

# Literacy Strategies for Littles

Susan Fischer  
M.S., CCC-SLP

Wyoming Families for Hands & Voices

Janine Cole  
Teacher of the Deaf / Outreach Supervisor  
Wyoming Department of Education

# Goal

- Participants will learn strategies to support young children with hearing, vision or dual sensory challenges, build literacy skills.
- Participants will expand their current definition of “reading” and learn “outside of the book”



# Myths

- My child is too young
- My child is too active
- I need to read the entire book for it to be meaningful
- There are appropriate times/places to read
- My child won't benefit from reading due to hearing or vision loss or cognitive level
- My child doesn't have the necessary vocabulary to comprehend books/stories

- Why Read With Your Child?
  - Develops vocabulary associated with daily routines
  - Increases imagination and creativity
  - Supports the development of receptive and expressive language
  - Associated with increased academic outcomes
  - Develops vocabulary beyond what your child experiences in daily life
  - Enhances a child's concentration
  - Creates a bond between the child and caregiver
  - Helps children develop empathy
  - Exercises your child's brain

- *Reading with children starting in infancy gives lasting literacy boost*
- *Shared book-reading that begins soon after birth may translate into higher language and vocabulary skills before elementary school*
- *Date: May 4, 2017 Source: American Academy of Pediatrics Summary: New research shows that reading books with a child beginning in early infancy can boost vocabulary and reading skills four years later, before the start of elementary school.*



# MILESTONES OF EARLY LITERACY DEVELOPMENT



## NEWBORN TO 6 MONTHS

**TALK, SING, READ, PLAY** Right from birth, babies are listening, looking, and learning. So find, and enjoy, those everyday moments when you can talk, sing, read, and play together with your baby.

	6 TO 12 MONTHS	12 TO 24 MONTHS	2 TO 3 YEARS	3 TO 4 YEARS	4 TO 5 YEARS
<b>MOTOR DEVELOPMENT</b> <i>What your child is doing</i>	holds head steady sits in lap without support grasps book, puts in mouth drops, throws book	holds and walks with book no longer puts book in mouth right away turns board book pages	learns to turn paper pages, 2 to 3 pages at a time starts to scribble	turns pages one at a time, and from left to right sits still for longer stories scribbles and draws	starts to copy letters and numbers sits still for even longer stories
<b>COMMUNICATION AND COGNITION</b> <i>What your child is saying and learning</i>	smiles, babbles, coos likes and wants your voice likes pictures of baby faces begins to say "ma", "ba", "da" responds to own name pats picture to show interest	says single words, then 2- to 4-word phrases gives book to adult to read points at pictures turns book right-side up names pictures, follows simple stories	adds 2-4 new words per day names familiar objects likes the same book again and again completes sentences and rhymes in familiar stories	recites whole phrases from books moves toward letter recognition begins to detect rhyme pretends to read to dolls and stuffed animals	can listen longer recognizes numbers, letters can retell familiar stories can make rhymes learning letter names and sounds
<b>ANTICIPATORY GUIDANCE</b> <i>What parents can do</i> <i>Ask questions and wait for your child to answer</i> <i>Read and speak in your first language</i>	talk back and forth with your baby; make eye contact cuddle, talk, sing, read, play point at and name things: nose, ball, baby, dog... follow baby's cues for "more" or "stop" play games such as "peek-a-boo" or "pat-a-cake"	smile and answer when your child speaks or points let your child help turn the pages; keep naming things use books in family routines: naptime, playtime, bedtime; on the potty; in the car, bus use books to calm or distract your child while waiting	ask "Where's the dog?" or "What is that?" be willing to read the same book again and again as you read, talk about the pictures keep using books in daily routines	ask "What happens next?" in familiar stories point out letters, numbers point out words and pictures that begin with the same sound together, make up stories about the pictures	relate the story to your child's own experiences let your child see you read ask your child to tell the story encourage writing, drawing point out the letters in your child's name
<b>WHAT TO READ</b>	board and cloth books; books with baby faces; nursery rhymes	board books; rhyming books; picture books; books that name things	rhyming books; picture books that tell stories; search and find books	picture books that tell longer stories; counting and alphabet books	fairy tales and legends; books with longer stories, fewer pictures

LET YOUR CHILD CHOOSE WHICH BOOK TO READ. FIND STORIES ABOUT THINGS YOUR CHILD LIKES.

# Creating / Supporting Optimal *Access* for the child with hearing loss

- Having a functional knowledge/understanding of your child's hearing ability is essential to knowing how to provide access
- Amplification must be worn and functioning
  - During all waking hours
- Position: Optimal: eye/ear level
- Read in a quiet environment
- Position: Seat child in the corner of couch/chair with adult on the floor directly in front of the child
- Position: Seat child in bouncy seat, highchair or play saucer & adult on the floor or in a chair directly in front of the child or child
- Position: Child on the floor & adult sitting on the floor in front of the child
- Face to Face Positioning:
  - Allows you to watch for the child's signals, follow eye gaze, recognize communication attempts
  - Allows the child access to your facial expressions, gestures, sign language and thus enhances meaning
  - \*place signs on the book, on your child's face, as well as using traditional sign language hand placement

# Creating / Supporting Optimal Access for the child with vision loss

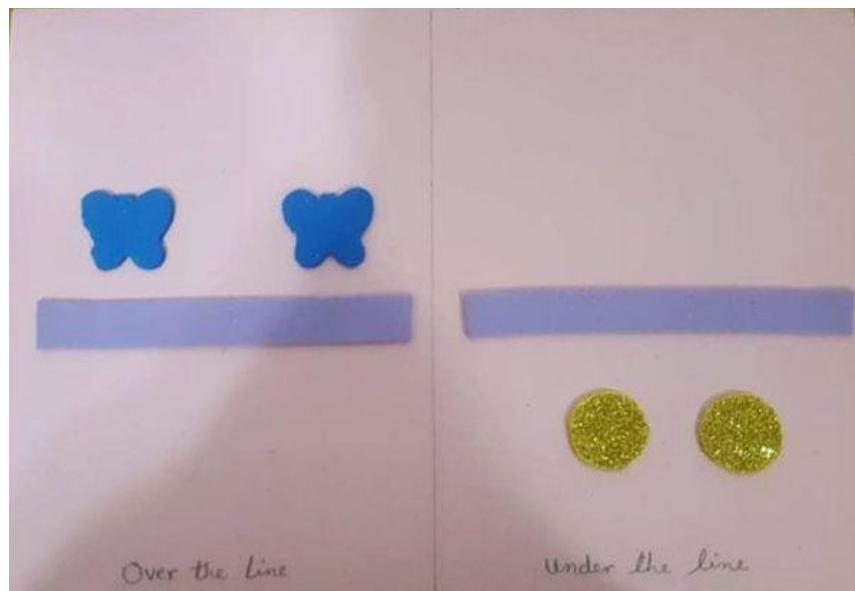
- Having a functional knowledge/understanding of your child's vision is essential to knowing how to provide access
- Use knowledge regarding the child's most effective sensory channel: (auditory, visual, tactile) to determine best way to support/provide access
- Glasses must be worn and correctly fitted
- Awareness of lighting
- Awareness of contrast
- Distraction free environment: avoid visual and auditory “clutter”
- Use knowledge regarding the child's most effective sensory channel: auditory, visual, tactile, etc. t

# Experience Books

- Keep it simple:
  - Avoid “clutter”
- Take photos of your child during daily routines, visits to the park, visits to the zoo, visits to the dentist, at the grocery store, etc.
- Make child the “star” of the book
- Let go of what it “looks like”
- Create an experience book using photos, drawings, **real** objects (when able), textures, contrast, etc.
  - Using real objects adds tactile input
  - <https://www.signingsavvy.com/sign/if>

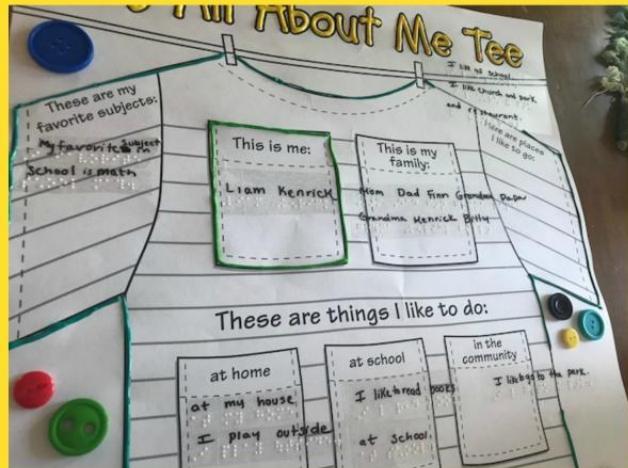
- A parent in Egypt made this tactile book of opposites for her 6-year-old son, Omar, who is a kindergarten student. The characteristics of each item have been labeled in print (e.g. long/short, soft/hard, big/little). Labels will be added as well.
- Children may enjoy helping to make this type of book or adding additional items to the book.





# Star Student

Making an Assignment  
Accessible in an  
Inclusive Setting

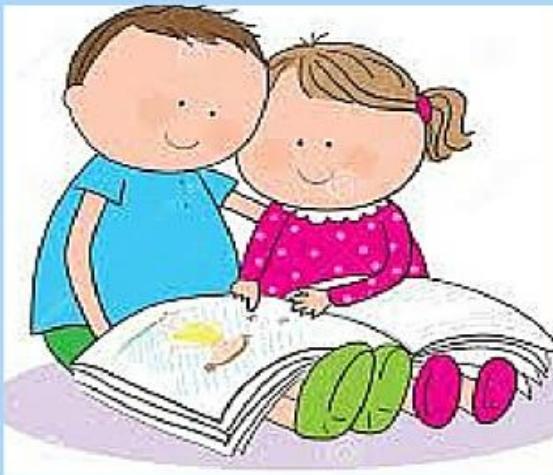


PATHS TO  
LITERACY

**Materials:**  
Star Student Poster  
Puffy Paint  
Buttons/glue  
**Braille Label Paper**



# **Make an experience book or start a daily picture journal:**



**Keep it simple! Hand drawings and stick figures wanted! Photos are great too, but not if they keep you from getting the page done!**

**Step 1: Choose an event from the day's busy schedule!**

**Step 2: Draw a picture and write a sentence to describe the event.**

**Step 3: Practice using past tense verbs to retell the events.**

**Step 4: Encourage your child to share the story with other family members or teachers.**

# Paths to Literacy Skills

- <http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/blog/teaching-literacy-skills-through-grocery-shopping>

# Story Boxes

- Collect Items Relevant to the story
  - Focus on items that are important in acting out the story
  - Look for items your child will enjoy touching/exploring
  - Use real objects if possible, especially for visually impaired child.
- Present the items to the child as you read the story
- Give ample time for your child to explore the items
- Use the items to “act out the story”



# When reading:

- How you read matters: add “expression”
  - Auditorily: intonation, stress, pitch patterns
  - Visually: facial expressions
  - Actions: read and “do”
    - Children must move their bodies and actively engage in play to integrate concepts/experiences
    - The body must feel before the brain can comprehend.  
~E. Gordon
- Stray from the text
  - Level up and level down
  - Integrate nouns, verbs, adjectives, prepositions, question forms, etc. when reading



# LITERACY EXPANSION



- Help children make the connection between their own experiences and those in the book. Use that knowledge to make predictions throughout stories.
- Allow your child to explore a new book while you wait and listen. This will encourage spontaneous language and give you a picture of your child's interests and levels.

## STRATEGIES

- Create vocal turn-taking opportunities on each page! You read a page and have your child read the next. Model appropriate sounds or labels for your child and use pause time or use an expectant look (or a toy microphone) to encourage vocal play turn-taking.

- Use acoustic highlighting while reading. Vary pitch, emphasize key words, reduce rate of speech and increase pause time.
- Remember that reading books with children often means describing the pictures with labels and actions and may not include reading the words each time.

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# Incorporate Music Into Books

- Sing, sing, sing using your own voice
- Sing at a slightly slower pace to support the child's ability to sing along
- Pause at the end of known phrases, thus affording the child an opportunity to “fill in the blank”
- Use hand movements
  - Twinkle Little Star
  - Itsy Bitsy Spider



# The “Power” of Rhyming Text

- Brain Development with Rhyming:
  - When 2 sounds are similar, they excite the same cells and their connections.
  - As these sounds are heard repeatedly, neural connections become stronger and the sounds become more easily recognized or familiar.
  - The brain then begins to distinguish between sounds that are alike and those that are different.
  - This is a process essential to phonemic awareness.
    - Wolfe and Nevills, 2004
- Phonemic awareness is essential for reading
- Incorporate books with rhyming text when possible

# Questions:

