This is a chapter excerpt from Guilford Publications.
Best Practices in Literacy Instruction, Seventh Edition. Edited by Lesley Mandel Morrow, Ernest Morrell, and Heather Kenyon Casey.
Copyright © 2023. **Purchase this book now:** www.guilford.com/p/morrow10

CHAPTER 4

Best Practices in Early Literacy

Lesley Mandel Morrow
Susan M. Dougherty
Diane H. Tracey

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

THIS CHAPTER WILL:

- Discuss early childhood literacy development through the lens of culturally responsive teaching with social justice and equity in mind
- Provide an overview of the primary theories underlying early literacy education
- Present a brief summary of the major governmental initiatives that have significantly affected early literacy education in the United States
- Offer research synthesis and research-based instructional strategies related to early literacy best practices
- Examine special issues related to early literacy instruction, including digital literacies, dual language learners (DLLs), and socioemotional development
- Suggest an approach to developing a classroom community that supports motivation for literacy learning and prompts the development of an "I can do this" mindset
- Illustrate best practices in early literacy through the presentation of a case study

INTRODUCTION

Early literacy abilities develop during a critical period of child development. Starting from birth, children are influenced by their environment in

myriad ways that have consequences for the development of conventional reading and writing skills in the preschool and early elementary years. And, in turn, their success in acquiring reading and writing skills will have lifelong impact. Environments that are rich with oral language, opportunities to play and explore, and loving and supportive relationships and that are free from high levels of stress and trauma are supportive of early literacy learning. Thus, a major concern of culturally responsive teaching related to early literacy development is the examination of the environments that young children are growing up in.

Sadly, the picture for a large number of American children is not a good one. In 2020, 16% of American children lived in poverty (Irwin et al., 2022) and grew up subjected to all of the stress associated with a lack of access to adequate food, housing, medical care, and child care that accompanies poverty. Despite programs intended to support the food needs of families in poverty, 6.2% of U.S. families with children experienced food insecurity in 2021 (Coleman-Jensen, Rabbitt, Gregory, & Singh, 2022). While in most cases children are shielded from food inadequacy by the adults within the family, in cases of families with very low food security (0.7%), children are affected as well as the adults. Additionally, in 2020, 9.2% of children under the age of 1 and 4.7% of children between ages 1 and 5 were uninsured (Williams & Garfield, 2021), leaving many parents and caregivers with little way to ensure that their child was receiving adequate medical care. The effects of family stress related to poverty are well established, resulting in critical interruptions in cognitive and socioemotional development.

One means of providing a level of support and care for young children, particularly young children being raised in poverty, is to provide free or low-cost child care and early education. When families are offered the opportunity to send their children to safe, loving, and enriched environments for care, they are able to pursue work, education, and coordinate other aspects of life that allow them to support their children during out-of-school hours.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

Policy Influences on Access

In the United States, government policies have impacted children's access to early education and care. In 1965, President Johnson authorized the first federal policy directed at preschool education by creating Head Start. The goal of the initiative was to prepare low-income children for kindergarten. Head Start is still in operation today and grants are made directly to public and private nonprofit organizations. Consistent with a child-centered model of early literacy education, Head Start services address children's cognitive, physical, emotional, and social needs. Initially, Head Start was

mostly focused on the emotional and social needs of the child. Research has demonstrated that very young children can be and should be engaged in learning appropriate literacy skills in prekindergarten (PreK). Therefore, Head Start and other PreK programs have embedded literacy learning in PreK.

State-level initiatives have been developed to expand upon federal-level programs and to provide quality early education to young children who remained unserved by Head Start. Over the past two decades, aggregate state-level funding has more than doubled for preschool education and many more states fund some amount of preschool education. These initiatives are generally widely favored by the American public and are championed by state governors from both sides of the aisle. Despite bipartisan support, however, the number of state-supported "seats" in PreK and preschool programs comes nowhere near the current level of demand. Most vitally, in 2020 there was a "seat gap" of nearly a 2.5 million for low-income 3- and 4-year-old children across the states (Friedman-Krauss et al., 2022). In addition to the shortage of available publicly funded PreK and preschool education, those programs that are available vary greatly in terms of quality. Only five states currently fund preschool programs that meet the 10 quality benchmarks established by the National Reading Panel (2000). According to their estimates, $12 billion would be needed to bring currently funded programs in compliance with all 10 standards, another $31 billion would be needed to provide high-quality preschool to all low-income children, and another $32 billion would be required to provide high-quality preschool to all children. Certainly, a real commitment on the part of the federal or state governments and the citizens of the United States will be needed if high-quality preschool education is to become a reality for all American children.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

EVIDENCE-BASED BEST PRACTICES: A RESEARCH SYNTHESIS

In addition to the need for high-quality early education in general terms, we must also ask about the qualities of the most effective early learning situations with regard to literacy development. Recognizing the high stakes involved with learning to read and write in the early elementary years, educators of young learners at all levels wonder how to best support the young children in their care. Educators and the public debate a range of topics when it comes to early literacy development. How soon should letters and sounds be explicitly taught? Is play-based learning best? How often and for what purpose should digital media be used? How are children learning multiple languages best supported? What types of literacy materials are most essential in early childhood classrooms? To support our readers'

thinking about these issues, we share theory, policy, and research that have helped to shape best practices in early literacy education. Then, we conclude with a case study of an exemplary early childhood classroom and ideas for engagement activities.

Best Practices: Theoretical Influences

Historically, many theorists have addressed early childhood learning from child-centered theoretical perspectives. Child-centered approaches suggest that it is best to provide children with motivating opportunities that stimulate exploration in playful environments. Rousseau (1712–1778) believed that children's learning evolved naturally as a result of their innate curiosity. Pestalozzi (1746–1827) also believed in natural learning, but felt that children needed adult facilitation to enhance their development. Froebel (1782–1852), who emphasized the importance of play as a vehicle for learning, coined the term *kindergarten*, which, from German, translates as "children's garden." Piaget emphasized that children acquire knowledge by interacting with objects and experiences and, subsequently, change and reorganize their knowledge in response (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969). Dewey's (1916) philosophy of early childhood education led to the concept of a child-centered curriculum built around the interests of children and a problem-based learning approach.

Moving beyond child-centered theoretical approaches that focused on the environment within which the child had opportunities to grow and explore, Vygotsky (1978, 1986) put forth the theory of social constructivism. Vygotsky recognized that children learn as a result of their social interactions with others. He particularly emphasized that children learn from interacting with others who are more developed than they are—linguistically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally. He explained that with the support of more knowledgeable others, children can be supported within the zone of proximal development, successfully completing tasks that they would be unable to complete independently, gaining control over that task over time until it is mastered.

More recently, the term *emergent literacy* has been used to refer to the development of literacy during the period in a child's life between birth and when the child can read and write conventionally (Teale, 2003). In emergent literacy theory, literacy is viewed as beginning at birth and growing through authentic learning experiences at home and in school. The word *emerge* captures the underlying belief of this framework; children's literacy abilities are thought to emerge as they engage within authentic contexts. They "read" books by looking at the pictures and producing stories without attending to print at first and they "write" using combinations of scribbles or letter-like forms. Emergent literacy theory is based on the beliefs

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

that children's development in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are all interrelated, and that strengthening of any one of these four areas will have positive effects on the others.

In contrast to child-centered and constructivist approaches to learning, skills-based instructional models involve the systematic explicit teaching of literacy. Skills-based instruction has its roots in *behaviorism*, which suggests that complex cognitive activities, such as reading and writing, can be broken down into their composite skills that are taught one at a time (Tracey & Morrow, 2012). Direct reading instruction is a skills-based approach. In direct instruction, teachers explicitly focus students' attention on specific reading skills and provide information to students about those topics. After direct teaching, children typically practice the new skill and then, through repetition and, as needed, further direct instruction, the skill is mastered.

Today, the views of the most appropriate context for young learners continue to be debated. In general, by the time children reach the later preschool, kindergarten, and early elementary years, time spent on direct instruction increases. We emphasize that while some amount of direct instruction is beneficial, particularly when it comes to learning discrete skills (e.g., recognizing the 26 letters of the alphabet), opportunities to explore and engage with literacy materials (e.g., writing in pretend play situations) remain a rich source of authentic experience that builds motivation and allows for practice.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

Best Practices: Policy Influences

Like theories related to early literacy teaching practices, policy has informed and influenced instruction. In 1997, Congress requested that the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) establish the "National Reading Panel" to determine the most effective practices for teaching reading. Made up of a group of distinguished scholars, the panel reviewed scientifically based reading research and then published *Teaching Children to Read: An Evidence-Based Assessment of the Scientific Research Literature on Reading and Its Implications for Reading Instruction* (NRP, 2000). From the research, five key areas were identified as essential for effective reading instruction: (1) phonemic awareness, (2) phonics, (3) vocabulary, (4) comprehension, and (5) fluency.

The National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) was another influential policy group. The NELP was charged with conducting a synthesis of the scientific research specifically related to early literacy development from birth through kindergarten. The variables identified as essential to early literacy success include (1) expressive and receptive oral language development; (2) knowledge of the alphabetic code; (3) phonological and phonemic

awareness; (4) use of invented spelling; (5) print knowledge including environmental print; and (6) other skills, such as rapid naming of letters and numbers, visual memory, and visual perceptual abilities (National Early Literacy Panel, 2008).

Since the 1990s, teaching at all levels has been influenced by the creation of standards that outline what children at various grade levels are expected to know and be able to do. Initially, these efforts were conducted within states, resulting in somewhat different expectations for students across the United States. In 2009, educators were introduced to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which were developed by several nationally based groups, including the National Governors Association. These new standards and the standardized tests created alongside them affected how the English language arts were taught. Today, following criticism and controversy, many states have returned to state-level standards—however, the influence of the CCSS remains evident. Kindergarten and first- and second-grade learning expectations are included in these standards; preschool standards are often also developed by the states.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

Best Practices: Research Influences

Like theory and policy, research on literacy learning has influenced the instructional practices of educators working with young learners. It has also pointed to the important connections between socioemotional learning, culturally responsive teaching, and literacy development.

Building a Supportive Classroom

Before thinking about *what* to teach, it is important to consider the environment within which learning will take place. Classroom environments that encourage children to take risks and overcome challenges are vital to development. The goal should be to develop a context in which the teacher and children collaborate, help each other, and share a warm and supportive relationship. The way in which teachers interact with students affects what they will learn—about themselves, about others, and about literacy.

More recent research has identified the importance of socioemotional development to all learning, including literacy learning. Children who are able to self-regulate and attend to direct instruction, who are able to communicate effectively with others, and who have a positive self-concept learn academic skills more readily (Howse, Calkins, Anastopoulos, Keane, & Shelton, 2003; Piata, Belsky, Vandergrift, Houts, & Morrison, 2008). Teachers of young children, from infants to first and second graders, play an important role in the social and emotional development of their students. When teachers act as positive role models and show a positive attitude

toward all children, they develop warm relationships and a caring classroom community. They are able to show children appropriate ways to interact and display empathy that their students emulate. The language that teachers use with children and the manner in which it is delivered will set the tone of the classroom. We encourage educators to be aware that tone of voice is very important. The same statement can feel like positive reinforcement or sarcasm. For example, "Wow, you chose a great book there," can make a child feel good about the book chosen or really bad, depending on how it is said. Sarcasm and criticism are hurtful, especially for young children, and, therefore, should always be avoided. It is also important that teachers focus on what children are saying and doing, despite the many demands for their attention. Positive reinforcement of desired behaviors and redirection of off-task or undesired behaviors is much more effective and creates a much more pleasant environment than negative reinforcement. Although currently very popular, techniques that make children's behavior public (e.g., red-, yellow-, and green-light behavior charts) often do more harm than good. Instead, teachers should set reasonable guidelines for behavior and then support children who are not yet able to consistently meet those guidelines. Support can come in the form of redirection, altered expectations, and opportunities for reflection and discussion. Asking questions that prompt children to think about the effects of particular behaviors provides them with a feeling of ownership and pride. For example, a teacher might say, "The library corner looks great. I see that you remembered to put books back neatly where they belong. Why is this important?" As teachers interact with children for instructional purposes they should use techniques that give all children a voice and an opportunity to participate. Sufficient wait time (approximately 5 seconds) before selecting a student to answer a teacher-directed question allows for greater participation and provides children with an opportunity to think before answering.

In addition to creating an atmosphere that supports children's social and emotional development, equity requires teachers to utilize activities and materials and create environments that maximize learning for every child (Friedman & Mwenelupembe, 2020). Within the area of literacy, book choice is an obvious area for attention. As Rudine Sims Bishop (1990) told us decades ago, books can serve as windows, mirrors, and sliding doors if they represent us and show us the lives of others. For a very long time, books for young children almost exclusively featured the lives of White children and, thus, for the growing numbers of children from non-White groups, rarely served as mirrors. Likewise, the only windows offered were into the lives of White, typically suburban, middle-class children. The small number of books that featured non-White characters were often written by White authors, sometimes resulting in distorted depictions of the lives of children of diverse backgrounds. Recent progress has been made within

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

the realm of children's publishing to produce books written and illustrated by individuals who represent diverse backgrounds and whose characters authentically reflect these backgrounds. Early childhood educators must find these books and incorporate them into their classrooms and their lessons. Without authentic representation in the books of the classroom, we risk sending a message to young learners that reading and writing are not for them. And because research has demonstrated that those children who spend the most time reading develop greater proficiency (Anderson, Wilson, & Fielding, 1988; Stanovich, 1986), the lack of representation can only contribute to lower proficiency in literacy. By ensuring that *all* students see themselves reflected in the literature read aloud, featured, and discussed in the classroom, early childhood educators offer an essential foundation for literacy learning.

In addition to helping students see literacy as something that is "for them," children's literature that features children from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, from diverse language backgrounds, from diverse family types, and from diverse socioeconomic circumstances open up opportunities for discussion and personal connection. For example, the book *Everybody in the Red Brick Building* (2021) written by Ann Wynter and illustrated by Oge Mora, is set in a multifamily apartment building and describes the noises of the night that can be heard through the walls and windows. In Emma Otheguy's *A Sled for Gabo* (2021), illustrated by Anna Ramírez González, Gabo shares a snowy day in a city with his neighbors. *I Love My Hair* (1998) by Natasha Tarpley and illustrated by E. B. Lewis portrays a Black mother and child as they engage in nightly hair combing and talk about beautiful hair styles that they could create. Saadia Faruqi's *Yasmin* series invites early readers to join in the adventures of a spunky girl who reflects Faruqi's Pakistani American heritage. When read and shared in classrooms, these books offer many more children a representation of themselves and an opportunity to discuss with their teachers and classmates the ways their lives connect with those portrayed in the stories. These books serve as windows (Sims Bishop, 1990) as well, offering a chance to discuss the similarities and differences among cultural groups and experiences.

In the past few decades, the work of psychologist Carol Dweck (2006), who wrote the book *Mindset*, has influenced thinking about the qualities of learning environments that most benefit young learners. The teaching of skills and the modeling of learning strategies, while essential, should be accompanied by messages that help children develop a mindset of "I can succeed." We want young children to view learning through a lens of growth through effort (e.g., working hard to overcome challenges), rather than what is called a "fixed mindset" (e.g., believing that people are either naturally good or bad at something). Teachers should endeavor to use

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

language that helps children adopt a *growth mindset*. We can explicitly talk about responses to tasks that are hard and encourage children to "keep trying" and to notice their improvements over time (Pawlina & Stanford, 2011).

During literacy instruction, teachers can simultaneously work toward building a growth mindset and developing students' strategies—for decoding new words, for comprehending, for learning new vocabulary, and for writing. This can be accomplished by talking directly about the challenges students face during literacy-related tasks and by encouraging students to talk about how they approached various challenges and then overcame them. For example, the popular CAFÉ system focuses on the development of strategies for four domains of literacy: comprehension, accuracy, fluency, and expanding vocabulary (Boushey & Moser, 2009). Within accuracy, students are taught a range of strategies for decoding words they don't automatically recognize. As teachers share each of the strategies with young readers and provide them with opportunities to practice using them, they can also talk directly about the challenges posed by new "big" words in texts and invite students to decide which strategies work best for them and how they used these strategies with success. At the end of a small-group reading lesson, a teacher might say, "Emily, I noticed that you figured out the word *careful* after a few tries. I was so glad you kept at it and didn't give up. A few months ago, I think you would have stopped after one try. Do you agree? Can you tell us what strategy you used to figure out the word *careful*?" By focusing both on the strategies used for decoding and on students' increasing confidence and willingness to employ strategies, the teacher encourages a growth mindset among his or her young readers.

When classroom environments are supportive and encourage risk taking and when teachers help children acquire a growth mindset, opportunities to learn literacy skills and strategies are maximized.

Comprehension of Fictional Text

A primary goal of an early literacy education is to help young children comprehend and enjoy stories. Comprehension and enjoyment are facilitated when teachers engage their students in prereading, during reading, and postreading activities. Prior to reading a story to children, prereading activities build youngsters' background knowledge and strengthen understanding of new vocabulary; as a result, text comprehension is improved (van Kleek, 2008). A "picture walk," is an example of an effective prereading activity. During picture walks, children and teachers talk about the pictures in the book prior to reading it. This activity helps prepare the students' minds for the upcoming text, thus enhancing story comprehension.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

During a read-aloud of a fictional story with young children, the teacher can model the thinking of a skilled reader by commenting at pivotal points (Dickinson, McCabe, & Essex, 2006; Dougherty-Stahl, 2004; McGee & Schickedanz, 2007). Teacher comments demonstrate for young children the kind of thinking readers do about characters' motivations and connecting them to events; the comments also support comprehension of the plot as it unfolds. For example, when reading *Strega Nona* (dePaola, 1975) aloud to a group of kindergarteners, the teacher might pause when reaching the point in the text at which Strega Nona leaves Big Anthony on his own for a few days with the admonition not to touch the pasta pot. The teacher might say, "I know Big Anthony really wants to prove to everyone that Strega Nona has a magic pasta pot and I see in this illustration that he is thinking about the pasta pot right now. I am thinking that he might not keep his promise to not touch the pot." A few strategically placed comments during a read-aloud support young children as they begin to acquire the ability to comprehend. It is important to remember that the comments should focus on pivotal moments within the story. The reader should not interrupt the story too frequently; it is important to keep the story flowing so that children pay attention to and connect the events of the story.

After reading, students benefit from experiences that help them to deepen and extend their comprehension of the text. For fictional texts, story retelling, with or without storytelling props, help children to connect the main events of the narrative (Curenton, 2011; Morrow, 2009). Discussions that focus on open-ended questions also serve to consolidate children's understanding of a fictional text (McGee & Schickedanz, 2007).

Comprehension of Informational Text

In addition to the ability to comprehend and enjoy narrative text, young students' ability to comprehend and enjoy informational text is an important component of their early literacy development. Informational text includes books about science, social studies, music, art, and procedural (how-to) texts. Reading informational texts to young children develops their knowledge about a range of subjects—information that they will draw upon in future years as they begin to formally learn about particular topics in school.

Research has demonstrated that PreK and kindergarten children are able to learn content from informational texts, learn about different types of informational texts, and learn about how informational texts are organized (Duke, Bennett-Armistead, & Roberts, 2003). Duke, Halladay, and Roberts (2013) recommend that informational texts be used throughout the day in early childhood classrooms. They note that these texts are ideal for whole-class read-alouds, small-group guided reading lessons, independent

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

reading, and as supplements to content-area lessons. Duke et al. (2013) suggest that classroom teachers provide students with topic choices of the informational texts, and pay close attention to the difficulty level of the texts used in lessons. These researchers also remind classroom teachers to carefully craft the questions they ask young students during discussions of informational texts. Because informational texts for young children often contain photographs or illustrations that work alongside the words to explain concepts, teachers can demonstrate how a reader uses all of these sources of information during reading by making comments and asking questions. Questions teachers might ask include (1) "What can we learn from this picture that the words did not tell us?", (2) "Why did the author/illustrator choose to put this picture here?", (3) "How does this picture help us understand the words better?", and (4) "What pictures could be added to help explain the words I just read?" (Duke et al., 2013, pp. 55–56).

Guthrie (2004) has spent a great deal of his professional life researching how to engage and motivate students, especially in the use of informational text. He has developed a framework called Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI). CORI has five central features: (1) theme-based instruction, (2) an emphasis on student choice for both what is read and how to respond, (3) the use of hands-on activities for responding to readings, (4) the availability of a wide variety of text genres at different reading levels chosen to interest students, and (5) the integration of social collaboration into reading-response activities. Research on the effects of CORI showed increased motivation for reading, increased use of metacognitive skills, and increased gains in conceptual knowledge among elementary-grade students (Tracey & Morrow, 2012). Given the features of CORI, we believe it can effectively be applied in early childhood classrooms.

In fact, Patrick, Mantzicopoulos, and Samarapungavan (2009) describe the outcomes of using scientific literacy projects (SLPs), which incorporate many of the elements also seen in CORI, with children in kindergarten. They found that using thematic, inquiry-based units that also incorporate literacy activities, such as writing and recording in science notebooks and interactive read-alouds of science trade books, resulted in greater motivation for science learning. Particularly notable was the increased enthusiasm for science learning among kindergarten girls when compared to children not engaged in the SLP units.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

Word Study

During the early childhood years, young children learn an array of skills that lead to success in reading the vast majority of printed words by the elementary-grade years. In this section, we address print concepts, phonological/phonemic awareness, phonics, high-frequency words, and fluency,

all of which were highlighted in the NRP report (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Print concepts is a term used to capture the ways in which print works in a particular language. Print concepts include (1) the relationship between spoken and written language; (2) concepts of words, letters, and sounds; and (3) the directionality of print (in English, left to right and top to bottom). Children learn print concepts through being exposed to books and writing and through explicit instruction (Gehsmann & Templeton, 2013).

Phonological awareness refers to the ability to recognize various sized units of sound within spoken language. These units of sound include whole words, syllables, and individual sounds (phonemes). The ability to recognize individual sounds is so important to early literacy learning that it has been given a special name. Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to hear and manipulate phonemes: the smallest units of sounds in the English language. Both phonological and phonemic awareness are solely auditory processes; young children can become aware of units of sound without knowledge of what symbols (letters) might be used to represent them in print. Research has demonstrated that phonemic awareness is linked to success in early reading (Cardoso-Martins & Pennington, 2004; National Reading Panel, 2000). Presenting young children with rhyming texts and oral activities that require them to substitute sounds, blend sounds to form words, and segment words help children to learn phonemic awareness (National Reading Panel, 2000; Yopp & Yopp, 2000). And while phonemic awareness itself is a purely auditory skill, research has demonstrated that combining phonemic awareness activities with instruction on letter–sound combinations is beneficial. (Cassano, 2018; International Literacy Association [ILA], 2020). Therefore, once young learners are beginning to recognize different letter forms (e.g., letter recognition), activities that combine segmenting phonemes and selecting matching letters can be introduced.

Phonics, the ability to correctly associate letters with their corresponding sounds, is an essential word recognition skill for young children (National Reading Panel, 2000; Shaywitz et al., 2004). Of course, the ability to correctly associate letters with their corresponding sounds is dependent on the subskills of (1) letter recognition and (2) knowing the sounds that letters can represent. In other words, a young child learns to recognize the letter *B* (and differentiate its form from other, similar looking letters) and learns that the letter *B* is often used to represent the /b/ sound. An early phonics activity might involve having children sort pictures or small items based on their initial, medial, or final *letter* (e.g., "Put all the objects that begin with the letter *B* in the blue basket and all the objects that begin with the letter *P* in the purple basket"). Soon, children will be taught vowel sounds and sounds represented with consonant clusters (digraphs and blends) and will begin to read and spell words with three or

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

four letters with consistent spelling patterns (e.g., hat, big, top, fish, chip). Later, children will learn common letter combinations for representing common larger sound segments (e.g., the letters –*ight* are sometimes used to represent the /īt/ heard in words such as *light* and *right*) and will begin to apply their knowledge of phonics to the decoding of multi-syllabic words. If young students are having difficulty mastering phonics, it is important to determine whether their weakness is a consequence of a visual (letter recognition) deficit or an auditory (phonological processing) deficit (or both), and to intervene accordingly.

Another essential word recognition skill is the ability to recognize the most frequently seen words (Gehsmann & Templeton, 2013). These words are often referred to as "sight words" and the goal is for children to automatically identify them without having to engage in decoding. Words that occur with great frequency in the English language (e.g., *the*, *is*, *was*) are the focus of attention in classroom materials such as the morning message or big books. Young children often learn to read and spell these words as they engage in early writing and find it necessary to repeatedly use them. *The Reading Teacher's Book of Lists* (Kress & Fry, 2015) is an excellent resource for lists of high-frequency words and sight-word activities. It is useful to also point out that any word a young child recognizes instantly can be called a sight word and that words such as the child's first name, words related to thematic study, and other words that are personally meaningful to a child might become sight words.

Children learn the relationships between letters and their corresponding sounds and between printed and spoken words through a process of creating neural connections between these items (Adams, 1990; Kuhn, Schwanenflugel, Meisinger, Levy, & Rasinski, 2010). These connections become stronger and faster with practice, eventually contributing to automatic and fluent word recognition. Since young readers build their bank of words recognized automatically by developing neural connections that connect written words to their pronunciations and because these connections become stronger and faster with practice, it is essential that children are explicitly taught to decode words. Systematic, explicit phonics instruction must be a part of the curriculum for beginning readers.

Automatic word recognition is one component of fluency, which is the third foundational skill for young readers. *Fluency* is the term used to describe reading that sounds *natural*; it is smooth and appropriately paced and the reader reads individual words correctly and with ease (Kuhn et al., 2010). Fluency develops as a function of practice, often in the form of repeated readings. Activities ideal for promoting fluency are shared reading (teacher-led instruction typically with a big book), paired reading (students in homogeneous or heterogeneous pairs), choral reading (the teacher and students all read aloud at the same time), rereading (reading a text

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

multiple times in order to develop fluency), and Readers' Theater (children are assigned parts in a script and reread until ready to read the script aloud for an audience.

Writing

Since the 1970s, educators have included writing as an integral part of best practices in early literacy (Morrow, 2009). Writing ability begins in a child's first year of life and is developed through authentic learning activities. Young children begin writing when they make their first scribbles on a page. Later, scribbles become random letters and next, children engage in invented spelling: writing that reflects the relationships between sounds and letters but without concern for correct spelling or punctuation (Schickedanz & Collins, 2013). Eventually, through explicit instruction and exposure to words through reading, children's writing and spelling become conventional.

As with reading, writing development is best supported through authentic experiences. Examples of authentic activities include writing notes and letters that are actually mailed (electronically or through the postal service), writing recipes that will be shared, writing in journals or creating blog posts that will be read and responded to, and writing stories and poetry that will be listened to by others. Writing instruction in the classroom includes the use of a writing center and whole-group and small-group writing lessons in which teachers explicitly teach skills and mechanics.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

Speaking and Listening

Children's oral language, both expressive (speaking) and receptive (listening), provides the foundation upon which their reading and writing skills are built (Gillam & Reutzel, 2013). Therefore, helping young children to develop their listening and speaking skills is one of the most important jobs of early childhood educators.

Children's speaking and listening skills are enhanced through experiences that provide language opportunities. Gillam and Reutzel (2013) emphasize that teachers do not need to create isolated lessons to address children's listening and speaking skills in classrooms. Rather, Gillam and Reutzel advocate that teachers embed interactions that support language growth into storybook reading and content-based lessons by (1) encouraging children to always speak (and answer questions) in full sentences; (2) helping children learn conversational rules, such as listening to one another, taking turns when speaking, staying on topic, and responding to others' comments; and (3) supporting students as they learn to fully describe their experiences, perceptions, and opinions on a wide variety of topics.

Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary development is a special area of importance for young children. Children with greater levels of vocabulary knowledge in preschool have higher literacy outcomes throughout elementary school (Masek et al., 2018). In the early years, vocabulary is developed through exposure to oral language; in general, children who are exposed to lots of language input learn more words than children who hear less spoken language or a smaller range of words (Hart & Risley, 1995, 1999; Weizman & Snow, 2001). When adults use tactics to help children understand the meanings of new words (e.g., gestures, explanations), vocabulary learning is enhanced (National Reading Panel, 2000; Weizman & Snow, 2001).

Jalongo and Sobolak (2011) determined that in order to become proficient readers, children should know the meanings of approximately 10,000 words by the age of 6. According to Byrnes and Wasik (2009), this can be accomplished during the early childhood years if children learn approximately five to six new words per day, which equates to about 38 new words per week and approximately 2,000 new words per year.

Teachers help students learn vocabulary when they explain new words as they are encountered during storybook reading and content-area instruction (e.g., science, social studies, health). There is a positive correlation between how often children listen to storybook read-alouds and the size of their vocabulary (Sénéchal, 1997; Walsh & Blewitt, 2006). Often it takes more than simply hearing a word in a book to learn its meaning, however. When teachers read with expression, explain word meanings, ask open-ended questions, and model language expansion, vocabulary knowledge will grow (Beck & McKeown, 2001; Collins, 2018).

It is important to remember that repetition and deep explanation are essential to learning word meanings (Harris, Golinkof, & Hirsh-Pasek, 2011; Neuman & Wright, 2014). Children rarely learn the meaning of a new word through just one exposure to the word's meaning. Therefore, simply mentioning the meaning of a word while reading a story will not be enough for many of your students to learn and remember it. Instead, you want to find additional times to use the word and discuss its meaning. You might (1) explain the word's meaning in greater detail after reading aloud, (2) provide a synonym, (3) use the word as you talk about the story in a postreading discussion, (4) use the word again in a piece of classroom writing (e.g., morning message), (5) show an illustration or a video that shows the word's meaning visually, and (6) find ways to have the children use the word verbally (e.g., turn to a partner and talk about something you would be *cautious* around). It's also true that children seem to be able to learn more word meanings when the words are linked by a theme or category (Pollard-Durodola et al., 2011). When attempting to build children's

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

content vocabulary, it is helpful to select words that are connected by theme or topic (e.g., nature, transportation, animal body parts).

Further Considerations in Early Literacy Instruction

In this section, we discuss best practices that relate to recent societal changes and newly acknowledged challenges. First, we respond to the increasing availability and influence of technological tools in both schools and in everyday life. Next, we explore emerging understandings about the education of young DLLs.

Digital Literacies in Early Childhood Classrooms

To be successful in the 21st century, young learners must become proficient in both traditional (print) and digital literacies (McKenna, Conradi, Young, & Jang, 2013). There are a number of significant differences between print and digital texts that require us to provide exposure to and instruction for both types of text. While traditional text is almost always read from the top of the page to the bottom, and from the left to the right, digital texts are often navigated in a nonlinear manner as the reader clicks on links to move through a variety of pages and websites. Additionally, digital texts often contain hyperlinked resources, such as on-demand pronunciations, dictionaries, audio texts, and video clips (McKenna et al., 2013). These additional resources, which can be considered scaffolds for learning, may be the reason that digital texts have been found to be at least as effective as traditional texts in supporting literacy achievement, and sometimes more so (Korat & Shamir, 2012; Moody, Justice, & Cabell, 2010; Tracey & Young, 2007).

A range of digital resources are now available to support young learners in the learning of foundational reading and writing skills. Apps, websites, videos, and TV programs can all be utilized to foster the learning of letters and sounds and new vocabulary, to practice letter formation and to compose messages, and to offer access to stories and information. When high-quality digital media is utilized and complemented by social interaction (e.g., talking about the information viewed), learning opportunities can be increased (ILA, 2019).

DLLs in Early Childhood Classrooms

In early childhood classrooms, it is critical to acknowledge the strengths and address the needs of children whose primary language is a language other than English. Often these students have been referred to as English language learners, but terminology is changing as we recognize that supporting the maintenance and continued development of language and

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

literacy skills in the primary language has great benefits (Roberts, 2017). For this reason, the terms *emergent bilingual*, which suggests that the child is on a path to becoming fully bilingual, and *dual language learner* (DLL), which suggests that the child is learning to use two languages at the same time, are replacing earlier terms. In this chapter, we use the term *dual language learner*, which has been adopted by Head Start and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). It is estimated that 40% of the United States' elementary and secondary school population by 2030 will be acquiring English alongside another language (Thomas & Collier, 2002), making it essential that teachers engage in best practices for supporting these students. The majority of young children from this group will be born in the United States, making it especially appropriate to use the term *dual language learners*; they will be raised in home environments within which they are highly likely to have exposure to their family's primary language and English. Each child's level of exposure to the primary language and English will vary from a great deal to just a little, depending on a whole range of factors (e.g., length of time in the United States, language use in the surrounding community, sibling language use, exposure to English-language television).

While DLLs must master phonological awareness and word identification strategies just like their peers who are acquiring English only, *The Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language and Minority Children and Youth* (August & Shanahan, 2006) demonstrated that the greatest ongoing areas of instructional need for DLLs are "English vocabulary, English proficiency, and other higher-level text processing skills" (Carlo & Bengochea, 2011, p. 118). Early childhood educators working with DLLs might (1) include print in the classroom in children's first languages, such as labels on objects; (2) strategically pair students with stronger oral English communication skills with students who need support in English communication; (3) provide daily, extensive, and explicit vocabulary instruction; (4) have children collect "very own word" (VOW) cards for new English vocabulary; (5) use visuals and manipulatives to support instruction; and (6) engage with family members and encourage them to teach primary language vocabulary that connects to the topics/themes being taught in English in school and to read storybooks and other texts in their primary language.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

BEST PRACTICES IN ACTION

The Physical Environment

A classroom's physical environment sets the foundation for literacy learning. The classroom should be inviting, with well-defined centers around

the room. Ideally, displays on the walls reflect a theme being studied and demonstrate evidence of the children's growing literacy development. In the whole-group area (a large carpeted space), there should be an interactive whiteboard for the morning message and other computer-based activities, a calendar, weather chart, helper chart, daily schedule, classroom rules, and a pocket chart for assembling cut-up words into sentences.

The literacy center should contain a rug for independent reading and multiple bookshelves for storing books. There should be baskets of books grouped by level of difficulty. Other shelves can hold baskets organized by topics and authors. Colored stickers on the books and baskets assist students in returning them to the correct spot. Books about the current theme can be placed on a special open-faced shelf, and rotated monthly as the class theme changes. Ideally, the literacy center has a flannel board and flannel board characters, puppets, and props for storytelling. There is a rocking chair for the teacher and other adults to read to the class. The listening area in the center can have a CD player for listening to stories and multiple headsets. There are manipulatives for learning about print. These include magnetic letters, puzzles, rhyme cards, and letter groups (e.g., word families) on small tiles for making words.

The writing center is an extension of the literacy center. There is a round table for children to meet with the teacher for guided writing instruction and individual conferencing. At least one computer should be a part of the writing center. The center offerings should include many types of paper, a stapler, markers, crayons, colored pencils, dictionaries, alphabet stamps, and ink stamp pads. The writing area should include a word wall that is divided into sections for each letter of the alphabet. When the children learn a new word, it is taped under its initial letter where it can be located for help in later spelling or to practice reading. Other classroom centers include science, math, dramatic play, and art.

Case Study

Kim Jackson has been teaching kindergarten for the past 11 years. She recently completed a master's degree and earned literacy specialist certification. She teaches in a working-class community and has 22 students of diverse backgrounds in her all-day kindergarten class. Ms. Jackson's philosophy of teaching includes integration of the curriculum so that students can build connections between content areas. She implements whole-group, small-group, and center-based instruction in her classroom. She focuses on explicit skills instruction embedded within meaningful, authentic contexts.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

Center Management

In addition to whole-class lessons, Ms. Jackson uses daily center-based instruction. This allows her to interact with students in small groups and to provide children with the opportunity to collaborate or work independently. To ensure that students visit two specific centers a day, Ms. Jackson has designed a contract for her students. The contract has the name of each center and an icon representing the center. These same labels and icons are visible at the actual centers. When children complete their center work, they check it off on their contracts. The completed work is placed in the basket labeled "Finished Work." After children complete their two assigned centers, they can work at any center they choose. At the end of each day, Ms. Jackson reviews the children's completed work. Any incomplete work, or work that indicates a child needs additional help with a concept, is placed in the "Unfinished" folder. There is a time during the next day for addressing these tasks. This system is consistent with Ms. Jackson's commitment to differentiate instruction based on her students' needs.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

Assessing Students to Determine Instructional Needs

In order to provide instruction that meets the varied levels of her students, Ms. Jackson devotes time to assessment, using both formal and informal measures. In September, January, March, and June, Ms. Jackson formally assesses students' knowledge about print and book concepts, phonological and phonemic awareness, letter recognition, phonics, sight words, vocabulary, listening comprehension, and writing ability. As children begin to read conventionally, she takes frequent running records of each child's reading, enabling her to identify the types of reading errors made, the word identification strategies used, and the students' reading comprehension ability. She also takes anecdotal notes about her students' behaviors that indicate both progress and points of difficulty. She collects samples of children's writing, analyzes them, and places them in student portfolios. Ms. Jackson also monitors the students' social, emotional, and physical development.

Small-Group Reading Instruction

As stated above, in addition to whole-class lessons, Ms. Jackson works with small groups of children for reading instruction. With the assessment information she collects, she places students with similar levels of ability and need together. Because the kindergarteners are just beginning to learn word recognition skills, these lessons often focus on phonemic awareness and phonics skills. Some children in the class are learning to connect single

consonants with their sounds, others are beginning to learn short vowel sounds and to decode three-letter consonant–vowel–consonant (CVC) words, and still others are working with more complex sound–symbol patterns, such as consonant digraphs (*sh*, *ch*, *th*) and long vowel/silent-*e* patterns (CVC-*e*). After explicitly teaching these skills, Ms. Jackson typically supports each group as they read decodable texts that allows them to practice using the new skill in a reading context. As she works with her students, she takes careful notes regarding literacy progress, and adjusts the group members as needed. Ms Jackson presently has four small groups and meets with each group three times a week. As time permits, she will meet with students who need additional support to reach grade-level expectations for additional instructional sessions.

Daily Read-Aloud

Each day Ms. Jackson and her students meet on the classroom carpet for a read-aloud. Often, there are several read-alouds during the day, particularly when there are books to be shared that match the class's current science or social studies investigations. Ms. Jackson strategically selects books throughout the year that represent the cultural backgrounds and racial identities of her students. At the beginning of the year, she shares *Alma and How She Got Her Name* (2018) by Juana Martinez-Neal, *Your Name Is a Song* (2020) by Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow, and *The Name Jar* (2001) by Yangsook Choi. Ms. Jackson and the students use these books to talk about the importance of names and as a jumping-off point for many activities that help them learn their classmates' names. Later in the year, *A Sled for Gabo* (2021) by Emma Otheguy, illustrated by Anna Ramírez González, is read in the same week as Ezra Jack Keats's *The Snowy Day* (1962). These stories prompt Ms. Jackson and her students to share and discuss the many ways their own families experience snowy days.

Writing Opportunities

Ms. Jackson's kindergarteners are engaged in writing from the very first days of school. At first, for some children, this writing is actually drawing, but soon, through Ms. Jackson's modeling and direct teaching, they begin to add words and attempted spellings in order to communicate their ideas. Often the writing falls within the genre of personal narrative (e.g., playing in the park, my soccer game, my sister's birthday) or informational texts (fire trucks, all about dogs). At times, children explore the creation of characters and write fictional or fantasy stories (e.g., Super Bunny, My Trip to Mars). As explicit decoding and encoding lessons continue, the children begin to write more and begin to spell more words conventionally, all the

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

while continuing to use what they know to do their best to spell the sophisticated words that they want to use in their stories.

Science and Social Studies

Throughout the year, Ms. Jackson and the students engage in a number of thematic units that involve investigation of scientific phenomena and social studies themes. These units always involve read-alouds of some of the incredible informational texts for young children. Ms. Jackson finds that reading these books aloud prompts children to connect what they already know about these topics to some of the new information presented. The students are often prompted to ask questions that lead to new investigations. When learning about forces and energy (included in the Next Generation Science Standards [National Research Council, 2013] for kindergarten), Ms. Jackson shares the book *Oscar and Cricket: A Book about Rolling and Moving* (2006) by Geoff Waring, and leads her students in many investigations that explore the movement of balls on flat hard ground, on grass, and down slides. When learning about animal traits and how they are connected to survival, Ms. Jackson reads *Feathers Are Not Just for Flying* (2013) by Melissa Stewart and *What Do You Do with a Tail Like This?* (2003) by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page. These texts lead to investigations of different animal features and drawing and sketching of feathers and tails. Science study always offers an authentic context for writing; Ms. Jackson creates science journals for each unit and the students use them to draw and write about their scientific observations regularly.

Family Involvement

Before new thematic units begin, Ms. Jackson sends home a short note about the activities that would be done in school, the skills being taught, and suggestions for activities for parents to do at home. Parents are invited to come into the classroom or to join the class virtually through Zoom to share read-alouds, family activities, or skills/information. Ms. Jackson sends home copies of the books she is reading aloud on a rotation so that parents and children can share them together; when possible Ms. Jackson sends home translated versions of the books to the bilingual families. She has copies of *Un Trineo Para Gabo* and *Alma y Cómo Obtuvo Su Nombre* to send home to Spanish-speaking families alongside their English versions. Ms. Jackson communicates often with parents, sending home a weekly newsletter (distributed electronically to parents) that includes photographs showing students engaged in projects and lessons related to class themes. She also frequently calls or emails parents to share information, good news, and ask for their input.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

REFLECTIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

In this chapter, we have (1) provided an overview of the primary theories that underlie best practices in early literacy education; (2) presented a brief summary of the major governmental initiatives aimed at supporting early childhood education and literacy learning; (3) offered research synthesis and research-based instructional strategies related to early literacy best practices, including the importance of socioemotional development and a diverse representation of children in texts used in the classroom; (4) examined special issues related to early literacy instruction, including digital literacies and DLLs; and (5) illustrated best practices in early literacy through the presentation of a case study.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Consider the efforts within your state or local area for increasing access to high-quality care and education for young children. What are the current levels of access within your state? What organizations aimed at increasing access or supporting quality exist? Are there governmental efforts underway to expand access and improve quality? Determine whether you are interested in interacting with any of these efforts.
2. The chapter discussed a number of essential components of early literacy learning and instruction (i.e., explicit phonics instruction, phonological awareness, comprehension of fictional and informational texts, vocabulary development). Choose one of these components and dig a bit deeper. Who are the early childhood experts in these areas? What recommendations do they offer?
3. Reflect on the literature for children read, displayed, or made available in your classroom. To what degree do the characters in the fictional texts reflect the children in your classroom and in your community? To what degree do they offer insight into the lives of others who are different from those of the children? To what degree do the stories reflect everyday life and experiences; to what degree do they inspect problems or issues? With balance in mind, make a wish list of new books for your classroom.
4. Meeting the needs of DLLs and continuing to optimize the potential of digital technologies to support students' literacy growth are two pressing educational issues. Choose one of these two topics and locate and review 8–10 articles/blog posts that address these issues and offer recommendations. Compile a list of the issues discussed and the recommendations across the articles. Then, share what you have found with at least 10 other educators.

REFERENCES

Adams, M. J. (1990). *Beginning to read*. MIT Press.

Anderson, R. C., Wilson, P. T., & Fielding, L. G. (1988). Growth in reading and how children spend their time outside of school. *Reading Research Quarterly, 23*(3), 285–303.

August, D., & Shanahan, T. (2006). *Developing literacy in second-language learners: Report of the National Panel on Language Minority Children and Youth*. Erlbaum.

Beck, I. L., & McKeown, M. G. (2001). Text talk: Capturing the benefits of read-aloud experiences for young children. *The Reading Teacher*, *55*, 10–20.

Boushey, G., & Moser, J. (2009). *The CAFÉ book: Engaging all students in daily literacy assessment and instruction*. Stenhouse.

Byrnes, J. P., & Wasik, B. A. (2009). *Language and literacy development: What educators need to know*. Guilford Press.

Cardoso-Martins, C., & Pennington, B. F. (2004). The relationship between phoneme awareness and rapid naming skills and literacy acquisition: The role of developmental period and reading ability. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 8*(1), 27–52.

Carlo, M., & Bengochea, A. (2011). Best practices for literacy instruction for English-language learners. In L. M. Morrow & L. B. Gambrell (Eds.), *Best practices in literacy instruction* (4th ed., pp. 117–137). Guilford Press.

Cassano, C. M. (2018). A close and careful look at phonological awareness. In C. Cassano & S. M. Dougherty (Eds.), *Pivotal research in early literacy: Foundational studies and current practices* (pp. 111–141). Guilford Press.

Coleman-Jensen, A., Rabbit, M. P., Gregory, C. A., & Singh, A. (2022). *Household Food Security in the United States in 2021*. (Economic Research Report No. ERR-309). Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Retrieved December 29, 2022 from *www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details/?pubid=104655*.

Collins, M. F. (2018). Storybook reading: Insights from hindsight. In C. M. Cassano & S. M. Dougherty (Eds.), *Pivotal research in early literacy: Foundational studies and current practices* (pp. 201–237). Guilford Press.

Curenton, S. M. (2011). Understanding the landscapes of stories: The association between preschoolers' narrative comprehension and production of skills and cognitive abilities. *Early Child Development and Care, 181*(6), 791–808.

Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education*. Macmillan.

Dickinson, D. K., McCabe, A., & Essex, M. J. (2006). A window of opportunity we must open to all: The case for preschool with high-quality support for language and literacy. *Handbook of Early Literacy Research, 2,* 11–28.

Dougherty-Stahl, K. A. (2004). Proof, practice, and promise: Comprehension strategy instruction in the primary grades. *The Reading Teacher, 57*(7), 598–609.

Duke, N. K., Bennett-Armistead, V. S., & Roberts, E. M. (2003). Filling the great void: Why we should bring nonfiction into the early-grade classroom. *American Educator, 27*(1), 30–35.

Duke, N. K., Halladay, J. L., & Roberts, K. L. (2013). Reading standards for informational text. In L. M. Morrow, T. Shanahan, & K. K. Wixson (Eds.),

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

Teaching with the Common Core Standards for English language arts, PreK–2 (pp. 46–66). Guilford Press.
Dweck, C. (2006). *Mindset*. Ballantine.
Friedman, S., & Mwenelupembe, A. (2020). *Each & every child: Teaching preschool with an equity lens*. National Association for the Education of Young Children.
Friedman-Krauss, A. H., Barnett, W. S., Garver, K. A., Hodges, K. S., Weisenfeld, G. G., Gardiner, B. A., & Jost, T. M. (2022). *The State of Preschool 2020: State preschool yearbook*. National Institute for Early Education Research.
Gehsmann, K. M., & Templeton, S. (2013). Reading standards: Foundational skills. In L. M. Morrow, T. Shanahan, & K. K. Wixson (Eds.), *Teaching with the Common Core Standards for English language arts* (pp. 67–84). Guilford Press.
Gillam, S. L., & Reutzel, D. R. (2013). Speaking and listening standards. In L. M. Morrow, T. Shanahan, & K. K. Wixson (Eds.), *Teaching with the Common Core Standards for English language arts* (pp. 107–127). Guilford Press.
Guthrie, J. (2004). Teaching for literacy engagement. *Journal of Literacy Research, 36*(1), 1–29.
Harris, J., Golinkoff, R. M., & Hirsh-Pasek, K. (2011). Lessons from the crib for the classroom: How children really learn vocabulary. In S. B. Neuman & D. K. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research* (Vol. 3, pp. 49–65). Guilford Press.
Hart, B., & Risley, T. R. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children*. Brookes.
Hart, B., & Risley, T. R. (1999). *The social world of children: Learning to talk*. Brookes.
Howse, R. B., Calkins, S. D., Anastopoulos, A. D., Keane, S. R., & Shelton, T. L. (2003). Regulatory contributors to children's kindergarten achievement. *Early Education and Development, 14*(1), 101–119.
International Literacy Association. (2019). *Digital resources in early childhood literacy development* [Position statement and research brief]. Author.
International Literacy Association. (2020). *Phonological awareness in early childhood literacy development* [Position statement and research brief]. Author.
Irwin, V., De La Rosa, J., Wang, K., Hein, S., Zhang, J., Burr, R., . . . Parker, S. (2022). *Report on the Condition of Education 2022* (NCES 2022-144). U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved December 29, 2022 from *https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/ pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2022144*.
Jalongo, M. R., & Solobak, M. J. (2011). Supporting young children's vocabulary growth: The challenges, the benefits, the evidence-based strategies. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 38,* 421–429.
Korat, O., & Shmir, A. (2012). Direct and indirect teaching: Using e-books for supporting vocabulary, word reading, and story comprehension for young children. *Journal of Educational Computing Research, 46*(1), 135–152.
Kress, J. E., & Fry, E. B. (2015). *The reading teacher's book of lists* (6th ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

Kuhn, M. R., Schwanenflugel, P. J., Meisinger, E. B., Levy, B. A., & Rasinski, T. V. (2010). Aligning theory and assessment of reading fluency: Automaticity, prosody, and definitions of fluency. *Reading Research Quarterly, 45*(2), 230–251.

Masek, L. R., Scott, M. E., Dore, R., Luo, R., Hirsh-Pasek, K., & Michnick Golinkoff, R. (2018). Now you're talking: Vocabulary development in the home context. In C. M. Cassano & S. M. Dougherty (Eds.), *Pivotal research in early literacy: Foundational studies and current practices* (pp. 9–28). Guilford Press.

McGee, L. M., & Schickedanz, J. A. (2007). Repeated interactive read-alouds in preschool and kindergarten. *The Reading Teacher, 60*(8), 742–751.

McKenna, M. C., Conradi, K., Young, C. A., & Jang, B. G. (2013). Technology and the Common Core Standards. In L. M. Morrow, T. Shanahan, & K. K. Wixson (Eds.), *Teaching with the Common Core Standards for English language arts* (pp. 152–169). Guilford Press.

Moody, A. K., Justice, L. M., & Cabel, S. Q. (2010). Electronic versus traditional storybooks: Relative influence on preschool children's engagement and communication. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy, 10,* 294–313.

Morrow, L. M. (2009). *Literacy development in the early years: Helping children read and write* (7th ed.). Allyn & Bacon/Pearson.

National Early Literacy Panel. (2008). *Developing early literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel*. National Institute for Literacy.

National Reading Panel. (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel—Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and Its implications for reading instruction*. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

National Research Council. (2013). *Next generation science standards: For states, by states*. National Academies Press.

Neuman, S. B., & Wright, T. S. (2014). The magic of words: Teaching vocabulary in the early childhood classroom. *American Educator, 38*(2), 4–13.

Patrick, H., Mantzicopoulos, P., & Samarapungavan, A. (2009). Motivation for learning science in kindergarten: Is there a gender gap and does integrated inquiry and literacy instruction make a difference? *Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 46*(2), 166–191.

Pawlina, S., & Stanford, C. (2011). Preschoolers grow their brains: Shifting mindsets for greater resiliency and better problem solving. *Young Children, 66*(5), 30–35.

Piaget, J., & Inhelder, B. (1969). *The psychology of the child* (H. Weaver, Trans.). Basic Books.

Piata, R. C., Belsky, J., Vandergrift, N., Houts, R., & Morrison, F. J. (2008). Classroom effects on children's achievement trajectories in elementary school. *American Educational Research Journal, 45*(2), 365–397.

Pollard-Durodola, S. D., Gonzalez, J. E., Simmons, D. C., Davis, M. J., Simmons, L., & Nava-Walichowski, M. (2011). Using knowledge networks to develop preschooler's content vocabulary. *The Reading Teacher, 65*(4), 265–274.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

Roberts, T. (2017). *Literacy success for emerging bilinguals: Getting it right in the PreK–2 classroom*. Teachers College Press.

Schickedanz, J. A., & Collins, M. F. (2013). *So much more than the ABCs: The early phases of reading and writing.* National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Sénéchal, M. (1997). The differential effect of storybook reading on preschoolers' acquisition of expressive and receptive vocabulary. *Journal of Child Language, 24*(1), 123–138.

Shaywitz, B. A., Shatwitz, S. E., Blachman, B. A., Pugh, K. R., Fulbright, R. K., Skudlarski, P., . . . Gore, J. C. (2004). Development of left occipitotemporal systems for skilled reading in children after a phonologically-based intervention. *Biological Psychiatry, 55*(9), 926–933.

Sims Bishop, R. (1990). Windows, mirrors and sliding doors. *Perspectives: Choosing and Using Books for the Classroom, 6*(3).

Stanovich, K. E. (1986). Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly, 21*(4), 360–407.

Teale, W. (2003) Questions about early literacy learning and teaching that need asking—And some that don't. In D. M. Barone & L. M. Morrow (Eds.), *Literacy and young children: Research-based practices* (pp. 140–157). Guilford Press.

Thomas, W., & Collier, V. (2002). *A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement*. Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence.

Tracey, D. H., & Morrow, L. M. (2012). *Lenses on reading: An introduction to theories and models* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

Tracey, D. H., & Young, J. W. (2007). Technology and early literacy: The impact of an integrated learning system on high-risk kindergartners' achievement. *Reading Psychology, 28,* 443–467.

van Kleek, A. (2008). Providing preschool foundations for later reading comprehension: The importance of, and ideas for, targeting inferencing in storybook-sharing interventions. *Psychology in the Schools, 45*(7), 627–643.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* MIT Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1986). *Thought and language.* MIT Press (Original work published 1962)

Walsh, B., & Blewitt, P. (2006). The effect of questioning style during storybook reading on novel vocabulary acquisition of preschoolers. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *33*(4), 273–278.

Weizman, Z. O., & Snow, C. E. (2001). Lexical input as related to children's vocabulary acquisition: Effects of sophisticated exposure and support for meaning. *Developmental Psychology, 37*(2), 265–279.

Williams, E., & Garfield, R. (2021). How could the Build Back Better Act affect uninsured children? KFF, November 11, 2021. Retrieved December 29, 2022 from *www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/how-could*.

Yopp, H. K., & Yopp, R. H. (2000). Supporting phonemic awareness development in the classroom. *The Reading Teacher, 54*(2), 130–143.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Choi, Y. (2001). *The name jar*. Dragonfly Books.
dePaola, T. (1975). *Strega Nona*. Simon and Schuster.
Faruqi, S. (2018). *Meet Yasmin!* Capstone.
Jenkins, S., & Page, R. (2003). *What do you do with a tail like this?* Houghton Mifflin.
Keats, E. J. (1962). *The snowy day*. Penguin.
Martinez-Neal, J. (2018). *Alma and how she got her name*. Candlewick Press.
Martinez-Neal, J. (2018). *Alma y cómo obtuvo su nombre*. Candlewick Press.
Otheguy, E. (2021). *A sled for Gabo*. Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
Otheguy, E. (2021). *Un trineo para Gabo*. Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
Stewart, M. (2013). *Feathers are not just for flying*. Charlesbridge.
Tarpley, N. (1998). *I love my hair*. Little Brown and Company.
Thompkins-Bigelow, J. (2020). *Your name is a song*. Innovation Press.
Waring, G. (2006). *Oscar and Cricket: A book about rolling and moving*. Candlewick Press.
Wynter, A. (2021). *Everybody in the red brick building*. HarperCollins.

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press

Copyright © 2023 The Guilford Press.
No part of this text may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, microfilming, recording, or otherwise, without written permission from the publisher.
Purchase this book now: www.guilford.com/p/morrow10

Guilford Publications
370 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10001
212-431-9800
800-365-7006
www.guilford.com