Professional Development Guide

Implementing the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy
Part 1: Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts
College of Education, The University of Texas at Austin •
Texas Education Agency • Region XIII Education Service Center

www.texasreading.org

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Professional Development Guide

Implementing the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy Part 1: Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Table of Contents:

1. Introduction

What is the Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts?....7
Introduction....8
Organization & Content of the Guide....8-9
Center Staff and Other Contributors....10

2. Trainer Notes

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines....2
Language Development....5
Overview of Language Development....6
What is Language Development....7
Essential Language Systems....8
The Language-Literacy Connection....11
Language Accomplishments of Monolingual 4-Year-Olds....12
Language Diversity in Prekindergarten....13
Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten....15
What do you know about These Languages....18
Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten....20
Second Language Learners and the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines....21
Facilitating Second Language Acquisition....23
Stages of Second Language Acquisition....24
Focus on Developing Language and Print Concepts....25
Making a Second Language Comprehensible....26
Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines....29
Getting to Know the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines: Self Assessment....30
Optimal Language Development Occurs When....31
Room Arrangement for Optimal Language Interaction....32
Room Arrangement (before)....33
Room Arrangement (after)....34
Features of a Language-Rich Classroom....35
Scaffolding Children's Language Development....37
Preschool Settings for Language Development....41
Preschool Setting #1: Circle Time....42
Sharing Personal Narratives....43
Preschool Setting #2: Read-Aloud Sessions....47
Grouping for Effective Read-Alouds....50
Read-Aloud Sessions....51
Cognitively Challenging Book Talk....55
Types of Questions and Responses....59
Before, During, and After....60
Reading Aloud Different Types of Text....61
Text Types....62
Graphic Organizers....63
Story Retells....64
10 Ways to Retell, Reenact or Dramatize a Story....65
Read-Alouds and the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines....66
Preschool Setting #3: Small Group Instruction....67
Preschool Setting #4: Independent Center Time....69
Designing Dramatic Play Centers....73
Revisiting the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines....74

3. Transparencies

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Texas Center
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Table of Contents (contd.):

4. Handouts/Activities

5. Reprints

6. References

Introduction

What is the Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts ?

The Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts assists educators in enhancing the reading and language arts knowledge and skills of Texas students, through implementation of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

How are the Center's Activities Accomplished?

Goal 1: Develop and disseminate materials that support educators in implementing the TEKS with English language learners in grades K-2.

Goal 2: Enhance the knowledge, skills, and practices of prekindergarten teachers in implementing the new Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for language development and literacy development.

Goal 3: Enhance the knowledge, skills, and practices of kindergarten and first grade teachers in implementing the reading and language arts TEKS.

Goal 4: Enhance the knowledge, skills, and practices of grades 6 through 12 teachers in implementing the reading and language arts TEKS.

Goal 5: Use technology and media to disseminate information to educators on effective instructional practices in reading and language arts.

Goal 6: Enhance the knowledge, skills, and practices educators use to implement the reading and language arts TEKS with students in grades K-5 who are experiencing difficulties.

Goal 7: Enhance the knowledge and competencies of Education Service Center (ESC) reading liaisons, educators, and school administrators through professional development.

Goal 8: Communicate the goals, activities, and accomplishments of the Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts.

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Literacy Labs
Both school-based and university-based labs serve as models for universities and school districts.

Professional Development Guides and Videos
These guides are designed to provide educators across the state with materials and plans for professional development in instruction based on the reading and language arts TEKS.

Reading Liaisons
Education Service Center Reading Liaisons work collaboratively with Center personnel to engage in and provide professional development on the TEKS.

School Partnerships
Collaborative relationships with schools promote research on effective reading practices and inform the content of professional development guides.

Texas Center
for Reading
and Language Arts

Introduction

This professional development guide, Implementing the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy Part 1: Language Development, is based on the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines. These guidelines provide a means to align prekindergarten programs with the TEKS curriculum, and are intended to help educators make informed decisions about curriculum content for prekindergarten students. The Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines articulate accomplishments for three and four-year olds within broad domain areas. They serve as a resource to assist educators in instructional planning and are to be used on a voluntary basis.

Organization and Content of the Professional Development Guide

Overall Content

This guide, Implementing the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy Part 1: Language Development, addresses the language components of the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines. The guide contains detailed trainer notes, color transparencies, reprinted materials, original handouts, and suggested activities designed to support the application of the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines to classroom practice. These activities draw on participants' knowledge and expertise and offer opportunities for practice.

Instructional Content

The overhead transparencies are organized into the following sections:
(a) Overview of the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy Development.
(b) Key concepts in language development and the role of language in early literacy development,
(c) Language Diversity and Bilingualism,
(d) Effective instructional practices to implement the Guidelines, and
(e) Suggested session activities.

The Trainer Notes section provides detailed information and suggested strategies designed to enhance trainers' presentation of the content. Where appropriate, Trainer Notes identify the materials neede to complete the session activities associated with the transparencies. This information is also provided in table format at the end of the Introduction section. Given the extensive content of the guide and the fact that the time available for professional development sessions varies, the presentations may be adapted. The presentation includes an overview of the content and skill building practice with audience participation.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the support of the following individuals and agencies for their contributions to the professional development guides, Implementing the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy Part 1: Language Development and Part 2: Early Literacy Development.

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Statewide Initiatives

Special thanks to all our reviewers and contributors whose assistance and support made a valuable contribution to this product.

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Language Development Activities and Handouts

Trnsp #	Activity / Handout	Activity Description	Trainer Materials
17	Handout		Second Language Learners Glossary of Terms
18	Activity #1	Activity #1: What Do You Know About These Languages? Participants discuss their knowledge of the languages spoken by Texas prekindergartners.	Handout for Activity #1 Paper and pens or pencils for each group to record responses
21	Activity #2	Discuss this question: "How can teachers plan instruction that takes into account children's native language abilities?"	Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy (Reprint Section)
30	Activity #3	Activity #3: Getting to Know the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines: Self-Assessment Participants are asked to reflect upon their own knowledge and skills related to the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy in the following areas: listening comprehension, vocabulary, verbal expression, and developing knowledge of literary forms.	Handout for Activity #3 Paper and pens or pencils for each group to record responses
33	Activity #4	Activity #4: Room Arrangements for Optimal Language Interaction (Before/After/Modify Current Floorplan) Handouts of two sample floor plans provide a forum for discussion and evaluation with respect to language interaction. Participants are then asked to discuss one feature of their own classroom to change to encourage language interaction.	Handouts for Activity #4 (3 handouts) Paper and pens or pencils for each pair to record responses Optional: large-scale diagrams of room arrangements on poster board or overheads for whole-class discussion
39-40	Activity #5	Activity #5: Scaffolding Script Participants read through the Scaffolding Script in pairs. Participants are asked to identify which of the scaffolding strategies the teacher is using in each of the exchanges.	Handout for Activity #5 grease pencil or erasable marker pencils or pens
45-46	Activity #6	Sharing Personal Narratives Role Play Scaffolding Script from Activity #5 Participants practice scaffolding a child's language use by role playing the sharing of a personal narrative. One person pretends to be a prekindergartner who shares a photograph from home. The others at the table take the role of teachers who scaffold and extend the "child's" language based on the photograph.	Scaffolding Script from Activity #5 to use as a reference Transparency #38 on overhead (scaffolding strategies) **Note:** 1 family photograph from magazines or other resources should be available for each table of participants
47	Activity #7	Activity #7: News of the Day Trainers are encouraged to model this activity for teachers, first in a purely oral format, then writing down "children's" contributions on chart paper. Afterwards, participants discuss "News of the Day" activities that they use with their preschool children. Participants can use the Handout for Activity #7 to record their favorite ideas.	Handout for Activity #7 pencils or pens Optional: examples of ideas to share with large group
53	Activity #8	Activity #8: Building Vocabulary Participants identify key words and concepts from a children's book,and identify how these concepts and vocabulary words can best be taught in the context of a Read-Aloud session.	Handout for Activity #8 Trainers are encouraged to have a wide selection of age-appropriate story and information books for read-alouds at the session. Teachers who did not bring their own books can select from those provided by trainers to conduct this activity.
60	Activity #9	Activity #9: Before, During and After Reading Aloud Participants select from one of three well-known tales (The Three Bears, Little Red Riding Hood, The Three Little Pigs) to generate BEFORE, DURING and AFTER questions and activities for 3- or 4-year-olds.	Handout for Activity #9 Overhead Transparencies 42-46 as reference material for the activity

Language Development Activities and Handouts

55	Handout	Cognitively Challenging Book Talk Examples of the different types of cognitively challenging questions that can be included in conversations about stories and books are provided in the handout.	Handout on Cognitively Challenging Questions
62	Activity #10	Activity #10: Text Types Participants pick a theme or topic appropriate for prekindergarten students and identify several narratives (storybooks) and information books that could be used to develop the theme.	grease pencil
63	Activity #11	Activity #11: Graphic Organizers Participants read over the different types of graphic organizers that appear on Handout #11. Discuss how these might be used to develop a favorite theme or topic.	Handouts for Activity #11 on Graphic Organizers
65	Activity #12	Activity #12: Story Retell with Flannel Board Teachers go through steps 2 and 3 of a successful story retell lesson. One participant in each small group is designated as the "teacher." All others are "children." The teacher models the process of retelling a favorite story using the flannel board set (Step 2), then scaffolds children in the guided retelling of the story (Step 3).	1 Flannel board and 1 Flannel board story set per group of 8-10 participants
66	Activity #13	Activity #13: Read-Alouds and the PreK Curriculum Guidelines Refer to the Handout for Activities #13 and #16. Participants discuss with a partner or small group WHICH of the language accomplishments identified in the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines are addressed through effective Read-Alouds and Read-Aloud follow-up activities, then record specific language accomplishments under the Read-Aloud category.	Handout for Activities #13 and #16: Linking Instruction to the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines
68	Activity #14	Activity #14: Small Group Instruction (Building Language Through Cooking and Science Activities) Participants are asked to read through the handouts for Activity #14" and then practice using the "running commentary" strategy during a Small Group Instruction role-play.	Activity #14: Small Group Instruction: Building Language Through Cooking and Science Activities Materials needed: 1 box of food coloring, 6 clear plastic cups, 1 eye dropper per table of 4-8 participants, paper towels, newspaper to protect tables
73	Activity #15	Activity #15: Designing Dramatic Play Centers Participants select a favorite theme unit or storybook, then identify and design a dramatic play setting related to the selected theme or story. Trainers may wish to divide participants into two groups. Half of the participants design a real-life, theme-related setting, while the other half designs a story-related setting.	Materials needed: Large Butcher Paper, 1 sheet per table Fat colored markers, one set per table
74	Activity #16	Activity #16: Revisiting the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines Participants will engage in the following activities to conclude the training session: 1. Think about the practices highlighted in the discussion of Small Group Instruction and Independent Center Time. 2. Refer to the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines. Discuss with a partner or small group WHICH of the language accomplishments are addressed through the activities highlighted for each of these settings. 3. Refer to the Handout for Activity #13 and write some of the specific language accomplishments under "Small Group Instruction and Independent Center Time."	Handout for Activity #13/16

Trainer Notes

Language Development

1

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

- ✓ Articulate what 3- and 4-year olds should know and be able to do
- ✓ Provide a means to align prekindergarten programs with the TEKS curriculum
- ✓ Serve as a resource to assist educators with instructional planning; to be used on a voluntary basis

2

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

1. Listening comprehension
2. Speech production and speech discrimination
3. Vocabulary
4. Verbal expression
5. Phonological awareness
6. Print and book awareness
7. Letter knowledge and early word recognition
8. Motivation to read
9. Developing knowledge of literary forms
10. Written expression

3

#2: Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy

Before we begin to discuss language development, the topic of today's session, let's focus directly on the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines.

The Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines:

- Articulate what 3- and 4-year-olds should know and be able to do
- Provide a means to align prekindergarten programs with the TEKS curriculum
- Serve as a resource to assist educators with instructional planning and are to be used on a voluntary basis

Today's professional development training session will address implementing the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy.

#3: Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy

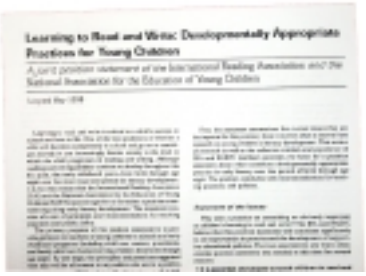
The Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy identify what prekindergartners should know and be able to do in the following broad areas:

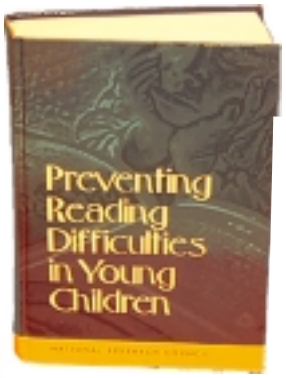
1. **Listening comprehension**
2. **Speech production and speech discrimination**
3. **Vocabulary**
4. **Verbal expression**
5. **Phonological awareness**
6. **Print and book awareness**
7. **Letter knowledge and early word recognition**
8. **Motivation to read**
9. **Developing knowledge of literary forms**
10. **Written expression**

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Primary Source Materials





4

These guidelines draw from existing research on children's language and early literacy development. Primary source materials for the Language and Early Literacy Guidelines include:

- **The 1998 National Research Council report on *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children***
- **The 1999 National Research Council publication, *Starting Out Right,*** and
- The 1998 joint position statement issued by the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) titled, ***Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children.***

You will find a copy of the IRA/NAEYC joint position statement in the reprint section of this guide. You will also find a copy of the chapter on preschool education from *Starting Out Right*.

Note: A copy of the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines has been included in the reprint section of this notebook. Trainers may wish to allow participants time to familiarize themselves with this document before moving on to the training content. However, activities which refer participants to the Guidelines have been built into the training sessions at various points.

Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

"The more children know about language…the better equipped they are to succeed in reading."

National Research Council, 1999

5

Language skills are critical to children's preparation for literacy and success in school.

Let's focus on the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for **Language Development,** and its role in developing early literacy in prekindergartners.

"The more children know about language….the better equipped they are to succeed in reading."

This statement comes directly from the recent (1999) National Research Council publication, *Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children's Reading Success.*

As prekindergarten teachers, you are in a critical position to enhance children's language development and thereby improve your students' chances for future success in school.

(Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1999)

Overview of Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Key concepts in language development

Language diversity and bilingualism

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Organizing instruction

We will discuss:

- Ideas for effective read alouds
- Ways to enhance circle time
- How to develop language through science and cooking activities
- Ways to enhance children's dramatic play and independent center time

6

In this workshop, we will examine

Key concepts in language development,

Language diversity and bilingualism,

the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines, and

Organizing instruction to implement the Guidelines effectively

Specifically, **we will discuss:**

- Activities to **enhance circle time,**
- **Ideas for** more **effective read alouds,**
- Ways to **develop language through science and cooking activities,**
- Ways to enhance children's dramatic play and language development during **independent center time.**

What is Language Development?

Speaking and listening to communicate meaning

Children learn language as they interact with responsive adults and peers and experience language use in meaningful contexts.

7

Essential Language Systems

Quick Quiz

1. _____ → the basic sound units of language

2. _____ → words and word meanings

3. _____ → phrases and sentences that make sense and are correct

8

#7: What is Language Development?

Language development involves children's learning a whole set of language systems, each with its own rules.

Children learn these language systems in a fairly unconscious way as they **speak and listen to communicate meaning.**

Children learn language as they interact with responsive adults and peers and as they experience language use in meaningful contexts.

#8: Essential Language Systems: Quick Quiz

- We're going to talk about the four principal language systems.

  Each one is essential for children to become effective communicators as well as successful readers and writers later on.

- On this transparency you see definitions for three of those systems.

  As a quick quiz, jot down on a piece of scratch paper the name of the language system you think goes with each definition.

(Snow & Tabors, 1993)

Essential Language Systems

Answers

1. **Phonology** → the basic sound units of language
2. **Vocabulary** → words and word meanings
3. **Grammar** → phrases and sentences that make sense and are correct

9

Essential Language Systems: Answers

1. The first definition refers to which language system?

Pause for responses.
Yes, it's **phonology.**

Phonology refers to those aspects of language that are related to how we hear, produce and represent **the basic sound units of language**, such as phonemes and syllables.

A phoneme is the smallest unit of speech sound that is specific to a language. For example, /s/ is a phoneme that appears frequently in English language words. /rr/ (rolled r) is a sound in Spanish phonology that has no English equivalent.

Children master the phonological system of their native language as they learn to make sounds and combine them into words.

2. The second definition refers to which language system?

Pause for responses.
Yes, it's **vocabulary**.

Vocabulary refers to knowledge of **words and word meanings**.

Between the ages of 2 and 6, children learn at least 3 or 4 new words a day, and expand the meanings they have for words they know. This learning occurs with lots of help from adults and other children, who provide information about words and their meanings.

3. The third definition refers to which language system?

Pause for responses.
Yes, it's **grammar**.

Grammar, also known as syntax, refers to the system of rules that guides how to combine words into **phrases and sentences that make sense and are correct.**

Children learn the grammatical rules of their native language unconsciously as they acquire language.

(Snow & Tabors, 1993)

Essential Language Systems

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

4. Pragmatics

The appropriate use of language; rules for communicating effectively in diverse social situations

Pragmatics includes:

- Rules of politeness
- Conversational skills
- Extended discourse, for example:

  - Telling a story
  - Giving an explanation

10

4. The fourth language system is **pragmatics:**

Pragmatics refers to the rules for **the appropriate use of language to communicate effectively in many different situations** and for many different purposes.

Pragmatics includes:

rules of politeness, such as learning to say "please," "excuse me," or "*con permiso*," and other polite ways of talking;

conversational skills, such as taking turns when talking with a partner, and focusing talk on the topic at hand; and

extended discourse, which refers to stretches of related talk that extend beyond just a single sentence.

Extended discourse skills include **telling a story** and **giving an explanation** so that the listener can understand the relationship between ideas and events.

Extended discourse skills such as narrative are especially important for success in reading and school.

Pragmatics are culturally specific. For example, what is considered polite talk or good storytelling in one culture may not be so in another.

(Cazden, 1988; Ninio & Snow, 1996)

The Language-Literacy Connection

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Language	Reading and Writing
Phonology	• Phonological awareness • Letter-sound correspondences
Vocabulary	• Listening comprehension • Word recognition • Reading comprehension
Grammar	• Listening comprehension • Comprehending complex written language
Pragmatics (with emphasis on narrative and other extended discourse)	• Listening and reading comprehension • Written composition • Understanding teacher talk

11

The information on this transparency can be presented in a "think, pair, share" format, by covering the information on the right side of the transparency and asking teachers to consider how each language system is linked to children's later success as readers and writers.

Why is language development so critical? While language skills are important in and of themselves, this transparency shows how **language** development is also linked to children's later success as **readers and writers.**

Phonology and children's awareness of the sounds of words, that is, their **phonological awareness**, form the basis for learning **letter-sound correspondences**.

Vocabulary in preschool is an important predictor of later literacy success. Preschool children with large vocabularies tend to have better **listening comprehension, word recognition, and reading comprehension** later on.

Grammar is important because children's familiarity with complex sentence structures helps them **comprehend stories read aloud to them** and that they later **read themselves**.

Pragmatics with an emphasis on extended discourse are also important.

Narrative and explanation are forms of extended discourse that appear in most books and written texts; thus they are critical for **listening** and later **reading comprehension**.

Extended discourse skills also relate to the development of **written composition** skills.

Finally, **pragmatic skills** are important **for understanding what teachers say** in the classroom, much of which is explanation.

In summary:

It is important to keep in mind that children's language skills in preschool are strong predictors of their future success as readers and writers.

(Catts, Fey & Tomblin, 1999; Hart & Risley, 1995; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Snow & Tabors, 1993;)

Language Accomplishments of Monolingual 4-Year-Olds

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

- Expressive vocabulary of around 1,500 words
- Produce complex sentences at least 4 to 5 words in length
- Mastery of most basic grammar rules
- Ask and answer "wh" questions
- Discuss feelings; use language to converse and entertain
- State and defend opinions
- Can tell simple stories and create make-believe situations
- Can describe objects and events by joining sentences together
- Can engage in word play or word games
- May have difficulty pronouncing /r/, /l/, /s/, /th/, /z/

Still to be developed:

- Wide vocabulary
- Conversational skills
- Complex grammatical structures
- Narrative and descriptive skills

12

#12: Language Accomplishments of Monolingual 4-Year-Olds

Here is an overview of the many language skills and concepts prekindergarten children may bring to school.

As you read through the list, remember there is a wide range of normal variation in language abilities from one child to another.

Some children use language that is developmentally immature, that is to say, below what one might expect for children of the same age, while others use language that is beyond expectation for their age.

Also, it is important to be aware that the language development of bilingual children may be different from that of monolingual children, who speak only one language. We will come back to this point in a moment.

The 4-year-old child still needs to learn a vast number of **words**, develop **narrative and other extended discourse skills**, and learn more **complex grammatical structures**. Many prekindergarten activities such as book-reading and teacher-led small group instruction provide opportunities to nurture the language that relates to the development of literacy.

(Cazden, Snow, & Heise-Baigorria, 1990; IRA/NAEYC, 1998; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998)

Language Diversity in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Most prekindergarten children are experienced users of language, but their language has been acquired in the context of their homes and communities, and within diverse cultural and linguistic settings.

13

#13: Language Diversity in Prekindergarten

As we talk about language development, keep in mind the diverse preschool population in Texas.

Most prekindergarten children are experienced users of language, but their language has been acquired in the context of their homes and communities, and within diverse cultural and linguistic settings.

Many of the differences in language heard among preschoolers reflect differences in children's home language backgrounds, not learning problems or deficits.

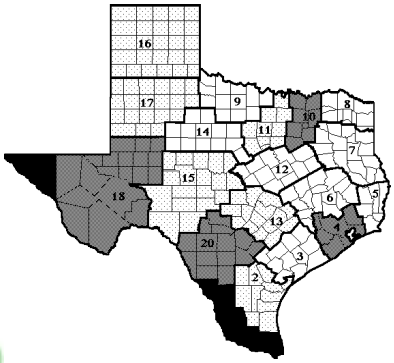
Some preschool children may have had fewer opportunities to acquire the kind of vocabulary and specialized book language that is especially valued in school.

Children with less developed language repertoires need enriched language experiences. To introduce a steady flow of new words, concepts, and language structures, talk with them, respond carefully to their talk, and read to them at every opportunity.

Language Diversity in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

37% of prekindergarten children and 31% of Head Start children in Texas have a dominant language other than English



- 5% and Under
- 6% - 10%
- 11% - 30%
- Over 30%

LEP students Pre-K- 12,
Texas Education Agency, 1999-2000

14

#14: Language Diversity in Prekindergarten

Let's look at some of the language differences in our prekindergartners.

In 1999-2000, nearly 47,000 Texas prekindergartners, or **37% of all prekindergarten students, had a dominant language other than English.**

These students were officially classified as Limited English Proficient, or "LEP." They were most heavily concentrated in Education Service Center Regions 1, 4, 10, 18, 19 and 20.

In addition, Head Start programs served approximately 18,000 Texas children with a primary language other than English.

That represents 31% of the state Head Start population.

Nearly every early childhood teacher in Texas can expect to teach children non-English language backgrounds at some time.

(TEA, 1999-2000, PEIMS data)

Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Home Language:

Spanish

91%

Vietnamese
Chinese
Korean
Laotian (Lao)
Cambodian
German
Japanese
French

(in order of most to least represented in Texas)

9%

Texas Education Agency, 1999-2000

- Many children enter prekindergarten already bilingual to some degree.
- Bilingual 4-year-olds may have more limited vocabularies in each of their two languages than their monolingual age peers. However, their combined vocabulary in both languages is likely to be equal to or exceed that of the English-only child.

15

This chart of 1999-2000 Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data shows the most common languages of prekindergarten children who speak a language other than English at home. The languages are listed in order from the most commonly represented to the least represented in Texas prekindergarten classrooms.

Spanish is by far the most common home language of the second language learners in Texas schools.

Read through the list of other languages represented in the state.

- **Many children** who speak a language other than English at home **come to school already bilingual to some degree**. A bilingual child has at least some level of proficiency in two different languages.

- **Bilingual 4-year-olds may have more limited vocabularies in either their home language or in English than their monolingual age peers. However, their combined vocabulary in both languages is likely to be equal to or exceed that of the English-only child.** Remember, bilingual children have a wide range of proficiencies in each of their two languages.

Ask participants: What does this mean for assessment?

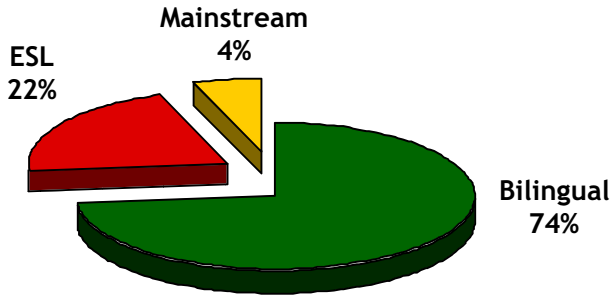
One possible answer: It is important to assess bilingual children in ***both*** *of their languages to get an accurate sense of all that they DO know. This is especially true in the area of vocabulary. If we assess children only in English or only in one of their two languages, we will have an incomplete picture of their language competencies.*

(Genessee, 1995; TEA, 1999-2000, PEIMS data)

Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Program Type: 1999-2000



Texas Education Agency

16

#16: Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten (contd.)

Children who speak a home language other than English are sometimes referred to as Second Language Learners.

1999-2000 data show that more than **74**% of Second Language Learners in Texas prekindergartens are **in bilingual classroom settings**.

In these classrooms, children develop their language and early literacy skills in their primary language, usually Spanish, as they acquire English.

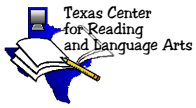
This is important because children benefit academically from having a strong language and literacy foundation in their home language.

Approximately **22**% of Limited English Proficient (LEP) prekindergartners are placed in **English as a Second Language, or ESL classrooms**, where teachers use specific strategies to support children's acquisition of language and early literacy skills in English.

Finally, **nearly 4**% of Limited English Proficient prekindergartners are in regular or mainstream classroom settings. Children in these settings usually receive no special supports to facilitate their acquisition of English.

(August & Hakuta, 1997; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; TEA, 1999-2000, PEIMS data)

Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten



Glossary of terms:

- Second Language Learners
- Limited English Proficient (LEP)
- Bilingual
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Bilingual Education

17

Second Language Learners Glossary of Terms

Note: Trainers may want to spend time discussing the following terminology, or may choose to refer participants to the Handout Section in which this glossary can be found.

- **Second Language Learners**: Students from homes where the language background is other than the majority language, and who are considered to be limited English proficient. For most children from non-English language backgrounds in the United States, the second language is English.

- **Limited English Proficient (LEP)**: A label used by TEA and many other state and local education agencies nationwide to identify children who have a home language other than English, and for whom basic proficiency in spoken English has not yet been attained.

- **Bilingual:** Term used to describe any individual with some degree of spoken proficiency in two languages.

- **ESL**: Acronym for English as a Second Language. Refers to instructional programs designed to facilitate the acquisition of English for native speakers of other languages.

- **Bilingual Education**: Refers to educational programs that provide students from non-English language backgrounds with some degree of instructional support in their native language, in addition to instruction in English as a second language. Some bilingual education programs also provide second language instruction for native English speakers.

What Do You Know About These Languages?

Activity #1

CAMBODIAN	FRENCH	LAO
CHINESE (Mandarin)	GERMAN	SPANISH
ENGLISH	JAPANESE	VIETNAMESE
KOREAN		

1. Which of the above is the most widely spoken language in the world (# of native speakers)?
2. Which are the second and third most widely spoken (# of native speakers)?
3. Which of the above are written using the Roman alphabet?
4. Which of these languages have both formal and informal forms of address, depending on the social status of the speaker and addressee (as in the French for *you*: informal "tu" vs. formal "vous")?
5. Which languages have alphabetic versus pictographic scripts?

18

#18: Activity #1: What Do You Know About These Languages?

Activity

Let's see how much we know about the languages spoken by Texas prekindergartners.

Refer to the Handout for Activity #1. At your table, work together to answer each question.

Remember there may be more than one answer for some questions.

Answer key:

1. Chinese (Mandarin) = 800+ million native speakers

2. 2nd = English, with 400+ million native speakers; 3rd = Spanish with 300+ million native speakers

3. Written using the Roman alphabet: English, Spanish, French, German, Vietnamese (since the 17th century) and Japanese (within last 50 years)

4. Languages with both formal and informal forms of address: All except English

5. Alphabetic: English, Spanish, French, German, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Lao (Cambodian and Lao have syllabic-alphabetic writing systems in which separate symbols represent individual syllables.)

Pictographic (also known as ideographic): Chinese, Korean

Alphabetic AND pictographic: Japanese

After a few minutes, read each question aloud and review answers with the group.

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Remember!

The language forms that children bring to school are intimately tied to their family, community, and personal identity.

19

#19: Remember!

Language and dialect differences are not deficits!

Children from different backgrounds may vary in the way they use language and in the way their language sounds.

It is important to remember that **the language forms that children bring to school are intimately tied to their family, community, and personal identity.**

We need to respect language and dialect differences among our children and help them take pride in their cultural backgrounds, as we model standard language use.

Children are eager to learn a new language or language form when there is acceptance of them, their cultures, and their native languages or dialects.

Note: Within each broad language group, there is great diversity. For example, Spanish-speaking preschoolers may trace their family origins to Mexico, Cuba, Guatemala, Colombia, Puerto Rico, or other Spanish-speaking countries, each with its own cultural history and language characteristics. It is important that we learn as much as possible about each child and his or her family and avoid making assumptions based on ethnic group affiliations.

Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Excellent literacy instruction in multilingual settings may be possible "only if children's home languages are taken into account in designing instruction."

(National Research Council, 1998)

"The native language serves as the foundation for English language acquisition. Cognitive skills transfer from one language to another. Students literate in their first language will apply these skills to the second language."

(Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines; TEKS)

20

#20: Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten

We're now going to focus specifically on addressing the needs of children who speak a home language other than English.

Children with limited proficiency in English are sometimes referred to as second language learners.

However, it is important to recognize that in prekindergarten, all children are still in the process of acquiring their FIRST language.

A recent report by the **National Research Council** states:

Excellent literacy instruction in multilingual settings may be possible "only if children's home languages are taken into account in designing instruction."

The Texas **Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines** and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills **(TEKS)** remind us:

"The native language serves as the foundation for English language acquisition. Cognitive skills transfer from one language to another. Students literate in their first language will apply these skills to the second language."

(Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; K-TEKS)

Second Language Learners and the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Activity #2

1. Refer to your copy of the Prekindergarten Curriculum Language and Early Literacy Guidelines. Read the second paragraph in the introduction section on p.2.

2. The Guidelines state, *"Except where specified, the following guidelines outline language and literacy accomplishments for 3- and 4-year-old children IN THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGE."*

3. Discuss: How can teachers plan instruction that takes into account children's native language abilities?

21

Activity

#21: Activity #2: Second Language Learners and the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Materials needed:
Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines (Reprint Section)

1. Refer to your copy of the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy. Read the second paragraph in the introduction section on p. 2.

2. The Guidelines state, "Except where specified, the following guidelines outline language and literacy accomplishments for 3- and 4-year-old children IN THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGE."

3. Discuss the following: "How can teachers plan instruction that takes into account children's native language abilities?"
Record your responses to share with the group.

Possible responses:

- *Children's home languages are valued and respected as the foundation for future language and literacy growth. The stronger that foundation, the greater the likelihood that children will be successful English readers later on.*

- *Whenever possible, provide instruction in the child's home language. Bilingual teachers, paraprofessionals or teachers' aides, and parent volunteers can provide children with needed home language support.*

- *Books, environmental print, and other print resources in children's native languages should be made available.*

Second Language Learners and the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

For children learning English as a Second Language, specific language accomplishments are identified by the acronym "ESL" in the areas of listening comprehension, speech production, vocabulary, and verbal expression.

All of the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines apply to the individual child AT HIS OR HER LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH.

22

#22: Second Language Learners and the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Many teachers in English-only classrooms will have opportunities to work with children learning English as a second language.

Sometimes bilingual personnel are not available to provide prekindergartners with an instructional program that supports their native language development.

Also, many prekindergartners in bilingual classrooms spend some of their day learning English as a Second Language.

Designing effective language and early literacy instruction for second language learners holds unique challenges.

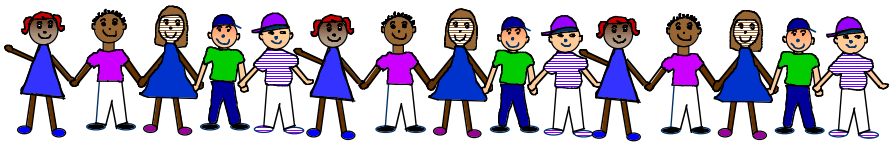
For children learning English as a Second Language, the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines identify specific language accomplishments using the acronym "ESL" in the areas of listening comprehension, speech production, vocabulary, and verbal expression.

It is important to remember that **all of the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines apply to the individual child AT HIS OR HER LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH.**

Facilitating Second Language Acquisition

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

1. Hold high expectations for children's learning.
2. Create a safe and secure learning environment.
3. Create opportunities for children to use English for playful and interesting purposes.
4. Facilitate the development of essential language and early literacy skills, at the child's level of oral proficiency in English.



23

#23: Facilitating Second Language Acquisition

Teachers of young children learning English as a Second Language need to keep in mind several principles in designing effective instruction:

1. **Hold high expectations for all children's learning!**
2. **To learn a new language, children need to feel safe and secure** in their attempts to communicate with others.
3. **Create opportunities for children to interact with others using their new language in playful and purposeful ways.**
4. **Facilitate the development of essential language and early literacy skills at the child's level of oral proficiency in English.**

(Tabors, 1997)

Stages of Second Language Acquisition

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

- Home language use
- Nonverbal or silent period
- Early production or telegraphic speech
- Productive language use

Keep in Mind: Children tend to function at a slightly higher level in receptive language skills (listening) than in expressive language skills (speaking).

24

#24: Stages of Second Language Acquisition

Young children acquiring English as a second language tend to go through the following developmental stages:

- Some children continue to communicate **using their home languages** for a period of time, even with people who are not likely to understand them.
- Then, children often enter a **nonverbal or silent period**, in which they don't speak at all, except to speakers of their home languages.

Although they are silent, children may use nonverbal forms of communication, such as gestures or pantomime.

During this time, they are listening actively and gathering information about the new language.

- Once they have acquired sufficient English by listening, children enter a stage of **early production** in which they use **telegraphic speech**.

  Telegraphic speech refers to children's use of one- or two-word phrases to communicate much longer ideas.

  For example, a child at this level may point and say simply "Ball," meaning, "Can I please have that ball?"

- Finally, children begin **productive language use.**

  At this stage of second language acquisition, children use new vocabulary and their growing knowledge of English grammar to build sentences.

  It is normal for children to overgeneralize language rules, such as saying "goed" instead of "went," or "foots" instead of "feet."

  Throughout this process, the focus is on meaningful communication.

  Keep in Mind: Children tend to function at a slightly higher level in receptive language skills (listening) than in expressive language skills (speaking).

  This means that often second language learners are able to understand what is said to them before they are able to communicate with their own words and sentences.

(Tabors, 1997)

Focus On Developing Language and Print Concepts

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Activities that promote language development, listening comprehension, and print concepts are ideal for children learning English as a Second Language

WHEN

the activities accommodate children's language needs.

This means making the language of instruction comprehensible to children.

25

Making a Second Language Comprehensible

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

- Use meaningful language in context
- Use simplified language
- Use nonverbal cues
- Use manipulatives, visuals, and objects
- Introduce content in the child's primary language
- Speak slowly and enunciate clearly
- Repeat, rephrase, and extend children's language
- Provide opportunities for interaction in English

26

#25: Focus on Developing Language and Print Concepts

Lessons and activities that promote language development, listening comprehension, and print concepts are ideal for children learning English as a Second Language

WHEN

the activities accommodate the children's language needs. This means making the language of instruction comprehensible to children.

#26: Making a Second Language Comprehensible

To help children understand the new language they are hearing and to scaffold their language use:

- **Use meaningful language in context.**
- **Use simplified language**. Use simpler vocabulary and grammatical structures.

  Try to put the vocabulary words you want to emphasize at the end of sentences.

  For example, "That strange animal is an armadillo!"
- **Use nonverbal cues** including gestures and facial expressions.
- **Use manipulatives, visual media, and objects** to help children understand your message.
- **Introduce content in the child's primary language, <u>when feasible</u>.**
- **Speak slowly and enunciate clearly.**
- **Repeat, rephrase, and extend children's language.**
- **Provide opportunities for interaction in English.** Consider teaching English-speaking children how to interact more effectively with their more limited English speaking peers.

All of these ideas are effective supports for children with diverse learning needs.

Remember!

The English language learner is doing twice the cognitive work of the native speaker because he or she is:

1st - Acquiring new literacy concepts and skills, AND

2nd - Attending to the sounds, meanings, and structures of a new language.

27

Also Remember...

- *Second Language Learners have many strengths and proficiencies in their home languages that may be invisible to English-only teachers.*
- *Parents are an invaluable source of information on children's language abilities.*

28

#27: Remember!

Remember, the English language learner is doing twice the cognitive work of the native speaker because he or she is:

1st: Acquiring new literacy concepts and skills

AND

2nd: Attending to the sounds, meanings, and structures of a new language.

Learning of new concepts and skills is most likely to occur when the child fully comprehends the message.

#28: Also Remember…

Also Remember…

- **Second language learners have many strengths and proficiencies in their home language that may be invisible to English-only teachers**.

Second language learners are in the process of adding English to their language repertoire.

- **Parents are an invaluable source of information on children's language abilities.** Teachers can learn a great deal about children's language needs and proficiencies by speaking informally with parents and other care-providers.

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Address broad areas of language development, including:

- Listening Comprehension
- Vocabulary
- Verbal Expression
- Developing Knowledge of Literary Forms

29

#29: Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

We will now focus on the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines and discuss ways teachers can organize instruction to support children's language development.

The Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines address broad areas of language development for prekindergarten.

These areas include:

- **Listening comprehension**
- **Vocabulary**
- **Verbal expression**
- **Developing knowledge of literary forms**

Getting to Know the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines: Self Assessment

Activity #3

Assess your own knowledge!

LANGUAGE AREAS

- Listening Comprehension
- Vocabulary
- Verbal Expression
- Developing Knowledge of Literary Forms

Handout for Activity #3

Getting to Know the Prekindergarten Guidelines: Self-Assessment

LANGUAGE AREAS • A ccomplishments	I Know and Do Well✓	Examples of My Instructional Activities	I Need to Know More ✓
1. LISTENING COMPREHENSION			
• listens for different purposes			
• enjoys listening to and responding to books			
• understands and follows simple oral directions			
2. VOCABULARY			
• shows steady increase in listening and speaking vocabulary			
• refines and extends understanding of known words			
3. VERBAL EXPRESSION			
• uses sentences of increasing length and complexity			
• tells a simple personal narrative			
• begins to retell the sequence of a story			
4. DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE OF LITERARY FORMS			
• begins to predict what will happen next in a story			
• imitates the special language of storybooks and story dialogue in retellings and dramatic play			
• becomes increasingly familiar with narrative form and its elements (characters, plot, resolution)			
• connects information and events in books to real-life experiences			

• accomplishments
example: Becomes increasingly familiar with narrative form and its elements.

30

Activity

Materials needed: Handout for Activity #3

Note: Participants should be reminded that the handout lists only a sample of the language accomplishments identified in the Guidelines for each area.

This activity is designed to help you assess your own knowledge of the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines and the associated child accomplishments.

The column on the left lists the Language Areas and a few of their corresponding child accomplishments from the guidelines.

Take a moment to reflect on your own practice as a prekindergarten teacher.

In the second column, "**I Know and Do Well,"** identify those specific areas where you recognize your greatest knowledge and expertise.

Jot down the names of activities you do that promote language development in these areas in the third column, "**Examples of My Instructional Activities."**

In the fourth column, "**I Need to Know More**," check those areas where you would most like to improve your knowledge.

We will now focus on effective ways teachers can support children's language development.

Optimal Language Development Occurs When...

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

...children have opportunities to use language frequently.

"Children who are constantly exposed to an environment rich in oral language and who interact frequently with adults in a supportive social and emotional setting develop more facility with oral language than children lacking these opportunities."

Morrow, Strickland, & Woo, 1998

31

Room Arrangement for Optimal Language Interaction

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Small partitioned spaces promote:

- Higher quality verbal interaction.
- Increased cooperative play.
- Create use of language-related activities.

Large open spaces result in:

- Poor language interactions.
- Less use of language-related activities.

32

#31: Optimal Language Development Occurs When…

Optimal Language Development Occurs When…

…children have opportunities to use language frequently.

Take a moment to read the following passage.
Refer to transparency.

What does this mean for how we design instruction for optimal language development? *Pause for responses.*

This passage highlights how critical it is to create a language-rich prekindergarten environment for 3- and 4-year-olds.

Children need frequent opportunities to interact intensively with teachers and other adults and to interact with each other one-on-one and in small groups, both during and outside of formal instruction.

The language environment is where some of our strongest efforts need to be focused.

(Morrow, Strickland, & Woo, 1998; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998)

#32: Room Arrangement for Optimal Language Interaction

We begin by focusing on room arrangement.

Classroom design and use of space has an important impact on children's opportunities for language development.

Classrooms with **small partitioned spaces promote:**

- **higher quality verbal interactions**,
- **more cooperative play** among children than classrooms with large open spaces, and
- **greater use of language-related activities.**

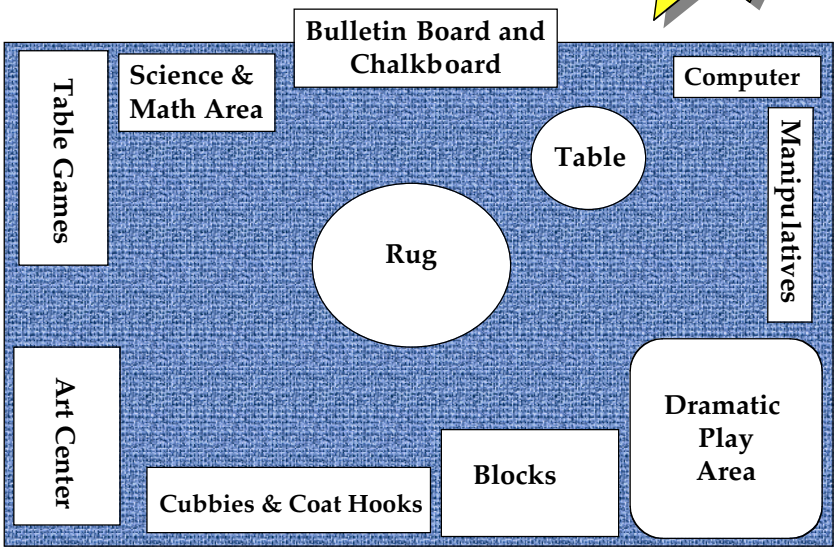
On the other hand, **large open spaces** tend to result in:

- **poor language interaction** and
- **less use of language-related activities.**

(Morrow, Strickland, & Woo, 1998; Neuman & Roskos, 1993)

Room Arrangement (Before)

Activity #4



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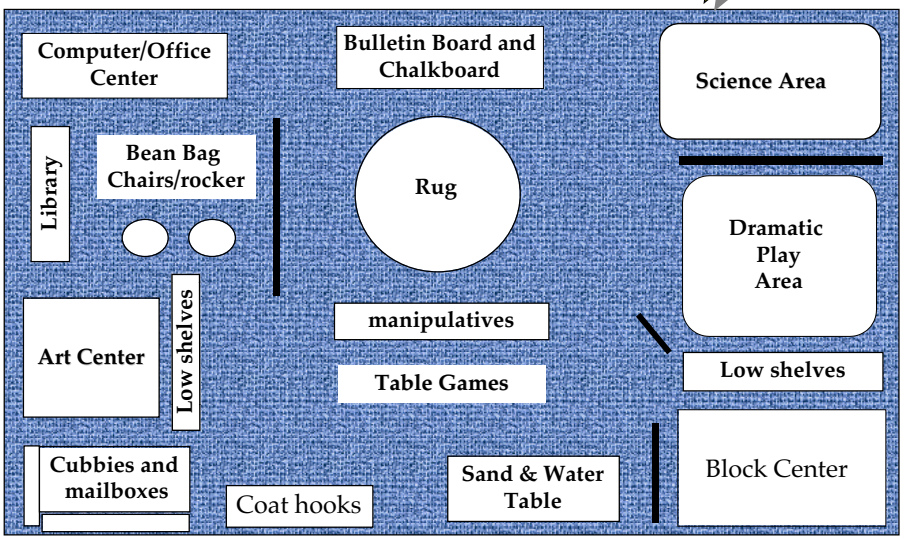
Room Arrangement (After)

Activity #4



34

Activity

Materials needed:
Activity #4 Handout

Note:
Research suggests that the physical space of the classroom should be broken into smaller activity and play settings so that boundaries are built into the environment. These boundaries encourage more talk among students and between students and the teacher.

Activity #4: Room Arrangements for Optimal Language Interaction

- Find the three Activity #4 Handouts.
- With a partner, evaluate each floor plan with respect to language interaction.
- Discuss one feature of your own classroom you might change to encourage language interaction.

(Morrow, Strickland, & Woo, 1998; Neuman & Roskos, 1993)

Optional Homework Assignment: Think about how you might improve your room arrangement in response to the principles discussed above. Bring a draft classroom plan to share with others at our next session.

(Morrow, Strickland, & Woo, 1998; Neuman & Roskos, 1993)

Features of a Language-Rich Classroom

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Teachers in language-rich classrooms:

- ✓ Read aloud daily
- ✓ Engage children in extended, cognitively challenging conversations
- ✓ Ask open-ended questions
- ✓ Encourage children to retell stories
- ✓ Encourage children to describe events in their lives
- ✓ Discuss a wide range of topics
- ✓ Model use of new and unusual words
- ✓ Discuss word meanings

35

#35: Features of a Language-Rich Classroom

Cover up the list of features of a language-rich classroom and then ask the following question:

You're all familiar with the importance of a *print-rich* classroom.

What do we mean by a *language-rich* classroom?

Pause for responses. You may wish to list participants' ideas on chart paper.

Then uncover the transparency list and compare.

Teachers in a "language-rich" classroom:

- **read aloud daily.**
- **engage children in extended, cognitively challenging conversations**. (We will focus more on "cognitively challenging talk" when we discuss effective read-aloud strategies.)
- **ask open-ended questions.**
- **encourage children to retell stories.**
- **encourage children to describe events in their lives.**
- **discuss a wide range of topics** that are inherently interesting to children.
- **model use of new and unusual words** and encourage children to use new vocabulary and language.
- **discuss word meanings.**

***Research note**: Cognitively challenging conversations and the use of wide vocabulary by teachers, as well as time spent in small group activities with the teacher during preschool, have all been shown to affect children's literacy skills at the end of kindergarten.*

(Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998; Snow & Tabors, 1993)

Features of a Language-Rich Classroom (contd.)

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

In language rich classrooms, teachers:

- ✓ Challenge children to justify their thinking
- ✓ Encourage children to express ideas using complex sentences and vocabulary
- ✓ Encourage language play
- ✓ Encourage pretend play and pretend talk
- ✓ Interact with children one-on-one and in small group activities

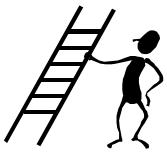
Children's language abilities are enhanced as the quality of conversation and the amount of one-on-one or small group interactions with children increase (NRC, 1998)

36

Scaffolding Children's Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Scaffolding…



- guides and supports the child's language learning by building on what the child is already able to do.
- moves child from a lower to a higher level of language use.
- builds language and literacy skills in young children.
- builds English as a Second Language skills.

37

#36: Feature of a Language-Rich Classroom (cont'd.)

In "language-rich" classrooms **teachers**:

- **challenge children to justify their thinking;**
- **encourage children to express ideas using complex sentences and vocabulary;**
- **encourage language play** such as rhyming, alliteration, and the use of repetitive or rhythmic language;
- **encourage pretend play and pretend talk**, such as the kind of talk children use in dramatic play centers; and
- **interact with children one-on-one and in small-group activities.**

Children's language abilities are enhanced as the quality of conversation and the amount of one-on-one or small group interactions with children increase (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

Teachers in language-rich classrooms maximize opportunities for interactions that involve lots of talk and that focus on letting the children express ideas.

(Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Snow & Tabors, 1993)

#37: Scaffolding Children's Language Development

One of the keys to creating a language-rich environment is to **scaffold** children's **language development**.

- Through "**scaffolding**," the teacher **guides and supports children's language learning by building on what the child is already able to do, moving him or her to a higher level of language use.**
- Scaffolding has been used successfully to **build young children's language and literacy skills,** including with children who are language delayed.
- It is also effective for **building English as a Second Language skills.**

Scaffolding Children's Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

To SCAFFOLD children's language, teachers…

- model the use of extended language and rich vocabulary
- use questions and prompts to extend children's language
- give children adequate response time
- expand children's ideas, using new vocabulary and syntax
- request clarification
- promote questions and conversations among children
- provide feedback to encourage, interpret, and evaluate children's responses

38

You can **scaffold children's language development** in many ways.

- **Model the use of extended language and rich vocabulary**. For example, before children are asked to retell a story you can model the story retell process using a flannel board. During "show-and-tell," you can describe your own "show-and-tell" object before the children describe theirs.

- When children begin retelling stories, you **can ask questions and use prompts** to help them reconstruct story events.

Encourage children to be more precise in their descriptions by asking open-ended questions, such as questions that begin with why" and "how." For example, ask a child to explain how she felt when she visited her cousins in Mexico, or why Little Red Riding Hood stopped to talk to the wolf.

- **Give children adequate response time.** Wait at least five seconds before rephrasing the question or requesting help from another child.

You can also:

- **expand children's ideas using new vocabulary and syntax**. This means taking what a child has said and rephrasing it in a new way, adding more complex grammar or vocabulary. This is especially important for children learning a second language. For example, if a child tells you, "Look, I made a dragon," you can respond by saying, "Yes, I see you made a dragon with scaly, green skin."

- **request clarification**. Tell the child you're not sure you understand what she means and ask her to explain more clearly.

- **promote questions and conversation among children.** Encourage the children to ask questions of one another so that they learn to use language appropriate to the needs and interests of their listeners.

- **provide feedback to encourage, interpret and evaluate children's responses.**

Scaffolding Children's Language Development

Activity #5

39

Scaffolding Children's Language Development

Activity #5

- Can you tell us a story about your photo?
- Can you tell us what was happening here?
- Who is that in the picture?
- Where were you when this was taken?
- Yes I see that you were behind your house on the patio,
- and it was a beautiful sunny day. What were you all doing?
- What kind of cake was it?
- How did you bake the cake?
- I'll bet you mixed the ingredients together. Am I right?
- Hmm. I'm not sure I understand. Can you tell us exactly what happened?
- Would any of you like to ask ….

40

#39: Activity 5- Scaffolding Children's Language Development

Activity

Materials needed:
Handout for Activity #5

Now let's look at how this translates into real language interactions. Refer to the Activity #5 Scaffolding Script in your Handouts Section.

This dialogue involves an interaction between a teacher and child during a Sharing Time activity. In this dialogue, the child tells the class about a photograph she brought from home.

With a partner at your table, choose the role of either teacher or child. Then read through the dialogue. As you do, think about the specific ways in which the teacher scaffolds the child's language use.

#40: Activity 5- Scaffolding Children's Language Development

Activity

Participants read through the Scaffolding Script in pairs. After 2 or 3 minutes, ask participants to identify which of the scaffolding strategies the teacher is using in each of the exchanges.

- Can you tell us a story about your photo?
- Can you tell us what was happening here?
- Who is that in the picture?
- Where were you when this was taken?
- Yes I see that you were behind your house on the patio, and it was a beautiful sunny day. What were you all doing?
- What kind of cake was it?
- How did you bake the cake?
- I'll bet you mixed the ingredients together. Am I right?
- Hmm. I'm not sure I understand. Can you tell us exactly what happened?
- Would any of you like to ask ….

Preschool Settings for Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

1. Circle time

2. Read-aloud sessions

3. Small group instruction

4. Independent centers

41

#41: Preschool Settings for Language Development

We're now going to focus on ways to scaffold children's language development in some of the activity settings commonly found in preschool classrooms.

We're going to focus on four preschool settings in particular:

1. **Circle time,**
2. **Read-aloud sessions,**
3. **Small group instruction**, and
4. **Independent centers**

We'll examine ways that teachers can address Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language Development in each of these settings.

Preschool Setting #1:
Circle Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

The following Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines can be addressed in the context of Circle Time.

Child accomplishments:

- Listens for different purposes
- Tells a simple personal narrative
- Uses language for a variety of purposes
- Uses sentences of increasing length and grammatical complexity
- Uses new vocabulary in everyday communication
- Refines and extends understanding of known words

42

Most of you use "**Circle Time**" as a preschool setting.

Circle Time promotes language development when children feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and sharing their experiences with others. It is a setting for many favorite language activities, including:

Sharing Personal Narratives
News of the Day or Morning Message

These activities build important links between children's home and school experiences and help children develop extended discourse skills (telling personal narratives, providing explanations and descriptions).

These Circle Time activities address the following Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for language development:

- **Listens for different purposes**
- **Tells a simple personal narrative**
- **Uses language for a variety of purposes**
- **Refines and extends understanding of known words**
- **Uses new vocabulary in everyday communication**
- **Uses sentences of increasing length and grammatical complexity**

Sharing Personal Narratives

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

CIRCLE TIME

Narrative: talk in which at least two different but related events are clearly described.

Personal narratives relate meaningful events and experiences.

Narratives may be told using photographs or drawings as props.

43

#43: Sharing Personal Narratives

During Circle Time, children can develop extended discourse skills by sharing personal narratives.

Narrative is one of the most important language skills children develop in preschool.

Narrative is an extended discourse form in which at least 2 different but related events are described so that the relationship between them becomes clear.

Children begin to learn about the structure and purpose of narrative through exposure to the stories that adults tell during everyday conversation, such as, "You'll never believe what happened on my way to school today. After I left the house, I saw an old friend. She was really in a hurry..."

In their own **personal narratives**, children **relate events** or experiences that have special **meaning** to them. **Narratives can be told using favorite photographs or drawings as props.**

Sharing Personal Narratives

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To help children build narrative skills teachers can:

- Model the telling of personal narratives
- Scaffold children's narratives
- Use questions to develop narrative structure
- Recognize cultural differences in narrative style

44

To help children build narrative skills, you can:

- **model the telling of personal narratives** using your own favorite photos.
- use **scaffolding** to extend children's language and encourage them to add important details. You can **ask open-ended questions**, such as "What were you doing at the park?" or "Why was your dog barking?"
- use questions to help children learn **narrative structure**: What happened first? What happened next? The children will learn that, like storybooks, personal stories can have a beginning, middle and end.
- **recognize** that children's personal narratives may reflect **cultural differences.**

Note:
For example, in some cultures, children are socialized to participate in conversations with adults, whereas in other cultures, children are not considered appropriate conversational partners. Those children may find adult-child conversations strange or unfamiliar. Some children may tell personal narratives that stay focused on a single topic and proceed chronologically, while others may tell narratives that have several themes or episodes, and follow a less sequential pattern. Some children may even learn that it is inappropriate to draw attention to themselves by telling a personal story in front of a group. These differences affect the way children respond to teachers' behavior and to specific classroom language activities.

Many children may feel more comfortable sharing personal narratives in one-on-one or small group settings before they share with the whole class.

Small group settings provide opportunities for a higher level of teacher support and more individualized attention for children who are shy or who have more limited extended language skills.

What ideas do you have that encourage shy or reluctant children to participate?

Pause for participants to share ideas. One idea is for the teacher to hold a microphone, real or imaginary, near the child's mouth. The child can whisper, then pause and let the teacher "amplify" his or her comments to the group.

Sharing Personal Narratives: Role Play

Activity #6

"What was happening when you took this picture?"

or,

"Can you tell us a story about your picture?"

45

Sharing Personal Narratives: Role Play

Activity #6

What scaffolding strategies were easy to do?

Which strategies were more difficult?

What kinds of questions elicited longer or more elaborate responses from the child?

46

#45: Activity #6: Role Play

Activity

Materials needed:
At least one individual at each table should have a photograph from home depicting a family scene or event.

Let's quickly practice scaffolding a child's language use. Choose a person at your table to be a prekindergarten child. That "child" will share a photograph she or he brought from home. The others at the table will be teachers.

Your objective as teachers is to help scaffold and extend the child's language to encourage their telling of a personal narrative based on the photograph.

The first teacher to the left asks the child to begin. The child tells one thing about her photo using the language of a typical 4-year-old. "What was happening when you took this picture?" or, "Can you tell us a story about your picture?"

The child tells one thing about her photo using the language of a typical 4-year-old. The second teacher to the left responds to the child's statement using one of the scaffolding strategies on Transparency #38 in your notes. (The Scaffolding Script can also be used as a reference.)

Then the child responds. The next teacher uses another strategy, and the child responds. Go around the table and listen to the scaffolding of language being used in the interactions.

#46: Activity #6: Role Play

Activity

Allow about five minutes for the activity. Then ask the following questions.

- What scaffolding strategies were easy to do?
- Which strategies were more difficult?
- What kinds of questions elicited longer or more elaborate responses from the child?

Preschool Setting #1: Circle Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

News of the Day

- Encourages the retelling of events
- Converts children's home or school experiences into a literary form
- Demonstrates that oral language can be written down

47

Preschool Setting #1: Circle Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

News of the Day

News of the Day / Morning Message

Discuss with your colleagues different ways teachers can develop children's language skills through News of the Day or Morning Message activities.

Jot down your favorite ideas in the space provided below for future reference.

_____

What questions or prompts could be used to encourage children's verbal expression for each of the strategies you discussed? Keep in mind the importance of asking open-ended (how or why) questions.

_____

48

News of the Day or Morning Message is an activity that:

- **Encourages the retelling of events**

  When you and the children discuss events that are important in the children's lives, you encourage them to further develop their narrative skills.

- **Converts children's home or school experiences into a literary form**

- **Demonstrates that oral language can be written down**

News of the Day is an activity that models the use of literate discourse.

1) Each day during Circle Time, ask children to "tell their news", that is to, describe important events in their homes or communities, or to comment upon activities in the classroom that day.

2) Spend time at the beginning of the year conducting this activity in a discussion-only format, without writing down the children's news.

3) As children become better at telling their news, record their comments on a large sheet of paper with the date. You may add pictures or ask the children to draw a picture beside their name.

Daily news bulletins can be kept as a log of the classroom's year-long activities. They can also serve as the basis for weekly parent news bulletins.

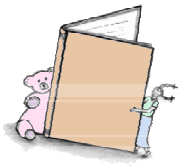
Activity

Materials needed: Handout for Activity #7

Note:
Trainers are encouraged to model this activity for teachers, first in a purely oral format, then writing down "children's" contributions on chart paper. Afterwards, participants can take a moment to share with one another "News of the Day" activities that they use with their preschool children. Participants can use the Handout for Activity #7 to record their favorite ideas.

Preschool Setting #2:
Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts



Read-aloud sessions can help children:

- Improve their vocabulary and concept development
- Broaden their knowledge about the world
- Enhance their listening comprehension
- Strengthen their extended language skills

Frequent book readings familiarize children with book language and how it differs from everyday language.

Verbal interactions between adults and children before, during, and after book reading can have a strong influence on children's language and literacy development.

49

#49: Preschool Setting #2: Read-Aloud Sessions

Reading aloud to children is one of the most important activities for developing language and early literacy skills.

Reading aloud provides excellent language learning situation for ALL children, especially for children with more limited vocabularies and less experience with literate types of oral language.

Read-aloud sessions can help children:

- **improve their vocabulary and concept development,**
- **broaden their knowledge about the world,**
- **enhance their listening comprehension, and**
- **strengthen their narrative and other extended discourse skills.**

Through frequent book readings, children become familiar with book language and how it differs from everyday language.

Children encounter a broader range of words in books than they do in a typical conversation.

As they listen to stories read aloud, they develop sense of narrative language and story structure.

As they listen to information books being read aloud, they develop a sense of "explaining language" as they learn information.

Verbal interactions between adults and children before, during, and after book reading can have a strong influence on children's language and literacy development.

(Dickinson, Cote, & Smith, 1993; IRA-NAEYC, 1998; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998)

Grouping for Effective Read Alouds

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Read-aloud sessions can be conducted effectively with children one-on-one, in small groups, and in whole class settings.

Research strongly supports the effectiveness of reading aloud to small groups of 3-6 children.

The quality of group book-reading with 4-year-olds is linked to children's language and literacy skills at the end of kindergarten.

50

#50: Grouping for Effective Read Alouds

Read-aloud sessions can be conducted effectively with children one-on-one, in small groups, and in whole class settings.

Research strongly supports the effectiveness of reading aloud to small groups of 3-6 children.

Teachers are most likely to use unusual words in a small group setting. Small group time is conducive to good conversations about books.

The quality of group book-reading with 4-year-olds is linked to children's language and literacy skills at the end of kindergarten.

(Beals, De Temple, & Dickinson, 1994; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998)

Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Vocabulary & Background Knowledge

The size of a child's vocabulary is a key predictor of reading success.

Reading/Listening Comprehension and Enjoyment

"To read successfully, children need sufficient background knowledge and vocabulary to render written texts meaningful and interesting."

National Research Council, 1998

51

Building children's **vocabulary and background knowledge** is crucial to literacy achievement.

The size of a child's vocabulary is one key predictor of reading success. Preschool children with strong receptive or listening vocabularies tend to have good story listening comprehension AND good reading comprehension in the later elementary grades.

"To read successfully, children need sufficient background knowledge and vocabulary to render written texts meaningful and interesting."

Knowing a lot of words is usually related to knowing a lot about the world.

This means that helping children acquire wide-ranging world or background knowledge is important for literacy success.

Children who lack vocabulary and background knowledge related to book topics will have difficulty understanding the books they encounter in school, especially as the books they read become more difficult in third grade and beyond.

Read alouds are an excellent way for children to learn new vocabulary and build background knowledge.

This feedback loop illustrates that the more children are read to, the more quickly their **vocabularies and knowledge** about the world grow.

As their vocabularies grow, their **listening comprehension** and **enjoyment** of books increases.

The success they experience comprehending books will help motivate children to learn to read, and to read independently. This will lead to greater knowledge of words and of the world.

(Dickinson, Cote, & Smith, 1993; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1999; Snow & Tabors, 1993)

Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

To build vocabulary and background knowledge:

1. Read books on many topics
2. Teach some new words and concepts before reading
3. Discuss word meanings as you read and focus on challenging words
4. Use many senses when introducing new words
5. Discuss book illustrations
6. Promote analytic or cognitively challenging discussions about book events and topics
7. Repeat-read favorite books
8. Use "oral cloze" technique

52

Not all kinds of reading aloud are equal. On this slide we have listed some ideas for developing vocabulary and background knowledge through read-aloud sessions.

To build vocabulary and background knowledge:

1. Read books on many topics.

Find books and stories about many different topics, creatures, places, and things that are of interest to your students.

2. Teach some new words and concepts before reading.

Before reading aloud, anticipate and discuss a few new words, their meanings, and other related concepts.

3. Discuss word meanings as you read and focus on challenging words.

Remember that young children usually love to learn challenging words in books. Words such as "nocturnal," "canopy," or "termómetro" (thermometer) are some examples.

Discuss other books that you have read that are on similar topics. This gives children an opportunity to use their knowledge of new words and concepts.

4. Use many senses when introducing new words.

Action words can be acted out. Other words can be drawn, sung, demonstrated, or presented visually.

5. Discuss book illustrations

To build background knowledge and motivation for reading, have students make predictions about the book based on the book's title and illustrations.

Discuss what children already know about the topic of the book, and relate the content of the book to students' knowledge of its topic.

Continued next page

(Beals, De Temple, & Dickinson, 1994; IRA-NAEYC, 1998; Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1999; Neuman, Copple, & Bredekamp)

-Continued from previous page-

Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

To build vocabulary and background knowledge:

1. Read books on many topics
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5. Discuss book illustrations
6. Promote analytic or cognitively challenging discussions about book events and topics
7. Repeat-read favorite books
8. Use "oral cloze" technique

52

Continued from previous page

6. Promote analytic or cognitively challenging discussions.

After reading the story with few interruptions, engage children in discussions that go beyond literal comprehension questions. Ask "why" and "how" open-ended questions that encourage children to make inferences and look for cause-effect relationships in particular story events.

7. Repeat-read favorite books.

Preschoolers may learn vocabulary words just from hearing them read in context. However, the chance of learning a word from hearing it one time is relatively small.

Reading a book several times gives children repeated exposures to new words and helps them refine their understanding of word meanings.

Children love to participate in selecting their favorite book for read alouds.

8. Use the "oral cloze" technique.

The oral cloze technique can give children opportunities to use new words they have heard during read alouds.

Reread a story, but deliberately pause before a new vocabulary word, allowing time for the children to supply the word.

Teachers who spend some time talking about words are most effective at promoting vocabulary learning.

But remember, it is the **quality** of the talk, not the overall amount or **quantity** of talk, that counts.

Read-Aloud Sessions

Activity #8

Building Vocabulary

Select a children's book from those available or one you brought from home. Identify key words and concepts that may be new or challenging for young children.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Book Title:

Book Author:

Which words/concepts are best introduced before reading the book aloud?

_____

How might you find out what children already know about these words?

_____

How might you introduce some new words/concepts using a multisensory approach?

_____
_____

Which words would you discuss in context as you read the book aloud?

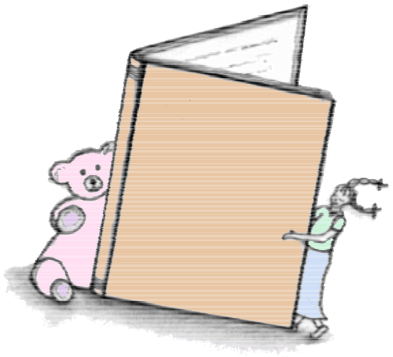
_____

Which words could be highlighted or reinforced using the oral cloze technique during a repeated reading?

_____

Identify other vocabulary-building activities you might use after you've read the book aloud.

_____
_____



53

Remember...

...reading aloud is not enough!

The effectiveness of reading aloud depends upon:

- the type, quality, and variety of books that are read and
- the types of interactions that occur before, during, and after reading

Cognitively challenging discussions and the use of a wide vocabulary by teachers is especially effective in enhancing children's language and literacy development.

54

Activity

Materials needed: Handout for Activity #8

- *Trainers are encouraged to have a wide selection of age-appropriate story and information books for read alouds at the session. Teachers who did not bring their own books can select from those provided by trainers to conduct this activity.*

(Beals, De Temple, & Dickinson, 1994; IRA-NAEYC, 1998; Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1999; Neuman, Copple, & Bredekamp)

Reading aloud should occur several times a day. But **remember, reading aloud is not enough**. The power and effectiveness of daily read-aloud sessions depends upon…

- **the type, quality, and variety of books that are read.** Preschool classrooms must provide children with many opportunities to experience the reading of good stories and interesting information books.

  The classroom books must contain rich language and vocabulary and engage children's interest or imagination.

- **the types of interactions that occur before, during, and after reading.**

It's the talk that SURROUNDS the reading aloud of books that is so important in enhancing children's language development and listening comprehension.

Cognitively challenging discussions and the use of a wide vocabulary by teachers is especially effective in enhancing children's language and literacy development.

(Dickinson & Smith, 1994 ; IRA/NAEYC, 1998; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Snow, 1991)

Cognitively Challenging Book Talk

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

- Discussion of past and future events
- Analysis/speculation about cause and effect relationships
- Prediction of upcoming events
- Talk that encourages deep thinking about issues or themes
- Analysis of characters' feelings, personality traits and motivations
- Direct discussion of words and word meanings
- Talk about print

The more that 4-year-olds participate in cognitively challenging talk about books and stories in preschool, the better their story comprehension, vocabulary and overall literacy achievement in Kindergarten through Grade 4.

55

Materials needed: Handout on Cognitively Challenging Questions

Research notes:

The more that 4-year-olds participate in cognitively challenging talk about books and stories in preschool, the better their story comprehension, vocabulary. and overall literacy achievement in Kindergarten.

Children's participation in this kind of talk is also linked to their literacy and school achievement in third and fourth grade.

Cognitively challenging book talk refers to questions and comments that:

- **focus on past and future events,**
- **analyze and speculate about cause and effect relationships,**
- **predict upcoming events,**
- **encourage thinking about issues or themes,**
- **analyze characters feelings, personality traits and motivations,**
- **explore words and word meanings, and**
- **talk about print.**

Let's look at some examples of how we might use this kind talk with *Goldilocks and the Three Bears.*

Refer participants to the Handout on Cognitively Challenging Questions.

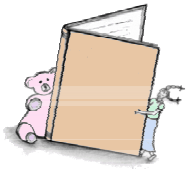
(Beals, De Temple, & Dickinson, 1994)

Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Before reading…

- Discuss children's experiences related to the story's theme
- Find out what children already know about a book topic
- Ask predictive questions
- Introduce key vocabulary using a variety of approaches



56

Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

During reading…

- Stop for children's reactions, comments, questions and predictions
- Explain new or unusual words
- Ask what story characters may be doing or feeling
- Point out story details in illustrations
- Recognize children's efforts to add sound effects, actions, or to read along

Asking too many questions during a storybook read-aloud is not as effective as discussions and questions before and after reading.

57

#56: Read-Aloud Sessions: Before Reading...

Read-Aloud Sessions: Before reading…

- **Discuss children's experiences related to the story.**
- With an information book, **find out what children already know about the book topic**.
- **Ask predictive questions**. Children discuss what the story may be about.
- **Introduce key vocabulary using a variety of approaches**. You may teach important new words using real-life objects or pictures when appropriate.

#57: Read-Aloud Sessions: During Reading...

Read-Aloud Sessions: During reading...

It is important that children hear the story without too many major interruptions so they can hear the flow of story events and the special language of books. However, you can encourage children to express their interests in the story as you read it.

- **Stop** a few times **for children's reactions, comments, questions, and predictions.**
- **Explain unusual words**, or you may **ask what story characters are doing or how they are feeling**.
- **Point out details of the story in the illustrations**; children may want to talk about the pictures.
- Recognize children's efforts to **add sound effects or actions** or to **read along**.

Asking too many questions during storybook read alouds is not as effective as discussions and questions before and after reading.

Note: It is important to engage children in discussion during the reading aloud of information books.

(Dickinson, De Temple, Hirschler, & Smith, 1992)

Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

After reading…

- Ask questions that encourage children to figure out the sequence of story events
- Encourage inferences and judgments
- Help the children link the book to their own experiences
- Ask children how they would change the story ending
- Discuss children's favorite story events
- Encourage acting out or retelling of well-loved stories
- Encourage children to share stories with family members at home

58

Types of Questions & Responses

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In Text

Includes many *who, what,* and *where* questions

- Focus on information on the page
- Rephrase text that has just been read
- Recall facts, events, and names (labeling)

Related to Text

Includes many *how, why,* and *what if* questions

- Move away from what can be seen on the page (making inferences)
- Analyze character behavior and motivation
- Focus on vocabulary and concepts
- Connect story and children's own world

59

#58: Read-Aloud Sessions: After Reading…

Read-Aloud Sessions: After reading…

- **ask questions that encourage children to figure out the sequence of story events** and look for cause-effect relationships.
- help children learn to ask questions of the teacher and their peers.
- **encourage** children to make **inferences and judgments.**
- help children **link the book to their own experiences**.
- **ask children how they would change the ending**. This can promote understanding that storybooks come from people's imaginations and that children can also make up stories.
- children can **discuss their favorite events**, or **act out/ retell the story** in their own words.
- **encourage children to tell people at home about the stories** they've heard at school.

#59: Types of Questions & Responses

Ask a variety of questions including those that can be answered **based on the text** and those that **relate to the text**. Provide support or scaffolding for children across a range of developmental levels.

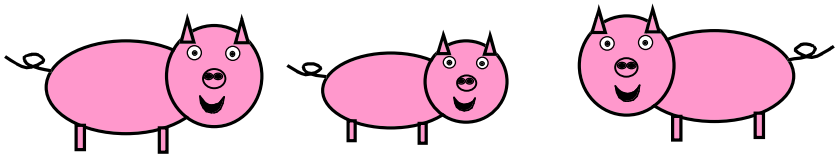
When teachers ask simple or more literal questions, they encourage children to become aware of the information in the text.

When teachers ask complex or more open-ended questions, children extend their thinking beyond the text.

Before, During and After

Activity #9

1. Refer to the Handout for Activity #9.
2. Select from one of three well-known tales: The Three Bears, Little Red Riding Hood, The Three Little Pigs
3. In a small group, come up with BEFORE, DURING and AFTER questions and activities for your 3- or 4-year-olds.
4. Use the information on Overhead Transparencies 55-59 to assist you.
5. Record the group's ideas on the Handout.



60

Activity

Materials needed: Handout for Activity #9

1. **Refer to the Handout for Activity #9 as a guide**.

2. **Select from one of three well-known tales: The Three Bears** (Los Tres Osos), **Little Red Riding Hood** (Caperucita Roja), **or the Three Little Pigs** (Los Tres Cochinitos).

3. **In a small group, develop some before, during and after questions and activities for your 3- or 4-year-olds**.

4. **Use the information on overhead transparencies 55-59 to assist you**.

5. **Record your ideas to share with the whole group**.

Reading Aloud Different Types of Texts

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Narratives:

Tell a story using a familiar story structure

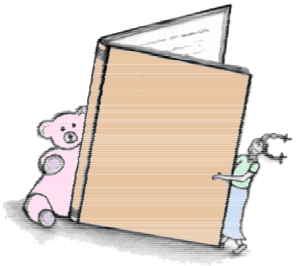
Beginning → Introduces Setting + Character(s) with a problem to solve or a goal to achieve

Middle → Plot: Series of events in which the character(s) attempts to solve the problem or achieve the goal

End → Resolution: Solution to the problem or accomplishment of a goal; theme is (sometimes) revealed

Information Books:

Present information or tell about topics in different and varied ways



61

#61: Reading Aloud Different Types of Texts

When you read aloud different types of texts, you will increase your children's abilities to understand and make sense of a variety of written materials.

The reading aloud of story books and information books exposes children to information and ideas from outside their everyday experience.

Narratives tell a story using a familiar story structure.

Narrative texts contain key story elements such as setting, characters, plot, resolution, and theme. These elements are usually presented within a familiar story structure.

The ***beginning*** of a story usually **introduces us to the setting and a character or characters with a problem to solve or goal to achieve.**

A series of plot episodes unfold in the ***middle*** of a story.

The **plot** consists of a **series of events in which the character or characters attempt to solve the problem or achieve the goal**. In the ***end***, the **problem is resolved or the goal is accomplished and a theme may be revealed**.

Information books present information or tell about topics in different and varied ways.

Reading information books aloud helps build and extend children's vocabulary and storehouse of knowledge about the world.

Helping prekindergarten children appreciate and understand informational text is an important part of early literacy development.

Early experiences with information books also help support children's comprehension of the content-area textbooks they will later read in school.

Can anyone think of an example of a nonfiction narrative or storybook? Example: A children's biography that tells the story of the life of Martin Luther King, Jr.

(Morrow, Strickland, & Woo, 1997; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998)

Text Types

Activity #10

1. With a partner, select a theme or topic appropriate for your prekindergarten students.
2. Identify several narratives and information books you might read aloud to develop the unit.

Theme / Topic

Narratives	Information Books
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Add theme-related texts or other types such as pattern books, alphabet books, songs, and poems to complete your list.

62

Activity

- **With a partner, pick a theme or topic appropriate for your prekindergarten students.**
- **Identify several narratives** (storybooks) **and information books you might use to develop the theme**.
- For example, if the theme or topic is Bears, you may include:

Pause for teachers' responses. Record teachers' responses on Transparency #62 with a grease pencil. Book titles in each category are listed below as additional examples

Example:

Narratives	**Information Books**
The Three Bears /Los Tres Osos	*Polar Bear Cubs*
Blueberries for Sal	*Andy Bear*
Un día felíz	*Grizzly Cub: 5 years in the life….*
Little Bear/Osito	
The Biggest Bear	
Corduroy	
Un Bolsillo Para Corduroy	
Bears in the Night	
El Bebé de los Osos Berenstein	

Add related pattern books (such as *Polar Bear, Polar Bear* by Bill Martin, Jr.), **alphabet books, poems, and songs in separate categories to complete your list**. Keep in mind that many pattern books, such as *Brown Bear Brown Bear*, are not narratives.

Graphic Organizers

Activity #11

Visual systems that organize information:

- Language to Literacy Charts
- K-W-L Charts
- Story Road Maps

Graphic organizers can be used before or after reading to help children:

- remember what they already know
- expand their knowledge about a topic
- visualize what they've heard read
- understand how books, book events, ideas or words are related to one another

63

Activity

Materials needed: Handouts for Activity #11

Graphic organizers are visual systems that organize information.

Different types of graphic organizers, such as Language to Literacy Charts, K-W-L Charts, and Story Road Maps, can help young children understand stories, new concepts, and related themes.

Graphic organizers appeal to children and provide a visual means of reinforcing their developing listening comprehension skills.

The oral discussions that occur during these procedures can add to the read-aloud experience.

You will find examples of each kind of graphic organizer in your Handouts. Graphic organizers are created by the teacher with the class.

K-W-L charts record what children already *Know* about a particular topic, what they *Want to know*, and what they *Learned*.

Graphic organizers can be used prior to, during, or after reading to help children:

- **remember what they already know**
- **expand their knowledge about a topic**
- **visualize what they hear**
- **understand how books, ideas and words are related to one another.**

Some organizers are better suited for narratives (Story Road Maps), while others work well with information books (K-W-L charts).

Have participants look at the Handouts for Activity #11 on Graphic Organizers.

Activity #11: Graphic Organizers

Look over the examples of different types of graphic organizers that appear on Handout #11. Discuss how you might use one of the suggested models to develop a favorite theme or topic.

(Morrow, 1997; Roser & Hoffman, 1992)

Story Retells

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Retelling familiar stories strengthens children's listening comprehension and narrative skills.

Steps to successful story retells:

1. Teacher reads story aloud several times
2. Teacher models a story retell with or without props
3. Children retell with teacher support (scaffolding and guidance)
4. Individual or groups of children retell independently

64

- **Retelling familiar stories is an ideal activity to help children strengthen their listening comprehension and narrative language skills.**

  Retelling stories helps children focus on the ways in which storybook language is different from everyday speech.

  Story retells can also improve children's vocabulary.

- **Successful story retells** can involve some or all of the following **steps:**

1. **Teacher reads the story aloud several times**.

2. **Teacher models a story retell with or without props**.

3. **Children retell the story with teacher support (scaffolding and guidance).**

   Teachers can hold up the book and use questions or verbal prompts to scaffold children's first retell attempts.

   For example, ask, "What happened first?"

   If children leave out details important to the logical sequence of the story, ask open-ended "how" or "why" questions to fill in what's missing.

   "What happened before that?" "Why did…?"

4. **Individual and groups of children retell the story independently.**

(Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Purcell-Gates, 1998)

10 Ways to Retell, Reenact, or Dramatize a Story

Activity #12

Start with group retells and teacher modeling

1. Oral response
2. Puppets
3. Flannelboard
4. Pretend-read to a stuffed animal
5. Pretend-read with a friend
6. Tell it to a parent
7. Tell it on tape
8. Group dramatization
9. Draw and tell
10. Story-based dramatic play centers

Create opportunities for independent practice

65

Activity

Materials needed:

- *1 Flannel board and*
- *1 Flannel board story set per group of 6-8 participants*

There are **many ways to retell, reenact, or dramatize a story**. Here are ten of them.

Always start by **modeling how to retell a story.** Then try **group retells** to help children become familiar with the process.

Oral Response involves the teacher using verbal prompts to help children retell the story after hearing it read aloud.

For the other suggested activities, you can model the use of props such as **flannel boards**, **puppets**, and costumes to do dramatic retellings of stories. Then scaffold children's use of props to retell stories in small groups.

As children gradually learn the process, you can use verbal prompts to help them with their retellings.

Finally, **create opportunities for independent practice.**

Place children's favorite books in centers where props are available. The children will have opportunities to further develop their narrative skills through independent retellings.

Activity #12: Story Retell with Flannel Board

Teachers go through steps 2 and 3 of a successful story retell lesson. One participant in each small group is designated as the "teacher." All others are "children." The teacher models the process of retelling a favorite story using the flannel board set (Step 2), then scaffolds children in the guided retelling of the story (Step 3).

Read Alouds and the PreK Curriculum Guidelines

Activity #13

1. Think about the practices highlighted in our discussion of read alouds.
2. Refer to the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines. Discuss with a partner or small group WHICH of the language accomplishments are addressed through effective read alouds and read aloud followup activities.
3. Refer to the Handout for Activity #13 and pencil in some of the specific language accomplishments under "Read Alouds." Remember to include accomplishments from the Guidelines category "Developing Knowledge of Literary Forms."

66

Activity

Materials needed: Handouts for Activities #13 and #16.

1. **Think about the practices we highlighted in our discussion of read alouds.**

2. **Discuss with a partner or small group which of the language accomplishments identified in the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines are addressed through effective read alouds and read-aloud follow-up activities**. Refer to the Guidelines in the areas of Listening Comprehension, Vocabulary, Verbal Expression, and Developing Knowledge of Literary Forms.

3. **Write down some of the specific language accomplishments under the read aloud category**. Notice the first accomplishment has been listed for you.

   Review the accomplishments teachers have listed. Accomplishments related to read-aloud activities include:

   Enjoys listening to and responding to books.

   Listens for different purposes.

   Shows a steady increase in listening and speaking vocabulary.

   Refines and extends understanding of known words.

   Begins to retell the sequence of a story.

   Becomes familiar with narrative form and its elements.

   Uses language for a variety of purposes.

   Uses sentences of increasing length and grammatical complexity.

Preschool Setting #3:
Small Group Instruction

Plan time each day for teacher-led, small group activities involving no more than 3 to 6 children.

When teachers provide small group instruction there are more opportunities to:

- extend conversations
- enrich vocabulary

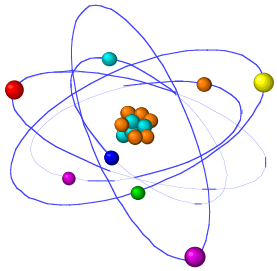
Which leads to:

- improved story comprehension, vocabulary, and early literacy skills in kindergarten

67

Preschool Setting #3:
Small Group Instruction

Activity #14



1. Read the Handouts for Activity #14 on Building Language though Cooking & Science Activities

2. Practice the "Mixing Colors" activity using the running commentary strategy.

68

- It is critical that teachers **plan time for small group activities involving no more than 3 to 6 children**.
- Research shows that **in small groups, teachers are more likely to engage children in cognitively rich, extended conversations** than at other times.
- They are also more likely **to use an enriched vocabulary** as they interact with children.
- The amount of time preschool children spend in small, teacher-led groups has an important impact on **children's story comprehension, vocabulary, and early literacy skills in kindergarten**.

(Beals, De Temple, & Dickinson, 1994; Dickinson, Cote, & Smith, 1993)

Activity

Building Language Through Cooking and Science Activities

Materials needed: 1 box of food coloring, 6 clear plastic cups, and 1 eye dropper (available at most pharmacies) per table of 4-8 participants, paper towels, and newspaper to protect tables

1. Read through Handouts for Activity #14. Included are sample lessons to develop new concepts and build children's language through science and cooking activities.
2. **Practice using the "running commentary strategy"** during a Small Group Instruction role-play. Identify one participant in each group to assume the role of teacher. The others will be prekindergarten children. Follow the suggestions provided for the "Mixing Colors" activity.

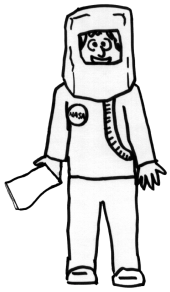
By conducting these activities in a small-group setting, children requiring more individualized attention have greater opportunities to participate in rich language interactions with teacher support.

Preschool Setting #4:
Independent Center Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Dramatic play:

- occurs when two or more children adopt roles and attempt to recreate a real-life situation,
- helps children develop vocabulary, conversation skills, narrative abilities and print knowledge, and
- contributes to children's cognitive, linguistic, and social development.



Children who engage in lots of pretend play and pretend talk in preschool tend to have better vocabularies in kindergarten

69

#69: Preschool Setting #4: Independent Center Time

We've talked about the Preschool Settings of Circle Time, Read Alouds, and Small-Group Instruction. Now we'll discuss a fourth setting, Independent Centers.

Most preschoolers spend some time each day at independent centers, where they learn on their own and in collaboration with other children.

We will focus on one kind of center that is particularly conducive to language and literacy development: the dramatic play center.

Dramatic play:

- **occurs when two or more children adopt roles and attempt to create a real-life situation,**
- provides many opportunities for oral language and literacy development through peer interaction, play, and exploration
- **helps children develop vocabulary, conversation skills, narrative abilities, and print knowledge,**
- **contributes to children's cognitive, linguistic, and social development,** including the development of communication skills and literacy, and can serve as an important context for children to explore their developing understandings of the functions and features of print.

Children who engage in lots of pretend play and pretend talk in preschool tend to have better vocabularies in kindergarten.

Preschool Setting #4:
Independent Center Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

To promote dramatic play:

1. Determine children's experience base to identify possible center ideas.
2. Select center ideas based on a classroom theme unit or children's interests.
3. Prepare the classroom environment:
   - Create clearly marked spaces for dramatic play.
   - Label materials and provide directions for use.
4. Include print materials and writing tools that reflect the center theme or setting.

70

Promoting Language Development Through Dramatic Play
To promote dramatic play:

1. **Determine children's experience base to identify possible ideas for play centers.**

2. **Select a dramatic play center idea based on a classroom theme unit or children's interests**. Provide choices and honor children's interests.

The household center is the standard center found in many classrooms. Other centers can be linked to the themes or units you are teaching. For example, if "pets" is the theme, a veterinarian's office can be set up as a dramatic play center.

What are some of your favorite dramatic play center ideas?

{Pause for responses. Help teachers focus on dramatic play centers as "settings" drawn from the real world, e.g., doctor's offices, restaurants, shoe stores, fire stations, airports. Encourage teachers to save discussion of storybook settings for later.)

3. **Prepare the classroom environment:**

- **Create appropriate spaces for dramatic play**. Furniture and dividers can be used to create natural space divisions that promote interaction between children.

- **Label materials and provide directions** using rebus pictures.

4. **Include print materials that reflect the center theme or setting.**

Paper, pens, markers, and other literacy materials related to the theme or setting should be included in all dramatic play centers.

What literacy materials might we include in a veterinarian's office center?

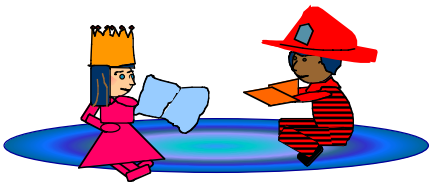
(Morrow, 1997; Neuman & Roskos, 1989; Walker, Allen, & Glines, 1997)

Preschool Setting #4:
Independent Center Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

To promote dramatic play (contd.):

5. Build background knowledge and vocabulary
6. Model play dialogue and scenarios by participating in children's play
7. Observe and interact with children to monitor their progress
8. Supply centers with new materials



71

Promoting Language Development Through Dramatic Play
To promote dramatic play (contd.):

5. Build background knowledge and vocabulary.

Develop children's background knowledge, concepts, and vocabulary for each play setting with field trips, discussions with classroom visitors, reading aloud of stories and information books, and by introducing play center materials in small group settings.

6. Model play dialogue and scenarios.

Just as you guide children's story retells, you can guide children in creating language- and literacy-rich play scenarios whenever a new center is introduced.

Visit the dramatic play area and play a role in a center scenario. You can model and extend conversations and demonstrate the use of available literacy materials. Then provide ample time for the children to create their own play scenarios.

For example:
Two children were seated at the restaurant center, waiting to order from their menus. The teacher picked up an order pad and pencil and joined the children at the center, saying, "Good morning ladies, I'll be your waitress today. May I take your order? We have several special items on our menu." This helped the children imagine new roles and dialogue that they later incorporated into their play.

7. Observe and interact with children to monitor their progress.

Recording children's language use in centers can provide valuable information for monitoring children's progress in language development, especially for children with special needs.

Monitoring children's use of print materials can help ensure that literacy-related interactions are occurring while children are involved in dramatic play.

8. Supply centers with new materials to keep children motivated. If play settings remain unchanged over long periods of time, play can become stagnant and repetitive.

Preschool Setting #4:
Independent Center Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Dramatic Story Play

- Dramatic play centers can be linked to stories or books read in class
- Pretend play with story props has been shown to help develop children's story recall and story-related comprehension
- Dramatic story play also improves children's narrative skills

72

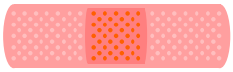
Designing Dramatic Play Centers

Activity #15

1. Select a favorite theme unit or storybook.
2. On a sheet or butcher paper, identify and design a dramatic play center related to the selected theme or story.
3. Show what items you would include. Be sure to include any appropriate print materials or literacy tools.

Theme: Pets

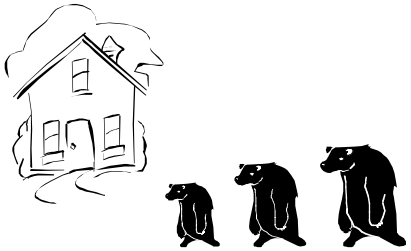
Center: Veterinarian's Office



Literacy materials:
- prescription pads
- pet care pamphlets
- books on cats and dogs

Storybook: *Goldilocks and...*

Center: The Three Bears' House



73

Dramatic Story Play

- **Dramatic play centers and materials can be linked to stories or books read in class.**
- **Children's pretend play with story props has been shown to help develop story recall and story-related comprehension.**
- **Dramatic story play also helps improve children's narrative skills.**

(Pelligrini, 1984)

Activity

Materials needed:
- *Large Butcher Paper, 1 sheet per table*
- *Fat colored markers, one set per table*

1. Select a favorite theme unit or storybook.

2. On a large sheet of butcher paper, identify and design a dramatic play setting related to the selected theme or story.

3. Show what items you would include. Be sure to add any appropriate print materials or literacy tools.

Note: Trainers may wish to divide participants into two groups. Half will design a real-life, theme-related setting. The other half will design a story-related setting.

Revisiting the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Activity #16

1. Think about the practices highlighted in our discussion of Small Group Instruction and Independent Center Time.
2. Refer to the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines and discuss with a partner or small group WHICH of the language accomplishments are addressed through the activities highlighted for each of these settings.
3. Refer to the Handout for Activity #13 and write some of the specific language accomplishments under "Small Group Instruction" and "Independent Center Time."

74

#74: Activity #16: Revisiting the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Activity

Participants will engage in the following activities to conclude this training session:

1. **Think about the practices highlighted in our discussion of Small Group Instruction and Independent Center Time.**

2. **Refer to the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines. Discuss with a partner or small group which of the language accomplishments are addressed through the activities highlighted for each of these settings.**

3. **Refer to the Handout for Activity #13 and write some of the specific language accomplishments under "Small Group Instruction and Independent Center Time."**

Transparencies

Language Development

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

- ✓ Articulate what 3- and 4-year olds should know and be able to do
- ✓ Provide a means to align prekindergarten programs with the TEKS curriculum
- ✓ Serve as a resource to assist educators with instructional planning; to be used on a voluntary basis

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy

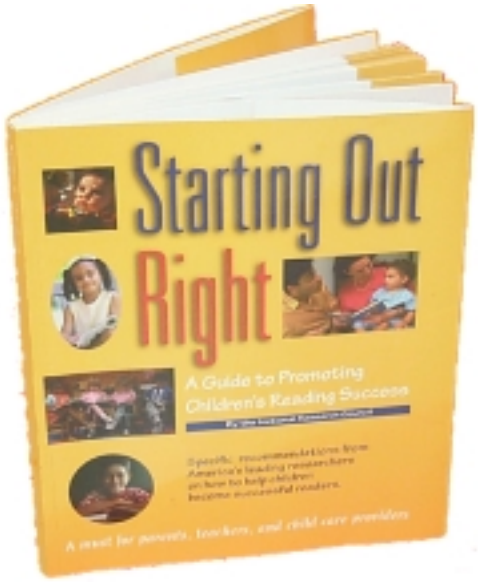
Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

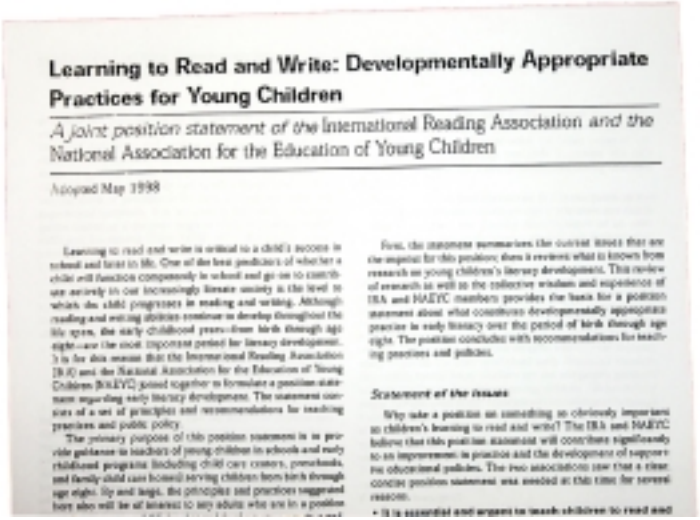
1. Listening comprehension
2. Speech production and speech discrimination
3. Vocabulary
4. Verbal expression
5. Phonological awareness
6. Print and book awareness
7. Letter knowledge and early word recognition
8. Motivation to read
9. Developing knowledge of literary forms
10. Written expression

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Primary Source Materials

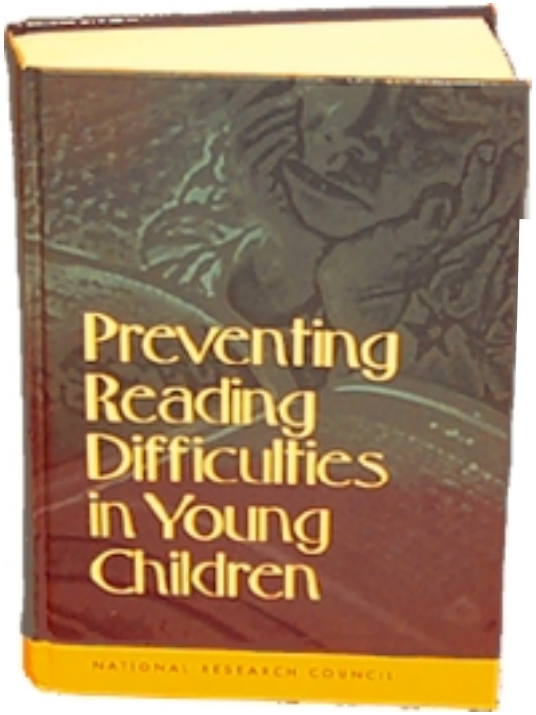




Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children

A joint position statement of the International Reading Association and the National Association for the Education of Young Children

Adopted May 1998



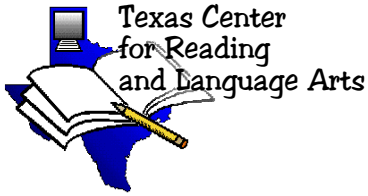
Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

"The more children know about language…the better equipped they are to succeed in reading."

National Research Council, 1999

Overview of Language Development



Key concepts in language development

Language diversity and bilingualism

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Organizing instruction

We will discuss:

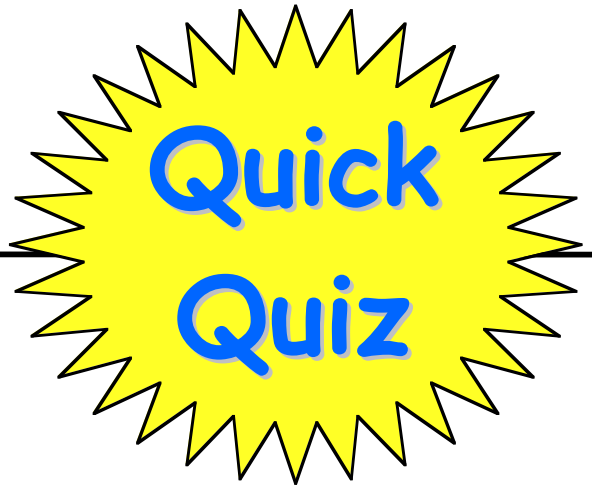
- Ideas for effective read alouds
- Ways to enhance circle time
- How to develop language through science and cooking activities
- Ways to enhance children's dramatic play and independent center time

What is Language Development?

Speaking and listening to communicate meaning

Children learn language as they interact with responsive adults and peers and experience language use in meaningful contexts.

Essential Language Systems



1. _____ → the basic sound units of language

2. _____ → words and word meanings

3. _____ → phrases and sentences that make sense and are correct

Essential Language Systems

Answers

1. Phonology → the basic sound units of language

2. Vocabulary → words and word meanings

3. Grammar → phrases and sentences that make sense and are correct

Essential Language Systems

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

4. Pragmatics

The appropriate use of language; rules for communicating effectively in diverse social situations

Pragmatics includes:

- Rules of politeness
- Conversational skills
- Extended discourse, for example:

  - Telling a story
  - Giving an explanation

The Language-Literacy Connection

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Language	Reading and Writing
Phonology	• Phonological awareness • Letter-sound correspondences
Vocabulary	• Listening comprehension • Word recognition • Reading comprehension
Grammar	• Listening comprehension • Comprehending complex written language
Pragmatics (with emphasis on narrative and other extended discourse)	• Listening and reading comprehension • Written composition • Understanding teacher talk

Language Accomplishments of Monolingual 4-Year-Olds

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

- Expressive vocabulary of around 1,500 words
- Produce complex sentences at least 4 to 5 words in length
- Mastery of most basic grammar rules
- Ask and answer "wh" questions
- Discuss feelings; use language to converse and entertain
- State and defend opinions
- Can tell simple stories and create make-believe situations
- Can describe objects and events by joining sentences together
- Can engage in word play or word games
- May have difficulty pronouncing /r/, /l/, /s/, /th/, /z/

Still to be developed:

- Wide vocabulary
- Conversational skills
- Complex grammatical structures
- Narrative and descriptive skills

Language Diversity in Prekindergarten

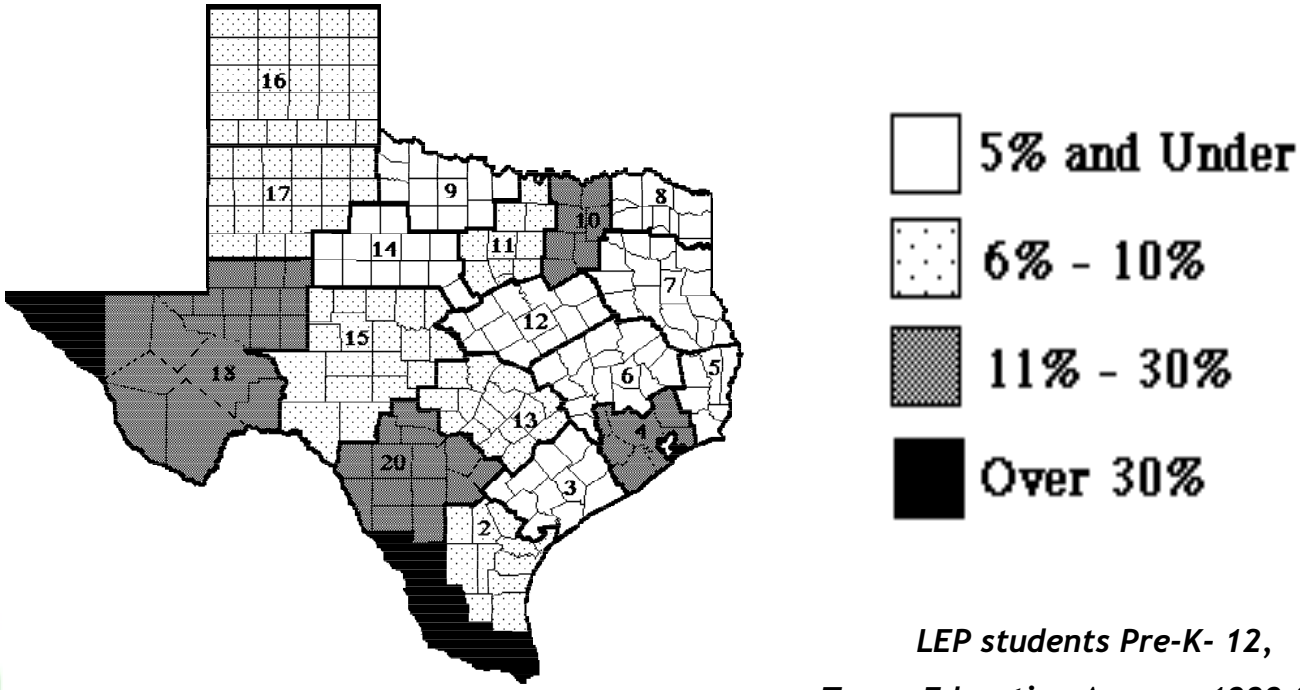
Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Most prekindergarten children are experienced users of language, but their language has been acquired in the context of their homes and communities, and within diverse cultural and linguistic settings.

Language Diversity in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

37% of prekindergarten children and 31% of Head Start children in Texas have a dominant language other than English



LEP students Pre-K- 12,

Texas Education Agency, 1999-2000

Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Home Language:

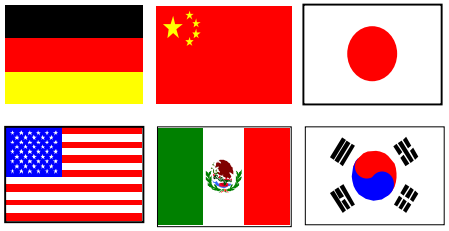
Spanish

91%

Vietnamese
Chinese
Korean
Laotian (Lao)
Cambodian
German
Japanese
French

(in order of most to least represented in Texas)

9%



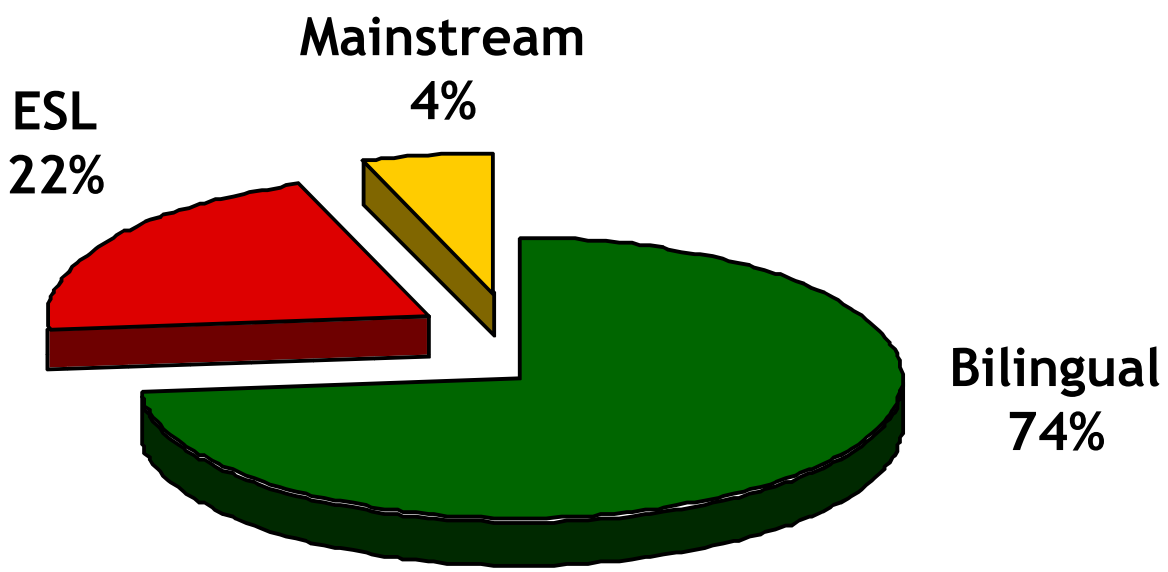
Texas Education Agency, 1999-2000

- Many children enter prekindergarten already bilingual to some degree.
- Bilingual 4-year-olds may have more limited vocabularies in each of their two languages than their monolingual age peers. However, their combined vocabulary in both languages is likely to be equal to or exceed that of the English-only child.

Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Program Type: 1999-2000



Texas Education Agency

Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Glossary of terms:

- Second Language Learners
- Limited English Proficient (LEP)
- Bilingual
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Bilingual Education

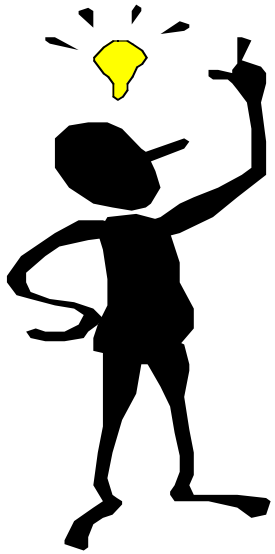
What Do You Know About These Languages?

Activity #1

CAMBODIAN	FRENCH	LAO
CHINESE (Mandarin)	GERMAN	SPANISH
ENGLISH	JAPANESE	VIETNAMESE
KOREAN		

1. Which of the above is the most widely spoken language in the world (# of native speakers)?
2. Which are the second and third most widely spoken (# of native speakers)?
3. Which of the above are written using the Roman alphabet?
4. Which of these languages have both formal and informal forms of address, depending on the social status of the speaker and addressee (as in the French for *you*: informal "tu" vs. formal "vous")?
5. Which languages have alphabetic versus pictographic scripts?

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts



Remember!

The language forms that children bring to school are intimately tied to their family, community, and personal identity.

Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Excellent literacy instruction in multilingual settings may be possible "only if children's home languages are taken into account in designing instruction."

(National Research Council, 1998)

"The native language serves as the foundation for English language acquisition. Cognitive skills transfer from one language to another. Students literate in their first language will apply these skills to the second language."

(Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines; TEKS)

Second Language Learners and the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Activity #2

1. Refer to your copy of the Prekindergarten Curriculum Language and Early Literacy Guidelines. Read the second paragraph in the introduction section on p.2.

2. The Guidelines state, *"Except where specified, the following guidelines outline language and literacy accomplishments for 3- and 4-year-old children IN THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGE."*

3. Discuss: How can teachers plan instruction that takes into account children's native language abilities?

Second Language Learners and the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

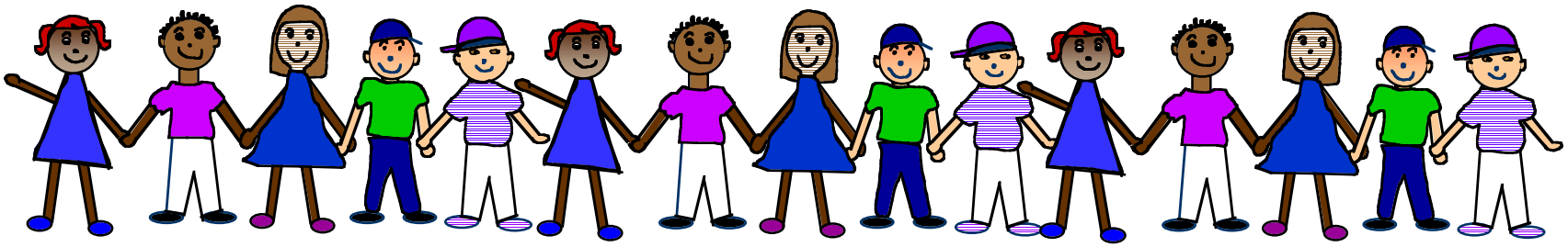
For children learning English as a Second Language, specific language accomplishments are identified by the acronym "ESL" in the areas of listening comprehension, speech production, vocabulary, and verbal expression.

All of the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines apply to the individual child AT HIS OR HER LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH.

Facilitating Second Language Acquisition

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

1. Hold high expectations for children's learning.
2. Create a safe and secure learning environment.
3. Create opportunities for children to use English for playful and interesting purposes.
4. Facilitate the development of essential language and early literacy skills, at the child's level of oral proficiency in English.



Stages of Second Language Acquisition

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- Home language use
- Nonverbal or silent period
- Early production or telegraphic speech
- Productive language use

Keep in Mind: Children tend to function at a slightly higher level in receptive language skills (listening) than in expressive language skills (speaking).

Focus On Developing Language and Print Concepts

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Activities that promote language development, listening comprehension, and print concepts are ideal for children learning English as a Second Language

WHEN

the activities accommodate children's language needs.

This means making the language of instruction comprehensible to children.

Making a Second Language Comprehensible

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

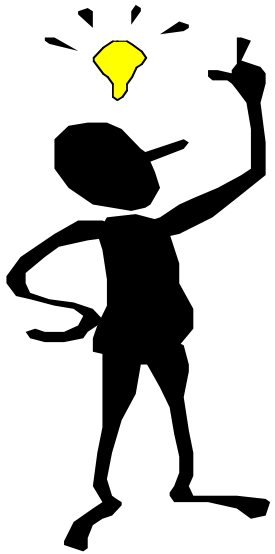
- Use meaningful language in context
- Use simplified language
- Use nonverbal cues
- Use manipulatives, visuals, and objects
- Introduce content in the child's primary language
- Speak slowly and enunciate clearly
- Repeat, rephrase, and extend children's language
- Provide opportunities for interaction in English

Remember!

The English language learner is doing twice the cognitive work of the native speaker because he or she is:

1st - Acquiring new literacy concepts and skills, AND

2nd - Attending to the sounds, meanings, and structures of a new language.



Also Remember…

- *Second Language Learners have many strengths and proficiencies in their home languages that may be invisible to English-only teachers.*

- *Parents are an invaluable source of information on children's language abilities.*

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Address broad areas of language development, including:

- Listening Comprehension
- Vocabulary
- Verbal Expression
- Developing Knowledge of Literary Forms

Getting to Know the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines: Self Assessment

Activity #3

Assess your own knowledge!

LANGUAGE AREAS

- Listening Comprehension
- Vocabulary
- Verbal Expression
- Developing Knowledge of Literary Forms

Handout for Activity #3

Getting to Know the Prekindergarten Guidelines: Self-Assessment

LANGUAGE AREAS • A ccomplishments	I Know and Do Well✓	Examples of My Instructional Activities	I Need to Know More ✓
1. LISTENING COMPREHENSION			
• listens for different purposes			
• enjoys listening to and responding to books			
• understands and follows simple oral directions			
2. VOCABULARY			
• shows steady increase in listening and speaking vocabulary			
• refines and extends understanding of known words			
3. VERBAL EXPRESSION			
• uses sentences of increasing length and complexity			
• tells a simple personal narrative			
• begins to retell the sequence of a story			
4. DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE OF LITERARY FORMS			
• begins to predict what will happen next in a story			
• imitates the special language of storybooks and story dialogue in retellings and dramatic play			
• becomes increasingly familiar with narrative form and its elements (characters, plot, resolution)			
• connects information and events in books to real-life experiences			

• accomplishments

example: Becomes increasingly familiar with narrative form and its elements.

Optimal Language Development Occurs When...

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...children have opportunities to use language frequently.

"Children who are constantly exposed to an environment rich in oral language and who interact frequently with adults in a supportive social and emotional setting develop more facility with oral language than children lacking these opportunities."

Morrow, Strickland, & Woo, 1998

Room Arrangement for Optimal Language Interaction

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Small partitioned spaces promote:

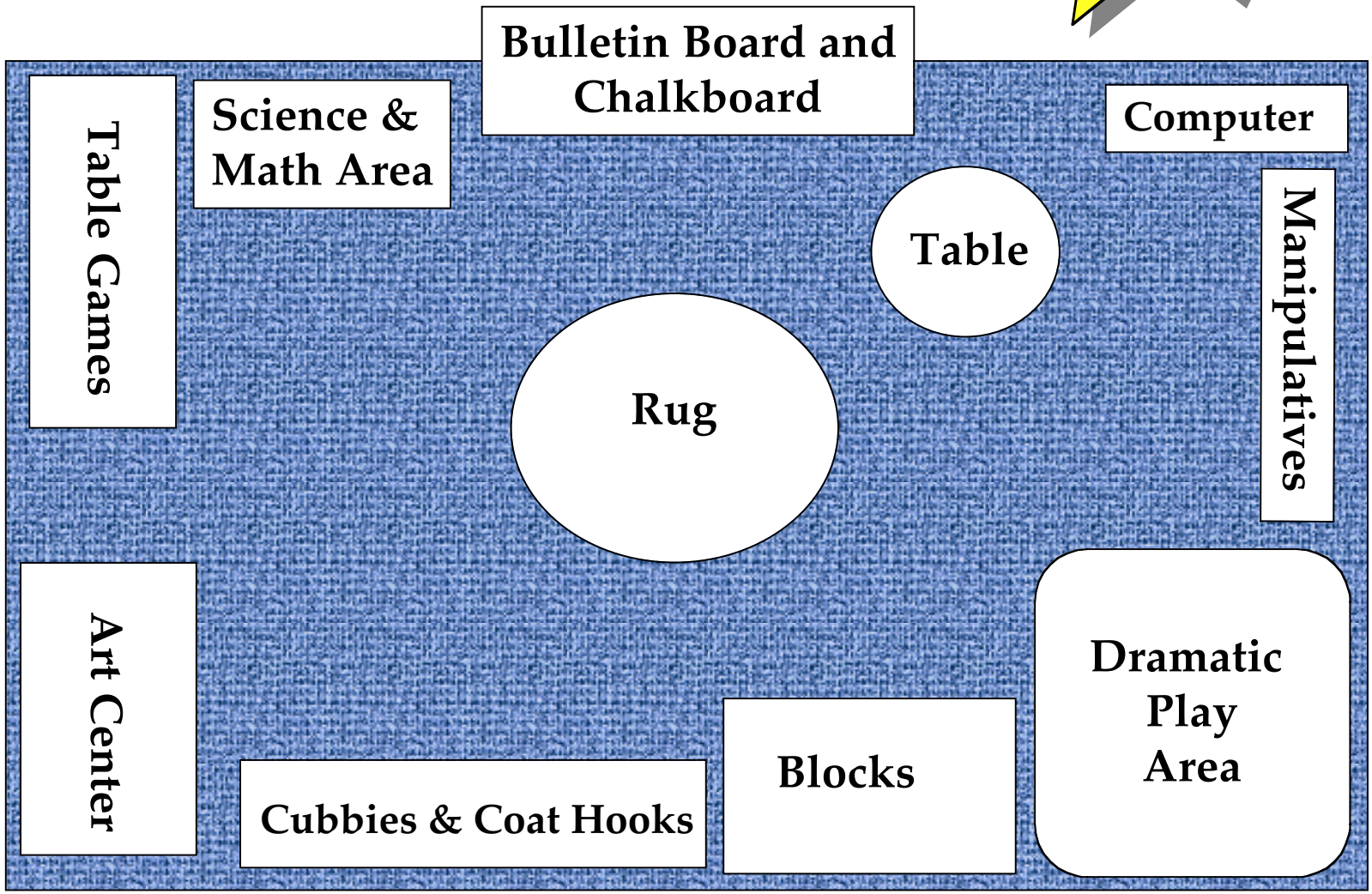
- Higher quality verbal interaction.
- Increased cooperative play.
- Greater use of language-related activities.

Large open spaces result in:

- Poor language interactions.
- Less use of language-related activities.

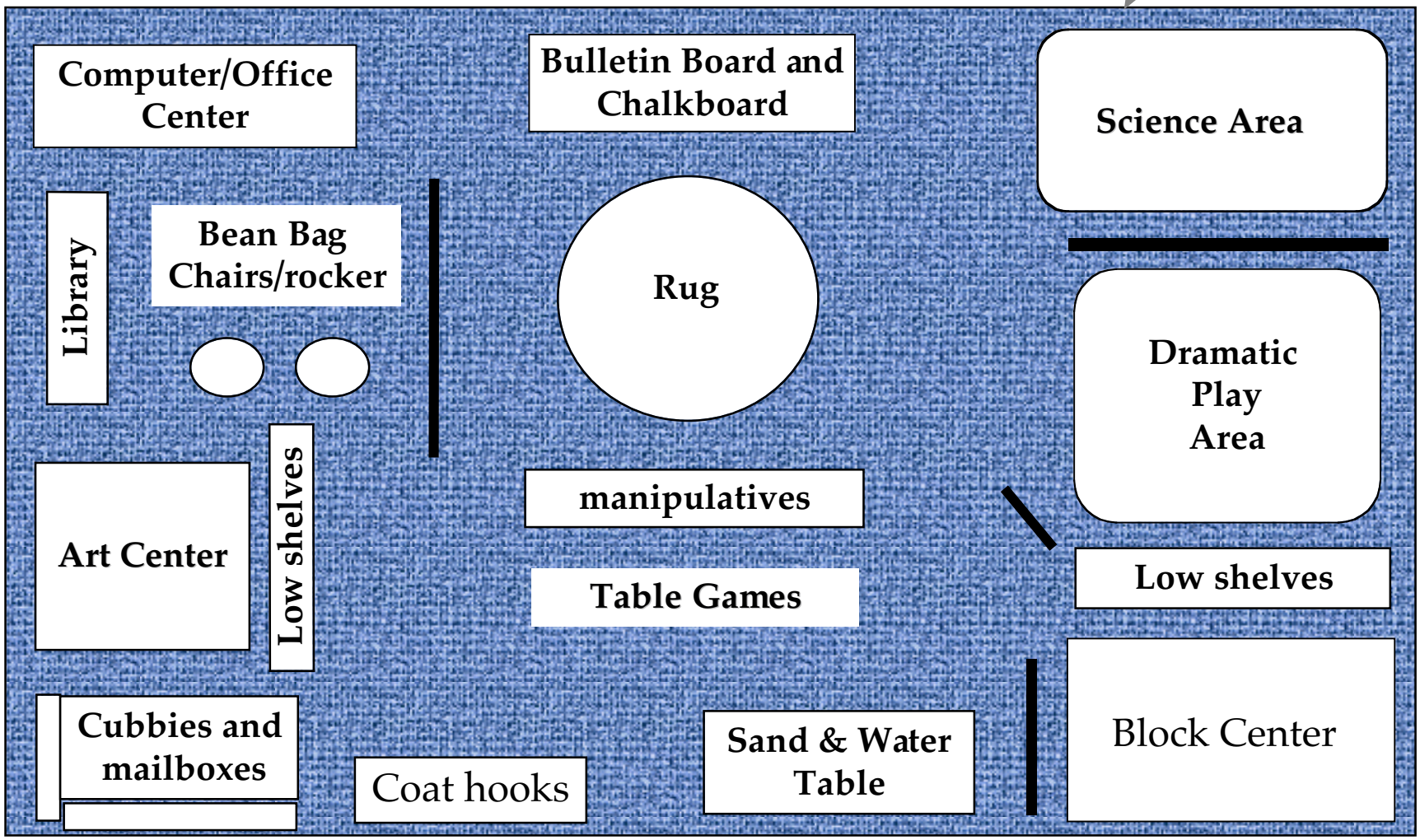
Room Arrangement (Before)

Activity #4



Room Arrangement (After)

Activity #4



Features of a Language-Rich Classroom

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Teachers in language-rich classrooms:

- ✓ Read aloud daily
- ✓ Engage children in extended, cognitively challenging conversations
- ✓ Ask open-ended questions
- ✓ Encourage children to retell stories
- ✓ Encourage children to describe events in their lives
- ✓ Discuss a wide range of topics
- ✓ Model use of new and unusual words
- ✓ Discuss word meanings

Features of a Language-Rich Classroom (contd.)

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In language rich classrooms, teachers:

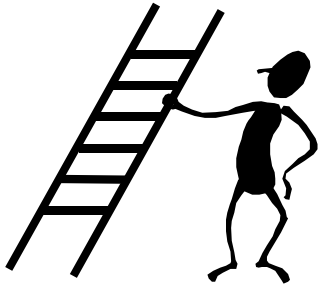
- ✓ Challenge children to justify their thinking
- ✓ Encourage children to express ideas using complex sentences and vocabulary
- ✓ Encourage language play
- ✓ Encourage pretend play and pretend talk
- ✓ Interact with children one-on-one and in small group activities

Children's language abilities are enhanced as the quality of conversation and the amount of one-on-one or small group interactions with children increase (NRC, 1998)

Scaffolding Children's Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Scaffolding…



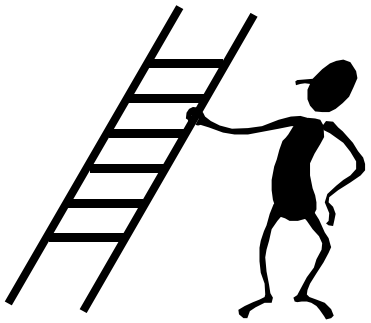
- guides and supports the child's language learning by building on what the child is already able to do.
- moves child from a lower to a higher level of language use.
- builds language and literacy skills in young children.
- builds English as a Second Language skills.

Scaffolding Children's Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

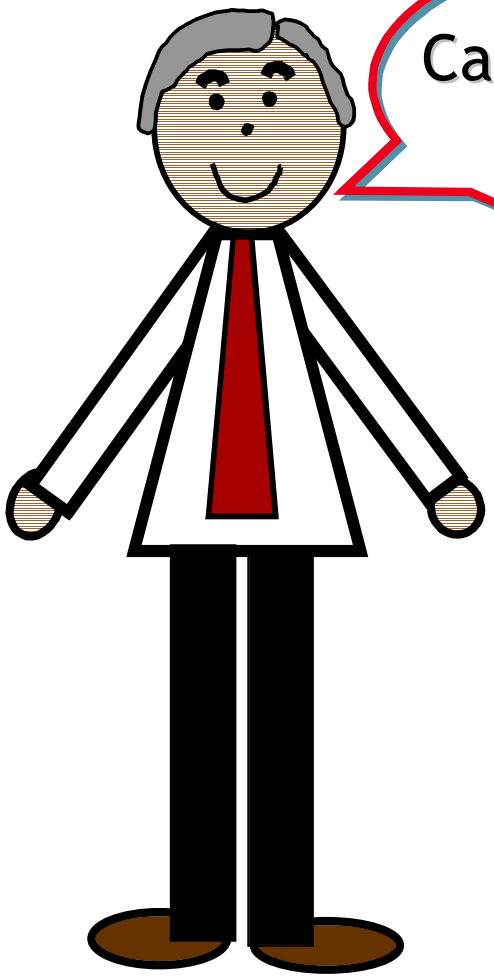
To SCAFFOLD children's language, teachers…

- model the use of extended language and rich vocabulary
- use questions and prompts to extend children's language
- give children adequate response time
- expand children's ideas, using new vocabulary and syntax
- request clarification
- promote questions and conversations among children
- provide feedback to encourage, interpret, and evaluate children's responses



Scaffolding Children's Language Development

Activity #5



Can you tell us about your photo?

It was my grandma's birthday.
We made her a cake.

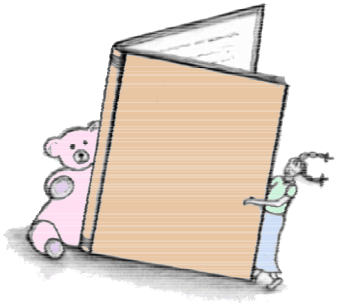
Scaffolding Children's Language Development

- Can you tell us a story about your photo?
- Can you tell us what was happening here?
- Who is that in the picture?
- Where were you when this was taken?
- Yes I see that you were behind your house on the patio,
- and it was a beautiful sunny day. What were you all doing?
- What kind of cake was it?
- How did you bake the cake?
- I'll bet you mixed the ingredients together. Am I right?
- Hmm. I'm not sure I understand. Can you tell us exactly what happened?
- Would any of you like to ask ….

Preschool Settings for Language Development

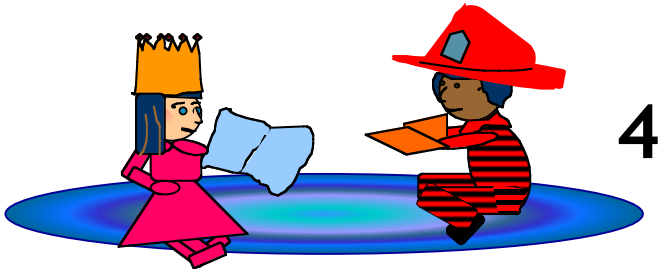
Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

1. Circle time



2. Read-aloud sessions

3. Small group instruction



4. Independent centers

Preschool Setting #1: Circle Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

The following Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines can be addressed in the context of Circle Time.

Child accomplishments:

- Listens for different purposes
- Tells a simple personal narrative
- Uses language for a variety of purposes
- Uses sentences of increasing length and grammatical complexity
- Uses new vocabulary in everyday communication
- Refines and extends understanding of known words

Sharing Personal Narratives

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Narrative: talk in which at least two different but related events are clearly described.

Personal narratives relate meaningful events and experiences.

Narratives may be told using photographs or drawings as props.

Sharing Personal Narratives

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

To help children build narrative skills teachers can:

- Model the telling of personal narratives
- Scaffold children's narratives
- Use questions to develop narrative structure
- Recognize cultural differences in narrative style

Sharing Personal Narratives: Role Play

Activity #6

"What was happening when you took this picture?"

or,

"Can you tell us a story about your picture?"

Sharing Personal Narratives: Role Play

Activity #6

What scaffolding strategies were easy to do?

Which strategies were more difficult?

What kinds of questions elicited longer or more elaborate responses from the child?

Preschool Setting #1:
Circle Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

News of the Day

Electrical Storm

Dam Proposed for Laos Is of Immense Meaning To an Array of Interests

Bankers, Business, the Poor, Wildlife and Government Have Stakes in Decision

World Bank Mulls It Over

What's News—

Business and Finance

World Wide

- Encourages the retelling of events
- Converts children's home or school experiences into a literary form
- Demonstrates that oral language can be written down

Preschool Setting #1:
Circle Time

Activity #7

News of the Day

News of the Day / Morning Message

Discuss with your colleagues different ways teachers can develop children's language skills through News of the Day or Morning Message activities.

Jot down your favorite ideas in the space provided below for future reference.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

What questions or prompts could be used to encourage children's verbal expression for each of the strategies you discussed? Keep in mind the importance of asking open-ended (how or why) questions.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Electrical Storm

Dam Proposed for Laos Is of Immense Meaning To an Array of Interests

Bankers, Business, the Poor, Wildlife and Government Have Stakes in Decision

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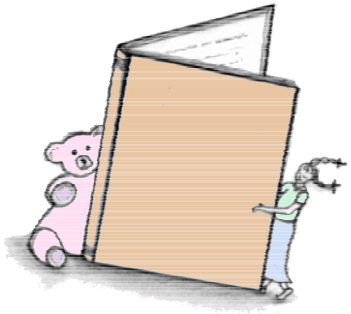
What's News—

Business and Finance

World Wide

Preschool Setting #2:
Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts



Read-aloud sessions can help children:

- Improve their vocabulary and concept development
- Broaden their knowledge about the world
- Enhance their listening comprehension
- Strengthen their extended language skills

Frequent book readings familiarize children with book language and how it differs from everyday language.

Verbal interactions between adults and children before, during, and after book reading can have a strong influence on children's language and literacy development.

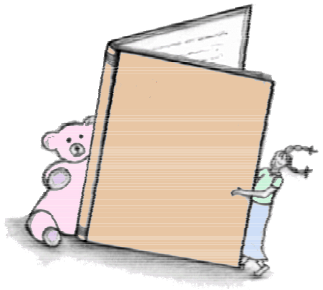
Grouping for Effective Read Alouds

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Read-aloud sessions can be conducted effectively with children one-on-one, in small groups, and in whole class settings.

Research strongly supports the effectiveness of reading aloud to small groups of 3-6 children.

The quality of group book-reading with 4-year-olds is linked to children's language and literacy skills at the end of kindergarten.



Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Vocabulary & Background Knowledge

The size of a child's vocabulary is a key predictor of reading success.

Reading/Listening Comprehension and Enjoyment

"To read successfully, children need sufficient background knowledge and vocabulary to render written texts meaningful and interesting."

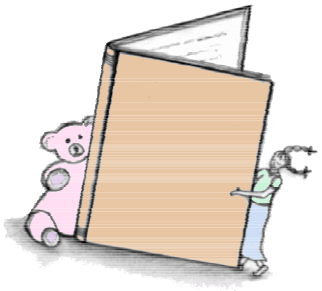
National Research Council, 1998

Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

To build vocabulary and background knowledge:

1. Read books on many topics
2. Teach some new words and concepts before reading
3. Discuss word meanings as you read and focus on challenging words
4. Use many senses when introducing new words
5. Discuss book illustrations
6. Promote analytic or cognitively challenging discussions about book events and topics
7. Repeat-read favorite books
8. Use "oral cloze" technique



Read-Aloud Sessions

Activity #8

Building Vocabulary

Select a children's book from those available or one you brought from home. Identify key words and concepts that may be new or challenging for young children.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Book Title:

Book Author:

Which words/concepts are best introduced before reading the book aloud?

_____

How might you find out what children already know about these words?

_____

How might you introduce some new words/concepts using a multisensory approach?

_____
_____

Which words would you discuss in context as you read the book aloud?

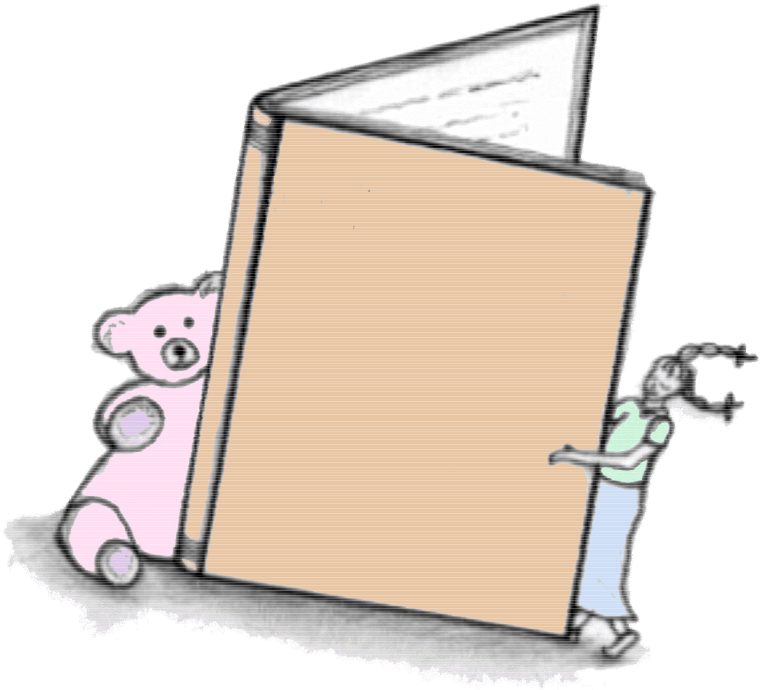
_____

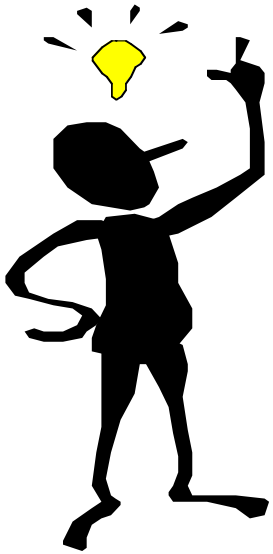
Which words could be highlighted or reinforced using the oral cloze technique during a repeated reading?

_____

Identify other vocabulary-building activities you might use after you've read the book aloud.

_____
_____





Remember…

…reading aloud is not enough!

The effectiveness of reading aloud depends upon:

- the type, quality, and variety of books that are read and
- the types of interactions that occur before, during, and after reading

Cognitively challenging discussions and the use of a wide vocabulary by teachers is especially effective in enhancing children's language and literacy development.

Cognitively Challenging Book Talk

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

- Discussion of past and future events
- Analysis/speculation about cause and effect relationships
- Prediction of upcoming events
- Talk that encourages deep thinking about issues or themes
- Analysis of characters' feelings, personality traits and motivations
- Direct discussion of words and word meanings
- Talk about print

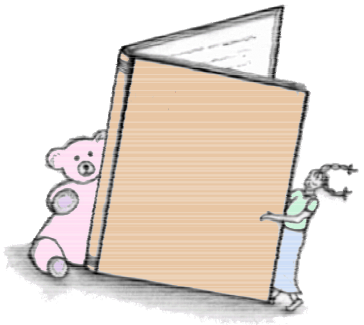
The more that 4-year-olds participate in cognitively challenging talk about books and stories in preschool, the better their story comprehension, vocabulary and overall literacy achievement in Kindergarten through Grade 4.

Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Before reading…

- Discuss children's experiences related to the story's theme
- Find out what children already know about a book topic
- Ask predictive questions
- Introduce key vocabulary using a variety of approaches



Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

During reading…

- Stop for children's reactions, comments, questions and predictions
- Explain new or unusual words
- Ask what story characters may be doing or feeling
- Point out story details in illustrations
- Recognize children's efforts to add sound effects, actions, or to read along

Asking too many questions during a storybook read-aloud is not as effective as discussions and questions before and after reading.

Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

After reading…

- Ask questions that encourage children to figure out the sequence of story events
- Encourage inferences and judgments
- Help the children link the book to their own experiences
- Ask children how they would change the story ending
- Discuss children's favorite story events
- Encourage acting out or retelling of well-loved stories
- Encourage children to share stories with family members at home

Types of Questions & Responses

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

From Text

Includes many *who*, *what*, and *where* questions

- Focus on information on the page
- Rephrase text that has just been read
- Recall facts, events, and names (labeling)

Related to Text

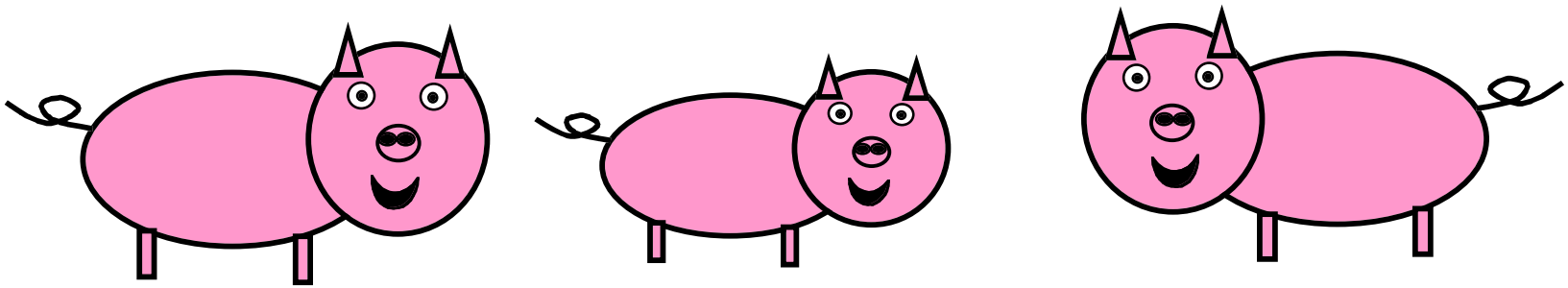
Includes many *how*, *why*, and *what if* questions

- Move away from what can be seen on the page (making inferences)
- Analyze character behavior and motivation
- Focus on vocabulary and concepts
- Connect story and children's own world

Before, During and After

Activity #9

1. Refer to the Handout for Activity #9.
2. Select from one of three well-known tales: The Three Bears, Little Red Riding Hood, The Three Little Pigs
3. In a small group, come up with BEFORE, DURING and AFTER questions and activities for your 3- or 4-year-olds.
4. Use the information on Overhead Transparencies 55-59 to assist you.
5. Record the group's ideas on the Handout.



Reading Aloud Different Types of Texts

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Narratives:

Tell a story using a familiar story structure

Beginning → Introduces Setting + Character(s) with a problem to solve or a goal to achieve

Middle → Plot: Series of events in which the character(s) attempts to solve the problem or achieve the goal

End → Resolution: Solution to the problem or accomplishment of a goal; theme is (sometimes) revealed

Information Books:

Present information or tell about topics in different and varied ways

Text Types

Activity #10

1. With a partner, select a theme or topic appropriate for your prekindergarten students.
2. Identify several narratives and information books you might read aloud to develop the unit.

Theme / Topic

Narratives	Information Books
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Add theme-related texts or other types such as pattern books, alphabet books, songs, and poems to complete your list.

Graphic Organizers

Activity #11

Visual systems that organize information:

- Language to Literacy Charts
- K-W-L Charts
- Story Road Maps

Graphic organizers can be used before or after reading to help children:

- remember what they already know
- expand their knowledge about a topic
- visualize what they've heard read
- understand how books, book events, ideas or words are related to one another

Story Retells

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Retelling familiar stories strengthens children's listening comprehension and narrative skills.

Steps to successful story retells:

1. Teacher reads story aloud several times
2. Teacher models a story retell with or without props
3. Children retell with teacher support (scaffolding and guidance)
4. Individual or groups of children retell independently

10 Ways to Retell, Reenact, or Dramatize a Story

Activity #12

Start with group retells and teacher modeling

1. Oral response
2. Puppets
3. Flannelboard
4. Pretend-read to a stuffed animal
5. Pretend-read with a friend
6. Tell it to a parent
7. Tell it on tape
8. Group dramatization
9. Draw and tell
10. Story-based dramatic play centers

Create opportunities for independent practice

Read Alouds and the PreK Curriculum Guidelines

Activity #13

1. Think about the practices highlighted in our discussion of read alouds.
2. Refer to the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines. Discuss with a partner or small group WHICH of the language accomplishments are addressed through effective read alouds and read aloud followup activities.
3. Refer to the Handout for Activity #13 and pencil in some of the specific language accomplishments under "Read Alouds." Remember to include accomplishments from the Guidelines category "Developing Knowledge of Literary Forms."

Preschool Setting #3:
Small Group Instruction

Plan time each day for teacher-led, small group activities involving no more than 3 to 6 children.

When teachers provide small group instruction there are more opportunities to:

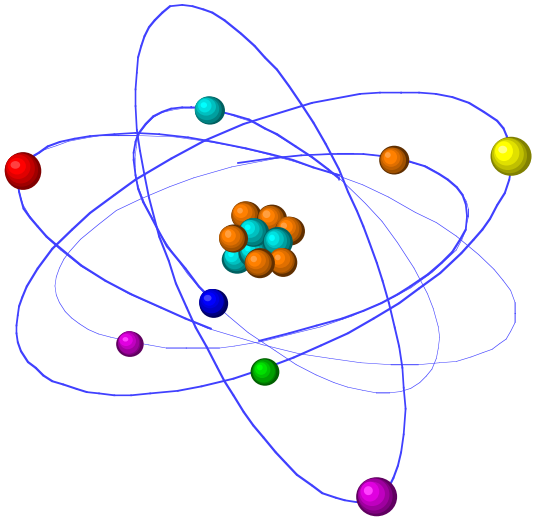
- extend conversations
- enrich vocabulary

Which leads to:

- improved story comprehension, vocabulary, and early literacy skills in kindergarten

Preschool Setting #3:
Small Group Instruction

Activity #14



1. Read the Handouts for Activity #14 on Building Language though Cooking & Science Activities

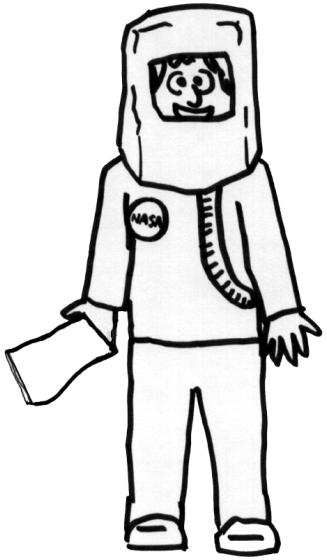
2. Practice the "Mixing Colors" activity using the running commentary strategy.

Preschool Setting #4:
Independent Center Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Dramatic play:

- occurs when two or more children adopt roles and attempt to recreate a real-life situation,
- helps children develop vocabulary, conversation skills, narrative abilities and print knowledge, and
- contributes to children's cognitive, linguistic, and social development.



Children who engage in lots of pretend play and pretend talk in preschool tend to have better vocabularies in kindergarten

Preschool Setting #4:
Independent Center Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

To promote dramatic play:

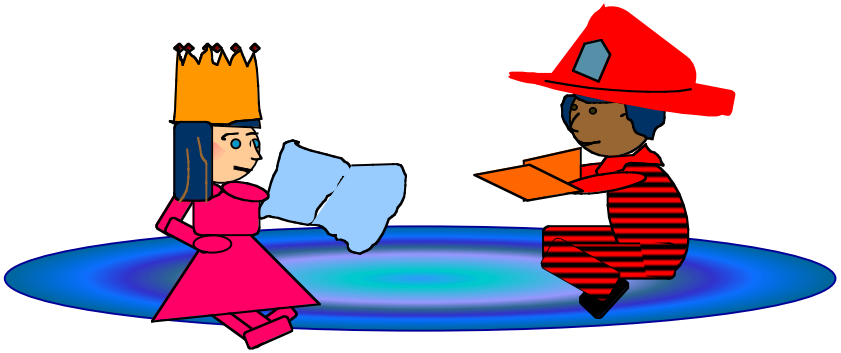
1. Determine children's experience base to identify possible center ideas.
2. Select center ideas based on a classroom theme unit or children's interests.
3. Prepare the classroom environment:
   - Create clearly marked spaces for dramatic play.
   - Label materials and provide directions for use.
4. Include print materials and writing tools that reflect the center theme or setting.

Preschool Setting #4:
Independent Center Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

To promote dramatic play (contd.):

5. Build background knowledge and vocabulary
6. Model play dialogue and scenarios by participating in children's play
7. Observe and interact with children to monitor their progress
8. Supply centers with new materials

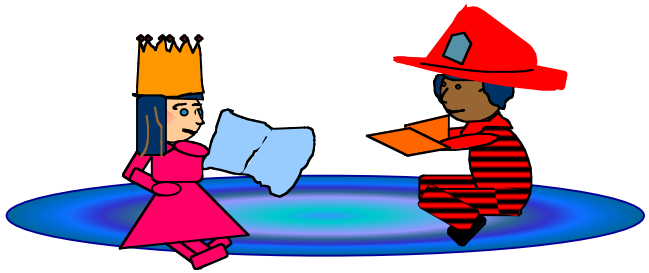


Preschool Setting #4:
Independent Center Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Dramatic Story Play

- Dramatic play centers can be linked to stories or books read in class
- Pretend play with story props has been shown to help develop children's story recall and story-related comprehension
- Dramatic story play also improves children's narrative skills



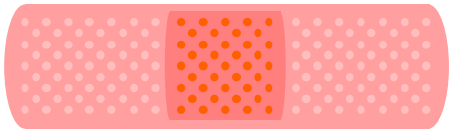
Designing Dramatic Play Centers

Activity #15

1. Select a favorite theme unit or storybook.
2. On a sheet or butcher paper, identify and design a dramatic play center related to the selected theme or story.
3. Show what items you would include. Be sure to include any appropriate print materials or literacy tools.

Theme: Pets

Center: Veterinarian's Office

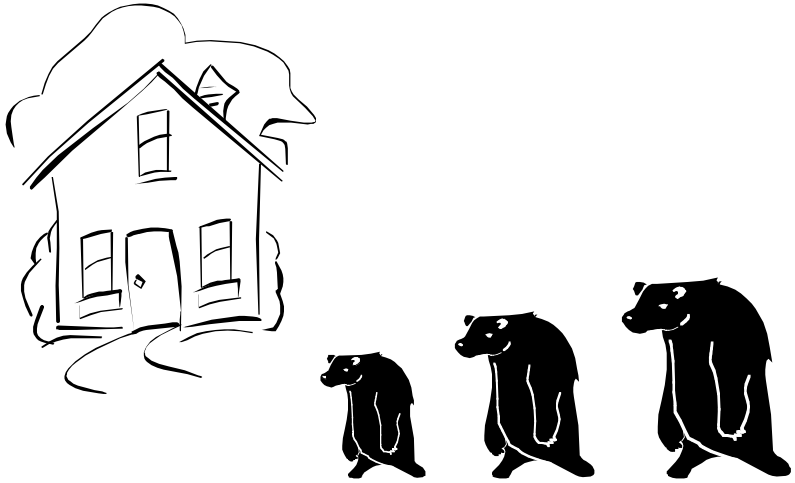


Literacy materials:

- prescription pads
- pet care pamphlets
- books on cats and dogs

Storybook: *Goldilocks and...*

Center: The Three Bears' House



Revisiting the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

1. Think about the practices highlighted in our discussion of Small Group Instruction and Independent Center Time.

2. Refer to the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines and discuss with a partner or small group WHICH of the language accomplishments are addressed through the activities highlighted for each of these settings.

3. Refer to the Handout for Activity #13 and write some of the specific language accomplishments under "Small Group Instruction" and "Independent Center Time."

Handouts/ Activities

Language Development

1

Notes

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

- ✓ Articulate what 3- and 4-year olds should know and be able to do
- ✓ Provide a means to align prekindergarten programs with the TEKS curriculum
- ✓ Serve as a resource to assist educators with instructional planning; to be used on a voluntary basis

2

Notes

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

1. Listening comprehension
2. Speech production and speech discrimination
3. Vocabulary
4. Verbal expression
5. Phonological awareness
6. Print and book awareness
7. Letter knowledge and early word recognition
8. Motivation to read
9. Developing knowledge of literary forms
10. Written expression

3

Notes _____

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Primary Source Materials

4

Notes _____

Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

"The more children know about language…the better equipped they are to succeed in reading."

National Research Council, 1999

5

Notes

Overview of Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Key concepts in language development

Language diversity and bilingualism

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Organizing instruction

We will discuss:

- Ideas for effective read alouds
- Ways to enhance circle time
- How to develop language through science and cooking activities
- Ways to enhance children's dramatic play and independent center time

6

Notes

What is Language Development?

Speaking and listening to communicate meaning

Children learn language as they interact with responsive adults and peers and experience language use in meaningful contexts.

7

Notes _____

Essential Language Systems

Quick Quiz

1. _____ → the basic sound units of language
2. _____ → words and word meanings
3. _____ → phrases and sentences that make sense and are correct

8

Notes _____

Essential Language Systems

Answers

1. Phonology → the basic sound units of language
2. Vocabulary → words and word meanings
3. Grammar → phrases and sentences that make sense and are correct

9

Notes

Essential Language Systems

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

4. Pragmatics → The appropriate use of language; rules for communicating effectively in diverse social situations

Pragmatics includes:

- Rules of politeness
- Conversational skills
- Extended discourses, for example:
  - *Tell a story*
  - *Give an explanation*

10

Notes

The Language-Literacy Connection

Language	Reading and Writing
Phonology	• Phonological awareness • Letter-sound correspondences
Vocabulary	• Listening comprehension • Word recognition • Reading comprehension
Grammar	• Listening comprehension • Comprehending complex written language
Pragmatics (with emphasis on narrative and other extended discourse)	• Listening and reading comprehension • Written composition • Understanding teacher talk

11

Notes

Language Accomplishments of Monolingual 4-Year-Olds

- Expressive vocabulary of around 1,500 words
- Produce complex sentences at least 4 to 5 words in length
- Mastery of most basic grammar rules
- Ask and answer "wh" questions
- Discuss feelings; use language to converse and entertain
- State and defend opinions
- Can tell simple stories and create make-believe situations
- Can describe objects and events by joining sentences together
- Can engage in word play or word games
- May have difficulty pronouncing /r/, /l/, /s/, /th/, /z/

Still to be developed:

- Wide vocabulary
- Conversational skills
- Complex grammatical structures
- Narrative and descriptive skills

12

Notes

Language Diversity in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Most prekindergarten children are experienced users of language, but their language has been acquired in the context of their homes and communities, and within diverse cultural and linguistic settings.

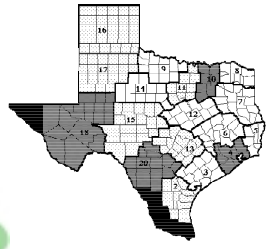
13

Notes _____

Language Diversity in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

37% of prekindergarten children and 31% of Head Start children in Texas have a dominant language other than English



- 5% and Under
- 6% - 10%
- 11% - 30%
- Over 30%

LEP students Pre-K- 12, Texas Education Agency, 1999-2000

14

Notes _____

Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Home Language:

Spanish

91%

Vietnamese
Chinese
Korean
Laotian (Lao)
Cambodian
German
Japanese
French

(in order of most to least represented in Texas)

9%

Texas Education Agency, 1999-2000

- Many children enter prekindergarten already bilingual to some degree.
- Bilingual 4-year-olds may have more limited vocabularies in each of their two languages than their monolingual age peers. However, their combined vocabulary in both languages is likely to be equal to or exceed that of the English-only child.

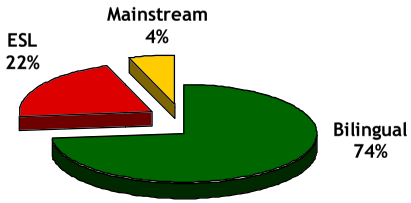
15

Notes

Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Program Type: 1999-2000



Texas Education Agency

16

Notes

Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Glossary of terms:

- Second Language Learners
- Limited English Proficient (LEP)
- Bilingual
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Bilingual Education

17

Notes

What Do You Know About These Languages?

Activity #1

CAMBODIAN	FRENCH	LAO
CHINESE (Mandarin)	GERMAN	SPANISH
ENGLISH	JAPANESE	VIETNAMESE
KOREAN		

1. Which of the above is the most widely spoken language in the world (# of native speakers)?
2. Which are the second and third most widely spoken (# of native speakers)?
3. Which of the above are written using the Roman alphabet?
4. Which of these languages have both formal and informal forms of address, depending on the social status of the speaker and addressee (as in the French for *you*: informal "tu" vs. formal "vous")?
5. Which languages have alphabetic versus pictographic scripts?

18

Notes

Remember!

The language forms that children bring to school are intimately tied to their family, community, and personal identity.

19

Notes

Second Language Learners in Prekindergarten

Excellent literacy instruction in multilingual settings may be possible "only if children's home languages are taken into account in designing instruction."

(National Research Council, 1998)

"The native language serves as the foundation for English language acquisition. Cognitive skills transfer from one language to another. Students literate in their first language will apply these skills to the second language."

(Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines; TEKS)

20

Notes

Second Language Learners and the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Activity #2

1. Refer to your copy of the Prekindergarten Curriculum Language and Early Literacy Guidelines. Read the second paragraph in the introduction section on p.2.
2. The Guidelines state, *"Except where specified, the following guidelines outline language and literacy accomplishments for 3- and 4-year-old children IN THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGE."*
3. Discuss: How can teachers plan instruction that takes into account children's native language abilities?

21

Notes

Second Language Learners and the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

For children learning English as a Second Language, specific language accomplishments are identified by the acronym "ESL" in the areas of listening comprehension, speech production, vocabulary, and verbal expression.

All of the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines apply to the individual child AT HIS OR HER LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH.

22

Notes

Facilitating Second Language Acquisition

1. Hold high expectations for children's learning.
2. Create a safe and secure learning environment.
3. Create opportunities for children to use English for playful and interesting purposes.
4. Facilitate the development of essential language and early literacy skills, at the child's level of oral proficiency in English.

23

Notes

Stages of Second Language Acquisition

- Home language use
- Nonverbal or silent period
- Early production or telegraphic speech
- Productive language use

Keep in Mind: Children tend to function at a slightly higher level in receptive language skills (listening) than in expressive language skills (speaking).

24

Notes

Focus On Developing Language and Print Concepts

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Activities that promote language development, listening comprehension, and print concepts are ideal for children learning English as a Second Language

WHEN

the activities accommodate children's language needs.

This means making the language of instruction comprehensible to children.

25

Notes

Language Development

Making a Second Language Comprehensible

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

- Use meaningful language in context
- Use simplified language
- Use nonverbal cues
- Use manipulatives, visuals, and objects
- Introduce content in the child's primary language
- Speak slowly and enunciate clearly
- Repeat, rephrase, and extend children's language
- Provide opportunities for interaction in English

26

Notes

Language Development

Remember!

The English language learner is doing twice the cognitive work of the native speaker because he or she is:

1st - Acquiring new literacy concepts and skills, AND

2nd - Attending to the sounds, meanings, and structures of a new language.

27

Notes

Also Remember...

- *Second Language Learners have many strengths and proficiencies in their home languages that may be invisible to English-only teachers.*
- *Parents are an invaluable source of information on children's language abilities.*

28

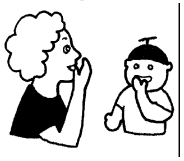
Notes

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Address broad areas of language development, including:

- Listening Comprehension
- Vocabulary
- Verbal Expression
- Developing Knowledge of Literary Forms



29

Notes _____

Language Development

Getting to Know the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines: Self Assessment

Activity #3

Assess your own knowledge!

LANGUAGE AREAS

- Listening Comprehension
- Vocabulary
- Verbal Expression
- Developing Knowledge of Literary Forms

Handout for Activity #3

Getting to Know the Prekindergarten Guidelines: Self-Assessment

LANGUAGE AREAS • A ccomplishments	I Know and Do Well/	Examples of My Instructional Activities	I Need to Know More ✓
1. LISTENING COMPREHENSION			
• l: listens for different purposes			
• e: ncoys listening to and responding to books			
• u n derstands and follows simple oral directions			
2. VOCABULARY			
• s: haows steady increase in listening and speaking vocabulary			
• r: efines and extends understanding of known words			
3. VERBAL EXPRESSION			
• u: ses sentences of increasing length and complexity			
• t: ells a simple personal narrative			
• b: egins to retell the sequence of a story			
4. DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE OF LITERARY FORMS			
• b: egins to predict what will happen next in a story			
• i: m itates the special language of storybooks and story dialogue in retellings and dramatic play			
• b: ecomes increasingly familiar with narrative form and its elements (characters, plot, resolution)			
• c: onnects informal classroom environments books to real life experiences			

• accomplishments *example*: Becomes increasingly familiar with narrative form and its elements.

30

Notes _____

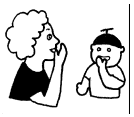
Language Development

Optimal Language Development Occurs When...

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

...children have opportunities to use language frequently.

"Children who are constantly exposed to an environment rich in oral language and who interact frequently with adults in a supportive social and emotional setting develop more facility with oral language than children lacking these opportunities."



Morrow, Strickland, & Woo, 1998

31

Notes

Room Arrangement for Optimal Language Interaction

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Small partitioned spaces promote:

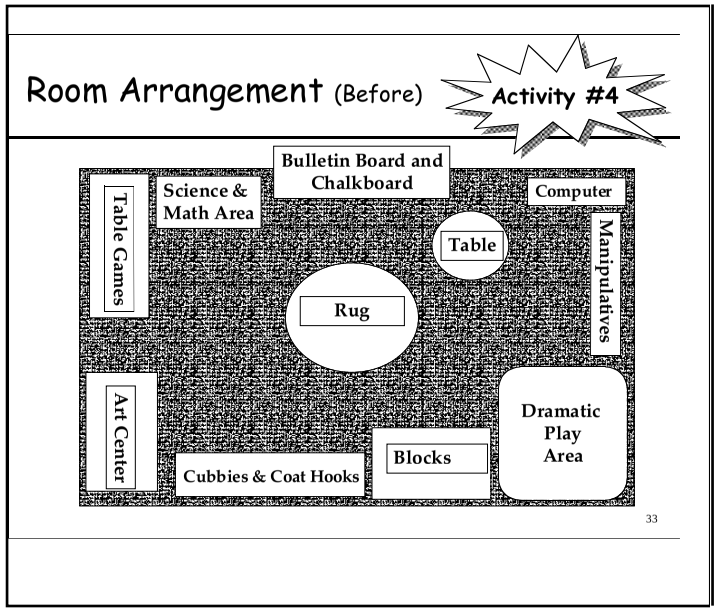
- Higher quality verbal interaction.
- Increased cooperative play.
- Greater use of language-related activities.

Large open spaces result in:

- Poor language interactions.
- Less use of language-related activities.

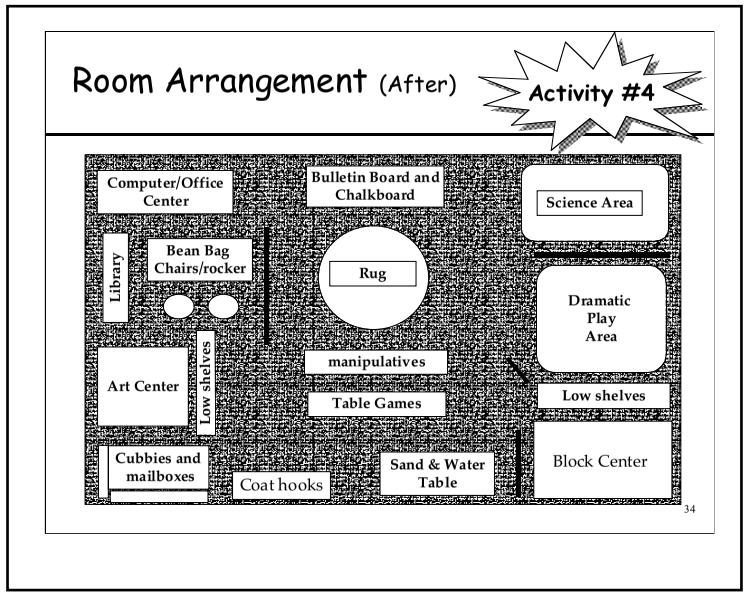
32

Notes



Notes _____

Language Development



Notes _____

Language Development

Features of a Language-Rich Classroom

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Teachers in language-rich classrooms:

- ✓ Read aloud daily
- ✓ Engage children in extended, cognitively challenging conversations
- ✓ Ask open-ended questions
- ✓ Encourage children to retell stories
- ✓ Encourage children to describe events in their lives
- ✓ Discuss a wide range of topics
- ✓ Model use of new and unusual words
- ✓ Discuss word meanings

35

Notes _____

Features of a Language-Rich Classroom (contd.)

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

In language rich classrooms, teachers:

- ✓ Challenge children to justify their thinking
- ✓ Encourage children to express ideas using complex sentences and vocabulary
- ✓ Encourage language play
- ✓ Encourage pretend play and pretend talk
- ✓ Interact with children one-on-one and in small group activities

Children's language abilities are enhanced as the quality of conversation and the amount of one-on-one or small group interactions with children increase (NRC, 1998)

36

Notes _____

Scaffolding Children's Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Scaffolding…

- guides and supports the child's language learning by building on what the child is already able to do.
- moves child from a lower to a higher level of language use.
- builds language and literacy skills in young children.
- builds English as a Second Language skills.

37

Notes _____

Scaffolding Children's Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

To SCAFFOLD children's language, teachers…

- model the use of extended language and rich vocabulary.
- use questions and prompts to extend children's language.
- give children adequate response time.
- expand children's ideas, using new vocabulary and syntax.
- request clarification.
- promote questions and conversations among children.
- provide feedback to encourage, interpret, and evaluate children's responses.

38

Notes _____

Scaffolding Children's Language Development

Activity #5

39

Notes _____

Language Development

Scaffolding Children's Language Development

Activity #5

- Can you tell us a story about your photo?
- Can you tell us what was happening here?
- Who is that in the picture?
- Where were you when this was taken?
- Yes I see that you were behind your house on the patio,
- and it was a beautiful sunny day. What were you all doing?
- What kind of cake was it?
- How did you bake the cake?
- I'll bet you mixed the ingredients together. Am I right?
- Hmm. I'm not sure I understand. Can you tell us exactly what happened?
- Would any of you like to ask ….

40

Notes _____

Language Development

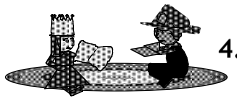
Preschool Settings for Language Development

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

1. Circle time

2. Read-aloud sessions

3. Small group instruction



4. Independent centers

41

Notes _____

Preschool Setting #1: Circle Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

The following Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines can be addressed in the context of Circle Time.

Child accomplishments:

- Listens for different purposes
- Tells a simple personal narrative
- Uses language for a variety of purposes
- Uses sentences of increasing length and grammatical complexity
- Uses new vocabulary in everyday communication
- Refines and extends understanding of known words

42

Notes _____

Sharing Personal Narratives

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

CIRCLE TIME

Narrative: talk in which at least two different but related events are clearly described.

Personal narratives relate meaningful events and experiences.

Narratives may be told using photographs or drawings as props.

43

Notes _____

Sharing Personal Narratives

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

To help children build narrative skills teachers can:

- Model the telling of personal narratives
- Scaffold children's narratives
- Use questions to develop narrative structure
- Recognize cultural differences in narrative style

44

Notes _____

Sharing Personal Narratives: Role Play

Activity #6

"What was happening when you took this picture?"

or,

"Can you tell us a story about your picture?"

45

Notes _____

Language Development

Sharing Personal Narratives: Role Play

Activity #6

What scaffolding strategies were easy to do?

Which strategies were more difficult?

What kinds of questions elicited longer or more elaborate responses from the child?

46

Notes _____

Language Development

Preschool Setting #1:
Circle Time

Activity #7

News of the Day

- Encourages the retelling of events
- Converts children's home or school experiences into a literary form
- Demonstrates that oral language can be written dow

47

Notes _____

Preschool Setting #1:
Circle Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

News of the Day

News of the Day / Morning Message

Discuss with your colleagues different ways teachers can develop children's language skills through News of the Day or Morning Message activities.

Jot down your favorite ideas in the space provided below for future reference.

_____

What questions or prompts could be used to encourage children's verbal expression for each of the strategies you discussed? Keep in mind the importance of asking open-ended (how or why) questions.

_____

48

Notes _____

Preschool Setting #2:
Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Read-aloud sessions can help children:

- Improve their vocabulary and concept development
- Broaden their knowledge about the world
- Enhance their listening comprehension
- Strengthen their extended language skills

Frequent book readings familiarize children with book language and how it differs from everyday language.

Verbal interactions between adults and children before, during, and after book reading can have a strong influence on children's language and literacy development.

49

Notes

Grouping for Effective Read Alouds

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Read-aloud sessions can be conducted effectively with children one-on-one, in small groups, and in whole class settings.

Research strongly supports the effectiveness of reading aloud to small groups of 3-6 children.

The quality of group book-reading with 4-year-olds is linked to children's language and literacy skills at the end of kindergarten.

50

Notes

Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Vocabulary & Background Knowledge

The size of a child's vocabulary is a key predictor of reading success.

Reading/Listening Comprehension and Enjoyment

"To read successfully, children need sufficient background knowledge and vocabulary to render written texts meaningful and interesting."

National Research Council, 1998

51

Notes

Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

To build vocabulary and background knowledge:

1. Read books on many topics
2. Teach some new words and concepts before reading
3. Discuss word meanings as you read and focus on challenging words.
4. Use many senses when introducing new words
5. Discuss book illustrations
6. Promote analytic or cognitively challenging discussions about book events and topics
7. Repeat-read favorite books
8. Use "oral cloze" technique

52

Notes

Read-Aloud Sessions

Activity #8

Building Vocabulary

Select a children's book from those available or one you brought from home. Identify key words and concepts that may be new or challenging for young children.

Book Title:

Book Author:

Which words/concepts are best introduced before reading the book aloud?

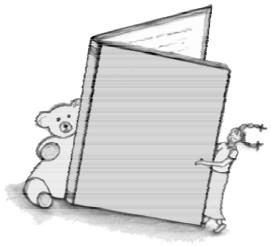
How might you find out what children already know about these words?

How might you introduce some new words/concepts using a multisensory approach?

Which words would you discuss in context as you read the book aloud?

Which words could be highlighted or reinforced using the oral cloze technique during a repeated reading?

Identify other vocabulary-building activities you might use after you've read the book aloud.



53

Notes

Remember...

...reading aloud is not enough!

The effectiveness of reading aloud depends upon:

- the type, quality, and variety of books that are read and
- the types of interactions that occur before, during, and after reading

Cognitively challenging discussions and the use of a wide vocabulary by teachers is especially effective in enhancing children's language and literacy development.

54

Notes

Cognitively Challenging Book Talk

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

- Discussion of past and future events
- Analysis/speculation about cause and effect relationships
- Prediction of upcoming events
- Talk that encourages deep thinking about issues or themes
- Analysis of characters' feelings, personality traits and motivations
- Direct discussion of words and word meanings
- Talk about print

The more that 4-year-olds participate in cognitively challenging talk about books and stories in preschool, the better their story comprehension, vocabulary and overall literacy achievement in Kindergarten through Grade 4.

55

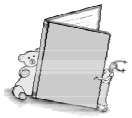
Notes _____

Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Before reading…

- Discuss children's experiences related to the story's theme
- Find out what children already know about a book topic
- Ask predictive questions
- Introduce key vocabulary using a variety of approaches



56

Notes _____

Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

During reading…

- Stop for children's reactions, comments, questions and predictions
- Explain new or unusual words
- Ask what story characters may be doing or feeling
- Point out story details in illustrations
- Recognize children's efforts to add sound effects, actions, or to read along

Asking too many questions during a storybook read-aloud is not as effective as discussions and questions before and after reading.

57

Notes

Read-Aloud Sessions

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

After reading…

- Ask questions that encourage children to figure out the sequence of story events
- Encourage inferences and judgements
- Help the children link the book to their own experiences
- Ask children how they would change the story ending
- Discuss children's favorite story events
- Encourage acting out or retelling of well-loved stories
- Encourage children to share stories with family members at home

58

Notes

Types of Questions & Responses

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

In Text

Includes many *who, what,* and *where* questions

- Focus on information on the page
- Rephrase text that has just been read
- Recall facts, events, and names (labeling)

Related to Text

Includes many *how, why,* and *what if* questions

- Move away from what can be seen on the page (making inferences)
- Analyze character behavior and motivation
- Focus on vocabulary and concepts
- Connect story and children's own world

59

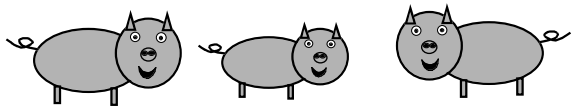
Notes _____

Language Development

Before, During and After

Activity #9

1. Refer to the Handout for Activity #9.
2. Select from one of three well-known tales: The Three Bears, Little Red Riding Hood, The Three Little Pigs
3. In a small group, come up with BEFORE, DURING and AFTER questions and activities for your 3- or 4-year-olds.
4. Use the information on Overhead Transparencies 42-46 to assist you.
5. Record the group's ideas on the Handout.



60

Notes _____

Language Development

Reading Aloud Different Types of Texts

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Narratives:

Tell a story using a familiar story structure

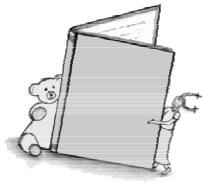
Beginning → Introduces Setting + Character(s) with a problem to solve or a goal to achieve

Middle → Plot: Series of events in which the character(s) attempts to solve the problem or achieve the goal

End → Resolution: Solution to the problem or accomplishment of a goal; theme is (sometimes) revealed

Information Books:

Present information or tell about topics in different and varied ways



61

Notes _____

Language Development

Text Types

Activity #10

1. With a partner, select a theme or topic appropriate for your prekindergarten students.
2. Identify several narratives and information books you might read aloud to develop the unit.

Theme / Topic

Narratives	Information Books
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Add theme-related texts or other types such as pattern books, alphabet books, songs, and poems to complete your list.

62

Notes _____

Language Development

Graphic Organizers

Activity #11

Visual systems that organize information:

Language to Literacy Charts | K-W-L Charts | Story Road Maps

Graphic organizers can be used before or after reading to help children:

- remember what they already know
- expand their knowledge about a topic
- visualize what they've heard read
- understand how books, book events, ideas or words are related to one another

63

Notes

Story Retells

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

- Retelling familiar stories strengthens children's listening comprehension and narrative skills
- Steps to successful story retells:
  1. Teacher reads story aloud several times
  2. Teacher models a story retell with or without props
  3. Children retell with teacher support (scaffolding and guidance)
  4. Individual or groups of children retell independently

64

Notes

10 Ways to Retell, Reenact, or Dramatize a Story

Activity #12

Start with group retells and teacher modeling

1. Oral response
2. Puppets
3. Flannelboard
4. Pretend-read to a stuffed animal
5. Pretend-read with a friend
6. Tell it to a parent
7. Tell it on tape
8. Group dramatization
9. Draw and tell
10. Story-based dramatic play centers

Create opportunities for independent practice

65

Notes

Read Alouds and the PreK Curriculum Guidelines

Activity #13

1. Think about the practices highlighted in our discussion of read alouds.
2. Refer to the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines. Discuss with a partner or small group WHICH of the language accomplishments are addressed through effective read alouds and read aloud followup activities.
3. Refer to the Handout for Activity #13 and pencil in some of the specific language accomplishments under "Read Alouds." Remember to include accomplishments from the Guidelines category "Developing Knowledge of Literary Forms."

66

Notes

Preschool Setting #3:
Small Group Instruction

Plan time each day for teacher-led, small group activities involving <u>no more than 3 to 6 children</u>.

When teachers use small group instruction there are more opportunities to:

- extend conversations
- enrich vocabulary

Which leads to:

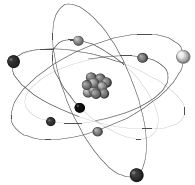
- improved story comprehension, vocabulary, and early literacy skills in Kindergarten

67

Notes _____

Preschool Setting #3:
Small Group Instruction

Activity #14



1. Read the Handouts for Activity #14 on Building Language though Cooking & Science Activities

2. Practice the "Mixing Colors" activity using the running commentary strategy.

68

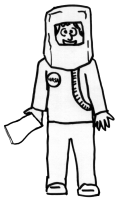
Notes _____

Preschool Setting #4:
Independent Center Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Dramatic play:

- occurs when two or more children adopt roles and attempt to recreate a real-life situation,
- helps children develop vocabulary, conversation skills, narrative abilities and print knowledge, and
- contributes to children's cognitive, linguistic, and social development.



Children who engage in lots of pretend play and pretend talk in preschool tend to have better vocabularies in kindergarten

69

Notes _____

Preschool Setting #4:
Independent Center Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

To promote dramatic play:

1. Determine children's experience base to identify possible center ideas.
2. Select center ideas based on a classroom theme unit or children's interests.
3. Prepare the classroom environment:
   - Create clearly marked spaces for dramatic play.
   - Label materials and provide directions for use.
4. Include print materials that reflect the center theme or setting.

70

Notes _____

Preschool Setting #4:
Independent Center Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

To promote dramatic play (contd.):

5. Build background knowledge and vocabulary
6. Model play dialogue and scenarios by participating in children's play
7. Observe and interact with children to monitor their progress
8. Supply centers with new materials

71

Notes _____

Preschool Setting #4:
Independent Center Time

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts

Dramatic Story Play

- Dramatic play centers can be linked to stories or books read in class
- Pretend play with story props has been shown to help develop children's story recall and story-related comprehension
- Dramatic story play also improves children's narrative skills

72

Notes _____

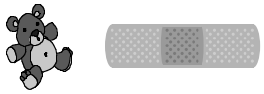
Designing Dramatic Play Centers

Activity #15

1. Select a favorite theme unit or storybook.
2. On a sheet or butcher paper, identify and design a dramatic play center related to the selected theme or story.
3. Show what items you would include. Be sure to include any appropriate print materials or literacy tools.

Theme: Pets

Center: Veterinarian's Office



Literacy materials:
- prescription pads
- pet care pamphlets
- books on cats and dogs

Storybook: *Goldilocks and...*

Center: The Three Bears' House

73

Notes _____

Language Development

Revisiting the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Activity #16

1. Think about the practices highlighted in our discussion of Small Group Instruction and Independent Center Time.
2. Refer to the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines and discuss with a partner or small group WHICH of the language accomplishments are addressed through the activities highlighted for each of these settings.
3. Refer to the Handout for Activity #13 and write some of the specific language accomplishments under "Small Group Instruction" and "Independent Center Time."

74

Notes _____

Language Development

Second Language Learners
Glossary of Terms

Second Language Learners:
Students from homes where the language background is other than the majority language, and who are considered to be limited English proficient. For most children from non-English language backgrounds in the United States, the second language is English.

Limited English Proficient (LEP):
A label used by TEA and many other state and local education agencies nationwide to identify children who have a home language other than English, and for whom basic proficiency in spoken English has not yet been attained.

Bilingual:
Term used to describe any individual with some degree of spoken proficiency in two languages.

ESL:
Acronym for English as a Second Language. Refers to instructional programs designed to facilitate the acquisition of English for native speakers of other languages.

Bilingual Education:
Refers to educational programs that provide students from non-English language backgrounds with some degree of instructional support in their native language, in addition to instruction in English as a second language. Some bilingual education programs also provide second language instruction for native English speakers.

Activity #1

What Do You Know About These Languages?

CAMBODIAN	FRENCH	LAO
CHINESE (Mandarin)	GERMAN	SPANISH
ENGLISH	JAPANESE	VIETNAMESE
KOREAN		

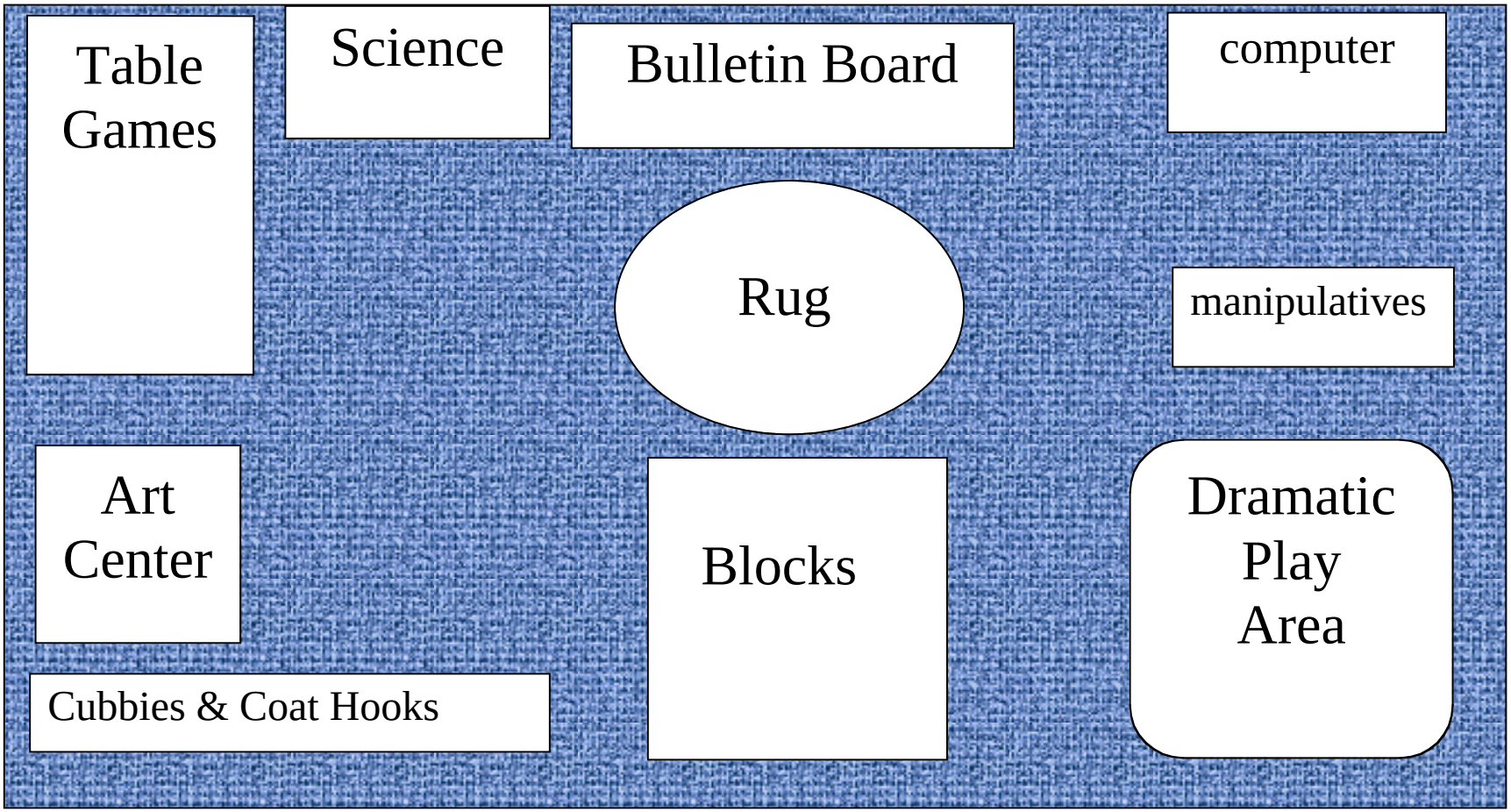
1. Which of the above is the most widely spoken language in the world (# of native speakers)? _____
2. Which is the second most widely spoken (# of native speakers)?_____
   The third most widely spoken? _____
3. Which of the above are written using the Roman alphabet?
   _____
4. Which of these languages have both formal and informal forms of address, depending on the social status of the speaker and addressee (as in the French for *you*: informal "tu" vs. formal "vous")?
   _____
5. Which languages have alphabetic versus pictographic (ideographic) writing systems? _____

Getting to Know the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines: Self Assessment

LANGUAGE AREAS • Accomplishments	I Know and Do Well ✓	Examples of My Instructional Activities	I Need to Know More ✓
1. LISTENING COMPREHENSION			
• listens for different purposes • enjoys listening to and responding to books • understands and follows simple oral directions			
2. VOCABULARY			
• shows steady increase in listening and speaking vocabulary • refines and extends understanding of known words			
3. VERBAL EXPRESSION			
• uses sentences of increasing length and complexity • tells a simple personal narrative • begins to retell the sequence of a story			
4. DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE OF LITERARY FORMS			
• begins to predict what will happen next in a story • imitates the special language of storybooks and story dialogue in retellings and dramatic play • becomes increasingly familiar with narrative form and its elements (characters, plot, resolution) • connects information and events in books to real-life experiences			

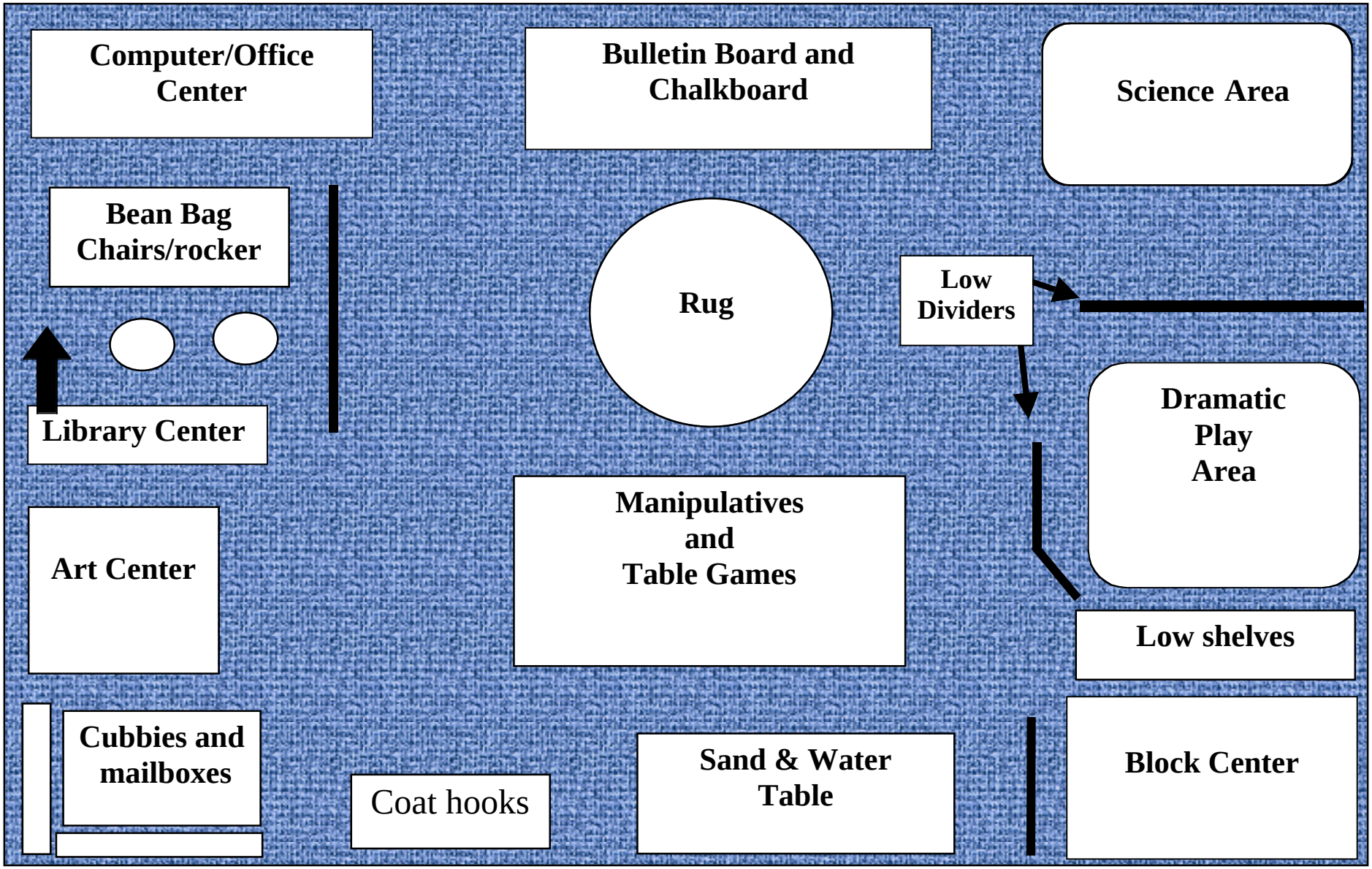
Room Arrangements for Optimal Language Interaction (Before)

With a partner analyze the following BEFORE and AFTER floorplans.
Discuss how each might limit or enhance opportunities for language interaction.



Adapted from: Neuman, S. & Roskos, K. (1993). Language and literacy learning in the early years. Orlando: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

Room Arrangement for Optimal Language Interaction (After)



Adapted from: Neuman, S. & Roskos, K. (1993). Language and literacy learning in the early years. Orlando: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

Room Arrangements for Optimal Language Interaction

Modify at least one aspect of your current classroom floorplan to facilitate greater verbal interaction between children and increased use of language-related activites. Draw your new design below, highlighting the changes you have made.

Scaffolding Script

Read the following dialogue with a partner. Identify the scaffolding strategy used in each exchange, and write it in the space beside the script.

SCAFFOLDING STRATEGIES INCLUDE:

- model the use of extended language and rich vocabulary.
- use questions and prompts to extend children's language.
- give children adequate response time.
- expand children's ideas, using new vocabulary and syntax.
- request clarification.
- promote questions and conversations among children.
- provide feedback to encourage, interpret, and evaluate children's response

DIALOGUE	SCAFFOLDING STRATEGY
Teacher: Can you tell us a story about your photo? **Child:** Ummmm……[Child has difficulty beginning.]	
Teacher: [Wait 5 seconds] Can you tell us what was happening here? **Child:** [No response]	
Teacher: [Wait 5 seconds] Who is that in the picture? **Child:** This is me… and my Mom… and my grandma.	
Teacher: Where were you when this was taken? **Child:** Outside my house.	
Teacher: Yes, I see that you were behind your house on the patio, and it was a beautiful sunny day. What were you all doing? **Child:** It was my grandma's birthday. We made her a cake.	

Scaffolding Script

DIALOGUE (CONTD.)	SCAFFOLDING STRATEGY
Teacher: That was very thoughtful of you. It looks delicious! What kind of cake was it? **Child:** Chocolate. With little flowers and it said her name.	
Teacher: Chocolate? Yum. That's my favorite flavor! So you decorated the cake and wrote your grandmother's name on it. How did you bake the cake? **Child:** With my Mom. We went to the store and got the stuff to put in and I helped.	
Teacher: Well, I know you're a great helper. I'll bet you mixed the ingredients together. Am I right? **Child:** Yes.	
Teacher: What ingredients did you put in your cake? **Child:** Eggs and sugar and chocolate. And it fell down and made a big mess!	
Teacher: Hmmm. I'm not sure I understand. Can you tell us exactly what happened?	
Child: I was mixing the 'gredients and the dog came by and scared me and I jumped ...and....and the sugar fell down and got on the floor and ...and it got on Spot's nose and my Mom laughed.	
Teacher: What a great story! I like the way you explained how the sugar fell on the floor. Boys and girls, would any of you like to ask [name] a question about her photo?	

News of the Day / Morning Message

Discuss with your colleagues different ways teachers can develop children's language skills through News of the Day or Morning Message activities.

Jot down your favorite ideas in the space provided below for future reference.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

What questions or prompts could be used to encourage children's verbal expression for each of the strategies you discussed? Keep in mind the importance of asking open-ended (how or why) questions.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Building Vocabulary

Select a children's book from those available or one you brought from home. Identify key words and concepts that may be new or challenging for young children.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Book Title:

Book Author:

Which words/concepts are best introduced before reading the book aloud?

_____

How might you find out what children already know about these words?

_____

How might you introduce some new words/concepts before you read the story?

_____
_____

Which words would you discuss in context as you read the book aloud?

_____

Which words could be highlighted or reinforced using the "oral cloze" technique during a repeated reading?

_____

Identify other vocabulary-building activities you might use after you've read the book aloud.

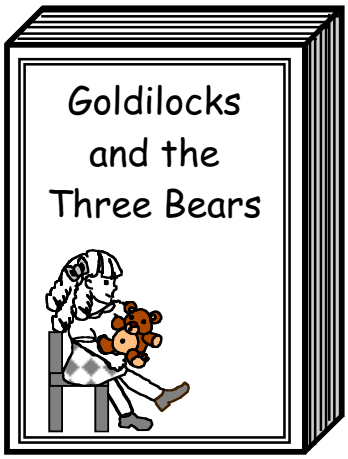
_____
_____

Cognitively Challenging Questions

Goldilocks and the Three Bears Questions…

that focus on past and future events…

- Do you think the Three Bears had ever gone for a walk in the woods before?
- Do you think Goldilocks' parents had taught her about strangers? Tell why.
- What do you think will happen when Goldilocks returns home?
- Do you think she will tell her parents about her adventure?
- What do you think her parents might say to her?



that analyze/speculate about cause and effect relationships…

- Why did the three bears go for a walk in the woods?
- Why did Goldilocks go inside the Three Bears' house?
- How did Baby Bear's chair break?

that predict upcoming events…

- What do you think will happen when the Three Bears come home?

that encourage deep thinking about issues or themes…

- Do you think Goldilocks should have gone into the house of the Three Bears?
- What should you do if you break something that belongs to someone else?
- Would you ever go into someone's house when they are not home? Why or why not?

that examine words and word meanings…

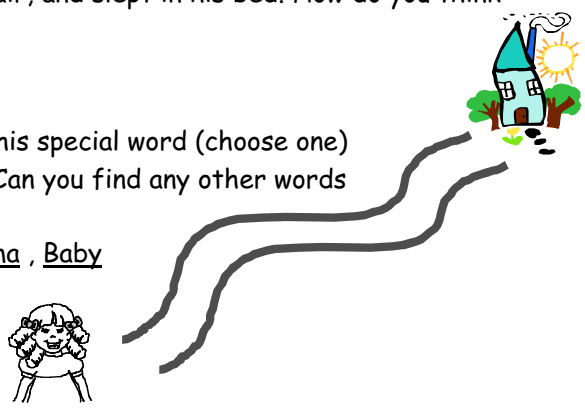
- Goldilocks was curious about the house of the Three Bears and so she went inside. What does curious mean? Do we know any other curious book characters?
- The three bears eat porridge for breakfast. What is porridge? Do you eat porridge at your house? What do you eat that is like porridge?
- What does medium/middle-sized mean? Can you find the middle-sized bowl on our table?

that analyze characters feelings, personality traits and motivations…

- Why do you think Goldilocks decided to go into a stranger's house?
- Goldilocks ate Baby Bear's food, broke his chair, and slept in his bed. How do you think Baby Bear feels when he meets Goldilocks?

that focus on print…

- Let's look for special words. When we hear this special word (choose one) we'll stop. Let's start with the word "bear." Can you find any other words that start with the "B" like in "Bear?"
- (Other special words might include: Papa, Mama , Baby Bear, or Goldilocks)



Before, During and After Reading Aloud

Select from one of three well-known stories: The Three Bears, Little Red Riding Hood, or The Three Little Pigs. In a small group, develop BEFORE, DURING and AFTER questions and activities appropriate for a read-aloud session with prekindergartners. Use the information on transparencies 55-59 (Cognitively Challenging Book Talk; Before, During and After Reading; Types of Questions and Responses) to guide your planning. Record the group's ideas below in the language of your choice.

Story Title: _____

Before Reading:

1._____
2._____
3._____
4. _____
5. _____

During Reading:

1._____
2._____
3._____
4. _____
5. _____

After Reading:

1._____
2._____
3._____
4. _____
5. _____

Graphic Organizers

Language to Literacy Charts

A language to literacy chart is a type of graphic organizer designed to elicit and organize children's responses to literature. Language to literacy charts organize ideas, highlight key information, and stimulate discussion. They are used to record children's responses to read-alouds, after the regular story time talk has occurred.

To help children notice similarities and differences among stories, language to literacy charts often contain questions that create opportunities to compare and contrast. For example, when the class is learning about families, they might read several books in a week on that topic. The language to literacy chart is used to record the children's reactions to each book, and then to compare one book to another.

Language to literacy charts help children compare features of related texts and to recognize that the print added to the language to literacy charts is indeed "their words written down."

These charts can be organized in different ways but the purpose is always the same: to draw attention to the connections between books. Typically, a language to literacy chart is designed as a matrix or a lattice with headings. For example, when comparing different books on the topic of bears, the headings across the top might read:

Name of Book	Author	Kinds of Bears
Osos Por Ahi	Joanne Ryder	brown bears & teddy bears
Blueberries for Sal	Robert McCloskey	black bears
Grizzly Cub	Rick McIntyre	grizzly bears

Graphic Organizers

After reading a story several times, pose a set of questions that will help children draw comparisons between this book and other books on the same theme (or different versions of the same story). Write these questions across the top of the chart, and then write the names of the books down the side. Take children's dictation, recording responses on the language to literacy chart. By providing a set of questions that will be answered after reading each book, language to literacy charts encourage children to listen carefully and to remember details about each story.

Types of Language to Literacy Charts

- Comparing books on a theme or topic (for example, stories about "families," stories about "things in 3's: 3 Bears, 3 Little Kittens, 3 Little Pigs)

- Comparing books in a genre [for example, "true" (non-fiction) books; fairy tales; alphabet books; or predictable books]

- Comparing different versions of the same story (for example, Goldilocks and the Three Bears as retold by Paul Galdone, Jan Brett, and James Marshall)

- Comparing several books by the same author, either sequels (the same character appears in several books, such as Ezra Jack Keats' character Peter) or non-related (the Eric Carle books). Sequels are very helpful as the character is already familiar to the children and is therefore more predictable.

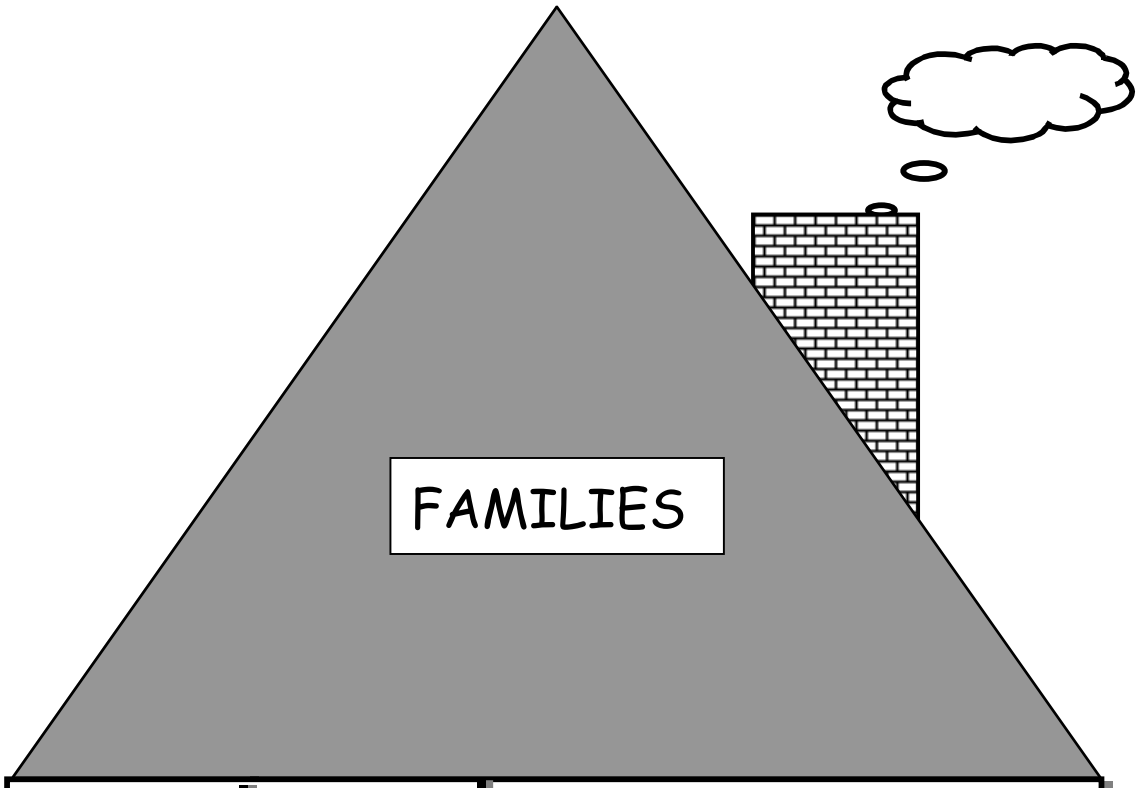
- As an advance organizer to access children's prior knowledge (similar to a "K-W-L" chart) and as a review at the end of each topic (for example, when studying frogs, ask children to tell you what they know about frogs, then write these words on a frog-shaped piece of butcher paper).

Adapted from:
Roser, N.L. & Hoffman, J.V. with Labbo, L.D. & Farest, C. (1992). Language charts: A record of story time talk. *Language Arts, 69,* 44-52.

Graphic Organizers

Comparing Books on a Theme or Topic: Language to Literacy Family Chart

This chart asks the child to remember and name facts about families in different books on this topic.



Title	Author	Who is in the family?	Where do they live?
El Bebe de Los Osos Berenstain	Stan and Jan Berenstain	Mama' Papa' Nene Osito y bebe nuevo	dentro de un gran arbol
Peter's Chair	Ezra Jack Keats	Daddy, Mommy, Peter, and Suzie	in an apartment
La Hora de Acostarse de Francisca	Russell Hoban	Papa' , Mama' y Francisca	en una casa

Graphic Organizers

Language to Literacy Chart of Predictable Books

There are several **types of predictable books.** One type is a **pattern book** with phrases that repeat throughout the story.

Name of Book	Author	Illustrator	What happens in this story?
I Went Walking (Sali de Paseo)	Sue Williams	Julie Vigas	A boy sees lots of animals and they're all different colors.
¿Eres Tu Mi Mama? Are You My Mother?	P.D. Eastman	P.D. Eastman	A baby bird that fell from his nest looks everywhere to find his mother.
Llaman a la Puerta (The Doorbell Rang)	Pat Hutchins Aida Marcuse, Translator		Mama acaba de hacer una docena de galletitas, mas que suficientes para sus dos hijos. Pero, en ese momento, llaman a la puerta.

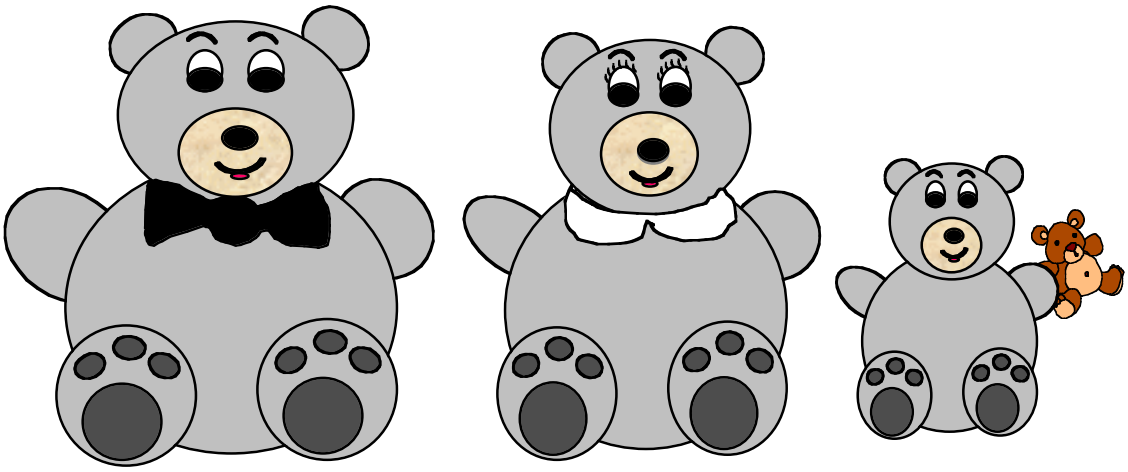
Graphic Organizers

Language to Literacy Chart of Sing-Along Books
Comparing Books in the Same Genre

Name of Book	Author	What Sounds Do You Hear?
El Toro Pinto	Anne F. Rockwell	"Escuchamos muchas canciones bonitas."
Down By the Bay	Raffi	"We hear rhyming words."
The Wheels on the Bus	traditional	" We hear lots of sounds: the wipers going, 'swoosh,swoosh,swoosh,' the babies going, 'wah-wah-wah,' and the driver going, 'Move on back!'"
Baby Beluga	Raffi	"We heard the ocean and the whales."
Roll Over! A Counting Song	traditional Illustrated by Merle Peek	"We heard silly bears falling out of bed."
5 Little Ducks (Los Cinco Patitos)	traditional song Illustrated by Pamela Paparone	"The Mama Duck says,'quack, quack, quack.'" "El pato dice, 'cua-cua.'"

Graphic Organizers

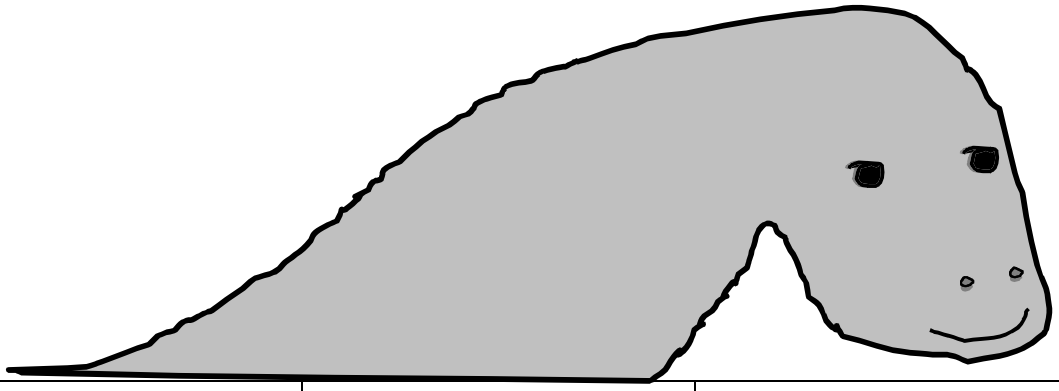
Comparing different versions of the same story: Language to Literacy Three Bears Chart



Our " Beary " Favorite Three Bears Stories		
Title of Book	**retold by… (author)**	**What We Liked About THIS Book**
Goldilocks and the Three Bears	Paul Galdone	"We got this one from the library."
Goldilocks and the Three Bears	Jan Brett	"I liked the pictures around the edges."
Los Tres Osos Y Ricitos De Oro	María Claret	"Nos gusta que son amigos."
Goldilocks and the Three Bears	James Marshall	"It was funny."

Graphic Organizers

Language to Literacy Chart Comparing Books by the Same Author



AUTHOR:	Title of Book	Observations
Bernard Most	Dinosaur Cousins?	"The dinosaurs looked sort of like some animals in the zoo."
Bernard Most	How Big Were the Dinosaurs?	"As big as a bunch of school buses. That's really big."
Bernard Most	What ever Happened to the Dinosaurs?	"It was funny!"
Bernard Most	Four and Twenty Dinosaurs	"It rhymes like Mother Goose"
Bernard Most	ABC T-Rex	"I like the one that starts like my name."
Bernard Most	If the Dinosaurs Came Back	"Funny. I wish the dinosaurs could come back, I would have one for my pet."

Graphic Organizers

K-W-L Chart about Frogs

K-W-L charts include 3 parts:
"K" for what do you know?
"W" for what do you Want to know? and
"L" for *what* did you Learn or *how* can we Learn it?

What do we know about frogs?

Mary knows that they are wet. Amalia knows that frogs hop. Jared knows that frogs say "rib-bit." Rebecca knows that frogs are green.

What do we want to know about frogs?

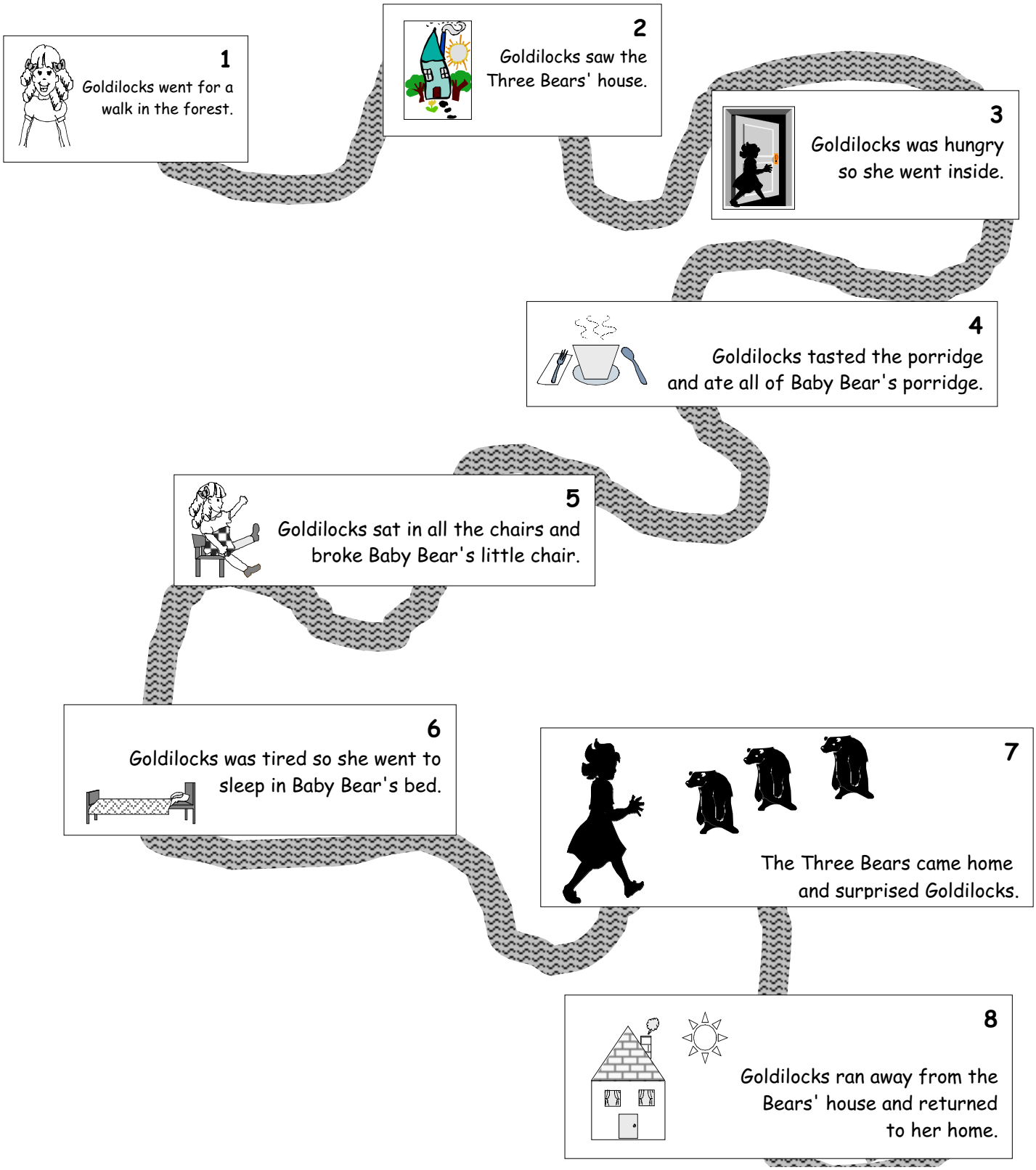
Michael wants to know how frogs make that sound. Diana wants to know where frogs live. Sammy wants to know if he can catch a frog.

How can we find out more about frogs?

Michael wants to ask a veterinarian. Diana wants to find out on the computer. Emily wants to go to the library. Quinn wants to go outside and look for frogs. Sharon wants to listen to the teacher read a book.

Graphic Organizers

Goldilocks and the Three Bears Story Road Map



Linking Instruction to the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

Refer to the Prekindergarten Guidelines for Language and Early Literacy Development. With a partner or in a small group, discuss and record WHICH of the language accomplishments you feel are addressed through the instructional strategies we highlighted for each of the following classroom activity settings.

#1: Circle Time (Sharing Personal Narratives, News of the Day)

- Listens for different purposes
- Tells a simple personal narrative
- Uses language for a variety of purposes
- Refines and extends understanding of known words
- Uses new vocabulary in everyday communication
- Uses sentences of increasing length and grammatical complexity

#2: Read-Aloud Sessions (Building Vocabulary, Cognitively Challenging Book Talk; Before, During and After Reading; Text Types; Graphic Organizers; Story Retells)

- Enjoys listening to and responding to books
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Linking Instruction to the Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines

#3: Small Group Instruction: (Science & Cooking Activities using "Running Commentary" and "Think Aloud" strategies)

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

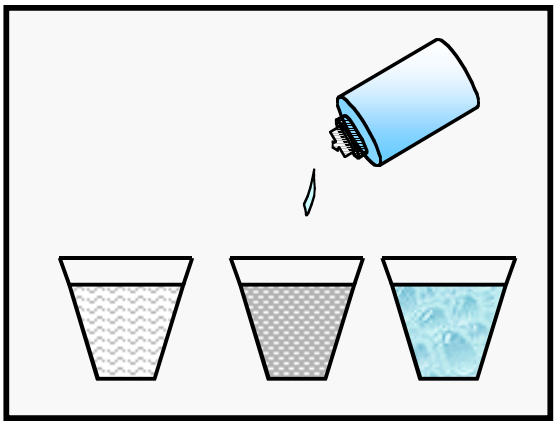
#4 Independent Center Time: (Dramatic Theme Play, Dramatic Story Play)

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Small Group Instruction

Building Language Through Cooking and Science Activities

Mixing Colors Activity



When using the "running commentary," the teacher talks about what he/she is doing while performing an activity. This is an opportunity for children to hear new vocabulary in a meaningful context. Children are given the opportunity to participate immediately following the teacher demonstration.

One science activity illustrating a "running commentary" is a lesson on mixing primary colors (red, yellow, and blue) to make secondary colors (orange, green, and purple). The activity is simple: clear plastic cups are filled with water to which drops of food coloring are added. These colors are mixed to make new colors.

Materials: 6 clear plastic cups; red, yellow, and blue food coloring; one eyedropper per child.

1. Pour water into three clear cups.

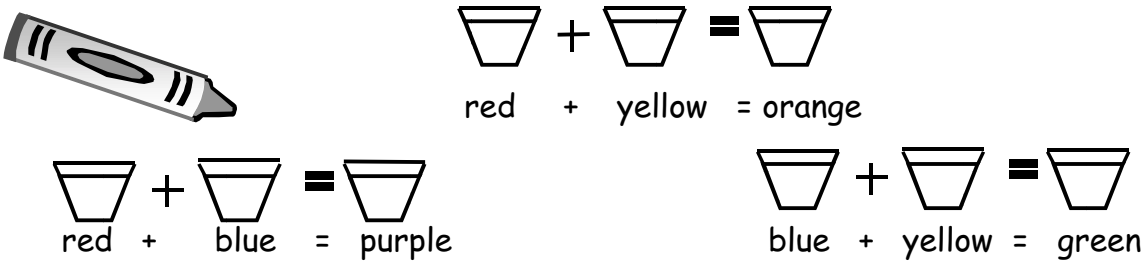
2. Squeeze several drops of food coloring into each cup of water using primary colors (red, yellow, and blue). Stir. Add enough food coloring to make each color a rich hue.

3. Mix secondary colors by transferring a small amount of colored water from two of the three cups of colored water. Mix red and yellow water in the first cup, blue and yellow water in the second cup, and red and blue water in the third cup. Water can be poured or it can be transferred using a tool (eyedropper, sponge or small bulb syringe).

4. For the purpose of using the running commentary strategy, the teacher can demonstrate the first color-mixing task. Then children can discover the results of mixing other primary colors on their own, with teacher support.

Small Group Instruction

Building Language Through Cooking and Science Activities



5. Children can record the results of the experiment on an observation sheet.

6. Read stories about mixing colors to revisit the concepts addressed through this activity. The following are a few of the many books built around the concept of mixing colors:

- Little Blue and Little Yellow by Leo Lionni
- Mouse Paint by Ellen Stoll Walsh
- Color Dance by Ann Jonas
- Color by Ruth Heller

With the running commentary strategy, the teacher highlights important vocabulary by using:

Action verbs that describe the processes involved when mixing colors. ("First I'll fill these cups. I'll pour water from this pitcher.")

Sequence words that denote order, such as "first," "second," and "third." ("First I'll begin by filling this cup with water…second I will add a little food coloring…now the third thing I'm going to do …")

Specific **words that describe the uses of objects** needed to complete the task. ("Let's see, I need something to stir with. Well, a spoon is for stirring…" "a pitcher is for pouring," "a towel is for cleaning," etc.)

Quantitative concepts to describe and compare amounts. ("One cup has more food coloring than the other cup. I will add some more food coloring so that both cups are the same color.")

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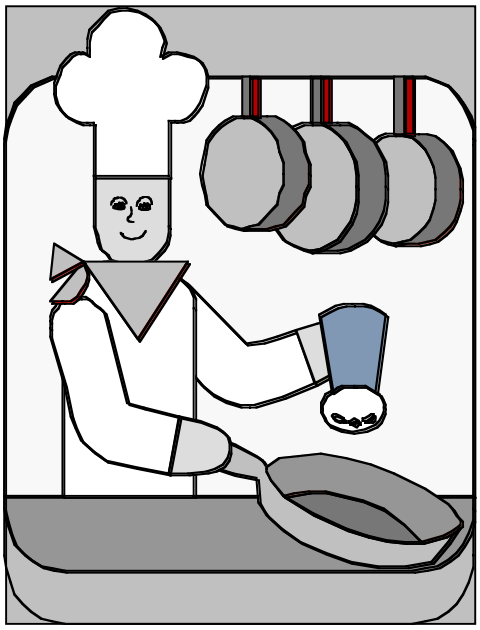
Building Language Through Cooking and Science Activities

Descriptive language to build vocabulary. Make **observations** throughout the activity, commenting on the process. For example, observing the marbling effect food coloring has when it is first dropped into the water ("I love to watch the color swirl through the water. It looks like it's dancing."), the **changes observed** in the water from empty to full, clear to colored, before and after stirring, etc.

Use **predictive language**. **Think out loud** about what might happen when two colors mix together ("I wonder what will happen if I pour a little of this blue water into the yellow water").

Explain **rare** and **challenging** words in context. ("Did you see how quickly the towel **absorbs** the water? It soaked it right up.").

Making Peanut Butter Playdough



Cooking activities provide many opportunities for children to learn new vocabulary and concepts. To emphasize **language development**, the teacher highlights important vocabulary and procedures by modeling the thinking process using the "Think Aloud" scaffolding technique. This can be done before, during and after the cooking experience.

Before: Preview the recipe by naming ingredients, equipment, and sequence. It is helpful to display an oversized copy of the recipe, and to refer to it frequently. ("We're going to make some peanut butter playdough, and so I need to learn how to make it. Let's read the recipe first so we'll know what we're going to need.")

Small Group Instruction

Building Language Through Cooking and Science Activities

During: Provide a running commentary while demonstrating the activity. After the demonstration, have the children complete the activity themselves. Follow the "think aloud" strategy for scaffolding language:

Ask yourself questions: "I wonder if we have all the ingredients. Let's check the recipe. Do we have the peanut butter?
Make predictions: "When I pour this honey, I'll bet it's going to make the mixture hard to stir. What do you think?")
Check predictions: "Wow, this is really getting thick. We were right, that honey made it hard to stir."
Relate to personal experiences: "We like to eat peanut butter at my house. Have you eaten peanut butter before? Tell us about it."
Connect with prior knowledge: "Do you remember when we made playdough last week? We really had to stir it up, didn't we? Peanut butter playdough is like regular playdough, so maybe we'll have to stir this up like we did before."
Make inferences: "When we made homemade playdough, do you remember what it felt like? (soft and squishy) This feels the same to me. Does it feel the same to you? I wonder if we can make letters and shapes out of this playdough like we did with our other playdough."

After: Reviewing the experience helps children remember and use the new vocabulary in a meaningful setting. Here are some options for reviewing the cooking activity:

Ask the children to retell the recipe in their own words.

Take pictures of each step of the process and then ask the children to sequence the pictures.

Draw a new recipe chart, having each child draw an ingredient. This provides an opportunity to reinforce vocabulary development by emphasizing names of ingredients, functions of equipment, textures of mixtures in different stages, and quantitative vocabulary such as "empty/full, small/large, more/less…"

Small Group Instruction

Building Language Through Cooking and Science Activities

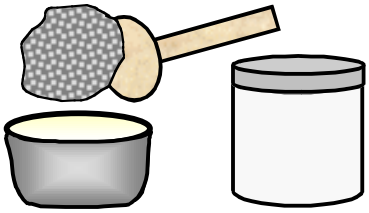
Play memory games to help the children recall their experience. For example, line up all the ingredients, then ask the children to close their eyes. Remove one ingredient and ask what is missing.

Have the children explain the activity to the rest of the class. Use this as an opportunity to assess children's use of new vocabulary.

To promote literacy development, record their "retelling" as a language chart.

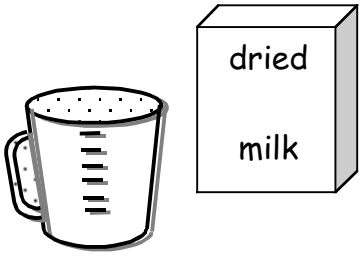
How to Make Peanut Butter Playdough

1. Put 1 cup peanut butter in bowl.



2. Add 1 cup honey. Stir.

3. Add 1 cup dried milk powder. Stir. The mixture should be easy to handle and not sticky. If it is sticky, add more of the dried milk powder.



4. Roll into balls. Give each child a small amount to roll, squeeze, squish, flatten, and shape. Shape and eat!

Additional ingredients may be added, such as GrapeNuts or Rice Krispies cereal for crunchiness and cinnamon-sugar as a coating.

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Reprints

Prekindergarten
Curriculum Guidelines

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Texas Education Agency

December 1999

CONTENTS

Prekindergarten Curriculum Guidelines 1

Language and Early Literacy 2

Mathematics 8

Science 11

Social Studies 13

Fine Arts 16

Health and Safety 18

Personal and Social Development 20

Physical Development 21

Technology Applications 23

Acknowledgments 24

PREKINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

Research confirms the value of early education for young children. Prekindergarten programs that support effective teaching practices have been shown to lead to important growth in children's intellectual and social development, which is critical to their future academic success. Quality programs that provide challenging but achievable curriculum engage children in thinking, reasoning, and communicating with others. With teacher direction and guidance, children respond to the challenge and acquire important skills and concepts.

The purpose of this document is to help educators make informed decisions about curriculum content for prekindergarten children. The guidelines are based on knowledge of theory and research about how children develop and learn; they reflect the growing consensus among early childhood professional organizations that a greater emphasis be placed on young children's conceptual learning, acquisition of basic skills, and participation in meaningful and relevant learning experiences. The guidelines also delineate the content that children are to learn and what they should be able to achieve. Finally, the guidelines provide a means to align the prekindergarten programs with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

The guidelines describe specific goals for prekindergarten children in each content area. The intent of this organizational design is to ensure that all three- and four-year-old children have the opportunity to strive towards these goals. Due to age differences and previous experiences, however, children will have a great diversity of knowledge. Some children, regardless of their age level, will be at the beginning of the learning continuum, while others will be further along. Children with disabilities may need accommodations and modifications of the guidelines in order to benefit from them. For children whose first language is not English, the student's native language serves as a foundation for knowledge acquisition. Students in a prekindergarten English as a Second Language (ESL) program should receive instruction in a manner they can understand and that is commensurate with their proficiency level in English. Children's current strengths and skills should serve as the starting point for new experiences and instruction rather than become a limitation. To use these guidelines to the best advantage and to extend the learning of skills and concepts, teachers must build on children's existing competencies.

These guidelines are important tools to help teachers define and implement a comprehensive curriculum. Such a curriculum helps to build connections between subject matter disciplines by organizing the large amounts of information children must learn into a set of meaningful concepts. Using concepts from the guidelines, teachers can work across disciplines to provide many opportunities for children to achieve knowledge and skills.

This document presents the commissioner's guidelines for prekindergarten curriculum. Because there is no state-required prekindergarten curriculum, use of these guidelines is

voluntary. Texas Education Code § 29.153 contains statutory requirements concerning prekindergarten.

Prekindergarten Guidelines

Language and Early Literacy

During the prekindergarten years, children's experiences with communication and literacy begin to form the basis for their later school success. Given adequate opportunities to interact with responsive adults and peers in language and print-rich environments, young children develop vocabulary, extended language skills, and knowledge of the world around them. They develop listening comprehension and phonological awareness; understanding of the everyday functions of print; motivation to read; appreciation for literary forms; and print awareness and letter knowledge. They learn what books are and how to use them. Understanding the value of literacy as a means of communication, as well as coming to enjoy reading, are accomplishments typical of the future good reader. These language and literacy accomplishments are best achieved through activities that are integrated across different developmental areas: cognitive development, fine and gross motor development, and social and emotional development. It is important to consider native language, augmentative communication, and sensory impairments in accomplishing these guidelines.

Prekindergarten educators should provide opportunities to promote language and literacy learning in children who speak a language other than English. Except where specified, the following guidelines outline language and literacy accomplishments for three- and four-year-old children in their native language. For students whose first language is other than English, the native language serves as the foundation for English language acquisition. Specific guidelines for the language and literacy development of prekindergarten children whose home language is not English in English-only settings appear below in each domain.

Language and Early Literacy Development

(1) Listening Comprehension

Prekindergarten-aged children are able to comprehend what they hear in conversations and in stories read aloud with increasing accuracy, though three-year-old children may respond in single words or brief phrases to some questions, especially "why," "how," and "when" questions. Children demonstrate understanding through their questions, comments, and actions. Prekindergarten children in English as Second Language (ESL) settings listen purposefully to English-speaking teachers and peers to gather information about their new language.

The child:

- listens with increasing attention
- listens for different purposes (e.g., to learn what happened in a story, to receive instructions, to converse with an adult or a peer)
- understands and follows simple oral directions
- enjoys listening to and responding to books
- listens to and engages in several exchanges of conversations with others
- listens to tapes and records, and shows understanding through gestures, actions, and/or language
- listens purposefully to English-speaking teachers and peers to gather information and shows some understanding of the new language being spoken by others (ESL).

(2) Speech Production and Speech Discrimination

Young children must learn to vocalize, pronounce, and discriminate the sounds and words of language. Although most children in prekindergarten can accurately perceive the difference between similar-sounding words, they continue to acquire new sounds and may mispronounce words quite often in their own speech. The ability to produce certain speech sounds such as /s/ and /r/ improves with age. Just as infants and toddlers develop control over the sounds of their first language, young children in ESL settings gradually learn to pronounce the sounds of the English language.

The child:

- perceives differences between similar sounding words (e.g., “coat” and “goat,” “three” and “free,” [Spanish] “juego” and “fuego”)
- produces speech sounds with increasing ease and accuracy
- experiments with new language sounds
- experiments with and demonstrates growing understanding of the sounds and intonation of the English language (ESL).

(3) Vocabulary

Prekindergarten children experience rapid growth in their understanding of words and word meanings. Vocabulary knowledge reflects children’s previous experiences and growing knowledge of the world around them and is one of the most important predictors of later reading achievement. As children learn through experiences, they develop concepts, acquire new words, and increasingly refine their understanding of words they already know.

The child:

- shows a steady increase in listening and speaking vocabulary
- uses new vocabulary in everyday communication
- refines and extends understanding of known words
- attempts to communicate more than current vocabulary will allow, borrowing and extending words to create meaning
- links new learning experiences and vocabulary to what is already known about a topic
- increases listening vocabulary and begins to develop a vocabulary of object names and common phrases in English (ESL).

(4) Verbal Expression

Effective communication requires that children use their knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and sense of audience to convey meaning. Three- and four-year-old children become increasingly adept at using language to express their needs and interests, to play and pretend, and to share ideas. Children's use of invented words and the overgeneralization of language rules (for example, saying "foots" instead of "feet" or [Spanish]"yo no cabo" instead of "yo no quepo") is a normal part of language acquisition. Second language learners in English-only prekindergarten settings may communicate nonverbally (e.g., through gestures) before they begin to produce words and phrases in English. The ESL accomplishments noted below represent a developmental sequence for second-language acquisition in young children.

The child:

- uses language for a variety of purposes (e.g., expressing needs and interests)
- uses sentences of increasing length (three or more words) and grammatical complexity in everyday speech
- uses language to express common routines and familiar scripts
- tells a simple personal narrative, focusing on favorite or most memorable parts
- asks questions and makes comments related to the current topic of discussion
- begins to engage in conversation and follows conversational rules (e.g., staying on topic and taking turns)
- begins to retell the sequence of a story
- engages in various forms of nonverbal communication with those who do not speak his/her home language (ESL)
- uses single words and simple phrases to communicate meaning in social situations (ESL)
- attempts to use new vocabulary and grammar in speech (ESL).

(5) Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is an auditory skill that involves an understanding of the sounds of spoken words. It includes recognizing and producing rhymes, dividing words into syllables, and identifying words that have the same beginning, middle, or ending sounds. Phonological awareness represents a crucial step toward understanding that letters or groups of letters can represent phonemes or sounds (i.e., the alphabetic principle). This understanding is highly predictive of success in beginning reading. Some basic proficiency in English may be prerequisite to the development of phonological awareness in English for second-language learners.

The child:

- becomes increasingly sensitive to the sounds of spoken words
- begins to identify rhymes and rhyming sounds in familiar words, participates in rhyming games, and repeats rhyming songs and poems
- begins to attend to the beginning sounds in familiar words by identifying that the pronunciations of several words all begin the same way (e.g., “dog,” “dark,” and “dusty,” [Spanish] “casa,” “coche,” and “cuna”)
- begins to break words into syllables or claps along with each syllable in a phrase
- begins to create and invent words by substituting one sound for another (e.g., bubblegum/gugglebum, [Spanish] calabaza/balacaza).

(6) Print and Book Awareness

Through their daily experiences with reading and writing, prekindergarten children learn basic concepts about print and how it works. They learn that print carries meaning and can be used for different purposes. They begin to differentiate writing from other graphic symbols and recognize some of the common features of print (for example, that writing moves from left to right on a page and is divided into words).

The child:

- understands that reading and writing are ways to obtain information and knowledge, generate and communicate thoughts and ideas, and solve problems
- understands that print carries a message by recognizing labels, signs, and other print forms in the environment
- understands that letters are different from numbers
- understands that illustrations carry meaning but cannot be read
- understands that a book has a title and an author
- begins to understand that print runs from left to right and top to bottom
- begins to understand some basic print conventions (e.g., the concept that letters are grouped to form words and that words are separated by spaces)
- begins to recognize the association between spoken and written words by following the print as it is read aloud

- understands that different text forms are used for different functions (e.g., lists for shopping, recipes for cooking, newspapers for learning about current events, letters and messages for interpersonal communication).

(7) Letter Knowledge and Early Word Recognition

Letter knowledge is an essential component of learning to read and write. Knowing how letters function in writing and how these letters connect to the sounds children hear in words is crucial to children's success in reading. Combined with phonological awareness, letter knowledge is the key to children's understanding of the alphabetic principle. Children will use this sound/letter connection to begin to identify printed words.

The child:

- begins to associate the names of letters with their shapes
- identifies 10 or more printed alphabet letters
- begins to notice beginning letters in familiar words
- begins to make some letter/sound matches
- begins to identify some high-frequency words (age 4).

(8) Motivation to Read

Prekindergarten children benefit from classroom environments that associate reading with pleasure and enjoyment as well as learning and skill development. These early experiences will come to define their assumptions and expectations about becoming literate and influence their motivation to work toward learning to read and write.

The child:

- demonstrates an interest in books and reading through body language and facial expressions
- enjoys listening to and discussing storybooks and information books read aloud
- frequently requests the re-reading of books
- attempts to read and write independently
- shares books and engages in pretend-reading with other children
- enjoys visiting the library.

(9) Developing Knowledge of Literary Forms

Exposure to storybooks and information books helps prekindergarten children become familiar with the language of books and story forms. Children develop concepts of story structure and knowledge about informational text structures, which influences how they understand, interpret, and link what they already know to new information.

The child:

- recognizes favorite books by their cover
- selects books to read based on personal criteria

- understands that books and other print resources (e.g., magazines, computer-based texts) are handled in specific ways
- becomes increasingly familiar with narrative form and its elements by identifying characters and predicting events, plot, and the resolution of a story
- begins to predict what will happen next in a story
- imitates the special language in storybooks and story dialogue, and uses it in retellings and dramatic play [(such as "Once upon a time…")]
- asks questions and makes comments about the information and events from books
- connects information and events in books to real-life experiences
- begins to retell some sequences of events in stories
- shows appreciation of repetitive language patterns.

(10) Written Expression

Prekindergarten-aged children generate hypotheses about how written language works and begin to explore the uses of writing for themselves. They also begin to ask adults to write signs and letters for them. Through these early writing experiences, young children develop initial understandings about the forms, features, and functions of written language. Over time, children's writing attempts more closely approximate conventional writing.

The child:

- attempts to write messages as part of playful activity
- uses known letters and approximations of letters to represent written language (especially meaningful words like his/her name and phrases such as "I love you" or [Spanish] " Te quiero")
- attempts to connect the sounds in a word with its letter forms
- understands that writing is used to communicate ideas and information
- attempts to use a variety of forms of writing (e.g., lists, messages, stories)
- begins to dictate words, phrases, and sentences to an adult recording on paper (e.g., "letter writing," "storywriting").

Prekindergarten Guidelines

Mathematics

Mathematics learning builds on children's curiosity and enthusiasm, and challenges children to explore ideas about patterns and relationships, order and predictability, and logic and meaning. Consequently, quality instruction occurs in environments that are rich in language, encourage children's thinking, and nurture children's explorations and ideas. These ideas include the concepts of number pattern, measurement, shape, space, and classification.

(1) Number and Operations

Understanding the concept of number is fundamental to mathematics. Children come to school with rich and varied informal knowledge of number. A major goal is to build on this informal base toward more thorough understanding and skills. Children move from beginning to develop basic counting techniques in prekindergarten to later understanding number size, relationships, and operations.

The child:

- arranges sets of concrete objects in one-to-one correspondence
- counts by ones to 10 or higher
- counts concrete objects to five or higher
- begins to compare the numbers of concrete objects using language (e.g., "same" or "equal," "one more," "more than," or "less than")
- begins to name "how many" are in a group of up to three (or more) objects without counting (e.g., recognizing two or three crayons in a box)
- recognizes and describes the concept of zero (meaning there are none)
- begins to demonstrate part of and whole with real objects (e.g., an orange)
- begins to identify first and last in a series
- combines, separates, and names "how many" concrete objects.

(2) Patterns

Recognizing patterns and relationships among objects is an important component in children's intellectual development. Children learn to organize their world by recognizing patterns and gradually begin to use patterns as a strategy for problem-solving, forming generalizations, and developing the concepts of number, operation, shape, and space. Pattern recognition is the first step in the development of algebraic thinking.

The child:

- imitates pattern sounds and physical movements (e.g., clap, stomp, clap, stomp,…)
- recognizes and reproduces simple patterns of concrete objects (e.g., a string of beads that are yellow, blue, blue, yellow, blue, blue)
- begins to recognize patterns in their environment (e.g., day follows night, repeated phrases in storybooks, patterns in carpeting or clothing)
- begins to predict what comes next when patterns are extended.

(3) Geometry and Spatial Sense

Geometry helps children systematically represent and describe their world. Children learn to name and recognize the properties of various shapes and figures, to use words that indicate direction, and to use spatial reasoning to analyze and solve problems.

The child:

- begins to recognize, describe, and name shapes (e.g., circles, triangles, rectangles—including squares)
- begins to use words that indicate where things are in space (e.g., "beside," "inside," "behind," "above," "below")
- begins to recognize when a shape's position or orientation has changed
- begins to investigate and predict the results of putting together two or more shapes
- puts together puzzles of increasing complexity.

(4) Measurement

Measurement is one of the most widely used applications of mathematics. Early learning experiences with measurement should focus on direct comparisons of objects. Children make decisions about size by looking, touching, and comparing objects directly while building language to express the size relationships.

The child:

- covers an area with shapes (e.g., tiles)
- fills a shape with solids or liquids (e.g., ice cubes, water)
- begins to make size comparisons between objects (e.g., taller than, smaller than)
- begins to use tools to imitate measuring
- begins to categorize time intervals and uses language associated with time in everyday situations (e.g., "in the morning," "after snack")
- begins to order two or three objects by size (seriation) (e.g., largest to smallest) (age 4).

(5) Classification and Data Collection

Children use sorting to organize their world. As children recognize similarities and differences, they begin to recognize patterns that lead them to form generalizations. As they begin to use language to describe similarities and differences, they begin sharing their ideas and their mathematical thinking. Children can be actively involved in collecting, sorting, organizing, and communicating information.

The child:

- matches objects that are alike
- describes similarities and differences between objects
- sorts objects into groups by an attribute and begins to explain how the grouping was done
- participates in creating and using real and pictorial graphs.

Prekindergarten Guidelines

Science

Young children are natural scientists. They are eager to discover all they can about the world in which they live. In prekindergarten, children participate in simple investigations that help them begin to develop the skills of asking questions, gathering information, communicating findings, and making informed decisions. Using their own senses and common tools, such as a hand lens, students make observations and collect information. Through these processes, prekindergarten children learn about their world.

Children enter the prekindergarten classroom with many conceptions about the natural and constructed world-ideas that they have gained from prior experiences. Meaningful science learning experiences help children investigate those pre-existing ideas while building a foundation for additional knowledge. These meaningful experiences increase children's understanding of the natural world, living things, cycles, change, and patterns—concepts that organize the learning of science.

(1) Science Processes

Children use the processes of science to develop an understanding about their world. They use their senses to gather information, make tentative statements about events and relationships, and begin to test observations, draw conclusions, and form generalizations. Children learn by participating in a simple investigation (for example, adding water to a dried-up sponge), and then thinking about it, and finally discussing what happened. This inquiry approach enables students to build understanding over time.

The child:

- begins to demonstrate safe practices and appropriate use of materials
- asks questions about objects, events, and organisms
- shows an interest in investigating unfamiliar objects, organisms, and phenomena
- uses one or more senses to observe and learn about objects, events, and organisms
- describes observations
- begins to perform simple investigations
- gathers information using simple tools such as a magnifying lens and an eyedropper
- explores by manipulating materials with simple equipment, (e.g., pouring from a cup, and using a spoon to pick up sand or water)
- uses simple measuring devices to learn about objects and organisms
- compares objects and organisms and identifies similarities and differences
- sorts objects and organisms into groups and begins to describe how groups were organized
- begins to offer explanations, using his or her own words

- predicts what will happen next based on previous experience
- solves simple design problems (e.g., making a box into a little house for a storybook character, toy, or pet)
- participates in creating and using simple data charts
- shares observations and findings with others through pictures, discussions, or dramatizations.

(2) Science Concepts

As prekindergarten children learn science skills, they develop concepts about the natural and constructed environment. They identify components of the natural world including rocks, soil, and water. Children observe and describe changes, and they name organisms and describe basic needs of living things. Prekindergarten children observe cycles (for example, wet and dry) and structures (such as fences or buildings) and describe simple patterns that help predict what will happen next. They compare and sort objects and organisms based on observable differences and similarities. The children begin using what they know to solve problems, such as where to hang a wet cloth so it will dry quickly. The prekindergarten children can also develop an awareness that investigations help them learn about the natural world, that certain questions can be answered by investigations, and that those answers can change as new observations are made.

The child:

- observes and describes properties of rocks, soil, and water
- describes properties of objects and characteristics of living things
- begins to observe changes in size, color, position, weather, and sound
- identifies animals and plants as living things
- groups organisms and objects as living or nonliving and begins to identify things people have built
- begins to recognize that living things have similar needs for water, food, and air
- begins to identify what things are made of (e.g., distinguishing a metal spoon from a plastic spoon)
- uses patterns (such as growth and day following night to predict what happens next)
- identifies similarities and differences among objects and organisms
- begins to use scientific words and phrases to describe objects, events, and living things.

Prekindergarten Guidelines

Social Studies

Social studies concentrate on the nature of people and their world, the heritage of the past, and contemporary living and culture. The social studies are both integral to young children's lives and of great interest to them. Driven by a desire to know and achieve mastery over self and their environment, children are eager to gain understanding of the many aspects of their cultural and environmental world. Through social studies, children begin to develop the self-understanding that will serve as a foundation for learning about others and the world around them.

Although all aspects of education have the goal of preparing children to become contributing members of society, social studies are particularly well suited to foster the skills and attitudes necessary for participation in a democracy. Skills such as problem-solving, decision-making, and working independently and with others in a classroom prepare children to become fully functioning citizens.

(1) Individual, Culture, and Community

All children live in some type of group or social organization. Prekindergarten children must learn the skills of communicating, sharing, cooperating, and participating with others. These individual skills are necessary for all groups to function successfully and fairly. The better children are able to understand others, the more they will feel a sense of community and connection with other people and with their world.

The child:

- shares ideas and takes turns listening and speaking
- cooperates with others in a joint activity
- identifies and follows classroom rules
- participates in classroom jobs and contributes to the classroom community
- identifies similarities among people like himself/herself and classmates as well as among himself/herself and people from other cultures
- begins to examine a situation from another person's perspective.

(2) History

Prekindergarten children are aware of time and begin to organize their lives around it. Three- and four-year-old children learn to depend on events and routines that occur in a regular and predictable order. They begin to understand past events and how these events relate to present and future activities, demonstrating evidence of their growing understanding of time, change, and continuity.

The child:

- identifies common events and routines (e.g., snack time, storytime)
- begins to categorize time intervals using words (e.g., “today,” “tomorrow,” “next time”)
- recognizes changes in the environment over time (e.g., growth, seasonal changes)
- connects past events to current events (e.g., linking yesterday’s activity with what will happen today)
- begins to understand cause-and-effect relationships (e.g., if one goes outside in the rain, one will get wet).

(3) Geography

Geographic thinking for young children begins with the concepts of location and direction. Children use directions to locate their relative position in space and to locate their home and school in their community. They learn to recognize common features in their immediate environment and begin to represent them symbolically through drawings and constructions.

The child:

- identifies common features in the home and school environment (e.g., the library, the playground)
- creates simple representations of home, school, or community through drawings or block constructions
- begins to use words to indicate relative location (e.g., “front,” “back,” “near,” “far”)
- identifies common features of the local landscape (e.g., houses, buildings, streets).

(4) Economics

In prekindergarten, children learn about the world of work in their community. They explore the roles and relationships of consumers and producers, and become aware that people produce services as well as goods. Children learn that their community benefits from many different people working in many different ways.

The child:

- understands the basic human needs of all people for food, clothing, and shelter
- understands the roles, responsibilities, and services provided by community workers
- becomes aware of what it means to be a consumer.

Prekindergarten Guidelines

Fine Arts

Young children express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings using a variety of symbols. Through their art, music, and dramatic play, children actively engage in representing what they know and how they think, using problem-solving strategies to express ideas in different forms. The fine arts enhance children's ability to interpret symbols and are associated with growth in all areas of development, including academic learning.

(1) Art

Children explore a wide variety of materials and make discoveries about color, shape, and texture through art experiences. They learn to express what they know and begin to recognize how others express themselves through art. They also begin to gain control of fine-motor muscles and practice hand-eye coordination.

The child:

- uses a variety of materials (e.g., crayons, paint, clay, markers) to create original work
- uses different colors, surface textures, and shapes to create form and meaning
- begins to use art as a form of self-expression
- shares ideas about personal artwork
- begins to show interest in the artwork of others.

(2) Music

Three- and four-year-old children express themselves through singing and movement, and by playing simple instruments. Like art, music is a form of experiencing, learning, and communicating with others. Children learn to experiment with music concepts, volume, tempo, and sound. They begin to appreciate different types of music.

The child:

- participates in classroom music activities
- begins to sing a variety of simple songs
- begins to play classroom instruments
- begins to respond to music of various tempos through movement
- begins to distinguish among the sounds of several common instruments.

(3) Dramatic Play

Creative drama in prekindergarten involves young children in expressive and spontaneous productions. Children demonstrate their unique interpretation to music, songs, and stories through movement and dramatic experiences. These experiences contribute to children's ability to communicate more effectively and engage in cooperative activity with others.

The child:

- expresses feelings through movement
- begins to create or recreate stories, moods, or experiences through dramatic representations
- begins to engage in dramatic play with others.

Prekindergarten Guidelines

Health and Safety

Young children learn health-promoting habits and routines in prekindergarten. In these early years, they develop basic concepts, attitudes, and skills about nutrition, safety, hygiene, and physical activity that contribute to their well being. Children's experiences with their health and discovery of ways to improve it enhance their desire and ability to make wise decisions for healthy living in the future.

(1) Health

Health education includes personal hygiene and nutrition education. Children learn that regular hygiene routines and good nutrition are important to their health.

The child:

- becomes aware of routine healthy behaviors (e.g., brushing teeth)
- begins to follow health-promoting routines (e.g., washing hands)
- begins to understand the need for exercise and rest
- refines use of eating utensils
- begins to recognize and select healthy foods
- prepares simple healthy snacks.

(2) Safety

Prekindergarten children acquire everyday routines and procedures to remain safe and avoid injury. They learn about fire, traffic, environmental and personal safety, and what to do in emergency situations.

The child:

- recognizes the danger of fire and learns to treat fire with caution
- responds appropriately during a fire drill
- knows how to seek help in an emergency
- knows how to cross a street safely
- recognizes the symbol for poison
- knows never to eat substances that are not food
- recognizes the danger of poisonous substances, including drugs
- knows not to talk to, accept rides from, or take treats from strangers
- knows how to get help from a parent and/or trusted adult when made to feel uncomfortable or unsafe by another person/adult
- knows never to take medicine unless it is administered by an adult

- knows about safe behavior around bodies of water (e.g., pools, lakes).

Prekindergarten Guidelines

Personal and Social Development

Prekindergarten children develop personal and social skills that enable them to function well within the social setting of the classroom. Children develop a sense of who they are and their capabilities, and establish positive relationships with others, which enables them to effectively participate in class and community and accomplish meaningful tasks.

(1) Personal Development

Children develop a sense of self in prekindergarten. They begin to show initiative in learning and begin to take greater responsibility for their own behavior. They learn to channel their energies in ways that promote effective learning experiences.

The child:

- develops a sense of personal space
- expresses interests and self-direction in learning
- begins to show self-control by following classroom rules
- begins to be responsible for individual behavior and actions
- begins to show greater ability to control intense feelings (e.g., anger).

(2) Social Development

Children develop interpersonal and social skills for communicating with others. They learn alternatives for resolving conflicts and communicating their needs and feelings verbally, and they begin to develop and maintain productive relationships with other children.

The child:

- begins to share and cooperate with others in group activities
- respects other people's space and personal belongings
- begins to develop friendships with others
- begins to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas through language as well as through gestures and actions
- responds to the suggestions of others.

Prekindergarten Guidelines

Physical Development

Movement is at the center of young children's lives. Prekindergarten children participate in experiences that foster fundamental motor and movement skills, such as walking and running, which are necessary for participation in games and sports throughout life. They begin to develop gross motor skills that involve throwing, catching, and kicking, and fine motor skills that involve greater precision and accuracy of movement.

(1) Physical Movement

Children explore their physical space and understand how their bodies function in space through active movement experiences. They become more skillful and expressive in their movement from one point in space to another through running, jumping, hopping, and skipping movements.

The child:

- explores moving in space
- shows an awareness of name, location, and relationship of body parts
- moves within a space of defined boundaries, changing body configuration to accommodate the space
- becomes more able to move from one space to another in different ways (e.g., running, jumping, hopping, skipping)
- becomes more able to move in place (e.g., axial movements such as reaching, twisting, turning, and bending)
- begins to move in rhythm
- begins to participate in group games involving movement (e.g., Duck, Duck, Goose).

(2) Gross-Motor Development

Gross-motor development requires thought and deliberate movement. Three- and four-year-old children develop greater control of gross-motor manipulative movements that involve giving force to objects and receiving force from objects. Throwing, catching, bouncing, and kicking are fundamental gross-motor manipulative skills.

The child:

- begins to throw or kick an object in a particular direction
- begins to play catch with a bean bag or a large ball
- bounces a large ball and catches it
- begins to coordinate arms and legs (e.g., swinging, stretching).

(3) Fine-Motor Development

Fine-motor manipulative movements involve object-handling activities that emphasize motor control, precision, and accuracy of movement. Using a computer mouse, cutting with scissors, and drawing are the foundational skills needed for the demands of handwriting and other small-motor skills in later school years.

The child:

- begins to develop pincer control in picking up objects (e.g., weaving, touching small objects)
- begins to practice self-help skills (e.g., zipping, buttoning)
- begins to hold writing tools with fingers instead of with a fist
- begins to manipulate play objects that have fine parts
- begins to use scissors.

Prekindergarten Guidelines

Technology Applications

Young children have much to gain from use of technology. In prekindergarten, they expand their ability to acquire information, solve problems, and communicate with others. Regular access and exposure to computers and related technology can enhance this learning. Children use engaging, age-appropriate, and challenging software, and technology to extend their knowledge and to enrich their learning of curriculum content and concepts. These technologies serve as important learning tools and are integrated throughout the instructional program.

Children learn the basic functions of the computer and related technologies. They develop techniques for handling and controlling various input devices, and become increasingly confident and independent users of age-appropriate software programs.

The child:

- starts, uses, and exits software programs
- uses a variety of input devices, such as mouse, keyboard, voice/sound recorder, or touch screen
- begins to use technical terminology, such as “mouse,” “keyboard,” “printer,” “CD-ROM”
- follows basic oral or pictorial cues for operating programs successfully
- enjoys listening to and interacting with storybooks and information texts (e.g., multimedia encyclopedia) in electronic forms
- uses a variety of software packages with audio, video, and graphics to enhance learning experiences (e.g., improving vocabulary, increasing phonological awareness).

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Learning to Read and Write:

Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children

A joint position statement of the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

http://www.naeyc.org/about/position/psread98.pdf

Reprinted with permission from the National Association for the Education of Young Children. In Young Children, July 1998, 53 (4): 30-46. 1509 16th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036-1426. 202-232-8777. 800-424-2460. FAX: 202-328-1846.

Starting out right

A Guide to Promoting Children's Reading Success

http://books.nap.edu/books/0309064104/html/44.html

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Other Resources:

Phonemic Awareness

http://www.creativeteachingpress.com/products.html

Assessing and Correcting Reading and Writing Difficulties

http://vig.abacon.com/product/0,2371,0205274382,00.html

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