

Session Three Early Literacy Experiences

Web course on Early Literacy for WSDS
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Elizabeth Dennison, Instructor
SKI-HI Institute, Utah State University

Resources for content:

On the Way to Literacy, 2nd ed., APH
Project EDIN, Chapel Hill, NC
Project VIISA training material

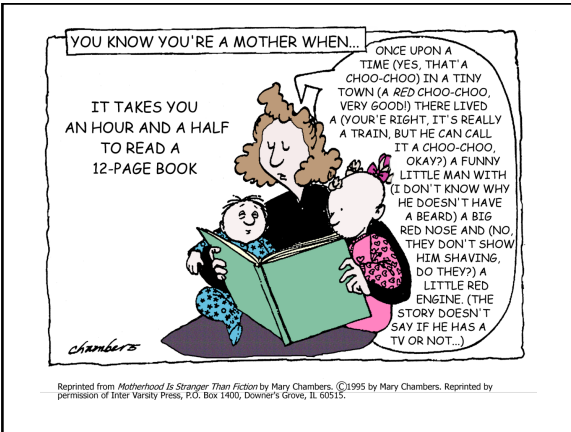
- “Literacy begins to develop at birth; it does not wait until a child reads his first word or even until he opens his first book. Literacy is a basic process, set in motion long before actual reading and writing take place, and it involves ALL of the child’s development.”

Stratton & Wright 1991



Everyday Literacy Activities

- Reading aloud to the child and sharing a variety of books in both braille and print
- Providing braille and print materials in the home
- Providing materials for scribbling in braille and print
- Talking about your own reading and writing
- Visiting the library
- Singing songs and saying rhymes
- Playing word games
- Telling and acting out stories
- Using tactile symbols for practical purposes
- Having extended conversations about all kinds of things, including the stories you read



Shared Storybook Reading

Shared storybook reading helps children acquire

- oral language,
- phonological awareness,
- concept development,
- knowledge of the conventions of print/Braille and of print/braille intentionality, and alphabetic knowledge.

Shared storybook reading with caregivers is also one of the first and most important book experiences of children with visual impairments.

Caregivers' Roll in Fostering a Love of Reading

- Read to the child everyday and start as early as possible.
- Sing nursery rhymes and children's songs.
- Treat books as though they are special.
- Let the child make their own book with real objects and add braille.
- Read with expression.
- Let the child see you reading.
- Keep books out and available on a low shelf where the young child can find them.
- Practice turning pages together and placing the book right side up. Find page numbers. Talk about reading left to right.
- Explore tactile books.

Shared Storybook Tips

- Select a time when the child is happy and read in a comfortable location.
- Read in a dramatic voice that makes the book exciting and add noises related to the story.
- Read only for as long as the child is interested—a few minutes is OK.
- Let children help turn the pages, even if a few pages are skipped.
- Point to the print or run fingers over the braille as the book is read.
- Discuss pictures, illustrations, and story objects.
- As you read, pause to recall what happened before or to talk about what might happen next.
- Stop to ask questions then think through answers together.
- Relate the book to children's and family's experiences.
- Talk about unfamiliar words.
- If the child can see them, talk about what is happening in the pictures. Share your opinions of the story.

The Role of Favorite Books

- Favorite books provide the comfort of a familiar story and facilitate learning.
- In very young children, the predictability of a favorite book may build story schemas (i.e., narrative knowledge).
- Understanding narrative schemas helps children appreciate a wider variety of books.
- As children age, a decrease in favorite books may reflect an increase in cognitive abilities.



Print/Braille Motivation

- When young children are read to frequently, they begin to associate books with positive feelings such as, amusement, comfort, and closeness.
- These feelings produce print/braille motivation.
- Print/braille motivation refers to children's relative interest in reading and writing activities.
- Children with high print/braille motivation become avid readers.

Making Books Pages Easier to Turn



Big paper clips attached to page



Corn pads to help pages stay apart and easier to turn



Types of Books

- Books of poetry, songs, chants and rhymes (Mother Goose)
- Children's classics (Goodnight Moon)
- Current favorites
- Predictable books (Brown Bear)
- Books with interesting language (Piggy in the Puddle)
- Informational books (animals, trucks)
- Concept books (about numbers, shapes, colors)
- Alphabet books (Chicka Chicka Boom Boom)
- Board books
- Books with tactile elements
- Books with recorded sounds
- Books in other languages
- Books about other children who are blind/low vision

Developmentally Appropriate Books

0-6 months: books with simple, large pictures printed on stiff cardboard, cloth, or vinyl; or books with one simple texture on a page



Black on white or white on black



Simple texture books



Foam book with pieces that come out, can be Chewed on and put back in

6-12 months: books with photos of other babies, familiar objects, or family photos on sturdy pages for touching and tasting; vinyl or plastic for bath time, cuddling, and mouthing



Accordion book to manipulate made from cut up sun visor



Vinyl bathtime book

Sensory Books



Scratch and Sniff



Tactile books



Texture baggy book

12-24 months: books with pictures of children in familiar routines and books about animals; preferably with few words per page, with simple rhymes or predictable text; sturdy books they can carry; texture books



Experience Books: stories about child's life and family



Touch and feel book

Storyboxes or Bags



Level I: Real Experience
(part of a daily routine or activity,
no book involved, just objects)



Level II: Book About Familiar Activity
(objects in baggie relate to the story)

Object and Texture Cues Prepare Child for Symbol Representation, Braille



Bathtime storybox to prepare
for bath (soap, washcloth,
brush, tub toy, lotion)



Object cues for daily activities
with print and braille labels

24-36 months: books with simple stories; books about counting, letters, shapes, and sizes; and books about favorite literary or TV characters



Food/snack box book



M is for mad



M is for mac and cheese.



M is for McDonalds

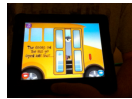
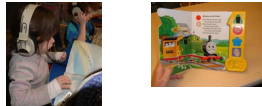
Alphabet books: the M book

Concept Books



Auditory Books

- Books on tape
- Push the button books
- Books on iPad
 - Wheels on the Bus
 - Old McDonald's Farm
- Books on the computer and web
 - Tarheel Reader website
 - powerpoint with voice



Experience Books and Books About Vision Impairment



Access to Braille in Books and Toys

- Children who read braille rarely have as many braille books as children with typical sight have standard print books.
- Braille books may intimidate caregivers because they do not know braille.
- Caregivers may be unaware of sources of braille books and believe braille books and materials cost too much.
- In addition, these children have less access to toys with braille on them.



Braille Blocks
Oatencourt.com



Braille Caravan
National Braille Press

Sources of Braille Books and Materials

Publishers of books for children:

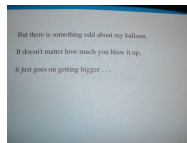
- Seedlings, Children's Braille Book Club, National Braille Press, The American Printing House for the Blind

Websites:

- Braille Bug site: www.braillebug.org
- Dots for Families website: www.uacoe.arizona.edu/vliteracy
- Paths to Literacy: www.pathstoliteracy.org
- Just Enough to Know Better: A Braille Primer for Parents, National Braille Press: www.nbp.org
- Power at Your Fingertips, manual and video from VIPS in Louisville, KY, www.vips.org
- Elizabeth's Story, a 30-minute video about early literacy experiences for preschoolers from www.aph.org
- Hadley School correspondence course, www.Hadley-school.org



Twin Vision Books



Book with interlining
(from Perkins Panda series)



"Going on a Bear Hunt"
from APH On the Way to Literacy Series

Conventions of Print/Braille

- Caregivers should encourage children to explore books (discovering that books have covers, fronts and backs, and tops and bottoms).
- Caregivers should also model reading from top to bottom and from left to right.
- A child who is learning braille can be encouraged to take a “piggy back ride” on the caregivers’ hands to feel movement of braille reading.
- When children are older and it seems developmentally appropriate, stop reading braille when the child stops feeling the braille so that the child learns that the braille dots represent words that tell the story.



Supporting Children Who Will Be Braille Readers

- Print/braille books can be purchased or borrowed.
- Objects can be used to enhance stories.
- Braille can be added to the pages of print books by brailleing on clear sticky back plastic labels or even clear contact paper, then sticking that on the page.
- Textures can be added to pictures.
- Tactile symbols can be placed on books’ covers for identification.



Supporting Children Who Will Be Print Readers

- Expose children to books with varying text sizes
- Optimize lighting conditions
- Reduce glare
- Select books with simple drawings and bright illustrations
- Provide opportunities to explore books using dome magnifiers and CCTVs



Modeling Literacy in Daily Routines

Children need to be directly involved in the daily literacy activities of their family members, such as

- reading newspapers,
- making grocery lists, and
- retrieving/replacing story books.



Caregivers can assist children by talking about their reading and writing activities and by letting children explore materials physically while they talk about what they are doing.

Ideally, parents of potential braille readers will learn braille as soon as possible so they can model braille reading and writing to their children.

Other Ways to Model Literacy Daily


- When cooking, read aloud from the recipe you are following.
- When driving, talk about the traffic signs that help you find your way.
- Let child help you make to-do, grocery and chore lists.
- Read the instructions for assembling a new toy they got out loud.
- Read some bills out loud and let the child watch (by sight or touch) you pay the bill.
- Read the labels on music CDs or movies to find their favorite one.
- Let child help scribble as you write phone messages from a call that comes in for a family member not present.
- Scribble notes to grandparents and mail them.
- When out and about, find braille on elevators, menus, etc.

Actively Exploring Writing



- Print writing materials include pens, pencils, markers, crayons, paint, paper, chalk, and chalkboard.
- Braille writing materials include braillewriters and slate-and-styluses, screen boards, and tools that can be used to make raised lines and dots.
- Caregivers should not be concerned about how children hold writing utensils or what types of marks they make.
- Children should simply be encouraged to play with writing materials.

Scribbling-Visual



The first writing tool is your finger, so make marks in pudding, yogurt, and finger paints.




There are many great apps on the iPad that let children use their fingers to draw (Glow Doodle, Paint Sparkles)

Scribble with various writing tools that make bold marks (e.g., scented markers, Colorix crayons, chalk, Magnadoodles).









Use alternative pencils.



Scribbling/Drawing Tactile Lines and Shapes

- Make marks in clay, playdough or wet sand with fingers and then stamps that leave impressions.
- Make shapes and lines in different directions with wiki stix.
- Draw with a crayon on thin paper placed over a piece of sandpaper or a screenboard. This leaves a bumpy texture to feel.
- Draw with a water soluble marker or paint brush on dry sponge paper from APH (quick-draw paper).
- Make pictures with geometric shapes on a magnet board or use the Wheatley Picture Maker from APH

Braille Scribbling



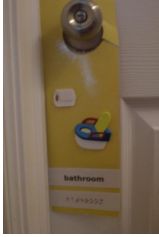


Put paper on carpet square, punch holes with dull pointed tool, turn it over, and you have bumps to feel. A tracing wheel could also be used to make bumpy lines.




Using slate and stylus Using braille writer

Labeling Things in the Environment



Picture, print and braille label on doorknobs



Tactile, print and braille label on snack box



Literacy-Enriched Play

When literacy props and resources are available to children, they tend to naturally integrate them into their play.



Library Visits and Other Literacy Adventures

- Go to the library story hour each week.
- Talk ahead of time to the librarian about adaptations that might help the visually impaired child.
- Request they order in some twin vision books.
- Help the child find and check out some books appropriate to their level.
- Sign the child up with the state Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to receive books in the mail.
- Visit book stores to look for their own books to purchase.
- Attend short plays and skits for children.
- Used puppets to act out simple stories.
- Make recipes suggested by storybooks.

Storybook Preview

- Storybook preview is the shared exploration of the content of a book without consideration of the storyline.
- Children are given the opportunity to label or describe the illustrations of interest, ask questions, and make comments to increase narrative knowledge and vocabulary.
- Caregivers identify and scaffold children's communicative attempts.



Building Sound Awareness

- Select books that involve rhyming patterns, such as *Goodnight Moon*, *Brown Bear*.
- Engage in word play involving alliteration (e.g., "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers").
- Recite or sing Mother Goose rhymes like "This Little Piggy."
- Rhymes that include movement and gestures, such as "Pat-a-Cake" and "The Wheels on the Bus," are captivating.
- Read poetry with vivid rhymes.
- Sing songs that play with language, such as "Old MacDonald Had a Farm" and "Bingo."



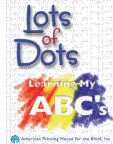
Sound Awareness, cont.

- Some toddlers enjoy listening to Raffi's song "Eat, Eat, Eat Apples and Bananas." This song repeats the same four words over, but changes the vowel sounds ("It, it, it ipples and bininis").
- Play with syllables of words by setting nursery rhymes to music, using different notes for each syllable. Caregivers can model breaking down words by singing the rhymes slowly, singing them fast, and clapping out syllables.
- Tapping with percussion instruments, such as sand blocks, cymbals, and drums, while singing can also help young children become aware of syllables.



Alphabet Awareness

- Alphabet blocks (Amazon.com, with braille and indented print letters on a wooden set)
- Magnetic letters (Seedlings has them with braille letters on them and an alphabet placement with print and braille on it)
- Alphabet books
- Alphabet songs



Playing with Alphabet Sounds



- Playing with magnet letters on a metal cookie sheet that have braille on them
- Child's name is Alisa
- If she points to or picks up the "A", make up a song about the sound it makes and play with an object that starts with that sound. "A is for 'a' as in apple or ankle. a-a-a"
- Draw/braille the letter; let her pretend scribble the letter in print or braille
- "I" is for 'i' as in lamb or your leg
- After a few letters, she may be ready to go on to another game...that's fine..don't push things
- Make it fun

Storytelling: Decontextualized Language

- Children who are told stories, whether fictional ones or ones based on real-life experiences, gain familiarity with decontextualized language.
- For example, a parent who has just come home from work uses decontextualized language to describe what happened at the office earlier in the day.
- Decontextualized language is the expression of ideas and concepts that are removed from the immediate situation or physical context.
- Exposure to decontextualized language facilitates children's ability to recall events, make predictions, ask and answer questions, and problem-solve



Shared Storytelling Steps

Step 1: Caregiver as storyteller

The caregiver tells a simple narrative. "Once, when I visited a petting zoo, I saw a llama."



Step 2: Caregiver as facilitator

After telling the story, the caregiver asks, "Have you ever been to a petting zoo? What animals did you touch?"

Step 3: Caregiver as listener/interpreter

The child tells a story. "Pig. I see pig with my mommy. So big!"

Step 4: Caregiver as facilitator

The caregiver uses prompts to help the story unfold, such as restating, paraphrasing, or asking *wh-* or open-ended questions. "You saw a big pig



with your mommy? What did the pig sound like?"

Step 5: Caregiver as listener

The child builds on the narrative. "The pig was loud. . . . Uh-oh . . . too big. I'm big."

Facilitating Narrative Development

Techniques to facilitate narrative development

- discussing children's daily experiences
- thinking out loud
- using pictures and objects to sequence the daily schedule
- encouraging others to share stories. modeling *who*, *when*, and *what* questions
- using art materials to support children's storytelling
- providing children with props to act out stories
- playing show-and-tell games



Dialogue/Conversation

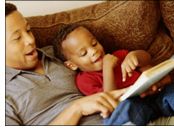
- Young children who are exposed to a wide variety of words in meaningful conversation learn new words each day.
- When adults use a wider variety of descriptive language, children pick up on words and learn their meaning in appropriate contexts.
- Children with larger vocabularies become better readers and writers as preschoolers.
- Children exposed to decontextualized language often become more adept learners in elementary school. Children with larger vocabularies become better readers and writers as preschoolers.
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Dialogic Reading

- This is a shared-reading technique in which the adult assumes the role of an active listener and the child learns to become a storyteller.
- The adult reader asks questions, adds information, and prompts the child in order to increase the sophistication of descriptions of material in the book.
- Children's responses are encouraged through praise and repetition.
- Dialogic reading has been shown, in a variety of circumstances, to produce greater effects on children's language skills than a similar amount of typical picture book reading in which children listen passively.
- Parents trained in dialogic reading enjoy the technique and say they plan to continue using it.

Dialogic Reading: PEER

- Prompt the child to comment on the book
- Evaluate the child's reply by responding to it
- Expand the child's response by paraphrasing and elaborating on it
- Repeat the expansion through a second prompt



Dialogic Reading: CROWD

- Completion prompts are used mainly with rhyming or repetitive stories. A blank is left at the end of a sentence, which children may fill in.
- Recall prompts ask children to describe something that happened in a story. Recall prompts can be used in the middle of a story or, if a child has read the book previously, before beginning to read.
- Open-ended prompts help facilitate problem solving and expressive fluency. Open-ended prompts should begin with words such as "why" and "how" or phrases such as "What do you think about...?" Open-ended questions may be about the storyline, tactile illustrations, pictures, or accompanying objects.
- Wh- prompts begin with *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, or *how* and are used to build vocabulary. Like open-ended prompts, they may refer to storyline, tactile illustrations, pictures, or accompanying objects.
- Distancing prompts ask children to relate the pictures and events in stories to their own experiences.

Critical Importance of Early Literacy

- Children who enter kindergarten with:
 - a limited vocabulary
 - little experience with conversation
 - inadequate concepts
 - limited exposure to written language
 - ... often remain behind throughout their school years
- Early literacy experiences are important for all children as it reaches beyond reading and writing
- Early literacy experiences:
 - help the child understand their world
 - offer opportunities to build knowledge and confidence
 - provide occasions for sharing fun
