

Writing for a specific purpose and audience

Early attempts and approximations at standard writing (often viewed as “just scribbles” by adults) are legitimate elements of literacy development. Children’s acquisition of writing typically follows general developmental stages, and individual children will become writers at different rates and through a variety of activities. Learning to write involves much more than learning to form alphabet letters.

- ⇒ Intentionally makes marks or scribbles
- ⇒ Associates writing with purpose
- ⇒ Creates writing with the intention of communicating
- ⇒ Produces recognizable writing that conveys meaning
- ⇒ Gathers ideas for writing for a purpose



School Readiness is the sum of children’s experiences prior to Kindergarten.

A high quality early childhood education, whether provided by family or a formal program, increases a child’s ability to succeed in school. The entire community is responsible for enhancing the physical, social, and cognitive development of children, from prenatal care through the age of five.



Using writing implements

Children need to experiment with a variety of “writing” techniques such as scribbling, drawing, and finally developing actual writing skills. Adults should promote the child’s experimentation and effort in using materials in their own creative manner. Children gain confidence in their growing ability to translate their communication into writing if the adults in their environment are more interested in what they are trying to say, than on their use of conventional letter formation and/or spellings.

- ⇒ Grasps writing tools
- ⇒ Imitates specific writing strokes to make a picture or letter formation
- ⇒ Imitate specific writing marks
- ⇒ Approximates writing string of letters
- ⇒ Writes from left to right, spacing letters correctly



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Is your child ready for reading in Kindergarten?



Awareness of Sounds

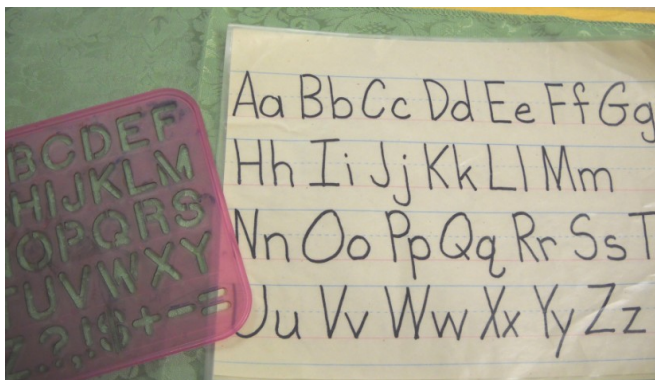
Phonological awareness is an “ear” skill. It is the ability to hear and manipulate the sounds of words, recognize that speech is composed of sounds, that some words rhyme, and that sounds can be manipulated. This is a foundation for phonemic awareness. Phonemic awareness is the ability to recognize the smallest units of sounds in words.

- ⇒ Responds to sounds in the environment
- ⇒ Produces a variety of sounds
- ⇒ Produces and blends the sounds of letter pattern into recognizable words
- ⇒ Compares sounds of different words
- ⇒ Distinguishes sounds within words
- ⇒ Attempts or is able to imitate rhyming



Play "what's that sound" and let your child try to guess where a sound comes from.

Help your child to become aware of sounds in letters. Play games: "What starts with 'm'?" "What ends with 't'?"



Awareness of Symbols

Print awareness is a child's earliest understanding that written language carries meaning. Young children may begin “reading” by pointing to the pictures and talking about them. Later, they will begin to put the pictures together to tell a story. Print awareness occurs when a child attempts to attend to the print while “reading.” Print awareness is a major predictor of a child’s future reading achievement and serves as the foundation upon which phonological and conceptual skills are built.



- ⇒ Responds to familiar pictures
- ⇒ Labels familiar pictures
- ⇒ Recognizes familiar symbols (stop sign, traffic light)
- ⇒ Compares, combines, orders letters and letter sounds
- ⇒ Recognizes that letters make words and words make sentences

- Read to your child every day. Find books with simple stories, and help your child start to think about what he or she sees and hears. Talk with him about what happens first, next and last in the story.
- Pretend to be in a restaurant where you take turns writing down each other's orders. Also, point out the words on stop signs, billboards, cereal boxes, etc.



Uses print for pleasure and information

In building a foundation for reading and understanding a variety of materials, young children need experiences with language and a variety of reading materials. They need to see adults obtaining and using information from many different printed sources: recipes, manuals, newspapers, Websites, books, encyclopedias, and many others. Young children learn that books and technical materials are a major source of needed and useful information. They also begin to recognize the different formats in which informational materials come.

- ⇒ Engages with a book
- ⇒ Imitate proper handling of books
- ⇒ Distinguishes print from pictures
- ⇒ Adjusts book so the print is upright
- ⇒ Chooses reading activities for meaning



Comprehends details, events, and main ideas

The older toddler will then begin to participate in “reading” or telling a story in a picture or book when they point to details in recognition. Later comprehension of events, stories, and main ideas is demonstrated by preschool children as they retell that story and later answers questions about the story.

- ⇒ Reacts to a story or event
- ⇒ Identifies details from a story or picture
- ⇒ Talks about characters and settings
- ⇒ Retells familiar stories
- ⇒ Comprehends and responds to stories