

Ready to Succeed

An Early Literacy and School Readiness Newsletter for Professionals

Language and Literacy Instruction

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Research tells us that experiences with storybook reading, discussions about books, listening comprehension, and writing are critical to children's early literacy development. Access to high quality, appropriate early language and literacy experiences will positively enhance children's development.

Consequently, the preschool curriculum should emphasize a wide range of language and literacy experiences, such as: story reading, dramatic play, storytelling, and retelling. Environments rich in oral language experiences should also be an integral part of the preschool program.

Research further indicates that teachers in early childhood programs are better able to provide quality programs in language and literacy when they

themselves understand the continuum of reading and writing development and how to integrate them into the curriculum.

Teachers of preschoolers should know about the individual needs of children and take into consideration their social, cultural, emotional, cognitive, language, and physical abilities. It is also important that teachers be sensitive to children from different language and cultural backgrounds.

Based on research on the preparation of exemplary

teachers conducted by Taylor, Pearson, Clark, and Walpole (2000), preschool teachers do best when they have college degrees and early childhood teaching certifications.

The International Reading Association suggests the following in noting that effective preschool teachers:

- ◆ are intentional and draw children's attention to print and print conventions.
- ◆ are responsive to children's thinking and are interactive.
- ◆ incorporate multiple literacy goals into single lessons.
- ◆ contextualize language and literacy conventions and skills and demonstrate learning goals.
- ◆ provide coaching and repeated use of conventions with authentic texts.



Ready to Succeed aims to assist everyone involved with the development of young children to value and embrace their role in fostering early literacy and school readiness.

Language and Literacy Instruction *continued*

- ◆ recognize the importance of language and literacy experiences in preschool to subsequent school achievement.
- ◆ integrate early literacy experiences into the preschool curriculum.
- ◆ connect physical, emotional, and social goals in the language and literacy curriculum when appropriate to do so.
- ◆ develop appropriate language and literacy standards for preschool.
- ◆ create a language and literacy program that is culturally competent.
- ◆ participate in professional development opportunities to remain up to date about evidence-based practice.

The research strongly indicates that high quality preschool experiences which successfully

foster language and literacy skills are laying a critical foundation for children's successful futures.

Source: *Literacy Development in the Preschool Years* by the International Reading Association. 2005



Fun with Dots

As with every good picture book, children enjoy hearing this story over and over again! Read the book *Ten Black Dots* by Donald Crews and then try one or both of these terrific activities that will foster imagination and counting skills.

MY DOT BOOK

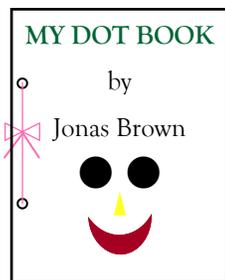
This activity can be one that takes place over time and may take reading the book a few times for the children to get the idea.

WHAT YOU NEED:

white construction paper
sticky dots (any color, any size)
crayons, markers, or colored pencils
hole punch
thick yarn or ribbon

WHAT YOU DO:

1. Give each child a piece of paper.
2. Allow them to choose a sticky dot and place it any where on their paper.
3. Encourage conversation of what



4. Have the children draw whichever object they decided on.
5. Next write a short sentence or description of the picture.
6. On the back of that piece of paper, place two sticky dots.
7. Encourage conversation of what two dots can become eyeglasses, a face, etc.
8. Repeat from #4.
9. Continue the above process until each child has a book of dots from 1-10.
10. Give each child a piece of paper to create the cover for their book with a title, illustration, and their name as author.
11. Place the piece of paper together in order and hole punch two holes on the left hand margin.
12. Use a 12 inch piece of yarn or ribbon to bind the book.
13. Feed each end of the yarn through the back of the book to the front and tie the ends together.

FINGER DOTS

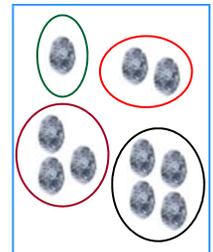
This activity may be messy, but what fun the children will have! You may want to use newspaper or an old cloth to cover your work surface.

WHAT YOU NEED:

construction paper (any color)
washable ink pad (any color)
crayons of different colors

WHAT YOU DO:

1. Have each child choose one finger or their thumb and rub it on the ink pad.
2. Stamp one fingerprint on the paper and draw a ring around it with a crayon.
3. Stamp two fingerprints and draw a ring around them using a different color crayon.
4. Stamp three fingerprints and draw ring around them using another different color of crayon.
5. Continue until each child has stamped sets of fingerprints up to ten.



Books We Love to Read

EMERGENCY WORKERS

Featured Title:

Mayday! Mayday!: A Coast Guard Rescue

by Chris L. Demarest

Rhyming text and breathtaking illustrations show how the Coast Guard uses aircraft and highly trained personnel to respond to a call for help.

Aero and Officer

Mike: Police Partners

Joan Plummer Russell

A Day in the Life of a Police Officer

Linda Hayward

A Day with Paramedics

Jan Kottke

Emergency!

Margaret Mayo

Even Firefighters Hug Their Mom

Christine Kole MacLean

Fire Fighters

Norma Simon

Firefighters A-Z

Chris L. Demarest

Firehouse Dog

Amy and Richard Hutchings

First Discovery: Fire Fighting

Gallimard Jeunesse

I'm Going to be a Firefighter

Edith Kunhardt

Keeping You Safe: A Book

About Police Officers

Ann Owen

A Police Officer, That's What I'll Be

Ronald Pinkston

We Need Police Officers

Lola M. Schaefer

MOVING

Featured Title:

Boomer's Big Day

by Constance M. McGeorge

Boomer, an eight-year-old golden retriever, wakes one morning to find something unusual is going on.

Boomer's family is rushing about, strangers are packing all the things in the house into boxes, and he can't find his favorite toy anywhere.

Boomer's family is moving!

Alexander, Who's Not (Do you hear me? I mean it!) Going to Move

Judith Viorst

Gina

Bernard Waber

Goodbye House

Frank Asch

I'm Not Moving Mama!

Nancy White Carlstrom

Ira Says Goodbye

Bernard Waber

Making New Friends

Jacqueline H. Blumenstock

Moving

Fred Rogers

The Berenstain Bears' Moving Day

Stan & Jan Berenstain

Pinky and Rex and the New Neighbors

James Howe

Why Did We Have to Move Here?

Sally Davies

When William Went Away

Sally Davies

Moving House

Ann Civardi

THE ZOO

Featured Title:

'Twas the Day Before Zoo Day

by Catherine Ipcizade

This story shares zoo keeper and animal preparations for the upcoming Zoo Day. But things aren't going according to plan . . . The llamas won't quit spitting, the giraffes are drooling, and the zebras aren't happy at all with their stripes. Will Zoo Day go off without a hitch?

Dear Zoo

Rod Campbell

Going to the Zoo

Tom Paxton

I, 2, 3 to the Zoo

Eric Carle

Put Me in the Zoo

Robert Lopshire

Color Zoo

Lois Ehlert

If I Ran the Zoo

Dr. Seuss

If Anything Ever Goes Wrong at the Zoo

Mary Jean Hendrick

Curious George Visits the Zoo

Margret Rey

Peek-a-Zoo

Scholastic, Inc

Goodnight Zoo

Adam Gamble



Fun with the Sun!

SUNNY, SPARKLY PAINTINGS

WHAT YOU NEED:

mixing bowl (an old one)
flour
water
salt
yellow tempura paint
paint brushes
construction paper (any color)

WHAT YOU DO:

1. Mix equal parts of flour, water, and salt.
2. Add the yellow tempura paint and mix well.
3. Have the children paint a sunny scene on their paper, maybe a



sunrise or sunset.

4. When the paint dries the salt will cause the paint to sparkle!

FLOPPY SUN HATS

WHAT YOU NEED:

2 or 3 sheets of newspaper per child
masking tape
scissors
odds and ends for decorating

WHAT YOU DO:

1. Open the sheets of newspaper and stack them on top of each other.
2. One child at a time, place the newspaper over a child's head.
3. Have the child hold the newspaper in place near their chin.

4. Use the masking tape and wrap it several times around the child's head, just above the eyebrows.
5. Remove the newspaper and rip the corners so that it is more rounded.
6. Roll up the edges of the newspaper toward the center of the hat.
7. Have each child decorate their hat using the crafting materials you have provided.
8. Discuss the importance of keeping the sun away from your skin and eyes.
9. Hats are a great way to provide this protection!



Fruit and Vegetable Zoo Animals

Read one of the books about zoo animals listed on page 3 with the children. Be sure the story you select includes giraffes, and then try this simple, but delicious snack.

BANANA GIRAFFES

WHAT YOU NEED:

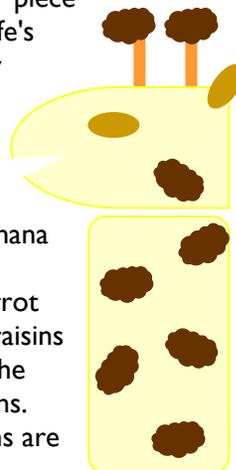
bananas
raisins
one carrot
sunflower seed kernels
knife
small paper plates
non-fat or low-fat vanilla yogurt (optional)

WHAT YOU DO:

1. Peel the banana and cut it in half lengthwise.
2. Cut one of the halves about one inch from the pointed end

to make the head of the giraffe and place it on the paper plate.

3. Cut a small triangular slit on the pointed end of the head banana piece for the mouth.
4. Cut a longer piece for the giraffe's neck and lay it flat side down on the paper plate under the head banana piece.
5. Use thin carrot sticks with raisins on top for the giraffe's horns. (These horns are made up of ossified cartilage. The female's are shorter than the males and have tufts of hair growing on



top of them. This is a simple way of determining the gender of a giraffe!)

6. Use sunflower kernels for the eye and ear.
7. Place raisins along the neck for the giraffe's spots.
8. Enjoy with a glass of milk or 100% fruit juice.

For an additional healthy snack time...

1. Place the remaining banana slices (you may need to cut them into smaller pieces), raisins, and sunflower kernels into small bowls.
2. Drop vanilla yogurt on the top and mix together.
3. Enjoy with a glass of milk or 100% fruit juice and whole wheat crackers.

Self-regulation - Searching for Intentional Practices, part 1

Researchers believe that most children are born with the ability to acquire self regulation skills. Self regulation has many definitions for children: ability to gain control of their body and its functions, ability to manage emotions, ability to focus and pay attention, and ability to control impulses. As early educators know, this is one of the most complex skills to develop and is individual to each child.

The stages of infancy through early childhood have proven to be critical in developing self regulation. Although most children acquire self regulation through positive early experiences, experts suggests that self regulation is a skill that needs guidance or to be taught. With these concepts in mind, what intentional practices can support self regulation?

With a basic understanding of self regulation, early educators can begin to look at each child's overall development to determine what practices may work.

Children need secure, attentive, nurturing, predictable adults. Infants and young children rely on predictable, nurturing care from adults in their lives. This relationship sets the foundation whereby children become aware that their needs are met; therefore they can feel joy, comfort, and low levels of stress.

Intentional practice: Along with meeting basic needs, try singing soothing songs to infants and very young children. Spend snuggle time reading with toddlers and

preschoolers. Incorporate eye contact, conversation, gentle touch, and listening. When you cannot get to a child's need right away, let her know that you hear her and will help her soon. "I hear you calling to me, Josie. I am changing Daria's diaper, but I will come to you when I'm done. Let's sing our a song while we wait."

Children need adults to understand temperament.

Every child has his own unique way of "being." Temperament describes characteristics that are displayed consistently. It is important to understand each child's specific temperament and adjust yourself to that temperament. Some temperaments may be challenging to you. Reflect on your feelings and explore how best to support the child.

Intentional practice: Consider adjusting yourself, the environment, or the experience to best help the child. For example, a very shy, quiet child may not like a lot of attention drawn to them with big "hellos" for the start of the day. Soften your voice and show a warm smile; key into their signals. Parents are a great resource to help you understand their child's temperament and what might help.

Children need adults to know the importance of "self talk."

When you hear young children talking out loud (usually to themselves), this is a good sign that the play or experience is interesting to the child and is not too frustrating. As children

develop, they will use this type of self talk silently in their head. Experts have noticed that children with self-control problems often don't show self talk. This important private speech helps children communicate with themselves, connecting conscious thought (awareness and planning).

Intentional practice: Prompt self talk by asking open-ended and problem solving questions such as, "I need to have the color brown for my painting, but we don't have it. What should I do?" Also, talk out loud about what you are doing: "I'm going to have to stop playing and wash the apples for snack. Then I'll have to cut them. How many apples I will need? One, two, three..."

Searching intentional practices that guide and encourage self regulation adds not only to quality care, but to helping each child learn to take care of herself. As with most development, gaining self regulation skills takes time.

We all need self regulation in being part of a family, community, or society. How wonderful (and powerful) it is that early educators can contribute to a child's development of self regulation by being well attuned to the child, meeting his needs, and planning thoughtful, intentional practices.

Look for Part 2 in the next issue!

Source: Better Kid Care, October 2007, Penn State Cooperative Extension

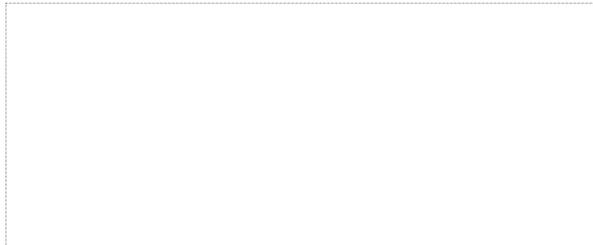




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Brochures Available to Give to Parents



Free informational brochures are available to Placer County providers through our program. We have created easy-to-read brochures on many different topics of interest to parents of 0-5 year olds.

They make a nice display in your parent area and provide parents with valuable knowledge.

Call Paula or visit the Ready to Succeed web pages online to request any or all of the following brochures for parents:

- Reading With Infants
- Tips for Reading to Toddlers
- Reading With Your Preschooler
- Tips for Bedtime Reading
- Early Literacy Stages
- Reading Wordless Books
- Catch a New Book Category
- Kindergarten? Is My Child Ready? Am I?
- Turn Your Television Off And...
- Before Once Upon a Time
- Beyond Happily Ever After
- Healthy Brain Development
- Tall, Talk, Talk With Me!

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