Early Literacy
Resource Handbook

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Dedication

We dedicate this resource book to the late Dr. Mary McEvoy who died prematurely in a plane crash in October 2002. She was the original champion for MELT. Her passion and vision for young children has continued to be an inspiration to all of us working on the project.

Acknowledgements

“Teachers plant the seeds that grow forever”
Anonymous

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Introduction: Minnesota Early Literacy Training Program

“The seeds of literacy are planted before children enter school. Important literacy skills do not develop spontaneously, instruction shapes them.” (Snow, Burns and Griffin, 1998).

With these wise words guiding its actions, the city of Minneapolis and the White Earth Reservation in NW Minnesota planned and implemented the Minnesota Early Literacy Training Project from January 2002 to April 2004. As both a research and a service project, MELT (an acronym did emerge!) was a complex variety of activities carried out by a multicultural staff of graduate research assistants and coaches/training specialists, led by co-coordinators Kate Horst and Angèle Passe. The overall direction was provided by Dr. Scott McConnell, with Dr. Michael Rodriguez and Dr. Paul van den Broek as co-investigators. It has been an exciting project that worked with early educators in both a large urban area and a remote rural community, combining the discipline and rigor of a scientific study and of a high quality professional development program.

The research study involved assessing three and four-year old children with five early literacy measures: the Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDIs) to measure verbal language development and phonological awareness; a comprehension task to measure children’s ability to comprehend and communicate; and Concepts About Print (CAP) to assess children understanding of print and books.

The project’s service goal was to implement an early literacy training and coaching curriculum for early childhood staff working in community childcare settings. The training model used was SEEDS of Early Literacy which invited pre-K educators to reflect on the impact of their practices and on their role in promoting early literacy as teachers of young children. The literacy coaching provided a challenging and supportive environment for teachers to examine their work and make changes based on data and observation. Its hallmark was effective communication and a clear results orientation.

This resource book illustrates the amazing work of the project’s early educators who understood the value of early literacy and creatively incorporated activities in all their interactions with children. It also reflects the dedication and skill of our early literacy coaches, Carrie Johnson, Lucy Arias, Nydia de Alba-Johnson and Sheila Welle who provided direction and support to teachers by building positive relationships, offering resources and celebrating successes.
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“Big 5” Emergent Literacy Skills

**Conversation/Discourse Skills** - Activities that promote children to think and use the words they have to communicate what they know, feel, or want.
- Remember to talk and ask children questions often to both increase language development and a child’s ability to communicate.

**Vocabulary and Background Knowledge** - Activities that introduce vocabulary and necessary background knowledge so children understand the meaning of a word.
- Remember to talk descriptively and read often to children. Books contain new words in context that help build vocabulary.

**Phonological Awareness** - Activities that get children listening, and becoming aware of rhymes and alliterations.
- Remember to play listening games, give directions in steps, and to rhyme and alliterate throughout the day in varied activities/areas.

**Book and Print Rules** - Activities that teach rules of print such as we start to read in the upper left corner; letters go together to make words, and words together make sentences. Activities that allow children to put their thoughts to words, written word has meaning.
- Remember before a child can read they need to know the “rules of the road” when it comes to reading and writing.

**Alphabet Knowledge** - Activities that teach children their letters.
- Letters are best learned in fun and meaningful activities.
SEEDS of Emergent Literacy

Sensitive and Responsive
• Teachers are sensitive and responsive to the children in their classroom. They talk and ask *questions*.
  o Questions
    ▪ Closed-ended: questions answered with a one word response.
    ▪ Open-ended: questions that require more than one word.
    ▪ Creative: questions that require children to use their imaginations and have no right or wrong answer.

Encourage and Enjoy
• Teachers enjoy their class, they encourage using *affirmations* more than they discourage. They plan fun and meaningful activities.
  o Affirmation: Specific positive feedback using the child’s name.

Educate
• Teachers plan developmentally appropriate activities for children, which allow them to talk, read and write. New skills are *explicitly taught*, and teachers look for opportunities to *scaffold* for the children.
  o Explicit Instruction: When giving direction to the children, “Show and Tell,” for example if they are helping you set the table you show them where the plate goes and you tell them where to put the plate.
  o Scaffold: Build on prior abilities by providing opportunities and support until they master new skill.

Develop through Doing
• Allow children to learn through doing; teachers provide hands on activities.

Self-Image
• Given the opportunity to learn with a SEEDS quality teacher children will develop positive self-images and enjoy learning.
Big 5
Literacy Skills Ideas

- Conversation
- Vocabulary & Background knowledge
- Phonological Awareness
- Book & Print Rules
- Alphabet knowledge
Conversation Ideas

Talking Puppets - Props to place in the block area or play house. Use paper rolls, pictures of children’s faces, construction paper for clothing and pipe cleaners for arms. Let the children color their clothes and write their names. The puppets promote pretend play and conversation.

Street Map - Draw a street map with your children on a piece of poster board. Draw or glue magazine pictures of common places children visit. Place it in the block area or next to toy cars. Ask questions about places they would like to go or create a story about a trip.

Flannel board Figures - Instead of tossing old books; cut, laminate, and attach velcro to pictures. Tell the story and put the pictures in order, then place figures by the book corner or group area and allow children to retell or create their own stories.

Storytelling props - Books are paired with a related prop, i.e., toy, puppets, or stuffed animals, to encourage interest in the book and promote conversation with books. Props can be set out weekly or daily to reinforce a theme or act out the books’ storyline. Ask questions related to the story, and allow “wait” time for children to answer.

Why is oral language and conversation important to reading and writing?
**Conversation Ideas**

**Planner/Calendar**- Place this prop in your housekeeping area or writing center. Highlight important dates such as birthdays, field trips, holidays, seasons, etc. Involve the children in creating a calendar by having them write or decorate it. Ask them about a special date and show them how to use a calendar to remember special occasions.

**Question Box**- Decorate a small box with the children. Write questions on small pieces of paper and place them inside the box. During meal times, have one of the children pick a question from the box. Use this question to promote conversation during this time. You can write questions related to your theme or to the food you are eating that day.

**Weather Graph**- Make a graph to talk about the weather during group time. Involve the children in graphing the different kinds of weather over the past week or so. Use this prop as an opportunity to ask questions, predict the weather, count days with sun, clouds, etc., and have kids take turns doing the forecast. Remember to use descriptive words to describe the weather (i.e., stormy, puffy clouds, brisk wind).

**Schedule**- Make a schedule of your day with pictures of the children during different parts of the day. Talk about the schedule every day to help with transitions. Children can read the schedule by associating the pictures with words. This is a great activity to do at the beginning of the school year.

⭐ **TIP**  Use environmental print to promote conversation and question asking

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What other examples of environmental print can you use in your classroom to promote conversation?
Vocabulary & Background
Knowledge Ideas

TIP Use these ideas to learn vocabulary about
Emotions and Problem-Solving

Feelings Poster- Talk about different feelings and introduce new vocabulary words. Take pictures of your children making different faces. Use the pictures to make a poster with the children so you can talk about feelings words every day. Write on the poster: "How are you feeling today?" Place the poster in a visible place like the writing center, group area or reading corner. You can always make a new poster with new words for feelings with different children.

Magnetic Feelings Poster- Make a feelings poster with pictures of your children. Every day during arrival time have each child come and put their name with magnetic strips under the feeling that matches how they feel. You can begin using the basic feelings: happy, mad, sad, and scared.

Feelings Book- Talk with your children about things that make them happy, sad, mad, scares, etc. Write what they tell you and have them act out what they say throughout the day. Take pictures and then make a book about feelings with the photographs of the children. Place it in the book area and have children read it to you or each other.

Getting Along Poster- On a piece of paper write "Let's Get Along." During group time talk about ways to get along when other children do something they don't like. Introduce words such as sharing, taking turns, choices, feelings. Take dictation of specific ways to solve a problem and get along with others. Have children draw a picture about what they say. Later, display the dictation and pictures.

Why do children need to know words for feelings?
Vocabulary and Background Knowledge Ideas

**TIP** Introduce new vocabulary words throughout different parts of the school day

**Helper Chart for Meals** - Make a helper chart for your meal times with actual food utensils. Label the utensils and put children’s names next to the assigned task. This is a great way to introduce vocabulary, especially for English language learners. As the children do their tasks, add running commentaries that describe what they are doing or have other children describe it.

**Nature Walk** - Go on a nature walk and have children collect different things like leaves, flowers, sticks, etc. Make a poster that says, “We went on a nature walk and this is what we collected.” Have children make a collage with the things they collected during their walk. Label the different items in their collage and go over new vocabulary words with children. Be specific: Name each thing they found. Example Instead of “leaf,” write and talk about what kind of leaf a child collected, for instance “this is an oak leaf.”

**Word Box** - Make a box and place some word cards on it. To make the cards, use index cards or construction paper. Think of common words children are learning (use words from your weekly theme or children’s names). Remember to first introduce these words to the children and place a picture next to it! Place the box by your writing center and allow children to practice writing these words.

**Science Words** - Create a science project related to your theme. Write some questions about the project and introduce key science words. The picture shows a transportation project that talks about ramps and cars. Questions relate to height of ramps and speed: Which ramp is high (low)? Which ramp makes your car go faster? Teach some science words and use them
Phonological Awareness-Listening Ideas

Listening Walk- Take the children for a walk. Make sure you go to noisy and quiet places. Tell your children they will need to walk quietly and listen carefully for any sounds. After the walk have each child share and draw pictures of what they heard. Take dictation about their walk. Bind or staple the pictures together to create a Listening Book.

The Mistake Game- Play this listening game during free choice or small group time. Take 4 to 6 familiar objects and place them in a plastic bag. Lay them out on the table and name them. The game begins when you name them again, but this time you name one object incorrectly. The child must listen to hear the mistake. You can change objects on a weekly basis, add items that correspond to your theme, add/expand to teach vocabulary, or have children go outside and choose the items (i.e. rock, stick, pinecone, leaf).

Sound Center- Make a sound center by including different items in one plastic shoe box to encourage listening skills. Include shakers filled with sand, rice, etc. and match the ones that sound the same or identify the ones that sound different. You can also include: rhyming books, books on tape, a lotto sound name (make your own by recording common sounds, find pictures of the sounds and put them on a piece of construction paper or poster board, so children can match sounds with pictures), and a tape of children’s voices.

Books on Tape- Place them by the sound center or in the book area. Get these books at the library or make your own (make a book and record a teacher or child reading the story). Encourage children to listen to the story and learn when to turn the pages. Ask the children to listen for specific words and do a specific action (jump, clap, etc) when hear that word.

What are 10 environmental sounds that the children in your classroom know?
Phonological Awareness

Rhyming Ideas

Rhyming Book-Bulletin

Read Good Night Moon by Margaret Wise Brown and explicitly teach the rhyming words used in the story. Later have children choose a word and come up with their own rhyme. As a group project use construction paper and write Goodnight ____ / Goodnight____ on the space. Write the rhyming words that the children choose, i.e. “goodnight dolly/goodnight Polly,” and have children draw a picture of their words. Help children come up with rhyming words such as objects, names or even nonsense words. This is also a great activity to teach new words!

Rhyming Names

Make name rhyming labels and place them in places that children see frequently such as the place they sit to eat, write, etc. Involve children in rhymes with their names during group time, small group or outside time. Have children help you make labels. Make this a fun activity and learn new words with your children: “Maya/Papaya,” “Peter/Eater.” Use your own pictures or have children draw their own.

Rhyming Board

Have an interactive board for children to play with during free choice or transitions. Choose four groups of one syllable rhyming words (i.e., cat, mat, hat/can, van, ran/ fun, sun, bun/car, far, star) with changeable beginning letters that match pictures of the words they can form. Use popsicle sticks or Velcro to change letters and pictures. Encourage the children to form different words, practice rhymes, learn, and spell new words.

Rhyming Box

Make a rhyming box and put it by your writing center. Inside the box put strips of rhyming words with pictures. Show and tell children how to use the box by writing words, playing a matching game, or add new words every week.

TIP Use these ideas as environmental reminders to rhyme with your children.
**Phonological Awareness**

**Alliteration Ideas**

**Alliteration Board**
- Spell out your children's names and put each letter on a different colored paper in a vertical line on a board. Each day as part of arrival, have children think of words that begin with the first letter of their name, the second, the third and so on. Add new words each day and review them with the children.

**Alliteration Placemats**
- Laminate sheets with a large letter and several pictures and words starting with that letter. At meals have children choose a placemat and talk about the beginning sound of the words. This activity also teaches letter knowledge, reading, and vocabulary. Use the placemats at every meal and review different letters.

**Alliteration Matching Game**
- Use this game for transitions or for small group time. The purpose is to match objects that begin with the same sound (i.e. kangaroo/kite). You can make your own game using matching cards, pictures, or magazine cut outs. Laminate them and have fun!

**Alliteration Colors**
- Each color is colorfully displayed. Add a picture of a child or someone related to the child. Both the name of the person in the picture and the color have the same beginning sound. Include displays of months, days, animals, etc. Have the displays around the classroom to use as opportunities to promote talking, reading, writing.

**TIP** Talk, read, and write about beginning sounds throughout the day

- How many children in your classroom can identify another word that starts with the same sound as their name?
**TIP** Make Class Books to explicitly teach book rules to your children

- Class Books allow children to become Authors and Illustrators
- When making books remember the following:
  - Include a cover page that includes a title, author/illustrator
  - Provide an opportunity for each child to contribute a page
  - Bind the book using rings, binders, yarn, etc.
  - Place class books in a special container that is easily accessible
  - Put class books in the library, read at group time, or take them outside for reading

- You can make different kinds of class books such as:
  - Re-creating Books- Read a repetitive book (i.e. Brown Bear, Brown Bear, Does a Firefly Have a Mother Too?). Have children re-create the book by thinking of ideas for a new book with the same storyline and illustrate their ideas.
  - Rules Books- Take dictation of different classroom rules during group time. Take pictures of children acting out the different rules. Make a book with the pictures and the different rules children mentioned during group time.
  - All About Me Books- Take a picture of each child or have each child draw a self-portrait and write his/her name. Ask questions related to that child’s likes, dislikes, favorites, family, etc. Make a page with pictures and put all the pages together in a book for the classroom.
  - Pattern Books- Give a statement to children or ask an open ended question (i.e. I like to eat..., Why is the sky blue?). Take dictation to complete the statement or answer question.
TIP Read, Read, Read. Reading books will help children learn how books work

Book Reading Board- Keep a count of how many books you are reading as a group and make a board or chart of it. Have a monthly goal and keep track by taking dictation of the title of each book you read as a group or individually. Display the chart so children can see the progress. Once you accomplish the goal, celebrate!

Critics Corner- Read a book as a group. Have children critique the book by sharing whether they like it or not and why. Make a poster and display different books or write their titles. Take dictation of children’s critiques and display them. You can change posters every other week or monthly.

Reading Messages- Have children pick their favorite book and take a picture of the child reading it. Have children make a picture of their favorite book and take dictation of why they like it. Laminate sheets and send them home to encourage parents to read to their children.

Reading Magnet- Take a picture of a child reading a book and paste it on magnetic strip. Involve children in decorating their pictures and write a message to parents about reading, for instance, “Reading to your child will make him/her smarter.” Send magnets home. Send books home to encourage parents to read to their children.
Print Rules Ideas

Center Management Labels - Make labels for each one of your learning centers. Be sure labels include pictures along with the words. Include spaces for children to post their names to limit the number of children in each center. Use a sign that says open or closed. This will teach children names and word recognition and will also aid classroom management.

Housekeeping Placemats - Use these placemats to promote word recognition and to teach vocabulary words. You can also make other labels for different objects in the housekeeping area. Make your own or use clip art or magazine cut outs. Encourage children to read the print and match object with label (i.e. fork, spoon and knife on their labels). Or, encourage children to copy words and make their own labels.

Matching Print Game - This game encourages children to recognize print by matching pictures with words. Use a folder and have animal labels in one side pocket and pictures of animal houses in the other side. Make your own pictures or use clip art or magazine cut outs. Have children match the animal label with its animal house. Or, instead of animal houses you can use animal pictures. You can change the game using labels and pictures of words related to your theme.

Print Display - Display print by having posters of common rhymes or songs on the walls. Make displays interactive by asking children about the display. The pictured display is a rhyme about making wishes. You can extend the activity by asking children to tell you what they wish, taking dictation, and displaying their answers around the poem.

Why can children read print displayed?
Letter Knowledge Ideas

**TIP** Make learning letters more meaningful through activities that draw attention to the shape of the letters

**Letter Box**- Decorate a box and use it as a letter box in the writing center. Make matching colored picture/word cards and letter cards. Have children put together individual cards to make words that match the picture/word cards. Children can also make their own picture/word cards and letters to add to the box. Encourage children to read and write the words.

**Alphabet Book**- Read an alphabet book to your children and then introduce the concept of making an alphabet book. Take pictures of children holding different objects that begin with different letters of the alphabet and make a page for each letter. Instead of pictures, you can have children draw a picture of the object and a self-portrait. When complete, read it with the children and place it in the library.

**Alphabetic Order of Toys**- Organize toys in alphabetic order! You can have A for Animals, B for Bears, C for Cars, etc. This will help your children recognize letters and also practice alliteration.

**Letter Bucket**- Decorate a plastic box or a bucket (i.e. ice cream, potato salad). Send the bucket home with a specific letter on it and ask parents to help their children find objects that begin with that letter and return it to class. During group time the child with the letter bucket will have a chance to share the items he/she found.
Using Questions to Increase Writing

**TIP** Ask different types of questions to promote dictation taking in your classroom

- When taking dictation remember to:
  - Write what the child says
  - Use questions to extend language
  - Read the dictation back to the child
  - Encourage each child to read the dictation to you or to another child

**Creative Questions**—Think of a creative question (i.e. If I had a million dollars...) and ask it during group time or as a small group project. Allow your children to answer the question and take a dictation of what they say. Post the question and answers on the wall.

**Theme Questions**—Think of an open-ended or creative question related to your theme and allow children to answer it. For example: theme-space/Where would you go in a rocket? Do an art project related to the question and take dictation of the children’s answers. Display the project and change as often as you change themes.

**Open-ended Questions**—Ask an open-ended question and take dictation of children’s answers. Have children draw pictures of their answers and display the pictures/answers.

**Storytelling Questions**—Ask an open-ended question related to a story you read to the group. Write down children’s responses and display them. For example: What if Goldilocks didn’t run away?
Tip: Incorporate WRITING in multiple ways in the daily schedule. Remember to make print and writing a part of the entire environment.

**Food Word Wall** – Encourage children to bring examples of food labels that they can read. Post in a visible area and encourage children to copy print on labels, then display.

**Journals** – Have a group or individual journals available to the children. Allow children to write in them freely or provide starter ideas. Starter ideas can be related to theme, special event, or routine like how are you feeling today, etc.

**Mail Boxes** – Have a mailbox for each child near the writing area. Encourage children to write letters to their friends or teachers. Mailboxes also serve as a good place to put the day’s work.

**Theme Stories** – Group stories are a great reading, writing, and talking activity. Review the theme before writing your story. Discuss what the class learned. Start the story off with a catchy sentence. Have each child in the class contribute a sentence; encourage them to use their new vocabulary from the theme. Sometimes the story will make sense other times it won’t. Remember, the process was a learning experience.

Did you model writing or include children in writing today in your class?
Literacy Rich Environmental Ideas

Talking

Reading

Writing
Writing Areas

Writing Area:
√ A must in every classroom! If you don’t have one, start working on one today!
√ Things to have in your writing area:
  • The alphabet
  • Word cards: familiar words and names
  • 2-3 types of writing utensils, and paper
    * Pens, pencils, markers, chalk
    * Lined paper, plain/colored paper, envelopes, chalkboard, and writing props (ex. order forms, date book, clipboard, stickers, blank note cards)
√ Be creative!
  • Relate writing center materials to the theme.
    * Word cards should be related to theme and new vocabulary.
    * Use related props (ex: holidays have blank greeting cards, theme related stickers)
  • Remember to keep the writing area well stocked and organized, it will be one of the favorite areas in the room.
Check-in Systems
Learning Letters with Names

Why is a student’s name a good place to start when teaching letters?

TIP Sign-in/check-in systems in your daily routine are ideal ways to teach name recognition and name writing.

Check in systems- Display children’s names in the entry area. Remind children daily to find their names and place it in the “I am here today” area. Start with first names then move to first and last names. Make it fun by changing the shape and color of tags related to theme, or season.

Sign in sheets- Have pre-made sheets for children to sign in daily. These are a good way to monitor improvement over time. You can also have pieces of paper available and have the children write their names on them. Post in a designated area.

Other Ideas:
Encourage children to always sign their artwork (after all, that’s what artists do!). Allow children to display their art and writing in the classroom.
Group Literacy

Tip Include children in group reading, writing, and talking activities.

Word Walls - An on-going activity that reinforces alphabet knowledge, vocabulary, background knowledge, and conversation. Your word wall can be associated with the theme, or alphabet order. Remember to do this activity as a group and let the children choose and write words.

Graphs - Chart children’s responses to an experience (book, field trip, new food, etc.) or chart likes and differences. Great for name recognition and one to one correspondence.

Class Posters - As a group make posters for the room. They can be used for rules, labeling areas, educating (color, seasons, space, etc.), or art for art’s sake. Remember to allow children to talk about what’s on the poster; include their writings as much as possible so that they can READ the poster.
Incorporating writing in a variety of areas is sometimes a challenge, but here’s how to simplify. Supply a writing utensil, something to write on, and – PRESTO! - now you have writing in other learning areas.

**Mail box** - Have a class mailbox. Children can write to each other or special mail can arrive for the class. This prop can be near the writing center, or part of a mail theme.

**Wipe off board** - Having wipe-off boards or chalk boards in various areas of the room is an excellent way to promote writing. Remember to model and talk about how to use the writing props.

**Create a TV** - Put paper up in the dramatic play area. Encourage children to draw pictures from favorite TV shows or create their own, add dictation to the pictures, then have the children explain their pictures to others. Tah-dah! You have a reading, writing and talking activity in the dramatic play area.

**Recipe Book** - In your housekeeping area have examples of cook books for children, preferably with pictures. Supply blank paper stapled together into books for children to create their own recipes. Facilitate this activity by asking questions about favorite dishes and what children think is in these dishes. Post the responses.
Hands on Literacy FUN: Activities for Teachers, Parents and Children

The following pages are meant to be used by teachers to increase early literacy involvement. Some suggestions and resources will be helpful in the learning environment, while others can be sent home with the children to increase communication and family involvement. We encourage you to copy and use them regularly. Encourage parents to have fun with their child in these experiences!

Fun with Dictation: This activity will help you practice writing with children. It teaches that what they say and draw can be written and read.

Activities to copy and send home:
- **Letter to families:** explains what themes or topics you are learning about. This encourages families to explore more at home.
- **Talk While You Walk:** promotes vocabulary building, asking questions and conversations.
- **Literacy at Home:** how to talk, read and write at home.
- **Exploring FUN Ways to READ Books:** “Reading” includes looking and talking about the pictures and stories, and making up stories.
- **Reading Log:** Track books to record adventures in “reading.”
- **Name Activities:** Several name activities provide fun ways to practice name writing and name recognition.

Web Resources for Teachers and Parents: Navigates you right to the good ones—without the time consuming surfing! Available on page 40

Books Lists:
- **Books & Songs That Teach the Big 5 Emergent Literacy Skills:** Ideas for books and songs that teach the Big 5! Available on page 43.
- **The Minneapolis Public Library resources:** Book lists, some in other languages for teachers and parents to assist in age appropriate selections. Available on page 47.

Family and Community Resources: Provides contact information for early childhood related resources. Available on page 53.

Recommended Bibliography: Complete list and summary of educational and teacher references, guides and curriculum books. Available on page 55.
FUN WITH DICTATION

On the next few pages you will find a series of dictation activities. They are designed to be open-ended, so have fun! Use your own ideas to add new pages.

The first blank is for the child’s name. The large framed area is space for the child to scribble or draw what they want. It may or may not relate to the topic listed.

When the child has finished, ask the child to tell you about the picture. Write exactly what the child says on the lines provided.

An example is found below:

Katlyn’s _________ bedtime.

I like it when my mom reads to me. That's my best blanket and I go to sleep happy.
FUN WITH DICTATION

____________________’s visit to the

dentist.

____________________
’s day at the park.
Ideas are limitless when you use these (or the previous) dictation activity.

Check these out:
(name of child)’s fun weekend, favorite food, favorite animal, favorite toy, favorite book, family, vacation, day in the sun, day in the snow, self portrait, best dream, favorite hero, favorite heroine, home, favorite song, big adventure, day at the movies, favorite sport, birthday party, first day of school, picnic lunch, good night, good morning, Summer fun, little bit of Winter.

Example: If ____________ Bobby ____________ could fly anywhere...

If _______________ could be anyone...
When _______________ grows up...
When _______________ goes to Kindergarten.
If _______________ was the President of the United States of America.
______________’s wish for the world.
______________’s famous painting.
What’s in _______________ backpack?
______________feels ___________ today.
______________ plants a garden.
It’s Spring in _______________’s neighborhood.
It’s Autumn in _______________’s yard.
What are we learning about?

Dear Families:
We will be learning and exploring ________________________.

*Look around your home and community for things to do with ________________________.

*Do you have toys or books that relate to this theme? Spend some time at home playing and having fun with those items.

*Draw, glue a picture or write a story together that relates to what we are exploring. You can use this paper - front and back.

*You can send it to school with your child to share with friends!
Parents and Kids: Next time you are walking with your child together—outside, at the mall, zoo, or just getting the mail—try talking while you are walking.

Tell your child what you are thinking, where you are going or what you see and hear.

**Play games:**
- “I spy with my little eye -something (red)…”
- Alphabet spy game—look for something that starts with the letter A, then B and C and so on.

**Ask them questions:**
- What is making the sounds you hear?
- What colors do you see?
- How many pine cones are on the ground?
- If you were that bird, where would you fly?

**Draw pictures:**
- Sketch and color what you see.
- Collect nature finds, and souvenirs.
- Label all the objects.
- Let your child write their name.
Talking about and Making Patterns:
Have your child use household items, snacks or toys to make a pattern and help clean up, too!
- forks and spoons
- cups and plates
- wash cloths and towels
- crackers and raisins
- barrettes
- fruit snacks shapes and flavors
- blocks and Legos®- vary colors too!
- game pieces or cards
- big and little stuffed animals
- favorite action heroes.

Talk about and Read boxes and labels:
Look at all the print in your home! Reading this print is lots of fun!
- Cereal
- Mac and Cheese
- Mashed potatoes
- Dinner kits
- Canned goods
- Snack foods
- Crackers and chips
- Toy packaging
- Movies and DVDs
- CD-ROM and Video games
- Magazines and TV guides
- Grocery store coupons
- Store ads and sales papers
Things to Talk and Write About at Home!

You and your child are authors when you write!
- Grocery lists
- Messages from callers
- Bills to be paid
- People to call
- Things to do
- Checks
- Wish lists
- Journals or diaries
- Homemade cards
- Pizza orders
- Taking pretend orders
- Letters or notes to family and friends
- Stories about what you did over the weekend

What can you write on?
You can use all kinds of paper!

Call your friend Jordan today!

A Special Message

“Hello? No, I’m sorry. She’s not here right now. Can I take a message?

Other places to write!
- The sidewalk - with water and a paintbrush, or chalk
- Notebook paper
- Junk mail
- The back of old bills
- Paper bags or towels
- Used envelopes
- Wrapping paper
- Old worksheets
- The back of this paper!
Exploring FUN Ways to READ Books

You don’t have to always read the words in the book—to be reading it! Check out these fun ideas!

Use the pictures to make up your own story:
• Give the characters’ your names or make up new ones.
• Make the town’s name your hometown or rename the town.
• Develop a new plot with a funny twist.
• Make up a new ending to teach a lesson. (Maybe Goldilocks decides to return and apologize to Baby Bear!)

Just talk about the pictures:
• Count objects; point and count the animals, insects or flower on the pages.
• Name objects and talk about favorites.
• Name colors and shapes.
• Discuss what is happening in the picture.
• What new words are you teaching?

“Then the dad took off in the airplane to rescue his little...

“How many baby ducks do you see?
Let’s count the ducklings together

Look at the marching band! What song do you think they are playing?
Sometimes you will read the whole book—words and all. When you do, try doing some of the things listed below! Remember to give your child time to talk and “read.” It’s okay if you don’t finish the whole book in one day.

**Stop to:**
- Make predictions about what will happen next.
- Ask questions about what just happened.
- Ask your child what he/she likes about the pictures, characters or story.

**Ask your child if he or she remember:**
- Feeling the same emotion as the character does.
- Going to the same places the character visits.
- Seeing the same objects in real life.

**How you do think the baby feels right now?**
**When have you felt**
OUR FAMILY’S
READING LOG

Write the titles of the books you and your child read & explore below. Remember there are lots of FUN ways to “READ” books!

This child’s drawing reminds us to read with kids at least 3 times a day!

1. __________________________
2. __________________________
3. __________________________
4. __________________________
5. __________________________
6. __________________________
7. __________________________
8. __________________________
9. __________________________ 10. __________________________
11. __________________________ 12. __________________________
13. __________________________ 14. __________________________
15. __________________________ 16. __________________________
17. __________________________ 18. __________________________
19. __________________________ 20. __________________________
21. __________________________

Yeah! You did it! Return this to your child’s teacher and your child will get a new log to complete, and a special surprise!
The Letters in My Name!

Parents, help your child learn the letters in their name. Look around your home or neighborhood for people, places or things that start with the same letter!

Example:  

\[ H \]

for Hannah

- Write child’s name below.
- Under each letter write the things you find together.
- Or draw 1 or 2 pictures of your favorites and label them.
- Or cut pictures from a magazine or grocery store ad and label them.
-NAME POEM-
An activity to try at home!

What rhymes with your child’s name?
What words sound the same at the beginning?

• Some children have lots of words that rhyme with their names, while others have to try Dr. Seuss’ style, nonsense rhymes (e.g., “Karna discovered tarna”). Have fun with nonsense words!

• Write a poem with your child’s name in it.

• Use the starter phrases below or make up your own.

• Read it or sing it when you are finished!!

• Send it to school with your child to share!

My name is __________________________.

I love to _________________________!

I am learning to ________________________.

I listen and have lots of fun when I___________!

My name is __________________________.

At school I read about__________________!

I am proud to be______________________.

Because my name is__________________!
NAME ART

- Below write your child’s name with a pen or pencil.
- Say the letters out loud as your child traces them with glue or a glue stick.
- Use rice, dried beans, lentils, cereal, buttons, etc., to put on the letters.
- Let dry and shake off the excess.
- Help your child cut these directions off.
- Display proudly in kitchen or on a bedroom door!
WHAT ARE MY NAMES?
Write your child’s names:
Tell your child about the letters as you form them.
For the first letters use capitals, all others use lowercase letters.

My first name is__________________________________________________________

My middle name is_______________________________________________________

My last name is__________________________________________________________

*Talk about these names with your child.  *What is special or unique about your child’s name or names?
*Share what you know about the names.  *Why were the names chosen?
*Below help your child write his or her name.  *When you are all done hang this in a special place!
Name Puzzle

- Make dotted lines between each letter.
- Write your child’s name in very large letters below.
- Let your child color or decorate letters.
- Help your child cut on dotted lines.
- Your child has a NAME puzzle to put together.
NAME Time Capsule:

- See how your child writes their own name over time.
- Allow them to scribble, pretend or write their name the best they can.
- Date it and keep adding new attempts. Watch how they get better over time from daily practice and encouragement.

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Web Resources for Teachers and Parents

Curriculum Ideas

www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content3/AmericaReads/ “Ready*Set*Read for Families” website has ideas to support literacy development in the home. It includes early childhood language activities for children birth through age five.

www.preschooleducation.com/ This website has activities for learning letters and sounds, articles, “Ask the Preschool Teacher,” book reviews, math, music & songs, science, sensory and much more!

http://teachers.net/lessons/posts/1015.html To find relevant preschool ideas click on Lesson Exchange, you will find links to: Alphabet Review Activities which has an assortment of alphabet review activities such as, “Old MacDonald had an Alphabet E-I-E-I-O!”

http://www.thepreschoolconnection.com/tic.html The Successful Classroom Idea corner includes list of materials for your reading, writing, math, sensory, etc., areas. You will also find instructions for activities to do with children. You can also order teacher guides and other supplies from this website also.

www.preschoolrainbow.org On this website you can print nursery/transition rhymes on seasons, time, animals, counting etc. Most activities and ideas require a $20.00 per year subscriptions or five quality activity plans.

http://users.stargate.net/~cokids/ This website has everything!--Information, curriculum ideas, and links to other sites.

http://www.theideabox.com You will find great curriculum ideas!

http://www.gameskidsplay.net/ All the childhood games you remember: jump-robe rhymes, etc.

www.literacycenter.net Follow the link to Play and Learn Interactive Site. This link has exercises for learning letters, shapes, writing, words, numbers, colors and keyboard. Children can watch how a letter is formed, match upper and lower case, learn numbers etc. Activities can be experienced in three languages. It’s Really Cool!

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Printables

http://schoolhouseprintable.tripod.com/  This site is a resource for other early childhood websites, ideas, and large selection of downloadable printables for classroom use.

http://www.preschoolprintables.com/  Great site for printable preschool resources: calendars, felt board, awards, etc.

www.enchantedlearning.com  This website provides printable pages and books on letters, numbers, shapes, themes, etc. Other features are nursery rhymes, craft ideas and links.

http://www.handwritingforkids.com/handwrite/manuscript.htm  This website allows you to design name worksheets, and letter worksheets for children.

Early Childhood Information

http://teacher.scholastic.com  Scholastic book home page with links to curriculum ideas, parent involvement, upcoming book fairs in the area, and lots more!!!!!!

http://www.education-world.com/  “The Educator’s Best Friend” is a website for teachers from pre-k to 12, articles, curriculum ideas, it is all there.

http://familyfun.go.com/  This is a fun website with many ideas. This website is geared to parents, but teachers will find many good ideas.

http://www.nwrel.org/comm/monthly/index.html  This site has great articles to share with parents, from bedtime routines to reading with your child. There are also articles in Spanish.


http://ecap.crc.uiuc.edu/  University of Illinois’s early childhood web page: lots of up-to-date information in the area of early education.

http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/ela/e_literacy/index.html  Saskatchewan Department of Education’s Early Literacy page, this website has extensive educational resources for early literacy.

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http://www.reading.org/focus/beginning.html  International Reading Association: A good source for early literacy resource articles.

http://www.readwritethink.org  International Reading Association: Lesson plans, and plenty of other resources.

http://www.earlyliterature.ecsd.net/  This website is a good source of early literacy information.

http://www.getreadytoread.org/  National Center for Learning Disabilities: This website is a good source for everything including information, ideas, and printable pages.


www.udel.edu/ETL/RWN/ReadingLists.html  This website has reading lists provided by Reading Is Fundamental and American Library Association. This site also includes links for activities/ideas for home

www.earlychildhood.com  Professional resource for teachers and parents, this site includes featured articles, activities, News Link, Reading Center, and Sharing Boards.

http://www.fisher-price.com/us/playtime/learn.asp  To find preschool information, click on Children Activities and Child Development from Fisher-Price® Play and Learn activities. There you will find activities to do with children!

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BOOKS & SONGS THAT TEACH THE BIG 5 EMERGENT LITERACY SKILLS:

Below are some ideas for using books to teach specific skills as well as a few suggested books and songs to practice with:

Phonological Awareness

Alliteration-
There are a lot of fun books to help kids develop the skill of hearing words that sound the same at the beginning. Most books that teach the ABC's can be used because they usually give a letter, then words that start with that letter. For example: D for Dad, Dog and Dream. Other books may give complete alliteration sentences: “Dad dreams of dancing with dogs in Denver.” When you read books, stories or poems remember to point out these beginning sounds and stress that they sound alike.

Suggested Alliteration Books:

Rhyming-
These books teach kids how to listen for words that have the same ending sounds. Some books teach on-set rhymes such as at-bat-sat-hat-cat. Others use poems to show rhyme patterns or nonsense rhymes like the ones Dr. Seuss is famous for. When you read books, stories or poems remember to point out these ending sounds and stress that they are alike: rhyme. Have fun with these and other rhyming books!

Suggested Rhyming Books:
Suggested Phonological Awareness Songs:
- Down by the Bay.
- Five Little Monkeys jumping on the Bed.
- Hush Little Baby/ Mockingbird.
- Oh, A-hunting we will go.
- Frog went a Courtin’.
- Willaby-Wallaby-Woo.

Vocabulary and Background Knowledge
Most books can teach new vocabulary and build on children’s prior knowledge. It is important to read and allow for time to talk about the new words, what they mean, and what kids know about them. Find ways to connect a word to a child’s past experience or create a new connection for them. It helps to write down new words and use them daily to reinforce their meaning.

Suggested Vocabulary Building Books:

Suggested Songs:
- If You’re Happy and You Know It.
- There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly.
- Over in the Meadow.
- Old McDonald Had A Farm.
- I’m So Hungry.
Conversation and Discourse Skills

Asking Questions—
Kids practice language when you ask them questions. Read books and stop to ask open-ended and creative questions related to the story. This will give them the opportunity to think and talk. “Where is Ralph the Rabbit hiding?” and “If you were Ralph the Rabbit where would you hide?” Remember to allow 3-5 seconds of wait time for the child to respond- longer for second language learners. Try asking a follow up question to children’s responses; talking back and forth is what conversation is all about!

Listening—
Read books that are predictable, repetitious or class favorites. Allow children to wait for your cue to fill in missing words or complete the endings. Change the words or the ending to see if the kids are listening; allowing them to correct you. If it’s a new book, ask them to explain what just happened. Have books on tape available in the classroom without adult assistance. Choose books that are fun and include words with meanings that sound like they are pronounced: “The ball hit the net with a swish-swish!”

Suggested Books for Conversation & Discourse Skills:
All books can be used to practice questions & listening!

Suggested Songs:
The Wheels On the Bus.
Old McDonald Had A Farm.
Head Shoulders Knees and Toes
Open Shut Them.
So Here We Are Together.
Name Chant.
I Hear Noises.
Alphabet Knowledge:
Books about ABC's help increase children's letter awareness. Name the letters, use your finger to trace the letters, and talk about how they are formed. Relate the letters to familiar words and children's names to make them fun and meaningful. Take time to write words that start with a specific letter as you read them in books. This also works well when practicing alliteration. Alphabet knowledge is a visual task and is about beginning letter recognition. Remember make it fun and start with their names.

Suggested Books:
Animal Alphabets.

Suggested Songs:
The ABC Song. (and Variations of.)
I'm Thinking of a Letter.
We're going on vacation, What shall I pack?
All name songs.

Book and Print Knowledge:
All books can be used to teach children concepts about print. Before reading a book, introduce the story by starting with the front of the book, title, author, and illustrator. Open the book and show where you will begin reading. Use your finger to show how words make up sentences and how sentences continue on the next row (return sweep.) Talk about the pages and words-reading and turning left to right. When you write in front of children, they can also learn these important skills.

Suggested Books and Songs:
All books and songs in written form can be used to teach these skills. You can take your pick and have FUN!
Big Red Barn, by Margaret Wise Brown- You’ll enjoy making the sounds of all the animals who live in the big red barn.

Big Red Barn, escrito por Margaret Wise Brown- Disfrutarán haciendo los sonidos de todos los animales que viven en el gran granero rojo.

Daisy is a Mommy, by Lisa Kopper- Talk about all the jobs mommies do as you read about Daisy and her puppies.

Daisy is a Mommy, escrito por Lisa Kopper- Hablen sobre todos los trabajos que hacen las mamás mientras leen sobre Daisy y sus cachorros.

Dear Zoo, by Rod Campbell- Children will enjoy guessing what animal is hiding under the lift-the-flaps.

Dear Zoo, escrito por Rod Campbell- Los niños disfrutarán adivinando qué animal se esconde detrás de las solapas.

Dinosaur’s Binkit, by Sandra Boynton- This interactive board book will be a favorite at bedtime.

Dinosaur’s Binkit, escrito por Sandra Boynton- Este libro interactivo de pastas gruesas será uno de sus favoritos para la hora de ir a dormir.

Father Who Had 10 Children, by Benedicte Guettier- Count your way through the adventures of this large family.

Father Who Had 10 Children, escrito por Benedicte Guettier- Ábranse paso a las aventuras de esta numerosa familia contando.

Feast for 10, by Cathryn Falwell- Go shopping and counting with this fun family.

Feast for 10, escrito por Cathryn Falwell- Vaya de compras y contando con esta divertida familia.

Flower Garden, by Eve Bunting- Can you guess where this girl is going with all these beautiful flowers?

Flower Garden, escrito por Eve Bunting- ¿Puede adivinar a dónde va esta niña con todas estas flores hermosas?

Good Dog, Daisy, by Lisa Kopper- Uh-oh! Daisy’s puppies are acting just like toddlers.

Good Dog, Daisy, escrito por Lisa Kopper- Oh-oh! Los cachorritos de Daisy están actuando como niños pequeños.

Good Night Gorilla, by Peggy Rathmann- You’ll have fun talking about one sneaky gorilla in this almost wordless book.

Good Night Gorilla, escrito por Peggy Rathmann- Se divertirán hablando acerca de un astuto gorila en este libro que casi no tiene palabras.

Good Night, Poppy and Max: A Bedtime Counting Book, by Lindsey Gardiner- Can you count all the things Poppy and Max use to get ready for bed?
Good Night, Poppy and Max: A Bedtime Counting Book, escrito por Lindsey Gardiner. ¿Pueden contar todas las cosas que Poppy y Max usan para estar listos a la hora de dormir?

Here Are My Hands, by John Archambault- Can your hands do all these amazing things? Here Are My Hands, escrito por John Archambault- ¿Pueden hacer todas estas cosas asombrosas con sus manos?

“Hi, Pizza Man!”, by Virginia Walter- What would you say to a pizza-delivering dinosaur? “Hi, Pizza Man!”, escrito por Virginia Walter- ¿Qué le dirían a un dinosaurio que entrega pizzas?

I Can Do It, Too, by Karen Baicker- Toddlers will repeat the title as they see all the things they can do, too! I Can Do It, Too, escrito por Karen Baicker- ¡Los niños pequeños repetirán el título conforme vean todas las cosas que ellos también pueden hacer!

If You Were Born a Kitten, by Marion Bauer- Find out how baby animals are born in this tender book. If You Were Born a Kitten, escrito por Marion Bauer- Descubran cómo nacen los bebés animales en este tierno libro.

Is That Josie?, by Keiko Narahashi- Who do you think is peeking out of the bed? Is it a sly fox, or Josie? Is That Josie?, escrito por Keiko Narahashi- ¿Quién creen que se está asomando desde la cama? ¿Será un zorro astuto o Josie?


Let’s Go, by Jane Chapman- Can the motorcycle pass all these vehicles? Let’s Go, escrito por Jane Chapman- ¿Puede la motocicleta rebasar a todos estos vehículos?

Look and Find with Bear!, by Joe Ewers- Help Bear in the Big Blue House find all sorts of things. Look and Find with Bear!, escrito por Joe Ewers- Ayuden a Bear a encontrar todo tipo de cosas en la gran casa azul.

Mother for Choco, by Keiko Kasza- Could Bear be a Mother for a bird? What do you say? *Mother for Choco, escrito por Keiko Kasza- ¿Podría Bear ser la mamá de un pájaro? ¿Ustedes qué opinan?

My Bunny and Me, by Lindsay Barrett George- Luis wants a bunny, but what would he do if he really had one? My Bunny and Me, escrito por Lindsay Barrett George- Luis quiere un conejo, ¿pero qué haría si realmente tuviera uno?
My Car Board Book, by Byron Barton- Learn all about cars in this colorful book.

My Car Board Book, escrito por Byron Barton- Aprendan todo sobre los autos en este libro de gran colorido.

My First Farm Board Book: Spanish/English [Dorling Kindersley]- Look at and name these bright photos in both languages!

My First Farm Board Book: Spanish/English, [Dorling Kindersley]- ¡Vean y nombren estas fotografías de gran colorido en ambos idiomas!

Oliver Finds His Way, by Phyllis Root- See how this little bear finds his way home.

Oliver Finds His Way, escrito por Phyllis Root- Descubran cómo este pequeño osito encuentra el camino a casa.

On Mother’s Lap, by Glo Coalson- When baby comes, this gentle book asks if there’s still room for big brother.

On Mother’s Lap, escrito por Glo Coalson- Cuando nace el bebé, este lindo libro se pregunta si aún hay espacio para el hermanito mayor.

Red Train, by Will Grace- Practice colors, counting, and animal names with this great rhyming book.

Red Train, escrito por Will Grace- Practiquen los colores, contar números y los nombres de los animales con este maravilloso libro de rimas.

Snowballs, by Lois Ehlert- You’ll have fun pointing to all the household objects used to bring these snow people to life.

Snowballs, escrito por Lois Ehlert- Se divertirán señalando todos los objetos de la casa usados para darle vida a esta gente de nieve.

Spot Helps Out, by Eric Hill- List the ways you help out in your family.

Toby, Where Are You?, by William Steig- Can you see where tricky Toby is hiding?

Trashy Town, by Andrea Griffing Zimmerman- Children love to help tell the story of how to clean Trashy Town.

Trashy Town, escrito por Andrea Griffing Zimmerman- A los niños les encanta ayudar a contar el cuento de cómo limpiar Trashy Town.

Where’s My Teddy?, By Jez Alborough- What happens when Eddie finds a different kind of bear?

*Where’s My Teddy?, escrito por Jez Alborough- ¿Qué pasa cuando Eddie encuentra otro tipo de oso?

The Wolf’s Chicken Stew, by Keiko Kasza- Why is Wolf baking cakes if he wants to eat chicken stew? Read this book together for a surprisingly sweet ending.
*Wolf’s Chicken Stew*, escrito por Keiko Kasza. ¿Por qué está Wolf horneando pasteles si él quiere comer guisado de pollo? Lean este libro juntos y se enterarán de un final sorprendentemente dulce.

Spanish books complied by Chris Till; Minneapolis Public Library, September 2001.

HOW we read with children is just as important as HOW OFTEN we read to them. CÓMO leemos con los niños es tan importante como QUÉ TAN FRECUENTE leemos con ellos.

Tips for sharing books with Twos & Threes:
Consejos para compartir libros con niños de dos y tres años de edad:

Let your child help tell the story by:
- Asking questions that start with ‘What…?’
- Following a question with another question
- Repeating what your child says
- Building on what your child says
- Helping your child repeat longer phrases
- Praising your child for talking about the book
- Following your child’s interests in the book
- Choose a time when you both want to look at books

Deje que su niño le ayude a contar el cuento:
- Haciendo preguntas que empiecen con “¿Qué…?”
-Respondiendo con una pregunta a sus preguntas
- Repitiendo lo que dice su niño
-Dando continuación a lo que dice su niño
-Ayudando a su niño a repetir frases largas
-Elogiando a su niño por hablar acerca del libro
-Siguiendo lo que a su niño le interesa del libro
-Eligiendo una hora en que ambos quieran ver libros

Prepared by Pat Downs, Minneapolis Public Library February 2002
**Cultural With A Sprinkling Of Spanish**


(Compiled by Chris Till, MPL. 9/2001)
Quick Picks
Books in English, Spanish, Hmong & Somali

**English**
Campbell, Rod. *Dear Zoo: A lift-the-Flap Book.*
Hill, Eric. *Where’s Spot?*
Reasoner, Charles. *Who’s There?*
Reasoner, Charles. *Who’s Peeking?*
Williams, Sue. *I Went Walking.*

**Spanish**
González, Lucia M. *Señor Cat’s Romance. El Romance de Don Gato y Otros Cuentos Populares de América Latina.*
Guy, Ginger Foglesong. *¡Fiesta!*
Hill, Eric. *Where’s Spot? ¿Dónde Está Spot?*
Shea, Pegi Deitz. *New Moon.*

**Hmong**
Brown, Margaret Wise. *Goodnight Moon.*
Matthews, Peggy B. *Farmer Boy. Tub Qoob Tub Loo.*
Shaw, Charles Green. *It Looked Like Spilt Milk. Nwg Zoo Le Mig Nyuj Nchuav.*
Stevens, Janet. *Tops & Bottoms.*
Xiong, Blia. *Nine-in-One, Grr! Grr!: A Folktale from the Hmong People of Laos.*

**Somali**
Axtell, David. *We’re Going on a Lion Hunt.*
Buxton, Cecile. *A journey Through Somalia.*
Hamanka, Sheila. *All the Colors of the Earth. Dhammaan Midabada Dhulka.*
Minneapolis/Hennepin County
Family and Community Resources

Hennepin County Resources:  http://www.hennepin.us

Hennepin County Follow-Along Program- Gives parents questionnaires to track development birth-4 years. ...........................................................................................................................(612)-348-5624

Hennepin County 348-TOTS -Free developmental screenings for children ages 0-3 years, who reside in Hennepin County. 8:00 am- 4:30 pm, Monday -Friday ...................................................(612)-348-8687

Hennepin County Immunization Services- Lists of location for free/low cost shots. Services are also available in Spanish, Somali and Oromo. ...................................................................................(612)-348-2741

Minneapolis Public Schools Resources:  http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us

Minneapolis Public Schools Preschool Screenings - Available at no cost for children ages 3 to kindergarten entry)....................................................................................................................(612)-668-0860

Minneapolis Public Schools Welcome Center - Complete school choice, school registration, transfers and records. Hours: 8am - 4:30pm, Mon. - Fri. 910 West Broadway Minneapolis, MN 55411 .................................................................................................................................(612)-668-1840

New Families Welcome Center- For families needing a translator to complete school choice, school registration, transfers, records, ELL testing. 2300 Chicago Avenue Minneapolis, MN 55404 .................................................................................................................................Main Phone: (612)-668-3700
Hmong: (612)-668-3703
Somali: (612)-668-3704
Spanish: (612)-668-3702

Minneapolis Public Schools HotShot Line- Immunization referrals.................................(612)-668-0870

Minneapolis Public Schools Early Childhood Special Education - Services for children birth to kindergarten with disabilities, call for eligibility screenings.................................................(612)-668-0860

Early Childhood Family Education -Call for parent classes/play groups nearest you. Some insurance is accepted and sliding fee scales available. 1006 W. Lake St., MPLS, MN 55408 .................................................................................................................................(612)-668-3927

http://www.ecfe.mpls.k12.mn.us
**Other Resources:**

*Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association (GMDCA)* - Help families find child care, help eligible families pay for child care, offer training, grants & loans, technical assistance and other resources to support child care providers & centers in Hennepin County. 1628 Elliot Ave. S. MPLS, MN. 55404 .................................................................Main (612) 341-1177

[http://www.gmdca.org](http://www.gmdca.org)

Subsidy Dept. (612) 341-0737

Referral Dept. (612) 341-2066

*Minneapolis Way To Grow* - Offers school readiness services; home visiting, groups and classes at no cost to families living in Minneapolis. Multi-lingual services are available. ..........(612)-874-4740

[http://www.ycb.org](http://www.ycb.org)

*Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board* - Call for a park nearest you to learn more about Tiny Tots, sports, Corn Feeds & Ice Cream Socials and other upcoming family events..............(612)-230-6400

[http://www.minneapolisparks.org](http://www.minneapolisparks.org)

*Minnesota Pacer Center* - Seeks to enhance the quality of life of children and young adults with disabilities and their families, based on the concept of parents helping parents. 8161 Normandale Blvd. MPLS, MN 55437.................................(952) 838-9000 - TTY: (952) 838-0190

Toll-free in Greater Minnesota........................................................................................................... (800) 537-2237

[http://www.pacer.org](http://www.pacer.org)

*Minneapolis Public Library* - (MPL) Call for a library nearest you..............English: (612)-630-0000

The MPL has multi-lingual liaisons available to help you.... .........................Spanish: (612)-630-6432

Or (612)-630-6425

Hmong: (612)-630-6419

Somali: (612)-630-6424

Or (612)-630-6428

*First Call for Help* - 24 Hour Resources: Education, Housing, Counseling, Health Services, Child Care, Employment, Legal Help, Support Groups, Food, Youth Services, Transportation, And More...

..........................................................................................................................Dial 211 Or local calls (651)-291-0211

.......................................................................................................................... WI, MN and IA (voice/TTY) dial Toll Free (800)-362-8255

*First Call for Help Multi Lingual Services* - Available 8:30 am -5:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

..........................................................................................................................Spanish, Hmong, French and Somali call 211

Russian call (651)-698-9167

Vietnamese and Laotian (612)-721-4852

[http://firstcallforhelp.org](http://firstcallforhelp.org)
Recommended Bibliography

*Educational and Teacher References

*Building a Foundation for Preschool Literacy: Effective Instruction For Children’s Reading and Writing.* Carol Vukelich et al., International Reading Association. 2004

This book includes research-based information about early literacy: How to incorporate early literacy into the daily schedule, environment, themes, and family-school interactions as well as information about assessment and standards.

*Emergent Literacy and Dramatic Play in Early Education.* Jane Davidson, Delmar Publishers. 1996

This book describes techniques to promote language development in dramatic play and includes examples and pictures for classroom implementation.

*Handbook of Early Literacy Research.* Susan B. Neuman (editor) David K. Dickinson (editor)

This book includes chapters by early literacy researchers on a wide variety of early literacy topics.

*Make Way for Literacy! Teaching the Way Young Children Learn.* Gretchen Owocki, NAEYC/Heinemann. 2001

This book offers effective guidelines for creating a classroom community that supports children’s developing literacy abilities through the use of family activities and literacy practices.

*Much More than the ABCs.* Judith A. Schickedanz, NAEYC. 1999

This book presents a thorough overview of the early stages of reading and writing. It includes useful booklists for different age levels to promote different literacy skills.

This book presents helpful suggestions for preschool educators that teach children learning English as a second language. It provides ideas for classroom implementation and family involvement.

Preventing Reading Difficulties. Catherine E. Snow, Susan Burns, & Peg Griffin, National Academy Press. 1998

This book provides groundbreaking information about early literacy and explores how to prevent reading difficulties in the context of social, historical, cultural, and biological factors.
*Guides*


This is a complete guide to phonological awareness - what it is, what it is not, and the best practices for teaching it. It includes an extensive list of books that foster sound awareness in a fun and meaningful way.

*Starting Out Right. A Guide to Promoting Children's Reading Success.* Susan Burns, Peg Griffin, and Catherine Snow, National Academy Press. 1999

This book is a must for parents, teachers, and child care providers. It provides specific recommendations from America’s leading researchers on how to help children become successful readers.


This book includes position statement of developmentally appropriate ways of teaching children to read and write. It includes pictures, concrete guidelines, and exciting ideas for the classroom.
*Curriculum Books*

*Building Blocks for Teaching Preschoolers with Special Needs.* Susan R. Sandall and Ilene S. Schwartz, Paul H. Brookes Publications. 2002

This manual offers strategies for teaching children with special needs. The authors suggest three building blocks for an effective program—curriculum modifications, embedded learning opportunities, and child-focused instructional strategies.

*Creating Readers.* Pam Schiller, Gryphon House. 2001

Over 1,000 games, activities, songs, finger plays, and stories address skills such as motor coordination, concept and language development, auditory and visual perception, and critical thinking. Appendix includes recipes, games, patterns, and ideas for each letter of the alphabet.


This book includes more than 50 fun, skill-building activities to use with large groups of children. The activities are organized into three sections emphasizing print awareness, metalinguistic, and oral language skills. It also includes informal observations, performance samples, and a checklist for literacy evaluation.

*Literacy: The Creative Curriculum Approach.* Cate Heroman and Candy Jones, Teaching Strategies, Inc. 2004

This book shows teachers how to create literacy learning opportunities within the framework of a comprehensive, integrated curriculum.


This book contains dozens of fun and engaging ideas for creating a literacy-rich classroom. Chapters explore how the use of big books, interactive charts, games, and manipulative materials can fill your classroom with meaningful print.
**Picture This: Digital and Instant Photography Activities for Early Childhood Learning.** Susan Entz and Sheri Lyn Galarza, Corwin Press. 2000

This book involves children in the learning process using a camera and simple computer equipment. Make games, record field trips, illustrate stories, or develop a slide show. Lesson plans for curriculum areas such as drama, emerging literacy, physical development, and sensory exploration. It includes sample lesson plans for each area and a checklist to track student progress.

**Silly Songs for Phonology and Sound Awareness.** Beverly Banker, Thinking Publications. 1998

This is a great teaching resource that pairs music, modeled after familiar childhood melodies, with phonological development. It includes songs and sets of illustrated songbooks and extended activities that may be used to develop early literacy skills and sound awareness.

**Spark Curriculum Set.** Susan A. Fowler and Beverly S. Lewman, Redleaf. 2001

This collection of curricula activities is not specific to literacy, the curriculum is built around children's books. It provides a foundation of supporting activities, vocabulary, and concepts to build throughout daily routines.

**Tell it Again! Easy to Tell Stories with Activities for Young Children.** Shirley C. Raines and Rebecca Isbell, Gryphon House. 1999

This book contains popular children's stories and shows teachers how to capture children's attention and imagination using simple, creative flourishes to stories that are familiar.