



Kindergarten II
Making a Successful Transition
Early Phases of Reading &
Writing

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Reading

Single most important academic skill that children acquire

Literacy skill development requires:

- Alphabet knowledge
- Phonological awareness
- Print Conventions & functions

Alphabet Knowledge

- Teach upper and lower case letters
- Magnetic letters on the fridge
- Sponge letters in the bath or outside
- Letter stamps
- Letter puzzles
- Show a variety of fonts

Phonological Awareness

Awareness of syllables and sounds

Development of Phonological Awareness in Four-year-olds

- Increases conscious awareness of rhyme and beginning sounds
- Can easily generate a series of 4-5 rhyming words and name 4-5 words that begin with the same sound.
- Can isolate the beginning and ending sounds in words
- May begin inventive spelling

Development of Phonological Awareness in Five-year-olds

- By the end of this year, many children are inventing spellings by isolating individual beginning and ending sounds in words they wish to write.
- Some children are segmenting all or almost all sounds in words they wish to write, including words that begin with two or more consonants (e.g., "fl-", "str-", etc.). Many children's invented spellings show a single or two-letter symbol for each sound segment in words that they write.
- Can isolate the beginning and ending sounds in words
- May begin inventive spelling

Encouraging development of phonological awareness

- Frequent exposure to nursery rhymes, songs and poems that contain rhyming words, and by adults explicitly labeling these as "rhymes" for the child.
- Point out words that begin with the same sound, sound out words for the child, and play games with rhyming words and words that begin with the same sound.
- A larger vocabulary requires the unconscious mental storage of words in segments when a number of words sound alike (e.g., slip, slap; clap, clip; string, strong). This makes it easier for a child to develop a conscious awareness of speech sounds, and then detect and manipulate these in words.

Encouraging development of phonological awareness

- A large vocabulary is built by regularly reading a variety of books to your child.
- Choose books written in verse
- Substituting letter sounds (sand without “s”)
- Acquisition of phonological awareness doesn’t develop in stages – skills develop in overlapping fashion

Encouraging development of phonological awareness

- Acquiring an awareness of sounds can be encouraged by asking children to isolate beginning and ending sounds in words
- Spelling words for children by sounding them out
- Helping children sound out printed words, encouraging them to spell words by sounding them out
- Playing word games that involve deletion or substitution of speech sounds (e.g., "What word would we have if we took /k/ off of 'cat'?").

Print conventions and functions

- Rules for organizing and using print
- Reading signs & lists (environmental print)
- Point out variety of print throughout day (home, stores, signs, charts, cards, etc.)
- Finger point reading increases literacy skills
- Helps child learn scanning left to right
- Will help develop sight recognition of some words (a, the, and)

Development of print conventions and functions in four-year-olds

- Knowledge that names of the author and illustrator are on the cover of the book, along with the title of the book.
- Holds a book right side up based on knowledge of the proper positions for objects pictured.
- Children pay attention to fairly long stories that are read skillfully with expression.
- Most children this age lose interest if a story is interrupted by questions from adults. Discussions are tolerated well after a story has been read.
- Can memorize several, familiar, predictable text books, and can recite these, word for word, using pictures to prompt recall.

Development of print conventions and functions in four-year-olds

- Organizing thoughts and summarizing are not yet highly-developed skills in most four-year-olds.
- Many children ask all kinds of questions, and make evaluative comments about characters' actions (e.g., "That wasn't very nice!").
- During the year, begins to connect specific authors with specific books, and to recognize multiple books by the same author.
- Children know to seek out information in non-fiction books.
- By the end of this year, children have a good understanding of fiction and non-fiction, and of fantasy fiction versus realistic fiction.
- Shows strong preference for familiar books when using books independently, but may also show interest in books that have not been read aloud.

Development of print conventions and functions in five-year-olds

- During this year, becomes acquainted with the Table of Contents that is provided in non-fiction books, and with the idea of a glossary and index. Many children also become familiar with chapter designations for longer fiction books.
- Attention for stories continues to increase among children who have a long history of hearing stories read aloud. Many children can tolerate waiting until the next day for an adult to finish a long story or another chapter in a chapter book. Many children can tolerate discussions during a story that stop the reading for a period of time, without losing interest.
- Many children begin to finger point read (e.g., point word for word as the text is recited) familiar predictable text books.

Development of print conventions and functions in five-year-olds

- By the end of this year, many children are quite coherent in retelling fairly long stories. The recently-developed skill of using complex sentences enables many children to relate stories more efficiently than they could a year earlier.
- May show strong preferences for story versus non-fiction, or vice versa. May show preferences for specific authors.

Encouraging development of print conventions and functions

- How books are read determine what children learn from them

Considerations when choosing stories:

- Competency & interest (not too complex, but provides interest & wonder)
 - Complex books have a plot and describe mental states of characters
 - Complex books prompt reasoning
 - Simple books have no plot or main theme
- Richness of language – introduce new words, diverse sentence structure
- Values conveyed – genuine characters, diverse cultures, family structures
- Appropriate illustrations and size

Reading and discussing books helps:

- Syntax – word order in sentences
- Grammar – how sentences are constructed
- Pragmatics – effect of context on language

How to support comprehension (most important goal):

- Introduce story, but avoid predictions
 - Title
 - Author
 - Illustrator
 - Main Characters
 - Story's Problem
 - Transition Language, "Let's read and find out!"

How to support comprehension (most important goal):

- Use voice, gesture, pacing, gaze and expression
- Point to illustrations
- Provide comprehension asides (talk about feelings of characters)
- Respond to questions and comments
 - Avoid long discussion during first reading – causes break in understanding
 - “I think we may find out...”

How to support comprehension (most important goal):

- Engage in discussions afterwards
 - Deepens understanding
 - Maintains flow
 - Ask inferential questions, “Why did _____ change his mind?”
 - Use reasoning, without adult help, children won’t engage in reasoning
 - Support vocabulary – select words that, if not understood, decrease comprehension of story
 - Use story to explain words not in text – gullible in *Henny Penny*
- Read over and over to give time for absorption
 - Read a second time within a few days of first reading

Phases of Writing

- Two processes
 - Composing
 - Representing

Early Childhood Experiences

- Knowledge of writing and drawing starts early
- Code related skills – phonological and letter sound associations
- Language skills

Emergent Writing (preschool years)

- Phase 1 (30 – 36 months)
 - Grocery list –squiggly lines
 - Practicing letters
 - Separates letters from drawing
 - Attributes meaning to pictures

Emergent Writing (preschool years)

- Phase 2 (3-4 years)
 - Interest in writing name and other words
 - Mock words –string of letters
 - Pictures tell of an event
 - Conversations about drawings will help future composing skills
 - Extend conversations by contributing information and asking questions
 - Correct inaccuracies in statements

Emergent Writing (preschool years)

- Phase 3 (4-5 years)
 - Drawings are more complex, tell a story
 - Create letters closer to conventional form
 - Begin to understand letter usage
 - Writing for variety of purposes
 - Understanding groupings of letters form words
 - Concepts of print

Emergent Writing (preschool years)

- Phase 3 (4-5 years)
 - Copies words
 - Mock words co-exist with words using other strategies
 - Use invented spelling (what children hear)
 - Uses left to right progression
 - Uses initial consonants
 - Uses spaces between words
 - Selects writing topics

Emergent Writing (preschool years)

- Phase 4 (5 – 6 years)
 - Better motor control forming letters
 - Understanding of word formation

How to provide a good start with writing:

- Read to young children
- Expose children to a range of purposes for writing
 - Menus, lists, signs, greetings, stories, poetry, labels
 - Highly motivating regardless of skill
- Provide mark-making opportunities early
 - Scribble writing and pictures lead to attributing meaning
- Talk with children about their writing
 - Learn oral language and message creation
- Keep focus on meaning
 - Balance code-based (letter sounds) with handwriting skills

What teachers and parents can do:

- Share books with children, including Big Books, and model reading behaviors
- Talk about letters by name and sounds
- Establish a literacy-rich environment
- Reread favorite stories
- Engage children in language games
- Promote literacy-related play activities
- Encourage children to experiment with writing
- Encourage children to talk about reading and writing experiences

What teachers and parents can do:

- Provide many opportunities for children to explore and identify sound-symbol relationships in
- Help children to segment spoken words into individual sounds and blend the sounds into whole
- Words (for example, by slowly writing a word and saying its sound)
- Frequently read interesting and conceptually rich stories to children
- Provide daily opportunities for children to write
- Help children build a sight vocabulary
- Create a literacy-rich environment for children to engage independently in reading and writing

What teachers and parents can do:

- Daily read and reread narrative and informational stories to children
- Encourage children's attempts at reading and writing
- Allow children to participate in activities that involve writing and reading (for example, cooking, making grocery lists)
- Play games that involve specific directions (such as "Simon Says")
- Have conversations with children during mealtimes and throughout the day
- Provide opportunities for children to draw and print, using markers, crayons, and pencils

References

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