



## **Who Builds the Community of Readers in Pre-K**

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This curriculum unit is recommended for Literacy in/ Pre-K  
*The unit can be taught as a mini unit of study*

**Keywords:** reading, author, illustrator, parts of the book

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

**Synopsis:** This unit will introduce children to reading and literacy in the rim of school and their community. I will show that the child can access and identify phonemic awareness and the role of print in the world. This unit will encourage and engage the parental engagement component and participation with literacy, make the connection of literacy, and develop the appreciation for literacy and reading in many genres and cultural aspects. We will learn how important books are to our learning and who to connect to books in the classroom and the home. We will focus on how to establish book and print awareness, and identify that letters and numbers are associated to reading. Children will engage in many learning activities in learning centers to support the awareness and connection to literacy. The children will make connections to reading with their family. They will understand how they read in their community. In learning the importance of literacy, the children will create a book with their family as present the book in the author's chair / tea celebration. The created books will become a part of the classroom library to share with others and build the classroom library. The opportunity to introduce the importance of reading and literacy to Pre-K children and their families will give a strong foundation to reading and allow the children to see themselves in books and discover how reading is infused in the city spaces where they live. This unit can become instrumental and will be used in the beginning of the year units of study for the CMS Bright Beginning Program.

*I plan to teach this unit during the first trimester that is the first part of the school year 2019. This is during the beginning of the year introduction and acclamation to school. This unit will help with the transition to classroom structure in literacy.*

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

# Who Builds the Community of Readers in Pre-K

*Carolyn Simmons*

## **Introduction**

With the vast changes in education and the emphasis on test scores for children to be on grade level, the right start is very important. Pre-K is often overlooked and not included in the scope of educational proficiency. Knowing that reading is the source to effective learning, this unit emphasizes literacy as the gateway into the world, as it changes the perspective of learning. When you read, you can learn about places and adventures that will come to life and enhance learning experiences. Through this unit I ask, what can I do with my Pre-K children to assure them the opportunity to grow and become a reader?

The role of a Pre-K teacher requires a great deal of patience and care for the children. This emphasis on care does not minimize the importance for instilling and developing early literacy in young children. The development of literacy skills and making the connection to reading and learning forms the foundation that young children need to experience as they are becoming aware of literacy and reading. In the unit, we will discuss the concepts that are implemented in learning to explore and develop an interest in books. In this unit, children will experience opportunities to engage in activities that will build reading strategies and extend a parental component to help develop literacy appreciation.

The catalysis for my awareness and development for how I can avenue my change into my classroom comes from my participation in the seminar Childhood and the City Space in Literature with the seminar leader Dr. Janaka Lewis, English Professor at UNC Charlotte. The focus of the seminar has enlightened and advanced my awareness of how literacy is presented to the children that I teach. I began to realize that I have a commitment to explore and expand the perception of literacy and delivery of literacy for beginning readers. We will focus on the identification of books that represent children of color and cultural diversity and lessons to highlight themes in literacy that will expand experiences for children and families to become, represented in the city spaces.

The seminar Childhood and the City Space has taught me to envision the awareness of how literacy is represented in the community and how to define the community connection for children and families, especially the resources that are available to families who are economically challenged. The seminar has engaged my interest in building a strong community within my classroom to increase the awareness of literacy. I want to offer families the awareness to how literacy is available in their community. I have implemented activities to help families understand the importance of reading and providing resources to support with take home reading materials and community engagement events.

In Pre-K, children are becoming engaged with beginning literacy skills and knowledge we want to engage children in literacy to improve reading by the end of the third grade and change the Pre-K to Prison Pipeline trajectory. The success of children comes from all hands being on board in school and at home. Young readers need exposure and the opportunity to see and differentiate literacy in the city spaces in which they live. Children become exposed to literacy in the classroom. I will show children how literacy is in books and using a variety of formats in the classroom and make the home school connection with activities to learn about reading. I will use the objectives included in intentional literacy artifacts in the learning centers throughout the classroom, such as to use read aloud with the reference to print and book and print awareness and to use literacy as a family connection while building the family input.

We will focus on the following topic:

- ❖ Within the learning centers and daily opportunities, the teacher provides, models use of, and encourages children engagement with literacy and artifacts that support literacy.
- ❖ Daily read aloud including verbal and nonverbal strategies for book and print awareness.
- ❖ Use technology to engage reading mediums.
- ❖ Provision for classroom and home reading materials and home book making and a wide range of reading materials.

I plan to introduce and make the curriculum unit available for other Pre-K teachers at my school and beyond in order to promote early childhood literacy in the city space for families and children to engage in build awareness of cultural literacy. Children need the opportunity to learn how important it is to read. They need to know the various methods of reading in the home, school and community.

The goal is to use the information that I have gained from the seminar to teach and elevate the awareness of early literacy through development levels in the classroom and parental guidance to engage students with activities and intentional learning opportunities. Since the Pre-K students are beginning to start their education process for 13 years to either college to career readiness and being a 21<sup>st</sup> Century learner it is key to provide both children and parents to effective reading strategies. The curriculum outcome will show the formative results. Children should have awareness to book and print knowledge. Children can identify the parts of a book. Children can identify what an author and illustrator does. Children can identify the difference between letters, numbers and words. Children have awareness that they can read daily. This curriculum will be a vital part of the beginning of the year curriculum as a mini unit second read.

## **Demographics**

I am currently a Pre-K teacher at our school. This is my nineteenth year of teaching Pre-K in Charlotte Mecklenburg School System's Bright Beginning Program. I am one of five Pre-K teachers at the Governors' Village Stem Academy. We teach the Create Curriculum using Teaching Strategies Gold Objectives for Development, Learning, and North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development. The children in my class have many literacy resources and the use of technology that enhances and support learning within the classroom.

The Governors Village Stem Academy is a school located in the heart of the University City Community that was once associated with the name the Governors' Village from North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt. The school was built in 1996 as the first of four schools that were built to support the thriving IBM and banking community. The original school is Nathaniel Alexander Elementary School, which is a Title 1 program school that is organized to meet the needs of the students based on social economic and educational needs. The school served 811 students in grades Pre-K to Fifth grade in the 2019-2020 school year.. The percentage of the students that showed proficiency in Reading /Language Arts is 31%, which is lower than the North Carolina state average of 46% for the 2016-2017 school year. The school has a teacher student ratio of 15-1 which is lower than the state ratio. The school has a minority enrollment that is 97% of the student body, which is the majority of African American, which is higher than the state average for schools. A trajectory of the schools change with the introduction of the joining elementary school John M. Morehead Elementary school connected by both schools using the cafeteria. John M Morehead STEM Academy is an above average public magnet school located in Charlotte, NC the school has 1,063 students grade K -8 with a student ratio of 17 to 1.

The proficiency level of the reading scores is 54% and the school once ranked best public middle school in North Carolina as #232 out of #676. In the year 2018 both schools joined with much agreement and cooperation from families and resistance from staff internalizing demographics. The schools became one based on the initiative from the Superintendent to increase the availability of a STEM Academy that would serve the community, limit the access to the Title 1 school status, and improve the overall quality of the education that is available for the children. The demographics of the school tell a story of what the school has to offer to the community. After one year of the new school, the state has reported that the school is a C on the state report card. What has this done for the children and how will this make a lasting impression on culture of the school? The Governors' Village Stem Academy has, been divided into two parts. The Upper is grade 5 to 8 and the lower is Pre-K to 4. The lower campus now ranks 782 of 1,461 North Carolina Elementary Schools and the ratio is 15.3 teacher to students. The current lower campus enrollment is 811 with the total of both campus at 2,100 students.

### **Rationale/Objectives**

The focus of the curriculum is essential to the children in the classroom that I teach in the Pre-K program. I am a teacher in the Bright Beginning Program, which is a literacy-based program and encourages parents to engage their children in the beginning stages of literacy and reading. The curriculum has many literacy components and phonological awareness the main source is the implantation of reading and literacy strategies to build lifelong readers. The children in my class are beginning their education journey. They often have limited to no experience with literacy. How do we use reading in our world? Thinking about reading such as

how do you read, who reads, where do you read and why do you read? The goals of the program are to prepare children for lifelong learners and readers. I want the children to have the opportunity to have embedded activities to engage children in literacy and making connections to the city space where they live, learn and play. It is important to have the opportunities to build on the support of literacy and areas of the child's daily routines for learning how to engage in literacy and learning. The goal of the unit is to focus on Who Builds the Community of Readers and how does the classroom bridge the community and the family together. The children will be introduced to literacy and activities in learning centers to promote the engagement and interest of literacy. Children will be introduced to books, Children will learn how to interact with books. The Children will experience story telling with books and technology resources. Children will learn that reading is all around in the school and home. Children will become authors and illustrators.

## **Content Research**

The research that is supporting reading evidence for children is that reading helps to educate children's minds and helps to develop enrich knowledge, as they are exposed to new ideas and diverse perspectives. The focus of this is to expose children and help them better understand the world around them. The children from Title 1 schools are typically low achieving and from higher poverty areas, some have limited English proficiency, are migratory, and are most often in need of reading assistance The Governors' Village Stem Academy is a Title 1 school. The focus for the government is to boost and escalate the level of quality of services administered to students in Title 1 schools.

Children's early reading achievement is related to their home literacy environment. This includes the quantity of books they can access and the family support for reading. Families from lower socioeconomic status backgrounds such as some families from the Governors Village Stem Academy may not have money for books or computers to support a positive literacy environment. It has been acknowledged that when students become good readers early in their education experience. The lack of appropriate literacy development can cause children to experience increased social and behavior problems and they are likely to be retained in school. Children who are at risk for reading tend to need remediation for their literacy skills by third grade. Thinking about how to integrate the community and families into reading development such as sponsoring a community engagement event would offer a resourceful start to the literacy issues especially in a Pre-K classroom. There is a need to increase understanding that children integrate all elements in their interpersonal and build environments to support their emerging literacy skills. Evidence from emergent literacy research documents that the way children participate in early literacy related activities influences the knowledge they construct. The essence of literacy and bringing a product to life such as reading a book to actually experiencing opportunities to be exposed to book makes a connection to literacy. Children need to have exposure to books at an early age, which has a cumulative effect in the preschool years and enhances emergent literacy (1).

In Pre-K, different methods and literacy techniques must be used to enable children and learning the concepts and content to internalize it in a development appropriate manner. The children learn about life from the many vast stories and strategies. The beginning foundation of literacy is often providing children with conceptual understanding, receptive and expressive language development, thinking and problem solving skills. The methods of using story-based props will engage children and development, in all domains. It can be difficult for children to understand the language and structure of the story such as the introduction of vocabulary and word usage. This is to help support comprehension and expressive language development skills for the children. The instructional bases for reading will involve the repeated stories allowing the children to capture the rhythm of patterns in literacy. Short repeated stories allow the children to capture the rhythm of the language at an early age. This is to enable the opportunity of learning how the language is used and developed, which creates the understanding of writing and allows them to recognize the new wording and literacy structure in stories (2).

Early childhood education can often take on a different viewpoint for teaching children to read. The viewpoint of this curriculum is to engage children in literacy development. There is the motivation to make it developmental, appropriate to teach children to learn as the support is coming from the International Literacy Association (LRA) and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The support of these organizations encourage the need for learning to read and write and the essential for children success in school and future years. This backs the indicator of their ability to achieve based on the degree to, which children develop in language, reading and writing. The development of many current theories on the acquisition of language and literacy are the steering points for transformation in reading instruction. The focus of emergent literacy has replaced the concept of reading readiness. In teaching literacy to Pre-K children the recognition that all language abilities must be balanced in the help to merge children's literacy-related play, literature, and storybook reading within literacy instruction. When cultivating component of literate children during their early childhood years is essential before introducing them to formal reading instructions. The purpose of this unit is to build on the foundation and awareness of literacy. This is a part of guiding the family literacy movement and allowing families and early childhood educators to be sensitive to the way they teach literacy at home and at school. The methods need to include developmentally appropriate literacy strategies and activities that integrate literacy-related play, writing, storytelling, creative dramatics, art and any content area(3).

Reading educates children's development and helps them to build knowledge as it exposes them to new ideals and perspectives. The exposure is what helps children better understand the world around them. Some students from Title 1 School are typically low achievers. The resources for Title 1 Schools districts have targeted resources to elevate and improve quality of services. Children at my school have experiences that link to their early literacy experiences that is, based on the lack of support. In order to enhance the lack of materials I provide take home readers to help bridge the gap and help children become better readers. When children become good readers, they are more likely to become better readers and learners throughout their education process. The achievement gap can extend throughout school. Developing programs and ways to engage the community and families is a sure way to help with the issues that affect children in achievement areas (4).

## Classroom Activities

The classroom activities will be focus on literacy and reading strategies in the classroom-learning environment. The children will have read aloud and interactive activities to support the beginning stages of literacy awareness. The lessons consist of five days of read aloud and I interactive activities with each read aloud and a home project. The students participated in a pre and post book and print assessment based on formative assessment data. Instructional objectives are determined. The extension of literacy will consist of a home book project. The lessons were, taught in the order they are presented. They are, taught for the second read in the Creative Curriculum. The order of the lessons are, based on the progression of the unit. The children are, introduced first how to read a book. The anchor charts are, used to support the content in the lessons and help children with visual awareness and support. The templates are used in the curriculum. The home-school connection activity consist of a take home project. The classroom activities are in the lesson plans. These activities will centered around reading and literacy in the classroom and the home.

### Activity 1

Unit: Beginning of the Year

Name of Book\_How To Read A Book\_\_\_ Author:\_KWAME ALEXANDER\_\_\_\_\_

Illustrator: MELISSA SWEET\_\_\_\_\_

Objectives: Children develop book knowledge and print awareness: Objective LDC-10: (Foundations)

Demonstrate knowledge of print ad its uses: Objective 17 (Teaching Strategies)

Uses and appreciates books and other texts: Objective 17a( Teaching Strategies)

Background Information: Use literacy anchor chart to support the visual process for the children.

Activity: Introduce the anchor chart Parts of the Book. Introduce the book. Read the book with excitement and engage the children using expression and showing feelings as you change your voice when reading. Discuss vocabulary words that appear in the story for understanding.

Closure: Children will name the parts of the book and will refer to a visual.

Extensions: Sing the song I R E A D to the tune of Bingo using letter cards to represent the letters in the song.

## Activity 2

Unit: Beginning of the Year

Name of Book\_Lola at the Library\_\_\_\_ Author:\_Anna McQuinn\_\_\_\_\_

Illustrator: Roselind Beardshaw\_\_\_\_\_

Objectives: Children develop knowledge of the alphabet and the alphabetic principle: Objective LDC-12: (Foundations)

Comprehends and responds to books and other texts: Objective 18 (Teaching Strategies)

Uses and appreciates books and other texts: Objective 17a( Teaching Strategies)

Background Information: Use KWL chart graphic organizer

Activity: Introduce the graphic organizer K / What is a Library? Introduce the book. Read the book with excitement and engage the children using expression and showing feelings as you change your voice when reading. Discuss vocabulary words that appear in the story for understanding.

Closure: Posed a Yes No question Have you been to the library is in your neighborhood?

Extensions: Children often cannot distinguish the difference between a letter, number or word. I introduced a sorting game using a venn diagram. Each child received either a letter, number or word and had to sort it by it origin.



### Lesson 3

Unit: Beginning of the Year

Name of Book \_Night Shift Daddy\_\_\_ Author:\_Eileen Spinelli\_\_\_\_\_

Illustrator: Melissa Iwai\_\_\_\_\_

Objectives: Children develop book knowledge and print awareness: Objective LDC-10: (Foundations)

Demonstrate knowledge of print and its uses: Objective 17 (Teaching Strategies)

Uses and appreciates books and other texts: Objective 17a( Teaching Strategies)

Shows basic understanding of people and how they live Objective 30 (Teaching Strategies)

Background Information: Engage children in the awareness that families have many structures and different reading opportunities exist in different families.

Activity: Using modeled writing recorded the answers of the children of when and where do you read at home.. Read the book with excitement and engage the children using expression and showing feelings as you change your voice when reading. Discuss vocabulary words that appear in the story for understanding.

Closure: Recited the poem Jack Be Nimble Jack Be Quick using the interactive poem to point to the words and engage the children in movement.

Extensions: The children place the beginning letter of their name on the Chicka, Chicka Boom Boom Tree..

Children receive a Take Home Activity to Make a Book.

#### Activity 4

Unit: Beginning of the Year

Name of Book: \_Library Day\_\_\_ Author: \_ Anne Rockwell\_\_\_\_\_

Illustrator: Lizzy Rockwell\_\_\_\_\_

Objectives: Children develop book knowledge and print awareness: Objective LDC-10: (Foundations)

Demonstrate knowledge of print and its uses: Objective 17 (Teaching Strategies)

Uses and appreciates books and other texts: Objective 17a( Teaching Strategies)

Background Information: Use literacy anchor chart to support the visual process for the children. Discuss the role of an author and illustrator.

Activity: Introduce the anchor chart Parts of the Book. Introduce the book. Read the book with excitement and engage the children using expression and showing feelings as you change your voice when reading. Discuss vocabulary words that appear in the story for understanding.

Closure: The children will sing and illustrate the song The Green Grass Grows All Around.

Extensions: The children will have a virtual field trip to the library.

## Lesson 5

Unit: Beginning of the Year

Name of Book: Child Self Written Book

Author: \_\_Student\_\_\_\_\_

Illustrator: \_\_Student\_\_\_\_\_

Objectives: Children develop book knowledge and print awareness: Objective LDC-10: (Foundations)

Demonstrate knowledge of print ad its uses: Objective 17 (Teaching Strategies)

Uses and appreciates books and other texts: Objective 17a( Teaching Strategies)

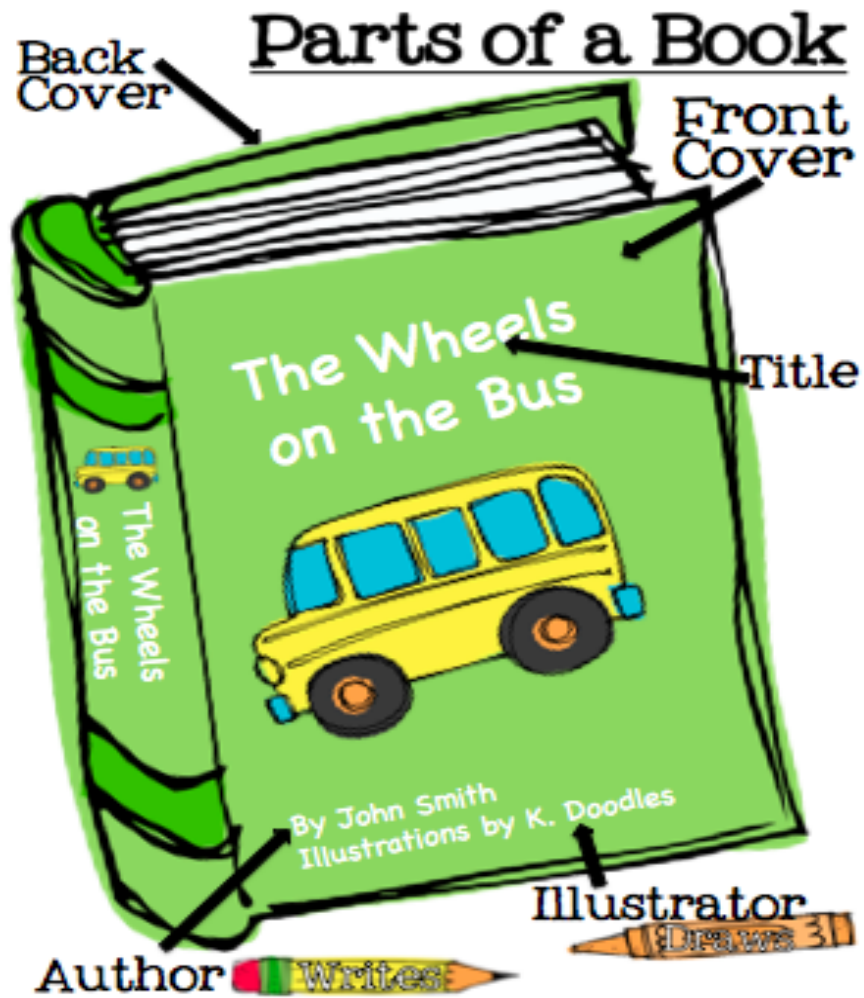
Background Information: Use literacy anchor chart to support the visual process for the children.

Activity: The children presented their books and we read the books as the child took the authors chair.. Discuss vocabulary words that appear in the story for understanding.

Closure: Children will name the parts of the book and will refer to a visual.

Extensions: Visited the school library and participated in a story time read aloud..

Figure 1 Anchor Chart



The anchor chart introduced before reading a book to help the children identify the parts of the book.

Figure 2 Formative Assessment

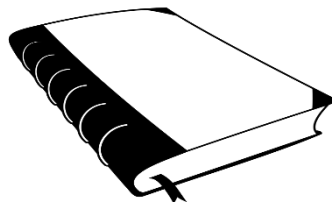
Book Print Awareness

Formative Assessment

Objective	Yes	No
Know what an author does		
Know what an illustrator does		
Knows to turn to the next page		
Knows where you start reading		
Know the difference between letter and word		
Know that print is read from left to right		
Know that print is read from top to bottom		
Can point to words as they are read		
Knows the difference from a letter and a number		

### Figure 3 Take Home Activity

Parent flyer that goes home to the families.



#### Take Home Book Project

This week our mini unit has been exciting and engaging learning about books and how, to become a reader. Your child will become an author and illustrator. Please make your take home book using any topic of interest to your child or family. The books are due on Friday. We will read their books and celebrate your child's story. **Please return the book on Friday.**

Thank You for your participation.

#### Proyecto de libro para llevar a casa

Esta semana nuestra mini unidad ha sido emocionante y atractiva para aprender sobre libros y cómo convertirse en un lector. Su hijo se convertirá en autor e ilustrador. Haga su libro para llevar a casa utilizando cualquier tema de interés también para su hijo o familia. Los libros vencen el viernes. leeremos libros y celebraremos la historia de su hijo. **Por favor devuelva el libro el viernes.**

Gracias por su participación.

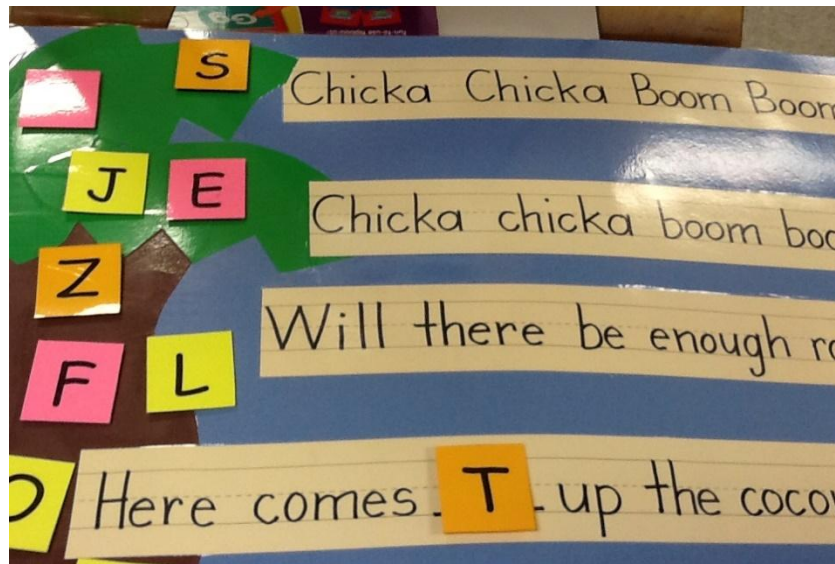
Figure 4 Sample of Books



Figure 5 Literacy Activity Day 2



Figure 6 Literacy Activity Day 3





## **Appendix 1**

### **Implementing Teaching Standards**

This unit affects the many standards for effective teaching and various developmentally appropriate standards. This is a literacy-based unit and it influences the appropriate teaching standards for early childhood education. The core content is, derived from the courses of study and objects that are a directive from the Charlotte Mecklenburg Bright Beginnings Program. The North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development and the Teaching Strategies Gold Objectives for Development & Learning. The children will have the opportunity to build concrete foundations for early literacy skills and development.

Objectives: Children develop book knowledge and print awareness: Objective LDC-10: (Foundations)

Demonstrate knowledge of print and its uses: Objective 17 (Teaching Strategies)

Uses and appreciates books and other texts: Objective 17a (Teaching Strategies)

Areas of literacy focus and development will consist of literacy and parental community awareness.

## Resources

### Materials for Classroom Use

Anchor chart The Parts of the Book

This is used to introduce the children the parts of the book.

Chart paper and markers

This is used to create KWL charts, graphic organizers and modeled writing

Technology

This is used for digital storytelling

Pre-made Book

This is used for the take home book-making project

Interactive Charts

This is used for Chicka Chicka Boom Boom Chart

### Reading List for Students

Alexander, Kwame. How To Read A Book. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishing, 2019. This is a creative mind-stimulating book that engages children in creativity as they learn about the imagination to reading a book.

McQuinn, AnnA. Lola at the Library. New York, NY: Scholastic Inc. 2006. The book depicts the excitement that Lola experiences as she embarks upon her weekly trips to the library with her mother.

Spinelli, Eileen. Night Shift Daddy. New York, NY: Hyperion Books for Children 2000. One of the best events about this book is the relationship that is between a father in his daughter based in reading and the cycle of events from day to night. When the father returns home from work the daughter reads to her father.

Rockwell, Anne. Library Day. New York, NY Aladdin 2016. This book gives a visual look at going to the library and all the unique things that can happen for a child at the library. It opens the world to the unique learning that occurs at the library.

## **Annotated Bibliography for Teachers**

Neumann, Michelle M., Michelle Hood, Ruth M. Ford, and David L. Neumann. "The Role of Environmental Print in Emergent Literacy (*Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 2012)

This good resource covers the importance of early literacy skills and the development of literacy for an emergent process

Zeece, Pauline Davey. Supporting Children's Social Cognitive Development: Literature Choices That Make a Difference. (*Early Childhood Education Journal*, 2000)

This article talks about the social connection that is associated to literacy and development.

Johnston, Vickie, and Cynthia Dawn Martelli. "Reaching Out to Students From Title I Schools, (*The Reading Teacher* 2019)

The information from this article is associated with the issues that relate to Title 1 schools and the vast concerns about effective reading issues.

Schick, Adina R., and Gigliana Melzi. "Print-Related Practices in Low-Income Latino Homes and Preschoolers' School-Readiness Outcomes. (*Journal of Early Childhood Literacy* 2016)

This article highlights the cultural issues of literacy and the concerns that affect the home school readiness for literacy.