

Emergent Literacy through Storytime and Play



Strategies for Fostering Emergent Literacy Skills



3955 East Fort Lowell Road, Suite 114, Tucson, AZ 85712
Phone: (520) 721-2334 • Fax: (520) 881-0669
www.makewayforbooks.org

Emergent Literacy through Storytime and Play



The main purpose of this guide is to help educators foster the development of emergent literacy as identified in the Arizona Department of Education Early Learning Standards and Infant-Toddler Developmental Guidelines, through the use of quality children's picture books. This guide is categorized by early literacy concept. Do not be tempted to focus on only one skill before moving on to the next. These concepts should be reinforced throughout the day as opportunities present themselves. Vocabulary Development has been included as language and literacy develop simultaneously.



Vocabulary Development - *The child understands and uses increasingly complex vocabulary.* Explain new words to children when you come across ones you think they may not know. Give them opportunities to talk and listen to what they say.

Concepts of Print - *Child knows that print carries messages.* Through daily experiences with printed materials, young children delight in beginning to understand the connection between spoken and written words. They begin to follow the print as it is read aloud and start to discover that reading and writing are ways to communicate information and to provide pleasure. Children develop the understanding that different forms of print, such as signs, letters, menus, storybooks, and magazines have different functions.

Book Handling Skills - *The child demonstrates how to handle books appropriately and with care.* It is important to provide young children with many opportunities to interact with and care for books in all environments. Young children need to have access to a variety of fiction and nonfiction books throughout the day, including those that reflect diverse cultures. Through these experiences, children learn to hold books right side up and turn the pages one at a time in order to view the illustrations and to gain a sense of the story or content.

Phonological Awareness - *The child develops awareness that language can be broken into words, syllables, and smaller units of sounds (phonemes).* Young children learn to discriminate between the similarities and differences in spoken language. Such awareness is the foundation of young children's abilities to hear and discriminate different sounds in words.

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Alphabet Knowledge - *The child demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet.* Children begin to recognize some printed letters, especially those letters found in their own names. To support young learner's knowledge of letters, adults need to provide children with easy and repeated meaningful interactions with written letters and words within the context of daily experiences. Activities should be presented in fun and interesting ways that engage children.



Comprehension – *The child shows an interest in books and comprehends books read aloud with increasing text complexity.* Children gain understanding about language and reading through their interactions with verbal language, print, and daily routines. In addition, children learn about reading concepts by experiencing a learning environment rich in signs, symbols, words, numbers, and art that reflect diverse cultures. When children are read to regularly and encouraged to intentionally interact with printed materials, they develop an interest in books and other printed materials.

Infant and Toddler Development

The Arizona Department of Education has devised a set of Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines for children 0-36 months old. Within these guidelines are indicators of developing emergent literacy:

Infant-Toddler Developmental Guidelines

Infant-Toddler Developmental Guidelines	
Indicators of Developing Emergent Literacy	<i>Shows interest in songs, rhymes and stories</i>
	<i>Shows interest in photos, pictures, and drawings</i>
	<i>Develops interest in and involvement with books and other print materials</i>
	<i>Begins to recognize and understand symbols</i>

Reading Tips



We encourage everyone to read to their children every day. Research has shown that reading aloud to young children is the single most important factor in learning how to read. The main purpose of this guide is to help educators foster the development of emergent literacy as identified in the Arizona Department of Education Early Learning Standards and Infant-Toddler Developmental Guidelines, through the use of quality children's picture books. This guide is categorized by early literacy concept. Do not be tempted to focus on only one skill before moving on to the next. These concepts should be reinforced throughout the day as opportunities present themselves in all areas of your environment, with many types of books.



Be Prepared: Read each book ahead of time so you are confident while reading it aloud. Practice the storytime activities beforehand so that you can decide which activities you would like to try, what material you would like to use, or if you need to modify anything.

Getting Children Ready to Listen: Finger plays, poems, and songs are a great way to start storytime. Singing can be effective in getting children to join the storytime area. This also helps to focus the children, introduce a topic, develop fine motor skills, increase vocabulary, learn new concepts, encourage language development and provide children a sense of empowerment.

Related Books: Reading related books to children can reinforce a particular topic. These can be narrative, informational, or a combination of both. Sharing various books about similar topics help children to make connections to their own lives, experiences, and the world around them.

Repeated Interactive Reading: Repeated interactive reading is the process in which children, through multiple readings, are actively listening and responding to the text. The most effective read alouds are ones in which children are actively engaged in the process. Children are provided the opportunity to develop an understanding through questioning, prediction, connection to personal experiences, and retelling the story. A stronger connection increases the potential to expand skills such as concepts of print, alphabet knowledge, and phonological awareness.

Make the Most of Reading Aloud: Storytimes with children can take many different forms: read with a whole group, a small group of children, or one-on-one with a child. When books are available throughout the learning environment, children are encouraged to read everywhere, every day! Be ready to read at a moment's notice, and never pass up an opportunity to share a book or story with your children!

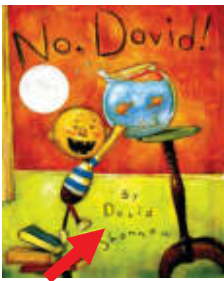
BOOK HANDLING SKILLS

The child demonstrates how to handle books appropriately and with care.

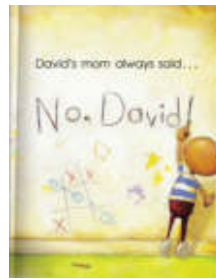


Use a puppet to engage children in learning book handling skills. Ask children to show the puppet how to hold a book, where the title is, where to begin reading, how to turn pages, etc.

Always point out the title and author of the book.



Run your finger along words as you read so children begin to learn print moves from left to right and top to bottom when reading in English.



Emphasize with children that books cannot take care of themselves. Perhaps read *The Boo Boo Book* by Joy Masoff and explain to them that books do not heal like our bodies do. If books get damaged, involve children in helping you repair them with items from your Book Hospital.



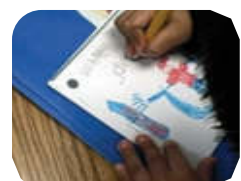
If you have books in various languages that involve different directionality while reading, talk about that with your children.

Practice page-turning with the children. Take photos of children's hands gently turning the pages. You might give children old magazines to practice page-turning.



Model how to put away a book properly by playing a game with your children. Ask children to find a book that is not put away properly (the book is sideways, upside down, backwards, not closed, or a book that's hiding somewhere in the room, etc.) and then invite them to put the books away properly.

If children write in books, give them paper to make their own books.



COMPREHENSION

The child shows an interest in books and comprehends stories read aloud.



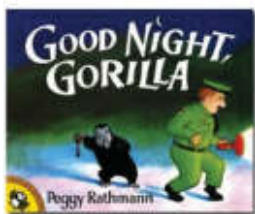
Children need repeated readings of stories. Re-read stories often to help children understand and enjoy the story.

Help children relate stories to their own life experiences.

In *Peter's Chair*, Peter shares his chair with his sister. Can you tell me about a time when you shared something?



Provide sequencing practice with felt boards and other manipulatives.



Give children opportunities to retell and act out stories. Use puppets and props.



Ask children questions about details in stories.

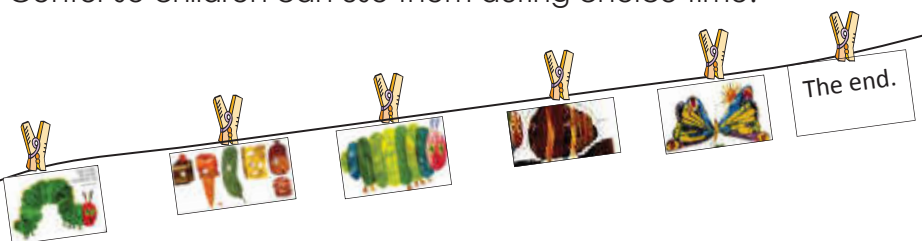
Clothesline storytelling - make simple drawings or photocopy pages that show four or five main events in a story. Include a picture and words for the title. Make another page that says, "The end." Laminate pictures or use contact paper. First retell the story, asking the children to help put the pictures in the correct order. Then have the materials ready in your Library Center so children can use them during choice time.

Mouse Paint



Ellen Stoll Walsh

At the end of the story, why did the mice leave some of the paper white?



VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

The child understands and uses increasingly complex vocabulary.



Use a puppet to engage children in learning book handling skills. Ask children to show the puppet how to hold a book, where the title is, where to begin reading, how to turn pages, etc.

Explain new words to children to foster vocabulary development. Repeat and reinforce these new words often. (Ex. Read a *Curious George* book and explain what "curious" means. Later in a different context, ask children who is curious about what they will have for snack. Tell them you are curious about different things.)



Bring in interesting things such as natural items. Provide experiences that encourage curiosity. Create a "curiosity box" where children have to reach their hand in and use their senses to describe the object in the box.

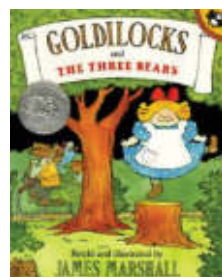


Provide opportunities for children to interact with pictures and have the chance to describe what is happening in the picture. Ask open-ended questions and expand on children's responses.



Talk frequently with children. Listen to what they have to say and encourage higher-level thinking.

How did Baby Bear feel when he found Goldilocks in his bed? What would you do if you found her in your bed?

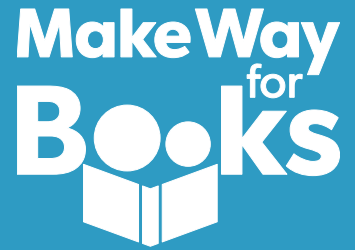


Sing songs, say rhymes, and do fingerplays throughout the day. These are fun ways to introduce new words.

Jack be nimble, Jack be quick.
Jack jump over the candlestick.
Jill be nimble, jump it, too.
If Jack can do it, so can you!

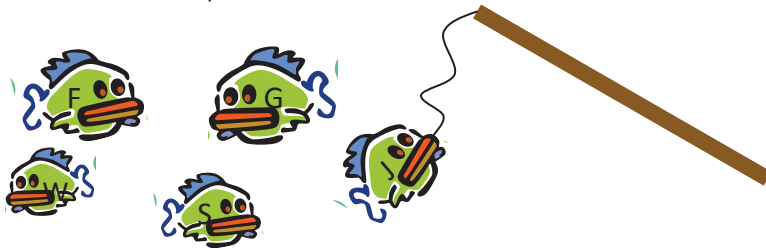
ALPHABET KNOWLEDGE

The child demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet.



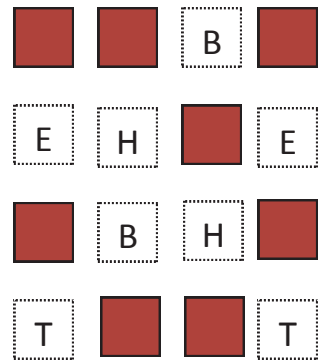
Teach the letters of the alphabet in **meaningful** ways.

Make a fishing game with 26 fish—one for each letter of the alphabet. Put a paper clip on each fish. Make a fishing pole with string and a magnet. Children take turns fishing. They name the letter they catch.



Start with the letters in a child's name. Make a pair of each letter and play Concentration."

BETH



Make a "name worm" for each child. First draw a worm with a face on colored heavy card stock (different colors for each child). Write the child's name leaving enough space between each letter to cut out. Laminate or use contact paper to make it more sturdy. Cut the letters apart. Place them in a "Can of Worms" and have children pick out their colored pieces. Also make name cards for each child on the same color as their worms. These can be used by the children as a reference to put their worm puzzles together.



Sing variations of the "Alphabet Song." Loud, soft, high-pitched, low-pitched, etc.

Create a chant using letters in a child's name. Holding up a letter say "Give me an ___!" Continue until you have spelled the child's name. Then ask "What's that spell?"

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

The child develops awareness that language can be broken in words, syllables, and smaller units of sounds



Play a listening game. Say several words that begin with the same sounds. Ask children to listen to see if the words begin with the same sound heard at the beginning of their names. (Ex. "If your name begins like *telephone* and *turtle*, line up to go outside.")

Sing songs, use puppets, and read books that allow children to identify and make different animal sounds.



Choose a settle down poem to use every day before storytime.

*Sometimes my hands are at my side
And then behind my back they hide.
Sometimes my fingers wiggle so.
I shake them fast, I shake them slow.
Sometimes my hands go clap, clap, clap
And then I place them in my lap.
But now they're quiet as can be
Because it's storytime you see.*

Use completion prompts. When reading books that rhyme, encourage children to fill in the missing word at the end of the sentence.

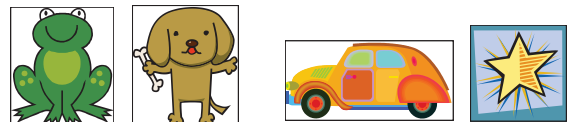


Ex. How do dinosaurs say good-night when papa comes in to turn out the _____? (light)

Teach nursery rhymes and repeat them often. Make nursery rhyme cards to use in your classroom.



Play games with pictures of rhyming word pairs.

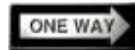


CONCEPTS OF PRINT

The child knows that print carries messages.



Have a variety of printed materials in the classroom (signs, letters, telephone books, storybooks, cook books, magazines, empty food cartons, menus, etc.)



Run your finger under the words as you read storybooks aloud.



Ask children to dictate descriptions of their artwork. Read each word out loud as you write it down on a separate sheet of paper.



Make puzzles out of food containers that are familiar to children. After children put together the puzzle, ask them to say the word or words.



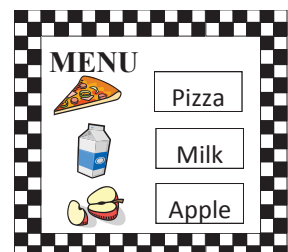
Place name cards in a basket and ask children to find their own names.



Place names of children on their cubbies and other appropriate places.



Help children make menus with pictures of food (cut out ahead of time) on one side and the words (written on index cards) on the other.



Cut out store front names from the weekly ads in the community, then attach them to index cards so that they may be used in the block area as children create buildings from their neighborhood.