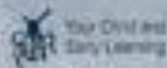


Emerging Language and Literacy in the Early Years

May 7th Bi-Annual Meeting with School Divisions

Your Child and Language and Literacy Development



- Your Child and Language and Literacy Development (2012-2013)
- Essential Learning Experiences for Three, Four, and Five Year Olds: Into Practice Booklet (2013)
- Enhancing Interactions Initiative (2011-2014)
- Responding to EYE Classroom Results (2013)
- Infant Toddler Language and Literacy Initiative (2011)
- Participation – “Government and Public Libraries Forum Early Learning Committee” (2010-2013)
- EAL Website Links

Early Years Branch Documents and Initiatives Supporting Language and Literacy Development



Reading in Kindergarten?

Literacy Practices in Kindergarten &
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

New Documents



- Inquiries from the field
- Direction from ADM to clarify Reading in Kindergarten
- Develop a statement and recommendations
- Consultation with Ministry of Education branches/units, committees, and post-secondary institutions

Background Information

What inquiries have you had in regards to literacy practices in Prekindergarten and Kindergarten?

- **Write your inquiries down** on a sticky note.
- **Share one inquiry** with the others at your table.
- **Place inquiries on the chart** paper titled Literacy Inquiries from the Field.

Play can become an important context for the discovery and exploration of reading and writing. It can provide a meaningful rich context for literacy engagement...for young children it may be the place to play with print for a purpose.
(Neuman & Roskos, 1990)



Inquiries from the Field

“Research shows that the development of play skills form the foundation of cognitive functioning which transfers to the process of learning to read...”

(Zigler & Bishop-Josef, 2006; Bodrova & Leong, 2001)

Literacy Practices in Kindergarten

In Saskatchewan, formal reading instruction begins in Grade 1. Research shows that the development of play skills forms the foundation of cognitive functioning that transfers to the process of learning to read (Zigler & Bishop-Josef, 2006; Bodrova & Leong, 2001). In Kindergarten, direct reading instruction is not appropriate and puts excessive pressure on young children that can result in disengagement, inattentiveness and frustration with literacy learning (Alliance for Childhood, 2011). The motivation or disposition to learn to read is one of the most critical factors affecting the achievement of reading competency. This disposition is a goal of Kindergarten.

In Kindergarten, children are exposed to a variety of experiences rich in language and literacy. The Kindergarten year is the emerging-experimental phase where children express their identity and make sense of their world through emerging reading and writing-like behaviours. Through careful observation and other means of informal assessment, educators must consider what their children need in the environment that will allow them to achieve the outcomes of inquiry, play-based learning (Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2010).

Foundations for Literacy Learning

Children are born literate and capable.

The foundations for literacy are built upon the first interaction that a baby has after birth – the gaze and voice of the primary caregiver. In the infant stage, babies start communicating by cooing, smiling and crying. During the toddler stage, first words are spoken and decision-making skills are being explored and developed. The preschool years are a time when oral communication is strengthened through relationships, conversations and play. By the time a child is Kindergarten age, emerging literacy skills are rapidly acquired as the child develops a deeper understanding and enjoyment of language and print.

Children need to engage in language-rich, print-rich environments.

Large blocks of uninterrupted time for inquiry, play-based learning are necessary for children to develop their language and literacy skills. Dramatic play, creative arts and project-based learning contribute to emerging reading and writing skills that progress at a pace appropriate to the child's developing skills and previous experiences. Environments reflect children's identity, language and culture. Open-ended materials, a variety of text types interspersed throughout the classroom and experiences out of the classroom are essential to providing quality, enriching environments that always keep the child and the child's perspective at the centre.

Children need oral language development opportunities and experiences in Kindergarten.

Kindergarten programs support children's language development, build vocabulary and increase conceptual knowledge resulting in higher level language skills that lead to competencies in reading and comprehension. Educators are literacy models providing rich demonstrations, interactions and shared literacy experiences. Relationships with peers and adults are essential in supporting genuine conversations enabling children to express their ideas, ask questions and offer opinions about their interests and experiences. It is essential for children to have competency in their first language. When children are learning English as an additional language, it is important for families to maintain their first language to provide fluent language models at home for children. Children's early language experiences provide a strong foundation for literacy development.

"Play can become an important context for the discovery and exploration of reading and writing. It can provide a meaningful rich context for literacy engagement. Indeed, for young children it may be the place to play with print for a purpose" (Neuman & Roskos, 1990).

Literacy Practices in Kindergarten

Key concepts from the document

“In Kindergarten, children are exposed to a variety of experiences rich in language and text types...”



The desire to know many things is what drives children to learn about reading and writing. (Dowling, 2010)

“The Kindergarten year is the emerging-experimental phase where children express their identity and make sense of their world through emerging reading and writing-like behaviors”.



“Play can become an important context for the discovery and exploration of reading and writing. It can provide a meaningful rich context for literacy engagement. Indeed, for young children it may be the place to play with print for a purpose”
(Neuman & Roskos, 1990)

- Children are born literate and capable.
- Children need language rich, print rich environments that are meaningful, relevant and developmentally appropriate.
- Children need oral language development opportunities to express ideas, and meaningful inquiry, play-based experiences in Kindergarten.
- Children need high quality shared literacy experiences and materials.
- Children need literacy approaches that build on what they already know and are infused through inquiry, play-based learning.
- Children benefit when their families are involved and engaged in exploring literacy experiences at home, in school and around the community.



Foundations for Language and Literacy Learning

- Classroom environments are language-rich and print-rich
- Approaches that promote language and literacy in holistic ways through inquiry and play
- Educators and administrators understand language and literacy development of children
- Educators are supported to implement high-quality practices and principles of emerging literacy learning and childhood development
- Families have opportunities to engage in their children's language and literacy development



Recommendations for Effective Emerging Literacy Practices

- Environments as stimulating and dynamic.



- Children as competent learners.



- Development and learning as holistic.



- Relationships as opportunities.



Principles of Early Learning

Continuum of Emerging Literacy Development

(Literacy Practices in Kindergarten, p.3)



	Infant	Toddler	Preschool/Prekindergarten/K	Grades 1, 2 and 3
Speaking	coos, babbles, cries	first words, 2 word phrases	phrases/sentences, takes turns, questions	storytells, inquires, predicts, infers, retells, reflects
Listening	rhymes, songs, music	words, phrases, conversations	various texts: rhymes, poems, songs, stories, digital media, conversations	variety of texts varied in length and purposes
Viewing	board books, environment	objects in texts & environment	names, letters, common environmental print	view books as sources of info. and for pleasure
Reading	observes illustrations	requests re-reading stories	makes up stories, explores books on own	independently reads(home & school), understands different text types
Representing	imitates, signs, gestures	scribbles, copies	draws, creates, builds, paints, sculpts, dramatizes	re-enacts, displays, creates stories both orally and written
Writing	explores writing mediums and tools		role-play writing, creates lists & cards, copies letters or writing	attaches meaning to text, interested in story structure

Some examples of the questions in the document include:

- Are children expected to be reading by the end of the Kindergarten year?
- How do I support Kindergarten children to develop the dispositions to learn about literacy?
- How should literacy and numeracy learning be approached in Kindergarten?
- How many letters and sounds should Kindergarten children acquire by the end of the school year?
- How do I respond to families' misunderstandings on skill-specific instruction and the value of inquiry, play-based learning?



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) Document



- Posting on www.curriculum.gov.sk.ca website under Teaching and Learning Materials
- Offering a one-day STF Summer Short Course
- Developing an infographic for families

Planning Forward



- **The two documents will be sent out in an email on Monday, May 12th .**
- **Please review the documents.**
- **We would appreciate your feedback and look forward to your collaboration.**

Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning to enable an individual to achieve his or her goals, to develop his or her knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in the wider society.

-UNESCO



Please feel free to contact me anytime
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