

Language and Literacy in Early Childhood



Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS):

§130.143. Human Growth and Development (3A, 4A)

- Factors that contribute to the intellectual development of children

§130.242. Principles of Human Services (4A)

- Basic needs of children

§130.247. Child Development (1F, 4A, B and C, 5A, B, C)

- Factors that contribute to literacy and the intellectual development of children

§130.248. Child Guidance (1A, 4A, C)

- Roles and responsibilities of caregivers related to the intellectual development of children

§130.250. Practicum in Human Services (1C)

- Career paths within the human services industries

Why Early Literacy is so Important

Children who enter kindergarten with weak language skills are likely to encounter difficulty in learning to read.
Pickulski and Templeton (2004)

Early language and literacy sets the stage for future success in school. It is the foundation for success in math, science, history and other school subjects and the key to success across all the domains.

Specific language skills in early childhood are predictive of later success in learning to read and write.

Early literacy does not mean teaching young children to read. In fact, early formal reading instruction can even cause frustration and discouragement, impacting reading success in later years.

This very early move into literacy is about children learning to enjoy books, having positive interactions associated with reading, and being surrounded by a literacy rich environment. It is about positive communication with adults and peers. All of these things improve communication skills, increase vocabulary, and encourage reading.

Language and Literacy Research Highlights

Early literacy research states that:

- Language, reading, and writing skills develop at the same time and are intimately linked.
- Early literacy development is a continuous developmental process that begins in the first years of life.
- Early literacy skills develop in real life settings through positive interactions with literacy materials and other people. (Zero to Three, 2003)

phonologically aware, and to develop language skills.

Early Literacy. (2003)
www.zerotothree/brainwonders

Pickulski, J. and Templeton, S. (2004). Teaching and Developing Vocabulary: Key to long-term reading Success. Current research in reading and language arts. Houghton-Mifflin Reading.

Snow, C., Burns, S., & Griffin, P. (1998). Preventing reading difficulties in young children. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Preschool and elementary students need to have opportunities to be motivated to read, to understand the uses and functions of print, to become



STATISTICS

Children who are skilled communicators tend to be more socially adept, with fewer behavior problems.

Kaiser, A., Cai X, Hancock T, and Foster E. (2002). *Teacher reported behavior problems and language delays in boys and girls enrolled in Head Start*. *Behavioral Disorders*. 28(1):23–29.

Suggested Activities for Students to Learn about Language and Literacy in Early Childhood

Create a lending library for young children. Include, with each book, tips for reading and definitions of new vocabulary words.

Have students sit on the floor and practice read-alouds as they should be done for young children.

Have students work in groups of two and develop a list of vocabulary words to directly link to a lesson plan for young children.

Develop a list of synonyms and antonyms for commonly used words.

Check out popular children's books.

Have students present the book, doing a read-aloud, introducing new vocabulary words, and working with predictive behavior.

Teacher will bring in upper-level textbooks. Working in pairs, students will read a page to one another. How does

this feel, when the student does not know the words or the context? How might young children feel when the same thing happens to them?

“Interview” a three-to-five year old child. Ask him/her about his/her favorite book. Why is this book a favorite? If possible, bring the book to class to share.

If there are young children who can visit with their parents, invite three or four to come to the classroom. Have students do read-alouds and follow ups with the children.

Group activity: Have students divide into groups. Each group will develop a flannel board or puppet illustration to go along with a children's book. The illustration should cover the entire story and allow for questions, prediction, and follow-up.

Related Careers

The numerous careers available are dependent on level of education obtained and work experience. Examples include:

- ✓ Assistant/Associate Teacher or Aide in early childhood programs
- ✓ In-home care provider (nanny)
- ✓ Assistant/Associate Teacher or Aide working with children with special needs
- ✓ Early Intervention Assistant
- ✓ Licensed Family Child Care Provider
- ✓ Teacher in early childhood programs
- ✓ Para-educator
- ✓ Program Director
- ✓ Child Development Specialist
- ✓ Family Life Specialist
- ✓ Parent Education Teacher
- ✓ Elementary Education Teacher
- ✓ Special Education Teacher
- ✓ Reading Teacher
- ✓ Early Intervention Specialist
- ✓ Children's Librarian
- ✓ Speech Therapist
- ✓ Speech Pathologist
- ✓ Behavior Specialist
- ✓ School Psychologist
- ✓ College/University Professor

Harvard Graduate School of Education

<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/academics/masters/anglit/faq/>

U.S. Department of Labor

www.bls.gov



School age children who fall behind in reading make up the majority of the referrals for special education services.

Summary Report of the 1994 Washington Summit on Learning Disabilities.

Children whose parents talk to them more tend to have a larger vocabulary. Parents and caregivers are the most significant adults that babies interact with and to whom they communicate their needs.

Kopko, K. (2014). Research sheds light on how babies learn and develop language. Cornell University Outreach and Extension.

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