supporting our youngest learners*. Teachers College Press.

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2018). *How people learn II: Learners, contexts, and cultures*. The National Academies Press. doi: <https://doi.org/10.17226/24783>.

Ray, K. W., & Glover, M. (2008). *Already ready: Nurturing writers in preschool and kindergarten*. Heinemann.

Roberts, S. K. (2023). Our proud heritage. Making reading meaningful: Sylvia Ashton-Warner and the language experience approach. *Young Children*, 78(1). <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/spring2023/our-proud-heritage>

Stauffer, R. G. (1970). *The language-experience approach to the teaching of reading*. Allyn & Bacon.

Tierney, R. J., & Pearson, P. D. (2021). *History of literacy education: Waves of research and practice*. Teachers College Press.

Wohlwend, K. E. (2019). Play as the literacy of children: Imagining otherwise in contemporary childhoods. In D. E. Alvermann, N. J. Unrau, M. Sailors, & R. B. Ruddell (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of literacy* (7th ed., pp. 301 – 318). Routledge.

# SUPPORTING LANGUAGE & LITERACY DEVELOPMENT IN INFANTS & TODDLERS: A FAMILIAL PERSPECTIVE

For young keiki (child/ren), high level abstract thinking needs to be in place as a foundational aspect of language & literacy learning. In addition for the young child, language & literacy development is an outgrowth of pilina (relationships) as the processes surrounding thought development are first experienced through the makua-keiki (caregiver-child) relationship. Using the lens of pilina, a keiki will begin to develop an understanding of the interactive process of communication through language, and actively engage in this process; this then forms the foundation for their ongoing literacy learning.

Responsive relationships help keiki engage with their physical and social world, and help them interpret these experiences in order for keiki to ultimately develop conceptual understandings of their world - all integral parts of understanding language and literacy. Keiki learn about responsive relationships through multiple, daily interactions and experiences which are fostered by the makua; for instance, serve and return interactions are an example of this.



*Serve and Return interactions shape brain architecture. When an infant or young child babbles, gestures, or cries, and an adult responds appropriately with eye contact, words, or a hug, neural connections are built and strengthened in the child's brain that support the development of communication and social skills. Much like a lively game of tennis, volleyball, or Ping-Pong, this back-and-forth is both fun and capacity-building. When caregivers are sensitive and responsive to a young child's signals and needs, they provide an environment rich in serve and return experiences.*

For more information, see Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University. (n.d.). Serve and return. <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/serve-and-return/>

In addition, the shared experiences that evolve between makua and keiki create a positive context through which pēpē (infants) and kama'iki (toddlers) can learn to focus, strengthen working memory, and develop self-control. These elements play a critical role in ongoing literacy learning. Furthermore, responsive relationships buffer toxic stress and create a safe environment that nurtures curiosity, strengthens resiliency, and encourages motivation as keiki encounter challenges.

At the core of language and literacy learning, are

the human connections that are formed through respectful, responsible, and reciprocal relationships. The foundational motivation is to connect to others and share in the human experience.

---

*Young children experience their world as an environment of relationships, and these relationships affect virtually all aspects of their development- intellectual, social, emotional, physical, behavioral, and moral. The quality and stability of a child's human relationships in the early years lay the foundation for a wide range of later developmental outcomes that really matter.*

Source: National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2004). *Young children develop in an environment of relationships*. Working Paper No. 1. Retrieved from <http://www.developingchild.net>, p.1.

---

## Activities Guide

Ideas and ways parents/caregivers can engage in language and literacy activities with keiki:

### Relationship Building

Goal: Warm, responsive, safe, secure, & stimulating environment builds a foundation for a strong bond and relationship with pēpē (e.g., making sure the needs of pepe are met, or responding to pēpē when pēpē communicates).

Suggested Activities:

- Pick up and soothe pēpē when they cry.
- Describe actions or things in detail as you engage in caring for pēpē: feeding, diapering, and putting pēpē to sleep.
- Follow the lead of pēpē, acknowledge their thoughts and experiences, encourage pēpē to engage & re-engage in activity.
- If pēpē does not want to participate, do not force pēpē to do something s/he does not want to do – encourage, but do not force.

### Communication: Talking, Signing, and Interacting

Goal: A part of Relationship Building is communicating with your keiki. The goal of talking or signing with your keiki is still to build a warm, responsive, safe, secure & stimulating environment.

Suggested Activities:

- Smile, talk & play with baby
  - Use “parent-ese” when speaking to an infant: high-pitched, slow-paced speech. Infants have an easier time following this type of communication.
  - During daily activities narrate what is happening (e.g., caring for needs, etc.). Example: Eating- "First we'll sit in your high chair and get you buckled in. Then we'll get the bowl and spoon ready."
- Enhance 2-way communication with gestures
  - Use motions when singing songs, and use hand gestures to communicate with baby. If this is not how you communicate typically, you may want to incorporate these gestures into using American Sign Language (ASL). Common ASL gestures taught to pēpē include "more," "all pau/done," and "please."
- Use Self-Talk & Parallel Talk when speaking to an infant.
  - “Self talk” is talking out loud about what you are doing, seeing, hearing, or feeling. “Parallel talk” is talking out loud about what your child is



doing, seeing, hearing, or feeling. An easy way to begin is by narrating what you are doing, like you are a radio commentator.

- Converse with your child, responding to his/her cues.
  - Use a variety of language that is directly related to the interests the child expresses.
  - Talk to pēpē in the language you use most often or sign with them. Name & label things for your child.

### **Music and Movement**

Goal: Words and motion, combined with rhythm and melody, connect keiki to their families' cultural traditions and the broader culture within their community. Lyrics and musical rhythm prompt verbal imitation and opportunities to play with the sounds and syllables in words. They also inspire the speech production and children's use of the language. Through music and movement, keiki develop ways of expressing emotions and ideas and understanding the emotions and ideas of others, while building language and literacy concepts. When movement is involved, it helps the brain remember. We interact, connect with each other, and



strengthen relationships through music and movement.

Suggested Activities:

- Play with sounds and motions, and invite pēpē to play with you:
  - peek-a-boo, waving bye-bye, throwing a kiss
  - vocal explorations
  - creation of different kinds of sounds within the environment and imitating the sounds using our voices and mouths/lips
- Explore movement & motions to songs, use hand gestures to communicate with baby, including using American Sign Language. Common ASL gestures taught to pēpē include "more," "all pau/done," and "please."
- Sing to and with pēpē:
  - contemporary and familial songs
  - action songs - "Family Fingers," "Where is Thumbkin," "5 Little Speckled Frogs", "Ke Kino (The Body)", "Eia Ma Kou (Here We Are)"
- Engage in rhythmic activities since rhythm, preliteracy, and auditory processing are interconnected during early childhood:
  - rock pēpē
  - bounce pēpē on lap
  - dance/move while holding pēpē

### **Writing/Symbolism**

Goal: Symbolic understanding is the idea that something stands for something else (i.e., a picture of your dog symbolizes your pet dog; the word 'fork' is a representation of an actual fork). Pretend play starts to develop in toddlerhood, and supports the use of symbolism and understanding of the world and their role in it. Increasing symbolic understanding in early childhood helps children understand letters and word development later.

In addition, building pre-writing skills across developmental domains helps to strengthen fine motor skills & hand eye coordination; these then will help later in life when the keiki is beginning to write.

### Suggested Activities:

- Support fine motor skills & hand eye coordination through eating finger foods or playing with playdough, rattles, blocks, balls, or any toys that promote strengthening fine motor skills.
- Have print & pictures/photos present in the environment with the keiki. Makua can also talk with and explain to the keiki the symbols and the representations of the print and pictures.
- Using sign language. You may want to incorporate using American Sign Language (ASL). Pēpē are often able to communicate through sign, before they can communicate verbally. “More”, “All pau/ Done”, and “Please” are common ASL gestures taught to pēpē.

### Books

Goal: A part of building symbolism is accomplished through reading with your keiki. The goal of sharing experiences around books with keiki, besides increasing literacy and language skills, is for them to become comfortable with and around books, and to spend time with a makua in a warm, responsive & stimulating setting.

### Suggested Activities:

- Create an environment in which books are a natural part of the child’s routine and daily activities. Books or print should be present throughout the environment.
- Keiki should have access to books, including pēpē. Board books (thick books) should be given to pēpē to explore, mouth, touch, throw, and look through. When reading to an infant, encourage touching and exploration of the book.
  - Recommended for pēpē are board books with: high contrast colors, books with faces, books with many images including books with mirrors, books with familiar objects pictured, or homemade books using family pictures/photos.
  - Recommended for toddlers are board books with: lots of images and lots of colors, including books that express emotions. Books that introduce repetition and include rhythm and rhyming words, are usually a favorite of toddlers.
- Share books in engaging ways to capture the attention of the keiki: singing, using motions, varying vocal expressions, and playing games with keiki are all appropriate ways to explore and read a book together.



Photo credit: Hawai'i State Literacy Plan

**Lead Authors: Germaine Tauati, Coleen Momohara, Charis-Ann Sole<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> These authors contributed equally to the development of this report.

# RESOURCES

## Language and Literacy Terms

The following have been adapted from Bear, D. R., Invernizzi, M., Templeton, S., & Johnston, F. (2020). *Words their way: Word study for phonics, vocabulary, and spelling instruction* (7th ed.). Pearson.

Alliteration	The occurrence in a phrase or line of speech of two or more words having the same beginning sound (e.g., <i>Big burly bears bashed berry baskets</i> ).
Alphabetic Principle	The concept that letters or groups of letters in alphabetic orthographies (i.e., written systems) represent the phonemes (sounds) of spoken language.
Blend	To combine the sounds represented by letters to pronounce a word; sound out.
Decoding (Reading)	(1) Using one or more strategies to identify a printed word and its meaning; (2) Using knowledge of the logic of the written symbol system (especially letter-sound relationships and patterns in alphabetic orthographies) to translate print into speech; encoding involves translating speech into print using this knowledge.
Encoding (Writing)	Involves translating speech into print using the knowledge of the logic of the written symbol system, especially letter-sound relationships and patterns in alphabetic orthographies.
Fluency	The ability to act (speak, read, write) with ease and accuracy.
Interactive Writing	A writing process used to teach younger students how to write. The process involves the sharing of a pen between the teacher and students.
Onset	The initial consonant(s) sound of a single syllable or word. The onset of the word <i>sun</i> is /s/. The onset of the word <i>slide</i> is /sl/.
Phoneme	The smallest unit of sound in spoken language that makes a difference in communication. The spoken word <i>nose</i> consists of three phonemes: /n/-/o/-/z/.
Phoneme Segmentation	The process of dividing a spoken word into the smallest unit of sound within that word. The word <i>bat</i> can be divided or segmented into three phonemes: /b/, /ă/, /t/.
Phonemic Awareness	The ability to consciously isolate, identify, and manipulate individual phonemes in a spoken language. It is often assessed by the ability to tap, count, or push a penny forward for every sound heard in a word like <i>cat</i> : /k/, /ă/, /t/.
Phonetic	Representing the sounds of speech with a set of distinct symbols (letters), each denoting a single sound.
Phonics	An approach to teaching reading that emphasizes the systemic relationship between the sounds of language and the graphemes (i.e., letters or letter combinations) that represent those sounds. Learners apply this knowledge to decode printed words.

Phonological Awareness	An awareness of various speech sounds, such as syllables, rhyme, and individual phonemes.
Phonology	The study of speech sounds and their functions in a language(s).
Predictable Text	Text for beginning readers with repetitive language patterns, rhythm, rhyme, and illustrations that make it easy to read and remember.
Rimes	A unit composed of the vowel and any following consonants within a syllable (e.g., ag in the word tag).
Shared Reading	An early childhood instructional strategy in which the teacher involves a group of young children in a reading of text in order to help them learn aspects of beginning literacy, such as print conventions, print tracking, the concept of a word, and beginning reading strategies.
Syllable	A unit of speech, either a word or a part of a word, containing a vowel or vowel sound.

## Position Statements

International Literacy Association. (2020). *Phonological awareness in early childhood literacy development. position statement and research brief.* [https://www.literacyworldwide.org/docs/default-source/where-we-stand/9457\\_Phonological\\_Awareness\\_1-2020\\_Final.pdf](https://www.literacyworldwide.org/docs/default-source/where-we-stand/9457_Phonological_Awareness_1-2020_Final.pdf)

International Reading Association (IRA). (1997 ). *The role of phonics in reading instruction.* <https://www.literacyworldwide.org/docs/default-source/where-we-stand/phonics-position-statement.pdf>

International Reading Association (IRA). (1998). *Phonemic awareness and the teaching of reading: A position statement from the board of directors of the International Reading Association.* <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED435086.pdf>

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the International Reading Association (IRA). (1998). *Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children.* <https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/PSREAD98.PDF>

## Early Literacy Resources

Arizona Department of Education. (2014). *Developing a thriving reader from the early years: A continuum of effective literacy practices.* <https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/2016/11/Developing%20a%20Thriving%20Reader.pdf?id=583c67e3aadebe13d87d426c>

Bodrova, E., Leong, D. J., Paynter, D. E., & Hughes, C. (2003). *Scaffolding literacy development in the kindergarten classroom.* McREL.

Burchinal, M., Krowka, S., Newman-Gonchar, R., Jayanthi, M., Gersten, R., Wavell, S., Lyskawa, J., Haymond, K., Bierman, K., Gonzalez, J. E., McClelland, M. M., Nelson, K., Pentimonti, J., Purpura, D. J., Sachs, J., Sarama, J., Schlesinger-Devlin, E., Washington, J., & Rosen, E. (2022). *Preparing Young Children for School (WWC 2022009).* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <https://whatworks.ed.gov/>.

Clay, M. M. (2014). *By different paths to common outcomes: Literacy, learning, and teaching.* Heinemann.

Kelley, S. (2021). Best practices in early childhood literacy. UCONN: NEAG School of Education. <https://cepare.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3130/2021/10/CEPARE-Early-Childhood-Literacy-Oct-2021.pdf>

National Early Literacy Panel. (2008). Developing early literacy: Report of the national early literacy panel. National Institute for Literacy & National Center for Family Literacy.

Zero to Three. (2022). Supporting language and literacy skills from 12-24 months. <https://www.zerotothree.org/resource/supporting-language-and-literacy-skills-from-12-24-months/>

## Research Articles & Abstracts

Axelrod, Y. (2017). "Ganchulinas" and "Rainbowli" colors: Young multilingual children play with language in head start classroom. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 45: 103–110. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-014-0631-z> **Abstract:** The purpose of this ethnographic case study was to study the language development of 4-year-old emergent bilinguals in a bilingual (Spanish/English) Head Start classroom with flexible language practices. Data were collected throughout the 10-month school year by visiting the classroom 2–3 times per week. Data include: field notes (observations and detailed notes of children language practices); transcriptions of interviews with teachers, families and administrators; and artifacts of children's work. The data were analyzed by examining shifts and patterns in the children's language practices over the year and the ways in which they negotiated language with others. Interviews with teachers, families and administrators provide insight into the language ideologies of the classroom, school and community. This paper highlights the language practices of two children to demonstrate the ways in which hybrid language practices, fostered by the teachers, created a classroom environment that allowed children to draw from their full linguistic repertoire to develop and engage with the curriculum.

Baker, M. (2019). Playing, talking, co-constructing: Exemplary teaching for young dual language

learners across program types. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 47: 115–130. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-018-0903-0> **Abstract:** An increase in the Dual Language Learner (DLL) population has led to a critical need for early childhood educators to understand how to best serve DLL children and their families. This article describes a qualitative multiple-case study that investigated specific teaching practices for DLLs in six community-nominated exemplary preschool classrooms across three program types (Head Start, public Pre-K, and private university-affiliated preschool programs). The aim of this study was to learn from exemplary teachers about their beliefs and practices for teaching young DLL children. Data collection sources included interviews with teachers, classroom observations, video recordings, and classroom artifacts. Findings demonstrate that exemplary teachers hold asset-oriented beliefs about bilingualism and diversity, viewing DLL children and families as knowledgeable resources to the community. With these beliefs as a foundation, teachers enact a wide repertoire of practices tailored for DLL children, including: fostering relationships and belonging through embedding home languages and cultural practices in the classroom; emphasizing guided play, co-constructed curriculum, and ongoing observational assessment; and scaffolding and teaching the English language. Implications for teaching and teacher education are discussed.

Banerjee, R., Alsalman, A. & Alqafari, S. (2016). Supporting sociodramatic play in preschools to promote language and literacy skills of English language learners. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 44: 299–305. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-015-0715-4> **Abstract:** English language learners are often at risk for communication and language delays—crucial elements in the foundation of early literacy skills. Studies have shown that preschool children involved in sociodramatic play demonstrate greater proficiency and interest in language development and reading. The manuscript shares evidence-based strategies to support early literacy skills for English language learners during sociodramatic play during center times in a preschool routine. Specific

environmental adaptations and adult interventions that teachers can use in their preschool classrooms to facilitate play that encourages early literacy skills are described.

Bennett, S. V., Gunn, A. A., Gayle-Evans, G., Barrera IV, E. S., & Leung, C. B. (2018). Culturally responsive literacy practices in an early childhood community. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 46: 241–248. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-017-0839-9>

**Abstract:** Early childhood educators continue to see an increase in their culturally diverse student population. As our country continues to grow as a multicultural nation, it is imperative that our early childhood classrooms embrace this rich diversity and provide experiences that affirm all students, families and communities. We (teacher educators) synthesized the current research into the following five frameworks that we believe embody the foundation of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) in an early childhood setting: (a) developing a culturally responsive classroom community, (b) family engagement, (c) critical literacy within a social justice framework, (d) multicultural literature, and (e) culturally responsive print rich environments. In this article we situate each framework within the larger context of research. Next we move beyond discussing CRT practices by offering ideas on how culturally responsive classrooms look and how to implement this pedagogy and in an early childhood setting with real classroom practices.

Bingham, G. E., Quinn, M. F., & Gerde, H. K. (2017). Examining early childhood teachers' writing practices: Associations between pedagogical supports and children's writing skills. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 39: 35–46. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2017.01.002>

**Abstract:** Despite a wide recognition about the importance of young children's language and literacy environments to later achievement, little is known about teachers' supportive approaches to early writing in preschool classroom contexts and the ways in which these supportive approaches relate to children's writing development. This study examined how teachers support writing in their classrooms and how these supports related to children's expressions of early writing skill. Forty-one preschool and Pre-K teachers

in three US states and their students (N = 488) participated. Teachers were observed in their classrooms and instances of writing support were recorded and qualitatively coded and analyzed. Findings indicated that teachers supported children's use of writing, however, the scope and focus of the supportive strategies used were limited. Examinations of teachers' supportive writing practices revealed that teachers were much more likely to focus on children's handwriting and spelling skills, with less attention to composing. Analyses examining associations between teachers' pedagogical practice and children's writing skills indicated that children from classrooms with teachers who supported composing exhibited stronger writing skills. Results are discussed in relation to early childhood curricular and teaching practices as well as to broader policy issues.

Bingham, G.E., Quinn, M.F., McRoy, K., Zhang, Ziao, & Gerde, H. K. (2018). Integrating writing into the early childhood curriculum: A frame for intentional and meaningful writing experiences. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 46: 601–611. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-018-0894-x>

**Abstract:** Despite the importance of early writing development to children's school success, research documents that early childhood teachers spend little time actively supporting children's writing development in preschool classrooms. This article provides a framework for integrating writing experiences across the early childhood curriculum. Practical examples are given regarding how writing opportunities can be incorporated into existing activities and play settings. The metaphor of backgrounding and foregrounding writing experiences is used to illustrate ways that teachers can set writing rich environments and activities in a manner that makes it easier for teachers to bring these experiences into everyday learning opportunities. Attention is given to how teachers can bring writing to the foreground of the curriculum by drawing attention to writing materials, making natural connections with children's interest and play, and scaffolding children's early writing attempts and experiences.

Bohanek, J. G., Fivush, R., Zaman, W., Lepore, C. E., Merchant, S., & Duke, M. P. (2009). Narrative

interaction in family dinnertime conversations. *Merrill-Palmer quarterly* (Wayne State University. Press), 55(4): 488–515. <https://doi.org/10.1353/mpq.0.0031> **Abstract:** Reminiscing has been shown to be a critical conversational context for the development of autobiographical memory, self-concept, and emotional regulation (for a review, see Fivush, Haden, & Reese, 2006). Although much past research has examined reminiscing between mothers and their preschool children, very little attention has been given to family narrative interaction with older children. In the present study, we examined family reminiscing in spontaneous narratives that emerged during family dinnertime conversations. The results revealed that mothers contributed more to the narratives than did fathers in that they provided, confirmed, and negated more information, although fathers requested more information than mothers. In exploratory analyses, mothers' contributions to shared family narratives were found to be related to fewer internalizing and externalizing behaviors in their children, while fathers' contributions to individual narratives of day-to-day experiences were related to fewer internalizing and externalizing behaviors in their children. These results indicate that mothers and fathers may play different roles in narrative construction with their children, and there is some suggestion that these differences may also be related to children's behavioral adjustment.

Boivin, N. (2021). Co-participatory multimodal intergenerational storytelling: Preschool children's relationship with modality creating elder inclusion. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 23(4). <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/14687984211012055> **Abstract:** The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted elderly people as a vulnerable and excluded community, and connecting to the younger social media generation requires a shift in intergenerational storytelling performance. Recent research on multimodality has emphasized its benefits for the interactional process in storytelling. This study examines three aspects of storytelling – participation, multimodality, and emotional interaction – and uses co-creation and multimodal discourse analysis to investigate two questions: (1)

*To what extent can intergenerational storytelling benefit older people's community engagement? (2) In a globalized world, how do children's relationships with modalities create new lifelong learning opportunities for elders?* Qualitative data were collected from pre- and post-session discussions from six storytelling sessions, video recordings made by the participants, and multimodal artwork created by the children after each session. The results reveal (1) that older participants had to adapt their multimodal storytelling, (2) that children preferred co-participatory multimodal storytelling, and (3) that co-participatory multimodal intergenerational storytelling benefits preschool and elders' well-being.

Bowling, E.C.C., Cabell, S.Q. (2019). Developing readers: Understanding concept of word in text development in emergent readers. *Early Childhood Educ J* 47: 143–151. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-018-0902-1> **Abstract:** A child's ability to pinpoint accurately to words while reading aloud a memorized text showcases his/her development of concept of word in text. This ability demonstrates the extent to which key early literacy skills are integrated (e.g., alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness). Research indicates that attaining a concept of word in text is a watershed literacy event that allows a reader to more readily acquire a store of sight words. Concept of word in text develops in a predictable fashion, progressing in three stages: developing, rudimentary, and firm. During the kindergarten year, teachers can foster children's development of concept of word in text in order to accelerate children's literacy learning. This article provides instructional suggestions that teachers can use to support this development.

Britsch, S. (2010). Photo-booklets for english language learning: incorporating visual communication into early childhood teacher preparation. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 38(3): 171-177. DOI: [10.1007/s10643-010-0412-2](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-010-0412-2) **Abstract:** Teachers can integrate discussion and writing about photographs into the early childhood curriculum to build speaking, reading, and writing skills in any language. Although little available research focuses on photography and early

childhood education as related specifically to English Language Learners, several current teacher resources do focus on uses of photography in classrooms for young children. What is lacking, however, is substantial reference to the planned use of language along with image creation through photography for the language development of English Language Learners (ELLs) in the early childhood classroom. Teacher training, too, devotes insufficient attention to either visual literacy or visual communication. This article provides a discussion of the role of the visual in English language development as a basis for a sample photography project that can be incorporated into a course for pre-service teachers in methods of teaching ELLs. Pre-service teachers thus experience the project first-hand in terms of image creation and the planning of appropriate content, language, and visual literacy objectives. The resulting visual products then function as teaching resources themselves; however, effective visual learning for ELLs requires that teachers possess such an informed understanding of the techniques that structure and assist language development.

Brown, S. (2011). Becoming literate: Looking across curricular structures at situated identities. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 39: 257–265. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-011-0468-7> **Abstract:** The United States is becoming more multilingual with globalization. Public schools continue to enroll increasing numbers of students who speak a language other than English. This adds to the rich diversity of classrooms while at the same time offers challenges for educators. This collaborative-ethnographic style research study investigates the ways in which identities are constructed for and by an English language learner (ELL) as she uses language at school. The author explores classroom reading events and the ways one ELL negotiates these events with her peers in an English dominant classroom. Results reveal the fluidity of identities across classroom curricular structures at school.

Calderon-Berumen, F. (2021) Latina immigrant mothers as educators: a testimonio of becoming. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 34(3): 262-275. DOI:

[10.1080/09518398.2020.1753847](https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2020.1753847) **Abstract:**

This article presents the experiences of Latina immigrant women who have raised or are raising children in the United States. As part of a minoritized group, Latina immigrant women have personal lived experiences that inform and affect the ways they interact with the world on a daily basis and that have shaped their personal and cultural identities in multiple ways. Those personal experiences are introduced in a testimonio, a personal narrative that portrays a collective story. Due to their experiences in becoming immigrants, these women have also developed particular ways of knowing, being, and doing that inform and guide their ways of mothering. The main implications of this testimonio call for educators' attention -at all levels- to find alternate ways of validating social and cultural ways of being and doing that unfolds outside educational institutions, especially from minoritized groups, which cultural practices may differ from those of the dominant culture.

Campbell, S. (2020). Teaching phonics without teaching phonics: Early childhood teachers' reported beliefs and practices. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 20(4): 783-814. Phonics continues to be one of the most controversial literacy instruction topics debated in the USA, the UK, Australia and New Zealand. Given the importance placed on phonics in early literacy learning and the role that teacher beliefs play in the types of code-related literacy children encounter, the purpose of this two phase mixed-methods study was to investigate the relationship between teachers' reported play-literacy beliefs, their phonics practices and the reasons behind their decisions not to use commercial phonics programmes in the prior-to-school years. This mixed-methods study found there was a correlation related to teachers' play-based, child-centred literacy beliefs, their reported holistic early literacy phonics practices and their decisions not to use commercial phonics programmes. Logistic regression analysis revealed a positive and significant relationship between early childhood teachers who stated that they would never consider using a commercial phonics programme and their reported belief that children learn letters and sounds incidentally. Thematic analysis of interview

data found that the teachers interpreted phonics instruction as a method occurring as an isolated skill–drill activity and subsequently held strong views against heavily scripted commercial phonics programmes. The interview data also revealed a range of play-based and holistic phonics examples embedded through everyday classroom experiences over explicit systematic instruction reported. Early childhood teachers' knowledge, experience and reported beliefs, together with a high level of confidence in addressing parental pressure to engage in formalised phonics lessons, were reasons behind their reported practices. This study has important implications for understanding the different types of phonics methods children encounter, teacher concerns over loss of play-based literacy learning and the continuing controversy between adult-directed phonics and child-initiated, play-literacy practices.

Chang, N., & Cress, S. (2014). Conversations about visual arts: Facilitating oral language. *Early Childhood Educ J* 42: 415–422. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-013-0617-2> **Abstract:** Visual arts, such as drawings, are attractive to most young children. Marks left on paper by young children contain meaning. Although it is known that children's oral language could be enhanced through communication with adults, rarely is there a series of dialogues between adults and young children about their drawings. Often heard instead are simple comments given by adults like "It is a neat picture!" "You did a great job painting!" Yet, dialogic communication between adults and young children could not only help facilitate children's oral language, but also bring about many other merits. Regrettably, little literature addresses oral language facilitation about visual arts. This article describes the significance of facilitating children's oral language via adults' talking with young children about their visual arts based on Otto's (Literacy development in early childhood: reflective teaching for birth to age eight, 3edn. Pearson Education Inc, Upper Saddle River, 2008) linguistic scaffolding strategies and Halliday's (Language in a social perspective: explorations in the functions of language. Edward Arnold Model of Language Functions, London, 1973). Implications and suggestions for future

research are given at the end of this paper.

Colliver, Y., Harrison, L. J., Brown, J. E., & Humburg, P. (2022). Free play predicts self-regulation years later: Longitudinal evidence from a large Australian sample of toddlers and preschoolers. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 59: 148–161. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2021.11.011> **Abstract:** Self-regulation skills are foundational to successful participation in society, and predict a suite of positive outcomes throughout life. It has long been asserted that free (i.e., unstructured) play is important for the development of self-regulation, but studies investigating play and self-regulation have faced empirical limitations. The current study used a large sample (n = 2213) from the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children to investigate time spent in unstructured quiet and active play activities at ages 2–3 and 4–5 years as a predictor of self-regulation abilities 2 years later. Children's play was reported by parents who completed a 24-hour time-use diary for 1 random weekend day and 1 weekday. Self-regulation was indexed at ages 4–5 and 6–7 by parent-, teacher- and observer-reported items comparable to similar large, longitudinal studies. Results showed that the more time children spent in unstructured quiet play in the toddler and preschool years, the better their self-regulation abilities at ages 4–5 and 6–7 years, even after controlling for earlier self-regulation abilities and other known predictors. Further, between 1 and 5 hours of preschoolers' unstructured active play time significantly predicted self-regulation 2 years later. This study provides early support for parenting programs designed to increase opportunities for children to spend time in unstructured, free play in the early years.

DeBaryshe, B.D., Gauci, K.T. (2017). Early reading first as a model for improving preschool literacy instruction and outcomes. In: McLachlan, C., Arrow, A. (eds) *Literacy in the Early Years. International Perspectives on Early Childhood Education and Development*, vol 17. Springer, Singapore. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-2075-9\\_10](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-2075-9_10) **Abstract:** The Early Reading First program (ERF) was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education to develop model 'preschool centers of excellence' that enhance the

early language and literacy skills of low-income preschool children. In this chapter we report on the outcomes of an ERF project conducted with Head Start classrooms in Hawai'i. The intervention included intensive professional development on research-based curriculum and instruction, teacher-child interaction, family engagement, and child progress monitoring. Outcomes included large gains on intentional literacy instruction, classroom quality, and family engagement, and moderate to large gains on child emergent literacy skills. The intervention had little effect on oral language outcomes. Despite the academic focus, most teachers were highly satisfied with the experience, reporting increased child motivation and considerable professional growth.

Dyson, A. H. (2020) "This isn't my real writing": The fate of children's agency in too-tight curricula. *Theory Into Practice*, 59(2): 119-127. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2019.1702390>  
**Q Abstract:** In this article, I adopt a practice theory consideration of student agency, that is, I consider students' power to act on their interests and intentions, on their own inclinations; this will-to-act-on-the-world is central to becoming an active, adaptive participant across the life span. As practice theorist Shery Ortner has explained, none of us have unencumbered agency; we are all constrained and empowered by the institutional structures within which we live. Influenced by practice theory, I draw on ethnographic studies to examine the dynamics through which increasingly structured classrooms for young school children may dampen child agency or push it underground or out-of-school, thereby pushing out as well important dimensions of children's intellectual energy. I conclude with a consideration of what makes young children's composing, or any constructive and creative act, willful and intentional, that is, "real."

Flint, T. K. (2020). Responsive play: Creating transformative classroom spaces through play as a reader response. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 20(2): 385-410. **Abstract:** This eight-month study, conducted in a first-grade classroom in the southwestern United States, analyzed young children's playful responses to literature. It focuses on framing a theory that underpins play as a form

of reader response, which I term 'responsive play'. It further aims to answer the overarching research question and the sub-question: What are the affordances of play for responding to text in a first-grade classroom? What are the sociocultural resources that children use to respond to and make meaning with text? Findings suggest that the children in this study created a space for learning and understanding, through their responsive play, that allowed them to think through, demonstrate, and share their experiential knowledge, their funds of knowledge, and their intertextual knowledge -- as sociocultural resources -- and to connect these to their literacy learning as they cooperatively transacted with and responded to various books. These findings suggest that children's play, language, and literacy are complementary, that children's responsive play should be encouraged in the classroom setting, and that children's experiences and funds of knowledge should be valued as additive to the academic learning context. Implications of this study include that responsive play can be viewed as a generative source of academic learning and that the notion of reader response, in research and practice, can be reconceived to include responsive play.

Flynn, E. E., Hoy, S. L., & Garcia, M. A. (2019). Translanguaging through story: Empowering children to use their full language repertoire. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 21(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798419838569>  
**Abstract:** Translanguaging through story documents the progression of an emerging bilingual preschooler who draws on his full linguistic repertoire to story his experiences with others. Over the course of the school year, Diego progresses in his ability to tell a complete story in both English and Spanish. Repeated engagement in storytelling provides the support needed for Diego to continue and extend ideas in his stories and in his drawing and play. The case shows how opening the space for children to use their full language repertoire enables a child to reciprocally develop named languages like English and Spanish as he improves at academic tasks like telling stories.

Frey, N., & Fisher, D. (2010). Reading and the brain: What early childhood educators need to know.

*Early Childhood Education Journal*, 38(2): 103–110. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-010-0387-z> **Abstract:** This manuscript focuses on neuroscience research that may have applicability for early childhood educators. Beginning with cautions about the usefulness of neurosciences, we offer reviews of several ideas that can inform the practice of early childhood educators. We begin with the understanding that reading is not innate, meaning that every brain must be taught to read. We continue with the idea that language learning physically changes the brain to remind early childhood educators that their instruction can be powerful. We note the research focused on repetition that leads to automaticity, a key finding from reading research that results in skilled readers. We also discuss the importance that visuals play in learning and then note that children are hardwired to imitate others, which is why teacher modeling is so important. We conclude the article with future research needs and implications for educators.

Gerde, H.K., Bingham, G.E. & Wasik, B.A. (2012). Writing in early childhood classrooms: Guidance for best practices. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 40: 351–359. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-012-0531-z> **Abstract:** Writing is a critical emergent literacy skill that lays the foundation for children’s later literacy skills and reading achievement. Recent work indicates that many early childhood programs offer children materials and tools for engaging in writing activities but teachers rarely are seen modeling writing for children or scaffolding children’s writing attempts. Early childhood educational settings hoping to support children’s literacy development should provide multiple opportunities for children to observe teachers model writing, provide teacher support and scaffolding for children’s writing attempts and engage children in meaningful writing in their play. This paper provides twelve research-based guidelines for supporting children’s writing development in early childhood classrooms.

Gerde, H. K., Skibbe, L. E., Wright, T. S., Douglas, S. N. (2019). Evaluation of head start curricula for standards-based writing instruction. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 47: 97–105. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-018-0906-x>

[org/10.1007/s10643-018-0906-x](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-018-0906-x) **Abstract:** Writing is a core school readiness skill, yet preschools typically provide children with limited writing opportunities. To consider how curricular materials guide writing instruction, the five most common Head Start curricula were systematically examined in accordance with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. Curricula were coded considering the writing objectives they targeted, the teaching strategies proposed to promote early writing, the information provided on how to individualize instruction, and the tools provided to assess children’s development in this area. Analyses indicated that although all curricula included objectives and guidance for writing these programs varied in their focus on orthography, mechanics, and composing. The primary focus was on materials, and guidance for supporting writing typically lacked sufficient specificity to implement the guidance in ways that promote children’s writing development. Across curricula, there was scant information on how to differentiate writing instruction. The curricula themselves provided little in terms of assessment; two curricula did include a supplementary assessment program. Recommendations for enhanced supports for Head Start teachers are provided.

Gjems, L. (2010). Children’s narrating as a way of learning about other people’s beliefs in interaction with teachers. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 38: 271–278. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-010-0413-1> **Abstract:** As a genre of talk, narratives represent important building blocks in children’s learning in many fields. The purpose of the study presented in this article is to examine how teachers can encourage children’s learning about people’s beliefs through narrating. Narratives play an important part in children’s learning to understand other people and how they will act according to what they believe, think or know. This study is based on video observations of six children, 3 and 4 years old, and their spontaneous personal narratives told to teachers over a period of 8 months. The narrative analysis revealed that in most of the narratives the teachers were passive listeners or were concerned about the structure of events. The teachers seldom asked questions about the children’s mental state or disagreed

with the child in ways that revealed their different beliefs. Suggestions about implications of this study are that early childhood teacher education should focus on talking with children about what they may think or believe concerning narrated events, and also reveal what they think and believe themselves.

Hall, A.H., Matthew Boyer, D. & Beschoner, E.A. (2017). Examining kindergarten students' use of and interest in informational text. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 45: 703–711. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-016-0805-y> **Abstract:** This article describes a dual-case study that was conducted to examine the effects of The Tools Approach on kindergarten students' use of and interest in informational text. Children in one teacher's kindergarten classroom during two subsequent years participated in a writing intervention which included learning about text features, conducting group research, and conducting individual research. During both cases, data were collected during child, parent, and teacher interviews. The results of this study showed that children participating in The Tools Approach strategy increased their abilities to identify and use text features to gather and disseminate information. Children also demonstrated increased interest in reading and writing informational text as a result of their participation in the study.

Hall, A. H., Toland, M. D., Grisham-Brown, J., & Graham, S. (2014). Exploring interactive writing as an effective practice for increasing Head Start students' alphabet knowledge skills. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 42:423-430. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-013-0594-5> **Abstract:** The current study used a pretest–posttest randomized control group design with 73 Head Start students, ages 3–5 years. The researcher served as the interactive writing teacher for the treatment group, rotating to five different classrooms in one Head Start center 3–4 days a week for 13 weeks. Children in the treatment group received a 10–15 min interactive writing lesson each day in small groups within their own classroom settings. Children in the control group received standard literacy instruction in small groups with their own classroom teachers. Child outcome data on upper case, lower case, and

letter sound identification were collected before and after the intervention for both groups. Based on the large frequency of zeros on outcomes, zero-inflated Poisson regression analyses were performed. The results of the study showed that children receiving interactive writing identified more lower case and upper case letters at the end of the study relative to children in the control, but no differences were observed on letter sounds. While continued evaluation of the interactive writing strategy is needed in the preschool setting, the evidence from the current study shows encouraging trends in alphabet knowledge skill development as a result of this strategy.

Hare, J. (2011). 'They tell a story and there's meaning behind that story': Indigenous knowledge and young indigenous children's literacy learning. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 12(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798411417378> **Abstract:** This research draws on the reflections from group discussions with indigenous families and interviews with early childhood educators and community stakeholders from five First Nations reserve communities in Canada whose young children participate in the national aboriginal Head Start On Reserve (AHSOR) programme. The purpose of the study was to examine the contributions of indigenous knowledge to young indigenous children's literacy learning. In the course of this examination what became clear is that there is a greater set of literacy activities in these families than is recognized by early learning settings. Further, there is a literacy orientation within their indigenous knowledge systems that, draws on oral tradition, land-based experiences and ceremonial practices that, when linked to the discourses of schooling and literacy, provide the basis for improving educational outcomes for indigenous children and families, whose relationship with schooling has been historically troubled.

Hoffman, E.B., Whittingham, C.E. (2017). A neighborhood notion of emergent literacy: One mixed methods inquiry to inform community learning. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 45: 175–185. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-016-0780-3> **Abstract:** Using a convergent parallel mixed methods design, this study considered the early

literacy and language environments actualized by childcare providers and parents of young children (ages 3–5) living in one large urban community in the United States of America. Both childcare providers and parents responded to questionnaires and participated in focus groups held at various community sites within the neighborhood. Using snowball sampling, 77 childcare providers and 149 parents responded to surveys that asked about their individual roles in children’s emergent literacy development. Subsequently, several focus groups were held, ensuring childcare provider and parent representation from both center and home-based early childcare sites. Study questions considered the consistencies and inconsistencies in beliefs and actions by members of both community groups regarding early literacy development. Consistencies and inconsistencies were identified through a descriptive comparative analysis within and across survey and focus group data to guide the implementation of practical, ecological, research-based community learning that can be used as a model for other communities seeking to create similar communities of practice.

Huang, J., Siu, C. T.-S., & Cheung, H. (2022). Longitudinal relations among teacher-student closeness, cognitive flexibility, intrinsic reading motivation, and reading achievement. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 61: 179–189. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2022.07.009>  
**Abstract:** This study examines the roles of cognitive flexibility and reading motivation in explaining the longitudinal link between teacher-student closeness and reading achievement. The investigation is motivated by the fact that cognitive flexibility and reading motivation have been shown to be correlates of teacher-student relationship and reading achievement, yet their mediating roles are less well understood. The current study uses a sample of 17,342 students (8463 females; mean age = 73.42 months) from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study with different ethnic backgrounds. A declining trend of teacher-student closeness from kindergarten to Grade 2 was found. Teacher-student closeness at kindergarten was positively associated with reading achievement at Grade 4 and the effect

was mediated by cognitive flexibility and reading motivation at Grade 3. Declining closeness from kindergarten to Grade 2 was not related to the other associations. Consistent with the extended attachment view, these findings highlight the importance of an early supportive teacher-student relationship in promoting flexibility in thinking and interest in reading. This enhances subsequent reading performance in the middle elementary school years.

Huerta, M., & Jackson, J. (2010). Connecting literacy and science to increase achievement for English language learners. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 38: 205–211. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-010-0402-4> **Abstract:** Giving students a purpose and a passion for sharing their thinking through authentic learning experiences and giving them tools for writing through which they can risk new vocabulary, new language, and new thought is critical for the linguistic and cognitive development of students. Furthermore, students develop a deep understanding of content they have heard and read when given time to process information through writing and speaking. This article describes one teacher’s quest to identify and implement effective research-based instructional strategies that she could use to successfully support her kindergarten ELL students during science instruction.

Jalongo, M.R., & Hirsh, R.A. (2010). Understanding reading anxiety: New insights from neuroscience. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 37: 431–435. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-010-0381-5>  
**Abstract:** Recent advances in research have furthered understanding of the many roles that emotions play in fostering effective learning. This editorial argues, against fashion, that the affective domain is neither separate from nor less significant in the learning process than the cognitive domain. It begins with a vignette of a struggling reader. It then defines emotions and explains their role in learning, using cognitive psychology and neuroscience as the research base. Next, it examines the influence of the affective domain on learning to interpret symbols. The editorial concludes with an analysis of reading anxiety and recommendations for practice.

- Jalongo, M. R., & Sobolak, M. J. (2011). Supporting young children's vocabulary growth: The challenges, the benefits, and evidence-based strategies. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 38(6): 421–429. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-010-0433-x> **Abstract:** The complexity of words makes vocabulary development a multi-faceted process that presents challenges to early childhood educators, offers benefits to young learners, and must be supported through evidence-based strategies. All students, regardless of socio-economic status or background, need to make significant gains in receptive and expressive vocabulary at home and at school each year in order to support their growth in literacy. Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and those students who speak English as a second language are particularly at risk of failing to make proficient vocabulary gains. The most effective way for early childhood educators to enhance the vocabulary development of all students is to implement evidence-based strategies for teaching vocabulary. A key finding in the research is that young children need to be actively engaged in vocabulary development if they are to remember new words and begin to grasp the multiple, nuanced meanings of words. Other effective vocabulary instruction practices include meaningful repetition; combining the enactive, iconic, and symbolic modes; and reading aloud in a dialogic style. In light of the trend in the research data that links the child's vocabulary level to gains in reading comprehension, early childhood educators have a special obligation to teach vocabulary more effectively.
- Jones, C. D., Clark, S. K., & Reutzel, D. R. (2012). Enhancing alphabet knowledge instruction: Research implications and practical strategies for early childhood educators. *Teacher Education and Leadership Faculty Publications*. Paper 404. [https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/teal\\_facpub/404](https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/teal_facpub/404) **Abstract:** Alphabet knowledge is consistently recognized as the strongest, most durable predictor of later literacy achievement. Recent research offers practical implications for increased effectiveness of teaching alphabet knowledge to young children. In this article, we outline Enhanced Alphabet Knowledge instruction (EAK), a method of practical instruction that early childhood teachers can use to organize, plan, and teach the essential skills of alphabet knowledge. EAK emphasizes identifying the letter name and sound, recognizing the letter in text, and producing the letter form, through flexible, distributed cycles of review based on factors that influence acquisition of alphabet knowledge.
- Kervin, L., Turbill, J., & Harden-Thew, K. (2017). Invisible to visible: Mapping the continuum of literacy learning experiences in an early years setting. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 17(4): 465-484. **Abstract:** The face of early childhood education continues to change. In Australia, the national early childhood guidelines, "Early Years Learning Framework" (2009) and the "National Quality Framework" have articulated and defined the work of early years' educators in a range of areas, including literacy. Both frameworks state that their aim is to maintain the focus of the Development Strategy provide all Australian children with an educational foundation to support them throughout their lives. In this climate, and some years after the implementation of these guidelines, it seems timely to examine the literacy programmes, practices and perspectives of prior-to-school environments as they prepare children to transition to the early years of primary school. This paper reports on the findings of a study that aimed to explore the nature of literacy programmes, practices and perspectives, and in particular how such programmes support educators and children in one prior-to-school setting, as they prepare to transition to the first year of formal schooling. Analysis of the experiences offered in prior-to-school centres revealed a number of learning experiences that illustrated Bernstein's notion of visible and invisible literacy learning pedagogies. It was found that viewing these learning experiences along a continuum from invisible to visible pedagogical practices was a useful framework for categorising the range of experiences in which the children engaged. It is suggested that such a continuum would be a useful framework for both prior-to-school and kindergarten teachers to better support children as they transition across settings. However, we must add a caveat, namely, that such a framework

should not lead to increase pressure on prior-to-school settings to increase “visible pedagogical practices” in order to “teach” literacy skills.

Khan, K. S., Gugiu, M. R., Justice, L. M., Bowles, R. P., Skibbe, L. E., & Piasta, S. B. (2016). Age-related progressions in story structure in young children’s narratives. *J Speech Lang Hear Res*, 59(6):1395-1408. [doi:10.1044/2016\\_JSLHR-L-15-0275](https://doi.org/10.1044/2016_JSLHR-L-15-0275).

**Abstract:** Purpose: Prior theoretical and empirical work has referenced several broad stages of narrative development, particularly in terms of young children’s understanding of story structure. However, there is considerable variation in how story structure has been defined and assessed across these studies. The aims of the present study were threefold: (a) to test the unidimensionality of items designed to assess story-structure knowledge, (b) to examine story-structure item difficulty levels, and (c) to examine age-related progressions on individual story-structure components across 3-, 4-, 5-, and 6-year-olds. Method: Participants included 386 children (M = 4.8 years, SD = 11.67 months) from the Narrative Assessment Protocol study (<http://www.narrativeassessment.com/>), which was designed to revise a new narrative assessment tool for children between the ages of 3 and 6 years. Results: Factor analysis indicated that 16 of 21 items reflecting story-structure knowledge constituted a unidimensional construct. Individual story-structure item analyses further revealed that establishing subgoals and tracking the overall goals in the stories were particularly challenging for 3- and 4-year-olds. Conclusion: These findings hold implications for refinement of theoretical models of story-structure emergence in early childhood.

Kidd, L. & Rowland, C. (2018). The effect of language-focused professional development on the knowledge and behaviour of preschool practitioners. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 21(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798418803664> **Abstract:** The purpose of this project was to investigate the effectiveness of a language-focused professional development programme on the knowledge and behaviour of preschool practitioners (sometimes called early years practitioners) in the UK. In

Study 1 we determined whether the training received by practitioners is effective in improving their knowledge of how to support children’s language and communicative development. In Study 2 we tested whether trained practitioners, and practitioners from centres with embedded Language Champions, were able to implement the techniques they had been taught. For this, we video-recorded practitioners interacting, one to one, with 2- and 3–4-year-old children in their centres. We conclude that (1) practitioners retain the knowledge they have been taught, both about how children learn and about how to promote this learning, and that (2), in some respects, this knowledge translates well into practice; practitioners in centres with embedded Language Champions and trained practitioners used language-enriching behaviours when interacting with children more often than did untrained practitioners. We discuss how the translation of some techniques into overt behaviour could be made more effective.

Kumpulainen, K., Sairanen, H., & Nordström, A. (2020). Young children’s digital literacy practices in the sociocultural contexts of their homes. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 20(3): 472-499. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14687984209251>

**Abstract:** This socioculturally framed case study investigates the digital literacy practices of two young children in their homes in Finland. The aim is to generate new knowledge about children’s digital literacy practices embedded in their family lives and to consider how these practices relate to their emergent literacy learning opportunities. The study asks two questions, ‘How do digital technologies and media inform the daily lives of children in their homes? Moreover, how do the sociocultural contexts of homes mediate children’s digital literacy practices across operational, cultural, critical and creative dimensions of literacy?’ The empirical data collection drew on the ‘day-in-the-life’ methodology, using a combination of video recordings, photographs, observational field notes and parent interviews. The data were subjected to thematic analysis following an ethnographic logic of enquiry. The findings make visible how children’s digital literacy practices are intertwined in families’ everyday

activities, guided by parental rules and values. The study demonstrates children's operational, cultural and creative digital literacy practices. The study also points out the need for more attention to children's critical engagement in their digital literacy practices.

- Lee, B. Y. (2010). Investigating toddlers' and parents' storybook reading during morning transition. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 38: 213–221. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-010-0396-y> **Abstract:** This qualitative study builds on the previous body of emergent literacy research by investigating the use of storybook reading with parents during morning transition times through observation on fifteen toddlers (2- to 3-years old), their parents, and teachers in a university preschool classroom. The focus of this study is to investigate whether storybook reading with parents eases morning transitions for young children as well as fosters their literacy development. Additionally, this study seeks to understand how storybook reading with parents during morning transitions affects the partnership between parents and teachers. The findings of this study contribute to the literature showing that (1) reading a book with parents during morning transition times may provide smooth transitions, (2) it may help with direct interactions between teachers and parents and with direct parental involvement in a school setting, and (3) storybook reading with parents in class during morning transition times may lead the child to engage in independent reading.
- Lee, B. Y. (2011). Assessing book knowledge through independent reading in the earliest years: Practical Strategies and implications for teachers. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 39: 285-290. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-011-0464-y> **Abstract:** The purpose of this current study is to build on the previous body of emergent literacy research by investigating the necessity of assessing book knowledge (e.g., print knowledge, interpretive knowledge, and letter identification) in toddlerhood to set up successful literacy development by providing independent storybook reading opportunities. This study suggests strategies that teachers can employ in their toddler classrooms for accomplishing activities such as (i) setting up common and recurring opportunities

to read books independently with toddlers and (ii) informally observing and assessing children's book knowledge. Additionally, implications for practice are provided with detailed examples of how toddlers demonstrate their book knowledge and their understandings about books through independent reading.

- Lee, B. Y. (2017). Facilitating reading habits and creating peer culture in shared book reading: An exploratory case study in a toddler classroom. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 45: 521-527. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-016-0782-1> **Abstract:** Fifteen toddlers (2- to 3-years old, nine boys and six girls) in a university preschool classroom were observed for 7 months while spending time with books during transition time, between story time and lunch. This qualitative case study investigated the ways that teachers can facilitate toddlers' reading habits by providing literacy opportunities in unstructured learning environments and explored the contexts in which toddlers engage in independent reading activities. The findings of this study show that (1) toddlers can develop literacy through participating in meaning-making activities with peers while reading books together in unstructured environments and (2) toddlers want to read and choose to read in order to satisfy their curiosity, involvement, and social interchange, just as older children do.
- Li, L., & Doyle, A. (2022). Contextual support in the home for children's early literacy development. *Berkeley Review of Education*, 11(1). <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/815078rx> **Abstract:** The home literacy environment (HLE) refers to the physical, interpersonal, and emotional/ motivational factors in the home that have been found to be important for children's literacy development. In this paper, the emergence of HLE research, its conceptualizations, and the effects of HLE factors are reviewed with an emphasis on the relations between HLE and children's early literacy skills. Challenges faced by HLE researchers are also discussed with particular reference to three issues: privacy sensitivity, measure validity, and intervention fidelity. This paper also identifies directions for future research.
- Lipsey, M. W., Farran, D. C., & Durkin, K. (2018).

Effects of the Tennessee Prekindergarten Program on children's achievement and behavior through third grade. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 45: 155–176. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2018.03.005> **Abstract:** This report presents results of a randomized trial of a state prekindergarten program. Low-income children (N = 2990) applying to oversubscribed programs were randomly assigned to receive offers of admission or remain on a waiting list. Data from pre-k through 3rd grade were obtained from state education records; additional data were collected for a subset of children with parental consent (N = 1076). At the end of pre-k, pre-k participants in the consented subsample performed better than control children on a battery of achievement tests, with non-native English speakers and children scoring lowest at baseline showing the greatest gains. During the kindergarten year and thereafter, the control children caught up with the pre-k participants on those tests and generally surpassed them. Similar results appeared on the 3rd grade state achievement tests for the full randomized sample – pre-k participants did not perform as well as the control children. Teacher ratings of classroom behavior did not favor either group overall, though some negative treatment effects were seen in 1st and 2nd grade. There were differential positive pre-k effects for male and Black children on a few ratings and on attendance. Pre-k participants had lower retention rates in kindergarten that did not persist, and higher rates of school rule violations in later grades. Many pre-k participants received special education designations that remained through later years, creating higher rates than for control children. Issues raised by these findings and implications for pre-k policy are discussed.

Lonigan, C. J., Allan, N. P., & Lerner, M. D. (2011). Assessment of Preschool Early Literacy Skills: Linking Children's Educational Needs with Empirically Supported Instructional Activities. *Psychology in the schools*, 48(5): 488–501. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.20569> **Abstract:** The importance of the preschool period for becoming a skilled reader is highlighted by a significant body of evidence that preschool children's development in the areas of oral

language, phonological awareness, and print knowledge is predictive of how well they will learn to read once they are exposed to formal reading instruction in elementary school. Although there are now a number of empirically supported instructional activities for helping children who are at -risk of later reading difficulties acquire these early literacy skills, limitations in instructional time and opportunities in most preschool settings requires the use of valid assessment procedures to ensure that instructional resources are utilized efficiently. In this paper, we discuss the degree to which informal, diagnostic, screening, and progress-monitoring assessments of preschool early literacy skills can inform instructional decisions by considering the strengths and weaknesses of each approach to assessment.

Lu, M. (2003). Supporting early literacy development in family child care settings. ERIC Digest. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GOVPUB-ED-PURL-LPS46152/pdf/GOVPUB-ED-PURL-LPS46152.pdf> **Abstract:** The purpose of this Digest is to provide information for family child care providers regarding children's early literacy development. A definition and the characteristics of family child care are discussed in the first part of this Digest. The second half focuses on research-based strategies and recommendations that help support early literacy development for children enrolled in family child care settings: children acquire the forms and function of literacy through interacting with more capable peers and adults; children learn best from meaningful and functional activities; children learn to be literate in a literacy-rich environment, where diverse, real-life materials and activities meet children's different needs and interests; and providers should use public facilities and collaborate with local higher education institutes.

Lynch, J. (2011). An observational study of print literacy in Canadian preschool classrooms. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 38:329-338. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-010-0414-0> **Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to examine the role of print literacy in preschool classrooms. There were seven preschool teachers working in central Canada who were observed over three sessions. The process of analytic induction was

used to formulate categories based on interviews, classroom observations and documents. The following categories were identified from the data: book engagement and availability, writing engagement, and print displays and materials. There were some consistencies across centres in the availability of print materials; however, variation often existed in the types of interactions with print. For example, in some preschool classrooms, teachers had a more structured approach toward writing development while in others, they did not. Such differences in practice may be attributed to different beliefs and knowledge of early literacy development. The results of this study offer insight on the role of print literacy in preschool classrooms.

MacLeod, A. A. N., & Pesco, D. (2022): Narratives by bilingual children: a tale of strengths and growth during kindergarten. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2022.2132107>  
**Abstract:** Given their significance in daily life and frequent inclusion in clinical and educational assessments, children's narrative abilities merit investigation. The present study examines the narratives of children acquiring an additional language, adding to the more abundant studies of monolingual children. Sixty kindergartners (mean age 68 months) residing in Quebec, Canada participated. All spoke a minoritized language at home, and were being instructed in French, the majority language, at school. The children told stories in French based on pictures from the Edmonton Narrative Norms Instrument (Schneider, Dubé, and Hayward, 2005) in late fall or early winter, and again in spring. Their stories were subsequently analyzed for their macrostructural features. Despite limited exposure to French prior to kindergarten, the majority of children were able to communicate the central problem in the story, characters' attempts to resolve the problem, and outcomes of those attempts. Furthermore, the children's scores increased from time 1 to time 2 overall, and for four of eight story grammar elements. The higher scores were due to higher scores on elements as well as the emergence of new elements in children's stories at time 2. The findings can help guide expectations for narrative

growth among emerging bilingual children and inform instruction.

Mäkinen, L., Soile, L., Ilaria, G., & Sari, K. (2018). Are story retelling and story generation connected to reading skills? Evidence from Finnish. *Child Language Teaching and Therapy*, 34(2): 129-139. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1183456>  
**Abstract:** This three-year follow-up study investigated the associations of narrative and reading skills in typically developing Finnish children. Twenty children performed narrative retelling and story generation tasks twice, at five and eight years of age. Reading comprehension and word recognition tests were performed at the age of eight. Narratives were analysed for relevant information, total number of word tokens, clausal density and evaluation. The results showed increased narrative abilities with age, but the development was not seen in all narrative variables. This suggests that narrative tasks might capture development somewhat differently. Both narrative tasks were connected to reading skills. However, while retelling was connected to reading comprehension only, story generation related to both reading comprehension and word recognition. This study extends prior research by showing that not only retelling but also story generation is associated with reading.

Martzog, P., & Suggate, S. B. (2022). Screen media are associated with fine motor skill development in preschool children. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 60(5): 363-373. **Abstract:** Media form an integral part of children's environments and represent, amongst other domains, altered sensorimotor experiences. Fine motor skills (FMS) represent a fundamental prerequisite for learning and cognition and initial work has begun to show links with screen media usage – although work is scarce and the directionality is uncertain. Therefore, using a cross-lagged-panel design with 2 waves 1 year apart, we examined longitudinal links between media usage and FMS in 141 preschool children. Results show a negative cross-lagged path from media usage to FMS, which was also statistically significant when only newer media were examined, after controlling for parental educational attainment, immigrant status, device ownership, age of first use, working

memory, and vocabulary. The study contributes to our understanding of links between media usage and FMS development.

Massey, S. L. (2013). From the reading rug to the play center: Enhancing vocabulary and comprehensive language skills by connecting storybook reading and guided play. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 41(2): 125-131. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ998467> **Abstract:** This article explores the preschool teachers' use of concrete and abstract comments and questions within the classroom contexts of storybook reading and guided play to promote classroom conversations. Early childhood educators promote oral language development by creating a language-rich environment in which children become active participants in classroom dialogue. Teachers must intentionally plan and scaffold this learning through interactive storybook reading and storybook extensions using props through guided play. This article provides examples of the types of comments and questions that can serve to model and facilitate children's vocabulary and comprehensive language development and subsequent literacy skills.

McNamee, G. D. (2005) "The one who gathers children:" the work of Vivian Gussin Paley and current debates about how we educate young children. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 25(3): 275-296. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1090102050250311>. **Abstract:** This essay discusses the achievements of early childhood educator, Vivian Gussin Paley, preschool and kindergarten teacher for more than 30 years, and author of 12 books portraying her work in the classroom with young children. It begins with a description of seven narrative tools she developed over the course of many years that became the means for uncovering insights about children and the nature of their learning in classroom settings: The essay then examines how her work speaks to contemporary educational debates about the education of young children including the need for intellectual and academic rigor in early childhood classrooms; the place of pretend play in achieving academic goals; the building of inclusive classrooms as communities that support diverse young children to thrive; and

how schools can educate morally responsible future citizens for a democratic society.

Michael-Luna, S. (2013). What linguistically diverse parents know and how it can help early childhood Educators: A case study of a dual language preschool community. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 41: 447-455. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-013-0574-9> **Abstract:** While the population of bilinguals and English learners continues to rise in our schools, teachers often feel frustrated with their lack of knowledge about best practices to support their multilingual students' language, socio emotional and cognitive development. Teachers' frustration is compounded by the push for assessments in the early years. The aim of this 24-month ethnographic case study is to explore what information linguistically diverse families hold about their bilingual children's language development and use, and how this information can help teachers (1) understand formal and informal assessment data, and (2) create linguistically appropriate support for young bilinguals and their families. The research was drawn from an ethnographic case study of a dual language (Italian-English) preschool in a major metropolitan area. The private dual language preschool provided education for ages 2.8 years to 6 years of age. The families who participated in this study were primarily immigrants, bilingual and middle class.

Michael-Luna, S. (2017). Academic language in preschool: Research and context. *Reading Teacher*, 71(1): 89-93. **Abstract:** Developing and scaffolding academic language is an important job of preschool teachers. This Teaching Tip provides five strategies that extend the topic of academic language by integrating previous research and field-based data into classroom practice.

Mielonen, A., & Paterson, W. (2009). Developing literacy through play. *Journal of Inquiry and Action in Education*, 3(1). <https://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/jiae/vol3/iss1/2/> **Abstract:** Researchers agree that language and literacy derive from the first days of a child's life. Children become literate members in society by listening and interacting with the people that surround them.

This study examines how children develop literacy through play by looking closely at the benefits of uninterrupted play and how it encourages language development. The development of language skills, including reading and writing competence, through social interaction was observed to see how literacy development occurs within a home environment. This study also offers successful strategies to use during play that will enhance reading and writing skills within young children.

Mohr, K. A. J., Juth, S. M., Kohlmeier, T. L., & Schreiber, K. E. (2018). The developing bilingual brain: What parents and teachers should know and do. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 46(1): 11-20. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1165988>

**Abstract:** The field of neuroscience is now providing research findings about how the bilingual brain functions that can be used to promote richer and more successful dual-language development. This article summarizes recent research, then provides practical applications for parents and teachers of emergent bilinguals. Key understandings about how the brain processes first and subsequent languages are translated into ways to enrich instruction and family-based language and literacy experiences.

Murray, L., Jennings, S., Perry, H., Andrews, M., De Wilde, K., Newell, A., Mortimer, A., Phillips, E., Liu, X., Hughes, C., Melhuish, E., De Pascalis, L., Dishington, C., Duncan, J., & Cooper, P. J. (2023). Effects of training parents in dialogic book-sharing: The Early-Years Provision in Children's Centers (EPICC) study. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 62: 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2022.07.008> **Abstract:** Shared picture-book reading is well-recognized as beneficial for children's early language development, especially where "dialogic book-sharing" techniques are used. Possible benefits of dialogic book-sharing to other aspects of child development have been little investigated, and it has not been widely studied in European populations. We conducted a randomized trial of dialogic book-sharing in Children's Centers in the UK, with parents of 2- to- 4-year-old children, hypothesizing that it would benefit parenting and a range of child developmental outcomes. Intervention group

parents (n = 110) received 7, weekly, group training sessions, and control parents (n = 108) the usual center input. Parenting and a range of child outcomes (language, attention, executive function, social development, and emotional-behavior difficulties) were assessed on 3 occasions: before, after, and 4–6 month following intervention. For all study outcomes we compared controls with each of the Intention-to-Treat population and the per-protocol population (participants attending the requisite number of sessions); and, for primary child outcomes only, the population of parents who engaged well with the intervention. There were substantial benefits of dialogic book-sharing training to parental behavior during book-sharing, especially for sensitivity and cognitive scaffolding. For all 3 sets of comparisons there were small-medium effects of on child expressive language, and, for the per protocol and engaged populations, similar sized effects on child receptive language and attention. There was no evidence of benefit of dialogic book-sharing for the other areas of child development; we suggest that specific intervention components need to be added to standard dialogic book-sharing to effect change in these areas.

Nash, K. T., & Panther, L. (2019). The children come full: From high leverage to humanizing and culturally sustaining literacy practices in urban schools. *Teacher College Record*, 22669.

**Abstract:** This research note offers a critique of high leverage practices, refuting previous claims from a 2016 Teachers College Record commentary based on the authors' study, which initially sought to investigate high leverage practices. It includes discussion about the evolution of the authors' understanding of high leverage practices and eventual decision to abandon that concept based on findings from their study.

Neaum, S. (2018). Engaging with literacy provision in the early years: Language use and emergent literacy in child-initiated play. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 20: 680 - 705. **Abstract:** Pre-school children's engagement with activities in child-initiated play is taken to be an important mediating factor in their learning. The adult's role in supporting and enhancing children's play is an area of significant study. However, how children

play when play is child-initiated, and how this maps to our assumptions and expectations about the potential of opportunities on offer, is less well understood. This study reports findings of detailed observation of young children’s engagement with literacy provision during child-initiated play. The study showed that, despite rich provision, engagement was extremely limited. Equally significant are the findings from a functional analysis of the children’s language use during child-initiated play, which showed that the children made almost no use of Mathetic language – the language Halliday argues is necessary for learning, most notably the linguistic demands of formal schooling. These findings contribute to the nascent understanding of children’s access to playful learning opportunities that are provided for them in pre-school settings. These initial findings are stark and thus warrant further study.

Ness, M. (2017). Using Informational and Narrative Picture Walks to Promote Student-Generated Questions. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 45: 575–581.

[https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-016-0817-](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-016-0817-z)

**Z Abstract:** The purpose of this article is to explore the use of picture walks in narrative and informational text as a method to encourage question generation. This article overviews the instructional benefits of having students generate their own questions before, during, and after reading. Featured are two classrooms where students pose questions through narrative and informational text features.

Nogueron-Liu, S. (2020). Expanding the knowledge base in literacy instruction and assessment: Bilingual and translanguaging perspectives from families, communities, and classrooms. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 55(1): S307-S318.

**Abstract:** This article is a response to claims made by proponents of “science of reading” and “structured literacy” reading instruction approaches, in regard to their effectiveness with emergent bilingual students. The author argues that the strong knowledge base generated from studies examining the dynamic literacy practices of emergent bilingual students should also be included in reading curriculum, assessment, and teacher education decisions. First, the author provides an overview of the contributions and

limitations of the knowledge base associated with the science of reading, in relation to bilingual learners. The author explains that the complexity of the instructional, demographic, and sociocultural realities of emergent bilinguals in the United States requires solutions informed by various vantage points and perspectives. Second, the author summarizes family literacy research in households of Latinx bilingual children, documenting parents’ and children’s advocacy efforts, emergent biliteracy practices, and tensions in grappling with English-dominant instruction in schools. Finally, the author summarizes research extending oral reading assessment procedures to analyze emergent bilingual students’ miscues and retellings. The author cautions against the implications of critiques of the three-cueing systems and miscue analysis, by explaining how language-related perspectives, including translanguaging, can help expand miscue analytic approaches. This expansion can help teachers and families understand how emergent bilinguals draw from their multiple language and literacy resources in decoding and retelling. Implications for teacher preparation and professional development are included throughout.

Olszewski A, Soto X, Goldstein H. (2017). Modeling alphabet skills as instructive feedback within a phonological awareness intervention. *Am J Speech Lang Pathol*, 26(3):769-790. <https://doi.org/10.1044/2017-AJSLP-16-0042>.

**Abstract:** Purpose: This study evaluated the efficacy of an instructive feedback strategy for modeling letter names and sounds during presentation of positive feedback within a small-group phonological awareness intervention for preschoolers. Method: Two experiments were conducted using multiple-baseline designs across children and behaviors. Letter name and sound identification and performance on a phonological awareness fluency measure served as the primary outcome variables. Six children completed Experiment 1. A progressive time delay was added to instructive feedback to elicit a response from the 9 children in the second experiment. Results: In the first experiment, 6 children demonstrated gains on phonological awareness but not alphabet knowledge. With the addition of progressive time

delay in the second experiment, all 9 children demonstrated gains on letter name and sound identification as well as phonological awareness skills. Conclusions: Progressive time delay to prompt children's responses appears to bolster the effects of instructive feedback as an efficient strategy for modeling alphabet skills within a broader early literacy curriculum. Modeling alphabet skills did not detract from, and may have enhanced, phonological awareness instruction for preschoolers.

Puranik, C. S., & Lonigan, C. J. (2011). From scribbles to scrabble: Preschool children's developing knowledge of written language. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 24(5), 567–589. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-009-9220-8> **Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to concurrently examine the development of written language across different writing tasks and to investigate how writing features develop in preschool children. Emergent written language knowledge of 372 preschoolers was assessed using numerous writing tasks. The findings from this study indicate that children demonstrate knowledge about writing before beginning school and receiving formal instruction. There was clear evidence to support the claim that universal writing features develop before language-specific features. Children as young as 3 years possess knowledge regarding universal and language-specific writing features. Preschoolers appear to progress along a continuum from scribbling to conventional spelling. Although this progression is sequential, children's writing proficiency is task dependent. Implications of these findings on writing development are discussed.

Ren, L., Boise, C., & Cheung, Y. M. (2022). Consistent routines matter: Child routines mediated the association between interparental functioning and school readiness. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 61: 145-157. <https://centaur.reading.ac.uk/107923/1/Ren%20Boise%20Cheung%202022%20consistent%20routines%20matter.pdf> **Abstract:** School readiness is critical to children's academic and social-emotional success at school entry and over time. Using structural equation modeling, this study examined the mediating role of consistent child routines in the association

between interparental functioning and school readiness among preschool-aged children in China. Participants included 349 preschoolers and both of their parents. Data were collected across two time points with 1.5 years apart. Consistency in child routines was found to mediate the association between maternal interparental functioning and child school readiness. Specifically, mother-perceived marital satisfaction was positively related to their contributions to coparenting, which further had a positive association with consistency in child routines, and this eventually predicted children's school readiness across multiple indicators. However, different patterns of findings emerged for paternal interparental functioning. Father-perceived marital satisfaction was directly linked to consistency in child routines without the mediation effect of paternal coparenting, which, in turn, predicted school readiness. Fathers' contributions to coparenting also directly predicted children's social-emotional functioning. The findings have highlighted the importance of establishing and maintaining consistent routines for young children in order to promote school readiness across the preschool period.

Reutzel, P., Mohr, K. A. J., & Jones, C. D. (2019). Exploring the relationship between letter recognition and handwriting in early literacy development. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 19(3); 349-374. **Abstract:** Previous research has demonstrated correlation between letter-naming and letter-writing fluency, and a relationship between letter-naming fluency and successful reading development. Awareness of critical features of letters has received less attention as a part of handwriting development, but it is theorized to also play a role in letter-writing fluency. This study sought to delineate possible components of letter-writing fluency using four related tasks with kindergarten students. Results confirm the correlation between letter-naming and letter-writing fluency and indicate that recognition and manipulation of critical letter features correlate with letter-writing fluency. Findings suggest that awareness of critical features could be a part of early literacy instruction.

Schachter, R. E., Matthews, A., & Piasta, S. B. (2021). How do differing stakeholders perceive instances of literacy instruction? *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 21(1): 104-126. **Abstract:** In this study, we investigated how early childhood teachers' perspectives on their enacted literacy instruction aligned with the perspectives of observers of that same instruction. Two master teachers and two researchers, all with early childhood expertise, observed and reported their perspectives of 45 instances of literacy instruction. These were examined for alignment across each other and with teachers' descriptions of their thinking during the instruction. Participants' perceptions of instruction tended to align, yet there were notable differences in perceptions about context and goals. Although we often found common ground among participants regarding the purpose of instruction, there were interesting variations across participants that highlighted the complexity of classroom processes, the value of teachers' contextual knowledge and the multiple perspectives brought to bear on the same instance of instruction.

Snell, E. K., Wasik, B. A., & Hindman, A. H. (2022). Text to talk: Effects of a home-school vocabulary texting intervention on prekindergarten vocabulary. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 60: 67-79. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S088520062100154X> **Abstract:** This paper presents the results of an intervention study focused on understanding how a 5-month, vocabulary-focused texting program called Text to Talk can enhance home-school connections concerning vocabulary and preschool children's language learning. Classrooms (49) were randomly assigned to intervention or control status in an urban preschool program in the eastern United States. Intervention teachers delivered Text to Talk, a curriculum-aligned program that provides weekly texts for teachers to send to families that include vocabulary words and related activities from books being read in the classroom. Children's target word knowledge and receptive language skills (PPVT) were measured at baseline and follow-up, with treatment effects on target word knowledge ( $d = 0.17$ ). Treatment families reported much higher use of texting as a source of communication with

teachers, but otherwise rates of home-school communication in person, phone, and with paper were unchanged; family self-report of general home learning activities was also unaffected by treatment status. Implementation analysis showed moderate to high fidelity among teachers and families, with greater family fidelity associated with larger treatment impacts. The findings suggest that a family-focused texting-based program, aligned with the school curriculum, leads to improved taught-word knowledge among children from under-resourced communities.

Spencer, T. D., & Petersen, D. B. (2020). Narrative intervention: Principles to practice. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 51(4). **Abstract:** Purpose: Narrative interventions are a class of language interventions that involve the use of telling or retelling stories. Narrative intervention can be an efficient and versatile means of promoting a large array of academically and socially important language targets that improve children's access to general education curriculum and enhance their peer relations. The purpose of this tutorial is to supply foundational information about the importance of narratives and to offer recommendations about how to maximize the potential of narrative interventions in school-based clinical practice. Method: Drawing from decades of cognitive and linguistic research, a tutorial on narratives and narrative language is presented first. Ten principles that support the design and implementation of narrative interventions are described. Results: Clinicians can use narrative intervention to teach story grammar, complex language, vocabulary, inferencing, and social pragmatics. Storytelling, as an active intervention ingredient, promotes the comprehension and production of complex language. Conclusion: When narrative intervention is implemented following a set of principles drawn from research and extensive clinical experience, speech-language pathologists can efficiently and effectively teach a broad set of academically and socially meaningful skills to diverse students.

Teale, W. H., Whittingham, C. E., & Hoffman, E. B. (2020). Early literacy research, 2006–2015: A decade of measured progress. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 20(2): 169–222. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532703520938888>

[org/10.1177/1468798418754939](https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798418754939) **Abstract:**

This review examines patterns found in early (preschool-grade 3) literacy research appearing in English-language publications during the period from 2006 through 2015. It focuses on studies related to early literacy learning and teaching in home and school/school-like environments. The review sought to answer two questions: (1) What has early literacy research focused on over the past decade? and (2) What has that body of research contributed to our enhanced understanding of early literacy development, teaching, and learning? The results report on patterns of publishing early literacy research found in scholarly journals, topics researched, ages of children researched, characteristics of the populations researched, and designs used in early literacy research. In addition, qualitative analyses report on the content and trends of the research for a sample of studies for each of seven facets of early literacy research: phonics, phonological awareness, reading fluency, vocabulary, reading comprehension, writing, and digital literacies, as well as for the umbrella terms emergent literacy/early literacy/beginning reading. The results found from these analyses are discussed through an historical lens which identified four patterns characterizing early literacy research of 2006–2015: accretion, the influence of “scientifically valid” research, limited response to increasingly diverse student populations, and increased research focus on younger children.

Torr, J. (2020). How ‘shared’ is shared reading: Book-focused infant-educator interactions in long day-care centres. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 20(4): 815-838. **Abstract:** Children’s language experiences in the first two years of life are inextricably connected with their current and future language and literacy development. Research has shown that mother-child shared reading of picture books is a practice that can promote this development. Little is known, however, about the shared reading experiences of infants attending early childhood education and care centres. This naturalistic study analysed the reading experiences of 10 infants observed during a three-hour period as they and their educators went about their typical activities in their early

childhood education and care centres. Drawing on Halliday’s systemic functional linguistic theory, which proposes a non-arbitrary relationship between language use and features of the material setting, this study analysed two aspects of the infants’ shared reading experiences: the tenor (roles and relationships) realised in the educators’ use of speech function, and the field (the topic or subject matter) realised in the vocabulary used. The manner in which these contextual variables are realised in the adult-child talk during shared reading affects the pedagogical potential of this practice. The findings reveal that the infants had little opportunity to initiate or participate in book-focused interactions with their educators, with implications for their language and literacy learning opportunities.

Trainin, Guy; Wessels, Stephanie; Nelson, J. Ron; and Vadasy, Patricia, “A Study of Home Emergent Literacy Experiences of Young Latino English Learners” (2016). Faculty Publications: Department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education. 234. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/teachlearnfacpub/234> **Abstract:** This empirical study explored the home environment literacy practices of young Latino English learners and their families. The participants were 217 incoming Kindergarten Latino EL students and parents. The data collection included a completed HLEQ by the parents. In addition, children were administered the PPVT, the pre- LAS, the PALS-K screening, the Woodcock Reading Mastery assessment, and the Wide Range Achievement test. All of the literacy assessments given to the children provided the researchers with comprehensive look at their literacy knowledge base. The results of this study indicate that there were two significant paths for students’ achievement: availability of books and child initiated literacy factors that were directly related to the phonological processing efforts of students.

van Kleeck A, Schuele CM. (2010). Historical perspectives on literacy in early childhood. *Am J Speech Lang Pathol*, 19(4): 341-55. [https://doi.org/10.1044/1058-0360\(2010/09-0038\)](https://doi.org/10.1044/1058-0360(2010/09-0038)) **Abstract:** Purpose: To more fully understand current trends in preliteracy research, as well as controversies that continue to surround best

teaching practices, it is essential to have an understanding of the historical evolution of ideas and practices relevant to preparing young children for learning to read. Method: Several interrelated historical movements relevant to placing current research and practices related to preliteracy development in context are reviewed. These ideas play out in the interrelated and changing ideas regarding the role of the family in children's literacy development, as well as in the appropriate curriculum for preschoolers. Both historical reviews and original documents pertinent to the various historical trends are used to provide the current synthesis. Conclusions: The roots of most current practices during, and controversies regarding, the preliteracy period of development can be traced to a variety of different historical events, as well as to prominent philosophers and educators. Familiarity with these events, philosophers, and educators provides the perspective needed to effectively evaluate new information and approaches that come to the forefront, or that are currently being practiced by different groups or in different settings.

Varghese, C., Vernon-Feagans, L., & Bratsch-Hines, M. (2019). Associations between teacher–child relationships, children's literacy achievement, and social competencies for struggling and non-struggling readers in early elementary school. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 47: 124–133. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2018.09.005> **Abstract:**[Correction Notice: An Erratum for this article was reported in Vol 61 of *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* (see record [2022-95004-012](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2022-95004-012)). The authors regret to note a discrepancy in the number of participants in the study referenced above. The sample size was reduced by 15 students, from n = 503 (287 kindergarten, 216 first grade) to n = 488 (286 kindergarten, 201 first grade) and one teacher, from n = 52 (28 kindergarten, 24 first grade) to n = 51 (28 kindergarten, 23 first grade). The results and conclusions described in the article remain the same.] Teacher–child relationships (TCRs) have been found to play important roles in children's classroom experiences and learning during the elementary school years. Given the importance of TCRs, the present study examined

the associations between conflictual and close TCRs, children's literacy achievement, and children's social competencies using a sample of 503 kindergarten and first grade non-struggling and struggling readers and their teachers in ten rural schools in the Southeastern United States. Moderation by struggling reader status was also explored in the associations between conflictual or close TCRs and children's literacy achievement and social competencies. After controlling for child- and teacher-level characteristics, results from multilevel model analyses indicated that conflictual TCRs were significantly related to lower literacy achievement, more internalizing behaviors, more externalizing behaviors, and fewer prosocial behaviors. Close TCRs were not related to child outcomes, and moderation by struggling reader status was not significant.

Walsh, R. L., & Hodge, K. A. (2018). Are we asking the right questions? An analysis of research on the effect of teachers' questioning on children's language during shared book reading with young children. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 18(2): 264–294. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798416659124> **Abstract:** A review of 20 experimental, shared book reading (SBR) interventions using questioning strategies with preschool children was conducted. The studies were analyzed in terms of their quality, focus, and the questioning strategies employed. Although there were few methodological concerns about the studies conducted, treatment fidelity and replicability of the reported interventions are raised as issues needing attention in future research. The impact of questioning strategies on language and pre-literacy skills tended to be a focus of the reported studies, with little investigation of the development of children's thinking skills through questioning, and there were few attempts to analyze children's responses to different types of questioning techniques. Across the reported studies, there was also a lack of consistency around the terminology associated with different kinds of questioning. The article concludes with discussion of implications for the use of questioning techniques in early childhood education practice and argues for research into the impact of different questioning techniques on children's cognitive development.

Wasik, B. A., Jacobi-Vessels, J. L. (2017). Word Play: Scaffolding Language Development Through Child-Directed Play. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 45: 769–776. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-016-0827-5> **Abstract:** Play is an important activity in young children’s lives. It is how children explore their world and build knowledge. Although free play, which is play that is totally child directed, contributes to children’s learning, self-regulation and motivation, adults’ participation in children’s play is critical in their development, especially their language development. Guided by children, adults can help scaffold children’s language, and especially their learning. We suggest that adults scaffold children’s language during play by using research based strategies such as asking questions that invite extended responses and new inquiry, provide meaningful feedback and effectively use wait time, which provides children with the opportunity to respond to adults’ comments and questions. The goal is to provide adults with strategies to scaffold children’s language development during play while allowing children to direct their own play activities.

Whitehurst, G. J., & Lonigan, C. J. (1998). Child development and emergent literacy. *Child Development*, 69(3): 848–872. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1132208> **Abstract:** Emergent literacy consists of the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are developmental precursors to reading and writing. This article offers a preliminary typology of children’s emergent literacy skills, a review of the evidence that relates emergent literacy to reading, and a review of the evidence for linkage between children’s emergent literacy environments and the development of emergent literacy skills. We propose that emergent literacy consists of at least two distinct domains: inside-out skills (e.g., phonological awareness, letter knowledge) and outside-in skills (e.g., language, conceptual knowledge). These different domains are not the product of the same experiences and appear to be influential at different points in time during reading acquisition. Whereas outside-in skills are associated with those aspects of children’s literacy environments typically measured, little is known about the origins of inside-out skills. Evidence from interventions to enhance

emergent literacy suggests that relatively intensive and multifaceted interventions are needed to improve reading achievement maximally. A number of successful preschool interventions for outside-in skills exist, and computer-based tasks designed to teach children inside-out skills seem promising. Future research directions include more sophisticated multidimensional examination of emergent literacy skills and environments, better integration with reading research, and longer-term evaluation of preschool interventions. Policy implications for emergent literacy intervention and reading education are discussed.

Whittingham, C. E., Brown Hoffman, E., & Rumenapp, J. C. (2016). “It ain’t ‘nah’ it’s ‘no’”: Preparing preschoolers for the language of school. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 18(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798416674254> **Abstract:** This research presents reflections from focus group discussions with childcare providers and parents of preschoolers in one African American community situated within a large Midwestern city in the United States. The purpose of this study was to examine parents’ and childcare providers’ conceptions of literacy and language related to school readiness. During these conversations it became clear that both parents and providers engage in a number of practices to prepare children to use the standard variety of English privileged by mainstream schooling. Participants verbalize the dual importance of encouraging all language development for young children while explicitly teaching the uses of language as situated in a larger social context. Both parents and providers discuss the need to build a bridge for children between the English varieties used at home and the standard English valued by schools. In light of these findings, the authors problematize common conceptions of ‘school readiness’ as unidirectional and discuss implications for children entering school settings where language varieties are undervalued.

Zhang, C., & Quinn, M. F. (2018). Promoting early writing skills through morning meeting routines: Guidelines for best practices. *Early Childhood Educ J*, 46: 547–556. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-017-0886-2> **Abstract:** Observational studies suggest that early writing instruction rarely

occurs in early childhood classrooms, despite the importance of supporting young children’s writing development. Morning Meeting Time (MMT) routine is a typically occurring large group activity in early childhood classrooms that is interactive and familiar to teachers and children. Because it is interactive, occurs daily in most preschool classrooms, and is comprised of regular routines that can easily be modified, MMT provides a meaningful context for promoting young children’s writing development. This article describes the characteristics of MMT, discusses the rationales for infusing interactive writing instruction into MMT, and provides seven research-based guidelines for adding writing to MMT in early childhood classroom environments.

Zucker, T. A., Cabell, S. Q., & Pico, D. L. (2021). Going nuts for words: Recommendations for teaching young students academic vocabulary. *The Reading Teacher*, 74(5): 581-594. <https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1967> **Abstract:** Developing young children’s vocabulary is essential for later

reading success; thus, early childhood classrooms require a comprehensive vocabulary approach that teaches academic vocabulary. Yet even providing young children with child-friendly definitions of sophisticated words can be a challenge. First, the authors outline the components of a comprehensive vocabulary program for young children. Second, they review research evidence on the importance of direct vocabulary instruction and ways to increase children’s word consciousness and interest in learning “amazing” academic words. Next, they turn to practical suggestions of ways to select and teach new vocabulary. They describe ways to increase word consciousness that extend excitement for word learning. Finally, they demonstrate that early childhood educators can improve the quantity and quality of their vocabulary instruction when using a comprehensive vocabulary program the features routine shared book reading, direct vocabulary instruction, and supports for word consciousness.

