

Teacher Checklist of Literacy Practices

This checklist presents different activities that help to foster literacy development in preschool-age children. Teachers can use this list to evaluate their own literacy practices by checking each box that applies to their classrooms and looking at unchecked boxes for additional ideas.

Oral Language and Vocabulary — the teacher:

- Chooses a theme to explore and points out vocabulary words and concepts related to that theme throughout each day
- Encourages children to share experiences, describe and plan activities, have longer conversations, and ask questions
- Helps children think and talk about books during shared read alouds. Discusses the structure of the book or story, what the book is about, and/or what happens in it
- Connects books and stories to children's lives
- Supports children in acting out stories

Phonological Awareness — the teacher:

- Displays and recites poems and nursery rhymes
- Provides listening centers for replaying books on tape or children's records
- Gives children a chance to imitate, play with, and manipulate language through poetry, nursery rhymes, and songs
- Encourages children to create and recognize rhyming words
- Teaches children to recognize beginning sounds of words and match those sounds to letters
- Calls attention to rhymes, syllables within words, and beginning sounds during book reading

Print Functions and Units — the teacher:

- Reads aloud every day
- Re-reads the same book aloud several times
- Encourages "pretend reading"
- Displays age-appropriate books where children can easily see and reach them
- Sets up large group, small group, and individual "reading" times throughout the day
- Displays charts, big books, poems, and nursery rhymes in classroom and discusses them during circle time
- Calls attention to features of books (i.e. cover, author's name, title, print directionality)
- Labels items in the classroom, at children's eye level

Writing — the teacher:

- Models writing for a variety of purposes
- Makes paper, writing, and drawing implements available to children
- Praises all children's writing efforts, including scribbling, letter-like forms, or invented spelling
- Teaches children how to form the letters of the alphabet, especially the letters in their own names
- Displays children's written names prominently in the classroom
- Includes literacy activities in play centers, including any of the following:
 - Restaurant play area has notepads so that waiters or waitresses can take orders
 - Doctor's office has prescription pad
 - Housekeeping has scrap paper for writing recipes or grocery lists
 - Post office play area has envelopes and "stamp" stickers
 - School play area has blackboard, books, paper, and writing implements

Knowledge of the Alphabet — the teacher:

- Provides alphabet toys such as magnetic letters, letter cards, or foam letters
- Posts letters of the alphabet on writing tables and on classroom walls at children's eye level
- Directs children's attention to letters of the alphabet and printed words in books and environment
- Provides access to alphabet games
- Teaches the names of the letters and the letter sounds
- Displays alphabet books at children's eye level and within easy reach
- Helps each child learn the letters in his or her name and matches the letters to sounds

General Practices — the teacher:

- Models reading and writing
- Chooses activities appropriate for each child's level of development (i.e. some children are learning how to hold a pencil while others can already practice writing their own names)

Questions?

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