

# Developing a Thriving Reader From the Early Years: A Continuum of Effective Literacy Practices

## A Guide for Practitioners



When Arizona Reads, Arizona Thrives

# ATTENDANCE

## in the early grades



Many of our youngest students miss 10 percent of the school year—about 18 days a year or just two days every month. Chronic absenteeism in kindergarten and pre-K can predict lower test scores, poor attendance, and retention in later grades, especially if the problem persists for more than a year. Do you know how many young children are chronically absent in your school or community?

### Who Is Affected

Kindergarten and 1st grade classes often have absenteeism rates as high as those in high school. Many of these absences are excused, but they still add up to lost time in the classroom.

**1 IN 10 KIDS** in kindergarten and 1st grade is chronically absent. In some schools, it's as high as 1 in 4.<sup>1</sup>



**2 IN 10** low-income kids miss too much school. They're also more likely to suffer academically.<sup>1</sup>



**2.5 IN 10** homeless kids are chronically absent.<sup>2</sup>



**4 IN 10** transient kids miss too much school when families move.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Chang, Hedy; Romero, Mariajose. Present, *Engaged and Accounted For: The Critical Importance of Addressing Chronic Absence in the Early Grades*, National Center for Children in Poverty, NY, September 2008.

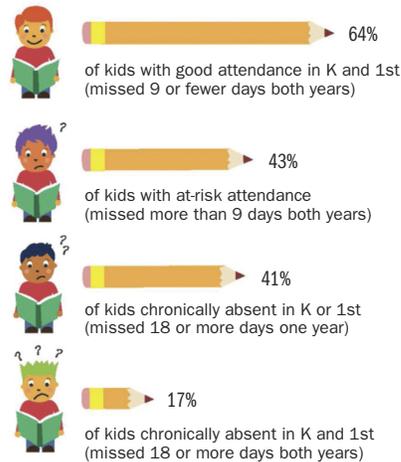
<sup>2</sup> *Chronic Absence in Utah*, Utah Education Policy Center at the University of Utah, 2012.

### Why It Matters

If children don't show up for school regularly, they miss out on fundamental reading and math skills and the chance to build a habit of good attendance that will carry them into college and careers.

Preliminary data from a California study found that children who were chronically absent in kindergarten and 1st grade were far less likely to read proficiently at the end of 3rd grade.

#### WHO CAN READ ON GRADE LEVEL AFTER 3RD GRADE?<sup>3</sup>



<sup>3</sup> *Attendance in Early Elementary Grades: Association with Student Characteristics, School Readiness and Third Grade Outcomes*, Applied Survey Research, May 2011.

### What We Can Do



#### ENGAGE FAMILIES

Many parents and students don't realize how quickly early absences can add up to academic trouble. Community members and teachers can educate families and build a culture of attendance through early outreach, incentives, and attention to data.



#### FIX TRANSPORTATION

The lack of a reliable car, or simply missing the school bus, can mean some students don't make it to class. Schools, transit agencies, and community partners can organize car pools, supply bus passes, or find other ways to get kids to school.

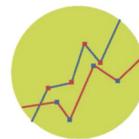
#### ADDRESS HEALTH NEEDS

Health concerns, particularly asthma and dental problems, are among the leading reasons students miss school in the early grades. Schools and medical professionals can work together to give children and families health care and advice.



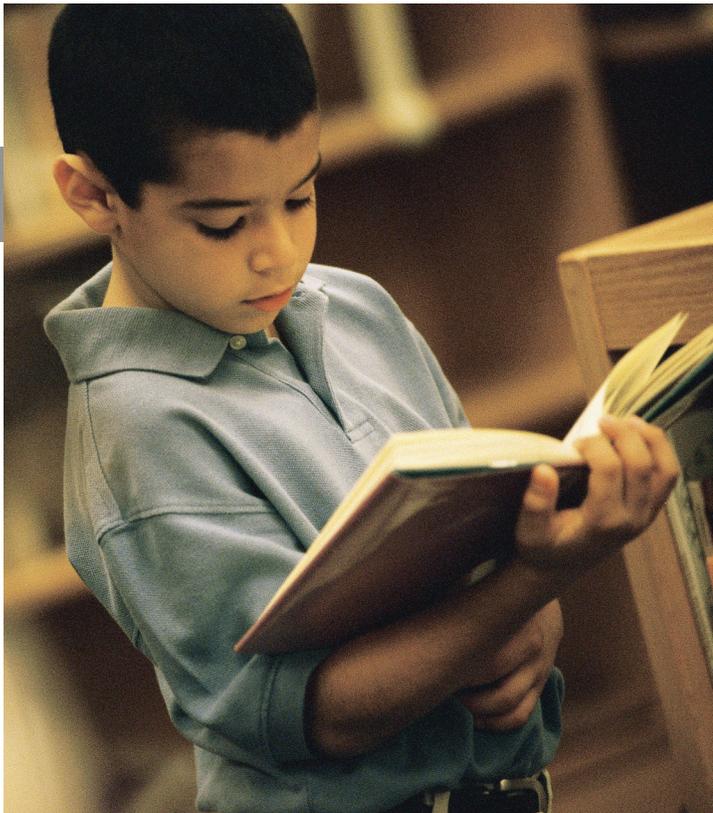
#### TRACK THE RIGHT DATA

Schools too often overlook chronic absence because they track average attendance or unexcused absences, not how many kids miss too many days for any reason. Attendance Works has free data-tracking tools.



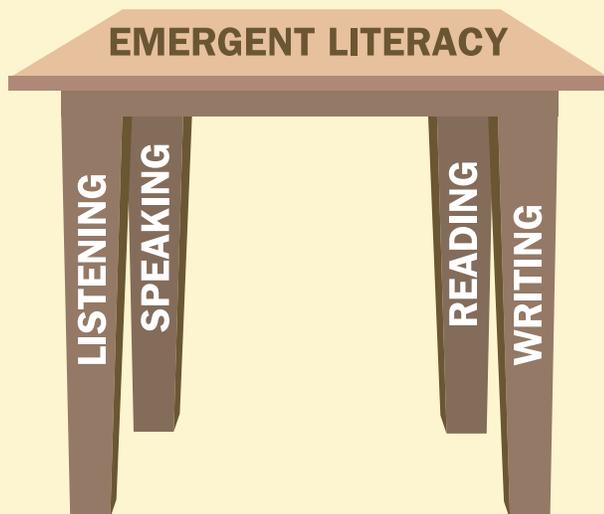
These are a few steps that communities and schools can take. How do you think you can help?

To learn more about how attendance affects academic success, go to [www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org)



### The Four Legs of Emergent Literacy

Think of the four table legs represented here as the four components that form the foundation of literacy. When all four components are in place, the table is in balance. If one is uneven, the child's emergent literacy skills are out of balance and that skill needs a little bolstering. For successful literacy development, all four skills need to be evenly developed in children.



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## A Continuum of Effective Literacy Practices: A Guide for Practitioners

Reading is vital to a child’s ability to learn and be successful in school. But a child’s ability to read doesn’t happen automatically. Children develop important language skills from birth—and early language abilities are directly related to later reading abilities.

The key to literacy is a progression of skills that begins with the ability to understand spoken words and decode written words, and culminates in the deep understanding of text and written communication. Reading development involves a range of complex language foundations including awareness of speech sounds, spelling patterns, word meaning, grammar, and patterns of word formation, all of which provide a necessary platform for reading fluency and comprehension.

A Continuum of Effective Literacy Practices Task Force was formed in the early part of 2013 to help Read On Arizona align the work of the Arizona Literacy Plan, articulate the components demonstrated in effective practices in the implementation of those standards, and highlight examples of the comprehensive approach critical to success on the state’s path to third-grade reading proficiency. This approach recognizes that a reader’s journey starts from birth and there are strong components and critical milestones that

guide the development of a healthy reader.

This tool was devised specifically for practitioners to be a guide for defining the early literacy system for Arizona. Grounded in the Arizona Infant and Toddler Guidelines, Arizona Early Learning Standards, and Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards, this tool is meant to be a resource for all adults who work with young children in Arizona.

*Developing a Thriving Reader from the Early Years: A Continuum of Effective Literacy Practices* defines the knowledge and skills that serve as the foundation for meaningful early learning experiences at every age. Moreover, it identifies essential concepts and skills that children are expected to have acquired by the end of key milestone ages, and how adults in their lives can assess where they are at on the continuum and what the next stage is in their literacy development. Having a set of generally agreed-upon guidelines helps caregivers work together to help children grow and learn. (Note: As used in this document, the term “caregivers” refers to parents, families, child-care professionals, educators, and other adults who impact a child’s literacy development.) The intent is that these skills are developmental by design and every child reaches these

milestones at his or her own unique pace, independent of where he or she spends the first five years or goes to school.

This publication is meant to be a blueprint to help build Arizona’s readers. It is not meant as an assessment or evaluative tool, but rather a map to guide the support and development of readers to meet their full potential.

### How to Use This Tool:

- To help early educators inform parents and families about their children’s learning milestones
- To contribute to a unified vision for the early language and literacy continuum in Arizona
- To provide a framework for implementing high-quality early literacy programs

### How NOT to Use This Tool:

- As standalone teaching practices or materials
- As a checklist of competencies
- As a standalone curriculum or program

The hope is that these components will guide early care and education practices related to literacy, such as curriculum and assessment choices, to ensure that children receive every opportunity to make progress in a range of contexts and across learning areas, setting a child up for success in school, career, and life.



## Acknowledgments

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In addition, Read On Arizona would like to thank all of the task force members for their literacy expertise and professionalism, their collaborative spirit, their dedication to creating this tool to help Arizona devise an early literacy system, and the commitment to a comprehensive approach to literacy that they demonstrated in building this continuum tool.

Task Force members include:

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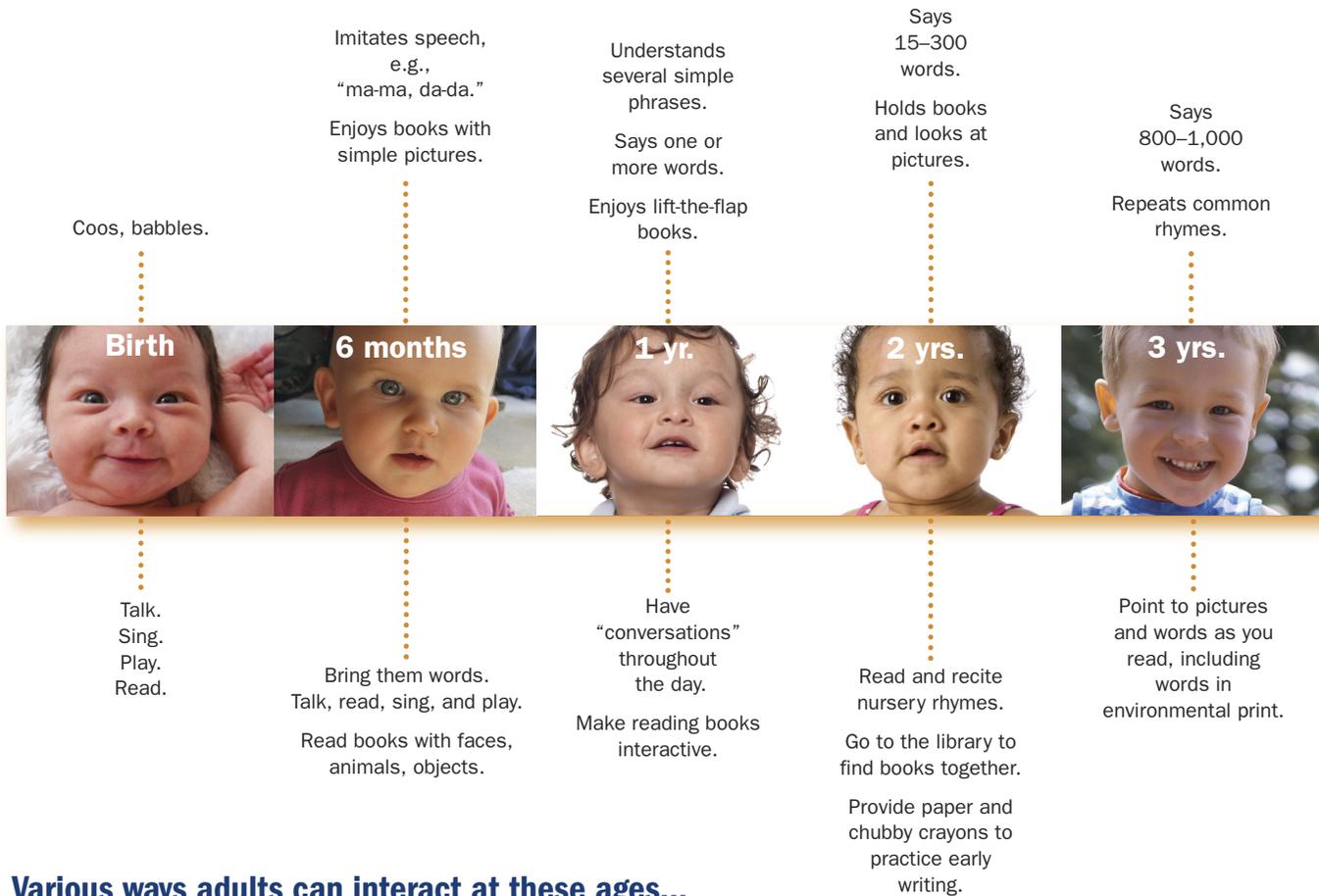
Additional Collaborators and Partners:

- AARP Experience Corps
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- Southwest Human Development
- *Karen Werner*, consultant, KWink media

# BUILDING BLOCKS TO BECOMING A READER (BIRTH THROUGH THIRD GRADE, AGE 8)

## A reader's typical milestones

At various ages, a child...



Various ways adults can interact at these ages...



When Arizona Reads, Arizona Thrives  
[www.ReadOnArizona.org](http://www.ReadOnArizona.org)

Comfortably uses long sentences (3–5 words).  
Begins to rhyme and play with words, letter names, and numbers.  
Makes predictions while reading using knowledge, pictures, and text.

Says 3,000–5,000 words.  
Starts to match letters with sounds.  
Uses complex and compound sentences.

Starts to read words on the page.  
Retells stories and makes connections.

Starts to read words automatically.  
Expands knowledge by listening to and reading books.

Reads chapter books.  
Is now learning an estimated 3,000 words a year.



4 yrs.



5 yrs.



6 yrs.



7 yrs.



8 yrs.

Focus on a few new words while you read. Repeat them in other situations.  
Providing modeling and support, help child write own name using letter-like forms.

Call attention to letters on signs.  
Talk about letter sounds.  
Have fiction and nonfiction books and magazines available.

Find books that meet their interests.  
Visit museums, libraries, and other community resources.

Build vocabulary through reading.  
Limit screen time to encourage reading.  
Providing modeling and support, guide child to write multiple sentences in an order that supports a main idea or story.

Help child develop an independent reading routine before bedtime.

## Ways adults can support children's language, reading, and writing

- Talk and read to your child in your native language so he or she is exposed to a rich vocabulary.
- Sing songs and play games.
- Babies enjoy being held and talked to while looking at simple picture books.
- Make reading a daily routine.
- Toddlers like to look at pictures while lifting flaps and feeling textures and hearing rhymes.
- Elaborate on what they say to increase their language, then tell your own stories about everyday life—and encourage them to tell theirs.
- Children ages 4 to 9 enjoy longer stories and repeated reading of favorite books.
- It is valuable for children's language growth to hear great stories that are beyond their reading ability. It is also fun for adults and children alike to read together.
- Make a point of reading chapter books out loud—listening is tough work for kids at first, but becomes easier with practice.
- While this chart shows typical development, children with special needs or who have experienced trauma may be developing on a slightly delayed continuum. Adults can support them with activities at a level aligned with their development.

## Key Milestones for What a Child Should Know or Do **Between Birth and 36 Months**

Indicators establish the developmental benchmarks that most children display at a particular age for each learning goal. Seen together, the indicators show the progression of development over time. It's important to remember that all children develop at a different pace and follow varied patterns of development. These milestones are meant to be GUIDELINES for skills children are working on in an age range.

### 5 KEY COMPONENTS OF EARLY LITERACY BEHAVIORS FROM BIRTH TO 36 MONTHS:

**1. Practicing/Modeling**

**Conversations:** Back-and-forth games that model the “taking turn” practice of having a conversation

**2. Looking and**

**Recognizing:** How children interact with pictures in books, and behaviors that show a beginning understanding of pictures

**3. Story-Reading**

**Behaviors:** Behaviors that include verbal interactions and increasing understanding of print in books, such as babbling in imitation of reading or running fingers along printed words

**4. Picture and Story**

**Comprehension:** Behaviors that show a child’s understanding of pictures or events in a book, such as imitating an action seen in a picture or talking about an event in a story

**5. Book-Handling**

**Behaviors:** Child’s physical manipulation or handling of books, such as page turning or chewing

**INDICATORS OF DEVELOPING EMERGENT LITERACY**

- Shows interest in songs, rhymes, and stories
- Shows interest in photos, pictures, and drawings
- Develops interest in and involvement with books and other print materials
- Begins to recognize and understand symbols

*Note: The indicators used throughout this report align and connect with Arizona's Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines.*



**EXAMPLES of behaviors that show development of language and emergent literacy:**

**Young Infant (Birth to 6 Months)**

- Starts to babble
- Kicks feet or moves arms in response to rhythm of music
- Looks at and attends to pictures of other babies or faces
- Looks at books, pats the pictures, or brings book to mouth
- Listens and attends to repetitions of familiar words, songs, or rhymes
- Hits buttons with pictures on toys to hear or reproduce sounds
- Recognizes his or her name
- Visualizes words and their meanings when hearing them

**Older Infant (6 to 18 Months)**

- Makes motions for familiar games, such as “pat-a-cake” or other rhymes and finger plays
- Points at or names objects, animals, or people in photos, pictures, and drawings
- Sings or joins in on familiar songs with adult
- Turns pages of books, looks at the pictures, and uses sounds or words
- Makes marks on a paper with a large crayon or marker
- Understands basic instructions, especially if given vocal clues or gestures
- Imitates sounds or familiar words of home language or speech
- Says 10–20 words, mostly nouns
- Follows some simple commands
- Pretends to read books

**Toddler (By 36 Months)**

- Knows several simple songs, rhymes, or stories
- Looks at, turns pages, and names people or objects in picture books
- Brings favorite books for adult to read
- Makes scribbles or shapes on paper to convey meaning
- Handles objects such as board books and alphabet blocks during play
- Understands how books should be handled
- Says 15–300 words
- Listens to stories
- Listens with comprehension and follows two-step directions
- Begins to pay attention to specific print, such as the first letters of his or her name

*For a summary of Arizona's Infant and Toddler Guidelines, go to [www.azftf.gov](http://www.azftf.gov)*

## The Prenatal Connection

Early and consistent obstetrics care and good maternal health practices—including eating well, getting adequate exercise, and avoiding smoking and alcohol—contribute to the development of healthy and eager-to-learn babies.

In addition to this, experts believe that babies begin learning the foundations of language while they are in the womb. Babies in utero learn to recognize their mothers' voices and associate them with security and warmth. Many researchers and doctors believe that singing, reading, and talking to a baby in the womb has a positive effect on fetal development and also creates a bonding experience between mother, baby, and anyone else who participates in the experience.



### EXAMPLES of key components and strategies adults can use to promote emergent literacy:

#### Young Infant (Birth to 6 Months)

Before a child is talking:

- Model early words. Repeat a sound and add a second sound, combining both to make a simple word.
- Use parallel talk. Describe what the child is doing in simple terms.
- Attach a label to an object or an action.
- Say the name of objects as you touch or point to them and tell the child what you are doing, e.g., "I'm looking for your bib."
- Talk, sing, repeat rhymes, do finger plays, or tell stories.
- Show baby pictures of family members or photos of other babies and young children.
- Provide cloth or cardboard picture books for baby to hold and look at.
- Identify and talk about familiar pictures or symbols on toys and household objects.
- Use books with simple, large pictures or designs with bright colors.
- Offer brightly colored "chunky" board books to touch and taste or washable cloth books to cuddle and mouth.

#### Older Infant (6 to 18 Months)

- Repeat favorite songs, stories, rhymes, or finger plays on a regular basis when interacting with baby.
- Make a photo or picture book for baby with some favorite people, animals, and things.
- Choose books for baby that have clear, colorful pictures with simple text.
- Provide opportunities to explore and use writing materials, such as large crayons, markers, and paper.
- Offer:
  - Sturdy board books they can carry
  - Books with photos of children doing familiar things, such as sleeping or playing
  - Goodnight books for bedtime
  - Books about saying hello and goodbye
  - Books with only a few words on each page
  - Books with simple rhymes or predictable text
  - Animal books of all sizes and shapes
  - Consistent story time one-on-one (on a lap, at mealtime, at bedtime) or in a group

When a child is beginning to talk, support the child's efforts with narrative talk using modeling, parallel talk, labeling, and self-talk. In addition:

- Expand language.
- Repeat and expand a child's words into a complete sentence.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Provide sufficient time for child to respond.

#### Toddler (18 to 36 Months)

- Sing songs with motions and do simple finger plays that toddler can imitate.
- Talk about favorite pictures, drawings, or photos and name the people and things in the pictures.
- Make board books available for toddler to look at, turn pages, and talk about with you and others.
- Provide opportunities to explore writing tools, such as large crayons or markers with paper, and allow time for scribbling and drawing.
- Utilize group interaction in storytelling (including question/answer and back-and-forth between adult and child).
- Offer:
  - Books that tell simple stories
  - Simple rhyming books they can memorize
  - Books about counting, the alphabet, shapes, or sizes
  - Animal books, vehicle books, books about playtime
  - Books with familiar characters
  - Books about opposites
  - Informational books about the world around them
  - Paper and chubby crayons to practice early writing
  - Consistent story time, one-on-one (on a lap, at mealtime, at bedtime) or in a group

# Key Milestones for What a Child Should Know or Do **Between 3 and 4 Years Old**



## 5 KEY COMPONENTS OF EARLY LITERACY STRATEGIES FOR 3 AND 4 YEAR OLDS:

- 1. Reading aloud to children in an interactive and conversational style**
- 2. Promoting children’s phonological skill development by playing with the separate sounds within spoken words**
- 3. Familiarizing children with letters of the alphabet and corresponding sounds**
- 4. Providing opportunities for children to experiment with writing**
- 5. Fostering an understanding of print concepts**

### INDICATORS OF DEVELOPING EMERGENT LITERACY

- Receptive language understanding
- Expressive language and communication skills
- Vocabulary
- Phonological awareness
- Alphabet knowledge
- Comprehension
- Early writing, processes, and writing application
- Concepts of print
- Book-handling skills

*Note: The indicators used throughout this report align and connect with Arizona Early Learning Standards.*

### EXAMPLES of behaviors that show development of language and emergent literacy (with proper modeling and support):

#### The child demonstrates understanding of directions, stories, and conversations.

- Demonstrates understanding of a variety of finger plays, rhymes, chants, poems, conversations, and stories
- Actively engages in finger plays, rhymes, chants, poems, conversations, and stories
- Follows directions that involve one step, two steps, and a series of unrelated sequences of action

#### The child uses verbal and nonverbal communication for a variety of purposes to share observations, ideas, and experiences, problem-solve, reason, predict, and seek new information.

- Communicates needs, wants, ideas, and feelings through three- to five-word sentences
- Makes relevant responses to questions and comments from others
- Initiates, sustains, and expands conversations with peers and adults

#### The child understands and uses increasingly complex vocabulary.

- Demonstrates use of vocabulary in oral language to express ideas and events
- Uses category labels and names objects within a category, e.g., fruit, vegetable, animal, transportation, etc.
- Uses words that indicate position and direction, e.g., in, on, out, under, off, beside, behind

#### The child understands the connection between spoken and written words.

- Demonstrates and understands that print conveys meaning and that each spoken word can be written and read
- Recognizes that letters are grouped to form words
- Recognizes own written name and the written names of friends and family
- Recognizes letters in environmental print, such as on street signs, cereal boxes, and logos

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

- Holds a book right-side up with the front cover and understands left-to-right and top-to-bottom directionality
- Identifies where in the book to begin reading
- Understands a book has a title, author, and/or illustrator

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

- Identifies and produces rhyming words
- Recognizes spoken words that begin with the same sound
- Identifies and discriminates syllables in words

#### The child demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet.

- Discriminates letters from other shapes and symbols
- Matches and recognizes similarities and differences in letters
- Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet and recognizes as many as 10 letters, especially those in own name and in the names of family and friends

#### The child shows an interest in books and comprehends books read aloud with increasing text complexity.

- Takes an active role in reading activities
- Asks and answers a variety of questions about books or stories told or read aloud
- Draws connections between story events and personal experiences
- Identifies events and details in the story and makes predictions

#### The child uses writing materials to communicate ideas.

- Uses a variety of writing tools, materials, and surfaces to create drawings or symbols
- Writes own name using letter-like forms or conventional print
- Intentionally uses scribbles/writing and inventive writing to convey meaning, ideas, or to tell a story

*For a summary of the Arizona Early Learning Standards, go to [www.azed.gov/standards-practices](http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices)*

**EXAMPLES of teacher, caregiver, and family strategies that show development of language and emergent literacy:**

Suggestions for modeling words:

- Provide high-quality vocabulary instruction throughout the day.
- Teach essential content words in depth. In addition, use instructional time to address the meanings of common words, phrases, and expressions not yet learned.
- Read stories that focus on sounds, rhyming, and alliteration; recite nursery rhymes.
- Play word games that are focused on letters in the child's name.
- Write the letters of the child's name on a strip of paper, then cut letters apart.
- Look for things that have letters of the child's name.
- Have the child create his or her own alphabet library using a scrapbook.
- Offer paper, crayons, markers, and other materials for early print activities.

What to do when reading to a child:

- Allow the child to select books of interest to him or her.
- Take the time to point out the title and illustrations of a book.
- Follow the text of the book using your finger.
- Have the child point to characters/objects/pictures in the book.
- Ask questions about what is happening in the story.
- Pause at the end of a line and allow the child to fill in the word.

## Interactive Shared Reading *Dialogic Reading—Having a Conversation While Reading*



### During reading:

- Read expressively.
- Focus on introduced vocabulary words.
- Ask open-ended questions to promote discussion.
- Evaluate and expand on the child's response.
- Repeat the initial question to check that the child understands the new information.

### After reading:

- Encourage the child to retell the elements of the story (looking for sequence of events and important details).
- Encourage the child to make connections between the events in the story and experiences they have had.

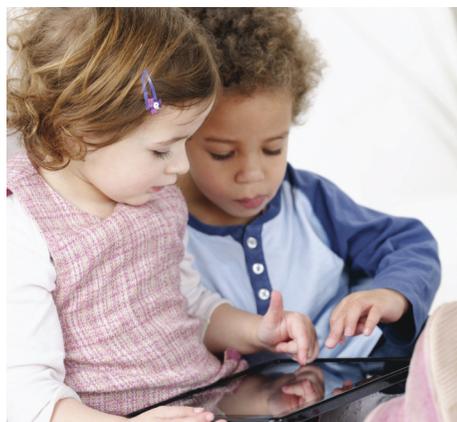
### Appropriate prompts to encourage interaction:

- Completion questions encourage a child to finish a phrase.
- Recall questions help check the child's understanding.
- Open-ended questions increase the amount of dialogue about a book.
- "Wh" questions (who, what, where, when, and why) can help teach new vocabulary.
- Distancing prompts (sometimes referred to as self-to-text questions) encourage the child to connect the story to experiences in his or her own life.
- Allow sufficient time for child to respond.

### Before reading:

- Considering the child's interests, carefully select a book that has rich narrative, interesting content, detailed illustrations, and appropriate vocabulary.
- Read through and identify where you will introduce targeted vocabulary.
- Before reading, show objects and pictures as ways to introduce new words.
- Ask questions.

## Incorporating Literacy Awareness into Activities and Daily Routines:



### Key findings show a focus on vocabulary is essential!

- Because vocabulary is foundational to the learning of the more complex oral language skills, an instructional focus on vocabulary is critical.

### Skills-based instruction (should be systemic, explicit, intentional, and provide opportunities for practice):

- Provided either in small groups of three to five children, or one-on-one
- Happens consistently: two to three times each week, or even daily
- Takes place in sessions that last from 15 to 30 minutes, based on the interests and needs of the children
- Includes both synthesis and analysis activities (Note: It is most effective when activities are integrated with alphabet knowledge.)
- Informed by data to ensure proper grouping
- Activities are meaningful and with a purpose to promote deep engagement

### Phonological awareness instruction:

- Identify onsets with rime.
- Blend syllables.
- Blend phonemes.
- Delete sounds.
- Change the onset.

Meaning-focused (contextual or knowledge-focused) activities are important in the development of an emerging reader.

### Phonological awareness instruction paired with alphabet knowledge:

- Show a letter and ask the child to point out the same letter.
- Ask children to discriminate between different letters, e.g., "Point to the letter T."
- Use children's printed names in a variety of ways such as identifying helpers, choosing who will play in particular learning areas, and determining who is ready to line up for outside play.

## Key Milestones for What a Child Should Know or Do During Kindergarten, Age 5



### INDICATORS OF DEVELOPING EMERGENT LITERACY (with prompting and support in some cases)

- Speaking and listening
  - Language
  - Reading standards for literature and informational text
  - Early writing, processes, and writing application
  - Writing foundational skills
- Reading foundational skills:
    - (a) Phonemic awareness
    - (b) Phonics
    - (c) Vocabulary development
    - (d) Reading fluency
    - (e) Reading comprehension

*Note: The indicators used throughout this report align and connect with Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards.*

### EXAMPLES of behaviors that show development of language and emergent literacy:

#### Speaking and Listening:

- Participates in listening, speaking, conversing, questioning, and discussing to clarify and understand
- Tells or retells a personal experience or creative story in a logical sequence and with details

#### Language:

- Identifies the names of people, places, and things as nouns and words that name actions
- Uses a graphic organizer showing multiple meanings of a word
- Listens and responds to stories, poems, and nonfiction
- Uses nouns, verbs, and prepositions
- Asks and answers questions about unknown words

#### Reading Foundational Skills:

- Demonstrates knowledge of print features: starting at the top left of the printed page, tracks words from left to right, moves from top to the bottom of the page
- Identifies upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet
- Orally produces rhyming words in response to spoken words
- Blends two or three spoken syllables to pronounce words



- Reads sight words and decodable texts with simple decodable words
- Reads aloud with fluency in a manner that sounds like natural speech

#### Reading Standards for Literature and Informational Text:

- Identifies the beginning, middle, and ending of a story with prompting and support
- Identifies the elements of a story, including characters, setting, and key events and details
- Derives meaning of words based on how they are used in a sentence
- Questions using who, what, where, when, why, and/or how to clarify meanings of words
- Makes predictions based on title, cover, illustrations, and text

#### Writing Foundational Skills:

- Writes the 26 letters of the alphabet in upper- and lowercase
- Writes letters to represent sounds heard in words
- Produces and expands sentences in shared language activities

#### Writing Standards:

- Writes, draws, or dictates an opinion, informative/explanatory, and narrative that includes a topic or name of a book, in order and with information
- With guidance and support, creates a topic and details using pictures, letters, or recognizable words, labels, captions, or descriptors
- Writes an informative/explanatory text which includes main topic, supporting details and facts, logical order, pictures, letters, or recognizable words, labels, captions, or descriptors
- Writes a narrative with a main idea based on a personal experience and supporting details
- Understands how to support an opinion or preference using pictures, imitative text, letters, or recognizable words
- Participates in creating a simple class report with teacher as scribe

*For a full summary of the standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science & Technical Subjects, go to [www.azed.gov/azccrs/elastandards](http://www.azed.gov/azccrs/elastandards)*

## Key Milestones for What a Child Should Know or Do During **First Grade, Age 6**



### INDICATORS OF DEVELOPING EMERGENT LITERACY (with prompting and support in some cases)

- Speaking and listening
- Language
- Reading standards for literature and informational text
- Early writing, processes, and writing application
- Writing foundational skills
- Reading foundational skills:
  - (a) Phonemic awareness
  - (b) Phonics
  - (c) Vocabulary development
  - (d) Reading fluency
  - (e) Reading comprehension

*Note: The indicators used throughout this report align and connect with Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards.*

### EXAMPLES of behaviors that show development of language and emergent literacy:

#### Speaking and Listening:

- Asks and answers questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media
- Shares and responds to ideas, information, opinions, and questions that connect with the conversation
- Produces complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation

#### Language:

- Uses common, proper, and possessive nouns; verbs (past, present, and future); adjectives; prepositions; and conjunctions
- Uses context clue strategies to determine meaning of unknown or multiple meaning words in a sentence
- Sorts words into categories (e.g., colors, clothing) to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent
- Uses words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading, being read to, and responding to texts, including using frequently occurring conjunctions to signal simple relationships (e.g., because)

#### Reading Foundational Skills:

- Orally identifies long and short vowel sounds in spoken words
- Orally blends phonemes to produce single-syllable words (e.g., /f/ /i/ /n/ /d/ = find; /f/ /l/ /a/ /t/ = flat)

- Segments phonemes and single-syllable words into sounds
- Decodes regularly spelled words in isolation and in text (e.g., phonograms: -ake-shake, -est-crest, -ite-white)
- Knows syllable patterns to determine vowel sounds and number of syllables in words
- Reads grade-level material aloud with appropriate speed, accuracy, precision, and expression to support comprehension
- Uses context clues to confirm or understand meaning of words in text
- Applies strategies (e.g., predict, self-question, self-correction, reread) to clarify meaning of words in text

#### Reading Standards for Literature and Informational Text:

- Asks and answers questions about a story and informational text using who, what, where, when, why, and how
- Supports answers using details from the text
- Explains the distinguishing features of a story or informational text
- Applies strategies to generate and answer questions about words and phrases in a text to determine meaning
- Knows and uses various text features (headings, tables of content, glossaries, electronic menus, and icons) to locate key facts or information

- Participates in a wide range of reading (e.g., science, social studies, menus, biographies, forms)

#### Writing Foundational Skills:

- Writes the 26 letters of the alphabet in upper- and lowercase within the context of a sentence
- Spells simple words they can read in decodable text
- Writes sentences containing a subject and a verb
- Expands and combines simple sentences

#### Writing Standards:

- Writes a personal opinion that includes a topic or name of book, their opinion, reason for opinion, and a concluding statement
- Writes an informative/explanatory text which includes main topic, supporting details and facts, logical order, and concluding statement
- Writes a narrative text in which they recount two or more sequenced events, including details of what happened, using signal words for order, and providing a closure.
- Composes a variety of functional texts (e.g., classroom rules, experiments, notes/messages, friendly letters, labels, graphs/tables, directions, posters)
- Uses a variety of digital tools to write, conference, and publish

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## Key Milestones for What a Child Should Know or Do During **Second Grade, Age 7**



### INDICATORS OF DEVELOPING EMERGENT LITERACY

- Speaking and listening
  - Language
  - Reading standards for literature and informational text
  - Early writing, processes, and writing application
  - Writing foundational skills
- Reading foundational skills:
    - (a) Phonemic awareness
    - (b) Phonics
    - (c) Vocabulary development
    - (d) Reading fluency
    - (e) Reading comprehension

*Note: The indicators used throughout this report align and connect with Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards.*

### EXAMPLES of behaviors that show development of language and emergent literacy:

#### Speaking and Listening:

- Builds on others' talk in conversations by linking his or her comments to the remarks of others
- Asks and answers clarifying questions about topics and text
- Asks and answers questions to understand, gather, and clarify information
- Tells a story or recounts an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences

#### Language:

*When writing or speaking:*

- Uses collective nouns (e.g., school of fish) and reflexive pronouns (e.g., myself, ourselves)
- Forms and uses frequently occurring irregular plural nouns (e.g., feet, children, teeth, mice, fish)
- Forms and uses the past tense of frequently occurring irregular verbs (e.g., sat, hid, and told)
- Uses adjectives and adverbs, and chooses between them depending on what is to be modified
- Writes multiple sentences in an order that supports a main idea or story

#### Reading Foundational Skills:

- Knows and applies grade-level phonics and word-analysis skills in decoding words
- Decodes regularly spelled two-syllable words with long vowels

- Decodes words with common prefixes (e.g., un-, re-, in-, im-, dis-)
- Decodes words with common suffixes (e.g., -s, -es, -ed, -ing, -ly, -er, -tion)
- Recognizes and reads grade-appropriate irregularly spelled words
- Reads on-level text with fluency for understanding

#### Reading Standards for Literature and Informational Text:

- Generates questions to ask about a story using who, what, where, when, why, and how
- Supports answers using details from literature and informational text
- Identifies the central message, lesson, or moral by answering questions from stories, fables, and folktales
- Describes how characters respond to major events or challenges in a story
- Describes the overall structure of a story, how the beginning introduces the story and the ending concludes the action
- Reads and understands at second grade and above a variety of informational and functional texts including history/social studies, science (e.g., menus, directions, recipes, forms, and biographies/autobiographies)

#### Writing Foundational Skills:

- Demonstrates command of the conventions of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
- Generalizes learned spelling patterns when writing words (e.g., cage, badge; boy, boil)
- Identifies real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe foods that are spicy or juicy)
- Uses words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading, being read to, and responding to texts, including using adjectives and adverbs to describe, e.g., "When other kids are happy that makes me happy."

#### Writing Standards:

- Constructs a variety of sentences both simple and compound
- Writes an informative/explanatory text which includes topic, facts, definitions, and a concluding statement
- Writes a narrative that includes topic or personal experience, supporting details that describe actions, thoughts or feelings, signal words for sequence, and conclusion
- Writes an opinion that introduces a topic, supplies reasons that support it, connects using linking words, and provides a concluding statement
- Strengthens writing by revising and editing
- Uses a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers

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## Key Milestones for What a Child Should Know or Do During **Third Grade, Age 8**



### INDICATORS OF DEVELOPING EMERGENT LITERACY

- Speaking and listening
  - Language
  - Reading standards for literature and informational text
  - Early writing, processes, and writing application
  - Writing foundational skills
- Reading foundational skills:
    - (a) Phonemic awareness
    - (b) Phonics
    - (c) Vocabulary development
    - (d) Reading fluency
    - (e) Reading comprehension

*Note: The indicators used throughout this report align and connect with Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards.*

### EXAMPLES of behaviors that show development of language and emergent literacy:

#### Speaking and Listening:

- Asks questions to check understanding of information presented, stays on topic, and links their comments to remarks of others
- Determines the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally
- Reports on a topic or text, tells a story, or recounts an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace
- Speaks in complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification

#### Language:

- Demonstrates command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking
- Demonstrates command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing
- Uses knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening
- Demonstrates understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
- Identifies real-life connections between words and their use

#### Reading Foundational Skills:

- Knows and applies grade-level phonics and word-analysis skills in decoding words
- Reads with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension
- Reads on-level text with purpose and understanding
- Reads on-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings
- Uses context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary

#### Reading Literature:

- Asks and answers questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis of the answers
- Recounts stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determines the central message, lesson, or moral, and explains how it is conveyed through key details in the text
- By the end of the year, reads and comprehends literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high range of difficulty for the grade level

#### Reading Informational Text:

- Determines the main idea of a text; recounts the key details and explains how they support the main idea
- Distinguishes his or her own point of view from that of the author of a text
- Compares and contrasts the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic

#### Writing Foundational Skills:

- Writes simple, compound, and complex sentences
- Writes sentences with increasing length and complexity (by expanding and elaborating) to explain their learning or thinking

#### Writing Standards:

- Writes opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons
- Writes informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly
- Writes narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences
- Conducts short research projects that build knowledge about a topic

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## Literacy Instructional Practices

### Key components of literacy instruction practices for:

**Preschool, Ages 3 to 4\***

**Kindergarten, Age 5\***

**First Grade, Age 6\***

**Second Grade, Age 7\***

**Third Grade, Age 8\***

\*takes into account child's needs and interests

### Data Used to Inform Instruction:

- Comprehensive Assessment System in place (Universal Screener, Diagnostic, Progress Monitoring tool, and Summative Assessment) Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) §15-704
- Literacy leadership team established
- Data used to determine focus area for small groups and to allocate resources
- Data used regularly to monitor progress, plan, and modify instruction and create and adjust instructional groups
- Data used to set ambitious and attainable goals in grade-level materials

### Instructional Time:

- At least 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction allocated in daily schedule in order for sufficient student reading development to take place
- Additional time for those at risk and who do not meet benchmark for the grade level
- English language learners (ELL) and special education will require additional time
- Use instructional time efficiently

### Instructional Focus:

- Essential elements of instruction include Writing Foundations, Phonological Awareness, Phonics/Advanced Word Study, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension-Changing Emphasis across K through third grade, Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards for Foundational Skills, Reading Informational Text, Reading Literary Text, Writing, Language, Speaking, and Listening
- Instruction based on individual needs for small-group targeted intervention

### Research-Based Strategies, Programs, and Materials:

- In accordance with A.R.S. §15-704, use scientifically based reading curriculum that includes essential components of reading instruction.
- Use evidence-based supplemental program and materials.
- Intervention programs are matched to instructional needs and delivered as designed.

### Tiers of Instruction and Support:

- Time allotted for Tiers I, II, and III schedule (Note: See page 15 for information about the three tiers of instructional support.)
- Differentiated instruction (Tier II targeted and Tier III intensive groups)

- Effective Tier I instruction for all-explicit, systematic instruction, language development embedded throughout, multiple opportunities for practice and engagement in learning
- Small group size—three to five optimally for students significantly below grade level, five to eight for those somewhat below grade level
- ELL benefit from small-group instruction targeting vocabulary and comprehension.
- Special education services are in addition to these tiers.

### Additional Notes from the State Literacy Plan Common Structural Components:

- Leadership (district, principal, coach)
- Direct, explicit systematic instruction
- Text complexity
- Rigorous instruction effective for young learners
- Assessment and data-based decisions
- Response to Intervention (RTI) and interventions—three tiers of instruction
- ELL program purpose and goals
- Parent engagement in Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT)
- Reading instruction for students with disabilities

# Effective Components for K–3 Reading Instruction and Remediation

**Any program needs to address any or all of the following essential literacy and language skills:**

- Phonological awareness (blending, segmenting, and manipulating individual sounds)
- Phonics (spelling, decoding, and word analysis)
- Fluency (accuracy, automaticity, and access meaning)
- Vocabulary (common, academic, and content specific)
- Comprehension (listening and reading, including text structures)
- Written response (spelling, dictation, and literary response or summarizing)

In all effective intervention and remediation programs, the at-risk students should receive instruction from a skilled reading teacher who has knowledge across grade levels and who effectively uses data to inform instruction and monitor student progress. That reading teacher can oversee a trained instructor who assists in helping a student build his or her essential literacy and language skills.

## Tier 1 – Basic Core Instruction

- Grade-level content
- Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards for English Language Arts
- Differentiated instruction in large and small group settings
- Assist student in reading independently at grade level
- Assess student three times per year

## Tier 2 – Targeted Instruction

- Skill-based (targeted skills)
- Diagnostic assessments and biweekly progress monitoring
- Small group (1:3, not larger than 1:7)
- Eight to ten weeks or longer if needed

## Tier 3 – Intensive Intervention

- Intensive instruction (urgent, relentless, and focused)
- Multiple opportunities for student response
- Skill-based (multiple targeted skills)
- Weekly progress monitoring
- Small group (maximum of 1:3)
- Full school year
- Not special education

**Time allocation for remediation (before, during, or after school):**

## Tier 1 – Grade Level Core

- 90 minutes per day

## Tier 2 – Targeted Intervention

- 45–50 minutes per day

## Tier 3 – Intensive Intervention

- 60–75 minutes per day

**Total Time:** 90 minutes per day (Tier 1)  
 $90 + 45/50 = 135/140$  minutes per day (Tier 2)  
 $90 + 60/75 = 150/165$  minutes per day (Tier 3)



### A sound evidence-based summer school intervention will include:

- Four to six weeks—condensed instructional model
- Comprehensive assessment system (screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring)
- Tier 2 intervention—two hours per day of explicit and systematic reading instruction (for students one grade level behind)
- Tier 3 intensive intervention—three hours per day of intensive explicit and systematic reading instruction (for students two or more grade levels behind)
- Assess at conclusion to determine grade assignment for following academic year (summative)

### A sound, effective online or out-of-school reading intervention program includes the following:

- Key elements of reading
  - Phonological awareness
  - Phonics
  - Fluency
  - Vocabulary
  - Comprehension
  - Written response
- Sequential, systematic, explicit instruction

- Adaptive review, expansion/integration/extension
- Timely corrective feedback
- Alignment to educator instruction
- Engaged time that will vary by program, based on how many grade levels a student is behind

### Research-based strategies, programs, and materials:

- In accordance with A.R.S. §15-704, use scientifically based reading curriculum that includes essential components of reading instruction
- Use evidence-based supplemental program and materials
- Intervention programs are matched to instructional needs and delivered as designed

Categories for scientifically research-based online reading programs are:

- **Supplemental** interventions that include one or more of the key elements of reading
- **Intensive** intervention that include all of the key elements of reading instruction

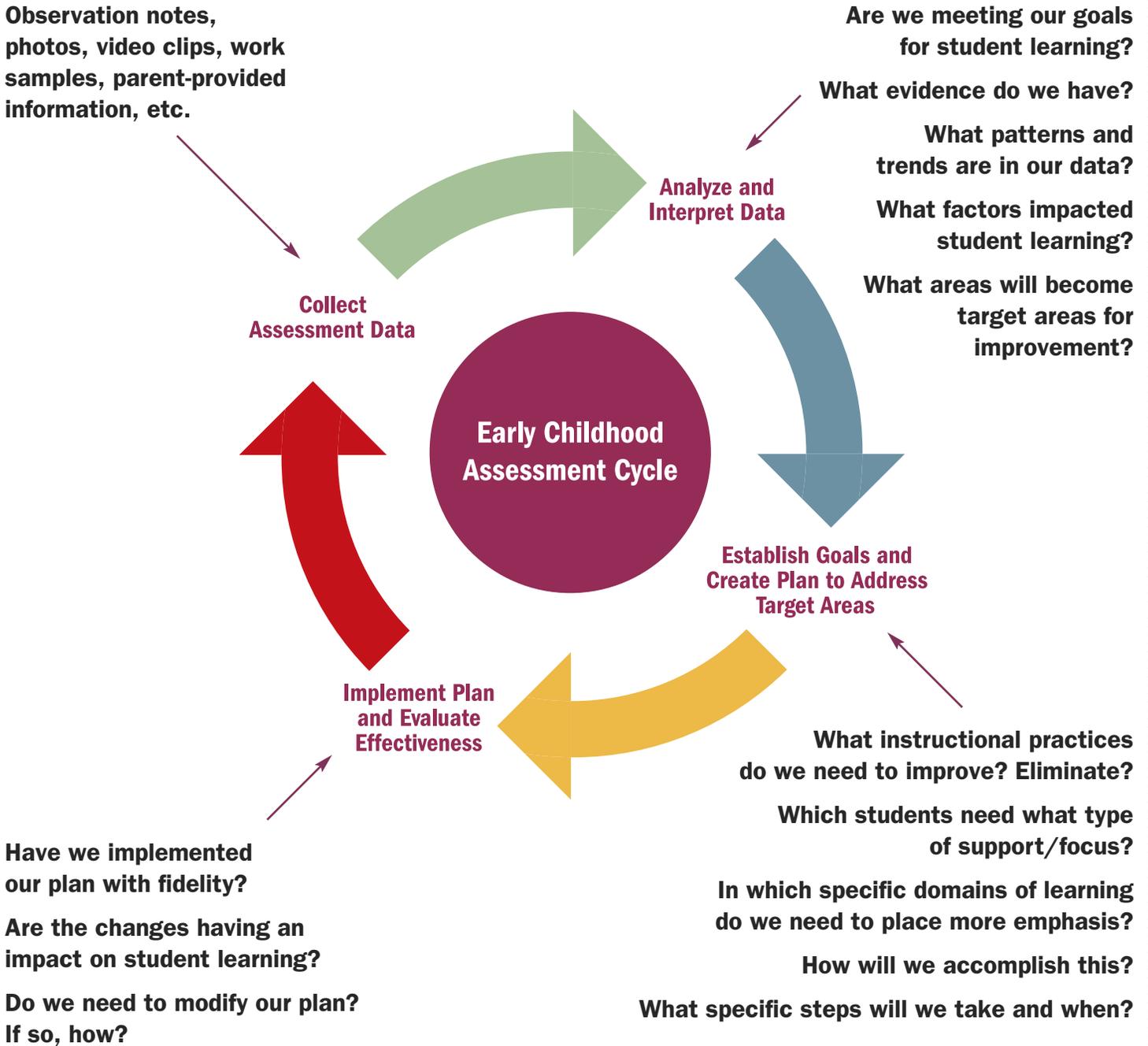
## Key Components of Effective Early Assessment From Birth Through Age 8

“Assessment is the process of gathering information about children from several forms of evidence, then organizing and interpreting that information . . . the basic process of finding out what the child knows and can do in relation to their optimum development. With that knowledge, an appropriate plan for effective instructional strategies to help them develop and learn can be identified, monitoring their progress along the way.”

– *Basics of Assessment: A Primer for Early Childhood Educators*, NAEYC

### How Assessment Works

Observation notes, photos, video clips, work samples, parent-provided information, etc.



**KEY PRACTICES OF AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT**

- **Collect evidence.**
- **Analyze and interpret the evidence.**
- **Establish goals and create a plan for each child and the whole group.**
- **Assessments should result in information that can be used to make accurate and useful decisions.**
- **Assessment practices should involve multiple observations.**
- **Parents and families should be a valued source of assessment information. Assessments should include multiple sources of evidence, especially reports from parents, families, and teachers.**

**Screening:**

Screening is a very general type of assessment that addresses common questions parents, families, and professionals have about the development of young children. Common examples are child-find clinics or vision or hearing screenings.

**Characteristics of Screening Assessments:**

- Screening procedures should include multiple sources of information, with attention to the family’s perspective in gathering and reviewing results.
- Screening instruments should be standardized in the administration and

scoring. (One screening tool example is Predictive Assessment of Reading [PAR], Wake Forest School of Medicine.)

- Screening procedures must be culturally and linguistically relevant.
- Screening results should only be used for the purpose for which they are developed: to identify children who will benefit from further assessment.

**Early childhood educators and practitioners can:**

- Gather information about the child and the family’s preferences and interests

through observations, informal interviews, surveys, and questionnaires.

- Select authentic reading and writing assessment tools to document progress (e.g., checklists, rating scales, word awareness, alphabet knowledge, phonological and phonemic awareness tasks, concepts about print, and anecdotal notes).
- Collect baseline data using formal and informal assessments.
- Use assessment results to guide instructional decisions and grouping options.

**K-3 Assessment Plan:**

Assessment is an integral part of instruction. It provides the educator with guidelines on where the child stands in the developmental continuum and helps teachers know how to best educate children.

As per Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) §15-704, the required comprehensive assessment components include Universal Screening, Diagnostic Assessment, Progress Monitoring Tools, and an Outcome Assessment. This system identifies students at risk of reading difficulty at the beginning of the school year or upon entry in school, determines

specific skill areas to be addressed in intervention, and provides progress-monitoring information for student and program decisions. There are many quality assessment tools, including DIBELS, AIMSweb, STAR, i-Ready, etc.

**Universal Screening:**

- Universal screening tools are administered to all students and provide baseline data for sorting those who meet benchmark (grade level) and those who do not meet benchmark (at-risk).
- The universal screen helps identify students who are at risk for experiencing reading difficulties and who might need more instruction.

**Diagnostic Tools:**

- Diagnostic tools are used for students who are not at benchmark and for whom additional information is necessary for targeted instruction. They help determine in which areas a student needs additional targeted instruction.

**Progress Monitoring Tools:**

- Progress monitoring tools provide information to help determine effectiveness of instruction, student progress, and plans for intervention. Frequency for monitoring student progress varies whether students are at benchmark, approaching benchmark, or at significant risk for reading difficulties.

**EXAMPLES of Effective Literacy-Related Assessment Tools for Children Birth Through Age 8 (by focus area):**

**Examples of Child-Focused Assessments:**

- Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ), Brookes Publishing Company (available in Spanish, French, and Korean)
- AIMSweb (Academic Information Management System) web-based, curriculum-based measures and data management system
- Battelle Developmental Inventory Screening Test, Riverside Publishing
- Developmental Indicators for Assessment of Learning (DIAL 4), Pearson Assessments (includes Spanish materials)
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), University of Oregon Center on Teaching and Learning
- Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (E-Lap), Kaplan Early Learning Company

- Early Screening Inventory-Revised (ESI-R), Pearson Early Learning (includes separate scoring for preschool and kindergarten)
- Learning Accomplishment Profiles-3 (LAP-3), Kaplan Early Learning Company
- Peabody Developmental Motor Scales, Second Edition (PDMS-2), PRO-ED
- Preschool Language Scale, Fourth Edition (PLS-4), Harcourt Assessment
- Teaching Strategies Gold, Teaching Strategies (includes support for dual language learners)

**Examples of Interaction-Focused Instruments:**

- Bracken School Readiness Assessment (BSRA), Pearson Early Learning
- Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), University of Virginia Press

**Examples of Environment-Focused Instruments:**

- Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale Revised Edition (ECERS-R), Teachers College Press
- Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS-r), Teachers College Press
- Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation Tool (ELLCO), Brookes Publishing
- Child/Home Early Language and Literacy Observation Tool (CHELLO), Brookes Publishing

OVERVIEW OF ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Each instrument should be selected using four criteria:

1. The instrument has established validity and reliability on a population of children representative of those to be assessed.
2. The instrument is culturally responsive so that children, teachers, and families understand the intent, administration, and results.
3. The instrument is affordable and the time required to administer it does not impede instructional time.
4. The results are easy to understand and relevant to stakeholders.

Assessment Tool:	Target Population:	Intended Users:	Examples:
<p><b>Rosetti Infant-Toddler Language Scale:</b> This scale identifies preverbal and verbal language development problems in children and provides essential information to early intervention team members.</p>	Children between the ages of birth and 3 years	Any member of the infant-toddler assessment team or intervention team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pragmatics: Assesses the way the child uses language to communicate with and affect others in a social manner</li> <li>• Gesture: Assesses the child’s use of gesture to express thought and intent prior to the consistent use of spoken language</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ):</b> This series of 19 parent-completed questionnaires is designed to screen children for developmental delays. The items on the scale represent behaviors that the child should be able to perform at that age.</p>	Children between the ages of 2 months and 60 months	Early childhood educators, social workers, nurses, pediatricians, and other early childhood professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excerpt of 12 month ASQ-3: Does child imitate a two-word phrase such as “What’s this?” or “Mama eat”? Without showing him, does child point to the correct picture when you say, “Show me the kitty” or ask “Where is the dog?”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assessment of Literacy and Language (ALL):</b> This tool identifies children at risk for reading difficulties due to an underlying language disorder.</p>	Preschool through grade 1	Early childhood educators and other early childhood professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Concepts: The child must point to a picture that is most similar to a verbal description (e.g., “Point to the big tree”).</li> <li>• Word Relationships: Child must describe why pairs of words are related (e.g., SUN and HOT).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS-Pre K):</b> This screening tool measures developing knowledge of important literacy fundamentals and offers guidance to teachers for tailoring instruction to children’s specific needs.</p>	Preschoolers	Early childhood educators and other early childhood professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alphabet Knowledge: The educator asks the child to name the 26 uppercase letters of the alphabet presented in random order.</li> <li>• Nursery Rhyme Awareness: The educator recites familiar nursery rhymes, stopping before the end so the child can supply the final rhyming word.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Get Ready to Read:</b> This screening tool measures key early literacy skills: print knowledge, linguistic awareness, and emergent writing.</p>	Preschoolers in the year before they enter kindergarten	Parents, families, and early education practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent points to pictures on the page and says to the child: “Let’s look at some pictures. I will ask you a question about them, and you point to the picture that is the best answer.”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Teaching Strategies GOLD:</b> This ongoing observational system can be used with any developmentally appropriate early childhood curriculum. It is based on 38 research-based objectives that include predictors of school success and is aligned with the Arizona College and Career Ready Standards, state early learning guidelines, and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework.</p>	Children ages birth through kindergarten	Early childhood educators	<p>With Teaching Strategies GOLD, educators can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a developmental profile of each child</li> <li>• Understand how their observations relate to important objectives for development and learning and use that understanding to scaffold each child’s learning</li> <li>• Determine if a child is making progress and compare the child’s knowledge, skills, and behaviors to those of most children of his or her age</li> <li>• Recognize children who might benefit from special help, screening, or further evaluation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS):</b> A set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of early literacy skills. They are designed to be short (one-minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of early literacy and early reading skills.</p>	Kindergarten through grade 6	Educators and personnel trained in DIBELS assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter Naming Fluency (LNF): The student is presented with a sheet of letters and asked to name the letters.</li> <li>• Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF): The assessor says words, and the student says the individual sounds in each word. Example: last: /l/ /a/ /s/ /t/</li> </ul>



## Utilizing Volunteers for Literacy Tutoring

The following are key components for effective volunteer reading tutoring programs to support language and literacy development in children birth to age 8.

Key Component:	Effective Practice Standard of Evidence-Based Tutoring Program:	Indicators of Effective Practice:
<b>Organizational Management</b>	Has clear organizational structure and management that support student success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a yearly project-specific work plan that accurately reflects program goals, activities, and responsibilities</li> <li>• Provides staff with opportunities for professional and skill development as well as performance appraisals</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural Understanding</b>	Demonstrates cultural competence and strives for cultural responsiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritizes cultural understanding to effectively meet the diverse needs of all students</li> <li>• Prioritizes selecting staff and tutors who are culturally competent</li> </ul>
<b>Student Recruitment and Management</b>	Implements a clear plan to recruit and manage student participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a clearly defined target group</li> <li>• Implements a plan to recruit student participants</li> <li>• Uses student assessment data to select the students most appropriate for intervention</li> </ul>
<b>Tutor Recruitment and Management</b>	Follows a clear plan to recruit and manage tutors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishes a tutor screening policy that includes background and reference checks</li> <li>• Selects tutors who are appropriate for the student target groups</li> <li>• Has a designated staff member who provides tutors with support, guidance, and feedback</li> <li>• Evaluates method of service</li> </ul>
<b>Tutor Training</b>	Offers initial and ongoing training opportunities to build the capacity of tutors to best meet student needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritizes tutor training by implementing a comprehensive training plan (a minimum of 10 hours of ongoing instruction, including orientation and initial training)</li> <li>• Provides ongoing training and professional development opportunities for tutors over the course of a year after 10 hours of ongoing instruction, including pre-service training covering the five components of literacy</li> </ul>
<b>Tutoring Intervention</b>	Provides high-quality tutoring interventions of sufficient duration and frequency that are aligned with classroom instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student participants attend tutoring frequently and consistently with a minimum of 60–90 minutes per week.</li> <li>• Tutoring interventions are tailored to individual student needs and progress.</li> <li>• Provides a lesson plan or outline for each tutoring session</li> <li>• Interventions are aligned with school district curriculum.</li> </ul>
<b>Engagement with Parents, Families, Schools, and Communities</b>	Recognizes and engages parents, families, schools, and communities as necessary partners for improving student achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicates and engages regularly with parents, families, and schools</li> <li>• Supports families as partners</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation</b>	Uses systematic evaluation to assess its impact on student outcomes and inform continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses evaluation results to continually improve the quality and effectiveness of its tutoring</li> <li>• Has a logic model that aligns program activities with expected outcomes</li> <li>• Uses an evaluation plan that clearly outlines how it measures student outcomes</li> </ul>

## What Adults Should Know About Using Technology and Interactive Media to Support Early Literacy Development



### ARIZONA EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY INDICATORS (AGES 3 TO 8)

1. Creativity and Innovation
2. Communication and Collaboration
3. Research and Information Literacy
4. Critical Thinking, Problem-Solving, and Decision-Making
5. Digital Citizenship
6. Technology Operations and Concepts

### DIGITAL LITERACY GUIDELINES (FROM BIRTH TO AGE 8):

1. **Select, use, integrate, and evaluate technology and interactive media tools in intentional and developmentally appropriate ways.**
  - Give careful attention to the appropriateness and quality of the content.
  - Be mindful of the child's experience as well as the opportunities for co-engagement to support active, hands-on, creative, and authentic engagement with those around the child and with his or her world.
2. **Prohibit the passive use of television, videos, DVDs, and other non-interactive technologies and media in early childhood programs for children younger than 2.**
  - Discourage passive and non-interactive uses with children ages 2 through 5.
  - Technology should be used in the context of conversation and interactions with an adult and support responsive interactions to strengthen adult-child relationships.
3. **Young children need opportunities to develop the early "technology-handling" skills associated with early digital literacy, akin to the book-handling skills associated with early literacy development.**
4. **Limit the amount of passive time that children spend with video and apps, and ensure that any use of technology spurs face-to-face dialogue and interaction between children and adults.**
  - For infants and toddlers especially, interactions with parents and caregivers are critical for building language skills.
  - Talking about digital photos, participating in Skype calls with loved ones, and co-viewing e-books are some examples of technology being used to spark adult-child interaction.
5. **Effective technology tools connect on-screen and off-screen activities with an emphasis on co-viewing and co-participation between adults and children and children and their peers.**

For a full summary of the Educational Technology Standard Articulated by Grade Level, go to <http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/2009-technology-standard>



### ENJOYING TECHNOLOGY WITH INFANTS AND TODDLERS (Ages 0 to 2):

Years before you could read, you learned how a book works—what the cover signifies, how to hold the book, and how to turn pages. Today’s babies are learning about books, too, plus a range of other devices. By familiarizing children with how technology works, you are putting them on the path to eventual proficiency with technology.

Try some of these literacy-building activities to turn a child’s fun time into an

educational opportunity:

- As she sits on your lap in front of the computer, allow your child to move and click the mouse. Help her type her name, and let her practice typing her first initials and seeing them fill up a page.
- Just as with shared book reading, shared technology time can be an opportunity to talk with children and use new vocabulary.
- Be a positive role model for your child when you are using technology by showing restraint with smartphones, tablets, or laptops.
- Children learn language best from live interactions with people, not from watching TV, movies, or video games. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that TV and other entertainment media should be avoided for children under age 2.



### STEPS TO BUILDING TECHNOLOGY AND READING SKILLS WITH PRESCHOOLERS (Ages 3 to 4):

During the preschool years, young children are developing a sense of initiative and creativity. Digital technologies provide one more outlet for them to demonstrate their creativity and learning.

Try these literacy-building activities for enjoyable educational opportunities.

- Read on a phone or tablet. App stores and e-book collections feature many classic books you can read with your children—or that they can listen to and follow along. Make comments and ask questions about what you are reading together.
- Play word and letter games. Find games on smart phones, tablets, and websites that challenge children to match letters to sounds, spell and learn new words, spot sight words, play with rhymes, and more.

### TAKE AN ONLINE ADVENTURE WITH AN EMERGING READER (Ages 5 to 8):

As children begin to develop basic reading skills, additional tools become available. New web-based technologies allow children to produce technology, adding to the appropriateness, motivation, and usability of technology tools.

#### WORD PROCESSING

As soon as a child is old enough to write, he or she is also old enough to tap out letters on a keyboard:

- Ask a child to type her name and other words or phrases she enjoys using proper spelling, grammar, and capitalization. She can write “thank you” and “get well” notes and illustrate them with family photos. Play with text font and size. Practice copying and pasting.
- Name and save documents together and create and name files to put them in.
- Create and send email to grandparents, friends, or other people who are close to the child.



- Supervise your child whenever he is online. A young child should not spend even a few minutes alone in front of an open Internet connection.

Being able to search for interesting and useful information online is no less important than the ability to navigate a library or bookstore. Using search engines, evaluating websites and, of course, reading online are valuable skills that you can introduce your child to gradually.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN AN APP

- Apps should be inviting and simple to use.
- Apps should be interactive, not reactive—the child should be the one in control. This allows children to develop their curiosity, problem-solving, and independent thinking skills.
- Content should be tailored to a child’s age and stage of development. What is engaging and stimulating to a 3 year old may not spark new learning in a 6 year old, for example.
- Avoid content that includes violence or aggressive behavior by the characters on screen.
- Watch out for apps that are electronic “worksheets,” emphasizing skills by mindless repetition or “drill and kill.”
- Avoid apps that try to entice children to make “in-app purchases” of coins or other digital accessories.

### TIPS FOR USING TECHNOLOGY WITH CHILDREN

Always independently preview apps and websites before introducing them to children. Knowing content is important. Ask yourself, “What will the child learn from this? What skills are being emphasized (e.g., listening, matching, counting)? Is it too loud? Is it too busy?”

Once an app or website is selected, caregivers should jointly engage with the child around the media, rather than leave them alone with the media altogether. Ask questions, make comments about what the child is doing, and connect to the child’s real world—just like you do when reading a book to a child. Good content encourages interaction and should spark ideas for hands-on or exploratory projects to take place offline later in the day.

Finally, keep in mind the amount of “screen-time” children have. Make sure children also have time each day for active play and physical exercise, quiet time for reading, conversation with peers and family members, and outdoor exploration when possible. It’s a good idea to develop “media rules” or a “media plan” to govern technology use.

Sites to refer to for more information:

- [www.childrenstech.org](http://www.childrenstech.org)
- [www.common sense media.org](http://www.common sense media.org)
- [www.fredrogerscenter.org](http://www.fredrogerscenter.org)
- [www.parentschoice.org](http://www.parentschoice.org)

For more information about appropriate technology use for children, visit [www.naeyc.org/content/technology-and-young-children](http://www.naeyc.org/content/technology-and-young-children)

# Professional Development Focused on Early Literacy

## KEY INDICATORS OF EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD) FOR EDUCATORS AND CAREGIVERS OF CHILDREN FROM BIRTH TO AGE 8

- PD is only effective when the learning is directly related to children’s needs, based on data.
- PD opportunities should be ongoing, connected, and part of a long-term improvement plan.
- PD should address all students’ needs, particularly those students who are at risk for later difficulties.
- Educators need support as they take new ideas from learning into actual practice.
- Educators need learning communities to support ongoing implementation issues.
- PD sessions need to be interactive, with time for collaboration, reflection, and actionable takeaways.

### Professional Development Opportunities for Those Who Work with Children

AGES	Appropriate Participants							
	Educators and early care practitioners	Adults*	Instructional support	Librarians	Community providers	Pre-service teachers	ELL coaches	Administrators
0-2								
3-4								
5-8								
<b>Writing</b>	X	X	X			X	X	X
<b>Vocabulary (grammar)</b>	X	X	X			X	X	X
<b>Reading</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Language development</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X		
<b>Speaking &amp; listening</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X		



\* Use of the word “adult” is defined as a parent, family member, caregiver, educator, etc. In other words, an adult in a child’s life who can help develop early literacy skills.

### EXAMPLES of Effective Teaching Strategies:

Create print-rich learning environments that include interactive-center activities (e.g., reading, writing, listening, art, and dramatic play) that provide opportunities for children to use language while socializing with children and adults.

- Reinforce oral language skills while participating in nonacademic activities such as lunchtime, recess, and field trips.
- Develop oral language skills by initiating informal and formal conversations with children.
- Align teaching approaches to introduce and strengthen children’s knowledge of early letter symbols and sounds.
- Read aloud to children on a daily basis.
- Encourage children to “pretend-read” using storybook language while demonstrating book-handling behaviors.
- Initiate phonemic and environmental print awareness, including labeling items around the learning environment.



- Develop authentic shared and guided reading and writing activities.
- Utilize technology to enhance early reading skills.
- Model voice-to-print matching while reading aloud.
- Incorporate activities that use the language experience approach.
- Encourage open-ended discussions around topics that are relevant and interesting to children.
- Understand the important relationship between early literacy and language skills and later success in reading.
- Participate in coaching observations and conferences.
- Intentionally build content knowledge about early literacy skill development.
- Use data to determine focus area for small groups.



**EXAMPLES of professional development resources to support language and literacy development in children birth to age 8:**

These examples were selected because they represent high-quality modules that serve a variety of participants and focus on literacy skills across a wide span of ages. This list is not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, the intent is to show a variety of programs available that have consistently shown the capacity to bring results.

Module:	Learning Objectives or Focus Areas:	Appropriate Participants:
<b>Let's Talk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn the key elements of meaningful conversations with young children</li> <li>• Thick versus Thin conversations</li> </ul>	Educators (birth–K) Instructional support team members Community practitioners Parents and families Librarians Caregivers
<b>Enhancing Early Literacy Skills in Children: From Babbling to Books</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine the process children go through in cracking the code to language</li> <li>• Get an overview of foundational skills that support children’s success in understanding key concepts about language and literacy</li> <li>• Learn techniques that support early literacy development in young children</li> </ul>	Educators (birth–K) Instructional support team members Community practitioners Parents and families Librarians Caregivers
<b>Curious World: Exploring and Discovering Through Books</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate fiction and informational text into learning areas</li> <li>• Scaffold children's use of advanced language through inquiry-based learning and literacy opportunities</li> <li>• Develop a co-learning and child-centered literacy environment</li> </ul>	Educators (birth–K) Instructional support team members Community practitioners Librarians
<b>Supporting the Whole Learner: Emergent Literacy and Social-Emotional Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate emergent literacy with social-emotional development</li> <li>• Develop expressive and receptive vocabulary</li> <li>• Promote high-quality interactions to support language development and comprehension</li> <li>• Create a positive and literacy-rich learning environment</li> </ul>	Educators (birth–K) Instructional support team members Community practitioners Parents and families Librarians Caregivers

Module:	Learning objectives or focus areas:	Appropriate Participants:
<b>Activities for Language Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define language development</li> <li>• Identify the essential language system</li> <li>• Explore multisensory instruction/strategy</li> <li>• Understand word meaning and “heaping” strategy</li> <li>• Provide activities for language development that can be integrated in a classroom or home</li> </ul>	Educators (birth–K) Instructional support team members Community practitioners
<b>Language Development and Communications (Infant Toddler Guidelines)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate the components of language:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Listening and understanding</li> <li>○ Communicating and speaking</li> <li>○ Emergent literacy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Educators (birth–K) Instructional support team members Community practitioners Parents and families Librarians Caregivers
<b>Language and Literacy (Arizona Early Learning Standards)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language- and literacy-rich environments</li> <li>• Multisensory instruction</li> <li>• Identifying the three strands: language, emergent literacy, emergent writing</li> <li>• Components of language</li> <li>• Vocabulary development</li> <li>• Phonological awareness</li> <li>• Hands-on activities to gain practical ideas and strategies</li> </ul>	Educators (birth–K) Instructional support team members Librarians
<b>Dialogic Reading</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select appropriate books for dialogic reading</li> <li>• Learn PEER sequence</li> <li>• Introduce vocabulary words using SEER method</li> <li>• Learn types of prompts using CROWD method</li> <li>• View examples of dialogic reading session</li> <li>• Practice and create a dialogic reading session</li> </ul>	Educators (birth–K) Instructional support team members Librarians
<b>Foundations of Reading</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic vocabulary</li> <li>• Deep comprehension</li> <li>• Causes of reading difficulty</li> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Structure of language: phonemes, consonants, vowels</li> <li>• Graphophonemic awareness, phonological awareness, blending, segmenting</li> <li>• Word identification, spelling, fluency</li> <li>• For more information, go to <a href="http://www.ncsnp.org/contact-us/contact_us.php">www.ncsnp.org/contact-us/contact_us.php</a></li> </ul>	Educators (birth–K) Instructional support team members Librarians
<b>LETRS® (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early literacy development</li> <li>• Phonological processing</li> <li>• Oral language: vowels, consonants, phonemic awareness</li> <li>• Developmental stages of oral and written language</li> <li>• Phonological awareness: rhyming, alliteration, blending, segmenting</li> <li>• Written language: print awareness, alphabet knowledge</li> <li>• Five stages of writing development</li> <li>• Assessment: formal and informal</li> <li>• For more information, go to <a href="http://www.soprislearning.com/professional-development">www.soprislearning.com/professional-development</a></li> </ul>	Educators (birth–K) Instructional support team members Pre-service teachers
<b>Teaching Reading Effectively</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundations of reading</li> <li>• Learning to read and spell</li> <li>• Basic principles of reading assessment</li> <li>• The structure of language</li> <li>• Graphophonemic awareness</li> <li>• Teaching word identification and spelling fluency</li> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Comprehension to summarizing</li> </ul>	Educators (ECE, ECE special education, elementary ed certified, SEI teachers) Instructional support team members
<b>Language/Grammar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrating command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking as an essential component of the Language Standards</li> <li>• Introduces multisensory grammar techniques for young learners</li> </ul>	Educators (ECE, ECE special education, elementary ed certified, SEI teachers) Instructional support team members
<b>K–3 Writing Foundations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where are the foundations for writing?</li> <li>• Strategies for teaching handwriting, spelling, grammar, and sentence structure</li> </ul>	SEI teachers, mainstream with ILLPs (including kindergarten) Instructional support team members

For more information as well as a listing of the workshops and professional development opportunities available, go to [www.azed.gov/pdcapacitybuilding](http://www.azed.gov/pdcapacitybuilding), [www.swhd.org/training/early-childhood-training](http://www.swhd.org/training/early-childhood-training), and [www.makewayforbooks.org/foreducators](http://www.makewayforbooks.org/foreducators)



## Family Involvement Is Important to Family Engagement

There is a difference between family involvement (offering information or making a parent aware of the importance of an issue or skill) and family engagement (or family partnerships). Involvement is the first step in a process and includes sharing information with caregivers so they have a deeper understanding. Family engagement is the next phase of the continuum and includes caregivers taking the new knowledge and changing their behaviors and implementing activities that incorporate the knowledge into their routines.

### Examples of Effective Family Involvement Related to Literacy (Ages 0 to 8):

- Attend community events, such as:
  - Literacy fairs
  - Book drives
  - School plays
  - One-time workshops that increase understanding of an issue or topic

### What You Can Do:

Social events are important for demonstrating that children are important and for building relationships, but are not enough for building literacy. Productive family engagement strategies revolve around children's learning and progress. Here are some ideas:

1. Equip parents and families with information and home literacy activities that will support their children's learning along the literacy continuum: speaking and listening, language, reading (phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension), and writing.
2. Encourage parents and families to read, talk, sing, and play with their children and help them understand the direct impact those activities will have on their language and literacy development.
3. Provide parents and families with data and regular, timely, and accessible updates about their children's literacy progress.
4. Check in to make sure that parents and families understand their children's literacy needs and how to help them.
5. Provide tools to help parents and families connect home activities to classroom learning (e.g., word games, conversation starters, all types of books—including multilingual and wordless picture books).
6. Give concrete suggestions on texts to read at home, on games that build literacy skills, and on how to have interactive conversations.

### Examples of Effective Family Engagement Strategies Related to Literacy (Ages 0 to 8):

- Parent literacy workshops and trainings or coaching (home-visitation programs, Parents as Teachers, Raising a Reader, Abriendo Puertas, Academic Parent Teacher Team model, etc.)



**When parents and families not only read to their children but read *with* them and engage in conversation, you see faster literacy development by one or two grade levels.**

- Multi-session trainings over time with opportunity for adult to apply learning
- Parent leadership institutes
- Programs incorporating technology used to engage parents and families and continue communication over time (early literacy apps)
- A key goal of any school-family partnership must be to boost literacy rates and each party should work together to develop a plan. Set goals for advancing literacy in partnership with parents and families.
- Update parents and families with partnership or engagement plans to include specific actions that will change or improve behaviors and impact children's literacy skills.
- Focus on relationships with parents and families, not programs. See family engagement as strength-based and collaborative.

**Parent Engagement: What Skills Need to Be Part of a Daily Routine?**

The latest research on parent engagement in early literacy stresses that children need to be given more specific skills while being read to in order to be successful with early literacy skills.

Parent involvement in early literacy is directly connected to academic achievement.

Children need parents and families to be their reading role models with daily practice in order to navigate successfully through beginning literacy skills. According to research, parents and families should focus on the words on the page while reading with their pre-K reader.

**What Educators Can Do:**

Here are some strategies to share with parents and families to support reading success:

- **Point to each word on the page as they read.** This beginning literacy strategy will assist children with making print/story/illustration connections. This skill also helps build a child's tracking skills from one line of text to the next.
- **Read the title and ask the child to make a prediction.** This will go a long way to ensure that a child incorporates previewing and prediction in his or her own reading practices both now and in the future.
- **Read broadly.** Introduce different genres of books and let child self-select texts of various kinds.
- **Embrace repetition.** Allow the child to read the same books multiple times.
- **Take "picture walks."** Help the child use the picture clues in most early readers and picture books to tell the story before reading.

- **Model fluency while reading, and bring their own energy and excitement for reading to their child.** Both new and seasoned readers struggle with varying pitch, intonation, and proper fluctuations when they read aloud. Older readers will benefit from shared reading (taking turns).
- **Register the child for a library card.** Then make regular visits to your local library.
- **Ask the child questions after reading every book.** The new Arizona College and Career Ready standards assessing children's readiness for the workplace and college ask children to compare and contrast their understanding of concepts. This takes practice. Help the child explain his or her understanding of any given story in comparison to another. Have the child share a personal experience similar to a problem or theme within a story.
- **Connect reading and writing if possible.** The connection between reading, writing, and discussion should be incorporated with daily literacy practice. Have a young child dictate to a parent who writes in a journal or on a sheet of paper.
- **"Read the world."** Find opportunities to point to, describe, and discuss things they see around them throughout the day, such as the text on a stop sign. Children need both rich conversation and a variety of experiences that enhance their vocabulary and understanding of the world around them.
- For more information on how parents and families can support their child's literacy development, see Read On Arizona's *Early Literacy Guide for Families* ([www.ReadOnArizona.org](http://www.ReadOnArizona.org)).

Parents and families, regardless of their race/ethnicity, educational background, gender, disability, or socioeconomic status, are critical partners with schools, libraries, and community services and can engage in diverse roles such as:

- *Supporters* of their children's learning and development, including encouraging an achievement identity, a positive self-image, and a "can-do" spirit in their children
- *Monitors* of their children's time, behavior, boundaries, and resources
- *Models* of lifelong learning and enthusiasm for education, including professional development opportunities
- *Advocates/activists* for improved learning opportunities for their children and at their schools
- *Decision-makers* in educational options for their children, the school, and community
- *Collaborators* with school staff and members of the community on issues of school improvement and reform

## The Family Engagement Continuum

Effective family engagement spans and reinforces learning in the multiple settings where children learn—at home, in prekindergarten programs, in school, in after-school programs, in faith-based institutions, in libraries, and in the community. Engagement should apply to any adult in a child’s life who has the responsibility for developing the child socially, mentally, academically, and otherwise.

For children to thrive, parents, families, caregivers, and educators must collaborate to build a support structure that strengthens learning and healthy development inside and outside of home or school. The Family Engagement Continuum serves as a guide to establish sound research-based practices for effectively engaging parents and families in student learning. These guidelines should be interpreted and customized to appropriately suit every stage of the educational continuum.

### Family Engagement Guidelines



**AGES 0 TO 2**

- Emphasize that parents and families, caregivers, and educators have shared responsibility in a child’s learning.
- Support parents, families, and caregivers with parenting and child-rearing skills that help them understand child development.
- Engage parents and families in regular, meaningful, two-way communication about how a child learns.
- Actively involve parents and families as volunteers and audiences at the community or education setting or in other locations to support their child’s learning.
- Involve parents and families with learning activities at home.
- Encourage parents and families to use the language in which they are most competent.
- Focus on learning, improvement, accountability, and innovation.
- Make parents and families equal partners in decisions that affect their child.
- Work together to inform, influence, and create practices, policies, and programs.



**AGES 3 TO 4**

- Guide parents and families to observe, promote, and participate in the everyday learning of their children at home, school, and in their communities.
- Encourage parents and families to advance their own learning interests through education, training, and other experiences that support their parenting, careers, and life goals.
- Invite parents and families to support and advocate for their child’s learning and development as they transition to new learning environments.
- Support parents and families in forming connections with peers and mentors in formal or informal social networks that are supportive and/or educational and that enhance social well-being and community life.
- Involve parents and families in leadership development, decision-making, program policy development, or in community organizing activities to improve children’s development and learning experiences.



**AGES 5 TO 8**

- Schools create a welcoming environment for all parents and families.
- Every parent or family receives personal invitations to student-centered activities linked to academic achievement and learning.
- Schools provide parents and families with targeted and clear student-performance data throughout the school year.
- Teachers, parents, and families set and evaluate short-term and long-term academic goals.
- Educators coach parents and families in the learning skills necessary to meet the students’ academic goals.
- Parents and families attend school-provided training to create a supportive learning environment at home.
- Schools create opportunities for parents, families, and educators to develop trusting and collaborative relationships.
- Schools provide targeted support services to meet parents’ and families’ needs.
- Data is used regularly to monitor progress, plan and modify instruction, and create and adjust instructional groups.



## Family Engagement Focused on Literacy

Partnerships between home and school need to be trusting and sustained in order to achieve the outcomes they target. Engagement initiatives must include a focus on building the capabilities of adults in children's lives and strengthening the communities that together form the environments essential to children's lifelong learning, health, and behavior, whether through pre- and in-service professional development for adults in children's lives and educators; workshops, seminars, and workplace education for parents and families; or as an integrated part of parent-teacher partnership activities. In fact, research shows family engagement is critical to improving child outcomes and schools.

Research suggests that there are certain components of effective family engagement that must be present in order for adult participants to come away from a learning experience with not only new knowledge but with the ability and desire to apply their learning and change their behavior. Research also suggests that important organizational conditions must be met in order to sustain and grow these opportunity efforts across sites or schools.



**Effective Family Engagement Focused on Literacy**

**Key Component:**

**Effective Practice Standards:**

**Organizational Management**

- Systemic: Purposefully designed as a core component of educational goals such as school readiness, student achievement, and school turnaround
- Integrated: Embedded into structures and processes such as education and professional development, teaching and learning, curriculum, and community collaboration
- Sustained: Operating with adequate resources and infrastructure support

**Culturally Appropriate**

- Strategies demonstrate cultural competence and strive for cultural proficiency:
- Honor and recognize parents' and families' existing knowledge, skill, and forms of engagement.
  - Sustain cultures that welcome, invite, and promote family engagement and participation in a variety of ways.
  - Connect all family engagement initiatives to student learning.
  - Build trusting relationships and two-way communications among educators, parents, families, and community members.
  - Recognize, respect, and address the needs of the parents and families.
  - Embrace a philosophy where responsibility is shared and parents and families are effective advocates for their children.

**Relationship-Building Process (over time)**

- Series of actions, operations, and procedures that are part of any activity or initiative:
- Linked to Learning: Initiatives are aligned with achievement goals and connect parents and families to the teaching and learning goals for the students.
  - Relational: Interactions build respectful and trusting relationships between home and school.
  - Collective/Collaborative: Learning is conducted in group versus individual settings and is focused on building networks and learning communities.
  - Interactive: Participants are given opportunities to test and apply new skills. Skill mastery requires coaching and practice.

**Staff and Family Education**

- Educational opportunities should build the capacity of adults to best meet student needs:
- Assist parents and families in developing more awareness of the need for literacy and learning in the home.
  - Maintain partnerships with organizations to provide effective parenting literacy education.
  - Tutoring program provides ongoing education and professional development opportunities for tutors.

**Student Learning**

- Inform and/or involve/educate adults in children's lives about children's learning activities.
- Provide educator training on the value of parent involvement at home.
- Utilize parent/school compacts to support shared responsibility for student learning.

**Evaluation**

- Use validated data collection instruments for evaluating family involvement. For more information, go to [www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/publications-resources/data-collection-instruments-for-evaluating-family-involvement](http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/publications-resources/data-collection-instruments-for-evaluating-family-involvement)

## What Schools and Families Can Do to Address Child Readiness



Children enter kindergarten from a variety of settings, such as homes, child-care centers, family child care, preschools, and Head Start programs. Wherever they come from, it's important to prepare young children for school to set them up for long-term academic success.

Studies show that parents and families commonly rely on schools to oversee their children's education once the child enters kindergarten. Schools can change this tendency by offering transition activities that encourage family involvement, such as:

- **Creating transition plan timelines** a year or more out, including invitations to pre-K night
- **Contacting preschool parents and families** to establish relationships and engage in a dialogue about how to set up effective transition practices
- **Offering kindergarten visits**, including school tours and meeting the teacher, principal, and staff
- **Providing home-learning activities** such as summer book lists and other literacy activities for the months leading to kindergarten
- **Holding informational meetings** and parent orientation
- **Creating flyers and brochures** on the transition to kindergarten, including kindergarten registration guidelines and kindergarten options in the community
- **Partnering with local PTOs and parent support groups** to inform parents and families how they can be involved in their child's kindergarten classroom and connect new parents and families with families currently enrolled in the school
- **Staffing bilingual teacher aides** as needed in early care, preschool, and kindergarten settings

When schools and families work together to help young children transition from home to pre-K to kindergarten, the result can be real progress for students. However, transitions don't end with kindergarten. Parents and families must maintain an active role to ensure that their children move successfully from grade to grade throughout the early years of school. Addressing readiness issues during the school year and throughout the summer months will mean greater achievement for these students not only at their current grade-level transition, but as they continue through school. 🌟

**Alphabetic Principle.** The understanding that letters are used to represent speech sounds (phonemes). There is a systematic and predictable relationship between written letters and spoken words.

**Alphabet Knowledge.** It's vital that children learn the letters of the alphabet and, ultimately, the sounds the letters represent. They begin to make the connection between letters and sounds, to see that letters work together to form words.

**Analysis.** As it pertains to phonemic awareness, analysis refers to saying a word and breaking it into its sounds. For example, soft: /s/ /o/ /f/ /t/

**Assessment.** The process of documenting knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs. Assessment can focus on the individual learner, the learning community, the institution, or the educational system.

**Decodable text.** A type of text often used in beginning reading instruction. With decodable text, new readers can decipher words using their existing correspondence knowledge.

**Emergent Literacy.** Skills that are recognized as precursors to more conventional forms of reading and writing.

**Expressive Language.** The ability to put thoughts into words and sentences in a way that makes sense and is grammatically accurate.

**Fluency.** Being able to read accurately, quickly, and with proper expression—fluently—means children can focus on the meaning of the words they are reading. Building fluency helps children understand what they read.

**Indicator.** A number or ratio related to a specific goal, derived from a series of observed facts. Indicators can show relative changes due to the described program or project.

**Interactive Shared Reading.** A reading strategy where the adult involves a child or small group of children in reading a book that introduces conventions of print and new vocabulary, or encourages predictions, rhyming, discussion of pictures, and other interactive experiences.

**Interventions.** The instructional practices, methods, strategies, approaches, and programs used by educators, parents, and families to mediate learning.

**Listening Comprehension.** The ability to understand what is spoken or read aloud.

**Milestone.** An ability that is achieved by most children by a certain age. Developmental milestones can involve physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and communication skills such as walking,

sharing with others, expressing emotions, recognizing familiar sounds and talking.

**Onset and Rime.** Onsets and rimes are parts of monosyllabic words in spoken language. These units are smaller than syllables but may be larger than phonemes. An onset is the initial consonant sound of a syllable (the onset of bag is b-; of swim is sw-). The rime is the part of a syllable that contains the vowel and all that follows it (the rime of bag is -ag; of swim is -im).

**Oral Language.** Oral language refers to speaking and listening and more. Children need oral language skills to express their needs and ideas (speaking) and to understand what others say (listening).

**Parallel Talk.** A form of speech in which an adult verbalizes activities of the child without requiring answers to questions. The parallel talk may take a form such as, "You stacked the blocks. You have a red one and two blue ones." The adult repeats utterances of the child correctly and may parallel the child's actions.

**Phonemic Awareness.** Children who separate words into parts learn that words are made of sounds and that changing the sounds changes the words. This ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds in spoken words is known as phonemes. Children must understand that words are made up of speech sounds or phonemes. For example, the word dog has three phonemes: /d/ /o/ /g/.

**Phonics.** When children understand the relationship between sounds and letters, they are able to recognize familiar words when they are written. Phonics is an instructional strategy—a method of teaching children to read by teaching the relationships between the sounds in speech and the letters of the alphabet in print.

**Phonological Awareness.** Not to be confused with phonics. Children need to be able to hear and play with the separate sounds within spoken words as they begin to learn to read. As they recognize the sounds within words, they learn that words are made up of smaller sounds. Types of phonological awareness include: word awareness, syllable awareness, rhyme awareness, and phonemic awareness.

**Print Awareness.** As children explore all types of printed materials (like books, magazines, and signs), they see that pictures and written words represent real things. Children also learn how print works, including the direction in which words are read.

**Progress Monitoring.** A scientifically based practice that is used to assess students'

academic performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and making necessary changes. Progress monitoring can be implemented with individual students or an entire class.

**Reading Comprehension.** Making meaning of written words is necessary for understanding what we read. Children can use various strategies to help them understand what they read. They can use what they already know (background knowledge) to make sense of what they read, use pictures and captions, make predictions, create mental pictures, ask questions, and summarize.

**Receptive Language.** The ability to understand or comprehend language heard or read.

**Scaffolding.** Temporary guidance or assistance provided to a student by a teacher, another adult, or a more capable peer, enabling the student to perform a task he or she otherwise would not be able to do alone, with the goal of fostering the student's capacity to perform the task on his or her own later on.

**Screening.** Any brief assessment done to determine if broader, more in-depth comprehensive testing is necessary.

**Synthesis.** Putting together sounds in a word.

**Tier 1 Core Instruction.** Every student receives 90 minutes of high-quality evidence-based instructional core program—whole group and small group.

**Tier 2 Targeted Instruction.** Students no more than one year behind participate in differentiated learning in addition to Tier 1 core instruction.

**Tier 3 Intensive Instruction.** Students who are more than two years behind receive 60 to 75 minutes of intensive instruction daily in addition to Tier 1 core instruction.

**Vocabulary.** Knowing lots of words also helps children's reading comprehension. Children with a limited vocabulary have difficulty understanding what they read. Children learn words in two ways—by hearing and seeing words as they listen, talk, and read and by having parents, families, and educators teach them the meanings of words.

**Writing.** Early writing is connected to reading success. Scribbling, drawing, and pretending to write are beginning steps. Children also may use invented spelling—getting some but not all of the letters correct or leaving out letters—as they begin to make the important connection between the sounds of language and the letters of the alphabet.

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Arizona Department of Education:  
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Arizona Literacy & Learning Center:  
[www.azliteracy.org](http://www.azliteracy.org)

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Arizona Ready: [www.arizonaready.com](http://www.arizonaready.com)

AZ FIND:

[www.azed.gov/special-education/az-find](http://www.azed.gov/special-education/az-find)

Campaign for Grade-Level Reading:  
[www.gradelevelreading.net](http://www.gradelevelreading.net)

Expect More Arizona:  
[www.expectmorearizona.org](http://www.expectmorearizona.org)

First Book: [www.firstbook.org](http://www.firstbook.org)

First Things First: [www.azff.gov](http://www.azff.gov)

Library—find a library near you:

[www.azlibrary.gov/LibDir](http://www.azlibrary.gov/LibDir)

Make Way for Books:  
[www.makewayforbooks.org](http://www.makewayforbooks.org)

Move On When Reading:  
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Reach Out and Read: [www.roraz.org](http://www.roraz.org)

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# THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

The achievement gap between children from high- and low-income families is roughly **30 TO 40 PERCENT LARGER** among children born in 2001 than among those born twenty-five years earlier.<sup>1</sup>



“... EDUCATION IS A WAY OUT OF POVERTY – BUT POVERTY IS ALSO A HINDRANCE TO EDUCATION.”<sup>2</sup>



Parents with the means invest more time and money than ever before in their children while lower-income families, which are now more likely to be headed by a single parent, are increasingly stretched for time and resources.<sup>3</sup>

LOW-INCOME YOUTH LACK OPTIONS IN THE SUMMER, and sometimes come to the library because it's air-conditioned.<sup>4</sup>



FOR EVERY ONE LINE OF PRINT READ BY LOW-INCOME CHILDREN, MIDDLE-INCOME CHILDREN READ THREE.<sup>5</sup>

## What Happens to Children DURING THE SUMMER?



During the summer months, disadvantaged children tread water at best or even fall behind. It's what we call **“SUMMER SLIDE”** while better-off children build their skills steadily over the summer months.



### SUMMER LEARNING LOSS

accounts for about two-thirds of the ninth grade achievement gap in reading.

## How Summer Learning Can Help CLOSE the Achievement Gap.

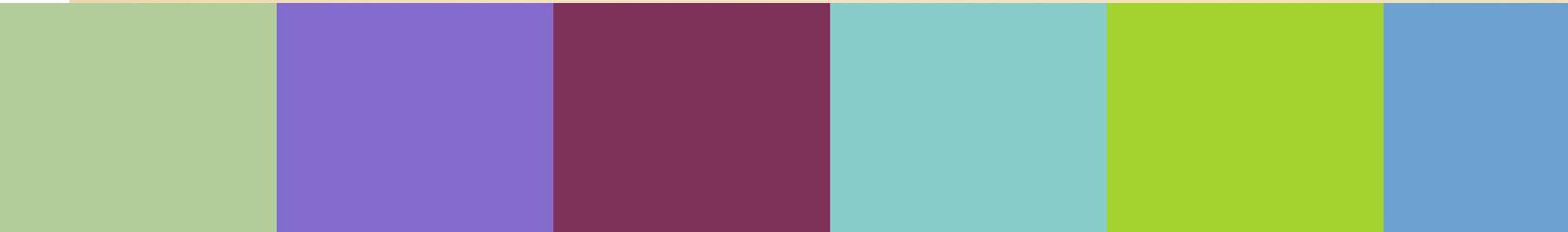
### SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS TARGETED TO LOW-INCOME STUDENTS

can help close the achievement gap that has been attributed, at least in part, to cumulative learning loss during the summers and that has been shown to be steeper for low-income students than for others.



Longitudinal studies indicate that **the effects of summer learning programs endure for at least two years after participation.**<sup>6</sup>

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When Arizona Reads, Arizona Thrives

[www.ReadOnArizona.org](http://www.ReadOnArizona.org)