

# Foundations for Literacy in Early Childhood

- Where does the journey to literacy begin?
- How do we prepare children for **reading** and **writing**?
- **Differentiated practice** to support all learners.

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Jacki Visman

Early Childhood Education Specialist



# Video

Please review the professional development training video; you will need approximately 60 minutes to complete the training.



# Certification

Please take a moment to complete the learning review provided. Upon submission, your certification will be sent to you immediately.

**Start**



# Jacki Visman



- M.S. in ECE
- 10+ years in ECE
- Teacher and School Director, Infant-PreK
- Early Childhood Education Specialist
- Parent of a spirited 3 y.o.



We Skoolhouse, inspired by the progressive Reggio Emilia philosophy, guides teachers and parents in facilitating early learning and development of children from pre-birth to six years old.



# ***Intro to Literacy: What is literacy? And, how do we “teach,” or rather support, these emerging literacy skills?***

In regard to literacy, it is important to include **language** in the conversation. Language and literacy, while different, build on one another and relate to one another.

**Language:** a system of sounds, gestures, and expressions that people use to communicate with each other. This includes *receptive language & expressive language*.

**Emergent Literacy:** the ways in which very young children begin to respond to and approximate reading and writing acts.



# Where does the journey to literacy begin?

Language and literacy learning begins **prenatally**. Hearing is already operational during the third trimester of gestation.

Study on Fetal Rhythm-Based Language Discrimination by the University of Kansas Department of Linguistics.

Babies in-utero are able to hear and distinguish between **language prosodies**: the tones, measures, phonemes, and rhythms used within language. Therefore, they can distinguish between different languages.

**"Sound discrimination,"** also known as auditory discrimination, is the ability to distinguish between different sounds, which is an important building block for language development and emergent literacy as it relates to later **phonological awareness** and **phonemic awareness**.



# Supporting infants with language development

- Talk
- Sing
- Rhyme
- Use Gestures
- Use **Parentese**: A way of speaking with a high pitch, slow pace, exaggerated vowel sounds, and simple sentence structure, that engages babies in language and conversation.



# Benefits of Multilingualism

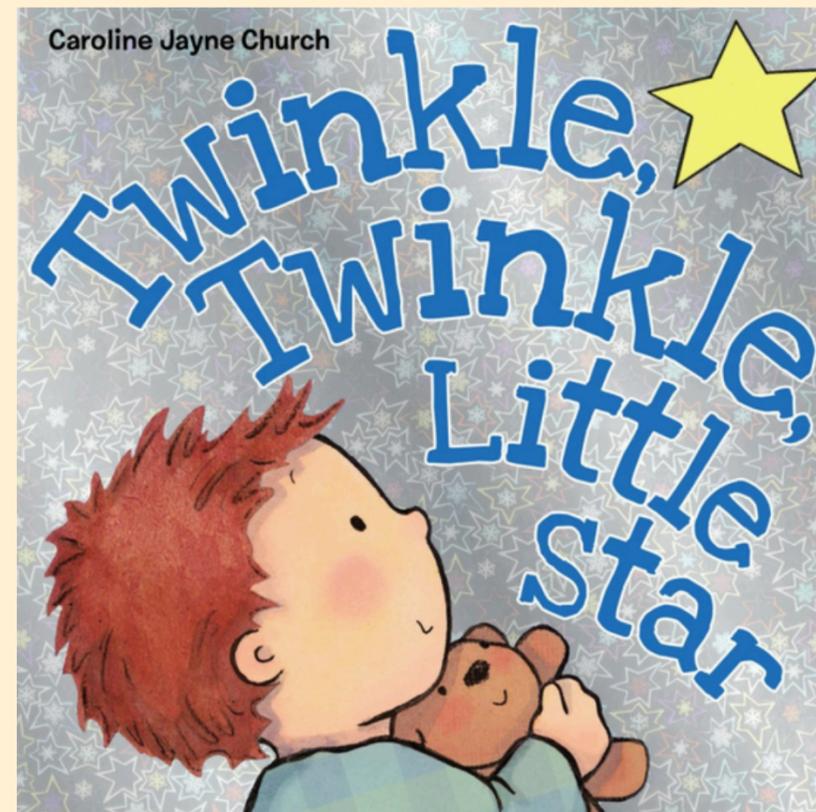
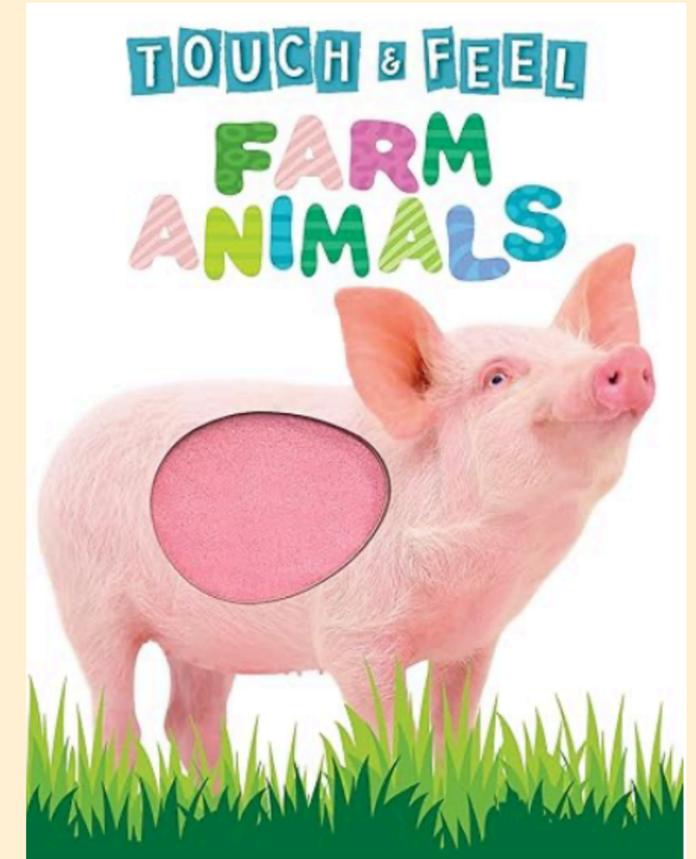
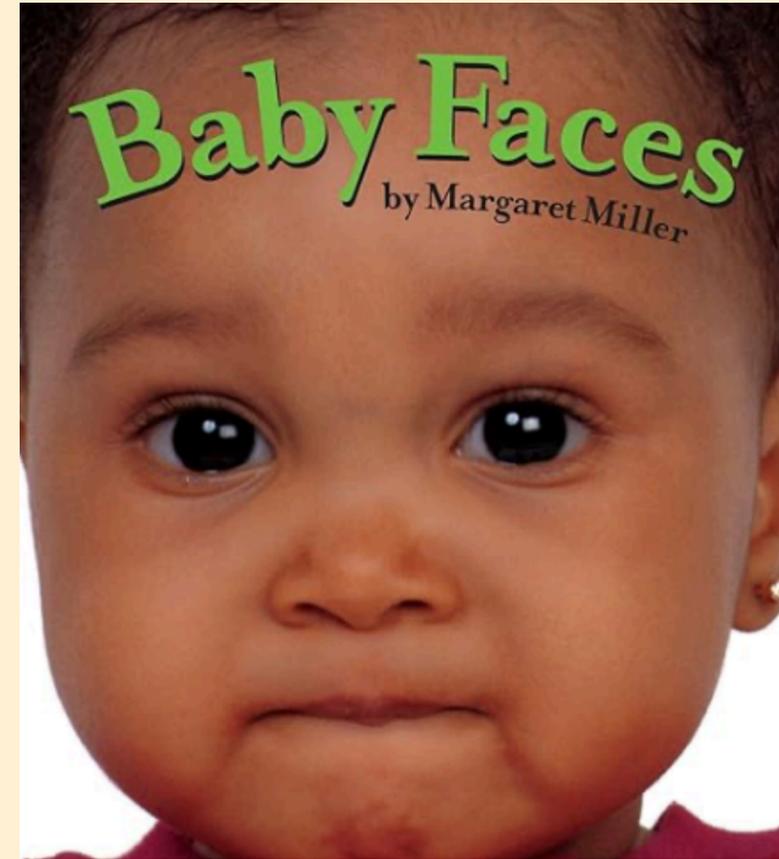
Multilingualism is extremely beneficial to the brain, as it **enriches language acquisition**, but also, in deeper ways. It strengthens **executive functioning skills** such as memory, flexibility, cognitive control, problem-solving, and focus. There are also immense social benefits for later in life.

Knowing that babies are born with a foundation for sound discrimination and language discrimination, and are ready to acquire multiple languages, it is recommended to immerse your baby in a multilingual environment right from birth, and even in-utero.



# Books for Infants

- Books with high-contrast images
- Wordless picture books
- Books with simple text
- Nursery rhymes and verse books
- Board books, “Indestructible” books, bath books
- Books with textures
- Soft books



# Don't Overlook Physical Development

Gross and fine motor skills in infancy (such as: crawling, balancing, pulling oneself up, sitting in a chair, switching objects from one hand to another; shaking a rattle; grasping objects) will serve as building blocks for a child's later ability to sit in a chair, use their core, balance and coordination to manipulate a drawing or writing utensil, and to focus and attend to writing or reading tasks.



# Supporting toddlers with language development

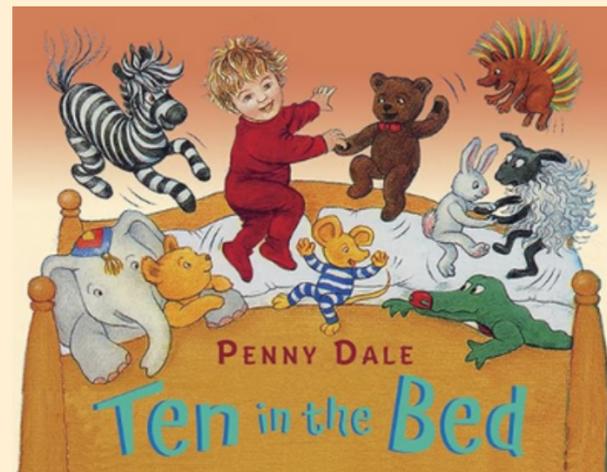
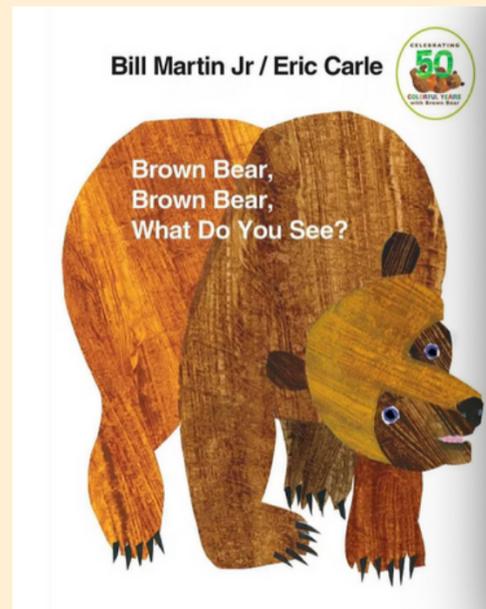
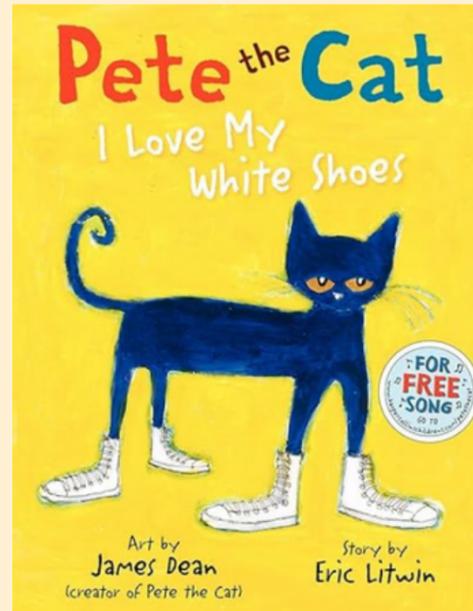
Continued regular talking  
Repetition of common phrases  
Use of exaggerated-emoting  
Extend the child's speech.

**DON'T** constantly “quiz” or ask for repetition of words and phrases (ie: “can you say ball? say ball!”)



# Books and Story Baskets

- Books with simple text
- Story Books
- Nursery rhymes and verse books
- Books with Repetition
- Repeat books regularly



**Story Baskets:** A basket of items that relate to a book -- such as plush toys and other materials



# Supporting Preschoolers (ages 3-6) with Emergent Literacy

Still prioritize and don't overlook:

- Continued talking and conversation
- Expand on language and vocabulary
- Continued singing and rhyming, discussion on the concept of rhyme
- Continued exercise in motor development
- Play to enhance/strengthen attention span

Exposure to print and books:

- Labels and books in every center
- Regular read alouds
- Examine signs around the environment (school, house, street signs, store signs, etc...)
- Use KWL Charts and Word Webs





# Books for your 3-6 yr old

Fiction

Nonfiction

Books with real images

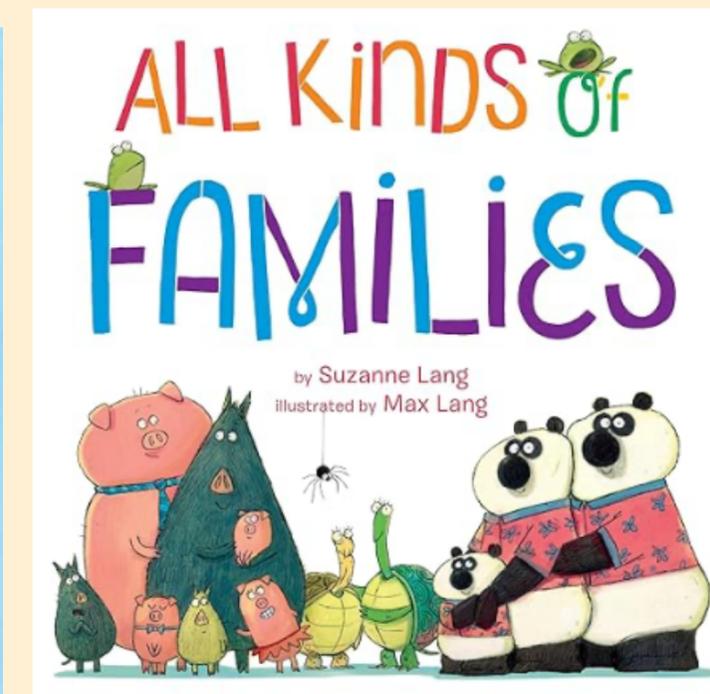
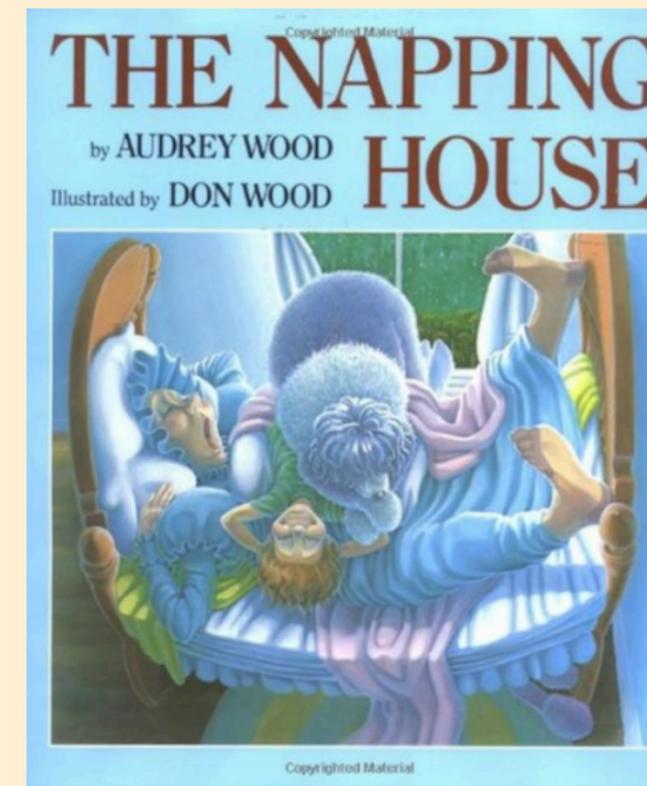
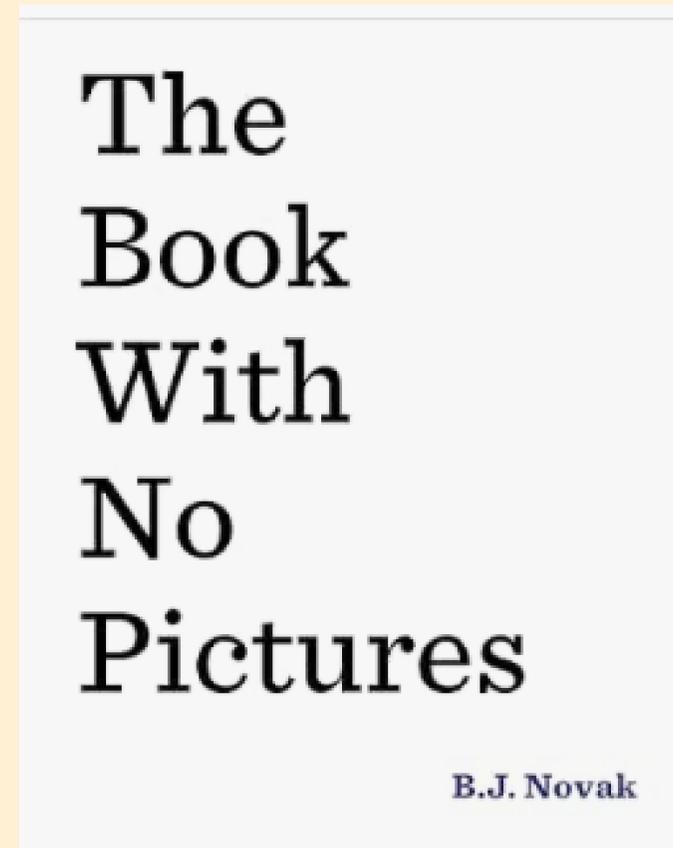
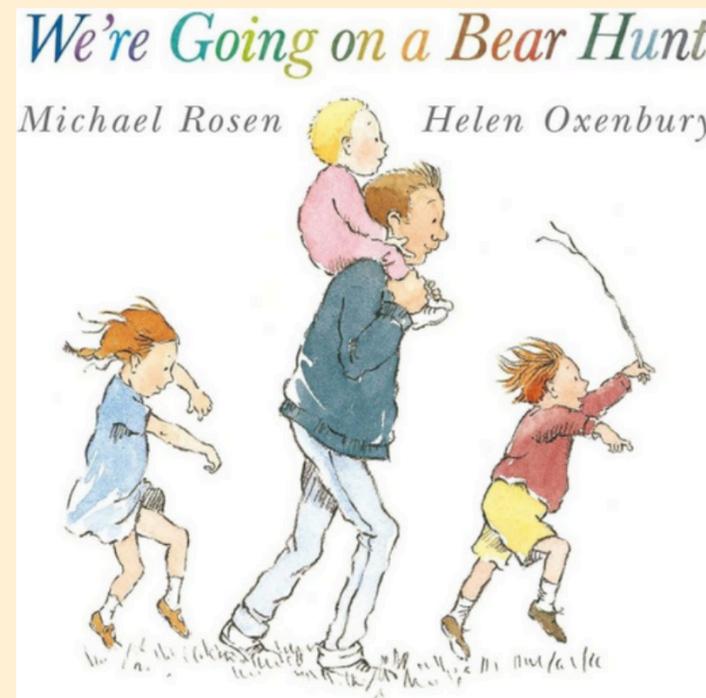
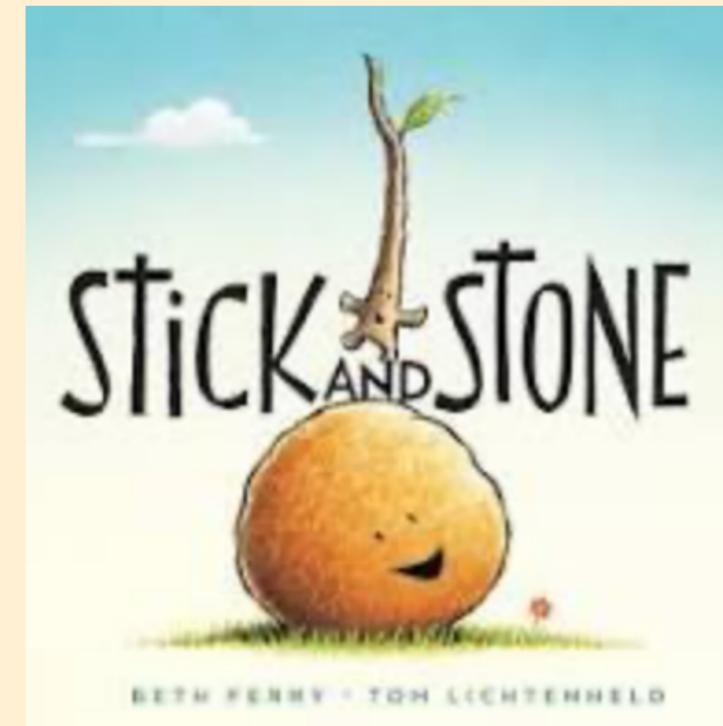
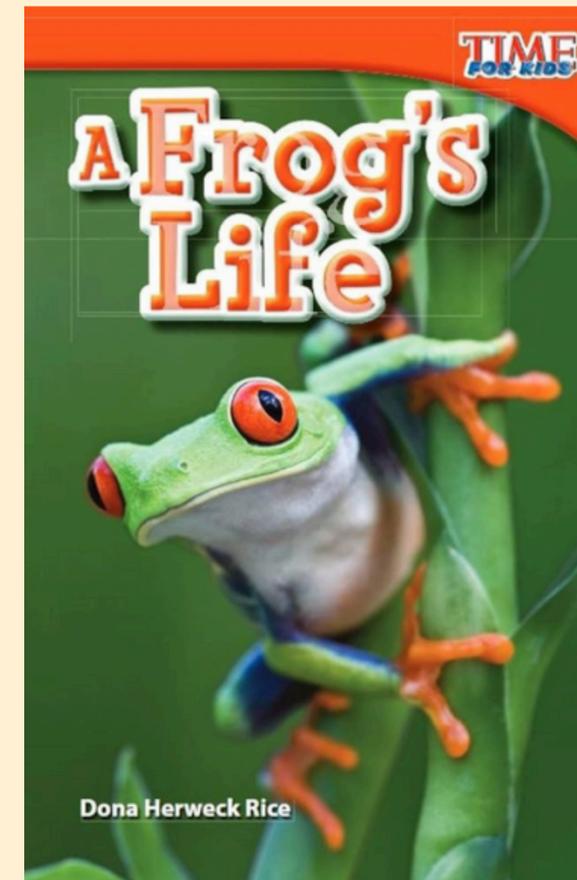
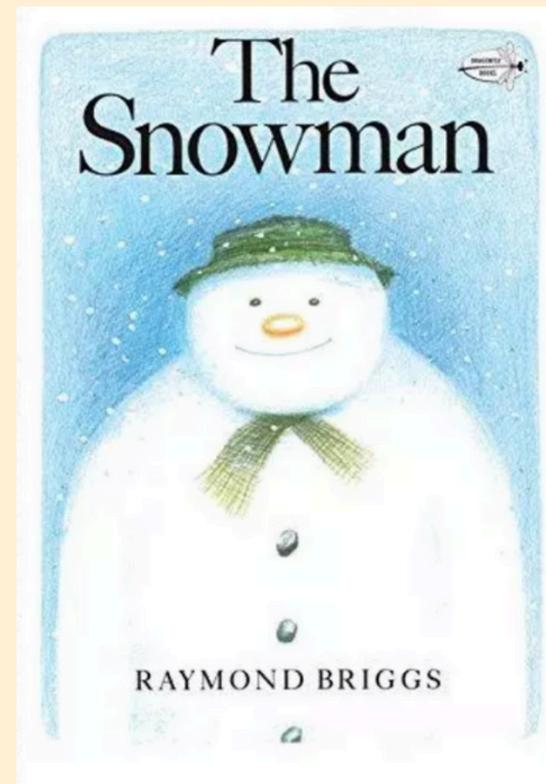
Story books

Wordless books

Word only or minimal pictures

Books with repetition

Books for social-emotional learning



# How to Conduct a Read Aloud

- Reread Books or Portions of Books
- Picture Walk
- Traditional Read-Through
- Think Aloud
- Set a Purpose for the Read Aloud
- Conversational Read Aloud
  - Turn and Talks
  - Solicit Questions from the Children
- Involve the children in movement/act it out
- Get artsy
- Use props
- Talk about the structure of a book



# The Power of Story Telling

- Storytelling promotes the understanding of the structure of stories, supports the understanding of context, and enhances comprehension.
- Creating art to go along with your story helps the child to think more critically about aspects of creating a book, e.g. sequence, plot, title, author, illustrator, etc.
- Creating concrete images encourages natural creation of various shapes and symbols; supports representation skills.
- Have children act out their story for one another, practicing story-telling skills, and allowing them to think more deeply about the characters within their story.

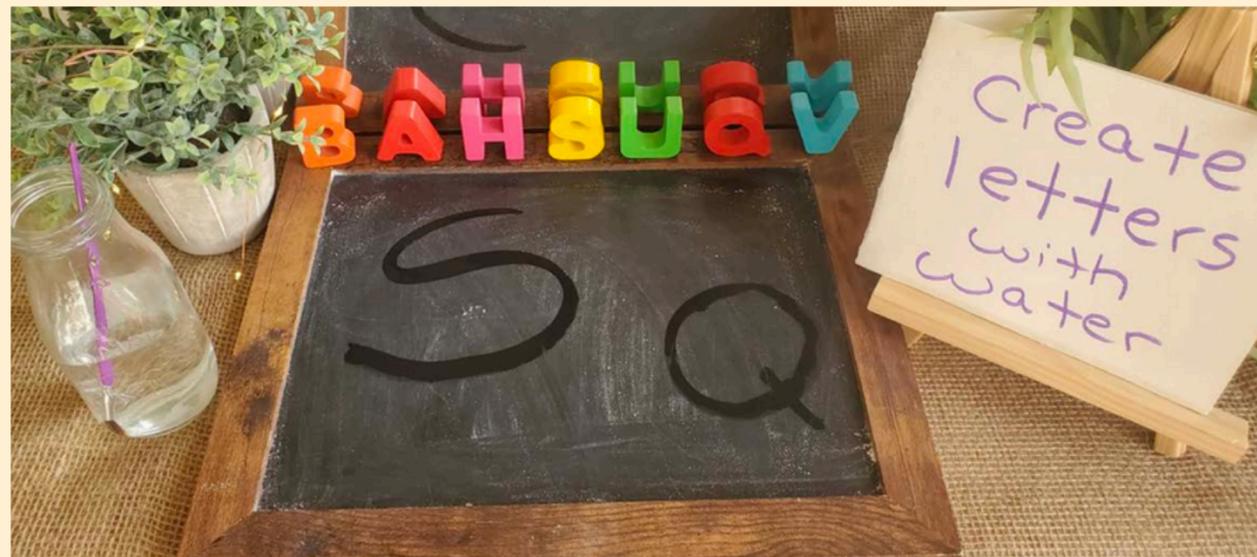


# Ways to explore *phonological* parts of language and *phonemes*:

- Rhyme - nursery rhymes and songs
- Games: I Spy; or scavenger hunt for things with the same first sound
- Movement (songs that address letter sounds with movement)
- As you learn new vocabulary, use your body to segment the phonemes and syllables:
  - Clap out syllables
  - Segment simple words with 4-6 year olds. Tap out phonemes in simple words.
  - Blend sounds together to make a word.
- Isolating first, middle, and ending sounds of a word



- Playful, tactile, and open-ended activities (montessori sandpaper boards; writing in sand; name/letter collages)



# Before we get into writing....

“A 2-year-old's hand is still soft and chubby, with bones that are mostly cartilage and joints that are delicate, making fine motor tasks like writing difficult and uncomfortable.

By age 4, the hand's bones are beginning to ossify, but the joints and muscles are still developing, so fine motor control is limited.”



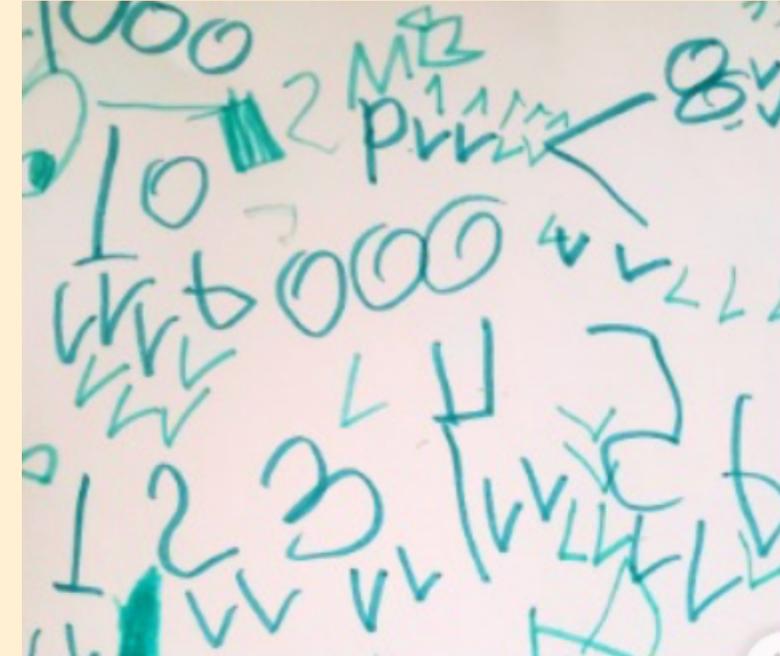
# Stages of Writing



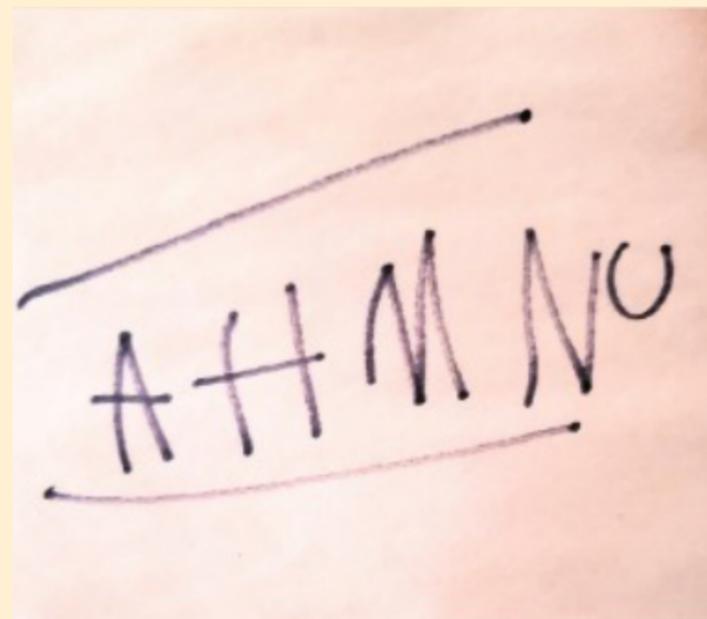
Scribbling (1-3yrs)



Pre-Symbolic (Ages 2-4)



Letter Like Forms (Ages 3-5)



Transitional (4-6 years)



Conventional Writing (5-7 yrs)

# Invented Spelling

Invented spelling is also known as child spelling, developmental spelling, or creative spelling. It is the child's first attempt at building words using the phonetic and phonemic awareness they have at the time.

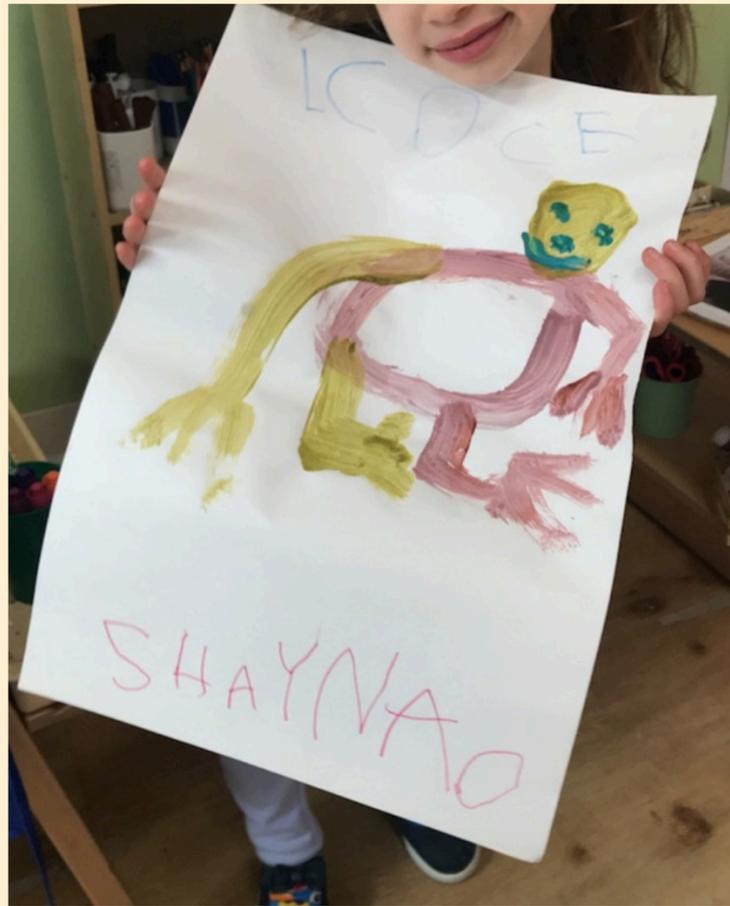
- Kindergarteners' invented spelling positively influenced conventional spelling and reading ability in elementary grades thereafter.
- Invented spelling has a positive impact in supporting students' independence and confidence in writing,

## Stages of Spelling (Gentry, 1982):

- Precommunicative stage - L T S
- Semiphonetic stage - E
- Phonetic stage - EGL
- Transitional stage - EEGUL
- Correct stage - EAGLE



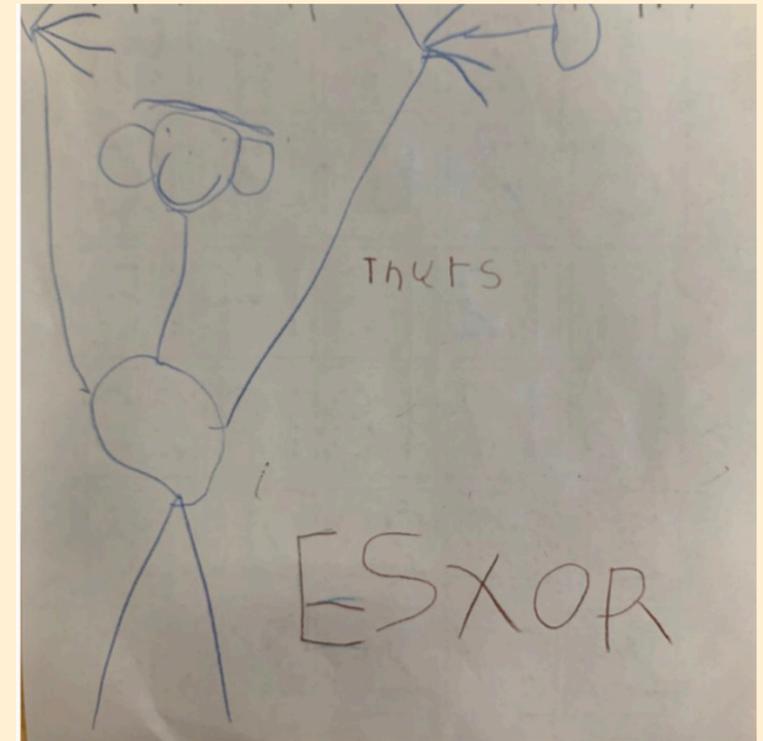
Shayna M painted a sunflower, and sounded out the whole word beautifully, "CNFLUR."



*Lola drew herself on top of some mountains, and wrote the word hike, "HAEK".*



*Rebecca painted a fancy tea pot, decorated with fruits and flowers. She wrote tea party, "T PRD!"*



*Maxwell drew a picture of himself exploring, "ESXOR."*

Ways to invite children to practice writing:

- Journal Prompts
- Offer them to "sign their work"
- Signing into school each morning
- Play materials for writing in each center/interest area



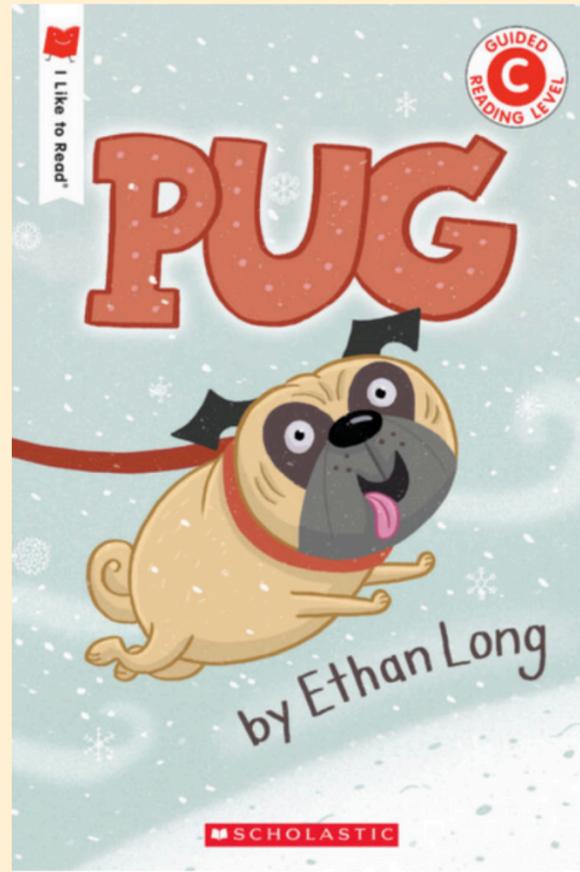
# Early Reading

When a child is ready, you may conduct **1:1** or **small group** guided reading. This usually begins in Kindergarten.

Books that are graded by leveling systems such as Fountas and Pinnell (levels A-C) and DRA (levels A-4) would be most appropriate to start with.

These level books offer minimal words per page and simple language.

[Scholastic Book Wizard](#)



# Questions? Let's Hear Them!



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**Infant Language Development** and **Toddler Language Development** webinars are available on the **We Skoolhouse Store**, and **on our platforms**.

## NEXT WEBINAR!

**New Series: Classroom Set Up**  
Wednesday, January 22nd,  
12pm EST