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HANDBOOK ON EMERGENT LITERACY FOR THE PRESCHOOL PARENT

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Education: Elementary

by
Laura Jean Grohowsky

December 1993

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Nov. 8, 1993


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ABSTRACT

This project explores the need for a parent handbook for pre-kindergarten parents. The literature reviewed in the research is divided into the following three sections: (1) parent-child interaction, (2) emergent literacy vs reading readiness, and (3) academic vs developmental kindergarten.

Parent-child interaction during the early years of a child's life is very important. The parent is the first teacher with whom a child interacts. No outside program can replace the supportive family that gives the child the emotional security and rich environment for learning. Teale and Salzby (1986) define the difference between emergent literacy and reading readiness. Emergent literacy recognizes that a child begins literacy development long before school entry as they interact in their home and environment. Prereading implies children are "getting ready to read and write".

Research shows that the kindergarten age children benefits best from a child-entered curriculum which is reflected in a developmental framework for kindergarten.

The handbook will help the parent to: (1) define emergent literacy and give the advantages of this type of learning, (2) create activities parents can be involved in with their child before entering kindergarten, and (3)

recommend ways for parents to carry out these activities with their child.

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INTRODUCTION

Thirty-five percent of our nation's children, more than one in three, are not ready for school according to the kindergarten teachers surveyed by the Carnegie Foundation (Boyer, 1992). When asked to identify the areas in which young children are most deficient, teachers overwhelmingly stated, "lack of proficiency in language." In response to the question, "What would most improve the school readiness of children?" the majority of kindergarten teachers said, "parent guidelines to help the child." Parent education was also included in this recommendation (Boyer, 1992).

Mothers and fathers are the first and most essential teacher the child has in his/her life. No outside program can replace a supportive family that gives the child emotional security and a rich environment for learning (Boyer, 1992).

For informal teaching or helping their young child to be successful, parents must be aware of what their child can learn and the experiences through which such learning will occur. They must know the importance of such matters as pointing out letters from the child's name on signs or containers.

In a study comparing kindergarten children's knowledge about print, those who knew a great deal about written language, had parents who believed that it was their responsibility to seize opportunities to convey information

about written language to their children (Resh & Wilson, 1990). Children of parents who had little knowledge may be parents who are unaware or unsure of their potential role in helping their child succeed in school (Resh & Wilson, 1990).

"Parents play roles of inestimable importance in laying the foundation for learning. A parent is a child's first tutor in unraveling the fascinating puzzle of written language. An informed parent can be a child's one enduring source of faith that sooner or later he or she will be a successful achiever in school" (Anderson, 1985).

For informal teaching or helping the children to be successful, parents must be aware of what the children can learn and the experiences through which such learning will occur (Anderson, 1985). A parent handbook for pre-school and beginning kindergarten parents is needed based on the research. There are two different paradigms concerning where the curriculum should be fitted around the child or the curriculum fitted to the child? (Bredenkamp, 1986). Research on the efficacy of academic and developmentally focused programs indicates that both types can produce great gains in school success (Gersten & Keating, 1987). The handbook will incorporate content and skill development with age appropriate activities that will enhance opportunities for the child to grow in all developmental areas.

This directly responds to the recommendations for parent education as presented by Boyer (1992).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Current research indicates that current beginning reading practices typically emphasize discrete skills such as letter-naming and letter-sound correspondences. Such practices fail to build on or take advantage of young children's emergent literacy. For the emergent literacy perspective to become common place in early childhood programs, changes in teachers and parents beliefs are required (Hiebert, 1988). When developing a parent handbook for pre-kindergarten parents, present research on emergent literacy needs to address the direction the handbook should take. The goals of a parent handbook are to enhance the parent's awareness of activities they should be involved in with the children before entering kindergarten. With this goal in mind, the literature reviewed will include: parent involvement, emergent literacy versus reading readiness, and academic versus developmental kindergarten.

Parent Involvement

A child learns about 90% of all the requisite intellectual skills by the age of five, a fact that supports the importance of quality parenting (DiSibio, 1984). According to research done in the mid 1970's, researchers such as Marie Clay reported on the way young children learn to read and write before coming to school. Clay found that five environmental factors emerged as common to almost every early

reader. They are as follows: (1) reading to children, (2) seeing a reading model, (3) availability and utilization of a wide variety of reading materials, (4) involvement with writing, and (5) positive quality interactive responses with the child (Clay, 1982). Parents play roles of inestimable importance in laying the foundation for learning to read. This is the place where life's most basic lessons are learned. No outside program, however well-planned, can replace the supportive family that gave the child the emotional security and rich environment for learning.

Language is the key to learning. Children who fail to develop adequate speech and language skills in the first five years of life are up to six times more likely to experience reading problems in school than those who receive adequate stimulation (Boyer, 1992). A caring environment builds emotional maturity and social confidence, which are keys to school readiness. A supportive environment is especially consequential to language development. It is in the early years when children become linguistically empowered that they learn to express feelings and ideas. Every child, to be educationally successful, needs a language-rich environment, one in which adults speak well, listen attentively, and read a lot each day (Boyer, 1992).

To a greater or lesser degree, children acquire specific knowledge about written language before coming to school.

Almost all children learn something about the forms of stories, how to ask questions, and how to recognize a few, or sometimes many letters and words. Early development of the knowledge required for reading comes from experience talking and learning about the written language (Anderson, 1985).

If teachers are to improve reading and language arts instruction in relation to pre-reading skills, they must involve parents, the primary educators of their children (DiSibio, 1984). Studies illustrate that development of vocabulary and syntactic complexity in oral language is enhanced in children who are frequently exposed to stories. Reading stories to children gives them a model for developing vocabulary and syntax (Strickland, 1989). Children's early experiences with books and reading are thought to contribute to their later success or failure in learning to read (Scarborough, Dobrick & Hager, 1989). Although parents may use flashcards or workbooks to work on the alphabet or related reading skills with the young child, it has not been successful (Hiebert, 1988). Efforts by parents to convey information about the functions and types of literacy as part of everyday life have been more successful (Hiebert, 1988). An example of this type of activity is a child's question of "what does that say?" as he points to the words on a gas pump. This creates an opportunity for caregivers to relay information about written language. Such opportunities in

day-to-day interaction are endless in homes, regardless of socioeconomic level (Hiebert, 1988).

Although children may play with materials independently or with peers, both the presence of materials and children's understanding of their use generally depends on parents. Parents also create routines for the use of toys and materials. In the homes of children who were avid readers, it was found that a designated time for reading was set, such as before bedtime or dinner (Hiebert, 1988). Additionally, parents who have the time, resources, and knowledge provide rich rewarding experiences for their children. Their instincts lead them, as they have led other parents in previous generations, to respond to their children in stimulating and supportive ways (Boyer, 1992).

Parents raise their children as they have been raised, which may not be good enough. It may also be true that many parents would welcome helpful guidance, as it relates to school readiness. One teacher argued, "parents need to be educated and helped" (Boyer, 1992).

For informal teaching or helping their child to be successful, parents must be aware of what their children can learn and the type of experiences which encourage learning to occur (Anderson, 1985). They must know the importance of such matters as pointing out letters from the child's name on signs and containers. In a study comparing kindergarten children's

knowledge, those who knew a lot about written language had parents who believed that it was their responsibility to seize opportunities to convey information about written language to their children (Anderson, 1985). Parents of children who had little knowledge did not share their belief.

Parents' good intentions or lack of knowledge is not good enough for the child if their children are to have a good foundation required for a successful school experience. Parents need to be informed and then put their knowledge and good intentions into practice.

Educators can play an important part in involving parents who lack a strong educational background or have feelings of inadequacy, by providing specific suggestions for the parents. This guideline should include simply written, easy to understand suggestions and activities for parents. (Resh & Wilson, 1990).

Emergent Literacy Vs Reading Readiness.

Reading readiness programs which became so firmly entrenched during the 1960's remains prevalent in the 1980's.

Since these skills were generally thought to be acquired as part of school learning, researchers rarely considered children's knowledge prior to school entry. (Teale & Salzby, 1986).

Recent research has shown that young children come to kindergarten with vast knowledge about reading and writing.

This research describes the early stages of literacy development in terms of "emergent literacy"--a concept that differs from traditional beliefs about reading and writing readiness (Freeman & Hatch, 1989).

The recent shift from the "reading readiness" paradigm to a description of the "emergent literacy" process has led to the new appreciation of the important language knowledge that young children bring to formal reading instruction. The relationship between oral and written language is one of the critical concepts of emerging literacy (Roberts, 1992).

Theory and research within the past five years have provided new insights into how children develop as readers and writers. Evidence now exists indicating that (1) young children begin the process of literacy development before they enter school, (2) reading and writing develop concurrently and in an interrelated manner, (3) literacy develops in everyday activities, and (4) children learn about literacy through interaction with their world (Freeman & Hatch, 1989). Literacy development is part of the total communication process that includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Theorists point out that children develop an awareness that written language makes sense and come to know the function as well as the forms of written language (Goodman, 1986).

Several assumptions underlie this new body of theory and research. First, children are viewed as active constructors of language, who acquire literacy in a developmental process. Second, literacy activities are meaning-based with an emphasis on the functions and social uses of written language. Third, literacy develops within a social context and is influenced by children's social interaction with others and with the world around them. This body of research has been discussed under the theoretical framework of emergent literacy, a construct that differs drastically from the traditional paradigm of reading readiness (Goodman, 1986).

Alternatively, reading readiness assumes the existence of a set of skills that are necessary prerequisites to formal reading instruction. Reading is viewed as a process distinct from writing. These reading skills, which are charted sequentially, can be learned through direct instruction, and then assessed by formal testing.

Examples of specific types of reading readiness skills include auditory, memory, rhyming, letter recognition, visual matching, listening skills, sound-letter correspondence, initial consonant sounds, visual and auditory discrimination. Most of these reading readiness skills are found and evaluated on kindergarten report cards across the country (Freeman & Hatch, 1989). Such practices fail to build on or take

advantage of young children's emergent literacy and beginning reading instruction.

According to the research done by Holdaway (1979) reading instruction in the United States has long been overly focused on skills. Skills are important, but their usage needs to be strategic children's literature, with its open-ended possibilities, meaningful text, and rich language-provided natural opportunities for moving beyond skills development to developing reading strategies and for affirming reading as a process of getting meaning from print.

According to Holdaway (1979) the major difference between a "skill" and a "strategy" is the coordinating control of a human mind overrating impurposely, predictive self-correcting way. In skills teaching the teacher tells the learner what to do and then corrects the response. In strategy teaching the teacher induces the learner to behave in an appropriate way and encourages the learner to confirm or correct his own responses (Holdaway, 1979).

Teale and Salzby (1986) discuss the differences between emergent literacy and reading readiness. An emergent literacy perspective recognizes that children begin literacy development long before entering school as the child interacts in the home and community. Young children develop as readers/writers. Emergent literacy theorists advocate that the two processes should not be taught separately. Instead of

following a preset sequence of skills, children are in the process of becoming literate from a very young age and therefore are not "getting ready to do it." Hall (1987) notes that the term "emergent" suggests that "development takes place from within the child." Emergence is a gradual process, which takes place over time.

Morrow (1991) notes relationships between beginning kindergartners levels of play and their emergence into reading, writing, and language. He found that "symbolic play," which demands higher levels of cognitive involvement, predicted higher scores on standardized tests. Dramatic play has been shown to improve story comprehension and production, possibly because children improve their understanding of story structure by creating episodes which, in turn, help them recall and produce narratives.

Observations of children at play have pointed out functional uses of literacy skills which children incorporate into their play themes. Morrow (1991) observed and described a range of literacy-related behaviors during children's play such as paper handling, storytelling, and early attempts at reading and writing. Literacy development in young children often occurs within the context of play. Play is an ideal setting which allows the young child to practice, elaborate and extend emergent literacy abilities. Morrow (1990) concluded that pre-school and kindergarten children are likely

to engage in more voluntary literacy behaviors during free-play periods when literacy materials are introduced and used.

In an interview study to determine parents' perceptions of how reading and writing develop in kindergarten children, researchers found that many parents believed that reading develops through check-point, systematic skills-based instruction (Bruneau, Rasinski & Ambrose, 1990). Although the interviewed parents were pleased with their children's excitement and enthusiasm for books which was emphasized in their child's whole language kindergarten, they also expressed concern for what they perceived as a lack of attention to necessary systematic skills development (Bruneau, Rasinski & Ambrose, 1990).

Academic Vs Developmental Kindergarten.

The appropriateness of focusing on preparation for alternative academic tasks is still a complex and debatable issue (Carnine, 1988). The fundamental question concerns whether the child should be fitted around the curriculum or the curriculum fitted to the child. The implicit goals of each grade level, including kindergarten, is to prepare children for the academic tasks at the next level (Day, 1988).

All parents, as well as kindergarten teachers, need to be aware of the research that shows that most young children come to school with a great deal of knowledge about reading and writing that is learned through everyday activities carried

out each day in their environment (Freeman & Hatch, 1989). Through the guidance of a parent handbook on emergent literacy and by emphasizing its importance, it may help change the parental philosophies regarding the presentation of what type of programs are best suited for the young child.

Although prevailing practices indicate the actual purpose of kindergarten is to prepare children for first grade, prevailing developmental theory (Bredekamp, 1986) indicates that such a purpose is inappropriate and counterproductive (Bredekamp, 1986). Three of the basic tenets of child development research and practice are that (1) children grow and develop at unique individual rates that are often unrelated to chronological age, (2) four- and five-year-old children learn best through doing, through direct, immediate involvement with the environment, and through sensory input of observation, manipulation and experience, (3) four- and five-year-old children are experiencing rapid and important growth in many developmental areas, including the cognitive/intellectual, psychosocial, and physical-motor domains. "In a position statement on programs for four- and five-year-old's the National Association for the Education of Young Children (Bredekamp, 1986) suggested that the degree to which the program is based on principles of child development is a major determinant of program quality."

NAEYC list several implications of these principles for curriculum goals and teaching methods. These are as follows:

- (1) appropriate curricula stimulate learning in all developmental areas: physical, social, emotional, and cognitive. Inappropriate curricula narrowly focus on cognitive development without recognizing and supporting the interactive relationship among all areas of development,
- (2) appropriate curricula respond to individual differences in ability, interests, development and learning styles. Inappropriate curricula expect all children to achieve the same narrowly defined skills within the same time frame, and
- (3) appropriate programs offer children the choice of many learning activities. Children learn through active exploration and interaction with adults and other children. They are provided with concrete learning activities that are relevant to their own life experiences. They work individually or in small, informal groups. In appropriate programs, teachers direct almost all the activity. Children spend a large portion of their time passively sitting, listening, and waiting. Abstract learning materials such as workbooks, dittos, and flashcards dominate a curriculum that emphasizes large-group, teacher-directed instruction and rote drill and memorization.

From NAEYC's perspective, fitting four- and five-year-olds to the traditional school curriculum of preparing them

for the academic tasks of first grade, is not the appropriate purpose of kindergarten. It has been suggested that kindergarten has three important functions. The first and most important is to minister to the nature and needs of five-year-olds. The second purpose is to lay the foundation for a good start in school subjects and activities and the third purpose is to provide comprehensive assistance with children's medical, nutritional, and psychological needs. Educators must focus on all three functions instead of on narrowly defined academic competencies (Hill, 1987).

A real difference exists in articulated goals: developmental programs explicitly focus on the "whole child," whereas academic explicitly focus on cognitive and academic skills. Regardless of the purpose of a kindergarten program, the children involved are actually learning and developing in many areas, and the child's kindergarten experience and learning environment make an impact on that development (Day, 1986). Research on the efficacy of academic and developmentally focused programs indicates that both types can produce significant gains in IQ score, academic achievement, and general school success (Gersten & Keating, 1987).

Kindergarten programs should incorporate academic content and skill development within a framework of individually appropriate experimental activities that provide opportunities to grow in all the important developmental areas. Such a

program will result in both academic success and joy in learning (Day, 1988).

Summary.

From the review of the literature, research overwhelmingly supports the need for parent involvement in the young child's pre-kindergarten years. Research is now showing a need for the parents to be aware of the importance of literacy in the home over reading readiness.

The new paradigm is encouraging a shift from reading readiness to an emergent literacy type of program in preschools and kindergartens. Research supports the developmental approach rather than the academic approach to kindergarten. Still today, many of our schools are still educating students in an inappropriate way.

Educators need to take a look at the present research on the way children learn best and implement it into their early childhood programs on the elementary schools sites. Parents need up-dated guidelines on what is important in helping the child before entering the school system, so that they will become successful learners.

The Handbook on Emergent Literacy for the Preschool Parent developed in this project will help parents to perform many of the tasks to help prepare their child for kindergarten. This information provided in this handbook will include: a) definition of emergent literacy, b) list the

advantages of this type of learning, c) activities that can be carried out with the child, and d) recommended ways for parents to carry out these activities with their child.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, and LIMITATIONS

The goal of the parent handbook for pre-kindergarten parents is to give direction to these parents in areas of learning that would be of benefit in helping their child before entering kindergarten and to make the transition easier and more successful. When a child is ready for kindergarten, it can be a wonderful experience that makes them feel good about themselves, good about school, and eager to learn.

The first objective of the handbook will be to provide parents with a better understanding of emergent literacy and how it is more beneficial for their child than just pre-reading activities. Many times young children are not ready for the activities involving paper and pencil, flashcards, and rote-memorization that are often associated with pre-reading techniques.

The next objective is to demonstrate to parents ways of teaching their child at home or anywhere else, utilizing common everyday learning situations.

The last objective is to ultimately have parent-child interaction. The handbook will stress the importance of this interaction such as reading orally to the child. It is important for the parent to know that the child learns best from simple everyday experiences. Many parents have not

experienced this type of learning, so they have not realized this can be an effective method of learning for their child.

Several limiting factors have been identified and must be considered when evaluating the proposed project. They include:

- 1) Success will be limited by the amount of parental enthusiasm and desire for their child to succeed.
- 2) Results will be limited by the developmental stage of each particular child.
- 3) Handbook effectiveness will be directly influenced by the quality of the learning environment.

DESIGN OF PROJECT

A questionnaire was developed for kindergarten teachers located in a suburban area in Southern California. The purpose of the questionnaire was find out what skills or activities other kindergarten teachers feel are of most importance before entering kindergarten. A second purpose of the questionnaire was find out whether their program is a whole language program or pre-reading-skills-based program. After the questionnaire was distributed and collected, the results were evaluated. Based on the results of the questionnaire and review of the literature, the areas are listed that should be included in the handbook.

The next phase was to develop a parent handbook, based on information gained from handbooks used by various schools in a radius of twenty miles, teachers response from the questionnaire, review of the literature, and this teacher's years of kindergarten experience. The handbook will begin by explaining to the parents how early childhood education is shifting from the pre-reading skills, which is the way many of them were taught, to the whole language or "emergent literacy" program which is being used in many kindergarten programs today.

The following sections are included: (1) how children ages three through five grow and learn, (2) parent tips on

assisting the preschooler in the areas of pre-reading and writing, (3) importance of reading aloud, (4) recommended read-aloud book list, reference resources, and children's magazines, and (5) sampling of nursery rhymes, familiar fairy tales, and predictable books with parent-child extension activities.

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Appendix A

Introduction to: Parent Handbook on Emergent Literacy for the Preschool Parent

This project is designed as an informational guideline for parents of preschool children. Its design is meant to be a simple, but effective, method of carrying out everyday activities with the child's environment that will enhance their knowledge and better prepare him/her for the successful school experience. Parents are encouraged to use the information in a manner most beneficial for their child. Both child and parent will derive more from the suggested activities if both parties find the experience enjoyable. Choose activities and reading materials that both parent and child will enjoy exploring together.

Changing Language Arts Curriculum.

The California Department of Education has developed a new language arts curriculum. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing should not be treated as separate subjects. Researchers show that readiness skills should not be taught in isolation.

How Three- Thru Five-Year-Olds Grow and Learn

Parents are the child's first teacher. They need to know what is expected at different stages of the young child's life. One of the best things they can do for their child is to learn how their child will grow and change as they go thru the various stages of childhood. Children should be given

every chance to engage in worthwhile activities that are age appropriate. The parent/child relationship that is developed at a young age will make a difference throughout both the child and parent's life. Specific examples of the three thru five year child's characteristics, the implications of these characteristics, and examples of children's literature which may assist at each stage of development are included in Appendix C.

Parent/Child Activities.

Seven skills are identified that will help children be ready to read. Simple activities are provided for parents of pre-kindergartners to help a child develop and reinforce the following skills: (1) coordination, (2) visual motor control, (3) visual perception, (4) visual memory, (5) auditory perception, (6) auditory memory, and (7) oral language production.

Reading Tips.

In this section of the handbook eleven suggested reading and writing tips are included. Parents need to explore each of the suggested recommendations and find what works best to meet their child's particular needs.

Reading Aloud to the Child.

Reading aloud is the single most important thing a parent can do for their child. The parent should begin reading to their child at a very early age. The parent should become

familiar with the do's and don'ts of reading aloud to the child.

Recommended Reading Selections.

Parents should familiarize themselves with well-known children's books, magazines, reference sources, authors, and publishers in the area of children's literature. Children and parents should make frequent outings to the public library or children's bookstores.

Getting Started: Interacting with Literature

In the final section of the project parents are provided with a synopsis of several children's literature selections. Pre-reading, reading, and post-reading activities are provided for each of the selections.

Early parent/child interaction is very important for a successful school experience. Understanding how the young child grows and learns, and then carrying out meaningful age-appropriate activities with the child will help prepare the young child for beginning kindergarten.

Appendix B

The Changing Language Arts Curriculum

The California State Department of Education has adopted a new language arts curriculum. Research has shown that readiness skills, such as letters and sounds learned in isolation, are not the optimum way to learn to read. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are four skills that should not be treated as separate subjects, but rather as different forms of the same subject: language arts.

In The Changing Language Arts Curriculum the State Department of Education states that as part of the new approach, educators and parents should work together to help students:

1) See the beauty and power of reading and writing so that the students will want to learn more.

2) Use reading to make sense of the work. In this way, students will better understand what is happening around them.

3) Clarify and communicate cultural values by sharing fine literature with others.

4) Apply language arts skills to real life situations, such as, writing a letter to grandmother.

All the uses of language-listening, speaking, reading, and writing-support each other. As stated before, the four components are learned most effectively when they are not presented as separate subjects, but are included together in the learning activities which students undertake.

Learning language in this way is sometimes referred to as "writing across the curriculum." Students write about what is read, not only in the language arts component. Speaking and reading take on greater importance as plays, speeches, and oral presentations are used in studying all areas of writing.

Students will be guided through a variety of thinking processes as the student discuss, write, dramatize, and listen to what the child is reading or being read to. Questions about what is being read or read orally to the student will be open-ended, having no right or wrong answer, with the intent of stimulating students to see various points of view and to explore their own ideas. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing will occur in contexts that have meaning for the children and that are connected to children's lives.

The kindergarten program has made a major shift from reading readiness to a whole language or emergent literacy type program. In this type of learning environment children are immersed in a print-rich environment, instead of the previous isolated letter-sound, phonics worksheet type classroom. As group charts and stories are done in the whole language classroom, the students begin to understand that what is said by the students can be written down and read back to the group or individual. From these charts and stories the class can understand the purpose of stories. Together the emergent-literacy classroom not only write stories, but

letters and recipes. Other things that are written together in the classroom could include labels on objects around the classroom, and classroom rules and jobs. Many kinds of charts can be made in the classroom. Examples of these could be as follows: (1) list of ways to describe our feelings, (2) list of things to do before parties and field trips, (3) sequencing events from a story, (4) steps of a science experiment, (5) directions for a recipe, and (6) making predictions and charting the results.

Children are continually allowed the opportunity to write for themselves. A variety of paper, markers, crayons, and pencils are made available to the children.

Children enjoy making journals in the classroom. Some children try to write themselves and others ask for help or draw pictures. At least once a day a writing activity is done in journals, charts, or a class group story.

Reading aloud to the children is another important component of the new framework. A variety of books are made available in the classroom. The children are read to at least once a day. The children are given time to "read" or look at the books themselves during the day.

The main difference between the emergent literacy program and the readiness program is that the children are actively engaged in the learning process. The students see the teacher modeling the writing and reading process and then are actively

carrying out what is being modeled. The students are not filling in worksheets or drilling alphabet cards as in previous readiness curriculum.

Appendix C

How the Three Thru Five Year-Old Grows and Learns

During the preschool years, children develop at an extraordinary rate. Each day's experiences, however familiar to adults, can be fresh and exciting to curious preschoolers. Tying language to the world, what a child knows allows them to go beyond that world to explore new ideas. The ability to use language and to reason is crucial to reading achievement. Not only are there abundant opportunities for a parent to help children develop language, but these opportunities occur naturally and easily.

Parents are the child's first teachers. To be the child's best teacher, one of the most helpful things parents can do is to learn how their child will grow and change. It helps to know what can be expected of a child at each different age. Each child is an individual with a personality and temperament different from other children.

Children should be given the opportunity to do meaningful tasks in a way that is age appropriate. Parents may need to learn what children at different ages can be expected to do, and set the tasks accordingly. The tasks should have value to the child. The way parents teach the child establishes the all-important relationship--the parent-child connection--that will be with the child and parent throughout life.

Parents may greatly benefit through the following information provided in the text, Children's Literature in the

Elementary School (Charlotte Huck, 1989). This research is based on children ages 3, 4, & 5 and provides specific examples of the child's characteristics, the implications of these characteristics, and examples of children's literature which may assist at each stage of development.

BOOKS FOR AGES AND STAGES
Preschool and Kindergarten - Ages 3, 4, & 5

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Implications</u>	<u>Examples</u>
Rapid development of language.	Interest in words, enjoyment of rhymes, nonsense, and repetition and cumulative tales. Enjoys retelling simple folktales and "reading" stories from books without words.	Random House Book of Mother Goose , Lobel Is Your Mama a Llama? , Guatino Roll Over! , Gerstein Mr. Guppy's Outing , Burningham Millions of Cats , Gag The Three Bears , Rockwell Sunshine , Ormerod
Very active, short attention span.	Requires books that can be completed in one sitting. Enjoys participation such as naming, pointing, singing, and identifying hidden pictures. Should have a chance to hear stories several times each day.	Eating the Alphabet , Ehlert The Very Hungry Caterpillar , Carle Each Peach Pear Plum , Ahlberg The Wheels on the Bus , Zelinsky Have You Seen My Duckling? , Tafuri Over in the Meadow , Langstaff

Characteristics

Child is center of own world. Interest behavior, and thinking are egocentric.

Curious about own world.

Beginning interest in how things work and the wider world.

Building concepts through many firsthand experiences.

Child has little sense of time. Time is "before now," "now," and "not yet."

Implications

Like characters that are easy to identify with. Normally sees only one point of view.

Enjoys stories about everyday experiences, pets, playthings, home, people in the immediate environment.

Books feed curiosity and introduce new topics.

Books extend and reinforce child's developing concepts.

Books can help children begin to understand the sequence of time.

Examples

Noisy Nora, Wells
Fix-it, McPhail
Where Is Ben?, Russo
A Baby Sister for Francis, Hoban, R.

The Snowy Day, Keats
Pancakes, Pancakes, Carle
Jesse's Daycare, Valens
Building a House, Barton
Trucks, Rockwell

My Visit to the Dinosaurs, Aliko
I Want to Be an Astronaut, Barton
Is This a House for a Hermit Crab?, McDonald
An Octopus Is Amazing, Lauber

Feathers for Lunch, Ehlert
Freight Train, Crews
I Read Signs, Hoban, T.
Trucks, Gibbons
26 Letters and 99 Cents, Hoban, T.

When You Were a Baby, Jonas
A Year of Beasts, Wolff
The Little House, Burton
Time To..., McMillan

Characteristics

Child learns through imaginative play; make-believe world of talking animals and magic seems very real.

Seeks warmth and security in relationships with family and others.

Beginning to assert independence. Takes delight in own accomplishments.

Makes absolute judgments about right and wrong.

Implications

Enjoys stories that involve imaginative play. Likes personification of toys and animals.

Likes to hear stories that provide reassurance. Bedtime stories and other read-aloud rituals provide positive literature experiences.

Books can reflect emotions. Enjoys stories where small characters show initiative.

Expects bad behavior to be punished and good behavior rewarded. Requires poetic justice and happy endings.

Examples

Martin's Hat,
Blos
May I Bring a Friend?,
DeRegniers
We're Going on a Bear Hunt, Rosen
Corduroy, Freeman

The Runaway Bunny,
Brown
Some Things Go Together, Zolotow
Little Bear,
Minarik
Ten, Nine, Eight,
Bang
Julius, the Baby of the World, Henkes

Will I Have a Friend, Cohen, M.
I Hate to Go to Bed, Barrett
Alfie Gets in First, Hughes
Titch, Hutchins
Flap Your Wings and Try, Pomerantz

The Three Billy Goats Gruff,
Asbjornsen and Moe
The Little Red Hen,
Galdone
The Tale of Peter Rabbit, Potter
Maxi, the Hero,
Barracca
Babushka's Doll,
Polacco

This information is only a guideline. Parents need to remember that each child develops at his/her own pace. When a parent tries a new pre-reading activity and the child joins in enthusiastically and successfully the child is ready. If the child does not want to try, the child is probably not ready yet. The parent needs to try again after the child has had a chance to mature a little more. It is important not to push a child who is not ready to read.

Appendix D

Parent/Child Activities: Steps to Reading

Seven skills have been identified in order to help children be ready to read. Simple activities are provided for parents of preschoolers to help a child develop and reinforce each skill (Foremaster, 1985).

DEVELOPMENTAL SKILL #1 - COORDINATION

The ability to move one's body in a controlled manner--walking, hopping, jumping, skipping, balancing.

Activities:

1. Let the child crawl over, under, and around chairs or tables.
2. When you are on walks with the child, ask the child to walk backwards or sideways.
3. Face the child, then hold hands and jump together while counting to ten.
4. With the child, practice walking along a line. Then practice it with eyes closed.

DEVELOPMENTAL SKILL #2 - VISUAL MOTOR CONTROL

The ability to control movements of small muscles--cutting, stringing beads, copying shapes and letters, and forming sequences.

Activities:

1. Have the child make scrap pictures from material, string, buttons, beads, shells--anything lying around.
2. Tracking, to follow where attention is directed, is an important skill. While the child sits in one place, name objects in the room. Have the child look at each object and then look back to the adult.
3. Draw a circle, square, and triangle on a piece of paper. Have the child copy the shapes with a pencil or with a piece of string.
4. Practice playing "drop the clothespin" into a milk bottle or carton with the child. Make it into a fun game.

DEVELOPMENTAL SKILL #3 - VISUAL PERCEPTION

The ability to match colors, shapes, sizes, letter forms, and words.

Activities:

1. Place some objects, such as buttons or blocks, on the floor. Have the child arrange them according to size and color.
2. Play "I spy something yellow." Have the child guess what it is.

3. Play "smaller but larger." Example: find something smaller than your head but larger than your hand. Then have the child take a turn doing the same.
4. Make two sets of numbers on cards. Have the child match the numbers.

DEVELOPMENTAL SKILL #4 - VISUAL MEMORY

The ability to reproduce letters or other objects from memory.

Activities:

1. In the car, have the child look at license plates and try to repeat the letters or numbers on them.
2. Arrange three shapes in a certain order. Mix them up and have the child arrange them in the original order.
3. Have the child name a row of objects from left to right. Then have the child close his or her eyes and do the same.
4. Play "What's Missing" with a collection of things on the floor. Take turns closing your eyes while one person removes something. Tell what's missing.

DEVELOPMENTAL SKILL #5 - AUDITORY PERCEPTION

The ability to identify common sounds, hear the difference between words, match beginning and ending sounds, and make rhyming sounds.

Activities:

1. Listen for sounds. Have the child point out where the sound is coming from.
2. Have the child cover his eyes. Ask the child to uncover them each time he or she hears you clap.
3. Say four words, three with the same beginning sound and one with a different sound. Have the child name the different one. Example: some, sun, see, boat.
4. Say two words which rhyme and have the child say as many as he can. Nonsense words are fine.

DEVELOPMENTAL SKILL #6 - AUDITORY MEMORY

The ability to hear and recall sounds, and to respond to directions.

Activities:

1. Give the child two simple directions to follow. Example: go to the door and then bring me the newspaper. Make the directions more complicated as the child is successful. (This can be difficult for child who is easily distracted.)
2. Give the child three crayons. Call out the colors and have the child arrange the crayons in that order.
3. Make up a sentence and have the child repeat it word for word.

4. Play "I Went To New York." You say, "I went to New York and I took a doll." The child says, "I went to New York and I took a doll and a" Each person adds an object, then the next person says the whole sentence and adds yet another object.

DEVELOPMENTAL SKILL #7 - ORAL LANGUAGE PRODUCTION

The ability to express oneself verbally.

Activities:

1. Ask the child to retell a story you have read together, in the child's own words.
2. Use a play or pretend telephone. Call the child and have a conversation.
3. Put something in a sack. Ask the child to reach in and feel it and describe what he or she feels. Example: "It's soft, it's round, and it's big" (a stuffed ball).
4. After the child has watched a TV program, ask the child to describe what happened.

Appendix E

Reading and Writing Tips

The following is a suggested list of reading and writing tips. Parents should feel free to explore and find out what works well for the child's particular needs.

- 1) When the child is learning to read, try labeling household objects with the names printed in bold letters on masking tape, encourage the reading of signs, posters, everything.
- 2) Hang up a chalkboard on which to write or draw messages. Have a family bulletin board, too, and occasionally pin up cartoons the child will enjoy.
- 3) Casually leave "irresistible" books around--books on whatever the child's current interest is.
- 4) Begin talking to children from infancy. Make sounds, call attention to sounds and connect them with objects and events. Talk to the child and explain activities as each is performed. Parents should listen and encourage conversation. Listening games should be played with children. A good bedtime game is to listen quietly and identify as many sounds as possible. Listening attentively is essential in learning.
- 5) Search out the better television programs for children. Public television provides a large variety of educational programming. Parents should

take the opportunity to watch some of the programs with the child. Afterwards, the program should be discussed with the child. The parent should be prepared to answer any questions the child might have.

- 6) Write notes and letters to children. Encourage a written reply. Give praise for all efforts in writing.
- 7) Show children how printed language is related to life all around, in the supermarket, in the car, and in the kitchen. Read simple things to them from the newspaper, magazines, signs, labels on food cans, and even cereal boxes. This shows them how important it is to know how to read.
- 8) Make sure writing materials are available. Scribbles are like early babbling and first words. Children play with writing, explore it and experiment with it. Some materials that parents might have on hand are chalk and chalkboards, felt pens, watercolor markers, crayons, pencils, and scratch paper stapled together to make a writing pad.
- 9) Encourage your child to write and respond to the meaning of what he writes, not the form. Even if

the adult can not read it, have the child write and tell the adult the meaning of the scribbles.

- 10) Makes sure children see adults modeling writing. When parents have a reason to do some writing, suggest the child do some writing at the same time and for the same reasons as the parent is. Some suggestions are: 1) notes to parents, letters to relatives, a list of things to do for the day, birthday cards, shopping list, a story, or a reminder to go on the refrigerator or bulletin board.
- 11) Parents should take advantage of teachable moments. Doing the laundry with the child can help develop concepts and language. An example of this would be talking about colors.

"Let's put all the same color in a pile. Here is a red sock, here is a red shirt, here are red pajamas, and a red apron. Is this sock red? No, it is blue. Let's find something else blue. Here is a blue dress. Is there something else blue? That is not far from blue, it is green. Here is a green shirt. We will put the green things in a separate pile. Do you have on something that would go on one of these piles? Yes, your pants are blue. We do not have a pile that matches your shirt. It is brown. Maybe next time we can make a brown pile."

Appendix F

Reading Aloud to the Child

While connecting experiences to language is an important foundation for learning to read, giving children direct contact with books is equally important. The Commission on Reading states that "the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children." (BNR, p. 23)

Children should be read to often. Make a pleasant experience of the event, making sure the sessions are relaxed and unhurried. Let the child choose a favorite story and explain pictures and answer questions about it.

Children should be provided with a wide range of reading materials. Besides regular children's books, read aloud from higher level books, magazines, newspapers, and advertisements. The child will begin to recognize the fact that the printed word is a part of everyday life. Books can convey suspense, interesting information and amusement. Set a good example by reading in the child's presence, thus establishing the idea that reading is an enjoyable and rewarding activity.

Reading stories to children can teach the child:

1. There are interesting things inside books.
2. To use their imagination.
3. That words make us think about things.

4. That words can give us pictures that can be visualized in the head.
5. Stories can give children ideas that had not been thought of without the aid of the book.
6. Words and ideas can be written down.
7. Marks on paper stands for the sounds and words we use.
8. The words in the story are written down using letters.

Reading stories to children also teaches the important things about pictures, and how they are used in books to stand for real things in real life.

Reading aloud to children stimulates the child's interest, emotional development, and imagination. There is also a fourth area which is stimulated by reading aloud and it is particularly vital in today's world--it is the child's language. Children will speak the language primarily as they hear it, whether from television commercials, street jargon, or slang.

The words of literature, as opposed to the electronic media, offer a wealth of language for children to see. Good literature is precise, intelligent, colorful, sensitive, and rich in meaning; it offers the child the best hope of expressing what the child feels. Parents can be an

essential part of the child's life through the joy of reading aloud.

Some "THINGS" To Remember:

1. Begin reading to children as soon as possible. The younger the child is when the adult starts the better.
2. Use Mother Goose rhymes and songs to stimulate the infant's language. Simple but boldly drawn picture books will help arouse the child's sense of sight and curiosity.
3. Read as often as the adult and the child have time for.
4. Remember that the art of listening is an acquired one. It must be taught and cultivated gradually-it doesn't happen overnight.
5. Set aside at least one traditional time each day for a story-e.g., before bed.
6. Start with picture books and build to storybooks and novels; vary the length and subject matter of your readings.
7. Follow through with the reading. If a parent starts a book, it is the parent's responsibility to continue it-unless it turns out to be a bad choice.
8. Avoid long descriptive passages until the child's imagination and attention span are capable of

handling them. There is nothing wrong with shortening or eliminating an overly long passage. (Pre-reading a selection will help do this.)

9. Allow time for discussion after reading a story. Thoughts, hopes, fears, and discoveries are aroused by books. Allow these to surface and help the child deal with them.
10. Reluctant readers or especially active children frequently find it difficult to just sit and listen. Paper, crayons, and pencils allow them to keep their hands busy while listening.
11. Fathers should make an extra effort to read to the children. Young boys often associate reading or schoolwork with women, so a father's early involvement with books and reading can do much to elevate books in a boy's estimation.

Some "DO'S" especially for the reader--

1. Do remember that reading aloud comes naturally to very few people. To do it successfully and with ~~ease~~ the reader must practice.
2. Do use plenty of expression when reading. If possible, change the tone of voice to fit the dialogue.
3. Do adjust the pace to fit the story. During a suspenseful part, slow down, draw your words out,

bring the listeners to the edge of the chair. The most common mistake in reading aloud is reading too fast. Read slowly enough for the child to draw a mental picture.

4. Read stories that are enjoyable. Your enjoyment will show in the reading.

Some "DON'TS" to Remember:

1. Do not continue reading a book once it is obvious that it was a poor choice.
2. Do not read above a child's emotional level.
3. Consider the intellectual, social, and emotional level of the audience. Challenge the child but do not overwhelm the child being read to.
4. Do not be fooled by awards. Just because a book won an award does not guarantee that it will make a good read-aloud.
5. Do not be unnerved by questions during the reading, particularly from young children. Answer the questions, do not put the young child off. Do not rush the replies. Foster that curiosity with patient answers-then resume reading.
6. Do not use the book as a threat-"If the child does not pick up their room, no story tonight!" As soon as the child sees that the adult turned the book into

a weapon, the child will change their attitude about books from positive to negative.

7. Do not try to compete with television. If the parent say, "Which do you want, a story or television?" the child will usually choose the latter. Since the parent is in charge the parent does the choosing. "The TV goes off at 8:30 in this house. If the child wants a story before bed, that's fine. If the child does not that's fine, too. But no television after 8:30."

(Adapted from The New Read-Aloud Handbook with permission by Jim Frelease, Penguin Books, 1989)

Appendix G

Recommended Read-Aloud Books

Picture Books

- Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day, Judith Viorst. Sequel: Alexander Who Used to Be Rich Last Sunday. New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1977.
- Amelia Bedelia, Peggy Parrish. Sequels: Amelia Bedelia and the Surprise Shower; Come Back, Amelia Bedelia; Play Ball, Amelia Bedelia. New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1972.
- Are You My Mother?, P. D. Eastman. Random House, 1960.
- Ask Mister Bear, Marjorie Flack. Macmillian, 1986.
- Bedtime for Frances, Russell Hoban. Sequels: A Baby Sitter for Frances; Best Friends for Frances; A Birthday for Frances; Bread and Jam for Frances. New York: Harper & Row, 1960.
- Blueberries for Sal, Robert McCloskey. New York: Viking, 1948.
- Brown, Brown Bear, What Do You See?, Bill Martin Jr. Holt, 1983.
- The Cake That Mack Ate, Rose Robart. Atlantic, 1986.
- Chicken Soup With Rice, Maurice Sendak. Harper, 1962.
- Do You Want To Be My Friend?, Eric Carle. Putnam, 1971.
- Drummer Hoff, Ed Emberly. Prentice-Hall, 1967.
- The Elephant and the Bad Boy, Elfrida Vipoint, Putnam, 1986.
- Fat Mouse, Harry Stevens. Viking, 1987.
- Frog and Toad Are Friends, Arnold Lobel. Sequels: Days with Frog and Toad; Frog and Toad All Year, Frog and Toad Together. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.
- Goodnight Moon, Margaret Wise Brown. Harper, 1947.
- The Gingerbread Boy, Paul Galdone. Clarion, 1975.
- The Gummywolf, A Delaney. Bradbury, 1987.

Harry The Dirty Dog, Gene Zion. Sequels: Harry and the Lady Next Door; Harry by the Sea; No Roses for Harry.

Hattie and the Fox, Mem Fox. Bradbury, 1987.

Henny Penny, Paul Galdone. Clarion, 1968.

The House That Jack Built, Rodney Peppe. Delacorte, 1985.

It Looked Like Spilt Milk, Charles Shaw. Harper, 1947.

The Little Engine That Could, Watty Piper. New York: Platt & Munk, 1930.

Over in the Meadow, Olive Wadsworth. Viking, 1985.

The Teeny Tiny Woman, Barbara Seuling. Puffin, 1978.

The Three Little Pigs, Paul Galdone. Clarion, 1970.

The Wheels on the Bus, Maryann Kovalski Little. Brown, 1987.

This Old Man: The Counting Song, Robin Koontz. Dodd, Mead, 1988.

Three Blind Mice, John Ivimey. Clarion, 1987.

Where the Wild Things Are, Maruice Sendak. Others: The Nutshell Library. New York: Harper & Row, 1963.

Wordless Books

- Ah-choo!, Mercer Mayer. Dial, 1976.
- The Bear and the Fly, Paula Winter. Crown, 1976.
- A Birthday Wish, Ed Emberley, Little, Brown, 1977.
- A Boy, a Dog, and a Frog, Mercer Mayer. Dial, 1967.
- Do you want to be My friend?, Eric Carle. Crowell, 1971.
- The Great Escape. Philippe Dupasquier. Houghton-Mifflin, 1988.
- Little Red Riding Hood. John Goodall. Atheneum, 1988.
- One Frog Too Many, Mercer Mayer. Dial, 1975
- Paddy to the Rescue, John Goodall. Atheneum, 1985
- Rosie's Walk, Pat Hutchins. Macmillan, 1968.
- The Silver Pony, Lynn Ward. Houghton-Mifflin, 1973.
- The Snowman, Raymond Briggs. Random, 1978.

Reference Resources

Do Animals Dream?, Joyce Pope. Viking, 1986.

How The Human Body Works?, Giovanni Caselli. Grosset, 1987.

The Kid's Question and Answer Book, By editors of "Owl Magazine." Grosset, 1988.

Life Through The Ages, Giovanni Caselli. Grosset, 1987.

Children's Magazines

Children's Playmate

1100 Waterway Blvd.
P. O. Box 567
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Child's Life

1100 Waterway Blvd.
P. O. Box 567
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Highlights for Children

P. O. Box 269
Colombus, OH 43272-0002

Humpty Dumpty

1100 Waterway Blvd.
P. O. Box 567
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Jack and Jill

1100 Waterway Blvd.
P. O. Box 567
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Stork

1100 Waterway Blvd.
P. O. Box 567
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Street Magazine

P. O. Box 52000
Boulder, CO 80301-2000

Turtle Sesame

1100 Waterway Blvd.
P. O. Box 567
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Your Big Backyard

National Wildlife Federation
1412 6th St. NW
Washington, DC 20036

(Trelease, 1989, pp. 153-157)

Appendix H

Getting Started: Interacting with Literature

Book One

Children's Book: Goodnight Moon

Author: Margaret Wise Brown

Illustrator: Clement Hurd

Synopsis: This is the story of a little rabbit who is having difficulty going to sleep and begins a ritual of saying goodnight to everyone and everything in sight. The goodnights even extends to the moon shining in the window.

Parent-Child Extensions:

Pre-reading:

Show the child the cover and read the title. Have the child identify colors, shapes, and objects inside the room and outside the windows. Have the child guess what room this is. Have the child express what feelings the girl/boy would have in a room like this.

Reading:

Have the child listen for rhyming words. The adult should point to the rhyming words as they read.

Post-reading:

1. Have the child tell the adult what else the girl/boy would say goodnight to if he/she were the bunny.
2. Ask the child who they say goodnight to.
3. Point to the pictures on the bedroom wall. Have the child tell what the pictures are about.
4. Let the child retell the story; then draw a picture of the boy/girls bedroom.

Book Two

Children's Book: Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?

Author: Bill Martin, Jr.

Synopsis: A big brown bear, yellow duck, and a blue horse are just a few of the colorful animals that are included in the pages of Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?

Parent-Child Extensions:

Pre-reading:

Cut out a variety of animal pictures from magazines. Use the pictures to stimulate a discussion about animals. For example, show a picture of a horse. Ask "Have you ever seen a real horse? What colors are horses?"

Reading:

Read the story without interruption. Read it again and ask the following questions at the appropriate time:

1. Can a bear really talk?
2. What noises does a real bear make?
3. What kind of birds are red?
4. Has the child ever tried to catch a frog?
5. How does a sheep feel when someone touches it?

6. Which animal would you like for a pet?

Post reading:

The parent or sibling could draw the pictures from the story and the child could color them the colors used in the story.

Book Three

Children's Book: The Very Hungry Caterpillar

Author: Eric Carle

Illustrator: Eric Carle

Synopsis: The story is about a tiny and very hungry caterpillar. One Sunday morning a caterpillar hatches from an egg. On Monday he eats through one apple. On Tuesday he eats through two pears. As the week goes by, the caterpillar eats more and grows bigger, until finally the caterpillar spins a cocoon. The caterpillar later emerges as a beautiful butterfly.

Parent-Child Extensions:

Pre-reading:

Before reading the story, share the pictures and talk about the four stages of a caterpillar's life cycle. Encourage a discussion by asking such questions as "What does a caterpillar come from?"

Reading:

Read the story once without interruptions. Reread it again and discuss the following questions:

1. Where did the little egg come from?
2. Why did the egg hatch on a sunny day instead of at night?

3. Is the story make-believe or could it really happen?
4. Tell what the caterpillar does that caterpillars really do.
5. Have the child tell about a time when he/she got a stomach ache from eating too much.
6. Let the child share what they think the caterpillar is doing while inside the cocoon.
7. Have the child tell if it would be more fun to be a caterpillar or a butterfly and why.

Post-reading:

Make a caterpillar puppet from a sock. Have the child retell the story to an adult or sibling.

Book Four

Children's Book: The Little Red Hen

Author: Paul Galdone

Synopsis: This story is a classic tale of a hard working hen and the three lazy animal friends. The little red hen finds some grains of wheat and plants them all by herself because her friends—a cat, dog, and a mouse, refuse to help her. After she harvests the wheat and prepares it for baking, all by herself, the hen bakes a cake. To the disappointment of her three friends, she eats all the cake—all by herself.

Parent-Child Extension:

Pre-reading:

Have the child discuss with the parent what he/she could do to help around the house. Talk with the child about how he/she would feel if only one of the family members did all the chores at home.

Reading:

Guide the child through the story and encourage critical thinking by asking the child through the following questions:

1. How does the little red hen feel when left alone to do the chores?

2. How did the little red hen's friends feel when the hen did not share the cake.
3. Should the hen have shared? Why?
4. Did the friends learn a lesson?

Post-reading:

Make a picture book of chores that boys/girls can do at home to help. Children can make stick puppets of the characters and act it out with their family.

Book Five

Children's Book: Where the Wild Things Are

Author: Maurice Sendak

Synopsis: Max, a mischievous boy is sent to his room without supper. He imagines himself in a forest by an ocean. He sails to the land of the wild things and becomes their king. But as king of all wild things, Max is lonely, so he sails back to his room to the people who love him.

Parent-Child Extension:

Pre-reading:

Before reading the story to the child, show the cover to the book and ask what they think the story is about. Have the child imagine and describe what a land with wild things might sound like.

Reading:

Read the story aloud for pleasure. Reread the story and occasionally stop and ask the following "what if" questions:

1. What would happen if boys/girls hammered a nail into a wall at home?
2. What would happen if children yelled at the mother like Max did?

3. How would a child feel if sent to bed without supper?
4. How would a young child feel if he/she met a monster with big yellow eyes?
5. If the child were king or queen of all the wild things far away from home, how would the boy/girl feel?

Post-reading:

Have the child make a wild thing puppet from a paper bag and strips of construction paper, scraps (paper bits, cotton, buttons, yarn, and feathers.)

Fairy Tales

Book Six

Children's Book: The Three Bears

Author: Fairy Tale Treasury collected by Virginia Haviland

Synopsis: The Three Bears is a well-loved tale of a father bear, mother bear, and a baby bear. One day the bears go for a walk to wait for their porridge to cool. Meanwhile, a girl named Goldilocks enters the bears' home. She tries their porridge, sits on their chairs, and tries out their beds. The bears return home to find the intruder asleep on the baby bear's bed. Goldilocks awakens, sees the bears, and flees.

Parent-Child Extension:

Pre-reading:

Introduce the story by discussing with the child if they think they could be allowed to go walking alone in the neighborhood, the park, the woods, or any other areas. Talk about why it is not safe to do this. Discuss manners that should be used when visiting other people's homes. Then tell the child they will be listening to a story about a little girl who goes for a walk alone in the woods and enters a house when the owners are not there.

Reading:

Read the story aloud for pleasure the first time. Reread the story leaving out specific words in the repetitive phrases for the child to fill in. For example, read "First she tried the porridge of the Great Big Bear. But it was _____", leaving out the words "too hot."

Post-reading:

1. Read several versions of the story and discuss the likeness and differences.
2. Ask the following critical thinking questions:
 - A. Should the bears have locked their doors? Why or why not?
 - B. How do you think the bears felt when they first noticed that someone had been in their house?
 - C. Do you think baby bear can fix his chair? Why or why not?
 - D. Should Goldilocks have run away? Why or why not?
 - E. What manners does Goldilocks need to learn?
 - F. Do you think Goldilocks will ever go into another house when people are not at home?
- 3) Make paper bag puppets of the main characters and act out the story.

Book Seven

Children's Book: Gingerbread Man

Author: Paul Galdone

Synopsis: There once was a lonely old couple who had no children. One day the old woman made a gingerbread boy. When she checked the oven, the gingerbread boy jumped out and ran away. The gingerbread boy taunted all those who saw him to try and catch him but he was too fast. A clever fox tricked him by offering him a ride across the river, but instead the fox ate him.

Parent-Child Extension:

Pre-reading:

Discuss the book cover. Predict what the story is about. Discuss the child's experiences with gingerbread cookies.

Reading:

Read the story aloud. Use vocal variation for each character the gingerbread man visits. Encourage the child to participate orally, "Run, run....."

Post-reading:

1. Make gingerbread cookies. Decorate them and eat them.

2. Children make pretend gingerbread men using playdough and cookie cutters. The children could decorate the gingerbread men from various colored playdough.

Book Eight

Children's Book: Jack and the Beanstalk

Author: Fairy Tale Treasury collected by Virginia Haviland

Synopsis: Once upon a time a poor boy named Jack swapped his only cow for some magic beans. Jack's angry mom threw the beans out the window. The next morning Jack found a huge beanstalk had grown up into the sky. Jack made several trips up the beanstalk to steal from a giant who lived up there. On his last trip, the giant tried to follow Jack down the beanstalk, but Jack chopped the beanstalk down, killing the giant when the beanstalk fell.

Parent-Child Extension:

Pre-reading:

Discuss the illustrations on the cover. How does a cow fit into the story? Do you think the story is true? Do you think the boy might have to make an important decision in the story?

Reading:

Read the story aloud to the child. Discuss how mom reacted to Jack trading the cow for beans. Discuss the characters in the story. Talk about how it would feel to have a

hen that lays golden eggs. Was Jack's mom still mad at the end of the story?

Post-reading:

1. Plant lima bean seeds in a styrofoam cup, and watch the beans grow. As it grows the child can pretend it is Jack's magic beanstalk.
2. After the plant has grown for a while, the child can use a small toy figure and act out the story of Jack and the Beanstalk.

Book Nine

Children's Book: Little Red Riding Hood

Author: Paul Galdone

Synopsis: One day while Little Red Riding Hood was taking a basket of food to her grandmother's house, she encountered a wolf. She continued her journey and after Red Riding Hood's arrival discovered that the wolf has disguised himself as grandmother. Little Red Riding Hood's cries of distress brought her father to the rescue. Grandmother was found unharmed and Little Red Riding Hood never again spoke to a wolf in the woods.

Parent-Child Extension:

Pre-reading:

Discuss the little girl on the cover of the book. Talk about why she might be wearing red clothing. Discuss where the little girl on the cover might be going and why.

Reading:

Read the story aloud with a lot of feeling and characterization. Reread it again. As the child becomes familiar with the text they can join in with you.

Post-reading:

1. Read several versions of the book.
2. Discussion between parent and child about talking to strangers.
3. Adults, child, and siblings could dress up and act out the story.
4. Make puppets of main characters and dramatize the story.
5. Cut out pictures of animals that can be found in the forest and make a booklet.
6. Make an accordion book. Take four squares of tagboard or heavy white paper. With masking tape, tape the squares together. Fold the book into an accordion shape. The child could draw scenes on to the pages in sequential order. Let the child tell the story using the picture book that was made.

Nursery Rhymes

Book Ten

Nursery Rhyme: "Hickory, Dickory, Dock!"

Author: From Mother Goose Treasury

Synopsis:

Hickory, Dickory, Dock!

Hickory, Dickory, Dock!

The mouse ran up the clock;

The clock struck one,

The mouse ran down,

Hickory, Dickory, Dock!

Parent-Child Extension:

Pre-reading:

Talk about the illustrations that are shown on the nursery rhyme. Talk with the child about their feelings concerning mice. Ask the child if one has ever been in their house.

Reading:

Read the rhyme through several times having the child repeat it after the adult. Do it all as a choral reading with the child.

Post-reading:

The child/parent could make clocks out of paper plates. The child could place the hands on 1 o'clock. A mouse could be cut out of construction paper and pasted on going up and down the clock. The children could learn songs such as "Three Blind Mice" with the child.

Nursery Rhyme: "Humpty Dumpty"

Author: From Mother Goose Treasury

Synopsis:

Humpty Dumpty

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall;
All the King's horses, all the King's men
Couldn't put Humpty Dumpty together again.

Pre-reading:

Discuss the illustration that is shown of the rhyme. Talk about why an egg might be sitting on a wall. Can eggs be put back together if they break?

Reading:

Read the nursery rhyme several times with the child. Have the child repeat it after you. As the child picks up the repetitive pattern, stop and see if the child is able to carry on with the rhyme.

Post-reading:

Cook eggs until they are hard-boiled. Color the eggs with markers. Glue on yarn hair. Add colored construction paper strip

legs and arms. Fold the legs and arms back and forth for an accordion look. Make four black circles for hands and feet.

Nursery Rhyme: "Jack and Jill"

Author: From Mother Goose Treasury

Synopsis:

Jack and Jill

Jack and Jill went up the hill,
To fetch a pail of water;
Jack fell down, and broke his crown,
And Jill came tumbling after.

Pre-reading:

Discuss illustrations that accompany the nursery rhyme. Discuss the well and why the children are getting water there instead of the sink at home. Talk about what might have caused the children to fall.

Reading:

Repeat the rhyme several times and have the child say it after you. With a pencil, tap out the rhythm of the nursery rhyme. Tap, tap, tap, tap, tap, tap, tap, Jack and Jill went up the hill, tap, tap, tap, tap, tap, tap, tap, To fetch a pail of water. Children practice the beat of the rhyme.

Variations may include clapping, snapping fingers, or stamping feet.

Post-reading

Shape a clothes hanger into an oval shape. Cover the clothes hanger with a nylon stocking. Glue on some yarn hair. Make facial features out of felt, construction paper, or material.

Appendix I

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Appendix J

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENT HANDBOOK

I am working on my Master's project for California State University - San Bernardino. My project involves developing a parent handbook for pre-kindergarten parents. Input is needed from kindergarten teachers in order to help decide what is of importance to include in the handbook.

Please evaluate the following information on a scale of one to five. (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Your kindergarten curriculum is whole-language oriented. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Your kindergarten curriculum is pre-reading oriented. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. Oral reading is important in your classroom. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. The year-round schedule has changed the way you approach your curriculum with your class. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. The information on the kindergarten report card leans toward an academic rather than a developmental program. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. The kindergarten program prepares the child for the academic requirements of reading and math that face a first grader. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. Your kindergarten program is developmental. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. Your kindergarten program is academic. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. Too much emphasis is being put on | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

academics in our kindergarten
classes today.

10. Is there a need for a parent handbook? Yes No

11. Explain briefly why you feel there is too much emphasis on academics in the kindergarten curriculum.

12. How do you feel about paper and pencil activities in kindergarten? Elaborate please.

13. What percentage of incoming students are not prepared for kindergarten?

Results of Parent Handbook Questionnaire

Fifty surveys were distributed among kindergarten teachers located in a suburban area of Southern California. Thirty-five teachers responded to the survey.

These responses provided pertinent information which guided the development of this handbook.

The survey revealed that an average of forty percent of the incoming kindergarten students were not prepared for school. Due to this large percentage, teachers overwhelmingly felt there was a need for a parent handbook.

The topics suggested by teacher response to be presented to the parents are as follows: (a) the changing language arts curriculum, (b) how children three through five grow and learn, (c) parent/child activities, (d) reading and writing tips, (e) reading aloud to the child, (f) recommended reading materials, and (g) parent activities to do with the child using literature.

The survey showed that the teachers with more years experience ran a much more academic program. The teachers who recently had graduated, and were trained in whole language were much more developmental in their approach to teaching.

Project Evaluation Form

Parent's Name: _____

School: _____

Grade Level: _____

Thank you for volunteering to field test a Parent Handbook on Emergent Literacy for the Preschool Parent. To assist in future revisions of this project, please answer the following questions as they apply to your findings.

1. How would you rate the following handbook features, on a scale of one to five? (1=not useful, 3=moderately useful, 5=often used)

General handbook information	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Changing Language Arts Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
How Three Thru Five Year-olds Grow and Learn	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Parent/Child Activities: Steps to Reading	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
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Reading and Writing Tips	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
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Reading Aloud to the Child	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
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Recommended Read-Aloud Books	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
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Getting Started: Interacting With Literature	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
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2. How would you rate the effectiveness of the handbook in the following areas:

Benefit to preschooler	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
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Preschooler enjoyment	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
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Effectiveness for parent	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
--------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	-----

Parent enjoyment	1	2	3	4	4	N/A
------------------	---	---	---	---	---	-----

Overall project usefulness	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
----------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	-----

3. How many times per week did you implement the parent tips or literacy related activities?

4. What was the average length of time spent on each parent/child activity? _____

5. Do you have further questions about any parent/child activities that are addressed in this handbook? _____

6. Did you encounter any problems with the implementation of any parent/child activities included in the handbook?

7. Do you have any suggestions or comments that would improve the usefulness of this handbook? _____
