



Literacy through Play for Pre-Kindergarten Students

By Jacquelyn Fizet, 2016 CTI Fellow
David Cox Elementary School

This curriculum unit is recommended for:
Pre-Kindergarten

Keywords: Emergent Literacy Skills, Literacy, Phonological Awareness, Reading, Reading Aloud, Reader's Workshop

Teaching Standards: See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

Synopsis- For this unit students will learn that print carries a message, and how to explore print in all learning domains, in all areas of the classroom. We will be working with the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear*, and bring an inviting literacy component to all areas, math, science, writing, dramatic play, sand and water, small and large group activities. The unit will contain fun and inviting activities that the children will flock to during their center time. By repeated readings of the book through interactive large group activities, and readings the children will be able to retell and sequence the story.

The end result will be that the children will have created a story stick with pictures from the book and will be able to retell the story to family and friends with their story stick. With all these activities and the ability to retell the children will understand that the words in the book they have been studying make up sentences and those sentences make a story. Hopefully with these activities my students will have to confidence to pick up a book and tell the story through pictures and knowledge of the pre readings. Let the fun begin.

I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 18 students in all learning domains in Pre-Kindergarten

I give permission for Charlotte Teachers Institute to publish my curriculum unit in print and online. I understand that I will be credited as the author of my work.

Literacy through Play for Pre-Kindergarten Students

Jacquelyn Fizez

Introduction

Today, children are born into a world full of print. The degree to which literacy is evident in home varies, but almost all children see adults being literate every day, reading books, making lists, writing notes, reading newspapers and magazines, reading directions or recipes, filling out forms and text messaging, reading labels on food packaging and doing countless other tasks that require literacy. In a way, children start becoming literate almost from the day they were born, as they notice elements of the world, which re bound to include literacy.

The ability to read and process information is a necessary part of our educational experience. The teaching of reading and writing to the young child is key for the formation of literacy skills as preschool children get ready for kindergarten and beyond. Literacy is now, more than ever, essential for the basic survival on a day to day basis. It has been proven that children who struggle to read will struggle in all subject areas. This can cause children to have a negative attitude towards reading and school in general.

Early exposure to reading in preschool can greatly increase literacy development and reading comprehension. Literacy scholars argue that reading to preschoolers helps prepare them for greater success in school (Anderson and Cheung, 2003). If a child is not exposed to reading in the preschool years by their parents/primary caregivers, the child will be behind entering elementary school. An early introduction to reading fosters the development of a positive attitude towards reading. When a child comes into elementary school with no prior reading exposure, educational leaders must address the needs of families to ensure the academic success of all students.

Literacy education needs to be equal. Research shows students with pre-reading happening in the home have an educational advantage once they begin elementary school. Studies have been conducted to determine how parental participation directly affects children's literacy. "Understanding the role of home literacy practices in children's language and literacy development during the preschool years has important implications for children's later literacy success" (Roberts, 2005). As a Pre-K teacher, it will be my goal to educate my parents along with my students, by providing quality books to read at home and to host a parent/student literacy night at my school.

Parents, educators, politicians, and community leaders place a high value on learning to read. At the same time, they also express concerns about how poorly children are learning to read. (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998). As we all, know children attempt to

communicate at a very early age, their first cry, their first coo, their first “mama and dada” are all proof that the very young child (baby) are trying to communicate. Research shows that we, as teachers, need to recognize and support what children already know about oral and written language before coming to school. Most children, by the time they come to school, can differentiate between words and pictures. Some children are aware of environmental print and can read the signs embedded in their logos. I teach in a very diverse school and all my children were entered into the program (Bright Beginnings) because there are all academically, socially and language and literacy at risk children.

Rationale

To promote early literacy, teachers and parents need to provide opportunities to:

- Permit and encourage children to build on their existing knowledge or oral and written language.
- Provide a supportive instructional environment where children can build a positive attitude toward themselves and literacy development.
- We, as teachers, need to remember to prepare ourselves as teachers of the very young child to deal with and respect the differences in languages and cultural backgrounds. At my school, in my current classroom, I have at least 4 different cultures represented and that is not taking into consideration religious beliefs.
- Teachers need to ensure that children have access to quality and age appropriate books. There are a lot of books that are made for young children but this doesn't mean all books for your readers are appropriate. We need to be sure to look through, read and analyze the contents to be sure the book is age appropriate.
- Lastly, we need to design a classroom setting for young children that is rich with literacy materials for reading as well as writing. Young children will begin to write and tell you what it says even at the very young age with scribbles. As I begin to teach the unit, I am sure I will see all the developing stages of writing from exploration to developing.

I believe that at a very young age children learn best through play. Since I am an at-risk program, I decided to research how play intervention affects the vocabulary learning of at risk preschoolers. In searching for research studies to support my theory that children learn best through play, I found the research conducted by Han, Moore, Vukelich, and Bell, along with the research from the “Foundation for Child Development” to be the most informative and best support my ideas of learning through play. I am creating this unit because I feel play is the basis for so much of the learning that prekindergartners do. There are three essential contexts for play, (1) cognitive-exploring, asking questions, and thinking. (2) emotional-expressing feelings within the social context and (3) creative-putting together new learning. Through play, children can be responsible for their own learning and they can use language not just to acquire knowledge, but also to demonstrate their knowledge.

Schools/Student Demographics

David Cox Road Elementary School is a Pre-Kindergarten through 5th grade school serving 722 students. David Cox, located near the University of North Carolina in Charlotte, opened its doors in 1994. David Cox is a Title I School.

At David Cox, students engage in Literacy, Math, Social Studies, and Science instruction daily. Literacy at David Cox follows the balanced literacy model. Teachers engage their students in multiple components of the balanced literacy model. This year, staff members will continue to engage in professional development in literacy.

This year, teachers continue to be fully engaged in the Data Driven Instruction (DDI) process. Pre-Kindergarten teachers use 'Teaching Strategies Gold' assessment system to assess all children in all learning domains. Teachers gather once a week during planning to assess children's progress and develop strategies to help them succeed. The Pre-K program is run by Bright Beginnings, which serves "at risk" children.

Unit Goals

A major goal of our society's educational system is for children to become literate. Although agreements exist regarding the importance of literacy, controversy surrounds the timing of literacy instruction and methods used to teach literacy skills. While most reading curricula involve formal instruction, I feel that informal instruction is more developmentally appropriate for four-year-olds. The early childhood literacy curriculum for a four-year-old should use a collaborative learning process that actively involves children to demonstrate their understanding of how words and images communicate meaning.

The following goals will serve as the basis of my developmentally appropriate literacy unit. I will encourage an awareness of how reading and writing are useful, attempt to develop listening comprehension skills, develop my student's concept knowledge, develop their oral language skills, and explore the process of communicating through written language. Using curriculum that is more collaborative in the learning process will help achieve these goals. These basis goals will help enable them to get things done, take charge of their lives, to express opinions and feelings, to experience emotions, and to function as productive citizens. My goals for them will include, children will;

- Demonstrate their understanding that words are sounds and that letters are symbols.
- Demonstrate the ability to assign appropriate labels to objects and people in their environment.

- Demonstrate the ability to use writing implements to form the symbols needed for pre-writing, pre-literacy and literacy skills.

In the areas of reading goals

- Know that the alphabet letters are a special category of visual graphics and have individual names.
- Recognize when there is print in the environment.
- Know that print is read in stories.
- Be aware of some sequence of events in stories.
- Connect information and events in stories to life experiences.
- Demonstrate understanding of literal meaning of stories through questions and comments.
- Identify by name at least 10 letters of the alphabet.
- Identify 8 colors.

Speech and Language Goals

- Pay attention to separate and repeating sounds in language (i.e. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?*)
- Begin rhyming sounds
- Name familiar animal
- Repeat four digits' when given slowly.
- Repeat words of four syllables.
- Demonstrate understanding of spatial awareness through prepositions, such as over and under.
- Often indulge in make believe.
- Use extensive language while carrying out activities.
- Readily follow simple commands even when the object of the command is out of sight.
- Ask questions constantly.
- Recognize gender different pronouns.
- Comprehend complex and compound sentences.
- Follow two step directions containing before and after.
- Talk in 4 and 5 word sentences.
- Speak intelligibly 90-100% of the time. Still may have some trouble with sentence structure.
- Carry on long conversations with adults, moderate conversations with peers.
- Use the pronoun "we".
- Count 10 objects independently.

These are some hefty goals but I believe all are attainable. I am going to need to be well equipped with a variety of different literacy interventions to have the most beneficial learning experiences for all my students.

Being innovated and flexible to new ideas can bring new attitudes and a new interest to even the most reluctant students.

Content Research

Research dating back to 2003 explains and proves the reason “play based teaching” is an essential component of early literacy achievement (Roskos). Research has proven that children who enter school with poor vocabularies often experience difficulties in learning to read. Sadly, many of my students at age 4 have only 2 word sentences when 5 to 6 word is age appropriate. Children may differ by several thousand basic word meanings by the time they enter school, when children begin school with such large differences in vocabulary, the gap usually never closes, in fact it may even widen. I believe it’s important as a Pre-K teacher to do all I can to narrow that gap before the child enters kindergarten.

Prekindergarten plays a very important role in supporting language growth and development. Talking is the way prekindergartners process all the new information they are gathering as they use their senses (look, hear, feel, touch and taste). Language is the most important tool for interrupting and explaining the information they pick up as they explore and learn. Quality talking and listening support memory and enhance listening. The kinds of talk children engage in as they play foster risk taking, support and demonstrate comprehension and strengthen community. Resnick and Snow (2008) describe four kinds of talk, these forms being narrative, explaining and seeking information, oral performance, and giving and understanding directions. These are all essential elements in knowing how to read and write.

Per the National Association for the education of Young Children (NAEYC), of which I am a proud member, *any* instruction of young children ought to consider the child’s age and their developmental progress. NAEYC & NAECS/SDE (National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education). 2002. NAEYC recognizes that play is a central component of developmentally appropriate practice and a vehicle for developing language, cognition, and social competence. So, all the research on play has the potential to provide guidance for early vocabulary instruction. Sadly, there is strong evidence that time for play has been dramatically reduced in present day early childhood classrooms (Zigler and Bishop), which contradicts much of what research has told us about what is beneficial to children. Howes and Wishard report that pretend play among 4-year-olds has dropped dramatically in recent years. However, in early childhood classrooms, academic learning and play are not mutually exclusive. NAEYC’s recent statement cautions educators, “Rather than

diminishing children's learning by reducing the time devoted to academic activities, play promotes key abilities that enable to learn successfully (NAEYC 2010). I am personally such a strong believer in this idea of play based learning. I have been teaching 30 years, I have taught both sides of the spectrum, and my students and I learn more and at a faster rate through play because it is so much more engaging.

Research shows that an overwhelming number of children in the United States are not academically ready to begin kindergarten, which is very true with my current class of at risk children. Education reform during the past two decades, advocates that a crucial step in preparing all children to be "school ready" is to create programs to ensure it. Dogget and Wat reported on data presented by different states in the U.S. that began prekindergarten state mandated programs and their effectiveness. Through their research they found that 30% of low-income children are unfamiliar with print until kindergarten. They also found that 17% of children from middle-income families and 8% of children who had a parent with a bachelor's degree or higher could not recognize print. Research from Coley suggest that about 60% of low-income children do not even know the alphabet prior to kindergarten and that more than one third of middle income children are at the same level. A conclusion of this study stated that communication and comprehension skills of a child both directly and indirectly effect their transition to literacy. This conclusion further went to show how more interactive classrooms closed the gaps in regards to literacy development of underachieving students. These statistics show that all Pre-K classrooms are beneficial to ensuring that students are "school ready". The result of this research drives my passion to develop effect play based teaching methods to improve this deficit with young children. The classroom has the greatest capacity, second only to the home and family of a child, to provide quality educational experiences and interactions to support and strengthen literacy development. Since low socioeconomic schools have most struggling students, creating an atmosphere that will increase students' literacy acquisition and development is of utmost importance. A child's literacy abilities directly affect how they learn in the classroom upon entering formal education (Roskos, Christie and Rigels, 1-3). Since I am a child's first experience with formal education I need to have methods in place that will be engaging and inviting to my 4-year-olds. If not, I will miss the opportunity to make a difference in their school lives. All the research I have presented so far points to the importance of early intervention and the success of play based curriculum.

The growing research on literacy development in young children is rapidly becoming a body of knowledge that can serve as the basis for the everyday practice of early literacy education (IRA & NAEYC). The knowledge base outlines children's developmental patterns in critical areas and print awareness. It serves as a resource for designing early literacy programs, such as Head Start and Bright Beginnings, and specific instructional practices. It offers reliable and valid observational approaches to early reading assessment. So now we must consider what young children should be learning and doing before they enter kindergarten: What early literacy instruction should children

receive, what should it emphasize and how should it be taught. With the imagery of Pips remark from “Great Expectations” in mind, teachers need to strive to show that a well-considered early literacy instruction is certainly not a “bramble bush” for my young students, but rather a welcoming environment in which to learn to read and write.

Parents have discovered that children even younger than one-year-old can respond to stories read to them. They buy plastic books that can survive the bath or spilled juice and read them over and over. Cuddle up on a lap, very young children can pat the pictures and make noises imitating the parents reading. A three-year-old can “read” a book by looking at the pictures. A 4-year-old can produce an appropriate retelling that matches each page, using much of the language of the story and repeating dialogue with expression. An example would be “The Three Little Pigs”, when they say “Not by the hair of my chinny-chin-chin). We call this “talking like a book” (Clay 1991). Responding to a story such as this does not involve attention to print, the child is cued by the pictures and is enjoying the patterns of the story as well as the close personal relationship with family and in my case teacher. They are also internalizing early behaviors related to reading and they have done so because they have had many story reading experiences. Some families do not have a tradition of reading stories, but every child has the ability to respond to language in pictures and books. When a child enters a Pre-K classroom you can quickly instill a love of reading stories by carefully by selecting books and making them accessible to everyone by reading them aloud. As children become more experienced with extended texts like stories, they acquire the most important foundation for reading-language. Language encompasses the structure, the vocabulary, and the meaning of oral and written texts. In my unit, I will be introducing two fun texts that I am hoping the children will enjoy and presenting the stories with fiction and nonfiction text and them pulling them together on the 5th day. Both books will be easy to understand and are presented with an easy flow that children will be able to follow and retell with ease. These kinds of books give young children the confidence to believe they can read themselves and others including their classroom peers.

Play Based Research in Pre-K

Play based learning is a term that embraces two approaches simultaneously. One is that children are given ample time to carry their own ideas into play, with assistance from teachers as needed. The other is that their knowledge of the world has been enriched through appropriate content offered in interesting and experiential ways by the teacher (me). This can include reading books, storytelling, puppetry, music and the arts, as well as encouraging hands on activities and exploration of nature. The children’s own play and content offered by myself one another. Play is the basis for so much of the learning that pre-kindergarteners do. There are 3 essential contexts for play; (1.) cognitive-exploring and asking questions and thinking, (2.) emotional-expressing feelings within the social context, and (3.) creative- putting together new learning. Through play children can be

responsible for their own learning and they can use their language not just to know but to show they know something.

Lev S. Vygotsky presented insights as early as 1978 on play that suggested a new role for adults in child's play. Vygotsky believed that children develop an understanding of the world through play and that adults could encourage this development by appropriate intervention. He viewed play as a means for socially assisted learning and scaffolding. In scaffolding, the adult assists the child to perform at a higher level than would be possible without adult support. When the child can perform alone, the adult gradually withdraws and lets the child act independently. This kind of adult intervention helps children expand their learning and knowledge during play. Makes sense, doesn't it? Adult scaffolding during play encourages children to learn self-regulation, cooperation, memory, language use and literacy development.

Play has been likened to the inquiry-based approach of a scientist because both engage in "what if" thinking. The child is continually trying out new possibilities and learns as much from failure and mistakes as from positive outcomes. It is the process that is of great importance to the child rather than the outcome. Creativity, curiosity, play, and problem-solving are all intertwined in early childhood. Social negotiation is also frequently part of the mix. It starts with "Let's play this way" and "No let's do it my way" and the conversations begin. That's the "ah ha" moments. Usually by age 4 children have become adept in their use of language in play and their ability to negotiate socially. This holds true for children from all socioeconomic backgrounds.

Children from all backgrounds enter preschool with poor play skills. One reason is that they have too many hours of screen time during the day which they view other people's creativity rather than developing their own. Modern toys are often related to film or television shows and come with a clear story line, making it difficult for children to create their own stories. It is helpful for children to engage with open ended play materials. Almost anything becomes a good toy in the hands of a playful child, blocks and other building materials, ropes, cloths, household items, and simple dress-ups are used in new ways every day.

The relationship between play and literacy has been studied greatly. Researchers found that play is an ideal way to support children's emergent literacy and that play enhances children's narrative abilities by scaffolding to more narrative production. Researchers reported that preschoolers use complex mental state verbs such as, say, talk, tell, write and explain when they are engaged in make believe play. I find that to hold true especially in block and dramatic play especially when I introduce new themes into those areas. Dickenson and Moreton (1990) reported that 4-year olds' talking more in pretend play was associated positively with the size of their vocabularies when they began kindergarten two years later. The advanced language capabilities that emerge in play offer not only a window into a child's growing competencies but also a link to their

literacy. Adults should assume a variety of roles when interacting with children such as onlooker, co-player, or sometimes play leader. When the adults draw children's attention to literacy in play, the children's ability to recognize literacy is enhanced. This kind of play is a blend of play and academic learning. This is the type of play I will be using in my classroom. So today a variety of terms are used to refer to the preschool phase of literacy development, emergent literacy, emergent reading, emergent writing, early reading, and symbolic tools. The term early literacy has been adopted as the most comprehensive yet concise description of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that precede learning to read and write (Myae, Moore, Vukelich, Buell). In the earliest phases of literacy development, forming reading and writing concepts and skills is a dynamic process.

The way we present and teach these skills to young child can be life changing. We need to make it exciting, engaging and most of all fun for a four-year-old.

Instructional Implementation

Teaching Strategies

Effective early literacy instruction provides preschool children with developmentally appropriate settings, materials, experiences, and social support that encourages early forms of reading and writing that develop into conventional literacy. With my students, I will be using rich teacher talk. I will engage children in rich conversations in large group, small group, and one-to-one settings. When talking with my students I will use rare words, words that they are unlikely to hear in everyday conversations. I will be extending children's comments into more descriptive mature statements. I will present the children with topics that are not immediately present, that involve knowledge about the world. For example, in the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?* by Eric Carle, I will expand upon their knowledge to present that not all bears are brown. I will also listen to and respond to what my students have to say. During story book reading, I will be reading aloud to my students once or twice a day, exposing students to numerous enjoyable stories, poems and informational books. I will encourage supportive conversations and activities before, during, and after readings. Repeated reading of favorite book builds familiarity, increasing the likelihood that children will attempt to read those books on their own.

These activities will include playing games, reading stories and poems, and listening to songs that involve basic sound devices. These devices include rhyme to help identify words that end with the same sound, alliteration to help recognize when several words begin with the same sound, and sound matching to help distinguish which of several words begin with the same sound. Alphabet activities will engage children with materials that will promote identification of the letters of the alphabet which will include alphabet books, puzzles, magnetic letters, and alphabet blocks. I will use direct

instruction to teach letter names that have personal meaning to children. Example sitting with Mia and Melanie, presenting the letter M and “Your names begin the same way, the letter M. “What’s the name of the letter?” “That’s right they both start with M”. I will support the emergent reader, by encouraging them to attempt to read books and other types of print by providing, a well-designed library center, repeated readings of favorite books, functional print related to class activities (such as a daily schedule), along with play related print such as signs, menus, employee name tags in a restaurant center which could be incorporated in the dramatic center. Support for emergent writing will be accomplished by encouraging children to use emergent forms of writing, such as scribble writing, random letter strings, and invented spelling.

I will be providing my students with a writing center with pens, pencils, markers, paper and book making materials. I will be showing shared writing demonstrations in which teacher write down text dictated by children. All centers will be stocked with play related writing materials, pencils and clipboards in the science center, notepads for taking orders in the restaurant in the dramatic play area are just a few suggestions. During shared book experience, read big books and other enlarged texts to children, and point to print as it is read. While introducing and reading the text, draw children’s attention to basic concepts of print such as, the distinction between pictures and print, left to right, top to bottom sequence, and book concepts like the title page, cover and spine. Read favorite stories repeatedly, and encourage children to read along on the parts of the story they remember. Lastly, I will be using integrated, content-focused activities to provide children opportunities for children to investigate topics that are of interest to them. The object is for the children to use oral language, reading, and writing to learn about the world. Once the topic has been chosen and topic related books are chosen the children will listen to the teacher read the books and then look at the books on their own. The children can then gather data using observation, experiments and interviews. They will be able to use emergent writing to record information and observations. My students will be able to engage in dramatic play to consolidate and express what they have learned. Because of such projects, children’s language and literacy skills are advanced, and they gain valuable background knowledge.

Unit Lessons- Opening a World of Color

The book for lesson one and lesson two activities will be *Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?* by Eric Carle. Four-year-old children need lessons that last between 5 to 10 minutes that are hands on, inviting and will encourage them to expand their vocabulary. Besides my main literacy lesson, I will be including small group activities and center ideas that include play based literacy experiences that are inviting to children. A flannel board and sequencing cards will be needed, (Making Teaching Fun.com) has the cards that can be copied in color or black and white. I will also be using companion stories which will be listed as they are used.

Day 1

Large group Literacy

This lesson will address language, cognitive and socialization domains of learning.

Introduce the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?* to the students, point out the front of the book showing the front of the bear and the back of the book showing the back of the bear, pointing out that like the brown bear a book has front and back. Introduce the cards to the children before reading the story. Give each child a card, you may need multiples depending on class size, tell the children they will be helping you read the story with their card. Show the children the first page of the story and ask “What do you think will happen first?” Encourage the child/children with the first picture to match his/her picture to the picture in the book by coming to the front and putting on the flannel board. Ask the child to say the name of the picture. If the child is unable to name the picture, offer them a choice such as “Is it a cat or a dog?”, and have him/her repeat the correct answer. Continue to the next page of the story, repeating the process for each picture in the sequence of the story, continuing to build the story with the pictures on the flannel board.

A suggestion to expand learning for children who are having difficulty identifying objects, is to send a set of cards home for the parents to use with their child. Children can use the cards to retell the story to classmates, or have the cards out for the children to put in sequence on the flannel board independently. These cards can also be used for transition activities.

Small Group Activities- these work best with 4-6 students. Domains-Language, cognitive and socialization

Animal Match

Brown Bear, Brown Bear book and sequencing cards.
You will need to reproduce two sets of each sequencing cards. You should choose the most familiar cards to use as a set, use 5 or less cards for children who have a limited vocabulary. After the children have been consistently successful matching the cards add another card to the set. Display one set of cards on the table. Have a child pick a card from the second set and match it to the correct card on the table. As the child matches the cards, encourage him/her to name the color and the object (red bird). For a child with a limited vocabulary, say the two-word phrase and have him/her repeat the phrase. Model turn taking with the children, practice using social language such as “my turn” and “your turn”.

Suggestions

As the children get better with the matching game, play the memory game as a next step, laying two sets of cards face down on the table and have the children turn the card face up one at a time to see if they get a match. If they get match and are able name the color and the object, they keep the cards. If the cards do not match they are returned to the table. Rotate cards from day to day for variety.

Brown Bear Colors

You will need paper plates, food coloring (Whole Foods Market offers natural food coloring), Karo syrup, and mirrors. Place a dot of Karo syrup on each plate, while pointing to the food coloring bottles ask the child, "What color do you want?", prompt answers if needed. If a child points to a color be sure to prompt the answer and have the child say "I want red." Once the child has chosen the color have him/her swirl the color and the syrup together and then taste it. Ask the child "How does it taste?" prompting the child to say it tastes.... sweet, good, or yummy. Give the child the mirror so that he/she can see the color on their tongue. Continue in this manner until all the children have had a turn.

Center Activities

To continue the theme of the book, make center activities to match. Some possible centers may be art, dramatic play, math, sand and water table.

Art Center: You can have the child draw his/her favorite animal for the story and then write the name of the color and animal beneath the picture. Be ready to accept early invented writing and assisting those who are at the letter making level if they ask how to spell a word.

Dramatic Play: Add story puppets or use the drawings the children did and add sticks for puppets. Encourage the children to reenact the story using puppets. Add paper and pencils to make theatre tickets to sell, also a cash register for collecting money. In the math center make a file folder game for bear matching i.e.; two red bears, two blue bears, purple bears and so on. Also, to teach color words you can make a color clip game. This can be found on the web site "Making Learning Fun" where they have a color game with paly dough lids, you match the proper clip to the matching word color. See teaching aides at the end of this paper.

Sand and Water Table: Make and laminate fish in different colors, add a magnet paper clip to the fish, using a magnet, hot glued to a piece of yarn on one end and tied to the stick on the other end, have the children fish for colors, when they catch one have them name the color. I got paint sticks from Home Depot and used those for my fishing poles.

Music and Rhymes: These are always a fun activity, here's a rhyme I will be using, it's catchy and simple.

Sung to-Head shoulders, knees and toes

Red, yellow, green, and blue, green and blue

Red, yellow, green, and blue, green and blue

Purple, orange, brown and black

Red, yellow, green, and blue, green and blue

Day II

Large Group Literacy

Reintroduce the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?* to the students by using an anticipation guide. I will show the children the front of the book, then using sentence strips mounted on the white board, I will ask them four or five questions that are written the sentence strips. As I read the question I will point to each word, some of the sentences will be correct others will be incorrect to get them thinking about the story. When I write the sentences, I add pictures to make it more interesting. Examples of questions would be: "Is this book about a brown bear?" "Was the fish green?" Did the teacher say, "I see children looking at me?" "Was the horse in the story is purple?"

As I ask each question I put a tally in either the yes or no column according to each child's answers. After questions, have been asked and tallied, I reread the book for children to assess their understanding. This is a fun activity that the children enjoy.

Small Groups- works best with 4-6 children

Sorting Animals

First start out by choosing one animal from the story, I start with the dog. When the children have identified the animal as a dog, present another dog of a different type, color or size; there can be several different types of dogs. I use my farm counting manipulatives from Lakeshore for sorting, you could also use Google images if you don't have manipulatives. Discuss that the new dog(s) may not look exactly like the first dog, they may look different but they are all dogs. When you have compared all the different dogs, introduce a different animal (i.e. cat). Repeat the same procedure for the cat. Afterward, place two baskets side by side on the table, with a picture label of a dog on one basket and a picture label of a cat on the other basket. When the children are familiar with both the cats and the dogs, mix them together. Have the children take turns picking one animal and deciding if it's a cat or a dog, and instruct them to place it in the correct basket. Add another animal and another basket after the children have mastered the previous ones.

Searching for colors

Copy the bear pattern (see teaching aides) and place one bear of each color in a basket. You will hold up a bear and name the color, having the children repeat the name of the color as each color is introduced. Then you should tell the children that they will pick a bear, tell what color the bear is, and then go out into the classroom and find a toy that is the same color. Once a child has found an object that is the same color have him/her bring the object back to the table. Ask the child to name the object and tell what color it is, prompt the answer if needed. Have the children attempt to form a sentence with the color and the object such as, "The Lego block is red like the bear," and model when necessary. Return the bear to the basket and continue in the same manner until all the children have had at least one turn.

Today's center ideas

Art Center: You can have the child make the sparkle fish from the story, provide a simple fish patterns (see teacher aides), paint brushes, orange paint and gold glitter in a shaker bottle. Demonstrate how to use the paint to paint their fish and then how to shake the bottle to make the glitter come out. When they are finished encourage the children to name their fish and write the name beneath the picture. Be ready to accept early invented writing and assisting those who are at the letter making level if they ask how to spell a word.

Dramatic Play: Add story puppets or use the drawings the children did and add sticks for puppets. Encourage the children to reenact the story using puppets. Add paper and pencils to make theatre tickets to sell as well as a cash register for collecting money.

Math Center: Make a file folder game for bear matching i.e.; two red bears, two blue bears, purple bears and so on. Also, to reach color words you can make a color clip game which can be found on the "Making Learning Fun" website. They have a color game with play dough lids, and you match the proper clip to the matching word color. See teaching aides at the end of this paper.

Sand and Water Table: Repeat the fish in different colors game, have the children fish for colors, when they catch one have them name the color. Music and rhymes are always a fun activity, here's a rhyme I will be using, it's catchy and simple, and the children will get better responding with repetition.

Sung to-Head shoulders, knees and toes

Red, yellow, green, and blue, green and blue

Red, yellow, green, and blue, green and blue

Purple, orange, brown and black

Red, yellow, green, and blue, green and blue

Day III

Large Group Literacy

Companion story

I See Colors by Rozanne Lanczak Williams-this lesson will address language, cognitive and socialization domains of learning.

Introduce this week's companion story, *I See Colors* by Rozanne Lanczak Williams. Take a picture walk, asking students to state what color they see. Call on students to also orally share, in a complete sentence, an object that they see. For example, "I see a red jump rope." For students who are unsure what to say and how to say it you can first model the action and following sentence, or have them point to the object they see, say the words for them and have them repeat what you said. Return to the front cover and read the story all the way through with the students. Brainstorm additional things that are red and items that are blue (i.e. red - apple, tomato, stop sign, etc.). Adding pictures for hints are fun and helpful when they are just beginning, once they get going the lists can become long. As they are naming the items once back in the classroom, write their objects on the board so that they begin to associate the spoken word with the letters needed for the word. After the story and during center time leave the word lists on the white board along with magnet letters for them to match and make words.

Small Groups- works best with 4-6 children.

Bears Positional Words- Language, fine motor, cognitive and socialization.

Teacher will demonstrate positional words by placing the animals in the front, behind, beside and over the bear. You need to make sure to say the positional word as the object is placed. You will need a stuffed bear and plastic animals in the story, I used the same animals I used with the sorting activity. Use positional words to instruct the child where animals should be placed (put the red bird beside the brown bear). Have the children take turns placing the animals in the appropriate position. Encourage the children to use position words expressively to tell where his/her animal is by asking "Where is the red bird?" Start out with using one positional word and a few animals, add additional positional concepts and animals when children have mastered the first positional concept. As a lesson extended use positional words to place children around the teacher.

Story Sticks-Language, cognitive and fine motor

You will need to gather one flat stick for each child in your class, I went to Home Depot and got paint stirrers, they work well. Next gather small dishes of paint I used the colors of the animals and paint brushes. You will want to cover the table as students get

to use the colors to paint their story sticks any way they want to. As they are painting have them tell you the colors they are using and why they chose those colors. This is a messy project and will need to dry over night to be used in a small group activity on day four.

Center activities

Art Center: You can have the child make the black sheep, black and brown are two colors that children struggle with at a young age. To make the sheep pattern you can either free draw it for them or go to Making Learning Fun.com and use their pattern. You will need black construction and white chalk, trace one sheep pattern on black construction paper for each child. Next make swirling marks on the sheep, ask the children, “What color is the sheep?” “What color is the chalk?” Since they already have the sheep when you go into music you can teach the rhyme “Baa, Baa, Black Sheep” as the children play with their sheep. To go along with the companion story, you can add a color sorting game and include real pictures of food and things they can see in their everyday life, see example in teacher aides. In the sand and water table use colored rice and laminated pictures of the animals, teacher and children from the story. Hide the pictures in the colored rice and have the children name the picture they find as they sift through the rice. This is a great sensory and language activity. Science center can have squeeze the bag in it. Place shaving cream and food coloring in a clear plastic cup. Prepare ahead of time cups containing blue, yellow and red mixtures of shaving cream. Have students place two different spoonful of colored shaving cream into a zip lock bag, seal them and let children squeeze the bag to mix. After they are done ask them to name the new color they made. In the writing center provide them with colored Wikki Stix (you can get them at any craft store) and their own name card and have them try bend the Wikki Stix into their name.

Day IV

Large Group Literacy Lesson

In advance, print out the *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* sequence cards in a smaller version (found at Making Learning Fun.com), cut the pictures out and have them laminated. You can use clear contact paper if you do not have access to a laminator. Amazon also has good prices on a personal laminator and often put their laminating sleeves on sale. Put one side of self-stick Velcro strip on the story sticks made in yesterday’s small groups, and Velcro squares on each story piece. You will need a complete set of story pieces for each child. Tell the children that today they are going to get to tell the story along with you, explain when they hear the name of the animal they will find that animal and put it on their sticks. You may need to take this a bit slower the first time to make sure the children are locating the animals needed. I put all mine in a small plastic lunch bag with the child’s name on it. After the first read encourage the

children to take turns with a “turn and talk” and with their story stick tell their friend the story. This is a great activity for them to take home to keep and share with their families.

Small Group Activities- Best done with 4-6 children.

Big and Little

Gather pairs of objects from the story one big and one little. You will need one big box to hold large objects and one little box to hold small objects. And of course, the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?* by Eric Carle. Teacher models putting the big objects in the big box and the small objects in the small box, and identifies the objects as big or small, encouraging the children to repeat big and small. It's kind of fun when you do this activity with an exaggerated big voice and little voice and even use hand motions to reinforce objects. Now have children take turns identifying big and little objects using one pair of objects (ducks) at a time. Ask the child to find the big duck (receptive language), and questions such as “Is the duck big or little?” (Expressive language) Then ask the child to follow your two-step direction, “Find the big duck and put it in the big box.” Ask another to do the same thing with the little duck and the little box. Continue to bring out pairs of objects and follow the procedure stated above to help the children identify/sort the objects as big and little. If time permits, after the activity have each child find an object in the room that is big and little and bring it back to the table.

Which color is missing?

Draw several different rainbows on small pieces of paper. Each one, exclude a color that should be in the rainbow. So, the first exclude red, second orange... etc. Then make a rainbow that has all the colors. Show the children the rainbow with all the colors on it. Ask what colors they see, then show each card to the children and ask them if they can guess what color is missing. For variation, put the colors in the wrong order. See if the children can see which color is not in the right place, this would be a lesson extender and used with the next level of this game. Make sure to encourage to use complete sentences when naming the missing color of the rainbow.

Center Activities

Continue with the animal search and name in the sand table.

Dramatic Play: This has changed into a paint shop, complete with paint cans, brushes, aprons, paint chip samples, and cash register all donated by the Home Depot. I have also placed clip boards, paper and color words with pencils and markers to encourage early invented writing.

Writing Center: Continue to provide them with colored Wikki Stix and their own name card and have them try bend the Wikki Stix into their name. Today I have also added color words written on sentence strips. In the art center copy a picture of the horse, glue, and purple tissue paper. Instruct the children to tear the paper into squares and then glue them on to their horse. When the project is finished ask them to tell you if they had a horse what color it would be and what they would name their horse.

Science Center: mixing colored water [Click here to see an image of this project.](#) The necessary materials are water, food coloring, plastic eyedroppers or pipettes, white plastic egg cartons. Fill three of the spaced in your egg carton with water. Add a couple of drops of red to one, yellow to another and green to the last. Show the children how to use the eyedropper or the pipette to move the water from one spot to another. Let them experiment with mixing the colors. When they have mixed colors let them paint with the water color mixture and ask them what the name of the colors are.

Color Song: This song is sung to the tune of “Mary’s Wearing a Red Dress”, Suzie is wearing red today, red today, red today. Suzie is wearing red today all day long. Substitute Suzie with a name of the child in your class, and red for the color that child is wearing. Repeat the song twice and let the child dance during the song. Have the other children sing and clap along.

Day V

End of Unit Celebration

Large Group Literacy

At the end of a fun unit I like to involve either the parents or our 3rd grade buddy class. This will work better if you can get mom, dad, grandma, grandpa, aunt, uncle or a special adult to come into the classroom to spend time with their child. This celebration can take up to 1 and ½ hours to complete if you do the large group activity and the 5 centers that will be run by adults. You will need white bulletin board paper, markers, pencils and tempera paint in the colors represented in *Brown Bear, Brown Bear*. The adults, or buddy class will have their child/student lay down on the white paper and they will trace their body. After the tracing is done have the student draw facial features like his/her own on the head of the tracing. Next you will need shallow bowls of the paint and ask the child what color he/she would like to paint their body, then the two work together to paint the child’s body on the white paper. Hang the student’s body pictures in the hallway to dry. Now you will split the class into five equal groups to go to the parent/buddy directed centers. You will be coming back to these after groups to tell a story.

All the following centers should be parent/buddy lead, you will need to explain the centers to the parents beforehand. Remind the leaders of the activity to encourage good conversations between them and between the children as well.

Parent/Buddy Run Centers

Balloon Prints

In a pie tin, place 3 to 5 teaspoon sized portions of different colored tempera paint evenly spaced about the area. Inflate a small balloon to a size which will easily fit in the palm of the child's hand. Show the child how to "dip" the balloon in the paint and press firmly onto a piece of paper. Let the child mix the colors, or use one color at a time. This is messy, but the results are wonderful.

Pastel Noodle Necklaces

Supply the children with dyed pasta noodles and yarn. Have the children thread the noodles onto the yarn to make a necklace. This works best if you dip one end of the yarn in glue and let dry overnight before using.

Milky Rainbows

Provide every child with a shallow container of milk. Place a couple drops of different food coloring in the milk. Next have the child dip a toothpick into a little dish soap and then dip it into the milk. What happens? Try it again!

Fruit Salad

You will need many different colored fruits. Examples are oranges, grapes (cut in quarters without seeds) apples, blueberries, strawberries, kiwi, cantaloupe, muskmelon, raspberries, and watermelon. Wash fruit, and cut into safe bite size pieces before serving. Serve each fruit in an individual bowl with its own serving utensil. Allow the children to choose which fruits they would like. **BE AWARE OF ANY ALLERGIES** in your class. Have the center leader encourage the children to name the fruits as they are adding them to the fruit salad, and to ask what their favorite fruit and least favorite is.

What's Under the Rainbow?

Find a very colorful sock. Place something in the sock, like a block, or a toy. Let the child feel the object and try to guess what it is. When they guess make sure they are naming the objects and the colors in the object, encouraging them to use sentences.

After the centers are complete take the class into the hallway and start the story by the teacher going first. Start with the name of the first child's body picture hanging and say, "Children, children what do I see? I see (insert student's name) looking at me." Then have said student say "Teacher, teacher, what do I see?" and he/she says, "I see (the next

child in the line of paintings) looking at me.” Then, that child would go on to name the child next to his/her painting and on down the line until all have had a turn to respond. You will probably want to repeat this activity more than once because as they do it the pace and timing will pick up and it will become more fun.

As a final wrap up to this wonderful celebration have the children do a reader’s theatre of the book. Select a child to read the book as the rest of the class acts out the story. I send home notes before the celebration and ask parents if possible have the children wear the color of their animal (i.e. red, blue, green etc.), and then the day of their play we provide headbands for them to wear made from sentence and color copies of each animal. Color copies are available on making learning fun.com, they also have copies of the children and the teacher. Depending on class size you may need multiples of each animal. The children love doing this and are very proud to share it with family and friends.

Assessments

For this unit, you can you a simple assessment chart with the targeted skills across the top and children’s names down the side. Your target goals should align with your teaching standards and unit goals. I have enclosed an example in the teacher’s aide’s appendix. In my preschool classroom, I am required to do ongoing assessments with Teaching Strategies GOLD which is an authentic, ongoing observational system for assessing children from birth through kindergarten. It helps teachers to observe children in the context of everyday experiences, which is an effective way to learn what they know and can do. Teach Strategies GOLD is based on 38 objectives for development and learning that include predictors of school success and are based on school readiness standards.

The objectives are aligned with the Common Core Standards, state early learning guidelines, and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. These objectives are at the heart of the system; teachers use them to focus their observations as they gather information to make classroom decisions. An ongoing assessment is happening during regular, everyday activities. It’s implemented on a continuous basis throughout the year, helps teachers meet children where they are, helps children meet challenging and achievable learning goals and give a broader more meaningful picture of development.

|

Appendix 1: Teaching Standards

Our teaching standards come from North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development. All the standards I have chosen will directly relate to my unit content, as well as being measurable and will be ongoing. Besides language and literacy goals, I have chosen, math, science, the arts, social/emotional and fine motor goals. I have incorporated language into all my activities to demonstrate the children can use language every day, every way.

APL-1 Children show curiosity and express interest in the world around them.

APL-5 Children are willing to try new and challenging experiences.

APL-8 Children maintain attentiveness and focus.

ESD-1 Children demonstrate a positive sense of self identity and self-awareness.

ESD-4 Children form relationships and interact positively with other children.

LDC-1 TO 5 Children understand conversations with others. Children participate in conversations with peers and adults in one on one, small group, and larger group interactions. Children ask and answer questions in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood. Children speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly. Children describe familiar people, places, things and events. Children use most grammatical constructions of their home language well. Children respond to and use a growing vocabulary.

LDC-8 Children develop interest in books and motivation to read.

CD-8 Children develop phonological awareness.

CD-12 Children develop knowledge of the alphabet and the alphabet principal.

DC-13 Children use writing and other symbols to record information and communicate for a variety of purposes.

LDC-14 Children use knowledge of letters in their attempt to write.

CD-2 Children recall information and use it for new situations and problems.

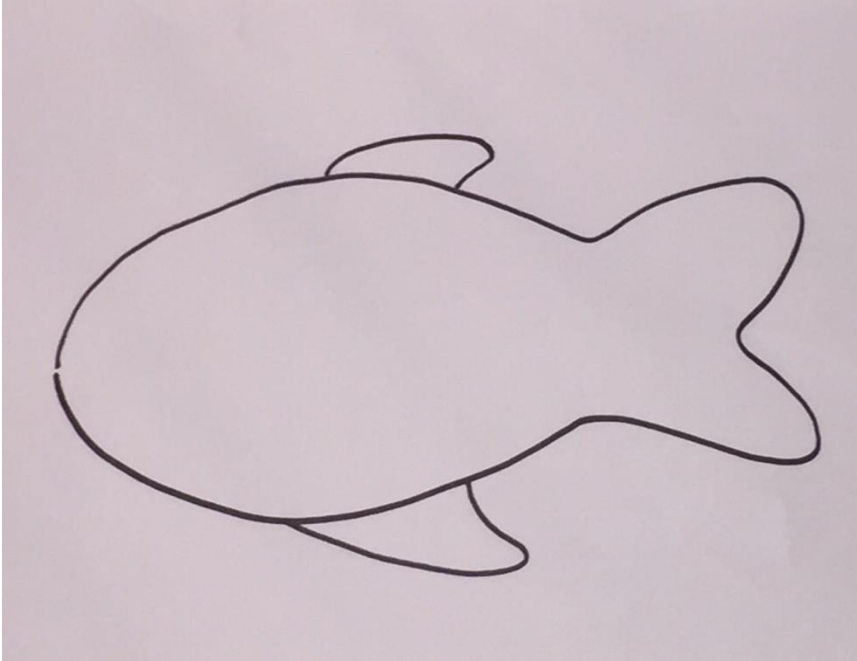
CD-5 Children demonstrate self-expression and creativity in a variety of forms and contexts, including play, visual arts,

CD-11 Children compare, sort, group, organize and measure objects and create patterns in their everyday environment.

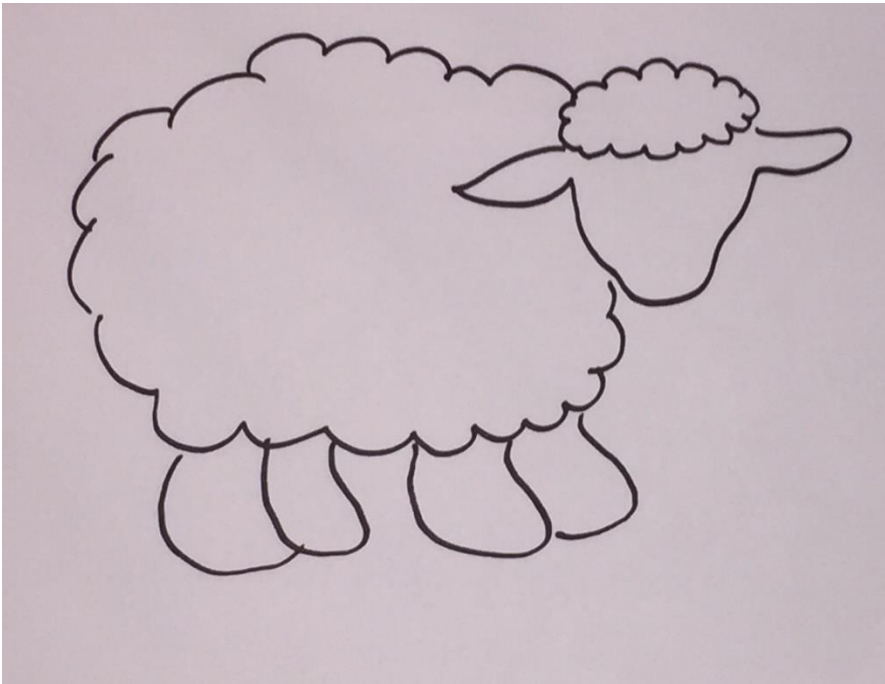
CD-15 Children explore the natural world by observing, manipulating objects, asking questions, making predictions, and developing generalizations.

|

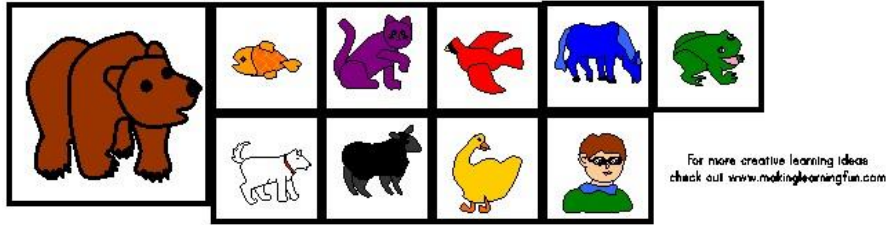
Appendix II



Fish pattern for sparkly fish



Sheep pattern for chalk sheep



Story stick for Brown Bear



Wikki Stix for writing center



Color games for math center

Materials for Classroom Use

Books: *Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?* and *I See Colors*
Paint in the colors mentioned in the books.
Markers

Crayons
Paper and Pencil
Sentence strips
Puppets (store bought or handmade)
Construction paper
Large bulletin board paper
Flannel board
Velcro
Buddy class (optional)
Parents, family members, special adults
Balloons
Fruit, donated
Noodles
Food coloring
Check weekly activities for other possible materials

Student Resources

Books:

Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See? - It is what most the lessons are based on.

I See Colors- This the companion book for the unit.

Lion and the Little Red Bird- I like this book because the children must think outside of the box with this color book.

Dog's New Spot- This is a fun book that the children enjoy because his spots are made by things they see in everyday like.

[ABC Mouse](#)- I like this website because it takes children through the natural progression in all learning domains. Once a level is accomplished by the student it automatically takes them to the next level.

[Starfall](#)- This is a wonderful website that promotes early learning in letters, letter sounds and early reading.

Teacher Resources

[Making Learning Fun](#)- They have many teaching ideas in all domains and link them to favorite and popular children's books. They also provide master copies of images that you may want to complete a unit.

[Measured Mom](#)- This is a great website developed by a stay at home mom who also has many teaching ideas in all learning domains and most of the things she uses you will have in your home. She also has many teaching game and project master free of charge.

School or neighborhood library- Instead of buying books and companion books for the units, check the library, it's free. When I get a book from the library I make sure to let my students know that they too can go the library to borrow books.

National Geographic Kids- This is a great way to make fiction characters come to life, like a brown bear.

iPad- Let the children do a reader's workshop of the story and then allow them to play it back, you'll be surprised not only of the enjoyment it brings but how they want to do it differently next time.

Notes

¹. Cheung and Anderson, *Time to READ: Family Recourses and Educational Outcomes in Britain*, 5, 13.

². Roberts, Jurgens, and Burchinal, *The Role of Home Literacy Practices in Preschool Language and Emergent Literacy Skills*, 10, 11.

³. Snow, Burns and Griffin, *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*, 321-37.

⁴. Roskos, Christie, and Richgels, *The Essentials of Early Literacy Instruction*, 1-3.

⁵. Hirsch, E. D., Jr., *Reading comprehension requires knowledge—of words and the way*, 10-29.

⁶. NAEYC & NAECS/SDE (National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education), *Early learning standards: Creating the conditions for success*, 1, 83, 84

⁷. Zigler, *Under Siege: A historical overview*, 1-13

⁸. Howes and Wishard, *Revisiting shared meaning; Looking through the lens of culture and linking shared pretend play through proto-narrative development to emergent literacy*, 83.

⁹. Vukelich, *Effects of play interventions on young children's learning of environmental print. Mind in Society; The development of higher psychological processes*, 8, 87.

¹⁰. Dickinson, David K., and Moreton, *Predicting specific kindergarten literacy skills from three-year-olds' preschool experiences*, 5-8

Bibliography

Antilla, Julie A. "The Effects of Early Literacy Development on Academic Success In the Educational Setting and Implications for Education Leaders and Teachers." PhD diss., Northern Michigan University, 2013.

In this dissertation, the author mentions how teaching and writing is key for the formation of literacy as young children attend school, through adolescence, and finally as they emerge as competent and educated adults. A student who struggles to read will struggle in all subject areas, potentially causing a negative attitude towards reading and school in general.

Cheung, and Andersen. "Time to Read: Family Resources and Educational Outcomes in Britain." ResearchGate. June 2003. Accessed September 2016.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285874262_Time_to_Read_Family_Resources_and_Educational_Outcomes_in_Britain.

In this paper, the authors explore the impact of social structure at home on children's responses in the classroom.

Dickinson, David K., and Joy Moreton. "Predicting Specific Kindergarten Literacy Skills from Three-Year Olds' Preschool Experiences." ResearchGate. August 1992. Accessed September 2016.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234714370_Predicting_Specific_Kindergarten_Literacy_Skills_from_Three-Year_Olds%27_Preschool_Experiences.
This study looking into the link between the context of language in the classroom and the students' literacy skills. Teachers were interviewed and observed. When literacy was nurtured, children had more advanced skills.

Early Literacy and Beginning to Read. Southern Early Childhood Association. 2002. Accessed September 2016.

This article reflects on how one of the most important elements of literacy development is that children associate literacy with pleasure and success, and develop a desire to read and write. This desire motivates an interest in learning the skills necessary to become proficient in all literacy activities.

Han, Myae, Noreen Moore, Carol Vukelich, and Martha Buell. "Does Play Make a Difference? How Play Intervention Affects the Vocabulary Learning of At-Risk Preschoolers." *American Journal of Play*, 2010, 83-105.

NAEYC recognizes that play is a central component of developmentally appropriate practice and a vehicle for developing language, cognition, and social confidence. Play is critical for developing the oral language skills that children need to read. Research discovers that children at play often use higher forms of language than normal.

Hirsch, E. D., Jr. "Reading Comprehension Requires Knowledge— of Words and the World." *American Federation of Teachers*, Spring 2003, 10-29. Accessed September 2016.

http://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/periodicals/AE_SPRNG.pdf.

This article focuses on how children are able to retain basics, but when the time comes they cannot retain more advanced literacy. In order to help these children overcome this hurdle, we must first understand where it is coming from and how to address it.

Howes, Carollee, and Allison Gallwey Wishard. "Revisiting Shared Meaning: Looking Through the Lens of Culture and Linking Shared Pretend Play Through Proto-Narrative Development to Emergent Literacy." *Academia.edu*. Accessed September 2016.

http://www.academia.edu/436026/Revisiting_Shared_Meaning_Looking_Through_the_Lens_of_Culture_and_Linking_Shared_Pretend_Play_Through_Proto-Narrative_Development_to_Emergent_Literacy.

Social play and proto-narratives allow children to interact and cooperate with other children. Forms of narrative development directly impact literacy development. This should be visited both at home and in the classroom.

Lesux, Nonie K. "PreK-3rd: Getting Literacy Instruction Right." *Foundation for Child Development*, no. 9 (May 2013): 1-18.

This article focuses on how effective instruction is a combination of direct instruction and inquiry based learning. Children need clear steps and quality materials to create a literacy rich environment. Young children need to engage in structured learning tasks, and routines that promote interactive play and inquiry.

Morgan, G. S. "Appropriate Preschool Goals." *Education.com*. April 30, 2014. Accessed September 2016. <http://www.education.com/reference/article/appropriate-preschool-goals/>.

This article is about how programs need set goals to help guide activities and teaching. Without these goals, teaching will begin to go in the wrong direction.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children, and The National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. "Early Learning Standards: Creating the Conditions for Success." *Early Learning Standards Position*, November 19, 2002. Accessed September 2016.

http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/executive_summary.pdf.

This articles addresses the educational, ethical, developmental, programmatic, assessment, and policy issues that arise in Head Start programs.

Roberts, Joanne, Julia Jergens, and Margaret Burchinal. "The Role of Home Literacy Practices in Preschool Children's Language and Emergent Literacy Skills."

- Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research. April 01, 2005. Accessed September 2016. <http://jslhr.pubs.asha.org/article.aspx?articleid=1783817>. This study analyzed shared book reading frequency, maternal book reading strategies, child's enjoyment of reading, and maternal sensitivity, and their effects on a child's language and literacy skills.
- Roskos, Kathleen A., James F. Christie, and Donald J. Richgels. "The Essentials of Early Literacy Instruction." *YC Young Children* 58, no. 2 (March 01, 2003): 52-60. Accessed September 2016. <http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200303/Essentials.pdf>. Children of a young age need both reading and writing to help learn about one another, as well as oral language to help understand both.
- Snow, Catherine, Susan Burns, and Peg Griffin. "Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children: Executive Summary." Reading Rockets. 1998. Accessed September 2016. <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/preventing-reading-difficulties-young-children-executive-summary>. This article reflects upon how important reading is in our society. They found that children who struggle with literacy early on tend to struggle in the future when it comes to the rest of their education. In attempt to fix this, the authors offer potential solutions to supply children with a more hopeful outlook.
- Vukelich, Carol. "Effects of Play Interventions on Young Children's Reading of Environmental Print." *Early Childhood Research* 9, no. 2 (June 1994). Accessed September 2016. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/223538487_Effects_of_play_interventions_on_young_children%27s_reading_of_environmental_print. This article explores how children exposed to print during play, both enriched and non-enriched, impacts the child's ability to read environmental print.
- Zigler, Edward F. "Play Under Siege." *21 Community News*, Winter 2004, 1-11. Accessed September 2016. http://www.childcareexchange.com/resources/pdf/21community_win2004.pdf. This article reflects upon how many schools are reducing or even getting rid of children's play, mainly with those of preschool and kindergarten age. This interactive play is crucial to the children to help their cognitive, language, problem solving, memory, and creativity skills.