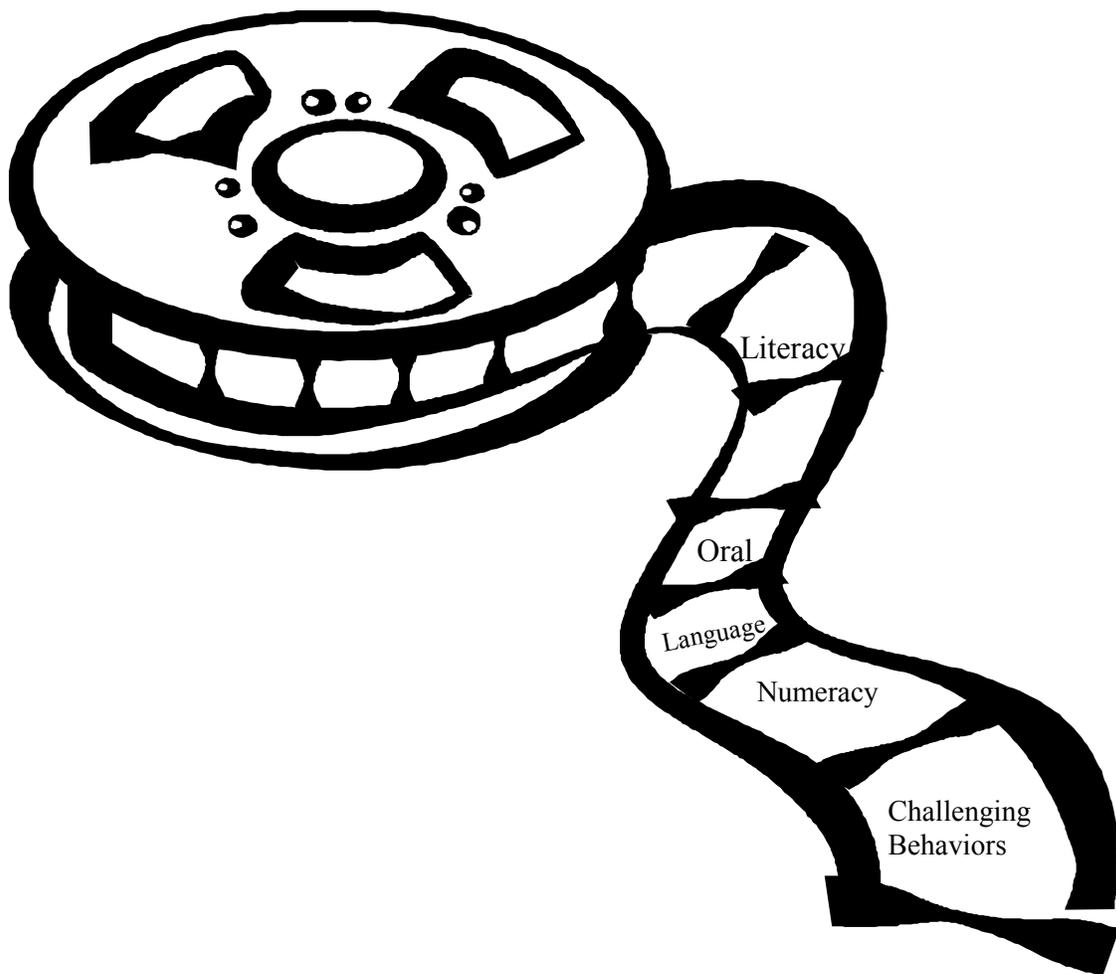


Project REEL



Resources for Early Educator Learning

FIVE BIG, FAT IDEAS

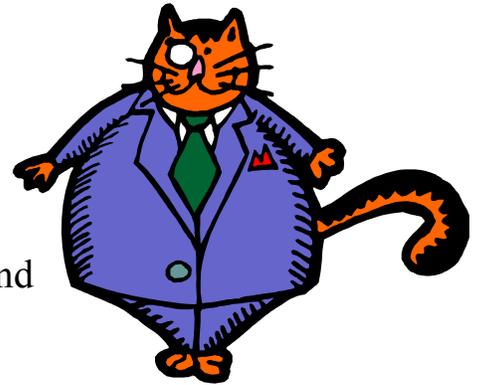
to remember about young children's learning:

1. Children learn best in a social setting.

Therefore, avoid independent seat work.

2. Children learn best through play.

Therefore, immerse them in a richly active play and avoid worksheets.



3. Children learn best when they are allowed to approximate adult behaviors.

Therefore, demonstrate adult practices and accept children's attempts at those adult practices **as if** they were already conventional efforts.

4. Children learn best in an atmosphere of respect where their dignity is protected.

Therefore, establish appropriately high expectations for children, focusing on positive guidance instead of punishment.

5. Children learn best when they have daily opportunities to use diverse social, language, literacy, and numeracy practices and receive extensive feedback from the caring adults in their classroom.

Therefore, offer children time to use new ideas and respond to them in ways that enriches their understandings.

Project REEL: Workshop 6

INTRODUCTION TO CHILDREN’S CONCEPTS ABOUT BOOKS AND PRINT

“Through experiences in their homes and communities, young children learn that print carries meaning and that reading and writing are used for a variety of purposes. They read menus in restaurants to know what foods are being served, write and receive letters to communicate with friends and relatives, and read (and listen to) stories for enjoyment. Children also learn as they observe parents and teachers using written language for all these purposes.”

(Tompkins, 2002, p. 142-143)



“By focusing on the importance of the first years of life, we give new meaning to the interactions young children have with books and stories. Looking at early literacy development as a dynamic developmental process, we can see the connection (and meaning) between an infant mouthing a book, the book handling behavior of a two year old, and the page turning of a five year old. We can see that the first three years of exploring and playing with books, singing nursery rhymes, listening to stories, recognizing words, and scribbling are truly the building blocks for language and literacy development.”

(<http://www.zerotothree.org/brainwonders/EarlyLiteracy/earlyliteracy.html>)

The highlighted lines on the Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards (from birth to age three, and from ages three to five) indicate the targeted objectives for this workshop:

Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards (Birth to Age Three)
<p>Section 2: Early Literacy Component: Book Handling Skills Component: Looking and Recognition Skills Component: Picture and Story Comprehension Skills Component: Early Writing Behaviors and Skills</p>
LEARNING EXPECTATIONS:
Eyes focus on simple pictures in books or drawings (0-4 mos.)
Begins to explore the physical properties of a book (5-8 mos.)
Holds a board, cloth, or plastic book and manipulates the pages (5-8 mos.)
Shows increased involvement and enjoyment with books (9-12 mos.)
Begins to interact with story and recognize pictures of everyday familiar objects (9-12 mos.)
Begins to make associations about familiar objects (9-12 mos.)
Begins to recognize symbols for objects (9-12 mos.)
Begins to show interest in exploring writing tools (9-12 mos.)
Begins to show interest in exploring books (13-18 mos.)
Begins to show awareness and interest in familiar pictures (13-18 mos.)
Begins to recognize “favorite books” and repeatedly requests to read them (13-18 mos.)
Pretends to read books (13-18 mos.)

Shows increased interest in exploring writing tools (13-18 mos.)
Shows interest in exploring books (19-24 mos.)
Shows awareness and interest in familiar pictures (19-24 mos.)
Begins to interact with story through familiar hand motions and expression of emotions (19-24 mos.)
Enjoys books that relate to personal experience (19-24 mos.)
Enjoys looking at book by self, while sitting by peers or when being read to by an adult; begins to connect familiar books to play experiences (19-24 mos.)
Begins to use writing tools to make marks on paper (19-24 mos.)
Begins to understand the connection between books and personal experiences (2 – 2 1/2 yrs.)
Recognizes and enjoys reading familiar books (2 – 2 1/2 yrs.)
Uses a variety of writing tools to make scribbles (2 – 2 1/2 yrs.)
Is aware of and can identify many sounds in the environment (2 – 2 1/2 yrs.)
Begins to distinguish between words with similar phonemes, such as <i>pat</i> and <i>path</i> (2 – 2 1/2 yrs.)
Engages in and enjoys word play with silly sounds and real and nonsense words (2 – 2 1/2 yrs.)
Begins to recite from memory familiar books (2 1/2 – 3 yrs.)
Scribbles and draws intentionally (2 1/2 – 3 yrs.)
Is aware of and can identify many sounds in the environment (2 1/2 – 3 yrs.)
Continues to distinguish between words with similar phonemes, such as <i>pat</i> and <i>path</i> (2 – 2 1/2 yrs.)
Discriminates among sounds based on volume and pitch—loud vs. soft, high vs. low, long vs. short (2 1/2 – 3 yrs.)
Engages in and enjoys word play with silly sounds and real and nonsense words (2 1/2 – 3 yrs.)

Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards (ages 3-5) Aligned with The Creative Curriculum® Developmental Continuum for Ages 3-5	
Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards (ages 3-5)	The Creative Curriculum® Developmental Continuum for Ages 3-5
Section 2: Early Literacy Component: Print Awareness	
LEARNING EXPECTATIONS:	
Demonstrates interest in books and what they contain	See #45
Understands how books work and the way they are handled	See #45
Begins to attend to print in the environment, especially own name	See #47
Shows awareness that print conveys a message, that print is read rather than the pictures	See #45
Understands concept of spoken and written word and that alphabet letters have individual names (ages 4-5)	See #s 45 & 46
Shows interest in purposeful writing (ages 4-5)	See #49
Shows good understanding of conventions of print (ages 4-5)	See #45
Demonstrates good word awareness, calls attention to print in the environment, and recognizes some common words (ages 4-5)	See #47
Routinely engages in purposeful reading and writing (ages 4-5)	See #s 44, 49, & 50

Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards (ages 3-5) Aligned with The Creative Curriculum® Developmental Continuum for Ages 3-5	
Tennessee Early Learning Developmental Standards (ages 3-5) Section 2: Early Literacy Component: Visual Discrimination Component: Visual Whole-Part-Whole Relationships Component: Visual Sequencing (Patterning)	The Creative Curriculum® Developmental Continuum for Ages 3-5
LEARNING EXPECTATIONS:	
Discriminates likenesses/differences in real objects	See #s 27 & 28
Discriminates likenesses/differences in pictured objects	See #s 27 & 28
Develops awareness of parts and wholes and how the parts relate to the whole	See #s 32 & 47
Uses left-to-right and top-to-bottom scanning and observes and reproduces each element in a patterns of a 3-dimensional objects	See #s 30 & 45
Discriminates likenesses and differences in black & white shapes, figures, and designs with subtle differences in detail or orientation (ages 4-5)	See #s 44, 49, 50
Discriminates likenesses and differences in symbols (ages 4-5)	See #s 27, 28, & 47
Further develops awareness of relationships of parts and wholes using more abstract figures (ages 4-5)	See #s 32 & 47
Uses left-to-right and top-to-bottom scanning; observes and reproduces a pattern with 3-dimensional objects by using a 2-dimensional paper model (ages 4-5)	See #s 30 & 45

Training Objectives

Early Childhood Educators will

- ✓ describe the characteristics of a child (infant, toddler, or pre-kindergartner) who has well-developed concepts about books
- ✓ describe the characteristics of a child (infant, toddler, or pre-kindergartner) who has well-developed concepts about print
- ✓ demonstrate using book/print awareness activities with small groups and individual children, avoiding whole-group teaching scenarios
- ✓ incorporate reading aloud, shared reading, and opportunities for independent reading multiple times each day in children’s schedules (in abbreviated sessions based on children’s engagement and through experiences in interest areas)
- ✓ incorporate writing aloud and shared writing into the daily schedule for older children so that they may see an “expert” at work, modeling both conventions of print and genre conventions (e.g., lists, postcards, letters, memos, phone messages, etc., each look different from one another)
- ✓ create a print-rich environment that is developmentally appropriate for their age-level focus
- ✓ select appropriate books for the varying age levels of children in their settings
- ✓ create and effectively utilize library and writing centers based on best practices in supporting emergent literacy development



- ✓ collect and integrate literacy materials into interest areas in addition to the library and writing centers (phone books, TV Guides, magazines, labels, product boxes, menus, newspapers, catalogs, junk mail, drawing paper, phone message pads, pencils & markers, books, etc.)
- ✓ demonstrate to children how to use the materials in the library/writing centers and interest areas and model how to integrate literacy experiences into play scenarios
- ✓ model beneficial read aloud strategies with young children using the “B-D-A” sequence of supporting children before, during, and after a book reading
- ✓ demonstrate that children with special needs require more frequent and intensive experiences in emergent literacy activities and responsive scaffolding of their present abilities
- ✓ actively support families’ involvement in their children’s literacy development
- ✓ demonstrate strategies to provide additional support to a child who is learning English as a second language

WHAT DO CHILDREN KNOW AND WHAT ARE THEY ABLE TO DO IF THEY HAVE A WELL-FORMED CONCEPT ABOUT BOOKS?

	“A child’s sensitivity to print is a major first step toward reading. . . . Children quickly settle into book-sharing routines with primary caregivers. Toddlers start recognizing favorite books by their cover, pretend to read books, and understand that books are handled in certain ways. As they reach their fourth and fifth years, children increasingly come to understand that it is the print that is read in stories, and that this print contains alphabet letters [and other features of print]” (National Research Council, 2001).
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Specifically, children with well-developed concepts about books

- know that a book is for reading
- can identify the front and the back of a book, as well as the top and the bottom
- can turn the pages of a book properly in the right direction
- know the difference between print and the illustrations or photographs
- know that images on a page are related to what the print says
- know where one begins reading on a page
- know what a title is
- know what an author is
- know what an illustrator is
- know how to handle and care for books

(Morrow, 2001, p. 203)



WHAT DO CHILDREN KNOW AND WHAT ARE THEY ABLE TO DO IF THEY HAVE WELL-FORMED CONCEPTS ABOUT PRINT?

Children who have well-formed concepts of print

- recognize print in their surroundings
 - point out familiar letters
 - recognize words that they see frequently
 - inquire about letters and words they don't know
- understand that print carries meaning
 - the words—not the pictures—are read
 - words said in oral language can be represented in a series of letters
- understand conventions of print
 - spaces between words, reading from top-to-bottom and left-to-right, etc.
- know that print is used for many purposes
 - road signs are different from menus which are different from newspapers, etc.
- practice print through exploratory writing
 - letters are grouped together to form words, and words combine together for phrases and sentences.



(Early Childhood-Head Start Task Force, et al., 2002; Justice & Pence, 2005)

WHAT IS AN ABBREVIATED LIST OF THE EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICULAR AGE RANGES?

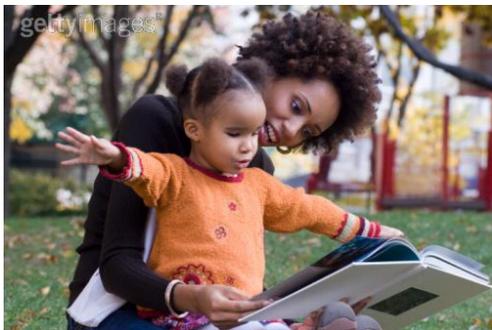
In addition to the details of the TN-ELDS, there are other generally accepted “**Birth to Three-Year-Old Accomplishments**” for infants and toddlers worth repeating here:

- Recognizes specific books by cover.
- Pretends to read books.
- Understands that books are handled in particular ways.
- Enters into a book-sharing routine with primary caregivers.
- Vocalization play in crib gives way to enjoyment of rhyming language, nonsense word play, etc.
- Labels objects in books.
- Comments on characters in books.
- Looks at picture in book and realizes it is a symbol for real object.
- Listens to stories.
- Requests/commands adult to read or write.
- May begin attending to specific print, such as letters in names.
- Uses increasingly purposeful scribbling.
- Occasionally seems to distinguish between drawing and writing.
- Produces some letter-like forms and scribbles with some features of English writing.

The following list of “**Three- to Four-Year-Old Accomplishments,**” again closely aligned with the Tennessee Standards, suggests that our literacy objectives for the typically-developing preschooler and pre-kindergartner involve them in:

- Knowing that alphabet letters [are different from pictures] and can be individually named.
- Recognizing print in the local environment.
- Knowing that it is the print that is read in stories.
- Understanding that different text forms are used for different functions of print (e.g., a list for groceries is different than the list on a menu).
- Paying attention to separable and repeating sounds in language (e.g., in Peter, Peter, Pumpkin Eater).
- Using new vocabulary and grammatical constructions in own speech.
- Understanding and following oral directions.
- Becoming sensitive to some sequences of events in stories.
- Showing an interest in books and reading.
- When being read a story, connecting information and events to real-life experiences.
- Questioning and commenting demonstrate an understanding of literal meaning of story being told.
- Displaying reading and writing attempts, calling attention to self: “Look at my story.”
- Identifying about 10 alphabet letters, especially those from own name.
- Writing (scribbling) messages as part of playful activity.
- Beginning to attend to beginning or rhyming sounds in salient words.

(National Research Council, 1999, p. 59)



Project REEL: Workshop 6 CONCEPTS ABOUT PRINT

“Researchers discovered that many 3-year-olds come to expect print to be meaningful. This understanding becomes evident when children point to words on signs, cereal boxes, or menus and ask, ‘What does that say?’ After making marks on a piece of paper, they ask, ‘What did I write?’

Research also revealed that young children quickly discover that print is functional and can be used to get things done in everyday life. For example, many 3-year-olds are familiar with the purposes of different types of print, such as store signs, restaurant menus, and name labels on presents. Young children’s knowledge of the functional uses of literacy also is demonstrated during dramatic play. Researchers have reported numerous incidents of preschoolers engaging in a variety of functional literacy activities while engaging in dramatic play, including jotting down phone messages, writing checks to pay for purchases, looking up recipes in cookbooks, and making shopping lists” (Vukelich & Christie, 2004, p. 6).



“It is essential that preschool teachers recognize and understand that a child’s sensitivity to print is the first major step toward reading. . . . This does not mean that teachers should watch and wait for these magical moments to occur before they instruct. On the contrary, . . . careful, thoughtful planning within a stimulating environment can facilitate cognitive growth and learning in young children” (Venn & Jahn, 2003, p. 120).



WHAT TYPES OF PRINT IN ADDITION TO BOOKS DO EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS NEED TO HAVE IN THEIR SETTINGS?

Print can be categorized into basically four different types: environmental, occupational, informational, and recreational.

- “**Environmental print** refers to print that is evident throughout one’s surroundings such as billboards and store signs.
- **Occupational print** means print that is necessary to a specific occupation such as a teacher’s class list, an architect’s blueprints, and an auto mechanic’s work orders.
- **Informational print** can organize, store, and retrieve the information that helps in every day life; examples are calendars and clocks.
- Finally, **recreational print** involves printed material that is associated with relaxation and leisure pursuits such as reading for pleasure, searching the Internet, and playing computer games” (Venn & Jahn, 2003, p. 121).

Teachers will want to have many books available to children in the setting, but will also want to have a generous sampling of print from each of the four categories above.

ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN (INFANTS AND TODDLERS)

Note: Because we predominantly share books with infants and toddlers, most of the strategies for print awareness are in this workshop manual under the “Infants and Toddlers” section of “Concepts About Books.” However, several other types of print awareness experiences valuable for older children are also beneficial for the literacy experiences of infants and toddlers.

Encourage young toddlers to play with **alphabet blocks** and **magnetic letters** on cookie sheets or other metal surfaces, and talk to them about the letters, even though the children may be too young to repeat the spoken letter or recognize the printed form. These are enjoyable ways to create conversations between teachers and children about print, while engaging the child in moving and manipulating small objects.



Show babies such environmental print as words printed on their bibs and on baby food jars, words printed on cereal boxes and the boxes in which toys come wrapped. Of course, be prepared for any piece of print to go into Baby’s mouth! This focus with babies on environmental print has far less to do with preparing infants for actual reading than it does with immersing infants and toddlers in oral language that

- 1) creates bonds between children and adults, and
- 2) supports their oral language production, both of which are foundational elements for learning to read.



ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES FOR OLDER CHILDREN (PRESCHOOL AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN)

One of the most powerful literacy connections that children make is that oral language can be written down and accessed in the future, creating a record that is permanent. Therefore, **Taking Dictation** from children is a crucial strategy for children’s understanding of communicating on paper using print conventions. Often called “Shared Writing” or the “Language Experience Approach,” recording children’s comments as they watch supports their knowledge in directionality, use of capital letters and end punctuation, the spelling of children’s names and familiar words, etc. In this shared writing strategy novice children are free to do the hard thinking of what to say, and the teacher/“expert” can print the children’s words say. Listed below are some representative scenarios in which we could take dictation from the children:

- Writing a caption for an illustration that a child completed
- Creating a chart of child-related rules for the interest areas
- A retelling of a story
- An original story
- An “I wish....” poem

- A list of favorite foods or games
- A thank you letter to recent guest
- An announcement for a child’s new sibling or pet
- An invitation to parents for a special event
- Etc.

Just because children have little or no book experience by preschool doesn’t mean they haven’t seen literacy in their homes. They have likely seen a wide variety of literacy activities (paying bills, filling out forms/applications, writing letters, clipping coupons, reading grocery store ads, etc.) that are often not valued in school. Let’s do our best to build bridges between the literacy they’ve seen at home and the literacy they need for a successful schooling experience. This connection between home and school can be supported in any setting through dramatic play in the interest areas: checking ads for sale items at Bi-Lo, clipping coupons for a visit to Toys ‘R’ Us, filling out an application to work at the veterinarian’s office, etc.

Emergent writing and concepts about print



“When children begin to write, they reveal what they already notice and understand about print because those items are evident in their writing, whether the writing is in scribble form or letters. They also gain more control of and build their visual perceptual skills in looking at print as they construct their own messages. Clay (1991) states that ‘the first explorations of print in the preschool years may occur in writing rather than in reading.’ Therefore, effective pre-school teachers offer children many opportunities to write on a daily basis in addition to providing plentiful graphic-practice activities to help strengthen their ability to attend to print features. After children practice making tunnels for cars to drive through and drawing hooks to catch fish with, they may be able to notice more easily the ‘tunnels’ and ‘hooks’ in letter forms” (Venn & Jahn, 2003, p. 123).

Writing the room

The sole purpose of this activity is for children to distinguish print from pictures in their classroom.

- 1) “Each child takes a pencil and a journal or blank piece of paper on a clipboard and walks around the room, looking for print to copy onto his or her paper.
- 2) The students do this activity for about 5-10 minutes, and then they come together to share their writing.
- 3) The first steps in sharing are for each child to find a buddy and tell the buddy both what print he or she found and where it is located in the room. This procedure allows for every child to talk and be on task. Then, there is a brief whole-class sharing session in which a few volunteers tell what print they found and where it is located in the room. This whole-class share allows children to practice their speaking and listening skills in addition to directing their attention to print in the room that some children would not have noticed yet.”
(from Venn & Jahn, 2003, p. 122).

Nothing in a child's world is more important to see in print than her or his name! A child's name is often the first word a child will read out of context, and it is certainly the starting point for children in their explorations into writing. One of the first steps to take in creating a literacy-rich environment is using the **children's names as labels in several places in the room**. Labels identifying their cubbies, their mailboxes, their attendance chart, their toothbrushes, etc., give them a sense of belonging and ownership, but more importantly it is a child's first example that people and things can be represented in a series of letters that construct a meaningful word.



Environmental print. Often one of the first pieces of symbolic print that young children come to read is the “golden arches” of the McDonald's sign. You have probably noticed also that they are able to identify the logos of Domino's, Wal-mart, or Bi-Lo, as well as other stores where their families frequently shop. We can take advantage of children's interest in **environmental print** by bringing in materials that display these logos, as well as multiple products that they see in grocery and other stores, such as cracker

boxes, milk cartons, detergent labels, soda bottles, etc. It is important to remember that it is not enough for teachers to bring print into their settings that children see in their worlds (cereal boxes, food & household products, fast food materials, cardboard road signs, etc.). “Print-rich environments require that children actually interact with the print, not just look at it.” (Campbell, 1998, p. 124)

Here's a fine idea from Neuman, Copple, & Bredekamp (2000) that you might wish to use in your setting:



❖ “Seeing a menu of snack or lunch gives children a meaningful experience—what is more meaningful than food?—with letters, words, and getting information from print. On menus for younger children and English-language learners, include pictures or photographs of the food items next to the words. Consulting the menu becomes a daily habit, and some children begin to recognize simple words and name single letters. For older children use print-only menus, or try an in-between version in which children try to identify each item from print alone but then can open a flap to look at the picture and see if they were right” (p. 69).

❖ Using a pocket chart with the words displayed and the pictures hidden, have children predict what the food will be, ask what they notice about the words or letters, and ask them about beginning letters of words. The teacher can then reveal the picture of the food item and talk about their predictions.

Show young children that there is **print all around them**:

Teacher: “Tucker, there is a word on your shoe. Can everybody see the word on Tucker’s shoe? I’m going to write it on the dry erase board. What do you think this word means?”



Teacher: “There is a sign on the street outside our school and it looks like this: (teacher draws a rectangle on her white board and writes NO PARKING). What do you think the words on this sign mean?”

Teacher: “There is a word on this box that I brought from home. This box was on the shelves above my washing machine. What do you know about this word right here?”

Teacher: “There is a sign over here in our block center by the electrical outlets. It reads, ‘Do not remove outlet protectors.’ What do you think that sign means?”

Make **signs and labels for the settings** *when children are present* so that they may observe and talk with you about the purpose for that sign/label. When you need to remind the assigned rabbit caregiver to change the rabbit’s water, give the children the benefit of seeing you write “REMINDER: BUNNICULA NEEDS FRESH WATER EACH DAY” and place the sign on his cage. This is a great opportunity to talk about signs and how they’re used to give us information, to warn us of potential danger, to give us instructions, etc.



Go for a **print walk around the neighborhood!** Look at the signs, street signs, flyers, notices on shops, etc. There are several benefits of this activity. Children will gain awareness of all the print in their environment. Teachers who do not live in the neighborhood will have a clearer picture of the children’s community and culture. Children will feel valued that the print in their environment is valued and important. You can focus on the messages, on the function of the print, of the letters and words included, etc. It would be a valuable literacy event if you could take pictures of the print you and your class discover so that you can retell the experience of your print walk at a later time.

Make many of your charts **rebus charts**, in which you draw a picture of key words immediately following a key word. This is particularly helpful when children must access the chart to carry out instructions or follow directions. One of your rebus charts might be an original child-dictated story that looks something like this:

Our Transportation Adventure Story

Once upon a time there was a boy 👤 Daquon who was given a shiny red bicycle 🚲 for his birthday. He wanted to visit his grandmother 👤 in Oregon. So his parents bought him a ticket on an airplane ✈️, but he missed his plane! So Daquon took a taxi 🚗 to the bus 🚌 station 🏢, bought his ticket 🎫 and hopped on, but then the bus broke down. Oh, no! What was he going to do? Daquon heard a train 🚂 coming down the tracks, so he flagged down the engineer 👤 and boarded the passenger car. There was just one problem: the train 🚂 was headed for Oklahoma, not Oregon!
Etc.

Your rebus charts could be original stories, like the example, or they might be retellings of favorite or new stories. You might make a chart for directions on how to make a snowman desert out of lemon cookies, expectations for clean up time, the morning message that tells them what to expect for the day's schedule, or any other text that children can dictate or you can write for children's multiple uses.

Obstacle Course

In using this activity children will learn that symbols and print contain information about objects and their uses and can guide actions and behaviors.

- 1) Set up an obstacle course in which children can practice a variety of motor skills (walking, running, balancing, crawling, climbing).
- 2) Prepare written labels and instructions with pictures, signs, and words for each part of the course. Post a label on the stairs that reads "steps" and the directions "walk up steps" and then a sketch of a stick figure climbing the stairs.
- 3) Continue labeling the course this way, with the children following written directions to jump, throw a beach ball into a wastebasket, walk on a strip of masking tape, etc.
- 4) Children who need low support will read and say signs fairly independently after teacher modeling, and children who need high support will need scaffolding by the teacher ("Which way does this arrow point?" "What is Marisol doing?" "This sign is on the ball. What do you think you could do with this ball that looks like the picture?")

(Notari-Syverson, et al., 1998, p. 111)



Show children on a daily basis **the many reasons we use print** :

Teacher: "I've got to remind Miss Arnelle that we need to go to Home Depot to get our flowers tomorrow. She might have forgotten our plans. Will you help me write a note to Miss Arnelle?"

Teacher: "I'm going to the grocery store before I go home tonight, and I'll need a **list**. I'm going to write down all the things I know I'll need to buy. I know I'll need tomatoes. T-t-t, tomatoes. What letter do you think begins the word tomatoes?" Talk about the items that you write and about the sounds of those words.

Teacher: "I'm going to send an **e-mail message** to my son at college. I want him to know that I love him and miss him, but that I'm going to rent out his room."

Teacher: "We have a guest coming next week. Let's write out the **directions** to our school from Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., so she'll know where to turn and where to park when she gets here!"

Teacher: “I want to remember what items are in our office supplies drawer. You name off the items that we find in the drawer, and I’ll put them on a **list** that we can tape to the outside of the drawer.”

Bring in the **newspaper** and show the many purposes you use it: for information, for coupons, for movie schedules, for the weather, to check the obituaries for your name, etc.

Go to a book or the Internet to **answer a question** that is raised during the day.

Bring in a **menu** from a restaurant they are familiar with, and show children how you use it to determine what the restaurant is offering and how you make your selection.

Don’t forget about all the daily printed materials you could share with children: grocery store ads, coupons, receipts, church bulletins, flyers, notices, recipes, directions for making cake or Jell-o, plane tickets, game directions, etc.



Suggestions for evaluation:

See *Creative Curriculum's Literacy* text "Print and Book Concepts Observation Form," as well as the Developmental Continuum sections on "listening and speaking" for infants and toddlers, and "reading and writing" for ages three through five.

 You might wish to gather together some environmental print, such as empty milk cartons, cereal boxes, soup labels, baby food jars, soda labels, laundry detergent labels, bar soap packages, toothpaste boxes, magazine covers, fast food labels, traffic signs, school signs, etc.

You would then ask a series of questions about the responses and check them against responses that you take over the next several weeks or months:

- "Have you ever seen this before? Where?"
- What do you think it is? What do you think it says?
- How do you know? What makes you think so?
- What tells you that it says _____? Show me with your finger where it says _____."

(Owocki & Goodman, 2002, p. 34)

 Keep track of children's progress on the computer. Sit down with each child once each month and monitor how their computer skills are improving. Ask such questions as:

How fast are they able to move around the screen compared to the last time I observed them?
 How well do they handle the mouse?
 What activities are they able to do now that they were not able to do last month?
 How well do they use the keyboard?
 When they encounter a problem, how do they handle it? Can they get around it on their own or do they still request the help of a teacher?
 Etc.

Strategies for ESL learners:

-  Have family members or community volunteers help you label objects in the environment in your children's home languages. Creating signs, directions, and other print in children's native language will help them grow cognitively and will demonstrate your appreciation of their home language and culture. It also helps remind us that bilingualism is a cognitive benefit—not a deficit—and that children benefit in many ways from being able to speak two or more languages.



- 🌐 Children learn language best when it is embedded in an authentic activity in which they are working with other children. Playing in centers with other native speakers is an excellent way for ESL children to learn new vocabulary that is associated with concrete items and embedded in a rich context. It would be even more beneficial for children if they could be using their home language simultaneously with their experimentations in English. Having a bilingual adult would be most favorable, of course, but an older bilingual child would also be helpful to help the ESL child practice his/her home language while learning the second.
- 🌐 Ask ESL children's parents to come to your classroom to share stories, songs, art, and experiences from their culture.
- 🌐 Ask ESL children's parents to share in classroom events and be monitors on field trips.
- 🌐 Find electronic books that have text in both English and the child's language. Many CD-ROMs have stories in multiple languages: Spanish, Japanese, Mandarin, etc.

Promoting family involvement in the literacy development of their child:

- 🏠 Suggest to family members that they talk with children about the different literacy practices they use every day (bill paying, writing lists, writing phone messages, letters, recipes, forms & applications, etc.).
- 🏠 Suggest to family members that they demonstrate to their children how they could include literacy activities in their play. For example, if the child is pretending to cook, then the parent could give paper and pencil and suggest they write down the recipe. The parent could give a cookbook to the child and have them find a recipe for what the child is pretending to make.
- 🏠 Suggest to family members that they point out letters and words that they run across in daily life. "Make an obvious effort to read aloud traffic signs, billboards, notices, labels on packages, maps, and phone numbers" (<http://ericec.org/ptips.html>).
- 🏠 Encourage families to assist in the setting. Invite family members to help with literacy activities such as bookbinding, reading with children, taking written dictation of children's stories, and supervising independent activities while teachers work with small groups and individuals.
- 🏠 Send home reading and writing activities and encourage families' feedback.
- 🏠 Celebrate the families in your setting. Invite parents and grandparents to share special skills they have, to talk about their cultural heritage, etc.
- 🏠 Send notes home occasionally to praise a literacy achievement by their child.

 Include family members in helping to assess their child’s progress. Provide forms for family members to fill out about their child’s literacy activities and the things they do with their child at home. The questions might include the following:

Concepts About Print Checklist (check one)	Always	Sometimes	Never
• My child asks to be read to.			
• My child looks at books alone.			
• My child understands what is read to him/her, or what he/she reads alone.			
• My child will pretend to read to me.			
• My child participates in the reading of a story with rhymes or repeated phrases.			
• My child will write with me.			
• My child will write alone.			
• My child will talk about what was written.			
• My child reads environmental print.			