

The Primary Program

Language Arts

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Language Arts in the Primary Program

Common Understandings

“Learning to read and write is one of the most important and powerful achievements in life. Its value is clearly seen in the faces of young children—the proud, confident smile of the capable reader contrasts sharply with the furrowed brow and sullen frown of the discouraged non-reader. Ensuring that all young children reach their potentials as readers and writers is the shared responsibility of teachers, administrators, families, and communities. Educators have a special responsibility to teach every child and not to blame children, families, or each other when the task is difficult. All responsible adults need to work together to help children become competent readers and writers.” (NAEYC, 1998). These adults must share basic understandings not only about reading and writing, but also about language, curriculum, assessment, and learning in order to support children completely.

The language arts program is inclusive of children with limited English proficiency, special needs, and high ability. The general information that follows is provided with diversity in mind, however certain sections are devoted to these special populations. All of the information is applicable to any given situation or group of students. It is up to the teacher to decide how to organize the classroom to match and support the diversity of students.

Understanding Language

Understanding language in its broadest sense encompasses oral, written, and visual modes. Each mode is both receptive and expressive as shown in the chart below. Children learn language, learn about language, and learn through language in a simultaneous, integrated fashion. Thus, language develops through use and, like thinking, is a process that embraces all curriculum areas.

	Receptive	Expressive
Oral	Listening	Speaking
Written	Reading	Writing
Visual	Viewing	Representing

Understanding Curriculum

Understanding curriculum requires that the purposes of the language and literacy program are clear and focused (see descriptors of learning). The purpose of the language arts program is to develop children’s reading, writing, speaking, and listening abilities while enabling children to use language for acquiring knowledge, communicating with others, and for enjoyment. Skills, such as phonics,

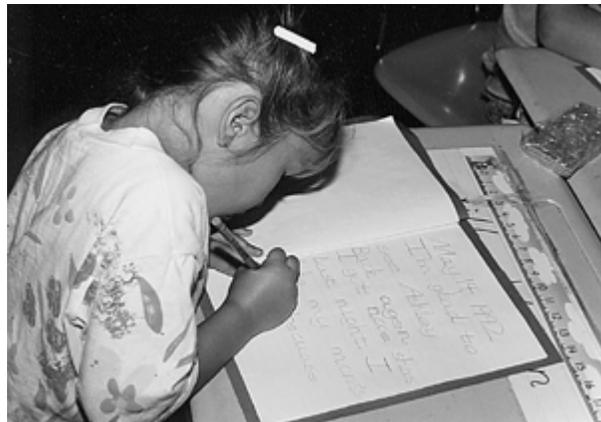
word recognition, capitalization, and punctuation, are taught in meaningful ways. As children use language in functional ways they develop an understanding of what language is and how it works.

The language arts program should help children to:

- Understand that communication is a process of conveying meaning to a particular audience for a particular purpose
- Understand that the language modes are interrelated
- Know and understand a variety of language forms (oral, written, visual)
- Understand that the language of print is different from the spoken language.

Daily activities such as the following should be provided for children to use their listening, speaking, writing, spelling, and reading abilities.

- Experiences of being read to and independently reading meaningful and engaging stories and informational texts
- Writing experiences that allow the flexibility to use non-conventional forms of writing at first (invented spelling) and, over time, move to conventional forms (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998)
- Opportunities to work in small groups for focused instruction and collaboration with other children
- An intellectually engaging and challenging curriculum that expands knowledge of the world and vocabulary
- Significant amounts of time for drawing, dictating, and writing about experiences
- Planning and implementing projects involving research at suitable levels of difficulty
- Discussing readings
- Conducting interviews
- Publishing writing in student made books and other formats
- Listening to recordings while following along with the print
- Using the school media center and classroom reading areas regularly
- Participating regularly in singing, choral reading, paired reading, and sustained silent reading
- Using literacy skills while working on science, social studies, mathematics and other content areas
- Using appropriate technologies for all of the above (word processing, internet resources, multimedia).
- Develop awareness of how authors organize text and supportive illustrations to create meaning and use these concepts in creating and expressing their own meaning



Understanding Assessment

Accurate and effective assessment of children's knowledge, skills, and attitudes in reading and writing helps a teacher more accurately match instructional strategies with how and what the children are learning. Both formal and informal assessments are necessary to gain a complete picture of each child's strengths and areas of need.

Effective assessment makes it possible for teachers to:

- Monitor and document children's progress over time
- Ensure that instruction is responsive and appropriately matched to what children are and are not able to do
- Customize instruction to meet individual children's strengths and needs
- Enable children to observe their own growth and development
- Identify children who might benefit from more intensive levels of instruction, such as individual tutoring, or other interventions (Neuman, Copple, & Bredekamp, 2000).

In addition, it has become quite apparent that one measure cannot be the main source for evaluating a child's progress. Rather than testing children, we need to assess their performance for growth in many areas and under many conditions. Assessment should help the teacher, child, and parent determine the child's strengths and weaknesses and plan appropriate instructional strategies

Morrow, 1997

Understanding Instruction

Learning to read and write is an interactive, complex and multifaceted process that requires a variety of instructional strategies and approaches. While the child is the one actually engaged in the construction of knowledge, it is critical that teachers and parents maintain a supportive and instructive role in the process (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998 and Neuman, Copple, & Bredekamp, 2000). Support for children can range from direct or explicit instruction to exploration opportunities where they interact and engage with meaningful, literacy-based materials. Instruction is based on careful selection of teaching and learning strategies that match the needs of individual or groups of children with the specific skills being taught.

To increase student success in literacy development, the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the International Reading Association (1998) have called for a shared responsibility of schools, early childhood programs, families, and communities. Goals for reading and writing in the early years must be challenging but achievable, with sufficient adult support. This includes teachers setting appropriate literacy goals and then adapting instructional strategies and decisions upon their knowledge of reading and writing, current research, and the individual child's strengths and needs.

Just plain reading has been shown to improve student's comprehension, even as measured on standardized tests.

Pearson, 1993

Understanding Learning

What a child knows about print depends upon the richness of the environment and the responsiveness of the adults. Children develop their own language skills successfully when the adults in the environment share these beliefs about learning:

- Children’s language flourishes when specific **conditions of learning** are present (Cambourne, 2000, 1989).
- Children need a strong **foundation** before formal instruction can be effective (Cunningham, 1995 and Cunningham & Hall, 1994).
- **The child’s brain** seeks meaning first, looking for whole-part-whole relationships (Jensen, 1998).
- Children pass through typical **stages of development** when learning to use language.

Conditions of Learning

An effective language arts program engages the learner. “Engagement ... has overtones of attention; learning is unlikely if learners do not attend to demonstrations in which they are immersed. However, attention is unlikely if there is no perceived need or purpose for learning in the first place. Engagement also depends on active participation by the learner, which in turn involves some risk taking.” (Cambourne, 1995). Adults can provide specific conditions in any setting and in any culture from home to school that will engage children in using and developing language.

In thirty years of research Brian Cambourne has studied complex learning in a variety of settings across many cultures. One outcome of this research is the identification of a set of conditions that always seem to be present when language is learned

Teachers are encouraged to examine their classroom practices for evidence of the conditions and to build them in to their lesson plans, classroom routines and daily instruction. The following chart is designed as a worksheet for that purpose.

Observing in the Classroom for Conditions of Learning

Condition	I see this in my classroom...	I see children doing this...	I see adults doing this...
Immersion			
Demonstration			
Expectation			
Responsibility			
Approximation			
Use			
Response			

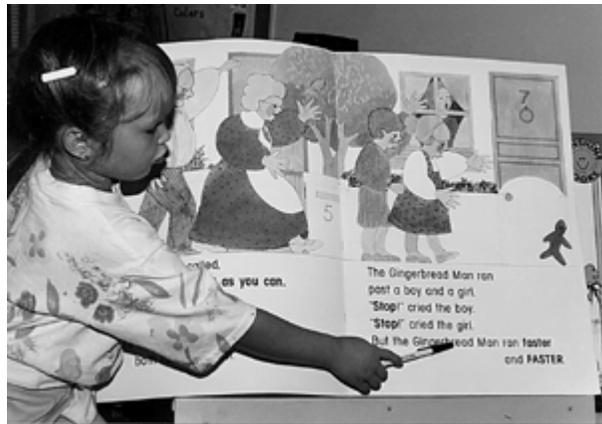
Conditions of Learning Summary

Condition	Description	Adult Responsibility	Example
<i>Immersion</i>	Children are immersed in language. The language that saturates them is available and always meaningful.	I will provide lots of time for children to talk, listen, read, and write about things of interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discussions ➤ Read alouds ➤ E-mail ➤ Shared writing ➤ Collaboration
<i>Demonstration</i>	Demonstrations are the raw material of all learning. The young learner uses the information to figure out how language is used.	I will provide children with many models of language use. They will know language is important when they see me reading, writing, speaking, and listening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discussions ➤ Read alouds ➤ Modeled writing ➤ Guided reading ➤ Word processing
<i>Expectation</i>	Children are more likely to engage in learning with those who hold high expectations for them.	I expect children to learn to talk, read, and write. There is every reason to believe children will succeed. Learning is not negotiable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Flexible grouping ➤ Collaborative reading and writing ➤ Computer use for all children
<i>Responsibility</i>	Children select and make use of language demonstration. The child decides when learning will be internalized.	I will give children options for using language, always providing and expecting high quality choices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Learning centers ➤ Planning boards ➤ Variety of materials ➤ Trusting children to learn
<i>Approximation</i>	Children's attempts are celebrated and valued. Adults and children are aware of stages of development.	I will understand the stages of language development and know that learning is never fixed, but always changing and growing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use invented spelling for assessment ➤ Flexible skill groups ➤ Assess by measuring what children can do, not what they can't do.
<i>Use</i>	Children have time and opportunity to practice what they have been learning and apply it to their own purposes.	I will have daily conversations with children. I will make sure that books, paper, writing materials, music, and other forms of language are readily available to children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Writing centers ➤ Technology access ➤ Classroom libraries ➤ Opportunities to research topics of interest.
<i>Response</i>	Adults respond to children with genuine communication and caring. They supply children with missing bits of information through example.	I will focus on what the child is trying to communicate. I will work with children on skills and strategies for improving communication and understanding. I will model my own learning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Genuine conversations ➤ Modeled reading and writing ➤ Interactive writing ➤ Skills taught with a purpose in mind ➤ Talk aloud

The Foundation

In classrooms where the conditions of learning are present, children are already exposed to an environment which supports a foundation for future language learning. Even so, it is essential that the teacher thoughtfully watches each child for evidence of an adequate language foundation. Before formal instruction in the skills of reading and writing can be effective, several components must be present (Cunningham, 2000). Many children acquire this foundation at home, however it cannot be left to chance. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to structure programs that provide for all children and to do so in ways that are as close to the home experiences as possible. There are children in every primary classroom who still need to develop understanding of:

- *What Reading and Writing are For*
Ask your students, “Why are you learning to read and write?” Some will give real world answers, others will give school world answers. The latter group doesn’t see reading and writing as part of their real world and may not have the same drive and motivation as children for whom reading and writing are perceived as skills everyone uses.
- *Print Tracking and Jargon*
Watch your children to see if they make sweeps with their eyes from left to right and top to bottom. Children who cannot relate pictures to words or talk about print using terms such as word, letter, sentence, and sound may be hopelessly confused by “school talk” about reading. All children need to be comfortable with these basic concepts before they can learn to read and write.
- *Phonological Awareness*
Children cannot use phonics (connecting sounds to symbols) until they have a strong sense of phonological awareness (the ability to manipulate sounds). Making rhymes and playing with words is one of the most powerful indicators that children are getting control of language. They are becoming aware of words and sounds and can manipulate these to express themselves and to impress others. Nursery rhymes, chants, seeing print being read aloud, reading books over and over again, and using inventive spellings are all important in developing a strong sense of phonological awareness.
- *Some Known Words*
Many first graders can read and write some words. Usually the words they have learned are words that are important or of high interest to them.
- *Some Letter Names and Sounds*
Children may not know all twenty-six upper and lower case letters, but many children come to school knowing the most common letters. Letters in the child’s name are the first to be used and recognized. Usually the letter names and sounds children know best are based on the words they can read and write, and they are learned best through repetition and meaningful use. Once children learn some letters, they should be encouraged to write them, to use them to begin



writing words or parts of words, and to use words to begin writing sentences. Instruction should be designed with the understanding that invented spelling is not in conflict with teaching correct spelling (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

Every child has a right to experiences which build this basic foundation. If children lack these experiences at home, they must be provided at school with every effort made to increase opportunities for family literacy experience. “Children’s concepts about literacy are formed from the earliest years by observing and interacting with readers and writers as well as through their own attempts to read and write” (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).



The Child’s Brain

Human beings strive to use language in meaningful ways from the day of birth. Since research about the brain and how it is related to classroom practice is a very new science, there is not much that we know with absolute certainty. There are however, some basic principles emerging which seem to support the intuition of those who work with children every day. From the work of Eric Jensen, the following ideas from neuroscience apply to language development (Jensen, 1998):

- Infants whose parents talk to and interact with them more frequently and use bigger, “adult” words will develop better language skills
- Children who are read to twenty minutes per day acquire the language base needed for reading skills later on. All of the words acquired are contributing to the development of syntax, vocabulary, and meaning
- Children cannot derive meaning from print until they have sufficient life experience to match words and experience
- There is no absolute timetable for learning to read. Differences of three years are normal and can vary between the ages of four years and ten years without developmental delay.

Stages of Development

All human beings pass through common stages of development in oral language, reading, writing, and spelling, and continue to develop throughout life. Each person, however, exhibits unique qualities within these stages. Knowledge of these stages and how they are manifested in children’s behaviors is essential for the teacher so he/she knows when and how to support movement within

and between stages. Children vary widely during the primary years (see *Widely Held Expectations*), and it is critical for the teacher to be well versed when talking with parents about normal ranges of development. Further, knowledge of these stages can prevent misinformation about a child which could result in misdiagnosis and subsequently harmful instructional decisions. “Teachers must understand both the continuum of development and the children’s individual and cultural variations. Teachers must recognize when variation is within the typical range and when intervention is necessary. Good teachers make instructional decisions based on their knowledge of reading and writing, current research, appropriate expectations, and their knowledge of individual children’s strengths and needs” (NAEYC, 1998).

The following sections provide information about the stages of development in oral language, reading, writing, and spelling. Since developmental continuums provide valuable guidelines for assessment and instruction, some examples have been included in the following pages. Whether one uses the examples in *The Primary Program*, or finds another reliable source, the teacher must decide which format, vocabulary, and descriptors work best for the situation. (For additional sources of information on language development in this book see “*Widely Held Expectations*” and the “*Descriptors of Learning*” for Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, and Viewing).



Development of Oral Language: Speaking and Listening

Oral communication plays an important role in all aspects of the primary program. Although speaking and listening often appear in language arts curriculum guides as separate strands, their interdependence is clearly recognized. The “*Listening/Speaking Scale*” can be used to identify listening and speaking skills on a continuum of development.

Listening/Speaking Scale

Student Name _____

Date and Context of Observation:

Student should be observed in a group.

Please note the date and context of the observation.

Scale Score: Fall _____

Spring _____

	1 Emerging	2 Beginning	3 Independent	4 Experienced
Responsiveness	<p>Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses on own perspective with little or no awareness of other's perspectives <p>Speaking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers little or no response to directions/questions posed by others May respond to directions/questions with information that is generally unrelated to the topic or situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates some awareness of other perspectives but is predominantly focused on own. Responds to some directions/questions posed by others. Responds to directions/questions at times with information that is relevant to the topic or situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates awareness and understanding of other perspective/points of view. Responds to most directions/questions. Responds consistently to directions/questions with information that is relevant to the topic or situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates understanding and respect for other perspectives/points of view. Responds to all directions/questions and elicits additional information. Responds consistently to directions/questions with relevant information and may extend response beyond what is asked.
Participation	<p>Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses attention when listening for a minimal period of time. <p>Speaking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates minimally in discussion or not at all. May raise questions or issues that are random or disconnected from the discussion. May speak spontaneously without awareness of the need to take turns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses attention when listening for a limited period of time. Participates in discussion at times. May raise questions or issues that are related to the discussion. Takes turns and/or shares the conversation with others at times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses attention when listening for a significant period of time. Participates substantively in discussion, allowing for the contributions of others. Makes appropriate comments and/or asks relevant questions. Takes turns with others and shares the conversation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses attention when listening for an extended period of time. Participates fully and actively in discussion, encouraging the contributions of others. Makes insightful comments and asks thoughtful questions. Takes turns, shares the conversation, and holds the attention of others when speaking.
Clarity	<p>Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reacts to what others say in ways that may be unrelated to the topic or situation. <p>Speaking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates some awareness of audience by conveying ideas. Communicates in a way that is difficult to understand. Uses limited vocabulary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reacts to what others say in ways that correspond to the meaning of the topic or situation. Demonstrates awareness of audience; tries to connect to their interests. Communicates in a way that is comprehensible. Uses simple, repetitive vocabulary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reacts to what others say in ways that indicate an understanding of the topic or situation. Demonstrates an awareness of audience by connecting to their interests through explanation. Communicates ideas clearly with some supporting details. Uses descriptive vocabulary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reacts to what others say in ways that show understanding and that may enhance the situation. Demonstrates an awareness of audience by providing listeners with complete information and detailed explanations. Communicates well-developed ideas clearly, elaborating with relevant details. Uses lively and descriptive vocabulary.
Organization	<p>Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absorbs information with difficulty. <p>Speaking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates in a fragmentary or random manner. Coordinates tone of voice and facial gestures with ideas occasionally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absorbs information, but with little discrimination between what is relevant and irrelevant. Communicates gist of the idea but may wander from topic, overall coherence is tentative. Coordinates tone of voice and facial gestures with ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absorbs relevant information and discriminates between what is and is not relevant. Communicates main idea effectively; may make connections to other ideas. Coordinates tone of voice, as well as facial and body gestures to convey meaning of ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates keen awareness of what has been conveyed; discriminates sharply between what is and is not relevant. Communicates ideas effectively in an organized and cohesive manner with meaningful connections. Uses tone of voice, volume, pace, repetition, and gestures to enhance meaning of ideas.

From New York State Education Department. Early Literacy Profile. 1998.

Speaking

Research confirms what we have long known about speaking; we speak far more than we write; effective speaking is extremely important in social and career functions; and we tend to take speaking for granted. A great deal of research and theory has focused on children's oral language development and on the instructional practices which can enhance that development. The following findings are important for understanding the developmental stages of speaking.

- By the time most children come to school, they have learned the articulation of sounds, grammatical structure, and the social uses of language. They also have acquired a large vocabulary related to their home language and culture.
- Speaking development moves from simple word combinations to more complete phrases and sentences. Familiarity, ease and confidence are developed through practice and experimentation. Oral language development is enhanced by encouragement and acceptance.
- Speaking development and cognitive development are closely linked. Both move from the concrete to the abstract, from egocentrism to socialization. Children's inner or private speech enables the development of internalized logical thought.
- Oral communication develops through interaction with peers and adults and, for the most part, children learn to use speech effectively without much systematic attention or instruction.
- Development of syntax and vocabulary springs from a functional base. Children understand what oral language is by experiencing what it does.
- Social norms at different ages influence the development of speaking competence:

The Science of Baby Talk

According to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, baby talk may sound like mere babble, but that doesn't mean infants aren't learning words. Here are some milestones in vocabulary development:

Approximate Age	Milestone
Birth to 18 months	Children learn one word every three days
7 ½ months	Children differentiate between sound-alike words (cut-cup)
Eighteen months	Children put together two word sentences
18 months to 30 years	People learn ten words a day or around 3,500 words a year
Thirty years +	Vocabulary building slowly continues, leveling off at about 80,000 to 100,000 words

Age	Prevailing Influences*
Preschool/Primary	Home, family environment. Different kinds of family environments and cultures result in different ideas about what things can be expressed and how they are said.
Elementary	Peer group, home. Effects of school become apparent, but do not prevail in the peer and home settings.
Adolescence	Begin to recognize social values and prestige factors. Peers are largest influence over personal speaking habits.
High School	Able to modify language to reflect various norms.

*Television, music, and other forms of media are gaining power as a prevailing influence for all ages.

Listening

Listening, like reading and writing, is a process. Just as these processes are recursive rather than linear, so is the listening process. Both reading and listening involve the reception of material and employ many of the same underlying mental processes.

Listening is directly related to language development, learning and the total process of human interaction. Learning to listen is learning to understand and appreciate another's point of view, and this, for children as well as for adults, expands perceptions of the world. Children who are active listeners can internalize new ideas and thoughts and assimilate them with their own to form new thinking patterns.

Listening affects performance in all language and curriculum areas. Listening is often taken for granted because it is integral to every day activities in all areas of the curriculum.

Children can acquire more effective listening skills where listening is recognized as an integral part of the curriculum.

Listening activities must have a purpose and a logical context. The child who is listened to comes to understand that what he or she says is important. Such children will be more likely to listen to others when expected, especially if they have learned that they can gain useful information from others.



Development of Reading, Writing, and Spelling

Learning to read and write is critical to a child's success in school and later in life. One of the best predictors of whether a child will function competently in school and go on to contribute actively in our increasingly literate society is the level to which the child progresses in reading and writing. The early childhood years—from birth through age eight—are the most important period for literacy development (Neuman, Copple & Bredekamp, 2000).

Reading, writing, and spelling develop together. Although the stages are presented separately in the outlines which follow, it is important that the teacher understands the relationship between the developing reader and the stages of spelling which appear in the child's written products. Inventive spellings reveal the extent of knowledge about letter/sound associations and language structure which, in turn, yields information about how the child approaches the reading task.



Learning to read is not something that happens after a stereotyped readiness period in first grade or kindergarten. Learning to read is the job of a lifetime. Two- and three-year-old children who are read to a lot begin their reading careers early. The day a child gets hold of a sentence pattern that works for him and reads it into the telephone directory or the Montgomery Ward catalog, or his daddy's newspaper at night, is launching himself on his reading career. He, in truth, is finding joy and power in the pages of a book, a psychological posture that every successful reader continuously brings to each reading encounter, knowing, subconsciously if not consciously, that he can make a go of print. This is the first and foremost reading skill.

Martin, 1984

Reading

Reading is the only way to become a good reader and to develop an adequate vocabulary and good writing style. Intensive practice in reading is vital and needs to take place in and out of school. Many students have phobias about reading and must learn to approach the task and profit from it, and they must have massive practice in gathering meaning from text if they are to make rapid progress in developing literacy.

- The more students read, whatever their current level of performance—juxtaposing their own experiences with those they encounter in fiction selections and gathering new information from expository prose—the broader their language base and cultural understanding. If they can become fluent readers even at a third grade level, there is much they can teach themselves.

- Wide reading is a major avenue of vocabulary acquisition. In fact, beginning around grade three, “the major determinant of vocabulary growth is the amount of free reading” (Nagy & Anderson, 1984, p. 327). The relationship between wide reading and quality of writing is also true for English language learners (Janopoulos, 1986; Krashen, 1993).
- People who read widely and rapidly generally score higher on standard measures of achievement (Anderson, Wilson, Fielding, 1988; Foertsch, 1992). They have more ideas to bring to the task; their reading rate is faster; and their writing is of higher quality.

Reading Nonfiction: Many informational tradebooks are available at a wide range of reading levels. The content of these books may be science or health, social studies, technology, cultural events, or daily life experiences. They are often written better than the textbooks students are using, and the organizational devices used by their authors to convey information are the same ones used in well-written texts for literate adults.

Reading Fiction: There is a rich children’s literature collection available. Students may at first be able to read only books at the picture storybook level, but they can learn from reading them, even learn to write their own stories around them. And the literary devices used in these books will include many used in longer, more advanced literary selections.

Reading Strategies

The Read-aloud

A Read-aloud is simply reading aloud to your students. Read-alouds of informative, expository prose can be very brief, sharing as little as a sentence and illustration, or a single paragraph. When you are looking for good models to share and discuss with your students, a) look for passages that address concepts that fit into curriculum content across disciplines; and b) passages that are well-written, especially in terms of how the author(s) announced and supported his/her major points.

- Encourages reading, models fluent reading, and is a way to share reader responses (Morrow & Weinstein, 1986; Pitts, 1986)
- Provides students experience with the rhythms of the English language
- Models enjoyment and/or learning from print
- Seeks to engage students with text
- Beneficial for low achievers (Bridge 1989; Winograd & Bridge, 1995)
- Works to increase students’ comprehension and vocabulary test scores (Cochran-Smith, 1988)
- Read-alouds by teachers serve as a form of “recommendation” of a book or selection which frequently leads to increased reading (Greaney & Hegarty, 1987; Wendelin & Zinck, 1983)

The Talk-aloud

Talk-alouds provide an opportunity to model the reading/writing connection, so students can “see” and hear how an experienced and skillful reader uses what the author has provided. The text used may be only an illustration, a sentence, or several pages. They are often in the context of mentioning something we noticed and appreciated about the text. Comments may include discussing what you



noticed about the relationship between the cover, the title, and the first line, and how they all worked together to announce the primary message of the book. Or, you might address what you noticed about how the author organized the text to get across the message. It is during talk-alouds that we can address anything that relates to the communication loop between the author and the reader (the reader-writer connection). Students participate in these discussions from the beginning. Eventually, after several teacher demonstrations, students may engage in similar “talk-alouds” with their reading partners and occasionally “lead” small and large group sessions.

- Encourages a connection between the author and the students (the reader-writer connection)
- Models how skillful readers “use” the text and illustrations
- Provides opportunity for literary discussions between teachers and students and between students

The Think-aloud

Think-alouds provide an opportunity to share with students your use of comprehension processes or strategies as you gather meaning from and use written text. This may include how you determine main idea or the author’s purpose, use the author’s organization of text, access and use prior knowledge, and how reading often creates new questions for us to answer. Essentially, you are modeling for students how you gather meaning from text, explicitly telling/modeling for students the strategy or comprehension process you are using to understand the author’s message. This also includes how you think or approach the task of gathering meaning using that strategy. After several teacher demonstrations, students begin to practice. These student think-alouds provide opportunities for teachers to assess students’ reading comprehension.

- Models the complex task of comprehending text
- Helps students think more metacognitively about their reading to promote reading improvement
- Makes the strategies used for processing text visible and accessible to students
- Allows teachers to assess students’ reading comprehension skills

Explicit Instruction

Explicit instruction provides modeling and systematic instruction for students in how comprehension occurs. As defined here, it is a “training model” for skill development. Basically, it is a cycle of teacher explanations of a process, followed by a teacher think-aloud using that process, followed by students practicing think-alouds using that process with different text, followed by another teacher

think-aloud designed from observing and listening to students. To reiterate, through explicit instruction, students are “trained” to recognize and use language concepts and comprehension processes through a series of lessons that include teacher explanations, teacher modeling with think-alouds, student practice of think-alouds, and multiple student applications of the concepts/processes during day-to-day reading.

- Helps students develop a foundation of comprehension strategies for reading
- Helps students think more metacognitively about their reading to promote reading improvement
- Allows for in-depth focus on reading comprehension processes and strategies

Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM)

The picture word inductive model is an inquiry-oriented language arts strategy that employs photographs containing familiar objects, actions, and scenes to elicit words in children’s listening and speaking vocabulary. This model helps students add words to their sight reading vocabulary, as well as their writing vocabulary, and also discover phonetic and structural principles present in those words. It includes both explicit instruction and concept formation lessons and is a multidimensional approach to literacy development, one which encourages the use and integration of a variety of actions and strategies. PWIM requires continuous modeling of reading and writing by the teacher and can also be used to teach students how to use observation and analysis in their study of reading and writing, as well as in comprehending and composing (Calhoun, 1999).

- Can be used with classes of students with mixed abilities and cultural backgrounds
- Builds vocabulary directly
- Motivating; promotes a feeling of immediate success among learners
- Uses students own developed language (listening and speaking vocabularies) to add reading and writing to their communication repertoire
- Supports transition from spoken to written language; students can see the transformations from oral to written expression
- Builds concepts about how language works, from use of conventions and standard English, to more complex concepts such as paragraph organization

Practices that Facilitate Learning to Read

1. Bring opportunities for reading, writing, talking, and listening together so that each may feed off and into one another.
2. Talk about and share different kinds of reading.
3. Focus on using reading as a tool for learning.
4. Make reading functional and purposeful.
5. Develop positive self-perceptions and expectations concerning reading.
6. Use a broad spectrum of sources and a variety of real books for student learning materials.
7. Provide multiple and repeated demonstrations of how reading is done or used.
8. Use silent reading whenever possible and whenever appropriate to the purpose.

Flippo, 1997

Development of Reading

Stage	Description
Early Emergent (preschool)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Knows that reading is something that people do✧ Knows that books contain stories✧ First labels and comments on pictures✧ Later, tells a story in oral like language✧ Finally, includes “book language” to tell the story
Later Emergent (early primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Knows that print contains the message✧ Tries to read the print using pictures to predict the text✧ Roleplays as a reader relying on familiar text✧ Reads own name and familiar environmental print
Early Literacy (later primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Makes use of context for predictions✧ Has a basic sight reading vocabulary of functional words✧ Knows the relationship between most sounds and letters✧ Reads slowly, repeating words and phrases
Fluent (later primary and/or in the year following)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Sets own purpose for reading (interest, information, favorite authors)✧ Uses predicting, sampling, and confirming✧ Self corrects miscues independently✧ Rate of reading increases✧ Prefers to read silently
Expanding (later elementary and secondary years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Hooked on books✧ Understands voice and style✧ Is aware of a variety of genres✧ Can identify literary elements✧ Relates literature to personal experiences✧ Uses reading for a variety of purposes✧ Comprehends at different levels (literal, inferential, critical)



Writing

Characteristics of Children's Writing

Children's writing takes on predictable characteristics as they move from non-conventional to conventional forms. This developmental ladder is first described in "Characteristics of Children's Writing", then illustrated in the "Stages of Writing" chart.

1. *Differentiation of scribbling between drawing and writing*

Writing scribbles take the form of cursive writing in our culture (as opposed to the shape of scribble in, for example, Arabic). This differentiation indicates that children are acquiring a "gestalt" or overall impression of the form of written language, with a focus on the sense of the whole rather than the particulars. It is analogous to the speech intonation patterns of toddlers, sounding like language but not made up of words. The beginnings of written language are much earlier than making letters, in the same way that oral language begins before baby's first words.

2. *Development of linearity, symmetry, and directionality*

Writing-like behaviors ("pretend writing") such as left-right directionality help us to see that a child is acquiring procedural knowledge related to writing and reading.

3. *Development of letter-like shapes, then letters*

This development demonstrates the influence of environmental print. In particular, young children form capital or capital-like letters. Once again, gross features or approximations develop before the form becomes stable. At this time, children do not associate the letters with particular sounds, often writing to make written objects without intending to represent a particular message. A child may ask, "What does this say?"

4. *Making "words"*

Children use a general rule strategy to "make words," using approximately three-six letters and avoiding too much repetition of a particular letter. Often children use the letters of their own name in various combinations.



5. *The syllabic hypothesis*

This is a specific example of one-to-one correspondence. Children use one letter to represent one syllable, often a whole word. Initially, the syllabic hypothesis is used to justify production, later to regulate it, and finally to plan ahead. Children first represent concrete nouns. The last words to be represented in a message are articles and other function words.

6. *Functional spelling*

Functional spelling indicates a child understands that writing can be "talk written down." An understanding of the relationships between letters and sounds is developing. Initially, one letter

may represent a whole word (for example, “B” for birthday), but soon the child realizes speech can be segmented. Children frequently use a letter-name strategy to create spelling. A typical sequence begins with consonants only followed by inclusion of long vowels. Other vowel sounds, short vowels for example, are the last to become conventionalized. Many children use short vowels in non-conventional ways because they associate the vowel sound with the vowel name that feels closest in the mouth (for example, short “e” with “a”). Research indicates that encouraging functional spellings frees children to write more substantively in the primary years.

7. *Segmentation*

Children use a variety of techniques to segment words. The most common of these is the use of the dot or the dash. These marks give us insight into children’s developing sense of word boundaries. As children learn to read, they come to realize that our writing system utilizes spaces to separate written words.

8. *Punctuation*

Although the period is the most frequent punctuation mark, it is often not mastered first. Many children use exclamation marks, quotation marks, commas, and apostrophes in their early writing. Many over-generalizations occur, for example, using periods at the ends of lines rather than to end sentences. This is often the result of reading material to which children are exposed; for example, some basal readers or teacher-made charts that place one sentence per line rather than using continuous text.



Stages of Writing

Name _____

Date _____

<p>1.</p>  <p>(I like trees.)</p>	<p>Pictures</p>
<p>2</p>  <p>(I like trees.)</p>	<p>Approximation</p>
<p>3.</p> <p>Bm d n v w o</p> <p>(I like trees.)</p>	<p>Random letters</p>
<p>4.</p> <p>I to h</p> <p>(I like to color.)</p>	<p>Random and initial sounds</p>
<p>5.</p> <p>I h a p c</p> <p>(I have a pretty cat.)</p>	<p>Initial consonants</p>
<p>6.</p> <p>I p a e n m i f t y r t .</p> <p>(I play in my front yard.)</p>	<p>Initial and final sounds</p>
<p>7.</p> <p>I got a skat Berd fer Krismes.</p> <p>(I got a skateboard for Christmas.)</p>	<p>Vowel sounds appear</p>
<p>8.</p> <p>My favrrit food is appls and makrone.</p> <p>(My favorite food is apples and macaroni.)</p>	<p>All syllables represented</p>
<p>9.</p> <p>Wen I was on vacshon it was fun to play weth Nicole. She is my baby sister. She is one year old. She is a verry nice sister becass it chers you up weth a baby sister around.</p>	<p>Multiple related sentences and many words with correct spelling</p>

Development of Writing

Stage	Description
Early Emergent (preschool)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Knows writing is something that people do✧ Writes in scribbles, letter-like shapes, and imitative cursive✧ Begins to relate letters to spoken segments but NOT to letter sounds (phonemes)✧ May or may not intend a message when writing
Later Emergent (early primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Writing reveals children's insights about how language works✧ Experiments with the functions of written language (making lists, writing checks, preparing menus)✧ Discover the relationship between letters of the alphabet and spoken sounds✧ Uses inventive spelling✧ May ask an adult to write down their message✧ Traces, rewrites, or writes independently using inventive spellings✧ Discovers that writer's intentions are expressed through specifically arranged symbols
Early Literacy (later primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Transitions from auditory to visual spelling strategies✧ Inventive spellings are slowly replaced by conventional spellings✧ Writes about topics of personal interest✧ Writes letters, stories with characters, research reports, notes, labels, and poems✧ Composes sentences that make sense✧ Develops a sense of beginning, middle, and end✧ Can arrange ideas in a logical sequence✧ Can read their own writing
Fluent (later primary and/or in the years following)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Consistently writes pieces that are a full page or more✧ Uses more of the conventions of adult writing✧ Ideas flow freely; language is not restricted or stilted✧ Writing is used to think, to create, and to communicate✧ Can use resources to assist or check spelling
Expanding (later elementary and secondary years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Writes with personal voice and style for a variety of purposes, in a variety of genres

Spelling

Development of Spelling

Spelling instruction should be an important component of language and literacy reading and writing. Since spelling involves writing, and writing involves thinking, the process of inventive spelling serves both the writer and the thinker. “Even though the teacher’s goal is to foster more conventionalized forms of spelling, it is important to recognize that there is more to writing than just spelling and grammatically correct sentences. It is true that children will need adult help to master the complexities of the writing process. But they also will need to learn that the power of writing is expressing one’s own ideas in ways that can be understood by others” (NAEYC, 1998).

Spelling Principles

A developmental view of spelling focuses on taking risks, teaching and applying spelling strategies, and recognizing and correcting misspellings when students edit or proofread their written work. This view recognizes first and foremost that spelling is learned and taught in the context of writing and that spelling competence, like all language competence, develops gradually over time.

Routman, 1991

Children’s stages of spelling development tend to correspond closely with their stage of literacy development.

Spelling is not separate from reading and writing, but is an integral part of both. It is a developmental process where skills evolve in stages similar to learning to speak. Like all skills, it is acquired through teaching and meaningful practice. Spelling is functional. It serves a purpose for both the reader and the writer in making meaning. Spelling is social and, like all language, is related to the values and power relations in society. It is also contextual in that uses of spelling vary in different contexts (Bean & Bouffler, 1997).

Strategies Learners Use for Spelling

- *Spelling as it sounds.* This is generally referred to as invented spelling and refers to direct sound/symbol relationship. (Nashon for nation)
- *Spelling as it articulates.* This makes use of the articulation aspects of sound. (Chridagen for tried again)
- *Spelling as it means.* Semantic units are represented. (Thanku for thank you)
- *Spelling as it looks.* This is a visual strategy that uses graphic patterning. (Shcool for school)
- *Spelling by analogy.* This is using words you know to spell words you don’t know. (Realistick for realistic)
- *Spelling by reference to an authority.* Use a dictionary or consult someone.
- *Spelling as an alternative.* Use another word that is known but means the same.

(Bean & Bouffler, 1997)

Strategies for Teaching Spelling

- Teach spelling as a developmental process.
- Encourage young children to invent spellings.
- Encourage children to become word hunters and become more personally responsible.
- Take time to teach spelling.
- Use word lists to organize and focus learning.
- Conduct a spelling workshop, 75 minutes per week, and teach strategies for learning words.
- Allow children to be actively involved in their own learning.
- Use mini-lessons to inspect the patterns and consistency of English spelling.
- Teach children to proofread.
- Make spelling consciousness the goal.



Gentry, 1993

Linking Conditions for Learning to Spelling

CONDITION	CLASSROOM STRATEGIES
Immersion	Print rich classroom, shared reading, read aloud, modeled reading and writing, word or letter centers, games, activities
Demonstration	Read aloud, modeled reading and writing, cooperative reading and writing, teach onset and rime, blends, digraphs, think aloud by the teacher focusing on strategies for spelling
Engagement	Show the power and value of conventional spelling. Discuss all aspects of spelling and the play of words.
Expectation	Use flexible and mixed ability grouping. Demonstrate the time and place for standard spelling. Make explicit the strategies good spellers use.
Responsibility	Insist on justification of comments when possible. Use language of speculation asking what else could be done.
Approximation	Discuss spelling approximations as temporary spellings and study similarities/differences to conventional spelling.
Response	Observe the child's temporary spellings to help modify to conventional spelling.
Employment/Use	Use word games, do proofreading.

Good spellers tend to:

- View spelling as a problem-solving task, thus being prepared to attempt unknown words by making use of prior knowledge to predict the most likely spelling.
- Have a well-developed language competence through exposure.
- Have an interest in words.
- Have a “spelling conscience” and consequently be prepared to proofread their writing.
- Have a large number of remembered spellings and can therefore write a large number of words as whole units.
- Have a learning method or systematic procedure for learning new or difficult words.
- Be confident about their ability to spell.
- Be able to make generalizations and deductions readily.
- Articulate words clearly.
- Write swiftly and legibly.

Good spellers tend to use the following strategies:

- The knowledge of the morphology, (aspects of language structure related to prefixes, root words, etc.,) and the consequent relationships between words.
- The knowledge of graphophonic relationships, (the variety of sound/symbol relationships), and the probability of letter sequences, the likely position of letters in a word and possible letter patterns.
- The ability to use visual memory to determine whether a word looks correct.
- The ability to apply a large number of generalizations.
- The ability to develop and use mnemonics, or memory aids.
- The ability to use resources such as other people, word lists, and dictionaries for a variety of purposes.

(adapted from Bolton, F. & Snowball, D. 1993)

Spelling Principles

A developmental view of spelling focuses on taking risks, teaching and applying spelling strategies, and recognizing and correcting misspellings when students edit or proofread their written work. This view recognizes first and foremost that spelling is learned and taught in the context of writing and that spelling competence, like all language competence, develops gradually over time (Routman, 1991).

The following principles apply:

- Spelling should facilitate communication of written language.
- Spelling is developmental.
- The need for standard spelling should be kept in proper perspective.
- There should be no special spelling curriculum or regular lesson sequences.

Quoted from Kenneth Goodman, Brooks Smith, Robert Meredity, and Yetta Goodman (1987). *Language and Thinking in School: A Whole-Language Curriculum*, pp. 300–301.

Reading and Spelling High-Frequency Words

Teaching High-Frequency Words

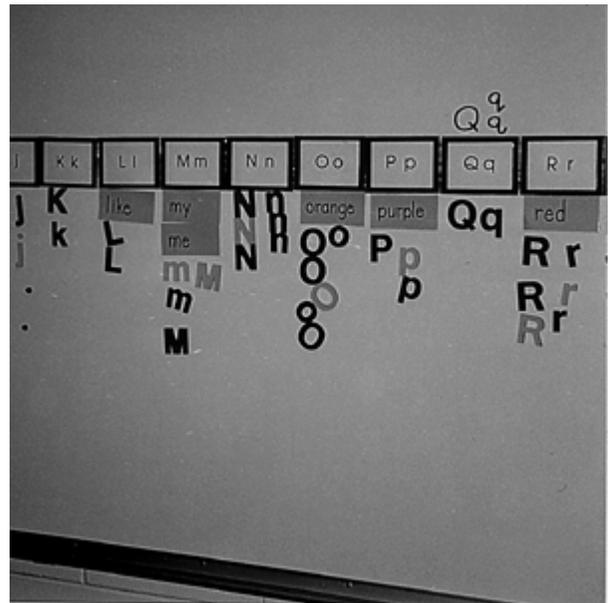
Most high-frequency words are abstract and not easily connected to meaning. Cunningham (1995) says there are three principles for teaching these words.

1. Provide a way for children to associate meaning with words.
2. Once meaning is associated, provide practice using a variety of learning modes.
3. If a common word has many confusable word usages, teach one first. As soon as that one is learned, teach another and practice both. Then teach a third and practice all three (Cunningham, 2000).

Strategies for Teaching High-Frequency Words

Word Walls

- Select four or five words to introduce each week
- Select an activity each day to do with the words
 - Discuss letter and sounds
 - Snap or clap the word
 - Write the word
 - Draw configuration boxes around the word
 - Give clues about a word and have students guess the word
 - Play Wordo
 - Do a cross checking activity
 - Make sentences
 - Do a variety of games like rhyming endings.
- Display prominently in the room for all children to see easily
- Review all the words weekly
- Words will vary from classroom to classroom



Word Sorts

- Can be done with any group of words
- Purpose is to focus on various features of the words
- Used to help children analyze words and look for patterns
- Process
 - Write 10-15 words on large index cards
 - Have children write them on individual papers
 - Have the children sort the words in different piles depending on features: number of letters, beginning letters, rime, endings, or semantics
- Teacher can direct the sort

Making Words

- Children are given letters and they use them to make words
- Children go from making small words to making larger words
- Activity is active
- Children look for patterns in words and how changing one or more letters change the word
 - Teacher gives directions
 - Children can reinforce the activity at a center
- Rimes—the following are all rimes. (Rime—the portion of a syllable that follows the onset.)
500 words can be derived from 37 rimes. (onset-fl + rime-ack = flack)

-ack	-ain	-ake	-ale	-all	-ame	-an	-ank
-ap	-ash	-at	-ate	-aw	-ay	-eat	-ell
-est	-ice	-ick	-ide	-ight	-ill	-in	-ine
-ing	-ink	-ip	-ir	-ock	-oke	-op	-or
-ore	-uck	-ug	-um-	-unk			

(adapted from Cunningham, 2000)



Stages of Spelling Development (adapted from Bear, et al., 2000)

Age	Characteristics
1–7 Prelitererate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Marks on page✧ Symbols or known letters randomly used in pretend writing
5–9 Early Letter Name	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Syllabic spelling✧ Uses several alphabetic letters✧ Mostly uses letter names to spell
Middle Letter Name	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Has left to right✧ Uses most letters✧ Knows some clear letter sound correspondences✧ Uses vowels in most words
Late Letter Name	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Uses most beginning and ending consonants✧ Uses short vowels✧ Knows most clear letter sound correspondences✧ Knows some blends and digraphs✧ Uses only sound patterns
6–12 Within Word Pattern	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Starts to use both visual and sound patterns✧ Getting r-controlled vowels in on syllable words✧ Begins using long vowel patterns✧ Gets common long vowels in one syllable words✧ Gets most long vowels in one syllable words✧ May know some inflectional endings and common suffixes
10+ Syllable Juncture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Short and long vowels stable in one syllable words✧ Experiments with joining syllables-doubling letters, changing /y/ to /i/✧ Beginning to understand the connection between meaning and spelling e.g. /ed/ conveys past tense✧ Learns homophones and homonyms
Derivational Constancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Uses common affixes and root words and concept of derivations✧ Begins to explore meaning basis and links to spelling✧ Can spell many multi-syllable words✧ Learns low frequency vowel patterns, mainly from meaning✧ Explores when to use different spellings for the same ending, e.g. /tion/ and /sion/

Development of Viewing and Visual Representation

Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are not the only modes of communication. Communication can also occur non-verbally, for example, American Sign Language, universal signs, logos, icons, and Braille. For some children these non-verbal forms of language are a major way of communicating. Even when we speak, meaning is conveyed not only through words but also through non linguistic cues such as tone of voice, pitch gesture, facial expression, posture, body language, and eye contact. Likewise, when we listen we interpret not only what is said but also these non-linguistic cues.

Reading and writing also incorporate non-verbal information, for example, directionality, spacing between words, and punctuation marks. Maps, charts, and graphs are specialized visual forms that communicate information. Viewing and visual representation are critical skills when using all of the forms of information made possible by technology.

Children need opportunities both to express and respond to visual representation across content areas, for example:

- Dramatic play, role play, pantomime, creative movement, dance
- Clusters, webs, maps, charts, graphs
- Drawings, collage painting
- Modeling, building, constructing
- Film, television, video
- Spreadsheets, databases, computer graphics
- Scientific inquiry



Children learn to read most effectively when all of the cueing systems work together rather than when treated separately. Phonics, spelling, printing, and other necessary skills of written language are learned more effectively through meaningful and purposeful use rather than in isolation.

Considerations for Children with Special Needs, High Ability, and First Languages other than English

All children deserve to reach their full language potential. Depending on the individual needs and development of the student, the nature and degree of adaptation will vary. Students need to be able to build on their unique intellectual, academic, social, physical, and cultural backgrounds. With the previous “Common Understandings” in mind the following considerations should also be taken into account.

Considerations for Children with Special Needs (Lincoln Public Schools, 1998)

1. Due to both biological and background factors, the degree of ease and difficulty of learning to read and write varies significantly among children. However, a major contribution to the prevention of reading/writing failure is instruction that appropriately meets the needs of the child (Adams, 1997). Instructional elements are a source of our most powerful tools to build reading success for all students.
2. No one approach or strategy can meet the needs of every child. Rather, strategic application of a variety of instructional strategies linked to assessed student needs will increase the likelihood that student needs are met. The host of strategies have set a course for a multifaceted instructional system to develop literacy in young children.
3. Some strategies have been found to be more effective in preventing and correcting reading difficulties in learners with special needs. According to Adams (1997), and Gaskins & Gaskins (1997) those include the following:
 - Determine the student’s appropriate instructional level.
 - Teach to the most critical, relevant goal for the student.
 - Provide explicit, systematic instruction balanced with some opportunity for implicit learning that has been guided by on-going assessment.
 - Give early support of phonological awareness and letter knowledge.
 - Use specific instruction on letter-sound correspondences and spelling conventions.
 - Model and guide application of spelling-sound knowledge in reading and writing opportunities.
 - Provide daily sessions in guided reading at the student’s instructional level which teach to both fluency and comprehension.
 - Provide daily sessions in independent reading at the student’s mastery level.
 - Practice contextual reading and reading comprehension skills.
 - Use teacher-activated exploration of new language, concepts, and thinking processes that support the interactions between oral and written language.
 - Create a safe environment for risk taking, understanding of similarities, and acceptance and appreciation of differences.
 - Organize for maximum academic engagement of all learners.
 - Teach and integrate strategies across the curriculum.
 - Encourage extensive reading and sharing of reading.

4. Early “learning-to-read” programs should be designed to ensure that appropriate amounts of instruction time be allotted for the development of phonological awareness, phonics, spelling, reading fluency, automatic word recognition, and comprehension strategies. All of these strategies are necessary but in and of themselves are not sufficient. However, for students experiencing challenges in learning to read, it is essential that these aspects of instruction be taught in an integrated context (Lyon, 1997).
5. To the fullest extent possible, collaborative planning and teaching among general and special educators should guide instruction for students with special needs. Coordination of services will promote the development of appropriate, cohesive, and strategic instruction to meet the students’ needs. This integration and cohesion will increase consistency and generalization of students’ skills and strategies.
6. Grouping of students with special needs should be fluid to address the multidimensional aspects of their learning characteristics. Students with special needs benefit academically and socially from being with their peers, both with and without disabilities.
7. High expectations for student achievement should be set for all learners. Expect and document progress.

Considerations for High Ability Learners (Lincoln Public Schools, 1998)

Although the following suggestions will be helpful when planning for all students, high ability learners will benefit greatly from instruction which is based on these recommendations.

Appropriately designed differentiated curriculum should:

1. Be planned and sequentially organized to include specific expectations for the acquisition of subject matter, mastery of skills, creation of products, and development of attitudes and appreciations related to self, others, and the environment.
2. Place emphasis on the interdependence of subject matter, skills, products, and self-understanding within the same curricular structure.
3. Include provisions to meet the need for some type of instructional pacing.
4. Allow for the expression of some aspect of the individual’s interest, needs, abilities, and learning preferences.
5. Be organized to allow for some individualization and self-selection.
6. Provide opportunities to learn to reconceptualize existing knowledge, to perceive things from various points of view, and to use information for new purposes or in new ways.
7. Provide learning experiences for students to address the unresolved issues and problems of society and apply personal and social data to analyze, clarify, and respond to such issues and problems.

Considerations for Children with First Languages Other than English (Lincoln Public Schools, 1998)

1. Provide a classroom environment that allows meaningful oral language interaction with teachers and English-speaking peers; use concrete materials and experiences to make the oral input comprehensible.
2. Provide a meaningful written language environment that demonstrates the functional uses of print and links children's homes and community print environments to the school's print environment.
3. Provide a model of reading for meaning rather than decoding. Use culturally familiar material and integrate new vocabulary and concepts into students' existing knowledge by using pre-reading and post-reading discussions and open-ended questions.
4. Provide a literacy program that incorporates interactive story telling, shared reading and taped books, the language experience approach, the use of writing through dialogue journals, and thematic units for integrated literacy instruction.
5. Provide instruction in how to comprehend content materials and to acquire study and test taking skills.
6. Provide native literacy instruction where feasible, recognizing the common language proficiency underlying reading and writing in both native and second language.
7. Provide children who do not read in their native language with additional opportunities to understand the links between oral and written language, the functions of literacy, and the concept of print.
8. Adjust instruction to the language proficiency level of the children. Walling (1993) suggests that the use of "sheltered" English techniques is one way to address the different learning styles and language proficiencies that children bring to the classroom. The following are a few suggestions for using "sheltered" English techniques to address different learning styles and help children comprehend:
 - Speak clearly and naturally but at a slightly slower pace.
 - Simplify vocabulary without "talking down" to students.
 - Give directions in a variety of ways.
 - Use examples or point out observable models.
 - Give special attention to key words that convey meaning; point them out or write them on the board.
 - Avoid jargon or idioms that might be misunderstood if taken literally.
 - Read written directions out loud and write oral directions on the board.
 - Allow time for translation by an aide or classmate and allow time of discussion to clarify meaning.
 - Divide complex or extended language discourse into smaller, more manageable units.
 - Allow extra time. New learners of English are coping with translating back and forth between languages as well as dealing with new content.

9. Help children process new vocabulary and cognitively demanding concepts. According to Hamayan and Perlman (1990) one of the difficulties children encounter in the mainstream classroom is in processing cognitively demanding concepts in English. They suggest using hands-on demonstration as often as possible to make this task easier. By demonstrating new concepts, meaning is conveyed not through language alone, but with the help of concrete referents that the students can touch, hear, and see (and sometimes taste and smell). In hands-on demonstrations, meaning is also invariably conveyed through gestures and body language, making it easier for children to comprehend the concepts being presented.

Additionally, Hamayan and Perman (1990) suggest that classroom teachers can help children process new vocabulary by contextualizing lessons for them. Extensive introductions to lessons help clarify the context in which new concepts are to be presented. Classroom teachers need to familiarize the children with the general areas under consideration (Mohan, 1998) and give them a set of ideas or plans with which to make sense out of new information. The following strategies will help teachers contextualize lessons:

- Draw from the children’s personal experience in the topical area or one closely related to it.
- Have children, either in small groups or in pairs, list everything they know about the topic to be presented.
- Guide the children in categorizing the different pieces of information they have listed. For example, a web helps organize the information that students already have about a topic to prepare to learn more about it.
- Help students read a chapter in a content-area textbook more easily, highlight the main idea and supporting details of the chapter. If the summary sentences are buried in the text or linguistically too complex for children, sentences can be pulled out and written in simple English on a separate sheet of paper and given to children for reference.

10. Encourage parental interest and participation in their children’s education.

Parental involvement is an integral part of the successful program. Involving parents of children is important not only for their academic success, but also for supporting the family objective of effective functioning in the larger society (Walling, 1993).

11. Recognize the importance of the child’s education.

When the child’s native language is placed in high esteem, the child’s own self-esteem is bound to improve. Parents are also more likely to become involved in their children’s education if the use of the native language is valued, especially by the teaching staff, and furthermore, parents are then more likely to take a collaborative role with the school (Hamayan, 1990).

Cognitive and academic development in the first language has been found to have critically important and positive effects on second language learning (Bialystock, 1991; Collier, 1989, 1992; Garcia, 1994, Genesee, 1987, 1994). Academic skills, literacy development concept formation, subject knowledge, and strategy development learned in the first language will transfer to the second language. However, because literacy is socially situated, it is equally critical to provide a socio-culturally-supportive school environment that allows the first language

and academic and cognitive development to flourish. Self-esteem and self-confidence are also critical components of success.

Hamayan and Perlman (1990) suggest it is the responsibility of the teachers of children to see to it that language and cultural diversity are seen as tremendous sources of richness from which all students can benefit. Language minority children's contributions could be numerous; they can teach others their language; they can teach others about their cultural heritage traditions. Language minority students can serve as native-language tutors to peers and younger students who need native-language support. They also can serve as links to parents who are not proficient in English. Hamayan and Perlman (1990) conclude that by showcasing children's strengths and contributions in the classroom and throughout the school, we will be ensuring a high likelihood of language minority children becoming proficient in English and succeeding in school and at the same time providing all children with a richer and more vibrant education.

Most effective instructional practices suggested for native-English speaking students have also been shown to be effective. Many researchers have found that instructional processes in reading are similar for both native and second-language learners (Allen, 1989; Goodman, 1986; Hudelson, 1989; Urzua, 1989). However, teachers may need to employ a broader variety of instructional procedures than would be necessary with native-English speakers.

According to Spangeberg-Urbschat, & Pritchard (1994) specific differences between reading instruction for native-English speakers and for second language learners include:

- While the reading process may be similar in both groups, greater cognitive demands are made on children who must develop reading skills simultaneously with oral language skills.
- No assumptions can be made about homogeneous background of children
- Not only may children be a different age and language background, but they may have completely different educational backgrounds as well.
- No single instructional approach is likely to meet all the needs of such a diverse groups of students. Instructional approaches need to be adapted to meet student's varied instructional needs.
- In the case of second language children, elaboration on or activation of prior knowledge about a topic involves identification and understanding of children's cultural background and experiences.
- With older children, teachers should capitalize on their level of cognitive maturity rather than using teaching procedures designed for primary grade children. For example, older students should be more capable of developing metacognitive awareness of reading tasks than younger children.
- Learning-strategy instruction is especially important. Learning strategies can provide opportunities to read and write supported by thoughtful and exemplary questioning, time for reflection, encouragement, and helpful assessment.

Learning Through the Language Arts

Meaning is central to language. Writing and reading, the process of constructing meaning with written symbols, involve the coordination and integration of complex cueing systems. Children will work to pull thoughts and words together as they listen, speak, read, and write in an attempt to make sense of their perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. All of these language activities, whether for composition or comprehension, are thinking activities and can be understood as developmental processes. For example, both composition and comprehension require that the student move from the known to unknown, supported by a bridge of words. Both require the child to translate thought to words and words to thought.

- Fluent, clear writing expressed with a sensitivity for language and based in good thought can be corrected if it contains errors of usage, punctuation, spelling, or grammar. The focus for young children is on making connections between thought and print.

- Reading is essentially a dynamic thinking activity in which the reader interacts with the text to create a meaningful understanding of the writing. Good readers seek to identify meaning rather than isolated words. In the primary classroom, skills are learned in context and for a purpose.

- Teachers need to be concerned with both skills and processes; there is not real dichotomy. Skills are essential for developing language competence, but they are not ends in themselves. Processes are crucial, but serve only to accomplish a purpose. It is important that skills be kept in the perspective of larger strategies with which the child makes meaning of print.



- Children must be taught to monitor their own processes. As they are reading, they may recognize they are not understanding and should apply a strategy to gain comprehension. They also can monitor their own writing processes, avoiding proofreading as they draft their thoughts.
- These processes integrate many skills and strategies. Children experience success through opportunities to read and write supported by thoughtful and exemplary questioning, time for reflection, encouragement, and helpful assessment.

The Goal of the Language Arts Program is the Understanding of Reading and Writing

Some children learn what reading and writing are from the way they are taught; it is important that instruction stress comprehension and meaning right from the beginning. Young children focus on meaning as they make sense of their world. This “sense” must be used to help children master the conventions of print. Children’s knowledge of semantic and syntactic information can reduce the need to attend to every piece of graphic information on the page.

In order to teach for understanding, the language arts teacher must be informed about the most promising teaching practices in the areas of:

- Reading/writing connections
- Reading comprehension
- Cueing systems
- Grouping for learning
- Reading to children
- Oral reading
- Independent reading
- Viewing and visual representation

Reading and Writing Connections

Reading influences writing and writing influences reading. For example:

- The type and amount of reading material to which writers are exposed influences the choice of topic, genre, vocabulary, style, and attitude. It is critical that children, at all levels, be exposed to informational text and learn how authors organize it for meaning.
- Children who are taught to read from basal readers with stilted language and format produce writing that is also stilted in language and format.
- Children who write know text makes sense and look for meaning in reading.
- Writing has been found to contribute to the knowledge base of how oral and written language are related to growth in spelling, phonics, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension.
- High levels of reading comprehension are attained when reading is approached with some of the strategies that writers use, for example, activating prior knowledge, formulating ideas, reflecting, and revision.
- Writers use reading in an integrated fashion, reading their own writing, reading a variety of other materials, and using knowledge they have acquired through previous reading.

Given that reading and writing develop together, these principles should be followed:

- Children learn to read by writing and to write by reading. Writing experiences begin along with reading experiences.
- Writing strategies should be incorporated throughout the reading process, from pre-reading to reflection upon the reading.
- Well-written materials should be selected for reading instruction
- Children should read their writing to others.

- Writing and reading comprehension both improve with instruction on story structure.
- Reading and writing should be linked with talking. Purposeful, child initiated talk is essential to reading and writing development.

Reading Comprehension

Comprehension is a dynamic, interactive process of constructing meaning by combining the reader's prior knowledge with the information in the text and within the context of the reading situation.

Prior knowledge is the major determinant of reading comprehension. When we read, we bring meaning to the print in order to get meaning from it. Readers need knowledge of the content, structure of the text, and effective strategies for reading.

Readers

Good readers use two kinds of strategies: 1)activating prior knowledge, and 2)self-monitoring for comprehension.

Research indicates the strategic reader:

- Understands that different purposes and different texts require particular strategies
- Identifies the task and sets of purposes
- Chooses appropriate strategies, for example, predicting, rereading, summarizing, looking for relationships
- Monitors comprehension, including:
 - Knowing whether one is comprehending
 - Knowing what is being comprehended
 - Knowing how to self-monitor comprehension whenever meaning is blocked

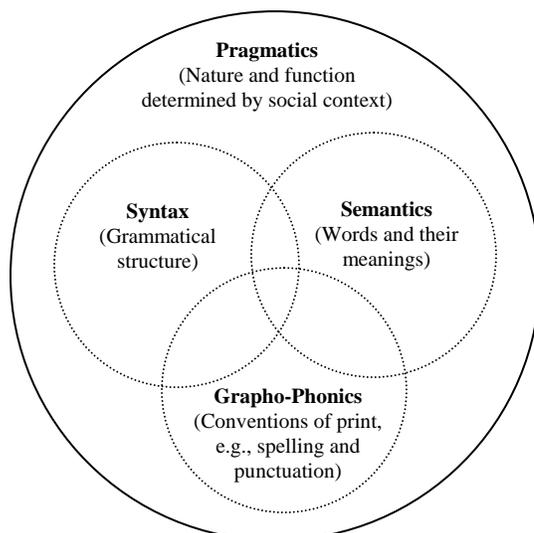
Teachers

Some of the research implications for the teacher include:

- Choosing well-written material that is clear and has effective structure
- Using strategies that activate prior knowledge such as clustering and webbing
- Teaching about the structures of written material, including how informational text is organized for meaning
- Accepting a wide range of responses in comprehension
- Engaging in reading for a purpose which makes sense to children.
- Modeling strategies
- Providing explicit instruction

Cueing Systems for Reading and Writing

Reading and writing involve the coordination and integration of four cueing systems; pragmatics, semantics, syntax and grapho-phonics. The diagram below illustrates the dimension of written language.



Writing is a process of composing with writing symbols. The following sections elaborate how writers and readers integrate the cueing systems to construct meaning as they write and read.

The Process of Writing

Pragmatics-The Context of Language

Young children usually write the way they talk. They do not yet understand writing is not simply talk written down. In the early stages of writing, it is important to build on the child's knowledge of oral language and to bring the child's oral language to the printed form, for example, through language experience activities and expressive writing. However, in order to build children's pragmatic knowledge of written language, it is important to bring print to the child.

The teacher may:

- Immerse the child in functional written language and provide opportunities to use writing informally in the course of daily activities such as the calendar, sharing time, signs, labels, invitations, thank you notes, announcements, and notes home.
- Read a wide variety of literature and non-fiction to children and encourage them to write in those genres or forms (for example, read fairy tales to children and provide opportunities for them to retell or write their own fairy tales; read letters to children and provide opportunities for them to write letters).

Semantics—The Meaning of Language

Semantics is the major focus in the writing process. As children write to create and express ideas, as they read and re-read their own writing and respond to the content of each other's stories, they focus on the semantic aspects of print.

The teacher may:

- Extend children's background experiences by:
 - Involving them in as many real experiences as possible, such as field trips, cooking, and other hands-on activities.
 - Providing vicarious experiences when real ones are not possible, for example, by reading to them or by using the Internet, software, films, video and audio tapes, dramas, and discussions.
- Discuss these experiences and have children write about them as well as provide opportunities for children to share their writing.
- Encourage both collaborative and independent writing to provide children with opportunities to practice composing meanings in print.
- Give purposes for writing, such as to give directions, record ideas, explain events, and entertain.
- Before writing, have students recall and share what they know about the topic, imagine and create images, build their knowledge, and extend their vocabulary.
- Help children clarify and extend their ideas by enlisting a variety of ways for them to share and respond to each other's writing.

Syntax-The Structure of Language

Children need opportunities to write in a variety of syntactic patterns. Pattern writing, sentence building, and extension activities provide opportunities to play with and extend syntactic knowledge. However, it is important not to overuse such activities. It is critical to provide children with opportunities for free writing (a journal) which allows children to express themselves in their own natural way.

The teacher may:

- Provide literature with repeated syntactic patterns, such as pattern books and poetry, and encourage children to write with these patterns.
- Establish daily situations for children to write language for different purposes—to tell stories, to explain, to persuade, to ask questions, and to give directions.

Grapho-Phonics-Conventions of Print

Writing is probably the single most important activity for focusing on and practicing letter formation (print and cursive writing), letter-sound relationships (for example: phonics and spelling) and punctuation.

The teacher may:

- Provide many opportunities for writing and encourage children to use invented spellings. As children attempt to match their spoken and written language, they extend and consolidate their awareness of letter-sound relationships.

- Use alphabet books. Read such books to the children and provide opportunities for reading and writing alphabet books.
- Encourage children to develop personal word lists, such as word families and words that sound the same.
- Have a variety of dictionaries available.

The Process of Reading

Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written text. It is an active process involving the constant interaction between the mind of the reader and the text. While reading, the reader predicts, samples, and confirms hypotheses. Reading is a complex process requiring the integration and coordination of many interrelated sources of information: context, meaning, structure, and sound/symbol relationships.



Pragmatic Cues-Understanding Context

The reader uses pragmatic cues while considering the context in which the text occurs. For example, the language one would use in a formal situation is different from that in an informal situation; the language of science or nonfiction is different from the language of literature. When readers use illustration style to predict that a book with photographs contains factual information and a book with cartoon illustrations contains a make-believe story, they are demonstrating the use of pragmatic cues. Effective readers have a wide background of experience with language in many situations. To expand children's knowledge of written language in its various uses, the teacher may:

- Immerse children in literature of a variety of genres and styles.
- Read a wide variety of non-fiction to children; and discuss the information readers receive from non-print cues, illustrations, and text structure.

Semantic Cues-Understanding Meaning

Readers construct meaning when they relate the information in the text to what they know. When a text contains facts new to the reader, the information can be integrated with what is already known. The semantic context consists of the meaningful relations among words and ideas. Self-correction when the text does not make sense is an indication of the child's effective use of semantic cues. Effective readers have extensive background knowledge of a wide range of topics and related language. To build children's experiential and language base and to encourage reading for meaning, the teacher should:

- Extend children's background experiences and involve them in as many real-life experiences as possible.
- Discuss experiences to extend the children's understanding and related vocabulary.
- Relate the experiences to print, by recording the experiences and reading related text to the children so they will see reading as both enjoyable and functional.

- Encourage extensive independent reading to help build children’s experiences with a range of topics.
- Give purposes for reading, such as to follow directions, to gain information, to enjoy the writing, and to respond.
- Before reading, have students recall and share what they know about the topic to build their knowledge of the concepts and vocabulary in the text before they read it.
- Encourage predictions before and during reading to promote reading for meaning.
- Help children clarify and extend understanding by enlisting a variety of ways to respond to reading such as dramas, writing, discussion, recording, and drawing.

Syntactic Cues—Understanding Structure

Readers need to know how language works and how to use information such as sentence structure, word order, function words, and word endings as they read. The syntactic context, consisting of the signals provided by the patterns of language, allows the reader to transfer knowledge of oral language to print. Self-correction of miscues that do not “sound right” is evidence of a reader’s use of syntactic cues. To build children’s knowledge of how language works, the teacher may:

- Read to children from a wide variety of literature.
- Provide time and opportunities for children to read independently, encouraging children to make predictions based on their knowledge of such patterns.
- Establish situations in which children can use language for different purposes—to tell stories, to explain, to persuade, to ask questions, to give directions.
- Use oral and written closure. Focus on syntactic patterns to predict and confirm.

Grapho-Phonic Cues-Understanding Sound-Symbol Relationships

Readers need to know how language works and to use information such as sentence structure, word order, function words, and word endings as they read. The syntactic context, the signals provided by the patterns of language, allows the reader to transfer knowledge of oral language to print. Self-correction of miscues that do not “sound right” is evidence of a reader’s use of syntactic cues. To build children’s knowledge of how language works, the teacher may help children develop an understanding of letter-sound relationships, by providing opportunities for them to:

- Hear language and then see it in print
 - See their own words and sentences in print
 - Hear language while following the print
 - Build sight vocabulary of signs, letters, labels, and other significant words in their environment.
- Use shared reading experiences, such as big books, to experience stories, songs, poems and chants. Point to the words as the teacher and child read together to reinforce directionality. Focus attention on particular letter-sound relationships.
- Provide many opportunities for writing. Encourage children to use functional spellings. As they attempt to match their spoken and written language, they extend and consolidate their awareness of letter-sound relationships.
- Read alphabet books to the children and provide opportunities for reading and writing alphabet books.

- Encourage children to develop personal word lists, such as word families and words that sound the same.
- Use word games of various types, such as whole class, small group, or individual games.
- Provide tapes of stories with accompanying books so children can follow the story in the book while listening.
- Use oral and written *cloze* procedure activities. Focus on graphic cues to predict and confirm words.



Children learn to read most effectively when the four cueing systems are taken as a whole rather than treated separately. Phonics, spelling, printing, and necessary skills of written language are learned more effectively through meaningful and purposeful use rather than in isolation.

Phonemic Awareness

Children need to have a strong understanding of spoken language before they can understand written language. This knowledge of how language works is called phonemic awareness. It is the ability to:

- Examine language independent of meaning (hear sounds that make up spoken words)
- Attend to sounds in the context of a word (understand the sequence of sounds and relationship between sounds in words)
- Manipulate component sounds (alter and rearrange sounds to create new words)

Phonemic awareness is NOT phonics. Phonemic awareness is the understanding that spoken words are made up of individual sounds and phonics is the relationship between sounds and written letters or print. They have a connection and phonemic awareness skills play a critical role in their acquisition.

Children also use the sense of sounds as they try to write. In the beginning stages of spelling, a single letter will stand for a word, then more letters join it as the child develops his understanding of words. Children who are allowed to use inventive spelling develop an early and strong sense of phonemic awareness (Cunningham, 1995).

Phonics

Children's knowledge of letter names and of letter-sound relationships is a tool with which children develop principles to unlock the alphabetic nature of our writing system. The purpose of phonics is to help children to understand the alphabetic principle, so that they are able:

- In reading—to form an approximate pronunciation that must be checked against their knowledge of real words and the context of the text.
- In writing—to form an approximate spelling of a word.

Phonetic instruction enables the learner with the task of decoding and figuring out how the alphabetic language works for the beginning readers. Adams (1990) reviewed decades of research and concluded that some readers can figure out the letter-sound system without instruction while others need explicit phonics instruction. Explicit phonics instruction speeds up the literacy acquisition of children. Cunningham (1995) says the need for this instruction is especially clear for the at risk children who have not had much exposure to reading and writing and thus have had fewer opportunities to figure out how the alphabetic system works.

How Children Learn Phonics

(Adapted from Weaver, 1996)

- By being encouraged to write independently
- By observing the teacher write down the children's ideas, or the teacher's own words and ideas
- By noticing print while the teacher reads a big book or large chart aloud
- By discussing interesting elements of sound in a reading selection (for example, alliteration, rhyme, onomatopoeia)
- By engaging in self-chosen activities with words having similar sound elements
- By hearing and participating in discussions of the use of phonics cues in the context of meaningful reading
- By receiving individual help in using phonics cues along with prior knowledge and context, in order to get meaning
- By rereading familiar materials and inferring phonics relationships

Ways of Helping Children Learn Phonics (Connecting to Print)

(Adapted from Weaver, 1996)

- Teach onset and rime patterns within songs, poems, stories that are read to and with the children.
- Guide collaborative activities focusing on onsets and rimes.
- Share and make alphabet books with children.
- Demonstrate the use of context and initial letter cues to predict a word.
- Reread favorite stories, poems, and songs from large texts that the children can follow; point to words while reading together.
- Provide small texts, tape recordings, and CD-ROM stories so the children can listen and follow the text.
- Do guided writing with children and support their efforts to write independently.
- Provide additional help and materials for the children who need it (e.g., books with alliteration and rhyme).
- Support children's own ways of learning phonics.
- Have faith in children as learners.

The Literacy Environment

Classrooms that Promote Literacy

“All children, especially those at risk for reading difficulties should have access to early childhood environments that promote language and literacy growth and that address a variety of skills that have been identified as predictors of later reading achievement.” (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Young children come from homes that support literacy to differing degrees. It is vital for teachers to create supportive environments that promote language and literacy and are responsive to each child.

An environment that promotes learning is one that is emotionally safe and accepting and is a social environment that encourages interaction between adults and children and among children themselves. When children feel safe and accepted they will be able to take the risks necessary to learn skills just beyond their current level. A predictable environment, one where children know what to expect, adds to the sense of security. The amount of validation children feel for the languages, knowledge, and abilities they bring to school directly affects their academic growth (Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1995).

Young children learn best in a social setting that encourages language and conversation. “Talking is probably the most important thing we do here, because you learn the most when you can talk while you work,” a teacher told her third grade class (Berk & Winsler, 1995). Oral language is essential to learning to read and write. Adults who help to expand the children’s language and vocabulary are making a tremendous contribution to their potential for learning to read. It is simply more difficult to read and understand words that one does not speak and has never heard before (NHSA, 1999).

A growing number of students are from homes where English is not the predominant language. These children must be made to feel accepted and that their home language is valued. Research has shown that the better developed the child’s first language is, the more successful he or she will be in becoming proficient in a second language (Bos & Vaughn, 1998). If an adult—teacher, aide, or volunteer—is able to speak the child’s language, the child will more quickly become comfortable in the classroom and will continue to strengthen his or her first language skills.

In 1999 a policy resolution by the International Reading Association recommends reductions in class size. According to recent research on reduced class size, smaller classes are shown to lead to high reading achievement if teachers are adequately prepared to take advantage of the change through quality professional development. With smaller classes, each child receives a larger portion of the teacher’s instructional time and has opportunities for greater learning. The Association recommends fewer than twenty children in each class rather than the current average of substantially more than twenty students. It also stresses that excellence in classroom reading instruction will be achieved through a combination of smaller class size, quality teacher preparation, and ongoing professional development.

Physical Arrangements of the Classroom

Classroom arrangement is an important factor in facilitating all learning, including reading and writing. The classroom that promotes literacy is print-rich, with print that is functional and serves a purpose. The classroom is also resource-rich with areas that offer opportunities for children to use reading and writing skills in many ways and at various levels. Most importantly, the environment includes adults who interact with and are supportive of children as they develop their skill, and who are models in using print for a variety of purposes.

Print-rich Environment

A “print-rich” environment surrounds the child with symbols and print, but the print must be functional, that is, print must serve a purpose. Print can be:

- A source of information
- A source of recreation or entertainment
- A means of recording
- A way to communicate with others
- A tie between home and school

Room Arrangement

The learner-focused program is not dependent on any particular model, but the principles of active learning must be kept in mind when arranging the room. Classrooms for young children must be inviting places, arranged to support a variety of activities and experiences (Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1992). The essential elements are flexibility, adaptability, and response to children’s needs.

For all areas of the room, consideration is given to safety, interference caused by noise, space available, and movement patterns. Keep in mind room for equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers, assistive devices. Locating interest areas so that materials and activities facilitate, supplement, and complement those of the others supports integration and allows children to select from and adapt the environment to suit their needs. Literacy activities can take place in any area of the room and throughout the day. A key area to promote interest in reading, however, is one where children can have immediate access to a collection of attractive stories and informational books.

Learning Centers

A classroom or other early childhood setting that is arranged in activity or learning centers encourages children to work in small groups or pairs where conversation and building on each other’s knowledge can take place. Learning centers are also a way to provide for individual differences in the classroom. The individual interests of the children can be encouraged, and the teachers are able to interact more informally and comfortably with the children.

The following suggestions may be useful when planning a learning center:

- Allow children to contribute materials, ideas, questions, and tasks to the center.
- Position the center in a place that is complementary to the activities of other centers around it.
- Vary the complexity and difficulty of the tasks in the center.
- Provide a choice of activities and expectations that acknowledge a variety of learning styles.

- Consider tasks designed for independent learning or small group work.
- Consider current themes and projects.
- Choose tasks that are relevant and meaningful for the children.
- Allow for multiple ways for children to represent their learning.

Learning centers naturally incorporate printed materials to be used in the children's play. Play is important for all children, even beyond age eight, because it gives children opportunities to experiment with uses of writing, to invent freely, and to practice more approximate literacy behaviors in non-evaluative settings (Bredenkamp & Rosegrant, 1995). Learning centers also include structured experiences that are selected and developed to challenge children and provide opportunities to extend children's knowledge of curriculum concepts.



Suggestions for learning centers related to language arts:

- The **library area** is an area that is comfortable and inviting, furnished with soft elements such as carpets and rugs, pillows and bean bag chairs. Children can read and be read to, look at pictures and listen to stories on a tape recorder.
- In the **writing area** children can experiment with various writing utensils, papers, envelopes, chalk boards, wipe-off boards, and computers as they practice using their writing skills for many purposes.
- A classroom **publishing area** includes wallpaper or fabric for covers, staplers, hole punches, scissors, magazines and other pictures to cut out, and a variety of writing and drawing utensils. Computers are handy for the writing and publishing programs available.
- A **computer area** in the room allows children to see their words in print and children can begin to learn word processing skills.
- **Dramatic play areas** encourage children to take on roles and act out events and experiences. Reading and writing materials can fit in as well. Children can use phone books and take messages in a house or office area; they make grocery lists and read food labels in the grocery store; or write and mail letters at the "post office." They may also recreate stories they have heard.

Learning centers and materials should be accessible to children and promote their independence as much as possible. Well-organized and labeled shelves make it easy for children to put away their materials and learn an important function of print. Learning center signs and shelf labels reflect the languages of the children in the classroom. Including Braille on these signs benefits all children.

Materials

An integrated curriculum allows for the development of literacy skills while building knowledge based on children's interests as well as the teacher's general goals. Children can write about what they are doing, research the subject in non-fiction books and magazines, work with other children discussing their findings, and illustrate their projects. Skills are taught in a meaningful, social context, not in isolation. Materials that encourage reading and writing are found in all areas of the room. Children's involvement in books and stories is encouraged through flannel boards, puppets, and real objects. Teachers also make available and help children use tape recorders, overhead projectors and computers.

Supporting Adults

Adult interaction is the most important factor in a quality early childhood setting. When adults converse with children about topics that are important and interesting to both, they expand the child's thinking and vocabulary as well as showing their care and concern for the child. "Through rich oral interactions during conferences, at writing centers, and in reading lofts, library corners, and literature circles, children enrich their pools of knowledge about the ways in which oral and written language work" (Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1995).



Children also need to observe adults using print as a real resource. They should see adults who routinely choose to use print—write or read the schedule for the day, send a message to a parent, read a book or newspaper or record an event. The related oral language shows the child the importance of written words and the connection between oral language and print. Adults can also model using the computer for writing, making labels and signs and sending e-mail messages.

Managing the Literacy Environment

The literacy environment includes the whole classroom and the routines and activities that take place daily. Time (daily routines and schedules), materials and group management are factors teachers carefully plan. Large blocks of time are allowed for project work time, independent reading and writing, and reading with a small group or a buddy.

Children can be involved in using symbols and print during the routines and transitions of the day. Even younger children can:

- Sign in upon arrival
- Record the lunch count
- Put toys away on labeled shelves

As they participate, they will learn the functional uses of print in a meaningful way.

(For samples of daily schedules see "Active Learning in the Classroom" section.)

Grouping for Learning

Since learning takes place in a social context, pairing children to read together can extend their understanding. Reading buddies, where children read to each other or even to a stuffed animal, is a good way to encourage children to explore books, help each other, and gain confidence in themselves as readers. Children will extend the meaning of the story and sometimes relate it to their own lives.

Through both integrated curriculum and arranging for children to work cooperatively with a partner or in a small group, children are grouped according to interest and factors other than ability. This allows the child to learn from a more knowledgeable peer and to be the expert.

Students who have basic skill needs may be included in a skills group. They will be assessed frequently and be assigned to different groups when they no longer need specific skill instruction.

Multicultural Considerations

It is important for children whose first language is not English to feel accepted and valued in the classroom. Incorporating the children's home language and culture using labels, posters, books, and if possible, adults who speak the language will help all children to realize that knowing and using more than one language is an advantage. Effective teachers of children with cultural and linguistic diversities:

- Have high expectations of their children and believe that all children are capable of academic success
- See themselves as members of the community and see teaching as a way to give back to the community
- Display a sense of confidence in their ability to be successful with children who are culturally and linguistically diverse
- Communicate directions clearly, pace lessons appropriately, involve the students in decisions, monitor progress, and provide feedback (Bos & Vaughn, 1998).

According to the National Research Council (1999), children who arrive at school with no proficiency in English should be taught how to read in their native language while acquiring oral proficiency in English. They will then extend their skills to reading English.

If there are no instructional guides and learning materials and no local teachers proficient in the language, or if there are too few children to justify the development of the program to meet these conditions, the initial priority should be developing the children's abilities to speak English. The postponement of formal reading instruction is appropriate until an adequate level of English has been achieved.

Children who are learning to speak and read English must learn sounds and words in context. Reading authentic literature will help the students hear sounds in English that they may not have in their own language. As with all children, predictable books, fairy tales, big books, songs, poems, and

nursery rhymes are effective resources. If the teacher does not speak the children's language, parents or community volunteers should be encouraged to come into the classroom to read stories in the native language. English speaking children will learn other languages through songs, rhymes, and poems.

Just as children learn to read in integrated, meaningful ways, writing is learned in the same way. It is important to accept the child's writing. Children who are just learning English will dictate and begin to write in the language they know best. They will gradually begin to transfer their skills to English. The child's writing can be posted for them to read and the teacher and child can choose work to include in the portfolio. The portfolio of writing collected over time will show the child's progress in both writing skills and acquisition of English language.

For children whose first language is not English, working in cooperative groups can be especially helpful. Cooperative groups help both native speakers and second language learners because they receive equal attention from teachers and have the opportunity to learn from each other. Cooperative grouping helps language minority students by:

- Allowing children to hear and produce English in a non-threatening, secure environment
- Creating an atmosphere where children can better adjust to the culture of the school, creating a supportive climate for children to make friends with children who speak other languages
- Helping children to raise their self-esteem because they can be active participants who can assume authority in the group and learn from their peers



Components of a Literacy Program

Literacy tasks influence children’s motivation for literacy learning. Children must have opportunities to be engaged in authentic purposes for speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Open-ended tasks allow children to make personal choices among literacy tasks. These choices provide challenges and allow students to take control of their own learning through planning, evaluating, and self-monitoring. Literacy tasks should foster collaboration and constructive comprehension through speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

The components of a literacy program provide a framework for literacy learning in the classroom. A variety of learning experiences are essential for promoting early literacy. The components of a literacy program support natural language learning through immersion, demonstration, expectation, explicit instruction, responsibility, employment, and response.

Self-motivated readers and writers:

- Gain satisfaction from reading and writing
- Choose to read and write
- Ask questions about books and pieces of writing
- Talk about books, authors, and stories

Self-directed readers and writers:

- Choose what they can read successfully
- Use a variety of clues to predict and self-correct
- Use a variety of strategies to create words and sentences

Self-regulated readers and writers:

- Monitor and check their own reading and writing
- Self-correct
- Repeat
- Voice and finger point as needed
- Stop when something doesn’t make sense and return to the text to get meaning

Components of a Balanced Literacy Program

READING	WRITING
Read Aloud	Modeled Writing
Guided Reading	Interactive Writing
Shared Reading	Shared Writing
Independent Reading	Independent Writing
Collaborative Reading	Collaborative Writing

Read Aloud

Purpose	Teaching/ Learning Experience	Characteristics	Teacher	Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides models of fluent reading ▪ Demonstrates purposes for reading ▪ Provides exposure to text above child's reading level ▪ Increases comprehension ▪ Develops sense of story ▪ Develops "Book Language" ▪ Creates a community of readers ▪ Motivates children to read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Done for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whole class ▪ Small group ▪ Fluent reader reads ▪ Listen to tape ▪ Student/teacher talk about text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engages interest ▪ Models fluent reading ▪ Invites responses and reflection ▪ Selects appropriate text that represents a diverse society ▪ Models thinking as engages with text, including informational texts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are engaged ▪ Respond and reflect ▪ May select text

Reading with Children

The read aloud experience immerses children in language, the styles of different authors and illustrators, and a variety of genre. In the home and at school, listening to text read aloud should be enjoyable. Children who are introduced to literature in their parent's lap associate print with positive images that last a lifetime. The read aloud experience should begin early and continue well past the time children learn how to read. Children should be read to at least once a day but preferably several times each day using high quality materials. Careful selection of text should include a variety of genre that represents a diverse society.



Since the language in books is different from the language of speech, children need to experience many literary forms. Literature offers opportunities to become emotionally involved in fantasy. Children will become readers if their emotions have been engaged, their imaginations stirred and stretched by what they find on the printed page. If children are to experience the full impact of literature, teachers must plan a program of literacy experiences which is much more than a list of unconnected poems and stories. The systematic study of wisely selected poems and prose will not only enrich children's lives, but will enable children to realize the personal satisfaction which comes from reading.

Children also need to hear and see a variety of non-fiction forms such as labels, directions, letters, and information books. Children who have been read to in their early years develop a familiarity with the language of books and learn that both pleasure and information can be gained through reading. Reading non-fiction may be their major source of knowledge about the world. Children in the primary years should experience a wide variety of non-fiction text and should have opportunities to learn how to locate and use information.

Expressive (personal)	Journal, learning log, note, letter, diary, dialogue, opinion, invitation, thank you note, interview.
Narrative (story)	Folk tale, fairy tale, animal story, fable, adventure, legend, cumulative and repetitive pattern story, contemporary realistic fiction, fantasy, cartoons
Poetic	Nursery rhyme, rhythmic verse, alliterative and rhyming poems, limerick, free verse, word play, riddle, child created poem, cinquain, song
Dramatic	Mime, puppet play, acting out stories, improvisation, role play, fingerplay, choral reading, skit, scripted play
Expository (non-fiction)	Sign, label, caption, list, directions, instructions, description, report, recipe, explanation, advertisement, newspaper article, magazine article, persuasion or argument, diagram, graph, documentary, interview

Reading aloud to children exposes them to text and genre that might otherwise be too difficult for them to read and comprehend independently. Children experience models of fluent reading and models of good writing. These models illustrate reading and writing done for many purposes. Talk during the reading is natural and should include predictions and speculations which encourage reflective thinking. Discussions about the text can help develop a sense of story, book language and increase comprehension.

Reading to children daily develops a community of readers with shared experiences in literacy. Children are motivated to read as they build an appreciation and enjoyment of the printed word.

How to Read with Students

- Select a purpose for reading such as a particular story, author, illustrator, genre, literary devices, theme, or topic.
- Select the text and pre-read to determine an area of emphasis.
- Develop a book introduction which highlights the cover of the book, the title, the author, the illustrator, and predictions about the text. Include background information which may be needed for a better understanding or added enjoyment.
- Read with enthusiasm and expression.
- When reading non-fiction, demonstrate the features of the text such as titles, table of content, index, glossary, headings, margin notes, photos, captions, charts, tables, diagrams, and highlighted text.
- Activate the students' listening for comprehension of critical information represented in the author's message.
- Invite questions, opinions, and comments about the text. Activities related to the text may follow as a group experience, center activity, or a student selected individual project. The text should be available for students in a classroom library or at a center so they can return to the text independently.

Guided Reading				
Purpose	Teaching/ Learning Experience	Characteristics	Teacher	Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotes problem solving while reading for meaning ▪ Provides guidance, demonstration, and explanation at all reading levels ▪ Provides the reader challenges and successes in a supportive environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Done by children with teacher support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small groups ▪ Homogeneous grouping ▪ Groups are fluid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Matches children with text ▪ Supports and coaches through the book introduction and strategy prompts ▪ Teaches skills, strategies, and problem solving ▪ Monitors and assesses ▪ Moves children to new groups based on assessment of reading level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do initial reading ▪ Use support as needed ▪ Check and self-correct their own reading

Guided Reading

During guided reading children focus on construction of meaning from the text while using problem solving strategies with support from the teacher. The goal of guided reading is to help children use independent reading strategies. The teacher works with a small group of students with similar reading abilities. Children are grouped and regrouped based on teacher observations and assessment. The teacher selects an appropriate book for the group that is at the children’s instructional reading level. The text should introduce or reinforce appropriate reading challenges for the group. At the emergent reading level the teacher guides the children in exploring the language structure and vocabulary prior to the first reading of the text which provides a high level of support. A discussion of reading strategies the children will use or have used in the past serves as a reminder of what the children will try if they come to a word in the text they do not know. Each child reads the whole text at all levels of guided reading. When reading non-fiction children may not read the whole text. An index or table of contents may guide their reading as they read to gain specific information. At the emergent level of guided reading each child reads aloud at their own pace. At more advanced levels of guided reading the children read silently followed by discussion of story and their use of the reading strategies (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996).

Guided reading provides the opportunity for teachers to observe and evaluate each child's reading in action. Through the use of strategy prompts, the teacher can call attention to specific concepts of print, a particular cue system, or a particular reading strategy.

Strategy Prompts

Meaning (Semantic)

Does that make sense?

Check the picture.

What happened in the story when _____ ?

Would you reread this?

Visual (Graphophonic)

Does it look right?

Where are you going to start reading?

What sound/letter does it start with?

What would you expect to see at the beginning, middle, and end of _____ ?

Can you point to _____ ?

Structure (Syntactic)

Does that sound right?

Would you reread this part?

Could there be another word that might fit here?

Self Corrections and Cross-Checking

Can you find a part that was tricky for you?

Are you right?

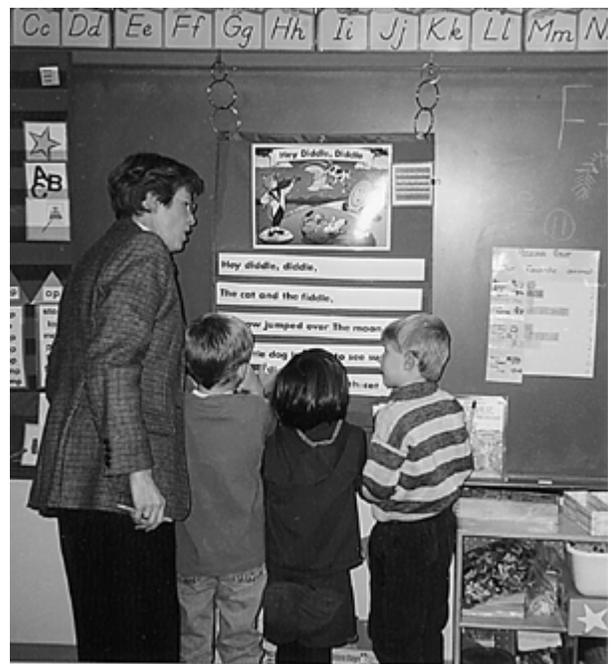
Could it be _____ ?

It could be _____, but look at _____.

Look more closely at _____.

How did you know that?

The format of a guided reading session changes as students' abilities progress. The amount of teacher support is high for emergent readers. Gradually teacher support decreases as children move to early fluency and fluent guided reading. Language mini-lessons introduce or reinforce areas of need observed by the teacher. Discussion may include retelling or responding to the text which connect children's own experiences. Follow up activities may extend the session into other content areas or different modes of creativity.



Sample Teaching Sequence for a Guided Reading Lesson

Teacher decides the focus of the lesson

What reading behaviors need demonstration and development?

Selection of text

Is the text supportive of the focus?

Is the text sufficiently challenging?

Is the text of interest and does it appeal to children?

Set the Scene

Provide a book introduction that arouses interest and motivates children to read the text. Highlight the cover, title, author, and illustrator. Allow students to link the book to their personal experiences.

Picture Walk

Walk through the book with emergent readers. Invite the readers to talk about the illustrations, which further develops meaning. Focus on language that may be difficult or unfamiliar to the reader.

First Read

Children read independently. Teacher observes and offers support through prompts and strategy reminders as needed. The teacher watches for a teaching point that will reinforce a reading strategy.

Return to the Text

Talk about the story. Student can reread favorite parts aloud in pairs or independently. The teacher takes advantage of the opportunity to teach reading skills and strategies in the context of the story based on their observations as children read.

Respond to the Text

Rereading independently or with a partner, writing, art and craft activities, and dramatization are ways children can respond to what they have read.

Running records are an assessment done by the teacher as a child reads. The running record is an assessment of the reading behaviors a child uses or neglects when they come to an unknown word. The teacher makes a check mark for each correct word said as the student reads. Reading miscues and self-corrections are recorded using standard conventions. The teacher analyzes the record to see if the child uses or neglects meaning, structure, and visual cues. This information guides the teaching points and strategy prompts used by the teacher to support the reader as he or she moves towards independence.

Shared Reading and Writing

Purpose	Teaching/ Learning Experience	Characteristics	Teacher	Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrates early strategies and skills ▪ Builds sense of story and ability to predict ▪ Demonstrates the process of reading and writing ▪ Highlights conventions of language ▪ Expands experiences and vocabulary ▪ Provides natural integration of listening, speaking, writing, and reading ▪ Provides opportunity to behave like a reader and writer in a safe environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Done for, with, and by children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whole class ▪ Small group ▪ Big books ▪ Charted text or poems ▪ Multiple readings of the same text ▪ Uses variety of genre ▪ Uses material for emergent, early, and fluent readers and writers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invites predictions, responses, and reflections ▪ Provides modeling of ongoing thinking done by a reader and writer ▪ Acts as the scribe during writing ▪ Demonstrates new forms of text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Predict, join in, and make suggestions about the reading and writing ▪ Respond and reflect ▪ Try out new strategies and skills

Shared Reading and Writing

Shared reading is an extension of the bedtime story experience. It is a read and think aloud demonstration of the process that effective readers use. The text is large which enables a small group or whole class to be introduced to a rhyme, poem, or big book story. Rhymes, poems and songs are great text for shared reading because of the elements of rhyme, rhythm, and repetition. A story must have predictable language, supportive illustrations, humor, a story-line, and characters with whom children can relate.

Shared reading can be used to teach the following strategies and conventions:

- *Directionality*
- *Layout (title page, table of contents, glossary)*
- *Predicting using meaning as the best guide for word-solving*
- *Self-correcting strategies through cross-checking and meaning (semantic), structure (syntax), and visual (graphophonic) cues*
- *Word attack skills (phonics, affixes, looking for little words in big words)*
- *Conventions of punctuation*
- *Conventions of spelling*
- *Conventions of grammar*
- *Introduce a new genre*

Fountas & Pinnell, 1996

Masking letters, words, and phrases in familiar text is a great way to focus on specific detail in print. A paper frame, colored highlight tape, wooden dowel used for a pointer, or a marker can be used to call attention to detail in print at even the earliest stages of reading. It is crucial that every eye be focused on a detail in print at the same time that the accompanying sound is stated. This provides the eye-voice-ear link that helps children understand print in even the earliest stages of reading. The detail that is masked is discussed in the context of whole word, phrase, sentence, or piece. The teacher must continue to reinforce: Does it make sense? (Semantic cueing system), Does it sound right? (Syntactic cueing system), and Do the letters match your prediction? (Graphophonic cueing system). The technique of masking helps teachers assess “on the go” as children offer what they know about print.

Shared reading focuses on making meaning from the printed text. The teacher demonstrates the use of the reading system and models what good readers do. During the first reading, children listen and watch as the teacher reads. As the reading continues, students are encouraged to read with the teacher, finish predictable sentences, and take over the reading. Children are able to learn what they are ready to learn as they practice reading behaviors in a non-threatening environment. The teacher demonstrates what good readers do before, during, and after reading. Effective readers consider the purpose for reading, plan, preview, predict, check, self-correct, confirm, respond, and reflect (Cambourne, 2000).

Masking questions: Who can find...

- *The first word we read on this page?*
- *A letter they know?*
- *A word they know?*
- *A letter with the sound _____ ?*
- *A word with one, two, three letters?*
- *A color word?*
- *An action word?*
- *A word with the “ing” ending?*
- *A word that rhymes with _____ ?*
- *A period (or any other punctuation)?*
- *A contraction for did not?*

Fisher, 1991

Design for a shared reading lesson:

- Teacher selects the text, the objective for the lesson, and determines how to group children.
- Select text large enough for everyone to read. Many teachers make their own text using chart paper or overhead transparencies.
- Prepare an introduction to the text ahead of time that creates interest. Call attention to the title, author, and special features of the text.
- Read the story and allow spontaneous comments and questions.
- Read it again and encourage the children to participate. Address the teaching point and discuss what the children notice.
- Offer these response opportunities: independent reading, writing, story map, reports, research, letters, choral reading for another audience or drama.
- Make the text available for children to return to the text during the time of their choosing.
- Return to previously read text for enjoyment, to focus on additional strategies and conventions, or to link a new text to an old favorite.



Independent Reading and Writing

Purpose	Teaching/ Learning Experience	Characteristics	Teacher	Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides opportunities for independence ▪ Provides opportunities to read and write for many different purposes and use many strategies ▪ Supports development ▪ Allows individuals to work in interest areas ▪ Increases ability to write words and use punctuation ▪ Fosters creativity and ability to compose text ▪ Promotes pleasure in reading and writing ▪ Challenges the reader and writer in a variety of situations ▪ Promotes collaboration among peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Done by children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whole class ▪ Small group buddy reading ▪ Independent reading ▪ Self selected material ▪ Journaling ▪ Story writing ▪ Letter writing ▪ Text retelling ▪ Speech balloons ▪ Labeling ▪ Center activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organizes text by level, content, and/or author ▪ Models how to locate and use materials ▪ Monitors and assesses ▪ Provides opportunities to share experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read and write independently ▪ Read and write for themselves ▪ Refine self-monitoring and self-correcting strategies ▪ Work with peers to edit writing

Independent Reading and Writing

During independent reading children can read on their own or with a partner. A wide range of books and magazines spanning a wide range of reading levels is needed. Even the youngest children should have access to quality nonfiction on a regular basis. Material may be organized by author, subject,

reading level, and genre. Colored dots, stickers, labeled shelves, or book baskets make materials easy to locate and return to the proper place. Organizing materials into categories and explicit teaching of how to locate material promotes wide reading. An organizational system like book boxes for each child allows readers to select text at their specific reading level and interest.

Rereading text is encouraged for fluency. Independent reading promotes confidence through successful experiences. Independent reading is critical for students to practice reading behaviors and strategies in a variety of text.

Independent writing provides the opportunity for independent production of written text for self-selected purposes. Writers increase their ability to use different forms of writing. A piece of writing may start at the draft stage, be revised, proofread, published and shared with the group. All pieces of writing don't have to be published. Sometimes the writing leads to a stronger idea or another interest. A piece of writing may be abandoned before it is published. Students can organize their pieces of writing in a folder or a writing tub. This collection serves as a record of their development and a great way to organize pieces that a student might return to in the future for further draft work.

My Reading Log				My Writing Log						
Name _____				Name _____						
Date	Title	Pages Read	Comments/ Responses	Date	Title/Story/ Topic	First Draft	Revised	Edited	Published or Shared	Teacher's Comments

Children support each other and share ideas during independent reading and writing. A community of readers and writers develops in which children are comfortable to take risks and gain confidence in their abilities. Reading and writing logs serve as a record of a child’s work. Logs are a useful assessment tool for students, teachers, and families. The log provides a history of the child’s literacy development in both reading and writing. Logs can also be used to keep track of spelling work, the mechanics of writing used in a piece, or reading strategies used during independent reading. Reading/writing logs and reading/writing conferences are ways to guide children in supporting each other and keep a record of their literacy development.

Interest inventories can help teachers identify student interest in reading and writing, school-related activities, home activities, and interest in language. This information is used to guide student selection of reading material, topics for writing, and curriculum. Interest inventories can provide a great deal of insight into children’s thinking and their perceptions about writing and reading tasks.

Teacher/child conferences and peer conferences are another source of support for developing readers and writers. Conferences offer the opportunity for the reader and author to talk about their work and reflect upon the meaning of a particular piece.

Developmental continuums for reading and writing are a synthesis of observations made about a child’s development in reading and writing. Observations are usually recorded by using anecdotal notes of daily observations and/or checklists. Knowing the development of each student guides teachers to make wise decisions about teaching points for the whole class, small groups, and individual conferences.

<i>Collaborative Reading and Writing</i>				
Purpose	Teaching/ Learning Experience	Characteristics	Teacher	Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides opportunities for collaboration in speaking, reading, and writing ▪ Fosters communication ▪ Develops a community of readers and writers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Done by children with peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Usually done in small groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitors and assesses ▪ Provides opportunities for children to share their work ▪ Teaches routines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collaborates and works independently on reading and writing projects ▪ Investigates interest areas ▪ Shares prior knowledge with peers

Collaborative Reading and Writing

Collaborative reading and writing projects can be facilitated in a number of ways in the classroom. Literature circles, learning centers, and research study teams are just a few ways to organize collaboration. Collaborative reading and writing projects can be extensions of theme studies that are led by child choice and interest. The teacher's role is to organize time and resources which help to create a supportive environment for children as they work together.

Literature circles are driven by student choice. Students form temporary groups based on their mutual interest in a particular book. In a class of twenty-five children, five to seven groups might be meeting at the same time to talk about different books. The reading material used are unabridged books that represent a diverse selection of genre and topics. The groups might be working with a common author or theme. The children discuss their own topics and questions related to the text. In one model each child is responsible for duties of a role in the group such as a discussion director, an illustrator, summarizer, vocabulary specialist, or an investigator. The teacher's role becomes that of a facilitator (Daniels, 1994).

Learning centers are interest areas set up in the classroom. These areas provide opportunities for children to study a concept in greater depth independently and cooperatively. Learning centers are designed with specific curriculum objectives in mind. The areas should have materials that are accessible to choices for learners.

Research teams are similar to literature circles in that they are most effective when children work in their interest areas. As the class is studying a specific theme, small groups of children can come together to research specific questions or interests. Through research teams a teacher can integrate skills from several curricular areas into a learning experience that is meaningful and interesting to the learner.



Literature circles, learning centers, and research teams are just a few examples of cooperative learning. Each opportunity requires the teacher to plan time for children to work together. The framework of a reading and writing workshop helps teachers organize a large block of uninterrupted time for reading and writing activities which encourage collaboration. During a reading and writing workshop, teachers can plan time for guided reading, reading aloud, shared reading, modeled writing, response to writing, interactive writing, word work and opportunities for collaboration and independent work. The workshop time follows a predictable flow everyday even though the activities may change from day to day. Typically, the workshop time starts with a whole group meeting. The meeting may include reading aloud, shared reading or writing, interactive writing, word work, and research teams as a few of the activities that may be organized after the group

meeting. At the close of the workshop block, the group meets together again. This allows the teacher to revisit a concept or activity that was previously introduced and link it to children’s work. Many professional books explain how to organize time, children, and materials for reading and writing workshops.

Modeled Writing				
Purpose	Teaching/ Learning Experience	Characteristics	Teacher	Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrates how writing works ▪ Models how writers plan and review ▪ Models construction of meaning ▪ Demonstrates the uses and purposes of writing ▪ Models skills and strategies ▪ Models the process of composition ▪ Models how to identify an audience for writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Done for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whole class ▪ Small group ▪ One-to-one coaching ▪ Model a variety of genre that represent a diverse culture ▪ Model emergent, early, and fluent reading and writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reads/writes ▪ Thinks aloud ▪ Provides model of ongoing thinking done by a writer ▪ Models strategies ▪ Explains why ▪ Invites responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are engaged ▪ Respond and reflect ▪ Apply skills modeled when working on independent writing

Modeled Writing

Modeled writing is a demonstration of the process writers use as they communicate ideas and experiences. The teacher thinks out loud as he or she models stories, journal writing, poems, songs, notes, lists, letters, informational text, or instructions. Any stage of the writing process can be modeled:

Prewriting:

- Attending to conventions of print
- Gathering ideas for writing

Drafting:

- Constructing personal meaning
- Discovering what ideas mean

Revision:

- Talking and thinking about ideas
- Practicing effective communication
- Clarifying and extending meanings

Proofreading:

- Attending to conventions of print

Publishing:

- Developing the writing to a level appropriate for the intended purpose

Presenting:

- Sharing and celebrating the writing

During modeled writing, the teacher creates the text as the children watch. The teacher explains the reasons for what he or she is doing as he or she writes, and may choose to reveal his or her thinking process. Writing is done on chart paper, an overhead projector, a chalkboard, a white board, or a computer presentation. The print must be large enough for everyone to read.

Modeled writing can be used for introducing the process of writing or for introducing a new genre. It can also be used to reinforce an aspect of writing with which a small group of children is struggling or be used to reveal the teacher's metacognitive process as he or she composes text. Modeled writing should occur often if not daily. Children's needs, teacher observations, and district curriculum guide what aspects of writing are to be the focus of the next modeled writing lesson. Anecdotal notes of new skills used by individual children during independent writing serve as a valuable assessment tool to share with children and families (Cambourne 2000).



Interactive Writing				
Purpose	Teaching/ Learning Experience	Characteristics	Teacher	Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develops sound/symbol relationships ▪ Develops concept of how print works ▪ Provides opportunities to plan and construct text ▪ Builds understanding of the connection between reading and writing ▪ Advances spelling skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Done by children with teacher support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Usually small group ▪ Use conventional spelling ▪ Based on a group experience or read aloud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collaborate to compose text ▪ Supports and coaches through questions and prompts ▪ Supports letter recognition and sound symbol relationships ▪ Links words to be written to children's names ▪ May write difficult words or parts ▪ Monitors and assesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hear and identify sounds in words ▪ Represent sound/symbol relationships ▪ Begin linking known words to unknown words ▪ Use familiar chunks (word endings) ▪ Make generalizations about print ▪ Collaborate to compose text ▪ Self-correct ▪ Try out new strategies and skills ▪ Use supports as needed

Interactive Writing

Interactive writing offers the opportunity for children to take an active role in the composition of text by actually holding the pen and doing the writing. The teacher's role becomes that of a coach as he or she builds upon what the child knows about print. Through questions and direct instruction, the teacher focuses the children's attention on the conventions of print. Questions and prompts used by the teacher vary according to the knowledge and needs of the children. Interactive writing models authentic reasons for writing. An interactive writing session might focus on a familiar children's literature selection, a topic of class study, or a shared group experience. The group negotiates the list, sentence, or retelling. The writing is done using the children's words. The group consensus is reached, the message is repeated aloud along with clapping, snapping, or word counting. The teacher then looks for the first student to begin the writing. As a word, list or sentence is finished, the group rereads while one child points to each word. The print is added to the classroom environment so

children can return to the message for independent reading opportunities. The text is revisited several times as spacing, punctuation, and spellings may be highlighted as reminders of the lesson. Interactive writing provides the opportunity for authentic instruction in phonics and linguistic patterns within meaningful text.

Expectations and guidelines for interactive writing over a school year

Beginning of year

- Simple text such as labels
- Text completed in one day
- Repeat orally the word or line to be written
- Teacher may write challenging words
- Extra attention to letter formation and spacing

End of the year

- More complex text
- Text constructed over several days
- Count words before writing begins

In the beginning lessons, the teacher attends to letter formation and spacing. Lessons may be ten minutes long at the beginning of the year and up to thirty minutes after some experience with interactive writing. As children gain competence, attention may move to punctuation, capitalization, prefixes, suffixes, and phonetic structure.

Teacher sensitivity is needed to value children's attempts and approximations. The teacher needs to explain that because others will be reading the text, conventional spelling must be used. Correction tape or even mailing labels can be used to allow children to revise their writing as they work.

In an interactive writing session, the text is revisited several times as spacing, punctuation, and spellings are highlighted as reminders of the lesson. The print is added to the classroom environment so children can return to the message for independent reading opportunities. The text may be extended during another interactive writing session (Button, Johnson, & Ferguson, 1996).

Many teachers take notes during or right after an interactive writing session. The teacher takes notes of what each child knows about print as they work. Any confusions are also noted as each takes his/her turn with the pen. The teacher's notes then become a guide for future teaching points in interactive writing, shared and modeled writing, guided reading, or shared reading.

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Descriptors of Listening Development

Early Primary	Later Primary
Dispositions	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grows in confidence; shows interest in what people have to say ▪ Attends with interest to orally presented stories, poems, rhymes, drama, music, and prose ▪ Is beginning to consider thoughts and ideas of others 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shows increasing confidence ▪ Is becoming a more active listener ▪ Gives a positive response to orally presented stories, poems, rhymes, drama, and prose ▪ Shows increasing interest and awareness of another person's point of view
Skills	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Builds upon listening skills developed during the preschool years ▪ Looks at a speaker ▪ Is sensitive to non-verbal communication ▪ Is learning to listen to the ideas of others in conversations and discussions ▪ Asks for repetition, restatement, or general explanation when meaning is unclear ▪ May begin to pinpoint his or her own source of confusion and ask about word meanings ▪ Is able to follow simple directions ▪ Moves from listening for general detail to listening for specific detail for longer periods of time 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refines the development of previous skills and expands his or her repertoire ▪ Is becoming sensitive to the need to be silent, to wait, to respond, as appropriate ▪ Is learning to listen to ensure mutual understanding and to sustain conversation ▪ Is learning to listen critically for main idea, sequence, and other key concepts ▪ Recognizes unfamiliar words and asks what they mean ▪ Is able to understand and follow more complex directions ▪ Is becoming more sensitive to detail in content and to sounds within words

Descriptors of Listening Development

Early Primary	Later Primary
Skills	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is able to distinguish between many types of speech, (informal chat, a warning, a joke, a poem) ▪ May be inattentive at times or easily distracted ▪ Focuses on whole (content) rather than part (detail) when listening to a story ▪ Is becoming more able to listen effectively to a variety of media (radio, films, tapes, television) ▪ Demonstrates an increasing awareness of facts, details, feeling, and values 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is able to distinguish between social interaction and information transaction within these categories (praise and flattery) ▪ Shows increasing attentiveness and less distractibility ▪ Is learning to compare and find relationships in stories, poems, and conversations ▪ Demonstrates an increasing ability to use facts, details, feelings, and values
Knowledge	
<p>The child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May have listening vocabulary of over 20,000 words by age seven ▪ Understands that ideas and information may be gained through listening 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experiences a rapid increase in vocabulary in a wide variety of areas

Descriptors of Speaking Development

Early Primary	Later Primary
Dispositions	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Responds confidently when approached ▪ Needs a listener, yet does not consider a listener's needs (egocentric) ▪ Is moving toward awareness of a listener's needs ▪ Shows interest in certain aspects of spoken language such as rhyme and rhythm ▪ Shows interest in comparing and contrasting words ▪ Is interested in playing with words and sounds in words, "creates words" 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintains dialogue with increasing confidence and fluency ▪ Wants listener's close attention ▪ Uses more explicit and objective language as he or she becomes aware of a listener's needs ▪ Strives for mutual understanding ▪ Is curious about some of the spoken language used (puns, riddles) ▪ Is curious about word meanings and wants to try more precise expressions ▪ Is interested in other ways to communicate (sign language, secret ideas)
Skills	
<p><i>General</i></p> <p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Builds upon speaking skills developed during the preschool period ▪ Uses language for different purposes, (greeting, informing, requesting) 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refines the development of previous skills and expands his or her repertoire ▪ Demonstrates increasing ability to use language for different purposes ▪ Refines his or her use of language and expands repertoire to include: to maintain group, to hypothesize and to express doubts

Descriptors of Speaking Development

Early Primary	Later Primary
Skills (continued)	
<p><i>General</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses language in a variety of ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – To reason – To predict – To direct – To maintain self – To imagine – To project – To report on past experiences – ▪ Is beginning to adapt or change language ▪ Sometimes speaks too loudly or too softly ▪ Begins to show feelings through talk rather than non-verbally ▪ Begins to follow implicit rules for conversation or narratives, (taking turns, staying on topic) ▪ Is moving from egocentric point of view; language is becoming more specific 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrates increasing adaptability of language to suit the needs of a listener or situation ▪ Is becoming sensitive to the need to modulate voice to the environment ▪ Shows increasing ability to use talk to express feelings ▪ Demonstrates increasing ability to follow rules for conversations and narratives ▪ Demonstrates increasing understanding of listener’s needs; language becomes more specific

Descriptors of Speaking Development

Early Primary	Later Primary
Skills	
<p><i>Phonology</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is able to use most of the phonemes in our sound system, with the exception of some sounds that are closely related 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses phonemes increasingly in conventional ways
<p><i>Semantics</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shows signs of widening vocabulary as interests and activities begin to expand; retains some baby talk ▪ Is becoming sensitive to the unwanted effects of poor word choice in speech ▪ Uses subjective language (meaning is clear to child but not always to listener) ▪ Is beginning to ask for clarification and explanation of ideas and concepts ▪ Asks about words/ideas not understood ▪ May substitute own notions rather than seek answers ▪ Asks many fact-finding questions leading to more how and why questions about his or her own physical world ▪ Focuses on whole (content) rather than on part (detail) when retelling a story ▪ Is beginning to be able to get to the point, to tell a story in a proper sequence 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increases in vocabulary that reflects a growing range of interest and knowledge ▪ Is becoming more thoughtful in choice of words ▪ Uses more objective language (meaning clear and specific) ▪ Increasingly asks for clarification and explanation of ideas, concepts, and words ▪ Is beginning to link ideas together ▪ Develops and/or adapts ideas from a variety of sources ▪ Uses questions to seek casual explanation ▪ Shows an increasing ability to integrate parts (details) with the whole when retelling a story ▪ Demonstrates increasing ability to get to the point, to control language, to tell a story in proper sequence

Descriptors of Speaking Development

Early Primary	Later Primary
Skills	
<p><i>Syntax</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shows rapid growth in language usage and structure ▪ Manipulates language and experiments with words, (uses original expressions) ▪ Is acquiring his or her own grammar (uses rules to generate great variety of sentences) ▪ Seeks rules and over-generalizes the use of rules for tenses and plurals (“I does it,” “mouses”) ▪ Ignores passive form and focuses on word order and negative forms (many kindergarten children choose a picture of a cat chasing a dog to illustrate “The cat is chased by the dog.”) 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses more complex sentence structures, more conjunctions, prepositions and connectives (when, if, because, since, probably) ▪ Demonstrates increasing use of conventional sentence structures ▪ Refines and expands his or her own grammar ▪ Begins to control exceptions to grammatical rules for tenses and plurals ▪ Is beginning to use passive form
Knowledge	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May have a speaking vocabulary of over 5,000 words by age seven ▪ Attempts to understand relationships (space, time) ▪ Is becoming aware of how to use language appropriately in social situations ▪ Is becoming aware of the needs of listeners ▪ May initiate dialogue 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experiences a rapid increase in speaking vocabulary in a wide variety of areas ▪ Uses, but tends to confuse, abstract terms (ask/tell, more/less, older/younger, as in “I’m going to tell my teacher if I can go.”) ▪ Shows increasing awareness of how to use language appropriately in a wide array of social situations ▪ Shows increasing awareness of needs of listener and need to make self understood

Descriptors of Reading Development

Pre-conventional	Emergent
Dispositions	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shows curiosity about print in the environment ▪ Enjoys being read to ▪ May think he or she can read ▪ Plays with books, paper, pencils ▪ Plays at reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cloth books – Board books – Picture books 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knows the rewards of reading and rereading; further reading ▪ “Role plays” self as reader relying on memory (rote reads) ▪ Explores new books ▪ Chooses ▪ Returns to favorite books ▪ Has an expectation of success in learning to read ▪ Is an avid and independent reader, who is making choices from a wide range of material ▪ Is beginning to show an interest in word forms and spellings

Descriptors of Reading Development

Early	Fluent	Expanding
Dispositions		
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enjoys re-reading favorite books ▪ Is beginning to explore new kinds of texts independently ▪ Usually chooses short books with simple narratives and illustrations ▪ Reads silently for short periods when encouraged to do so ▪ Shows some interest in words encountered in print ▪ Shows interest in topics, characters, and events, and asks questions for clarification ▪ Shows broadening of interests in literature ▪ Accepts miscues/errors as part of striving to get meaning 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chooses to read silently when given opportunity to do so ▪ Prefers silent reading; reads silently for increasing periods of time ▪ Begins to set own purposes for reading ▪ Reads books for interest, by favorite authors ▪ Is willing to talk about topics, characters, and events ▪ Shows keen interest in words ▪ Makes an effort to read text that goes beyond present knowledge and linguistic development 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is an avid and independent reader, who is making choices from a wide range of materials ▪ Reads for a variety of purposes ▪ Prefers silent reading (speed improves); reads silently whenever it is possible and without prompting ▪ Chooses confidently and wisely among a range of reading matter available ▪ Persists with text that goes beyond immediate knowledge and linguistic development

Descriptors of Reading Development

Pre-conventional	Emergent
Skills	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reads pictures rather than print, attempts are picture-governed, moving from labeling and commenting to story-telling ▪ Approximates some environmental print such as signs and labels in context ▪ Is not yet able to tackle print independently ▪ Relies on another person to read the text aloud 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Begins print-governed attempts ▪ Uses pictures to predict text ▪ Actively seeks to link meaning with print in the environment ▪ Recognizes some environmental print such as signs and labels ▪ Recognizes own name ▪ Gains some meaning even when environment cues are absent ▪ Thinks about what may happen and uses this to unfold the story ▪ Is growing in the ability to predict meanings ▪ Is developing strategies to check predictions against other cues such as the illustrations and the print itself

Descriptors of Reading Development

Early	Fluent	Expanding
Skills		
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses picture for checking rather than prediction ▪ Is well launched on reading but still needs to return to a familiar range of texts; often re-reads favorite books ▪ Makes greater use of context for predictions ▪ Makes more accurate predictions ▪ Actively uses alternative cues on the page (picture, syntax) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses all cueing systems to get meaning ▪ Is able to read more demanding texts, including children’s novels ▪ Approaches familiar texts with confidence but still needs support with unfamiliar materials 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can tackle some demanding texts and can cope with reading across the curriculum

Descriptors of Reading Development

Pre-conventional	Emergent
Knowledge	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knows writing is something adults do ▪ Knows books contain stories ▪ Thinks the pictures tell the story (pictures rather than text govern reading attempts) ▪ Knows that books are sources of information and environment ▪ Knows books have a front and back 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knows language can be recorded and revisited ▪ Understand that text as well as the illustrations carry the story ▪ Recognizes book language and sometimes uses this in speech, writing, or play ▪ Understands the importance of background knowledge and uses this to get meaning ▪ Is aware of some print conventions, especially those relevant to directionality, capital letters, and periods.

Descriptors of Reading Development

Early	Fluent	Expanding
Knowledge		
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understands the importance of self-improving system in developing oneself as a reader ▪ Understands how real and imaginary experiences influence the meaning gained ▪ Knows print has a fixed meaning ▪ Understands how much attention needs to be given to text to confirm predictions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understands significance of main conventions of print ▪ Shows increasing knowledge of print conventions ▪ Knows print flows left to right ▪ Has a basic sight vocabulary of functional and personal words ▪ Increases sight vocabulary rapidly ▪ Is stopped by hard words ▪ Knows relationship between the commonest sounds and letters 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knows how to use books to get information ▪ Knows how to use the library <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knows to focus on details of print only when meaning is lost ▪ Understands taking risks and making approximations are an essential part of reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has a reservoir of sight words for reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is aware of a variety of genres(story, poem, play, report) and can identify elements ▪ Understands authors and illustrators have individual voices and styles ▪ Is able to determine how authors use text and supportive illustrations to create the message ▪ Has a greatly enlarged vocabulary

Descriptors of Writing Development

Pre-conventional	Emergent
Dispositions	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Takes risks playing with letter or letter-like forms ▪ Is curious about letters and words 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Takes risks in attempting to represent “talk written down” ▪ Is interested in the names of some letters and how to represent specific speech sounds ▪ Writes mainly for self (egocentric) ▪
Skills	
<p><i>Pragmatics</i></p> <p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combines drawing and writing ▪ The drawing conveys most of the meaning 	<p><i>Pragmatics</i></p> <p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combines drawing and writing ▪ Writing supports and is supported by the meaning depicted in the picture
<p><i>Semantics</i></p> <p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May not intend to convey message ▪ May ask “What does this say?” of own writing 	<p><i>Semantics</i></p> <p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can write a caption or label to accompany own drawing ▪ When reading own writing may read the gist rather than exact words

Descriptors of Writing Development

Early	Fluent	Expanding
Dispositions		
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enjoys representing “talk written down” ▪ Enjoys sharing own writing with others ▪ Writes mainly for self or for the teacher 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enjoys playing with words in writing ▪ Enjoys receiving feedback from teacher and peers about own writing ▪ Writes for a known audience (classmates) 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enjoys playing with words and ideas in writing ▪ Values and seeks out feedback on writing ▪ Writes for a wider range of audiences
Skills		
<p><i>Pragmatics</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combines drawing and writing ▪ Writing can stand alone to convey meaning ▪ Is beginning to write for different purposes 	<p><i>Pragmatics</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can convey meaning in writing without pictures ▪ Is able to write for an increasing range of purposes 	<p><i>Pragmatics</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can convey complex meanings through writing ▪ Writes for wide range of purposes (for enjoyment, to think/create ideas, to communicate purposefully with others, to reflect upon experience)
<p><i>Semantics</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chooses own topics ▪ Writes connected ideas ▪ Can write a sentence and illustrate it ▪ Can “think aloud” on paper, jot notes, keep a journal ▪ Can write three or more sentences that make sense ▪ Sequences ideas logically ▪ Writes in journal on regular basis on personal topics ▪ is developing sense of beginning, middle, end 	<p><i>Semantics</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is conscious of own ability to choose writing topics ▪ Consistently writes stories of a full page or more ▪ Writes stories with two or more characters ▪ Writes confidently in the personal mode ▪ Uses writing as an aid to work through ideas ▪ Elaborates and supports idea with relevant details ▪ Gathers relevant ideas; writes in a smooth, connected way 	<p><i>Semantics</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confidently chooses own writing topics ▪ Writes easily understood text ▪ Writes fluently: ideas flow fluently, language is not restricted or stilted ▪ Writes in a more organized fashion (more sequential and sustained) ▪ Has a well-developed sense of story and of structure ▪ Writes a properly sequenced story with a convincing setting; includes details about characters

Descriptors of Writing Development

Pre-conventional	Emergent
Skills	
<i>Semantics</i>	<i>Semantics</i>
<i>Syntax</i>	<i>Syntax</i> The child: Writes single words, phrases, or short simple statements (single sentence caption)

Descriptors of Writing Development

Early	Fluent	Expanding
Skills		
<p><i>Semantics</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writes stories with one character ▪ May be dissatisfied with some of own writing and show willingness to make some changes ▪ Is able to read own writing 	<p><i>Semantics</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writes sufficient relevant ideas to produce a complete and logical sequence ▪ Is beginning to select words to create a particular effect ▪ Is developing some ability to edit and proofread ▪ Begins to develop a “voice” as a writer 	<p><i>Semantics</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increases ability to write in more complex narrative and non-narrative forms ▪ Is developing the capacity to write in a poetic style ▪ Is accomplished in writing in the personal (expressive) mode ▪ Uses writing to explore ideas and concepts and to create new ideas ▪ Is increasingly able to manage extended texts ▪ Is able to edit and proofread effectively ▪ Produces writing that is unified, well organized, and elaborated ▪ Shows increasing development of a “voice” as a writer
<p><i>Syntax</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writes a series of simple statements 	<p><i>Syntax</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses a variety of sentence structures ▪ Uses varied sentence lengths ▪ Writes some sentences containing more than one thought 	<p><i>Syntax</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses syntax in writing which is becoming more complete than that used in speech ▪ Arranges words and sentences deliberately to obtain an effect

Descriptors of Writing Development

Pre-conventional	Emergent
Skills	
<p><i>Grapho-Phonics</i></p> <p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Makes strings of marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Letter-like forms – Letters ▪ Uses letters or letter-like forms to depict meaning ▪ Practices alphabet or letters ▪ Knows some words such as own name, Mom, Dad ▪ Places words and letters in random order ▪ Tries out basic elements of print symbols ▪ May show linearity and directionality ▪ May utilize specific number of characters ▪ Demonstrates no sound/symbol correspondence 	<p><i>Grapho-Phonics</i></p> <p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Makes letters similar to conventional ▪ Matches some letters to sounds of speech ▪ Is beginning to include functional spellings in own writing ▪ Writes initial consonants in words ▪ May omit vowels ▪ Uses letter name as a sound cue ▪ May use one letter to represent a whole word ▪ May use one letter to represent each syllable ▪ Uses no spacing or non-conventional direction (left-right, top-bottom) ▪ May translate independently (JBNBO=Jack be nimble, JKBOK=Jack be quick, MGBKMTDA=My grandpa came today)

Descriptors of Writing Development

Early	Fluent	Expanding
Skills		
<p><i>Grapho-Phonics</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develops increasing ability to apply knowledge of sound/symbol correspondences ▪ Begins to use vowel and consonant combinations in syllables ▪ Attempts to represent most consonant sounds (initial, medial, final) ▪ Spells an increasing number of words conventionally ▪ Confidently uses functional spelling where standard form is not known ▪ Shows evidence of awareness of use of upper and lower case letters and periods ▪ Usually translates independently (IT STRTED TO THDR=It started to thunder, WE WENT TO THE HOSPTL=We went to the hospital) 	<p><i>Grapho-Phonics</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is growing in ability to handle conventions of writing (punctuation, spelling) ▪ Has internalized some conventions of adult writing (capitals, periods, question marks) ▪ Spells a considerable number of words conventionally ▪ Uses functional spelling as an interim measure while drafting but searches for standard form before final draft ▪ Uses classroom aids to assist or check spelling 	<p><i>Grapho-Phonics</i> The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Observes the conventions of written language ▪ Spells most words conventionally ▪ Uses classroom aids to assist or check spelling as appropriate ▪ Continually refines skills of punctuation and spelling

Descriptors of Writing Development

Pre-conventional	Emergent
Knowledge	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is aware of conventional print ▪ May not be aware that print “tells the story” 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knows the names of some letters ▪ Is aware of some forms of writing (labels, captions, stories, letters) ▪ Understand writing as “talk written down”

Descriptors of Writing Development

Early	Fluent	Expanding
Knowledge		
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has extensive knowledge of letter names ▪ Is growing in knowledge of sound/symbol correspondence ▪ Is gaining knowledge of some terms used with writing (letter, word, sentence) ▪ Shows beginning awareness of the needs of an audience ▪ Is aware of more forms of writing (captions, stories, notes, letters, poems, lists) 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has understanding of most grapho-phonetic patterns ▪ Has considerable knowledge of writing terms (names of punctuation marks, paragraph) ▪ Shows increasing awareness of the needs of an audience ▪ Is aware of various forms of writing ▪ Shows beginning awareness of the differences between speaking and writing 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has a wide understanding of grapho-phonetic patterns ▪ Has extensive knowledge of the language of writing (drafting, editing, description) ▪ Knows the needs of and is responsive to the reader (appearance of writing, letter formation, layout) ▪ Is aware of a range of forms and genres (tall tales, fables, myths, reports, experiments) ▪ Shows increasing awareness of differentiation between speaking and writing

Descriptors of Viewing Development

Early Primary	Late Primary
Dispositions	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shows interest in a variety of forms of visual representation ▪ Values viewing for enjoyment 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shows interest in increasing variety of forms of visual representation ▪ Values viewing as a tool for learning as well as for enjoyment
Skills	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Builds upon viewing skills developed during the pre-school years ▪ Views for a variety of purposes (for enjoyment, to follow directions) ▪ Is moving from viewing for general rather than specific detail to viewing for more detail for longer periods of time ▪ Focuses on whole rather than part (detail) when viewing ▪ Is able to interpret/understand some visual representations confidently ▪ Is becoming more able to view effectively a variety of forms of visual representation 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refines the development of previous viewing skills and expands repertoire ▪ Views for an increasing range of purposes (to gain information, to project into another's experience) ▪ Becoming more sensitive to detail in content/form ▪ Shows increasing ability to extract pertinent ideas, focus on the detail (parts) and keep whole in mind; to reflect and predict; draw inferences ▪ Approaches familiar forms of visual representation with confidence, but still needs support with new, unfamiliar, or more complex forms ▪ Is beginning to draw inferences from visual representation independently ▪ Is learning to compare and find relationships among a variety of forms of visual representation
Knowledge	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understands visual representations convey ideas and information; ideas and information may be gained through viewing ▪ Recognizes some form of visual representation in context (environmental signs) 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knows how to use a variety of forms of visual representation to get ideas and information ▪ Is aware of an increasing variety of forms of visual representation

Descriptors of Visual Representation Development

Early Primary	Later Primary
Skills	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manipulates and experiences with a variety of forms of visual representation ▪ Approximates conventional forms of visual representation ▪ Is able to represent ideas visually in a variety of forms ▪ Is able to represent ideas with confidence when representations involve overt physical action and/or concrete materials, (using concrete manipulatives in mathematics) 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manipulates and experiments with an increasing variety of forms of visual representation ▪ Is able to use forms of visual representation in more conventional ways, when appropriate ▪ Is able to represent ideas visually in more complex and sophisticated ways ▪ Is increasingly able to represent ideas in abstract-symbolic forms (number sentences in mathematics)
Knowledge	
<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is aware of a variety of forms of visual representation ▪ Knows the names of some forms of visual representation (a drawing, a picture, a model) 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has understanding of a range of forms of visual representation across the curriculum ▪ Knows the names of many forms of visual representation (map, chart, diagram)

Connecting Widely-Held Expectations with Language Arts Standards and Benchmarks

This work is the result of several rural school districts working to align the Primary Program’s Widely-Held Expectations to the McREL Compendium standards and benchmarks.

Kendall, J. S. & Marzano, R. J. (1997). *Content knowledge: A compendium of standards and benchmarks for K–12 education (2nd ed.)*. Alexandria, VA: Association for the Supervision and Curriculum Development and Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory, Inc.

1. Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies of the written process

B-3	3-5	5-7	7-9	9-11	11-13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use scribbles, lines, and circles for expression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine drawing and writing but drawing conveys most of the meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine drawing and writing to convey ideas Demonstrate increasing knowledge of letter names, common letter-sound associations--especially consonants and some forms of writing (labels, stories, letters) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May combine drawing and writing but writing can stand alone to convey meaning 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May try to grasp writing tools with whole hand May draw randomly and look away while drawing or making marks on paper or board May begin to make scribbles for pleasure of seeing the results of their actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May not intend to convey a particular message and may ask “What does this say?” of own writing Play at writing and may produce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scribble writing (imitative cursive writing) Random symbols (strings of forms that resemble letters) Random letters (strings of letters) Single letters that represent a sound (s for “snake”) or a syllable (dd for “daddy”) 				

**1. Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies of the written process—
continued**

B-3	3-5	5-7	7-9	9-11	11-13
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> View writing as something that people do and like to play at writing; are curious about letters and words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are interested in the names of letters and how to represent specific speech sounds; write mainly for personal interest Writing usually related to their own experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May produce a series of connected ideas that make sense, stories with two or more characters, stories of a full page or more, and reports, letters, poems, and other forms of writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand writing as "ideas written down" May produce stories with two or more characters, topics of ideas supported by relevant details, a series of ideas connected smoothly and logically, a variety of sentence structures and varied sentence length, and more complex reports, letters, poems and so on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show increasing awareness of differences between speaking and writing May produce writing that: Contains more complex narratives with complex settings and characters
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoy writing and sharing own writing with others Begin to develop a sense of audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoy receiving feedback from others about own writing Show an increasing awareness of audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value and seek out feedback on own writing and write for a wider audience
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are able to write for an increasing number of purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write for a broad range of purposes and can convey increasingly complex and abstract ideas through writing
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoy playing with words and ideas and can write from different points of view

2. Demonstrates competence in the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing

B-3	3-5	5-7	7-9	9-11	11-13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use scribbles, lines, and circles for expression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> View writing as something that people do and like to play at writing; are curious about letters and words Combine drawing and writing but drawing conveys most of the meaning 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine drawing and writing but drawing conveys most of the meaning 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May produce some conventional words (own name, mom, dad) as well as play writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May produce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing usually related to their own experiences - A label or caption to accompany a drawing - Single words or phrases - Short, simple sentences - A series of simple sentences - Simple stories with one or two characters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May combine drawing and writing, but writing can stand alone to convey meaning May produce a series of connected ideas that make sense, stories with two or more characters, stories of a full page or more, and reports, letters, poems, and other forms of writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can convey more complex ideas through writing May produce a series of ideas connected smoothly and logically, a variety of sentence structures and varied sentence length, letters, poems and so on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May produce writing that is easily understood, fluent, logically organized, unified, and elaborated

3. Uses grammatical and mechanical conventions in written compositions

B-3	3-5	5-7	7-9	9-11	11-13
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> View writing as something that people do and like to play at writing; are curious about letters and words May not intend to convey a particular message and may ask “What does this say?” of own writing Play at writing and may produce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scribble writing (imitative cursive writing) Random symbols (strings of forms that resemble letters) Random letters (strings of letters) 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play at writing and may produce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> single letters that represent a sound (s for “snake”) or a syllable (dd for “daddy”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are interested in the names of letters and how to represent specific speech sounds; write mainly for personal interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate increasing knowledge of letter-sound relationships, including vowels, [continued] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate increasing knowledge of most spelling patterns, terms used with writing [continued] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate increasing knowledge of spelling patterns, terms used with writing, a wider range of forms and parts of speech, [continued]
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May produce some conventional words (own name, mom, dad) as well as play writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May produce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single words or phrases Short, simple sentences A series of simple sentences 	common spelling patterns, terms used with writing (letter, word, sentence); and forms of writing (poem, report)	(paragraph, punctuation), and a variety of forms of writing (fables, fairy tales)	but are not yet able to grasp many of the formal aspects of grammar
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate increasing knowledge of letter names, common letter-sound associations--especially consonants and some forms of writing (labels, stories, letters) 			

3. Uses grammatical and mechanical conventions in written compositions—continued

B-3	3–5	5–7	7–9	9–11	11–13
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce increasingly conventional writing by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing in capitals and moving toward the use of lower case letters - Spelling with consonants and moving toward phonetic spellings that include vowels - Spelling some common words conventionally - Showing some sense of directionality but may reverse some letters (b and d) or right to left at times - Starting to use some punctuation marks (periods) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce increasingly conventional writing by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spelling an increasing number of words - Using upper and lower case letters and spacing between words - Conventionally using functional spelling when drafting - Understanding directionality (left-to-right, top-to-bottom of a page, front-to-back in a book) but still may reverse letters (b and d) - Developing the ability to punctuate (periods, question marks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spell considerable number of words conventionally • Use functional spelling while drafting, but search for standard spelling before the final draft • Use many punctuation marks conventionally (periods, question marks), but may still confuse others (commas, quotation marks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce increasingly conventional writing by using standard spelling and most punctuation marks (but still may confuse marks such as commas and semi-colons)
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May produce writing that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is more complex in grammatical structure than speech - Has more complex non-narrative forms

4. Effectively gathers and uses information for research purposes

B-3	3–5	5–7	7–9	9–11	11–13
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are developing knowledge of a variety of forms that communicate ideas (graphs, maps, charts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writes on topics/ideas supported by relevant details, and may create more complex reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has more complex non-narrative forms

5. Demonstrates competence in general skills and strategies of the reading process

B-3	3-5	5-7	7-9	9-11	11-13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are beginning to develop an understanding of language and how it works (imitating sounds, saying words, putting words together) • Are learning to name objects and may use the same word for two or more objects (all vehicles called “cars”) • Are increasingly able to identify familiar faces, toys, places, and activities 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be interested in grouping objects (putting all the large animals to bed and leaving the small ones to play) 					
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See themselves as readers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are able to read independently • May read longer and more demanding texts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are able to read independently

5. Demonstrates competence in general skills and strategies of the reading process-continued

B-3	3-5	5-7	7-9	9-11	11-13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Read” pictures for meaning; begin to recognize that writing has meaning (writing is intended for communication) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are curious about print in own environment--names of letters, signs, labels, and logos • Play at reading: “read pictures” rather than print • Begin with naming and commenting on the pictures, then telling stories from the pictures • “Read” print in own familiar environment (restaurant signs, familiar places, traffic signs) • Know that print is a source of information and enjoyment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begin to develop a basic vocabulary of functional and personal words recognized on sight • Are increasingly able to deal with the parts of print (letters and words) • Develop knowledge of common letter-sound relationships • Begin to develop an ability to try reading print, including ways to figure out unknown words (common letter sound associations, picture clues) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are interested in print (spelling, word meanings) • Make greater use of context to predict and confirm meaning of words • Begin to self-correct own miscues (“errors”) • Are rapidly increasing knowledge of words recognized on sight • Developing ability to read silently • Are increasingly able to read orally with fluency and expression • Develop increasing knowledge of letter-sound relationships and common spelling patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-correct own miscues confidently and independently 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the whole story rather than on individual words • Rely on an adult or older child to read text • Begin to develop a “sense of story” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that the print “tells the story” • continue to develop a “sense of story” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show ability to make inferences (understand content, draw conclusion) • Have a “sense of story” and can identify the parts 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to develop knowledge of some conventions of print, front-to-back directionality of books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness of print conventions (top-to-bottom and left-to-right directionality, punctuation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the main conventions of print (directionality, punctuation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the main conventions of print (directionality, capitalization, punctuation) and are developing an increasing knowledge of standard spelling) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the main conventions of print (directionality, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling)

5. Demonstrates competence in general skills and strategies of the reading process—continued

B-3	3-5	5-7	7-9	9-11	11-13
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See themselves as readers • Develop increasing independence in reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are increasing the length of time concentrating on reading • Are increasing silent reading rate (which may exceed the rate of speech) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase reading vocabulary, silent reading rate, length of time for concentration
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read for a variety of purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are developing an ability to adjust reading rate to suit purpose (scanning to locate information) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to adjust rate of reading to suit purpose (skim, scan, select, study)

6. Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies for reading a variety of literary texts

B-3	3-5	5-7	7-9	9-11	11-13
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin with naming and commenting on the pictures, then telling stories from the pictures • “Read” print in own familiar environment (restaurant signs, familiar places, traffic signs) • Know that print is a source of information and enjoyment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy reading favorite books • Choose short books with simple stories and illustrations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop increasing independence in reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are increasingly able to set own purposes for reading (read for interest, by topic or favorite author) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read for an increasing variety of purposes and choose from a wide range of reading material
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are increasingly able to recognize environmental print away from its familiar context 			

6. Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies for reading a variety of literary texts—continued

B-3	3-5	5-7	7-9	9-11	11-13
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that the print “tells the story” • Continue to develop a “sense of story” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make greater use of context to predict and confirm meaning of words • have a “sense of story” and can identify the parts • Are increasingly able to focus on details keeping main ideas in mind • Show ability to make inferences (understand intent, draw conclusions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are aware of different genres of reading materials and can identify some elements (the moral of a fable) • Are increasingly able to deal with detail in content and form, while keeping main ideas in mind • Show increasing ability to make inferences and to read critically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase knowledge of and ability to identify and discuss the elements (characters, plot) of a variety of reading materials • Are increasingly able to understand and discuss aspects of literature such as theme, conflict, and author’s style • Are able to deal with detail in content and form while keeping main ideas in mind • Are increasing in ability to read critically and to detect inconsistencies in argument
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show interest in topics, characters, and events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May broaden their interests in fiction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to broaden their interests in fiction and non-fiction
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are beginning to read novels; use books to find information 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are increasing in the ability to persist with longer and more complex texts (more difficult novels, school textbooks)
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that different readers may interpret the same material in different ways

7. Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies for reading a variety of informational texts

B-3	3-5	5-7	7-9	9-11	11-13
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Read” print in own familiar environment (restaurant signs, familiar places, traffic signs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are increasingly able to recognize environmental print away from its familiar context 			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that the print “tells the story” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are increasingly able to focus on details keeping main ideas in mind • Show ability to make inferences (understand intent, draw conclusions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are increasingly able to deal with detail in content and form while keeping main ideas in mind • Shows increasing ability to make inferences and to read critically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are able to deal with detail in content and form while keeping main ideas in mind • Are increasing in ability to read critically and to detect inconsistencies in argument
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are increasing in the ability to persist with longer and more complex texts (more difficult novels, school textbooks)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read for a variety of purposes • Books to find information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May broaden their interests in non-fiction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to broaden their interests in fiction and non-fiction
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are developing knowledge of a variety of forms that communicate ideas (graphs, maps, charts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to try reading material in various forms (graph, maps) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase ability to read various forms of text (graphs, maps, charts)
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are able to organize information from reading 	

Language Arts Appendix

10 Research-based Principles

Continuum of Development in Reading and Writing

Synchrony of Reading, Writing, and Spelling

Choosing Books

Read Aloud Now!

A child is a person who is going to carry on what you have started. He is going to sit where you are sitting, and when you are gone, attend to those things which you think are important. You may adopt all the policies you please, but how they are carried out depends on him. He will assume control of your cities, states, and nations. He is going to take over your churches, schools, universities, and corporations. The fate of humanity is in his hands (Abraham Lincoln).

CIERA 10 Principles

Improving the Reading Achievement of America's Children

10 Research-Based Principles

1. **Home language and literacy experiences** that lead to the development of key print concepts are plentiful among children who enter school prepared to learn to read. Joint book reading with family members helps children develop a wide range of knowledge that supports them in school-based reading. Once students are in school, parental help in the form of modeling good reading habits and monitoring homework and television viewing is associated with gains in student achievement. Programs that assist families in initiating and sustaining these sorts of activities show positive benefits for children's reading achievement.
2. **Preschool programs** are particularly beneficial for children who do not experience informal learning opportunities in their homes. These preschool experiences include opportunities to listen to and examine books, say nursery rhymes, write messages, and see and talk about print. Such preschool experiences lead to improved reading achievement in the school years, with some effects proving durable through grade 3.
3. **Skills that predict later reading success** can be promoted through a variety of classroom language and meaningful reading and writing events in kindergarten and grade 1. The two most powerful of these predictors are letter-name knowledge and phonemic awareness (the conscious awareness of the sounds in *spoken* words). Instruction that promotes phonemic awareness engages children in hearing and blending sounds. Activities that promote this attention to sounds can be motivating and playful for young children, including oral renditions of rhymes, poems, and songs, as well as writing their own journals and messages. Such instruction has demonstrated positive effects on primary-grade reading achievement, especially when it is coupled with letter-sound instruction.
4. **Primary-level instruction** that supports successful reading acquisition is consistent, well-designed, and focused. Teachers lead lessons where children receive systematic word recognition instruction on common, consistent letter-sound relationships and important but often unpredictable high-frequency words, such as *the* and *what*. Teachers ensure that children become adept at monitoring the accuracy of their reading as well their understanding of texts through instruction in strategies such as predicting, inferencing, clarifying misunderstandings, and summarizing. Instructional activities that promote growth in word recognition and comprehension include repeated reading of text, guided reading and writing, strategy lessons, reading aloud with feedback, and conversations about texts children have read.
5. **Primary-level classroom environments** in successful schools provide opportunities for students to apply what they have learned in teacher-guided instruction to everyday reading and writing. In these classrooms, teachers read books aloud and hold follow-up discussions, children read independently every day, and children write stories and keep journals. These events are monitored frequently by teachers, ensuring that time is well spent and that children receive feedback on their efforts. Teachers design these events carefully, using information from ongoing assessment of children's strengths and needs as the primary basis for new activities.
6. **Cultural and linguistic diversity** among America's children reflects the variations within the communities and homes in which they live and is manifest in differences in their dispositions toward and knowledge about topics, language, and literacy. Effective instruction includes assessment, integration, and extension of relevant background knowledge and the use of texts that recognize these diverse backgrounds. The language of children's homes is especially critical for schools to build on when children are learning to speak, listen to, write, and read English. There is considerable evidence that the linguistic and orthographic knowledge students acquire in speaking and reading their first language predicts and transfers to learning to read a second language. When teachers capitalize on the advantages of bilingualism or biliteracy, second language reading acquisition is significantly enhanced.

7. **Children who are identified as having reading disabilities** benefit from systematic instruction, but not at the cost of opportunities to engage in meaningful reading and writing. These children profit from the same sort of well-balanced instructional programs that benefit all children who are learning to read and write. Programs are characterized by intensive one-on-one or small-group instruction, attention to both comprehension and word recognition processes, thoroughly individualized assessment and instructional planning, and extensive experiences with an array of texts.
8. **Proficient reading third grade and above** is sustained and enhanced by programs that adhere to four fundamental features: (1) deep and wide opportunities to read, (2) the acquisition of new knowledge and vocabulary, partially through wide reading but also through explicit attention to acquiring networks of new concepts through instruction, (3) an emphasis on the influence that the kinds of text (e.g., stories versus essays) and the ways writers organize particular texts has on understanding, and (4) explicit attention to assisting students in reasoning about text.
9. **Professional opportunities** to improve reading achievement are prominent in successful schools and programs. These opportunities allow teachers and administrators to analyze instruction, assessment, and achievement, to set goals for improvement, to learn about effective practices, and to participate in on-going communities in which participants deliberately try to understand but successes and persistent problems.
10. **Entire school staffs**, not just first-grade teachers, are involved in bringing children to high levels of achievement. In successful schools, goals for reading achievement are clearly stated, high expectations for children's attainment of these goals are shared with all participants, instructional means for attaining these goals are articulated, and shared assessments are used to monitor children's progress. Instructional programs in successful schools may have many different programs extend into the home by involving parents in their children's reading and homework. Community partnerships, including volunteer tutoring programs, are common in such schools.

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(CIERA) (2000). *Improving the reading achievement of America's children: 10 research-based principles*.
Online, <http://www.ciera.org/ciera/information/principles/principles.html>.

Continuum of Children’s Development in Early Reading and Writing

Note: this list is intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive. Children at any grade level will function at a variety of phases along the reading/writing continuum.

Phase 1: Awareness and exploration (goals for preschool)

Children explore their environment and build the foundations for learning to read and write.

Children can

- Enjoy listening to and discussing storybooks
- Understand that print carries a message
- Engage in reading and writing attempts
- Identify labels and signs in their environment
- Participate in rhyming games
- Identify some letters and make some letter-sound matches
- Use known letters or approximations of letters to represent written language (especially meaningful words like their name and phrases such as “I love you”)

What teachers do

- Share books with children, including Big Books, and model reading behaviors
- Talk about letters by name and sounds
- Establish a literacy-rich environment
- Reread favorite stories
- Engage children in language games
- Promote literacy-related play activities
- Encourage children to experiment with writing

What parents and family members can do

- Talk with children, engage them in conversation, give names of things, show interest in what a child says
- Read and reread stories with predictable text to children
- Encourage children to recount experiences and describe ideas and events that are important to them
- Visit the library regularly
- Provide opportunities for children to draw and print, using markers, crayons, and pencils

Phase 2: Experimental reading and writing (goals for kindergarten)

Children develop basic concepts of print and begin to engage in and experiment with reading and writing.

Kindergartners can

- Enjoy being read to and themselves retell simple narrative stories or informational texts
- Use descriptive language to explain and explore
- Recognize letters and letter-sound matches
- Show familiarity with rhyming and beginning sounds
- Understand left-to-right and top-to-bottom orientation and familiar concepts of print
- Match spoken words with written ones
- Begin to write letters of the alphabet and some high-frequency words

What teachers do

- Encourage children to talk about reading and writing experiences
- Provide many opportunities for children to explore and identify sound-symbol relationships in meaningful contexts
- Help children to segment spoken words into individual sounds and blend the sounds into whole words (for example, by slowly writing a word and saying its sound)
- Frequently read interesting and conceptually rich stories to children
- Provide daily opportunities for children to write
- Help children build a sight vocabulary
- Create a literacy-rich environment for children to engage independently in reading and writing

What parents and family members can do

- Daily read and reread narrative and informational stories to children
- Encourage children’s attempts at reading and writing
- Allow children to participate in activities that involve writing and reading (for example, cooking, making grocery lists)
- Play games that involve specific directions (such as “Simon Says”)
- Have conversations with children during mealtimes and throughout the day

Phase 3: Early reading and writing (goals for first grade)

Children begin to read simple stories and can write about a topic that is meaningful to them.

First-graders can

- Read and retell familiar stories
- Use strategies (rereading, predicting, questioning, contextualizing) when comprehension breaks down
- Use reading and writing for various purposes on their own initiative
- Orally read with reasonable fluency
- Use letter-sound associations, word parts, and context to identify new words
- Identify an increasing number of words by sight
- Sound out and represent all substantial sounds in spelling a word
- Write about topics that are personally meaningful
- Attempt to use some punctuation and capitalization

What teachers do

- Support the development of vocabulary by reading daily to the children, transcribing their language, and selecting materials that expand children’s knowledge and language development

- Model strategies and provide practice for identifying unknown words

- Give children opportunities for independent reading and writing practice
- Read, write, and discuss a range of different text types (problems, informational books)
- Introduce new words and teach strategies for learning to spell new words
- Demonstrate and model strategies to use when comprehension breaks down
- Help children build lists of commonly used words from their writing and reading

What parents and family members can do

- Talk about favorite storybooks
- Read to children and encourage them to read to you
- Suggest that children write to friends and relatives
- Bring to a parent-teacher conference evidence of what your child can do in writing and reading
- Encourage children to share what they have learned about their writing and reading

Phase 4: Transitional reading and writing (goals for second grade)

Children begin to read more fluently and write various text forms using simple and more complex sentences.

Second-graders can

- Read with greater fluency
- Use strategies more efficiently (rereading, questioning, and so on) when comprehension breaks down
- Use word identification strategies with greater facility to unlock unknown words
- Identify an increasing number of words by sight
- Write about a range of topics to suit different audiences
- Use common letter patterns and critical features to spell words
- Punctuate simple sentences correctly and proofread their own work
- Spend time reading daily and use reading to research topics

What teachers do

- Create a climate that fosters analytic, evaluative, and reflective thinking
- Teach children to write in multiple forms (stories, information, poems)
- Ensure that children read a range of texts for a variety of purposes
- Teach revising, editing, and proofreading skills
- Teach strategies for spelling new and difficult words
- Model enjoyment of reading

What parents and family members can do

- Continue to read to children and encourage them to read to you
- Engage children in activities that require reading and writing
- Become involved in school activities

- Show children your interest in their learning by displaying their written word
- Visit the library regularly
- Support your child's specific hobby or interest with reading materials and references

Phase 5: Independent and productive reading and writing (goals for third grade)

Children continue to extend and refine their reading and writing to suit varying purposes and audiences.

Third-graders can

- Read fluently and enjoy reading
- Use a range of strategies when drawing meaning from the text
- Use word identification strategies appropriately and automatically when encountering unknown words
- Recognize and discuss elements of different text structures
- Make critical connections between texts
- Write expressively in many different forms (stories, poems, reports)
- Use a rich variety of vocabulary and sentences appropriate to text forms
- Revise and edit their own writing during and after composing
- Spell words correctly in final writing drafts

What teachers do

- Provide opportunities daily for children to read, examine, and critically evaluate narrative and expository texts
- Continue to create a climate that fosters critical reading and personal response
- Teach children to examine ideas in texts
- Encourage children to use writing as a tool for thinking and learning
- Extend children's knowledge of the correct use of writing conventions
- Emphasize the importance of correct spelling in finished written products
- Create a climate that engages all children as a community of literacy learners

What parents and family members can do

- Continue to support children's learning and interest by visiting the library and bookstores with them
- Find ways to highlight children's progress in reading and writing
- Stay in regular contact with your child's teachers about activities and progress in reading and writing
- Encourage children to use and enjoy print for many purposes (such as recipes, directions, games, and sports)
- Build a love of language in all its forms and engage children in conversation

In National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1998.

Synchrony of Reading, Writing and Spelling Development
 (Adapted from Bear, et al. 2000; Butler, Turbill, & Cambourne 1998)

READERS	WRITERS	SPELLERS
Ages 1–7		
Pre-Emergent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pretend reader ▪ Tries to read but does not yet realize that he must process the print 	Pre-Emergent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pretend writes ▪ Knows writing conveys meaning ▪ Tries to write like others, not yet sure what letters are 	Pre-literate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marks on page
Emergent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knows concept of word ▪ Can track one to one ▪ Uses picture and initial letter clues in patterned books 	Emergent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Produces string writing ▪ Uses letters, but does not leave spaces between words ▪ Knows writing conveys meaning, but often cannot read own writing 	Pre-literate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Symbols or known letters randomly used in pretend writing
Ages 5–9		
Early (Beginning) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Know some sight words ▪ Reading is unexpressive ▪ Rereads and uses initial letter and pictures to self-correct 	Early (Beginning) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writes simple labels, captions and some oral language patterns ▪ Some spaces between words ▪ Sometimes can read own writing, but others cannot 	Early Letter Name <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Syllabic spelling ▪ Uses several alphabetic letters ▪ Mostly uses letter names to spell
Early (Middle) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finger points ▪ Has basic of self-correction and word solving strategies ▪ Complex words still need picture support 	Early (Middle) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enjoys writing comments and observations in journals ▪ Can read own writing 	Middle Letter Name <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has left to right ▪ Uses most letters ▪ Knows some clear letter sound correspondences ▪ There are vowels in most words
Early (End) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading is becoming fluent and expressive ▪ Finger point when word or meaning solving ▪ Has some of self-correction and word solving strategies 	Early (End) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writes simple stories and information pieces ▪ Slow deliberate writer, rereads and tracks aloud ▪ Likes to write for familiar audiences for variety purposes ▪ Others can read writing 	Late Letter Name <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses most beginning and ending consonants ▪ Uses short vowels ▪ Knows most clear letter sound correspondences ▪ Knows some blends and digraphs ▪ Uses only sound patterns

Synchrony of Reading, Writing and Spelling Development (Continued)
 (Adapted from Bear, et al. 2000; Butler, Turbill, & Cambourne 1998)

Readers	Writers	Spellers
Ages 6–12		
<p>Fluent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading is fluent and expressive ▪ Has a variety of self-correction and word solving strategies 	<p>Fluent</p> <p>Explores many genres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing a sense of audience and considers them ▪ Begins to revise and edit own work with help ▪ Can detect some of own spelling errors ▪ Can take a piece through the writing process to publication 	<p>Within Word Pattern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Starts to use both visual and sound patterns ▪ Getting r-controlled vowels in on syllable words ▪ Begins using long vowel patterns ▪ Gets common long vowels in one syllable words ▪ Gets most long vowels in one syllable words ▪ May know some inflectional endings and common suffixes
Ages 10+		
<p>Developing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reads orally with sense of audience ▪ Silent rate is faster than oral rate ▪ Reads for a variety of purposes ▪ Reads like a writer—notices styles, voice, word choice, spellings, etc. 	<p>Developing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Begins using planning strategies—visual, outline, brainstorm ▪ Exploring different styles and genre for different purposes 	<p>Syllable juncture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Short and long vowels stable in one syllable words ▪ Experiments with joining syllables-doubling letters, changing /y/ to /i/ ▪ Beginning to understand the connection between meaning and spelling e.g. /ed/ conveys past tense ▪ Learns homophones and homonyms
<p>Extending</p>	<p>Extending</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can research, plan, draft, revise, edit, and proof-read own work ▪ Developing a sense of audience beyond own family and friends ▪ Knows characteristics of common genre: stories, reports, letters, instructions ▪ Knows writing is a process and requires revision, time, and persistence 	<p>Derivational Constancy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses common affixes and root words and concept of derivations ▪ Begins to explore meaning basis and links to spelling ▪ Can spell many multi-syllable words ▪ Learns low frequency vowel patterns, mainly from meaning ▪ Explores when to use different spellings for the same ending, e.g. /tion/ and /sion/

Things to Remember When Choosing Books

Infants

- Look for simple books with uncluttered pictures that are easy to “read.”
- Ideal subjects are those that reflect objects in a baby’s world clearly and realistically. First books should be made of cloth, soft, non-toxic, and washable.
- Look for board books that are firmly stitched or glued.

Toddlers

- Look for clear uncluttered pictures that are easy to “read.”
- Little stories that reflect the child’s own world are most appropriate for now.
- Books for independent reading should be of sturdy materials since turning pages is still difficult.
- Choose books you won’t mind reading and rereading.
- A supply of magazines for browsing is fascinating.

Three and Four Year Olds

- Is this right for these particular children?
- Will they understand the theme?
- Will it scare or comfort them?
- Does it relate to their interests?
- Does it answer some of their questions?
- Is the language as fresh as possible?
- Are the pictures interesting, well done, and enticing enough to pore over?
- Will I enjoy reading it many times?
- Do I approve of its messages, hidden or overt?

Five Year Olds

- Introduce a variety of books, from fantasy to fact. Reread old favorites and add new one to your storytime.
- Encourage children to tell original stories or retell old favorites.
- Provide puppets, paper, and crayons to extend the verbal experience to a visual one.
- Introduce some classic folktales, but steer clear of overly complex or gory ones.
- Borrow books from the library and build a small library of your own, special favorite they can read and reread.
- Draw attention to printed words, but don’t push for learning to read—loving books and stories is where reading begins.

Six and Seven Year Olds

- Offer a variety of books with more complex plots and characters.
- Take your cues from their interests and expand on those interests.
- Provide plenty of easy-to-read books.
- Continue reading aloud, especially books that may be a little difficult for sixes and sevens to read independently.
- Involve children in selecting books to borrow from the library and/or purchase for your library.

Eight and Nine Year Olds

- Books at this stage should be “desired” not “required”.
- Give kids options to exercise their own taste, even “poor tastes”.
- Look for read-aloud stories with three-dimensional characters and complex plots.
- Select stories you enjoy so that you convey that joy.
- If they find an author they like, encourage them to look for other books by that author.
- Choose books from various genres; if they seem to favor fantasy or mysteries or fairy tales, build on their enjoyment.
- Avoid pushing them to read at the next level independently. Longer and harder is not necessarily better.

Ten and Twelve Year Olds

- Children this age need books that explore morals and values.
- Nonfiction can be as important as fiction in expanding horizons and interests.
- Fantasy and legend speak to creativity and problem-solving.
- Reading aloud as a family activity is still a sound idea.
- Discuss books.

Adapted from: Oppenheim, Joanne, (1986) *Choosing Books for Kids*, New York, Bank Street College.





Read Aloud Now!



Why read aloud?

- ◆ It's fun and enjoyable for everyone...it helps create a special bond.
- ◆ Children learn to read as they listen and look at books.
- ◆ Models reading for a variety of purposes

How to read aloud!

- ◆ Share books you like.
- ◆ Let your voice get soft and loud. Change the pace of your reading...slow or fast.
- ◆ Turn off the television, radio or stereo—read a book
- ◆ Let your child have fun with the book. Encourage the child to point out pictures, ask questions or repeat words.

Where to start?

- ◆ Start at the library. Your library has it all—books, recording, videos.
- ◆ Ask your child's teacher for a list of books
- ◆ No matter what your interest, ask at the library.
- ◆ Introduce simple pictures and storybooks as the baby grows. Shapes, colors, and sounds will delight.
- ◆ Visit the library often. Let the children get their own library cards and select their own books.
- ◆ Keep plenty of reading materials around the house. Put children's books on low shelves.
- ◆ Give books as gifts. Let children know you think books are special

Tips for reading aloud

- ◆ Read to your baby: rhymes like "Mary Had a Little Lamb," a birthday card, the cereal box or a newspaper story you are reading. It's the sounds that are important.
- ◆ Make a special time for reading aloud: after dinner, before bed...anytime, anywhere, anyplace.
- ◆ Try lots of books. There's a book for everyone!
- ◆ Read more about people, places, and things you see on television.
- ◆ Have older children read aloud while you do household chores.
- ◆ Let children see you read. Talk about what you read.

Adapted from ALA Video/Library Video Network. *Read Aloud Now*.