

Ready to Succeed

An Early Literacy and School Readiness Newsletter for Professionals

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Early Literacy Development

In recent years major studies have found that the seeds of literacy are planted before children enter school. There are four major areas where development must occur prior to the start of formal literacy instruction:

- ✓ Oral language
- ✓ General cognitive skills
- ✓ Understanding and applying the concepts of reading and writing
- ✓ Specific literacy skills

Oral language

While many researchers and practitioners recognize a relationship between oral language development and literacy development, there has been little research that ties the two together. None-the-less, we see that children with weak oral language development do not seem to do well during reading and writing instruction. Having a large vocabulary, being



able to choose the correct grammatical form for the specific message being communicated, understanding the oral speech of others, sustaining a conversation, discussing events in a sequence, and being motivated to use language in various problem solving contexts (social and cognitive) are important components of oral language development.

General cognitive skills

Reading and writing rely on a specific set of cognitive skills, including attention, memory, use of symbols, and self-regulation. As children learn to read and write, they continue to improve these skills, eventually mastering them. For example, deliberate attention is required to differentiate between letters - especially if they look alike - and to isolate specific portions of a word for encoding or decoding. Children

must learn to pay attention to the way words look and patterns they see as well as difference between words. Since writing and reading require an understanding of symbols, if children cannot understand that symbols represent other things, they cannot learn to manipulate letters and words. Finally, children must be able to self-regulate so that they can monitor their own understanding of what they are reading and abandon ineffective reading strategies while keeping more effective ones.

Understanding and applying the concepts of reading and writing

Reading research of the last 20 years has shown that children must develop an understanding of the concepts that underlie the act of reading and writing before they can actually learn to read

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**Happy Birthday,
Dr. Seuss!**
~ Kings Beach ~
The Eye Book Mask

Early Literacy Development continued

and write. For example, they must learn that written speech represents thoughts; that reading and writing are used for communicating something meaningful; that there is a difference between "book language" and every day speech; that a printed message is constant and is read the same way each time; that a book contains print and pictures but the print is the major source of information. Children also must learn the major conventions of reading and writing (e.g. reading from left to right and



top to bottom, treating spaces as dividers between words and pausing at the punctuation marks). These are just a few of the underlying concepts that must be mastered as children learn to read and write.

Specific literacy skills

In addition to concepts and skills that underlie reading and writing, children also must learn specific literacy skills that enable them to decode and encode words. These include skills, such as breaking a word into component sounds (phonemic awareness) and recognizing letters and the sound

each of them "makes." Children must learn to visually distinguish between different letters and how to form these letters when they write. They also must learn to recognize certain words visually (sight words) and how to decode others (phonics). By the end of early childhood, children begin to learn some of the spelling rules that will facilitate writing in later grades. Finally, children must learn specific reading strategies that help them to figure out unknown words or the meaning of a complicated sentence.

The Early Literacy Advisor, 1999 and 2001

Summer Sandwiches

What You Need:

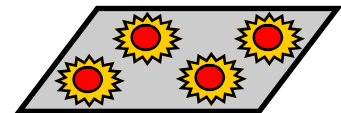
*medium ripe tomatoes
1 slice whole wheat bread per child
1 slice low-fat cheese per child
Oven preheated to 350°F
sun or flower shape cookie cutter
knife and cutting surface
cookie sheet*

What You Do:

1. Thin slice the tomatoes. Set aside.

2. Top one slice of bread with one slice of cheese.
3. Press cookie cutter into bread and cheese. (Save scraps to munch later.)
4. Place each bread and cheese shape on cookie sheet.
5. Place the cookie sheet in the oven and bake until the cheese bubbles and melts, 2-4 minutes.

6. Remove the cookie sheet and place on safe surface. Place one tomato slice in each sandwich.
7. Return sandwiches to the oven briefly to heat through.
8. Remove again.
9. Serve warm or cool.



Sunny Day Clay

What You Need:

Ingredients: 2 cups salt, 1 cup cornstarch, and water.

What You Do:

1. Mix the salt and 2/3 cup water in a saucepan.
2. Cook over medium heat for 4 - 5 minutes, stirring until the salt is dissolved. Remove from heat.
3. In a separate bowl, slowly



add 1/2 cup water to the cornstarch.

4. Stir until smooth, then add to the salt mixture.
5. Return to low heat and cook until smooth, stirring frequently.
6. Place the clay on a tray or paper plate and let the children work outdoors or in a sunny area indoors.
7. Give children a lump of clay

to model. Children may decorate their sun sculptures with small stones, leaves etc..

8. Place the finished items in the sun to dry.
9. Challenge children to predict how long it will take for the sculptures to dry.

Note: When this clay hardens in the sun, it doesn't crumble.



Super Summer Songs

Splash Into Summer

Sung to: "The Ants Go Marching"
By: Paula R. Anderson

Summer's coming,
we'll have some fun
Hurrah, hurrah
Summer's coming,
we'll have some fun
Hurrah, hurrah
Summer's coming,
we'll have some fun
We'll splash in the pool before
we're done
And we'll all be happy
that summer has come again!



On the First Day of Summer

Sung to: "Twelve Days of Christmas"
By: Suzanne L. Harrington and Wendy Spaide

On the first day of summer, my true love gave to me
A robin in a maple tree.
On the second day of summer...
2 ducks a-waddling
On the third day of summer...
3 bees-buzzin'
On the fourth day of summer...
4 watermelons
On the fifth day of summer...



5 picnic baskets
On the sixth day of summer...
6 wormy apples
On the seventh day of summer...
7 ants a-marchin'
On the eighth day of summer...
8 swimmers swimming
On the ninth day of summer...
9 children playing
On the tenth day of summer...
10 flowers blooming
On the eleventh day of summer...
11 mowers mowing
On the twelfth day of summer...
12 gardens growing

A Song for Mom and Dad

My Gift For You

Sung to: "Oh Christmas Tree"
By: Paula R. Anderson
Note: Family member titles can be changed for child's home situation.

Oh mommy dear, oh dad of mine
You are special to me!
Oh mommy dear, oh dad of mine
I do love you truly!

You are tops of all the rest
Because you're mine, you are the best!

Oh mommy dear, oh dad of mine
You are special to me!
Oh mommy dear, oh dad of mine
I will love you always!
And now it is your special day

So it is time for me to say

Oh mommy dear, oh dad of mine
You are special to me!
Oh mommy dear, oh dad of mine
This song is my gift for you!




Books for the Season

Mother's Day

 *The Mother's Day Mice*
Eve Bunting
A Present for Mom
Vivian French
The Mother's Day Sandwich
Jillian Wynot
What is Mother's Day?
Harriett Ziefert
Hooray for Mother's Day
Marjorie Weinman Sharmat
Love to Mamá: A Tribute to Mothers
Pat Mora

Memorial Day

 *Memorial Day*
Helen Frost
Memorial Day
Jacqueline S. Cotton

Let's Get Ready for Memorial Day
Lloyd G. Douglas
Memorial Day
Mir Tamim Ansary
Memorial Day
Geoffrey Scott
El Dia de Los Caidos
Mir Tamim Ansary

Father's Day

 *Happy Father's Day*
Steven Kroll
A Perfect Father's Day
Eve Bunting
What is Father's Day?
Harriet Ziefert
Celebrating Father's Day
Shelly Nielson
Dad's Dinosaur Day

Diane Dawson Hearn
In Daddy's Arms I Am Tall: African Americans Celebrating Fathers
Javaka Steptoe

Summer

 *On a Hot, Hot Day*
Nicki Weiss
Grandma Summer
Harley Jessup
How I Spent My Summer Vacation
Mark Teague
A Summery Saturday Morning
Selina Young
The Night Before Summer Vacation
Natasha Wing
Summer: An Alphabet Acrostic
Steven Schnur

Be sure to check the book lists on our website!

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Ready to Succeed is supported by
Children and Families
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Since 1917



Outcome Faire 2003

Friday, May 2nd
10:00 am ~ 1:00 pm

Rocklin Sunset Center
2650 Sunset Blvd ~ Rocklin

The Children and Families Commission Partner Network invites the community for a fun-filled day for the family! Come and see all the programs and services offered for Placer County. There will be:

Games ~ Art and Craft Activities ~ Food
Refreshments ~ Information Booths ~ Gifts
Play Area ~ Story Time ~ Live Music
FUN ~ FUN ~ FUN!

Call 530 889-6772 for more information.

"Off to a Good Start" Workshop for Early Childhood Educators

Saturday, May 17th
and
Saturday, May 31st

8:30 am ~ 12:30 pm
UCCE Office

11477 E Avenue ~ Auburn

Call or log on now to reserve your spot for this tremendous workshop series! Join us for these hands-on, interactive workshops to learn about activities you can do with children to promote school readiness and information you can share with parents.


Sharon K. Junge
County Director


Paula R. Anderson
Program Representative

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