

STANDARDS EDITION

More Than LETTERS

Preschool, Kindergarten, and First Grade

LITERACY ACTIVITIES



COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS • HEAD START EARLY LEARNING OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

SALLY MOOMAW

WITH ERICA HIERONYMUS

More Than Letters

STANDARDS EDITION

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STANDARDS EDITION

More Than **LETTERS**

Literacy Activities for Preschool, Kindergarten, and First Grade

SALLY MOOMAW
with **BRENDA HIERONYMUS**



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*Dedicated in loving memory to Professor Anne G. Dorsey—
exemplary teacher, lifelong mentor, collaborator, friend, and inspiration*

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LIKE ITS PREDECESSOR, the Standards Edition of *More Than Letters* is an extensive compilation of emergent-literacy materials and activities that translate theory and research into a dynamic, effective literacy program for children from preschool through first grade. Although children's developmental learning trajectories in literacy have remained consistent since the publication of the original edition in 2001, the playing field for teachers has changed dramatically with the advent of the standards movement. For this reason, *More Than Letters*, Standards Edition has been completely reworked and rewritten. Whereas the original *More Than Letters* was organized around types of literacy materials, such as big books, interactive charts, and literacy manipulative materials, the Standards Edition focuses on standards topics. Activities are grouped in series that relate to a specific topic but address similar standards. For example, the original book had a separate chapter on literacy suitcases; however, because the standards for literacy suitcases remain the same even though the materials change, literacy suitcases are now assembled under one activity series (1.6). Materials such as big books and interactive charts appear throughout the book rather than in designated chapters. They support literature, informational texts, foundational reading skills, and writing. The 66 activity series in the book contain 226 activities, of which 136 are completely new.

There are two sets of national standards in the area of early childhood literacy. For kindergarten through grade 5, the *Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts (ELA)*, developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association, and released in 2010, have been adopted by many states and used as a model for others. For preschool children, *The Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF): Ages Birth to Five*, developed by the Office of Head Start and released in 2015, lists English language arts standards under two preschool domains: (1) Language and Communication and (2) Literacy. In addition, all states have now created literacy standards for preschool. Because the areas of literacy are interrelated, it is typical for

any activity to encompass multiple standards. In order to meet the needs of teachers from preschool through first grade, each activity series is aligned with CCSS-ELA, HSELOF-Preschool, and state standards. These include one (and occasionally more) CCSS from the four literacy and two communication areas, as appropriate; one HSELOF goal from the Language domain and one from the Literacy domain; and a preschool standard from one of the states or the District of Columbia. State standards are included in order to give readers an idea of the range of standards employed across the country. Finally, a list of additional standards from CCSS and HSELOF that also align with the designated activity series is also included.

Because the original edition of *More Than Letters* was based on theory and research, it incorporated many of the literacy concepts that now comprise the literacy standards. These were presented through intentional integration of phonemic and phonetic awareness into literacy activities; strong reliance on predictable texts for children transitioning into reading; incorporation of meaningful print throughout the classroom; strong support for emergent reading and writing based on developmental sequences; and a hands-on, play-based curriculum that included manipulative games and materials. These teaching practices remain firmly integrated into this Standards Edition. In order to fully align with standards, substantial new material has been added, which includes two new chapters that focus on literature and informational text, as well as activities that target specific concepts addressed in national standards. These include onset and rime; segmenting words into syllables; opposites (antonyms); digraphs and blends; rhyme; and long and short vowel sounds. Writing for specific purposes, including research, has been expanded.

Many activities in this book are based on quality children's literature and information books. Many are classics written by award-winning authors; others are new. In the informational-text category, the activities employ current research and knowledge supported by outstanding photographic illustrations. All of the books are readily available from libraries or booksellers. Teachers should note that the activities in this book are designed for preschool, kindergarten, and first-grade children, ages three years and older. Some of the materials contain small pieces. A teacher whose children still put things into their mouths should use pieces that cannot be swallowed.

As with any discipline, early childhood literacy employs many technical terms for concepts and materials. Throughout this book, technical terms are highlighted in bold italics; they are defined in the glossary.

The term *teacher* is used throughout *More Than Letters*, Standards Edition, to discuss their role in facilitating children's literacy development. The word *teacher* is meant to be inclusive. All those who work with young children are teachers, whether they are parents, child care workers, librarians, assistants, or classroom aides. This book is designed to meet the varied needs of a wide spectrum of people who care for and nurture young children.

Literacy is one of the most important areas of education. Early enjoyment of reading and writing provides a foundation for a lifetime of ongoing learning. It is our hope that the ideas in this book will help teachers guide children as they discover the wonders and rewards of reading and writing.

Literacy Development, Standards, and the Literacy-Rich Classroom

FOR DECADES EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS in high-quality programs have understood that the transition into reading and writing occurs naturally when young children are surrounded by opportunities to interact with print in ways that are meaningful to them. In fact, research into children's literacy development in classrooms such as these has contributed to the state and national standards that serve as guidelines across the country (Neuman, Copple, and Bredekamp 2000). By visiting a classroom of three- to five-year-old children, we can see how the transition into reading and writing evolves:

- Several children sit with their teacher at the special activity table. She writes what they tell her about the pictures they have drawn. The pages will be compiled into a class book.
- In the reading area, three children cluster around a popular book with a repeating text and recite the words together.
- Nearby, a child points to the words on a class chart and inserts a card with his best friend's name into the song.
- A little girl arrives with her father. She runs to the teacher and shows him the writing she created with a take-home literacy suitcase.
- In the manipulative area, a child arranges magnetic letters to spell *Mom* and *Dad*.
- In the dramatic play area, two children write down grocery orders as they pretend to talk on the phone.
- In the block area, a child uses invented spelling to write a "Save" sign for her block structure.

- In the writing center, one child copies word cards into a blank book while another types words on a computer.
- During group time, the children help the teacher list new *rhyming* words for a silly song they love to sing.

For these children, reading and writing are fully integrated into their typical preschool day. Literacy experiences are carefully planned and guided by a knowledgeable teaching team. Throughout the year, the teacher will carefully document each child's progression into more sophisticated levels of reading and writing. Years of experience in diverse classrooms have shown that all children, regardless of cultural or socioeconomic background, flourish in this type of literacy environment. In fact, teachers of children learning English as a second language have documented that they often progress into reading English concurrently with learning to speak it (Elgas et al. 2002). Kindergarten and first-grade teachers are able to build on this solid literacy foundation as they continue instruction.

Literacy and the Young Child

As children are exposed to written language, both through books and through print in their environment, they begin to **construct** important literacy concepts (Neuman, Copple, and Bredekamp 2000). For example, they learn that what is spoken can also be written, and there is a prescribed way for writing things down. Children who do not yet understand the relationship between spoken and written language may appear puzzled if the teacher says she will write down what they say. However, repeated opportunities to see spoken words in written form help children construct the relationship between oral and written language. They learn that once something is written, it says the same thing no matter who reads it.

As children continue to explore books, they learn to distinguish the pictures from the print. They also observe the **left-to-right** and **top-to-bottom orientation** of the text, notice the configuration of words, begin to recognize the function of letters in the formation of words, and make sound/letter associations. Children develop both phonemic and phonetic awareness. **Phonemic awareness** refers to the ability to recognize spoken words as a sequence of sounds, and **phonetic awareness** describes an understanding of the relationship between letters (or groups of letters) and the sounds they represent. Eventually, children begin to recognize certain words and transition into actual reading. The process of reading evolves from the whole to the part (Goodman 1986). In other words, children first differentiate the print from the rest of the page globally. Later, they begin to distinguish words from the stream of writing, and finally they look at the parts of the words as they form **letter-sound relationships**.

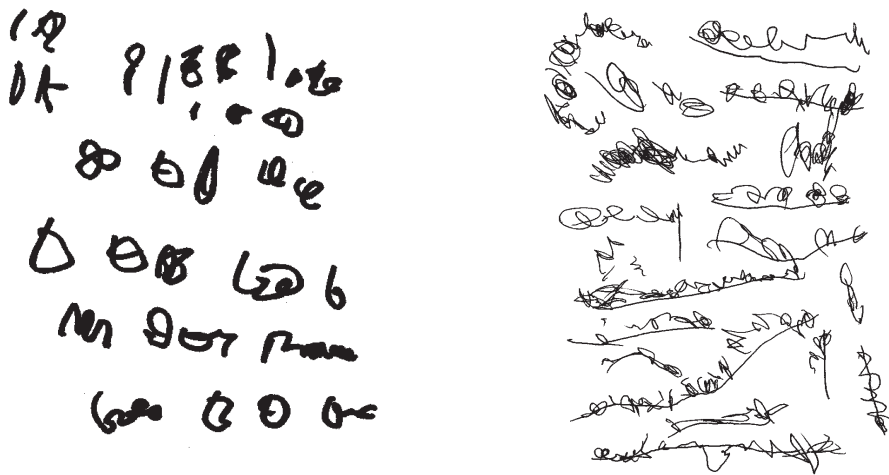
Children also follow a predictable progression in learning to write, much as they move through stages in learning to speak (Fields 1988). When surrounded by meaningful writing, children naturally transition into writing themselves, just as they progress

in speaking through living in a verbal environment. Although the rate of development in writing varies from child to child, the sequence of the stages follows a predictable order. This seems to be the case regardless of the child's native language. In our classrooms, we have observed similar stages emerge in children transitioning into writing in Chinese, Arabic, and English.

Writing Stages

Stage 1—Scribbling

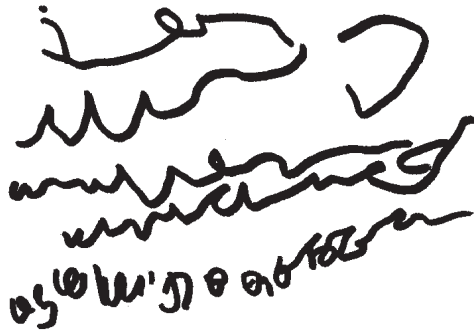
Scribbling represents a child's first attempts at reproducing writing. Although similar to the scribbling stage in art, the marks children create to represent writing are often more controlled. Scribbling is similar to babbling in oral language. Babbling allows children to explore the sounds of language, and scribbling enables them to experiment with the visual appearance of writing.



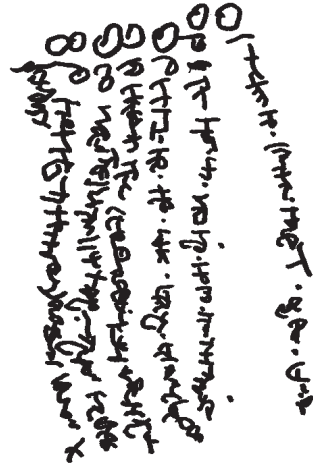
Stage 1 Examples: Scribbling

Stage 2—Linear/Repetitive Drawing

This stage is sometimes referred to as *personal cursive*. At this level, children's scribbling has been refined to look much more like standard writing. In fact, teachers who are not familiar with a child's native language may mistake the child's personal cursive for actual writing (see the Stage 2 example from a child of a Chinese family). As with scribbling, this stage of development in writing parallels early refinements in speaking. As children progress in learning to speak, they gradually drop sounds that are not present in their own language and retain only the relevant sounds. In a similar manner, as children become more aware of how writing actually looks, they refine their own writing attempts.



from an English-speaking child

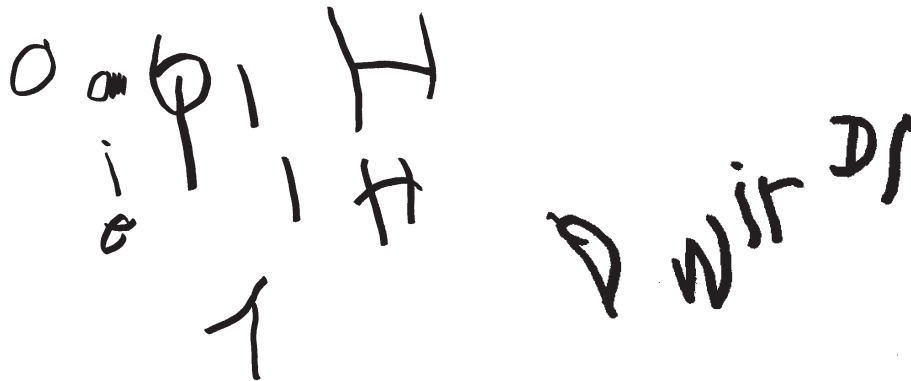


from a Chinese-speaking child

Stage 2 Examples: Personal Cursive

Stage 3—Letterlike Forms

At this stage, children's writing looks very close to actual printing; in fact, many of the marks may look almost like letters. As children progress to the next stage of writing, teachers may observe letters and letterlike forms intermingled in their writing.



Stage 3 Examples: Letterlike Forms

Stage 4—Letters and Early Word-Symbol Relationships

Children at this stage are beginning to reproduce letters and often use a single letter to represent an entire word. There may be a one-to-one correspondence between the number of letters written and the number of words they represent, although the letters may not all be formed correctly. This is similar to an early stage of speaking when children use a single word to represent an entire thought, such as “Out” for “I want to

go outside.” At this stage, the child indicates a clearer intent for the letters to represent specific words than in Stage 3.

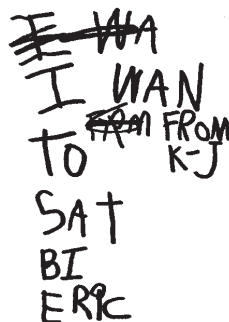
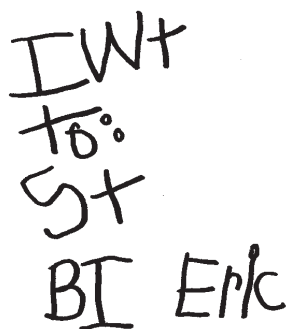


Don't take robot
—Quentin

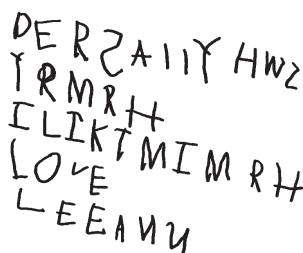
Stage 4 Examples: Word-Symbols

Stage 5—Invented Spelling

As children move into this stage of writing, they clearly demonstrate that they have constructed some *letter-sound relationships*. The first sounds that children usually represent are initial consonants. Later, more consonants are added, and finally vowels. Although they may leave out some sounds or may represent some sounds with the incorrect letter, children at this level show a substantial amount of knowledge about the structure of words. *Phonics* errors are similar to the overgeneralizations that children often make when speaking, such as saying *mouses* for *mice* after learning the general rule of adding an *s* to form plurals. Such mistakes actually show that they have constructed significant knowledge about grammatical rules. In the first Stage 5 example, the child initially writes his message using mostly consonants. Several weeks later, he writes the same message but adds more vowels, though not always the correct ones.



I want to
sit by Eric.

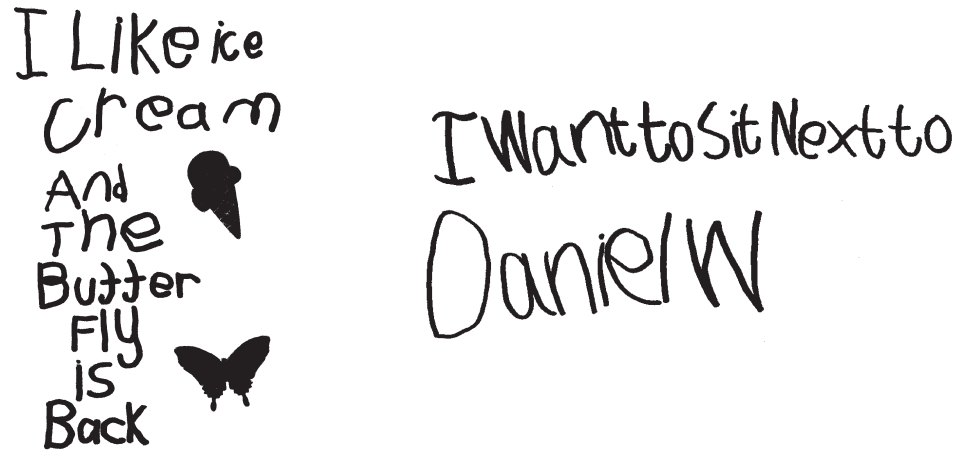


Dear Sally,
How was your March?
I liked my March.
Love,
Lee Ann

Stage 5 Examples: Invented Spelling

Stage 6—Standard Spelling

Eventually, children realize that words have a standard spelling. Even in preschool, some children remember the spellings of certain familiar words, such as *mom*, *dad*, *cat*, *love*, or their names.



Stage 6 Examples: Standard Spelling

Children may revert to earlier stages of writing when they have a lot to say. After all, personal cursive is much faster than actually writing letters or words. Thus, the teacher may observe long strands of personal cursive or letterlike forms punctuated by significant words.

Mom, Dad,
Caroline



Example of personal cursive alongside names of family members

Classroom environments that provide materials and relevant models encourage children to progress through the writing stages.

Literacy and the Early Childhood Teacher

Teachers of young children, from preschool through first grade, encourage the emergence and refinement of reading and writing by creating classroom environments that surround children with meaningful print. Teachers also provide planned and focused attention on particular concepts and skills that children must construct as they become readers and writers. Context is important. When letters or sounds are isolated from meaningful words or phrases, children cannot form the important relationship between oral and written language. Although they may memorize rules or sounds, the experience lacks real meaning. However, when **word boundaries** (words separated by spaces), letters, and sounds are explored within a context that has meaning, such as a repeating phrase from a popular song or book, children relate the words and letters they see to the sounds they hear. The following anecdote illustrates the problem of trying to teach phonics outside of a meaningful print context.

Five-year-old Mickey entered preschool during the middle of the year. At his previous school, Mickey had been instructed about the sounds of various letters. His new class was compiling a book of stories to accompany pictures they had drawn. When it was Mickey's turn, he asked the teacher how she would know what to write on his page. "I'll write down what you tell me," she replied. Mickey appeared confused and repeated his question several times. Finally, the teacher explained, "There is a way to write down all the words you say. I know how to do that, and I'll show you how it looks." The teacher had finally realized that although Mickey had memorized sounds to accompany letters, the knowledge had no practical meaning for him because he had not yet had the opportunity to construct the important relationship between written and oral language. This would now become a targeted literacy goal for him.

Facilitating Emergent Reading

Teachers can help children understand and **decode** written language by

- carefully selecting books to share with them;
- providing many opportunities for children to interact with print; and
- extending stories and written language into other areas of the curriculum.

Through book sharing, children begin to understand book language and the important components of a story. When teachers select a variety of types of books, they extend children's learning opportunities. For example, **predictable books**, which contain a repeating text or some other element that establishes a predictable pattern, allow children to

memorize the text quickly. They can tell the story along with the teacher and begin to feel like readers. (In this chapter, activity series 1.2 describes the use of a predictable book for book sharing.) On the other hand, books that are not predictable often provide a more extensive use of language and description, which increases children's vocabulary and language development. Books with *rhyme* and *rhythm* encourage children to play with language and to focus on the similarities and differences in the sounds of words. **Information books**, which are the focus of activity series 1.3, may pique children's curiosity and increase their knowledge of the world. Multicultural books allow them to consider the similarities, as well as the differences, among peoples.

Children focus more carefully on written language when they have many opportunities to manipulate print. Movable alphabets, word games, and charts with movable words are some of the many curriculum activities that teachers can design to increase children's interactions with print. In this chapter, activity series 1.4 introduces these materials.

Through play, children create a network of relationships and extend their understanding of the world. By introducing book topics into other areas of the curriculum, teachers enable children to use their play skills to interpret stories more fully. For example, many children enjoy the silly book and song, *The Lady with the Alligator Purse*. By incorporating a few props from the book into the dramatic play area, such as toy pizzas, doctors' badges, and purses shaped like alligators, teachers encourage children to reenact the story, perhaps with their own variations. Similarly, many children are attracted to Jan Brett's book *The Mitten*. They love to recreate the story with small plastic animals and a large mitten. In the process, they practice following the sequence of a story and have many opportunities to consolidate new vocabulary, such as the names of the various animals. Activity series 1.7, which presents an integrated literacy unit, expands reading and writing into science, art, music, dramatic play, and a field trip.

Children's exposure to reading is certainly not limited to books. Children see writing in many contexts throughout their day, from signs to cereal boxes to junk mail. Teachers can increase children's exposure to meaningful print by incorporating examples throughout the classroom. Food containers and phone books in the dramatic play area, road signs in the block area, and interactive song charts in the music area are just a few examples.

Facilitating Foundational Skills in Reading

Foundational skills in reading (the focus of activity series 1.4) include concepts of print; **phonological awareness**, which is the understanding of spoken words and sounds (**phonemes**); and phonics and word recognition. Two important curriculum materials that are used throughout this book, including in Chapter 1, are **big books** (activity series 1.1, 1.2, and 1.5) and **interactive charts** (activity series 1.1, 1.4, and 1.7). Both employ enlarged-print formats for text so that teachers can focus on foundational elements.

Big books are enlarged-print versions of predictable books, poems, or songs. In children's picture books, the illustrations play a critical role in helping them interpret

the content. Some children barely notice the print. The purpose of big books is to focus children's attention on the printed text by making the print large. As teachers read to groups of children, they point to the text. In this way, children learn important concepts about written language, such as the top-to-bottom, left-to-right, and **front-to-back orientation** used in English. Second, children learn that there is a direct relationship between spoken and written words, often referred to as **voice-print pairing**. This includes the idea of word boundaries, the spaces that separate words from one another. Through repeated readings of familiar books, children realize that each time a book is read, regardless of who reads it, the words are the same. It is the print that preserves the actual story. Finally, children begin to understand the relationship between particular sounds and the letters or groups of letters that produce them. In fact, they begin to recognize certain words by sight and read them in various contexts. Big books are therefore an important teaching tool for helping children transition into reading.

Interactive literacy charts serve many of the same purposes as big books. The print is enlarged, and the text often follows a predictable format. A key component of interactive charts is that children can manipulate some aspect of the print by changing one or more words. This focuses their attention on the words that remain the same and the text that they can alter. Initially, the words that children change are often their names. Playing with their names and those of their friends, which is the focus of activity series 1.1, is an important incentive for children to interact with print.

Big books and interactive charts are usually created by teachers. Although big books are commercially available, publishers often err by not making the print large enough to meet the needs of teachers. Construction paper and sentence strips allow teachers to create big books for their own classroom use. Many ideas are included throughout this book.

Teachers also create many of the interactive charts that they use to support reading. Although commercially available pocket charts provide a framework for teachers to add text written on sentence strips, they do not restrict children from moving all of the words around. Poster-board charts, in which most of the print is fixed, let the teacher make this decision. If laminated, teacher-made charts can be used for many years.

Facilitating Emergent Writing

Teachers also play an important role in encouraging the emergence of writing in young children. Strategies to facilitate the development of writing include

- accepting all writing as valid;
- breaking down words and letters into more manageable parts; and
- providing appropriate models and many opportunities to write.

Once teachers understand the sequence of development of children's writing, they can accept all writing attempts as part of a developmental process. By validating children's

early attempts at writing, teachers encourage them to continue the process. Right from the beginning, children can feel competent as writers.

Some children progress more quickly in developing writing skills when teachers *scaffold* by isolating parts of letters or words for them. Young children may be eager to copy certain words, such as their names, but the task may seem too confusing and formidable for some. Teachers can help by focusing on individual letters within the context of the word and giving verbal clues for how to make them. Teachers must judge carefully when to assist children in writing. Children need many opportunities to manipulate writing tools before they are ready for refinements.

Children are encouraged to write when there is a reason for it. When teachers supply appropriate models, such as word cards from a favorite story or topic, children are naturally motivated to reproduce them. By supplying writing materials in all areas of the classroom, teachers encourage children to incorporate writing as a regular part of their play. Writing restaurant orders, recording scores from a target game, notating observations for what may be inside a coconut, or creating labels for block structures are some of the many ways that children may incorporate writing throughout the classroom. Writing is the focus of activity series 1.5.

Facilitating Speaking, Listening, and Language

Language cannot be separated from literacy experiences. As teachers engage in reading and writing activities, communication is the glue that holds everything together. Speaking and listening are skills that children demonstrate and teachers support during most reading and writing activities. Language concepts, such as capitalization and punctuation, vocabulary, and understanding and use of question words, develop through children's interactions with literacy curricula.

Teachers can facilitate children's development in speaking, listening, and language through their conversations with individual children and the literacy materials they introduce to the class. When speaking to individuals, teachers should vary their sentence structure and vocabulary for each child. More complex ideas can be broken into shorter sentences for younger children, and vocabulary can be modeled in context. Children's literature, particularly when connected to real-life experiences, plays a crucial role in language development. As an example, in an urban classroom in which many of the children evidenced language delays, most of the children did not know common vocabulary words such as *bird*. The teaching team decided to use Pat Hutchins's predictable book, *Good-Night, Owl*, to focus on the concept of birds, types of birds, and the sound patterns created by birds. They paired the book with toy Audubon birds; when squeezed, the birds emitted the recorded song of each bird. The children loved both the book and the birds. Within a few weeks, they not only used the word *bird* but also gave the correct type of bird when they heard its sound. The children expanded their knowledge of songbird patterns into creating patterns with manipulative materials (Moomaw and Davis 2010). The example illustrates the importance of a carefully planned and integrated literacy program.

Teachers' Questions about Literacy Standards

What are the national standards for literacy?

The national standards for literacy are the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA) and released in 2010.

These standards are an outgrowth of a draft document circulated by the CCSSO and NGA in 2009, College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language (Council of Chief State School Officers 2010). Early childhood standards are encompassed by the K–5 strand for English Language Arts (ELA). The overarching standards, called **anchor standards**, are translated into grade-specific outcomes for each grade level, K–5. The standards are further grouped by content area into the following categories: Reading Standards for Literature; Reading Standards for Informational Text; Reading Standards: Foundational Skills; Writing Standards; Speaking and Listening Standards; and Language Standards. Grade-specific standards correspond by number to the related anchor standards in order to provide consistency across grade bands.

Although the intention of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) is to provide consistency in learning expectations for students across the country, they have never been truly national. Four states never adopted the standards; other states adopted them only in part, and some states that initially adopted the standards have since repealed and replaced them. Nevertheless, the Common Core State Standards have strongly affected the curriculum nationwide. States that craft their own standards in English and Language Arts (ELA), such as Ohio, often align them with the Common Core State Standards (Ohio Department of Education 2017). Therefore, in this book, activities are mapped to the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, Kindergarten (CCSS-ELA-K).

Are there national preschool standards for literacy?

The Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five lists literacy standards under two preschool domains: (1) Language and Communication and (2) Literacy (Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start 2015).

It replaces the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework for children three to five years old (Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start 2010). The purpose of the new framework is to align the continuum of skills and concepts that children develop during the preschool years with school readiness for a seamless transition to kindergarten. Among the guiding principles for the Head Start standards is the belief that “areas of development are integrated, and children learn many concepts and skills at the same time.” This has been a cornerstone of the More Than curriculum series for over two decades. In the current book, activities are grouped within related series to capitalize on the many overlapping standards that apply.

Are there other standards that apply to preschool?

Yes. All fifty states plus the District of Columbia now have learning standards for preschool children.

Some state standards acknowledge the framework from the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts by extending the age-bands downward from kindergarten to three, four, and five years. Other states align more closely with the previous Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and may bear titles that reflect this. Still other states have elected to develop their own standards and frameworks. For these reasons, alignment of state standards across the country is not possible. Teachers should consult their own state standards for preschool literacy. To provide a perspective of the range of standards contributed by states, this book aligns each activity series to standards from one of the fifty states or the District of Columbia. All are represented.

Do standards tell teachers how to teach?

No. The standards provide expected outcomes for students. Teachers must decide on the curriculum and its implementation so that they maximize children's learning.

As an example, one of the Foundational Skills for reading in the CCSS-K requires that children “recognize and produce rhyming words.” Understanding that five-year-old children enjoy silly songs and games, many kindergarten teachers might select that type of material to promote learning and understanding of rhymes; the choice, however, is determined by the teacher or school, not by the standards.

How are standards approached in this book?

The chapters in this book are arranged in the order of the Common Core State Standards.

Chapter 1, which is an introduction, includes an opening activity series (1.1) that focuses on names because they are so important to children. The next four activity series, 1.2–1.5, focus on the four CCSS in literacy: Reading Literature (1.2), Reading Informational Text (1.3), Reading Foundational Skills (1.4), and Writing (1.5). The CCSS standards for Speaking and Listening and for Language are addressed in all activity series. Activity series 1.6 links home and school, and activity series 1.7 addresses all English Language Arts standards through an integrated literacy unit.

The organization of the book follows the same progression with regard to standards. Chapter 2 focuses on Reading Literature, Chapter 3 on Reading Informational Text, Chapter 4 on Reading Foundational Skills, and Chapter 5 on Writing. Chapter 6 addresses *environmental print*, home/school connections, and multicultural language experiences. The final activity series (6.11) combines all areas in the form of a class movie.

Throughout the book, one (and occasionally more) CCSS from the four literacy areas is highlighted, and a list of additional standards that also align with the designated activities is provided. A Speaking and Listening Standard, as well as a Language Standard, are also highlighted, with a list of additional standards provided. Readers

can use appendix A to read all standards that align with a particular activity series. The CCSS are taken from the kindergarten grade band. First-grade teachers should consult the same standard number from the first-grade band. In most cases, the standards are very similar.

For teachers of preschool-age children, two goals from the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, one from the Preschool Language Domain and one from the Preschool Literacy Domain, are highlighted for each activity series. As with the CCSS, a list of additional standards that also align with the activities is provided. Readers can consult appendix B to read all Head Start goals that align with a particular activity series. In addition, a related preschool standard from one of the states or the District of Columbia is included with each activity series in order to give readers an idea of the range of standards employed across the country.

The Name Game— Foundations of Reading (4 activities)



Class attendance chart

DESCRIPTION

The first written word many children recognize is their name. It represents their presence and importance in the classroom, and it often designates a special area reserved for their belongings. This series of activities highlights several of the many ways that teachers can use children's names to help them transition into reading and writing and to teach many of the foundational skills in literacy. It thus aligns with content standards in all three areas.

This group of activities includes three **interactive charts**: an attendance chart where children can place their names when they arrive at school, a song chart to welcome children to group time, and a transition **chart** for leaving group time. It also includes a **big book** that incorporates children's names.

All early childhood classrooms should contain several sets of name cards for each child. They serve

multiple purposes throughout the day, which may include designating where children should sit at snack, lunch, or group time; inclusion on interactive charts to personalize the **emergent reading** experience; and models for writing experiences.

Attendance charts provide a place for children to hang their name tags when they arrive at school. To draw children's attention, interesting shapes attached to the chart, such as apples, teddy bears, or leaves, provide a space for each child's name. Children hang matching shapes containing their names to open spaces on the chart to document their arrival. At group time, a name chart accompanies a short song that announces the presence of children at school. It is repeated until the names of all children have been included. The transition chart for leaving the group is different. It focuses

on the beginning letter of the children's names. All children whose names begin with the designated letter take their turn to move to the next activity. This provides further practice in recognizing letters and associating letters with the sounds they represent (**letter-sound** or **phonetic-phonemic relationships**).

The big book is an adaptation of the familiar song "Rain, Rain, Go Away." Clear plastic windows allow children to add their names to the last line of the song. Children learn concepts of print, including front-to-back, left-to-right, and top-to-bottom procedures. They also discover that spoken words are represented by specific letters; when a word is changed in a sentence, the reading of the sentence also changes.

FOCUS STANDARDS

Common Core State Standards—K

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE

4. Ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.

Additional Standards: 2, 5, 10

READING STANDARDS: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.

Additional Standards: 1a, 1b, 1c, 2c, 3, 3a, 3b, 3c, 4

SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS

1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

LANGUAGE STANDARDS

5a. Sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.

Note: In this activity series, children sort words (names) by their beginning letter.

Additional Standard: 1f

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

P-LC 7. Child shows understanding of word categories and relationships among words.

Note: In this activity series, the word category is names.

Additional Standards: P-LC 1, 4

LITERACY

P-LIT 3. Child identifies letters of the alphabet and produces correct sounds associated with letters.

Additional Standards: P-LIT 1, 2

Minnesota's Early Learning Standards—Language and Literacy Development

EMERGENT READING

7. Begin to associate sounds with words or letters.

MATERIALS

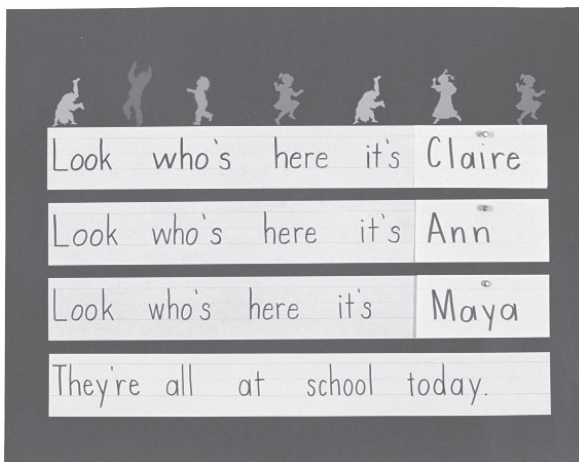
Name Cards

- ☐ sentence or word strips, about 8 inches long
- ☐ black permanent marker, for printing the children's names on the laminated sentence strips

Attendance Chart

- ☐ dark-blue poster board, 22 by 28 inches
- ☐ white sentence strip, with the words *Who is here today?* mounted to the top of the chart
- ☐ white, cloud-shaped paper cutout for each child in the class
- ☐ umbrella cutouts, made from colored paper, decorative scrapbooking paper, or wallpaper samples, for each child in the class, to hang on top of a cloud
- ☐ 3/4-inch paper fasteners (one for each cloud shape), added to the top center of each cloud after lamination
- ☐ hole punch, to create mounting holes on the umbrellas
- ☐ white rectangular labels, 1 by 2 3/4 inches (one for each umbrella shape), for the children's names

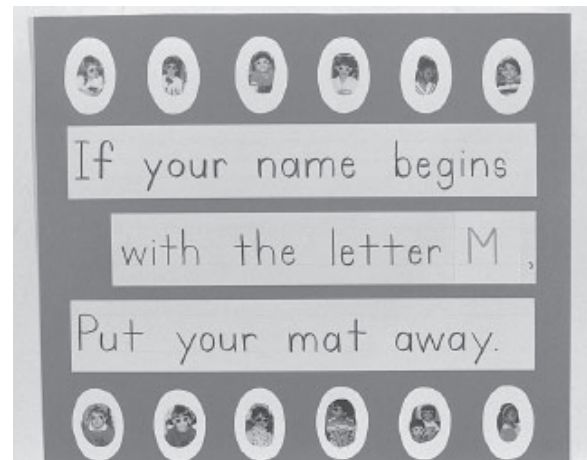
"Look Who's Here" Song Chart



- ☐ black poster board, 22 by 28 inches
- ☐ white or manila sentence strips and black marker, to print the words to the song, with a blank space at the end of the first three lines for the children's name cards

- ☐ silhouette stickers, to decorate the chart
- ☐ magnetic tape or paper fasteners, to attach the names to the chart
- ☐ name card for each child, as in the Name Cards materials list
- ☐ tune for the song, "Mary Had a Little Lamb"
- ☐ text for the song:
Look who's here it's ____,
Look who's here it's ____,
Look who's here it's ____,
They're all at school today.

Transition Chart



- ☐ poster board (any color), 22 by 19 inches
- ☐ 2 pastel sentence strips, with the following words printed on them:
Line 1: If your name begins
Line 2: with the letter __, (for a letter card)
- ☐ white sentence strip, for line 3:
Line 3: Put your mat away.
- ☐ photographs of the children, to decorate the chart
- ☐ white oval paper cutouts, to back the photographs (optional)
- ☐ index cards, cut in half, with the first letters of all the names in the class printed on them
- ☐ black marker, to print the words and letters

- ☐ glue stick or rubber cement, to mount the items to the board
- ☐ lamination, for protection and durability
- ☐ magnetic tape, to hold the letter cards to the board after laminating
- ☐ tune for the song, “This is the Way We Wash Our Hands” (recordings available online)

“Rain, Rain, Go Away” Big Book



- ☐ 4 pieces of dark-blue construction paper, 12 by 18 inches, for pages 1 and 2 and the front and back covers
- ☐ 1 piece of yellow construction paper, 12 by 18, for page 3
- ☐ cloud cutouts and rain stickers, for the illustration on page 1
- ☐ umbrella cutouts, for the illustrations on page 2 and the cover
- ☐ sun cutout and child-silhouette stickers, for the illustrations on page 3
- ☐ 4 blue sentence strips, for pages 1 and 2 and the cover
- ☐ 2 yellow sentence strips, for page 3
- ☐ clear word pocket, clear acetate, or extra laminating film, to form 2 pockets to hold name cards on page 3
- ☐ name card for each child, sized to fit the pockets
- ☐ stapler, to hold the pages together
- ☐ black marker, to print the words
- ☐ rubber cement or glue stick, to attach the materials to the pages
- ☐ basket, to hold the name cards

Directions for Making the Big Book

1. For the cover, print the words *Rain, Rain, Go Away* on a blue sentence strip. Use capital letters for each word because it is the title of the book. Glue the sentence strip and several umbrella cutouts to a piece of blue construction paper.
2. For page 1, print the words *Rain, rain, go away* on a blue sentence strip. Use a capital letter for the first word only. Glue the sentence strip to the bottom of a blue piece of construction paper. Add cloud shapes and rain stickers for the illustration.
3. For page 2, print the words *Come again some other day* on blue sentence strips. Use a capital letter for the first word only. Mount the sentence strips to the top and bottom of a piece of blue construction paper. Glue umbrella cutouts to the center of the paper.
4. For page 3, use yellow sentence strips. For the first line, leave a 9-inch blank space on the sentence strip followed by the word *and*. The second line is simply a 9-inch length of sentence strip. For line 3, print the words *want to play*, ending with a period. Glue the sentence strips to the board, as pictured. Add the sun and silhouette illustrations.
5. Use a piece of blue construction paper for the back cover. Staple the pages together.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Hang the attendance chart near the door to the classroom and place the name tags on a small table nearby. Throughout the year, new attendance charts with shapes that coordinate with the season or a high-interest curriculum topic can be created.
2. The “Look Who’s Here” song chart is an excellent way to introduce children to one another during the first days and weeks of school. The song helps children become familiar with the names of their classmates, and the chart helps them recognize the names in written form. The words are sung to the tune of “Mary Had a Little Lamb.” Teachers should point to each word (*voice-print pairing*) as they read or sing the words.
3. An appropriate time to implement the transition chart is after many of the children know the first letter of their names. Teachers should read the letter on the chart and repeat its sound several times to help children recognize the *letter-sound relationship*. When children suggest names that begin with a particular letter, emphasize the beginning sound as you repeat each name.
4. The big book can be implemented at any time of the year, but it is particularly popular on rainy days. Because the text is simple and most children already know the song, they can read the book independently. Many will point to the words and practice voice-print pairing.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	RELATED COMMENTS/QUESTIONS/ACTIONS
Children will begin to recognize the written form of their names and the names of their friends.	That’s right! Danny and Jordan are both here. You read their names on the chart.
Children will begin to focus on the beginning letter and sound of the names of their friends.	Julia begins with a “juh” sound. Who else’s name starts with that sound? Yes—Jordan.
Some children will begin to point to the words on the charts or in the big book as they read. If they make a mistake, they may self-correct.	Can you point to the words while you sing “Rain, Rain, Go Away?” You and Andi can take turns and help each other.
Children will begin to feel more comfortable and confident with printed materials.	I saw many of you reading the chart today and adding names to it.

Silly Sally and Friends— Reading Literature (3 activities)



Props for Silly Sally Story Extension

DESCRIPTION

Silly Sally, written and illustrated by Audrey Wood, is an exuberant **predictable book** beloved by many young children. The fanciful character of Silly Sally is on her way to town, but always moving backward and upside down. The story follows a sequence in which a chain of characters is introduced, one at a time, who then continue with Silly Sally on route to town. The sequence repeats when the character Neddy Buttercup awakens the other sleeping characters. This helps children begin to predict the events in the story. By clapping the **syllables** in the words for the characters, children discover that the animal words contain only one syllable. The **rhyming** text introduces children to many verbs with an

ing or *ed* ending, and the humorous illustrations hold their attention and help them predict the text. Children soon remember the words and can pretend to read the story. The book thus helps children develop many important **emergent reading** skills.

To encourage children to recreate and extend the story of *Silly Sally*, teachers can assemble a collection of small plastic animals to correspond with those in the book. Spools and wooden balls or doll heads, available in craft stores, are used to make the characters of Silly Sally and Neddy Buttercup. The character figures can be placed in a small basket or on a tray, along with a copy of the book, in the manipulative, block, or book areas of the classroom.

A related teacher-made **big book** incorporates photographs of all of the children in the class, mounted upside down. The text describes the actions of the children. For example:

Silly Peter played bells at school,
Upside down, looking cool.

When reading the big book to children, teachers can model the **front-to-back**, **left-to-right**, and **top-to-bottom orientation** of the text and demonstrate **voice-print pairing** by pointing to each word as it is read. Children can help in the group book sharing by reading the names of their friends. Because of the predictable and repeating text, they can also read the book independently.

FOCUS STANDARDS

Common Core State Standards—K

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE

7. With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the story in which they appear (e.g., what moment in a story an illustration depicts).

Additional Standards: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10

READING STANDARDS: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

3d. Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ.

Additional Standards: 1, 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 3b, 3c

SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS

6. Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.

LANGUAGE STANDARDS

5d. Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs describing the same general action (e.g., walk, march, strut, prance) by acting out the meanings.

Additional Standards: 1e, 1f, 4b

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

P-LC 3. Child varies the amount of information provided to meet the demands of the situation.

Additional Standards: P-LC 1, 2

LITERACY

P-LIT 2. Child demonstrates an understanding of how print is used (functions of print) and the rules that govern how print works (conventions of print).

Additional Standards: P-LIT 1, 3, 4

West Virginia Early Learning Standards Framework—Language & Literacy

LITERATURE

3. Recognizes story elements such as characters, sequence of events, and theme of a story.

MATERIALS

Book Sharing

- ☐ *Silly Sally*, by Audrey Wood, in hardcover, paperback, or big book format

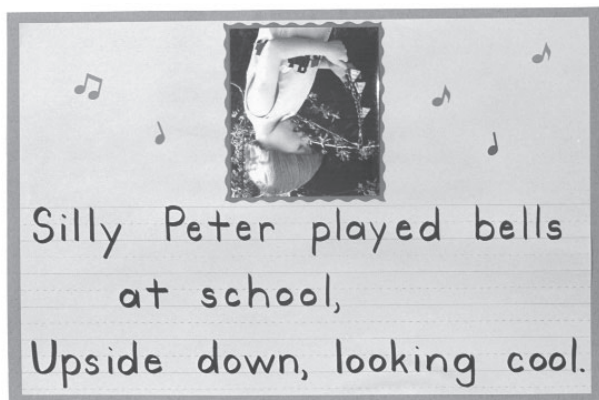
Silly Sally Story Extension

- ☐ 2 small wooden doll heads or wooden balls, approximately 1-inch in diameter, for the heads of Silly Sally and Neddy Buttercup
- ☐ 2 small wooden spools, for the bodies of Silly Sally and Neddy Buttercup

- ☐ small package of orange doll hair or orange yarn, for Silly Sally's hair
- ☐ small piece of lace trim, ribbon, or felt, for Silly Sally's dress
- ☐ small piece of yellow felt, cut in petal shapes, for Neddy Buttercup's tunic and hat
- ☐ 2 small wooden discs, to hold Silly Sally upside down and Neddy Buttercup right side up
- ☐ hot glue gun or glue, to attach the parts of the dolls

- ☐ small plastic figures of a pig, dog, loon (duck), and sheep, to correspond with the animal characters in the book

"Silly Friends" Big Book



- ☐ story paper, 12 by 18 inches (lined on half of the page and blank at the top), trimmed to 11 by 17 inches
- ☐ colored construction paper, 12 by 18 inches, to back the story paper (for durability and color contrast) and for the front and back covers
- ☐ sentence strip, for the cover, with the words *Silly Friends* printed on it
- ☐ photograph of each child in the class doing something at school, mounted upside down, with one child per page
- ☐ rubber cement or glue stick, to mount the materials
- ☐ lamination
- ☐ yarn ties or notebook rings, to hold the pages together
- ☐ text for each page, with the child's name and action added to the first line:
Silly Brooke Painted at school,
Upside down, looking cool.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Read the book to the class several times, over several days, so that the children become familiar with the story. For the initial presentation, read the book without stopping to allow children to grasp the overall storyline. Show children the name of the book and the author's name on the cover. Point out that Audrey Wood also created the illustrations. Address the meanings of some words that may not be familiar, such as *leaping*, *loon*, and *jig*.
2. On the second reading, pause before each character is introduced to determine if children remember their names and the order in which they appear. This allows children to participate in the shared reading and focuses their attention on the characters and story sequence. Draw attention to the name of Silly Sally. The words differ by only one letter.
3. On the next reading, focus on the rhyming words. Because the children have heard the text several times, they may be able to remember at least some of the rhymes. Ask children if they can think of other words that also rhyme with a designated word.
4. Finally, focus on the verbs with *ing* endings. After the story, create some movements with the children. Use an *ing* ending to model the appropriate action verbs, such as, "We are *swaying*," or "We are *turning* around." Model this verb form throughout the day, as in "I see you are *cutting* with scissors."
5. The collection of characters for the book extension should be available throughout the unit so that children can reenact the story or create their own stories.
6. After children are familiar with the story of *Silly Sally*, introduce the "Silly Friends" big book. Carefully point to each word to model left-to-right and top-to-bottom orientation, as well as voice-print pairing. Make the book available for children to read independently and with friends. It will likely be a popular addition to the classroom.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	RELATED COMMENTS/QUESTIONS/ACTIONS
Children will enjoy the story of <i>Silly Sally</i> and remember some of the characters.	Who are some of the animal characters Silly Sally meets? Why does she walk backwards and upside down?
Children will begin to remember the sequence of characters and events.	What character comes next? What does Neddy Buttercup do when he finds Silly Sally asleep?
Some children will remember that both <i>Silly</i> and <i>Sally</i> begin with an S.	What other letters are the same in <i>Silly</i> and <i>Sally</i> ? Let's compare the words.
Children will begin to remember the rhyming words.	Pause so that children can supply the rhyming word: "... a silly pig, they danced a _____."
Some children will be able to read the names in the class big book; others will rely on the pictures.	Let's play a game. I'll cover the picture and you try to figure out the name.
Children will practice reading both <i>Silly Sally</i> and the class big book independently.	This time you read the book to me, and I'll listen.

A World of Shapes—Reading Informational Texts (3 activities)



DESCRIPTION

A **concept book** is a particular type of **informational text** that examines topics that are conceptual in nature, such as colors, letters, numbers, patterns, shadows, shapes, and time. The illustrations in concept books are particularly important because they help make the abstract concepts more concrete for children.

This series of activities focuses on the concept of shape, including recognizing shapes throughout

the environment and describing the attributes of particular shapes. The first group of books is appropriate for preschool and kindergarten children. All have color, photographic illustrations and rely heavily on discussion among children and adults. Two of the books in this collection are wordless: *Shapes, Shapes, Shapes* and *Cubes, Cones, Cylinders, & Spheres*. The other three, *Shapes in Nature*, *Building Shapes*, and *A Star in My Orange*, have minimal text. The only text in *Shapes in Nature* is

the word for each shape, written in both print and cursive forms. *Building Shapes* is perfect for **emergent readers** because the text repeats: “Buildings are triangles,” “Buildings are squares,” and so forth.

Two additional books for first-grade teachers are included in this activity series: *If You Were a Polygon* and *If You Were a Quadrilateral*. These books focus on the characteristics of two-dimensional shapes with straight sides and help children sort them into appropriate categories. The text is child friendly, and the illustrations are humorous.

Young children from preschool through first grade will enjoy the two extension activities. The first involves sorting a collection of objects from nature

into groups based on their shapes. Children can work in pairs or small groups to decide where each item belongs.

The second activity is the creation of a class **big book** that children illustrate with paper collage pieces cut into the shapes and colors of small wooden table blocks. Children then add their names to a short poem, which is displayed on each page of the book, along with a word or brief description of what they built with the paper blocks. This encourages children to combine shapes to create new composite shapes, such as a triangle and rectangle that together form a pentagon.

FOCUS STANDARDS

Common Core State Standards—K

READING STANDARDS FOR INFORMATIONAL TEXT

8. *With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.*

Note: This refers to the books *If You Were a Polygon* and *If You Were a Quadrilateral*.

Additional Standards: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10

READING STANDARDS: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

1a. *Follow words from left to right, top to bottom, and page by page.*

Additional Standards: 1, 1b, 1c, 1d, 2c, 2d, 3, 3a, 3b, 3c

SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS

4. *Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.*

Additional Standards: 1, 2, 3, 5

LANGUAGE STANDARDS

5a. *Sort common objects into categories (e.g., shapes, foods) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent.*

Additional Standards: 1a, 1b, 1f, 2d, 5c, 6

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

P-LC 7. *Child shows understanding of word categories and relationships among words.*

Note: In this activity series, the category is words related to shapes.

Additional Standards: P-LC 1, 2, 3

LITERACY

P-LIT 2. *Child demonstrates an understanding of how print is used (functions of print) and the rules that govern how print works (conventions of print).*

Additional Standards: P-LIT 3, 6

Louisiana’s Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards—Language and Literacy Development

LITERATURE

LL2. *Demonstrate understanding of a variety of concepts, such as opposites, positions, and comparisons.*

MATERIALS

Book Sharing (Preschool and Kindergarten)

- ☐ *Shapes in Nature* by Alina A. Dumitrescu
- ☐ *Shapes, Shapes, Shapes* by Tana Hoban
- ☐ *Cubes, Cones, Cylinders, & Spheres* by Tana Hoban
- ☐ *Building Shapes* by Susan Canizares and Samantha Berger
- ☐ *A Star in My Orange* by Dana Meachen Rau

Book Sharing (First Grade)

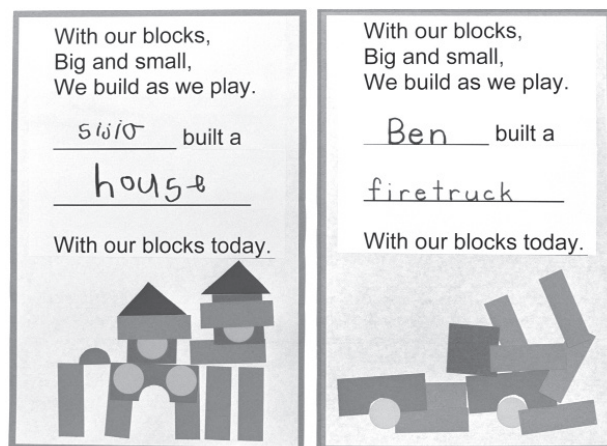
- ☐ *If You Were a Polygon* by Marcie Aboff
- ☐ *If You were a Quadrilateral* by Molly Blaisdell

Shape Sorting from Nature

- ☐ natural objects with a circular shape, such as a bird nest, sand dollar, round nut, snail shell (spiral), sweet gum pod, and sea urchin
- ☐ natural objects with an oval shape, such as a pumpkin seed, cowrie seashell, avocado seed, leaf from a jade plant, and a plastic bird's egg (to represent the natural egg)
- ☐ natural objects with a triangular shape, such as a fern (preserved in self-laminating film), pinecone, feather, naturally chipped rock, and a small replica of a spruce or pine tree
- ☐ natural objects with a pentagonal shape, such as a starfish with five arms, flower with five petals (preserved in self-laminating film), sand dollar (the center is a pentagon), locust pod (the center is a pentagon), and a dried apple slice that shows the pentagonal core
- ☐ natural objects with a hexagonal shape, such as a wasp comb, leaf with six fronds (preserved in self-laminating film), artificial flower with six petals, and a plastic replica of a snowflake
- ☐ sorting tray, with five compartments, or five small bowls

- ☐ basket or tray, to hold all of the objects prior to sorting

Building Blocks Class Book



- ☐ white construction paper, 12 by 18 inches (one sheet per child)
- ☐ white multipurpose paper, with the words to the poem printed on each page and blank spaces for children's names and what they created
- ☐ divided tray for each group, with construction-paper collage pieces cut in the shapes and colors of table blocks
- ☐ glue containers
- ☐ notebook rings or yarn ties, to hold the pages together
- ☐ text:

With our blocks,
Big and small,
We build as we play.
_____ built a

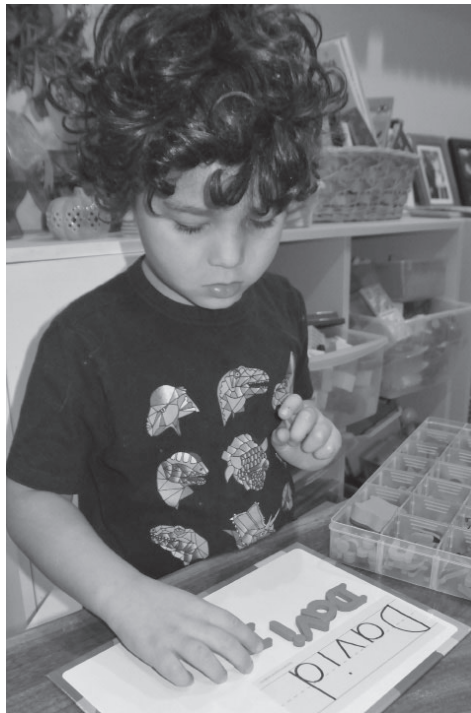
With our blocks today.

Implementation

1. Include copies of all the books in the book area of the classroom throughout the unit so that children can explore them independently.
2. *Shapes in Nature* is a good book to begin the unit. Black pages each contain a brightly colored image of a shape, a large photograph of a natural object that illustrates that shape, and the word for the shape in white print and cursive. To further help children visualize the shape, a bright line is used to outline the shape in the photograph. The layout of the book focuses children's attention on the desired content, which makes the book excellent for sharing at group time.
3. On the second day, teachers may wish to reread *Shapes in Nature* to remind children of the various shapes and their names. Tana Hoban's *Shapes, Shapes, Shapes* is a good follow-up. The photographs in this wordless book contain many shapes for children to identify and describe. It is an excellent book to prompt conversation.
4. *Building Shapes* and *Cubes, Cones, Cylinders, & Spheres* provide a logical sequence because the same shapes viewed in the previous books appear in three-dimensional form in these books. Although *Building Shapes* uses the two-dimensional term for the shapes in its text, teachers should also supply the term for the three-dimensional shape so that children become familiar with the vocabulary.
5. The shape-sorting activity should be implemented in the classroom once the shapes have been introduced during group time. The materials fit well in the manipulative, math, or science areas of the classroom.
6. After reading the books about three-dimensional shapes, provide wooden table blocks so that children can use them to create three-dimensional structures. Photographs of the block buildings can be taken to serve as models for the class big book illustrations.
7. After children have had a chance to build with the blocks, implement the Building Blocks class big book. Children can look at the photographs of their block structures and recreate them with two-dimensional collage pieces, or they can design a new picture for the book. Moving between two and three dimensions with shapes helps children develop concrete images of geometric forms.
8. Depending on the level of their class, first-grade teachers may decide to do a brief review of shapes before moving directly to the more advanced books, *If You Were a Polygon* and *If You Were a Quadrilateral*. After reading the books, children can sort plastic or wooden shapes into the appropriate groups.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	RELATED COMMENTS/QUESTIONS/ACTIONS
Some children will not yet know the names of basic shapes and will begin to learn them from these experiences.	The book says that this shape is called a circle. Let's make a circle with our arms. Look around and see if you see a circle in the room.
Children will begin to notice shapes in the books and throughout the classroom.	You're finding a lot of shapes! Let's write them down on this chart paper.
Children will sort the shapes from nature into various categories. Some may group circles and ovals together, and some may confuse pentagons and hexagons.	Alicia says the two flowers can't go in the same group. Tell us why you think they don't belong together.
Children will recognize their names in the class book and point to the words for the buildings they made.	Who made this page of the book? How can you tell?
As they listen to the teacher read the class book, and as they practice reading it themselves, children will begin to construct voice-print pairing and left-to-right orientation .	Where do you start when you read the book? What is the first word on every page of the book? That's right— <i>with</i> !
Some children will read the class book independently.	Can you find the word for <i>blocks</i> on this page? Jena wrote <i>skyscraper</i> ! That's a long word and a tall building!

Bingo Revisited—Reading Foundational Skills (3 activities)



Letter magnetic board

DESCRIPTION

Young children love songs and interactive games. They are also interested in reading their own names and the names of their friends. In this series of activities, the familiar song “Bingo” is repurposed to include the names of the children in the class. Any length of name will fit into the *rhythm* of the song. The letters for each child’s name are printed on cards and placed in an envelope labeled with the child’s name. This makes it easier for young children to find the necessary letters.

Children are excited by this activity and often work together to create many names. Cleanup then becomes a challenge. To make it easier to return the letters to the appropriate envelopes, consider printing each child’s name in a different color of marker; use the same color on the envelope. Children can then match the colors of the letters to the appropriate envelopes.

Not all children can use the chart at the same time. To extend opportunities for children to participate,

and to present the activity in a different context, teachers can assemble a basket of plastic magnetic letters, a magnetic board or metal baking pan, and a set of children's name cards. A tray containing the items can be placed in the manipulative, writing, or reading area of the classroom.

Yet another implementation of the song can occur at the snack or lunch table. Teachers can point to the letters on the children's name cards (activity series 1.1) as they sing the song.

FOCUS STANDARDS

Common Core State Standards—K

READING STANDARDS: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

1d. Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet.

Additional Standards: 1, 1a, 1b, 1c

SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS

1a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion).

Additional Standard: 1

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

P-LC 7. Child shows understanding of word categories and relationships among words.

Note: In this activity series, the category is words related to names.

Additional Standards: P-LC 1, 3

LITERACY

P-LIT 3. Child identifies letters of the alphabet and produces correct sounds associated with letters.

Additional Standards: P-LIT 1, 2, 6

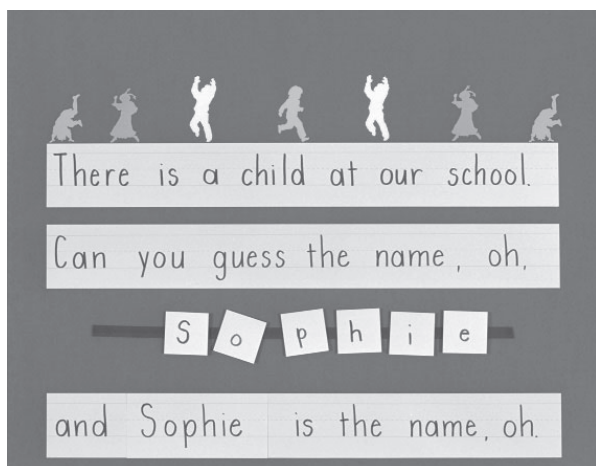
Maryland Early Learning Standards—Language & Literacy

READING FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

RF3.a. Recognize that words are made up of letters and their sounds.

MATERIALS

Interactive Chart



- ☐ colored poster board, 22 by 28 inches
- ☐ white sentence strips

- ☐ markers in multiple colors
- ☐ magnetic tape
- ☐ silhouette stickers or class picture, to decorate the chart
- ☐ white note cards or manila card stock, cut into rectangles 2 by 1.5 inches
- ☐ envelope for each child, to hold the letters in the child's name
- ☐ name card for each child, printed on white sentence strips
- ☐ rubber cement or glue stick
- ☐ basket, to hold the envelopes with the children's names

Letter Magnetic Board

- ☐ plastic magnetic letters, enough to make each child's name
- ☐ magnetic board or metal baking pan
- ☐ name card for each child

Directions for Making the Interactive Chart

Print the words to the song on white sentence strips, as pictured, and position them on the board. If desired, the name of your school can be substituted for the words "our school" in the first line. For line 3, attach a strip of magnetic tape to the board to hold the letters. On line 4, leave a space for the child's name. Once positioned, glue the sentence strips in place.

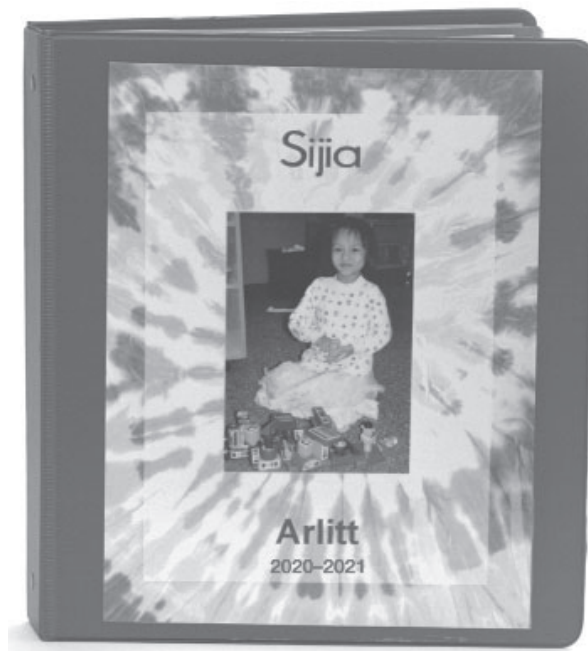
Using a different color of marker for each child, print the letters of the children's names on the rectangular cards, oriented vertically. Use a capital for the initial letter and lowercase letters for the rest of the name to help children learn this convention. Use the same color of marker for each child's letters, envelope, and name card. The letters and name cards can be attached to the board with magnetic tape.

Implementation

1. Introduce the chart at group time so that children can become familiar with it. All children will want to see their names on the chart. If there will not be sufficient time, let the children know that the remaining names will be sung the next day. For the initial presentations, do not remove letters from the names, as is the practice with the traditional "Bingo" song. This can be incorporated later.
2. Post the chart where it will be available throughout the day for children to use independently or with friends.
3. Once the song has been introduced, direct children to the magnetic board and letters in the classroom. They can use the name cards to create the names of their friends.
4. Teachers can use the children's name tags throughout the day, such as during snack or lunch, to continue the "Bingo" song and provide more practice.
5. When children have become familiar with the song, model singing multiple verses and removing one letter from the beginning of the names for each verse. Clap for the missing letters. This draws children's attention to **letter-sound pairing** in words and to **word boundaries**.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	RELATED COMMENTS/QUESTIONS/ACTIONS
Some children will match the letter cards to the letters in their name card.	What is the first letter in your name? See if you can put all the letters on the board in the correct order.
Some children will need help putting their letters in the correct order.	Look at your name card and find the first letter. Put the <i>R</i> on the left part of the magnetic tape. Now look for the next letter (point).
Many children will learn how to spell their name from singing the song and using the manipulative materials.	Tell me how to spell your name on the chart. If I switch the order of the letters, will it still spell your name?
Children will learn the names of many lowercase letters from participating in the activities.	Tell me the names of the letters in Nancy's name. Then we'll sing them.

Baby Books, Family Diaries, Scrapbooks, and Journals— Encouraging Reading and Writing (4 activities)



DESCRIPTION

This activity series begins with a special **big book** designed for each incoming class. Each child has a separate page that includes a photograph of the child as a baby, which is clearly visible, and a current photograph of the child, hidden behind a door. A short poem guides children to open the door to discover the child who matches the baby. The book helps children begin to know one another and reinforces their connection to home. The repeating text and photographs motivate children to read the book again and again with their new friends.

Family diaries build upon children's experiences with the class baby book. The diaries are a type of journal that focuses on children's home and school families. They are quite popular with young children, who like to share them with their friends. Parents send pictures of their children and families to school, where the teacher makes copies of the photos. If children do not have photographs from home, teachers can take pictures of them doing various things at school with their friends. On designated days, children select a photograph, glue it to their paper, and write or draw about it in their diary. On other days, the teacher may prepare a

specific topic for children to draw or write about, such as these:

What did your family do over the weekend?

What does your family like to eat?

Who are the members of your family?

What is your favorite thing to do at home?

Children also have school families, which include their classmates, teachers, classroom assistants, administrators, custodians, and lunchroom workers. Teachers can make photos of all of these people available for children to select and write about in their diaries.

School scrapbooks, which document each child's development throughout the year, are an excellent way to encourage children to write, preserve children's progression in writing, and share milestones with parents. The scrapbooks include photographs,

writing samples, artwork, and school artifacts, such as name tags and favorite class recipes. Specific pages allow children to record school memories, such as their friends, favorite lunch, special books, familiar songs, and favorite activities. Throughout the year, children can help select samples of their work to include in their scrapbooks.

Journal writing is incorporated into many kindergarten and first-grade classrooms, and some preschools. At first, many children seem to enjoy writing; however, over time, some children get tired of journal writing. Because teachers want to cultivate an enjoyment of writing in children, this activity provides ideas for inspiring young writers by connecting journal writing to popular topics and other activities in the classroom. Paper cut into shapes that represent areas of high interest, and word cards that relate to the shapes, encourage renewed interest in journal writing.

FOCUS STANDARDS

Common Core State Standards—K

READING STANDARDS: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.

Additional Standards: 1a, 1b, 1c

WRITING STANDARDS

1. Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose opinion pieces in which they tell a reader the topic or the name of the book they are writing about and state an opinion or preference about the topic or book (e.g., My favorite book is . . .).

Additional Standards: 3, 8

SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS

4. Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.

Additional Standards: 1, 5

LANGUAGE STANDARDS

2d. Spell simple words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships.

Additional Standards: 1a, 1b, 2, 2a, 2b, 2c, 5a, 5c

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

P-LC 5. Child expresses self in increasingly long, detailed, and sophisticated ways.

Additional Standard: P-LC 3

LITERACY

P-LIT 6. Child writes for a variety of purposes using increasingly sophisticated marks.

State of Alaska Early Learning Guidelines— Communication, Language, and Literacy

LITERACY

Goal 72. Children use writing skills and demonstrate knowledge of writing conventions.

MATERIALS

Class Baby Book



- ☐ pastel construction paper, 12 by 18 inches (one sheet per child)
- ☐ computer-generated text, printed on white multipurpose paper, cut out in sections, and mounted on the construction paper as pictured
- ☐ color copies of each child's baby picture and current photograph, mounted to the construction paper as pictured
- ☐ small doors, made from laminated construction paper and attached to the book pages after they have been laminated to hide the children's current photos
- ☐ lamination
- ☐ clear packing tape, to attach the doors to the book pages
- ☐ text for the poem:

(section 1)

When I was a baby

I looked like this,

Guess who it could be!

(section 2)

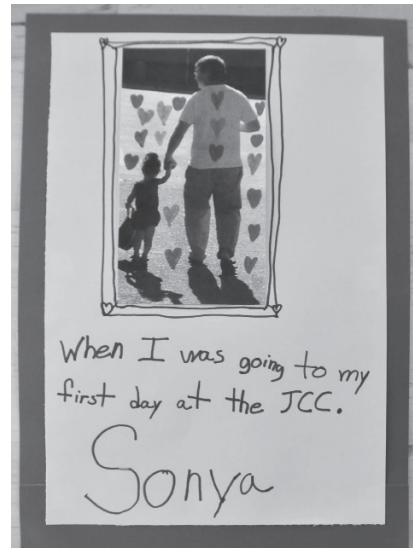
Now open the door

and you can see,

(section 3)

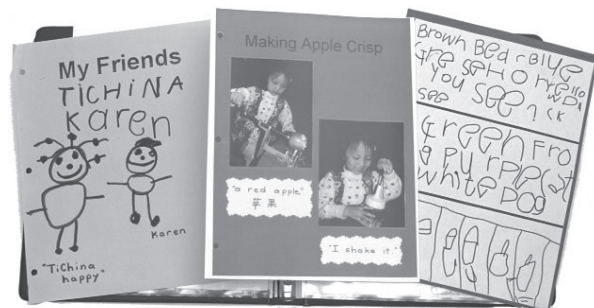
It's me!

Family Diaries



- ☐ one inexpensive loose-leaf notebook per child, or colored card stock, 8.5 by 11 inches, for the front and back covers
- ☐ white paper, 8.5 by 11 inches
- ☐ multiple copies of photographs of children and families
- ☐ colored markers
- ☐ glue sticks
- ☐ notebook rings, to hold the pages together if notebooks are not used

Scrapbooks



- ☐ one inexpensive loose-leaf notebook per child
- ☐ photographs of each child engaged in school activities

- ☐ page protectors, to hold artwork and writing samples
- ☐ 3-hole punch

- ☐ multiple copies of paper with preprinted headings, such as My Friends, My Favorite Lunch, My Favorite Books, Field Trips, Class Projects, and My Favorite Songs

Journals



Shape of paper

- ☐ *grocery cart*, to encourage children to write shopping lists of favorite foods

Word cards

- ☐ favorite foods, generated by the children, such as pizza, ice cream, and macaroni

Shape of paper

- ☐ *ice-cream cone*, perhaps to coordinate with an ice cream parlor in dramatic play
- ☐ *rocket or space ship*, to build on children's interest in space

Word cards

- ☐ ice cream flavors, such as vanilla, mint, strawberry, and chocolate
- ☐ rocket, astronaut, blastoff, moon, stars, comet, sun, Milky Way, and galaxy



- ☐ *mitten*, to coordinate with books about mittens and winter (activity series 2.6)
- ☐ *heart*, to coordinate with children's interest in Valentine's Day

- ☐ mitten, snow, snowman, snowflake, icy, cold, sled, and animals from *The Mitten*
- ☐ candy heart phrases, such as "Be Mine," "Hug Me," and "I love you"

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Introduce the Class Baby Book near the beginning of the year. It serves as a social icebreaker that draws children together as they share the book. The class baby book is a wonderful introduction to print for young children; older children can soon read the *predictable text*.
2. Consider alternating journal writing with writing for family diaries. Some teachers may wish to make materials available in the classroom for

children to add diary pages at various times of the day.

3. Encourage children to select artwork and writing to add to their scrapbooks.
4. Vary the journal experience throughout the year by including different word cards and shapes of paper.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	RELATED COMMENTS/QUESTIONS/ACTIONS
Children will delight in pairing the baby pictures with their classmates.	I wonder who this baby could be? Do you want to guess before we open the door?
Children will read along with the teacher, following the <i>left-to-right orientation</i> and <i>voice-print pairing</i> .	Look at the word for <i>I</i> . When <i>I</i> is a word, and not just a letter in a word, it is spelled with a capital.
Children will be eager to share information about their families and to read about other children's families.	We are going to keep your family diaries in a basket in the reading area. You can share them with your friends.
Children will write at various levels depending on their stage of development.	I can help you write <i>dog</i> . It starts with a <i>d</i> . Draw a circle. Now make a line going down.
Some children will find it easier to write in their journals because paper in specific shapes and word cards provide suggestions.	You wrote many space words in your journal. What is happening in the picture you drew? You can write about that, too.
Many children will be eager to write or draw on the unusual paper.	You and Clara both wrote shopping lists. Let's compare your favorite foods.

Connecting Home and School— Literacy Suitcases (3 activities)



Apple Literacy Suitcase

DESCRIPTION

Literacy suitcases encourage **emergent reading and writing** and build home/school connections. Some children do not have books or writing materials in their homes; others have many of both but still enjoy sharing special materials from school with a parent or older sibling. The literacy suitcase provides materials to read, models for writing, and an abundance of writing materials.

A basic literacy suitcase serves to introduce children to the shared literacy experience at the

beginning of the year. A small plastic case, backpack, or bag with handles contains and transports the materials, which include various colors of multipurpose paper cut into quarter sheets, several fancy pencils, name cards for all of the children in the class, and a note to the child and the parent.

Another option for a beginning literacy suitcase is one focused on apples, a favorite autumn topic. This suitcase is a bit more elaborate, with paper in the colors of apples (red, yellow, and green); a

pencil with an apple topper; paper cut into apple shapes; word cards for apple colors; and a fill-in sheet that says, *I like _____ apples best*. The apple suitcase is a good option for older preschool children who have had more experience with writing.

The third suitcase in this series is planned for older preschool, kindergarten, and first-grade children. It is based on the popular book *Dear Zoo*, by Rod Campbell, and includes a board-book copy of the book along with word cards for the animals in the story. Blank books with a red cage for the front, which is similar to the cover of the book, provide a space for children to write. There are also fill-in sheets that read, *I wrote to the zoo to send me a pet. They sent me a*

_____. Children can copy the name of an animal from the word cards to fill in the space.

Teachers should devise their own schedule for circulating the suitcases. One option is to send them home on Thursday, so that children have them for the weekend, and request that they be returned on Monday. The literacy suitcases can also be shared with individual children during class. Because the goal is to connect home and school, applications of standards will vary widely depending on how the children use the materials. The hope is that all children gain experience in exploring written materials and practicing emergent writing.

FOCUS STANDARDS

Common Core State Standards—K

READING STANDARDS: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

1b. Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS

1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework

LITERACY

P-LIT 6. Child writes for a variety of purposes using increasingly sophisticated marks.

North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development—Language Development and Communication

FOUNDATIONS FOR WRITING

Goal LDC-13. Children use writing and other symbols to record information and communicate for a variety of purposes.

MATERIALS

Basic Literacy Suitcase

- ☐ quarter sheets of various colors of multipurpose paper
- ☐ recycled envelopes from mail-in promotions
- ☐ recycled stamps from mail advertisements
- ☐ decorative pencil
- ☐ name cards for all children and teachers
- ☐ alphabet sample

- ☐ note to parents

- ☐ note to children

Apple Literacy Suitcase

- ☐ quarter sheets of red, yellow, and green paper
- ☐ pencil decorated with apples or an apple topper
- ☐ red, yellow, and green colored pencils or crayons
- ☐ name cards for all children

- ☐ word cards for *apple*, *red*, *yellow*, and *green*, written in colors that match the words
- ☐ fill-in paper strips that read *I like _____ apples best.*
- ☐ apple-shaped paper
- ☐ alphabet sample
- ☐ note to parents
- ☐ note to children

Dear Zoo Literacy Suitcase



- ☐ board-book copy of *Dear Zoo*, by Rod Campbell
- ☐ quarter sheets of white paper
- ☐ several blank books, made by stapling quarter sheets of paper to a cover with a red cage
- ☐ word cards for all the animals in the book
- ☐ fill-in sheets that read, *I wrote to the zoo to send me a pet. They sent me a _____.*
- ☐ name cards for all children
- ☐ several pencils
- ☐ alphabet sample
- ☐ note to parents
- ☐ note to children

Special Instructions for Suitcases

Laminate the word cards and alphabet sample for durability. If a binder is not available, use a notebook ring to hold the name cards together. This helps to keep them from getting lost. If possible, add photographs of the children to the name cards to help children read the names.

Sample letter for parents

Dear Parent,

Your child is bringing home a class literacy suitcase. Children can use the materials to draw or write in whatever way they wish. If there is a book in the suitcase, you and your child can read it together.

Children may use all of the disposable materials. Please return the suitcase with the other materials on Monday.

Thank you for helping with this activity.

Sincerely,
Sally

Sample letter for children

Dear Claire,

Have fun with the writing suitcase. Use the paper to write and draw.
Please bring it back on Monday.

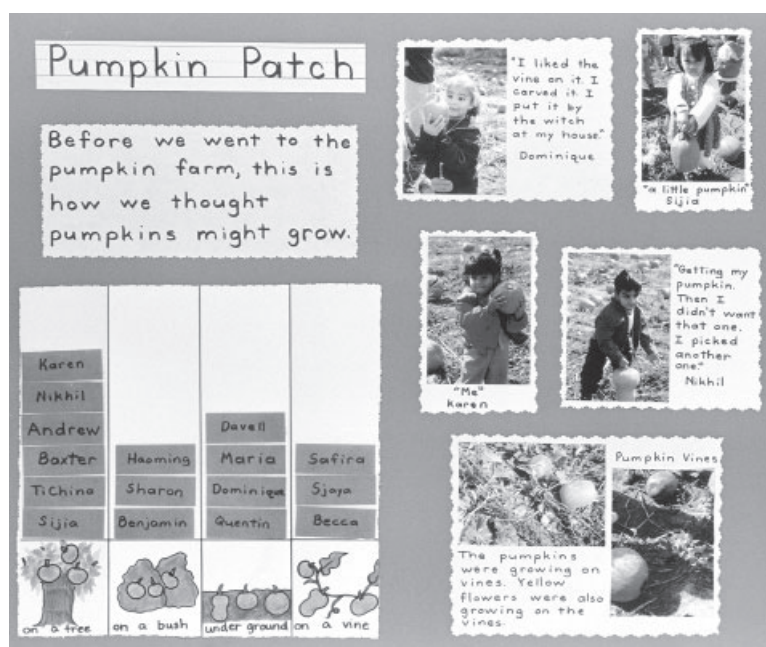
Your teacher,
Brenda

Implementation

1. Teachers may wish to explain the literacy suitcase and its purpose to parents during home visits or open houses.
2. Teachers should devise their own schedules for circulating the literacy suitcase. Some teachers send home several per week so that all children get a turn several times a year.
3. All children will want a turn to take the materials home. Posting a written schedule helps children anticipate when it will be their turn.
4. It is likely that some children will forget to return the suitcase when it is due. Plan some leeway in your schedule so you can call or send a reminder note home. Refrain from blaming children if the suitcase or materials are late or are lost.
5. Encourage children to bring back samples of their work if they wish. These can be posted in the writing area of the classroom.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	RELATED COMMENTS/QUESTIONS/ACTIONS
Children will be eager to take home the literacy suitcase.	Let's look at what is inside. You can use the paper and blank books to draw and write on.
Children will write at various levels, depending on their stage of development.	You made lots of writing marks on your paper. This one looks like the <i>H</i> in your name.
Some children will copy the word cards.	I see that green apples are your favorite. Mine too!
Some children will use phonetic spelling.	You wrote <i>snk</i> for <i>snake</i> . Can you hear another sound— <i>snaaaaa</i> . . . ? Yes—an <i>A</i> .

Pumpkin Patch—An Integrated Literacy Unit (6 activities)



Field trip documentation

DESCRIPTION

Pumpkins are exciting for young children, regardless of their age, and therefore make an excellent topic to extend literacy throughout the curriculum. This unit revolves around a collection of books about pumpkins that includes both *fiction* and *non-fiction*, although even the fictional books present accurate information about pumpkins. Several real pumpkins for the classroom spark children's interest and are the focus for some of the curriculum. Literacy activities extend to the science, writing, math, music, and dramatic play areas.

Information books are an important component of the unit. *Pumpkins*, by Ken Robbins, includes dazzling, full-page, color photographs of pumpkins at each stage of growth, which make it an excellent choice for group time. *From Seed to Pumpkin*, by Wendy Pfeffer, provides accurate information about pumpkins and attractive watercolor illustrations. It is an appropriate length for preschool through first grade. Finally, *Seed, Sprout, Pumpkin, Pie*, by Jill Esbaum, is a useful book for kindergarten and first-grade children who are engaged

in independent or group research. Published by National Geographic Kids, the text is written at an appropriate level for beginning readers, and the color photographs enhance the text.

Two fictional books are included in this unit. *Pumpkin, Pumpkin*, by Jeanne Titherington, employs the minimal storyline of a little boy planting a pumpkin seed and watching it grow. The short text and lovely pastel illustrations make this a perfect book for young preschool children. *How Many Seeds in a Pumpkin?*, by Margaret McNamara, presents scientific information and an interesting math problem through the storyline of students in a primary classroom examining pumpkins. Children from older preschool through the primary grades are likely to enjoy the story and gain information about pumpkins. The final focus book for the unit is *Up, Down, and Around*, by Katherine Ayres. A short, **predictable text** and large, merry illustrations describe how plants, including pumpkins, grow.

Numerous extension activities integrate the unit throughout the curriculum and increase children's learning. In the science area, preschool children predict what is inside the pumpkin(s) while teachers list their predictions. Older preschool, kindergarten, and first-grade children, who may have already explored the insides of pumpkins, predict whether the pumpkin(s) will float in a tub of water and then perform the experiment. With adult help, children in all classes should open a pumpkin and examine its contents. They can count to compare the number of seeds in various pumpkins. Some classes may roast

the seeds and eat them; seeds can also be planted and placed in a window for observation or saved for planting in the spring.

There are many opportunities for writing. A pumpkin-themed writing center includes word cards related to pumpkin growth, pencils with pumpkin toppers, paper shaped like pumpkins, and blank books with pumpkin covers. Kindergarten and first-grade children may work in table groups to research facts about pumpkins. Children can use story paper to draw and write their observations about pumpkins before and after they are opened.

Singing about concepts helps children remember facts. The text from *Up, Down, and Around* can be sung to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little, Star" to help children remember the content. Part of the text forms the basis for an **interactive chart** in which children insert word cards to label plants that grow up, down, or around. Meanwhile, the dramatic play area contains a farmers' market, with baskets of plastic vegetables and real gourds, along with their labels. Clipboards allow children to write orders. The song chart can be moved to the dramatic play area when it is not being used for group time.

Some classes may take a field trip to a pumpkin farm so that children can observe how pumpkins grow and select pumpkins for the classroom. Documentation of the field trip, which includes photographs and comments by the children, provides yet another literacy experience. Because the unit includes so many activities, it aligns with many content standards.

FOCUS STANDARDS

Common Core State Standards—K

READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE

9. *With prompting and support, compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in familiar stories.*

Note: This applies to the book *How Many Seeds in a Pumpkin?*

Additional Standards: 1, 6, 7, 10

READING STANDARDS FOR INFORMATIONAL TEXT

8. *With prompting and support, identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.*

Note: This refers to the reasons given for how pumpkins grow.

Additional Standards: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10

READING STANDARDS: FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

1b. *Recognize that spoken words are represented in written language by specific sequences of letters.*

Additional Standards: 1, 1a, 2, 3c, 4

WRITING STANDARDS

2. *Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name*

what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.

Additional Standards: 3, 7, 8

SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS

1a. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others and taking turns speaking about the topics and texts under discussion).

Additional Standards: 1, 1b, 4, 5

LANGUAGE STANDARDS

5d. Distinguish shades of meaning among verbs describing the same general action (e.g., walk, march, strut, prance) by acting out the meanings.

Note: This applies to *Up, Down, and Around* and the interactive chart.

The verbs *climb*, *vine*, *wind*, and *twine* are used to describe how vines grow.

Additional Standards: 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1f, 2, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 5, 5a, 6

Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

P-LC 7. Child shows understanding of word categories and relationships among words.

Note: This applies to the category of foods, and specifically vegetables, which are used in the book *Up, Down, and Around*, the interactive chart, and the farmers' market.

Additional Standards: P-LC 2, 5, 6

LITERACY

P-LIT 6. Child writes for a variety of purposes using increasingly sophisticated marks.

Additional Standards: P-LIT 1, 2, 5

Idaho Early Learning Guidelines— Communication, Language, and Literacy

READING

Goal 60. Children demonstrate awareness that written symbols can be used for a variety of purposes.

MATERIALS

Books

- ☐ *Pumpkins*, by Ken Robbins
- ☐ *From Seed to Pumpkin*, by Wendy Pfeffer
- ☐ *Seed, Sprout, Pumpkin, Pie*, by Jill Esbaum
- ☐ *Pumpkin, Pumpkin*, by Jeanne Titherington
- ☐ *How Many Seeds in a Pumpkin*, by Margaret McNamara
- ☐ *Up, Down, and Around*, by Katherine Ayres

Science/Math

- ☐ several varieties of pumpkins, including various colors and pumpkin gourds
 - prediction chart, for children to predict what is inside the pumpkin
 - prediction chart, for children to predict whether the pumpkins will sink or float
 - bucket or tub and water, large enough to allow the pumpkin to float
 - pumpkin carving knife, for an adult to use

- large bowls, for the pumpkin pulp and the seeds

Pumpkin Writing Center



- ☐ orange and yellow paper in the shape of a pumpkin
 - pumpkin-shaped blank books, with an orange cover and several white sheets inside
 - word cards, made from sentence strips, for *seed*, *pumpkin*, *sprout*, *flower*, and *jack-o-lantern*

- small illustrations for each of the word cards
- pencils with pumpkin toppers
- markers
- story paper (blank at the top, lined at the bottom)

Interactive Song Chart



- ☐ white poster board, 22 by 28 inches
- ☐ green sentence strips
- ☐ yellow sentence strips
- ☐ illustrations of vegetables
- ☐ black marker
- ☐ magnetic tape
- ☐ rubber cement or glue stick

Farmers' Market

- ☐ plastic vegetables, such as tomatoes, potatoes, corn, and carrots
- ☐ pumpkin gourds
- ☐ baskets or bins, to hold the vegetables
- ☐ label for each bin
- ☐ bags, for the shoppers
- ☐ several small clipboards, for taking orders
- ☐ pencils

Field Trip Documentation

- ☐ several pieces of orange poster board, 22 by 28 inches
- ☐ photos of the children interacting with the pumpkins and vines
- ☐ white paper, for displaying the photos and written documentation
- ☐ white sentence strip, for the title
- ☐ rubber cement
- ☐ black marker

Directions for Making the Song Chart

Use a black marker to print the words to the song on green sentence strips. Leave a blank space at the beginning of each line for the vegetable word cards.

_____ grow up.
 _____ grow down.
 _____ wind
 around and around.

Use yellow sentence strips to create word cards for the vegetables: *corn stalks, carrots, cucumbers, peppers, potatoes, pumpkins, broccoli, beets, and green beans*. Draw a small picture of each vegetable on the appropriate card, or attach downloaded photos from the Internet. Position and then mount the green sentence strips to the poster board. Leave space for the longest word card at the beginning of each line. Draw illustrations of vegetables around the border, or create a vegetable collage with photographs or cutout shapes. Laminate the chart and the word cards. Then add magnetic tape to the blank spaces on the board and the backs of the word cards.

Directions for Documenting the Field Trip

Ask teachers and chaperones to take photographs of the children and the pumpkins during the field trip. Close-up pictures of the pumpkins and vines are particularly important. Make sure that every child is photographed. After returning to school, ask children to describe the photographs, including what they were doing at the time and how the pumpkins looked. Mount the

photos to white paper and write the children's comments next to their pictures. Scrapbooking scissors, which cut fancy borders, are fun to use to cut around each child's documentation but are not necessary. Mount the papers to the poster board and post it in the classroom for children to read and discuss. Documentation panels help children remember important events and solidify the information.

Implementation

1. Display the pumpkin books in the book area and the pumpkins in the science area throughout the unit for children to explore. The pumpkin writing center and farmers' market should also be available throughout the unit.
2. For an initial group book sharing, *Pumpkin*, *Pumpkin* by Jeanne Titherington, is a good choice for younger preschool classes. *Pumpkins* by Ken Robbins, is an excellent choice for older preschool through first-grade classes.
3. Near the beginning of the unit, ask children to make predictions about what is inside the pumpkins and whether or not the pumpkins can float.
4. Before opening the pumpkins, let children place them in the water and observe what happens. Most children will be surprised that even the biggest pumpkins float. This is because they are largely hollow inside.
5. Children can write about pumpkins throughout the unit. After they are familiar with the books and have opened the pumpkins, children can work on individual or group research projects.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR	RELATED COMMENTS/QUESTIONS/ACTIONS
Children will be excited to see, touch, and lift the pumpkins.	How does the pumpkin feel when you lift it— heavy or light? Did you notice the grooves on the pumpkin? Help me count them.
Children will be interested in the books about pumpkins. Younger children may not realize what a vine is until they actually see one.	Look at these vines on the ground. This pumpkin is still attached to a vine. That's how pumpkins grow. I'll take a picture so we can remember.
Children will attach the word cards to the chart and note how this changes the words to the song. Some children will have trouble remembering which plants grow in which direction.	That chart says, "Potatoes grow up," but Sammy says that potatoes grow down. Let's check in the book.
Children will write about pumpkins based on their level of writing. Many children will be able to dictate more information about pumpkins than they can write.	Kim wrote, "I like pumpkins." So do I, Kim! Mark's research paper says that pumpkins can be orange, yellow, or green. I see those colors of pumpkins in the picture he drew.