



Alignments

Teaching Strategies
and the Science of Reading

For decades, education experts have debated the “right” approach for teaching young children how to read. In these discussions, early childhood education researchers have considered developmental procedures; teaching strategies; and, most recently, data from neuroscientists. Based on this information and on the advice of literacy experts, many early learning programs are choosing to use the body of literature defining the science of reading to inform their strategies for improving children’s literacy rates. As a result, early learning programs have started to focus on how curriculum and assessment tools incorporate this research to help them reach their goals.

While the arguments for which approach is best have polarized the educators and administrators who support them, Teaching Strategies’ view of teaching young children to become competent and confident emerging readers has remained constant: literacy is about letters, their sounds, and how those sounds and letters form words. It is about understanding the meaning of words and seeing how they relate to what a child already knows and is yet to know, and it is about falling in love with reading. This position on literacy for young children is supported by the literature on the science of reading.

Programs that use *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* as their comprehensive curriculum, *GOLD®* as an assessment tool, and/or *ReadyRosie®* as a family engagement tool may be looking for ways to articulate how these tools will help them reach their literacy goals.

The science of reading identifies five essential components of effective literacy learning.

1

Phonemic Awareness

the awareness to hear and manipulate the sounds of spoken words

2

Phonics

the relationship between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language

3

Fluency

smooth and accurate reading that mirrors the pace and degree of expression in natural speech

4

Vocabulary

the knowledge of the meaning of words

5

Comprehension

the ability to use the principles above to build an accurate understanding of a written text

The Creative Curriculum® and Coaching to Fidelity

The Creative Curriculum®

The Creative Curriculum® is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that features hands-on, project-based investigations as a pathway to rich, robust, meaningful learning. It incorporates the most up-to-date early childhood development research and provides teachers with the information they need to make intentional instructional decisions to support children's continued development. An early learning program designed to maximize children's potential to develop strong early literacy skills will consider these four areas, each of which are outlined in *Volume 4: Language & Literacy of The Foundation*, through our professional development offerings, and through our embedded facilitation guidance: literacy components, planning your literacy program, teaching strategies, and literacy learning in the interest areas and outdoors.

Children need teachers who intentionally use a variety of teaching strategies to help children progress. Effective teachers acknowledge and describe their learning; coach children's efforts and make suggestions; extend children's thinking with open-ended questions, prompts, and back-and-forth conversations; demonstrate effective learning behaviors; and provide information to expand children's knowledge base.

The seven components of literacy, covered in depth in chapter 1 of *Volume 4: Language & Literacy* and addressed consistently and thoughtfully throughout *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool*, are

- literacy as a source of enjoyment,
- vocabulary and language,
- phonological awareness,
- knowledge of print,
- letters and words,
- comprehension, and
- books and other texts.

Coaching to Fidelity

Coaching to Fidelity for The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool lays out the Items and Indicators that ensure that administrators, coaches, and teachers understand the degree to which teachers are implementing the curriculum with fidelity. *Coaching to Fidelity* informs successful implementation through the following Items and Indicators related to literacy.

Coaching to Fidelity

Implementation of *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool: Foundation*

The teacher and teaching assistant (if applicable) use both child-initiated and teacher-planned experiences to effectively guide children's language and literacy learning.

- a. Asks a variety of questions throughout the day to scaffold learning, extend thinking, and check for understanding
- b. Engages children in individual and small-group conversations
- c. Provides opportunities for children to talk with peers
- d. Introduces and discusses new words within meaningful contexts
- e. Leads children in songs, stories, games, and rhymes that play with elements of language (e.g., rhyming, alliteration)
- f. Includes phonological awareness activities daily
- g. Facilitates at least two planned read-aloud experiences each day
- h. Uses reading strategies that promote active participation during story time
- i. Engages children in storytelling and story retelling
- j. Draws children's attention to print and its uses (e.g., orients a book correctly, turns pages from the front of the book to the back)
- k. Draws children's attention to letters, words, and letter-sound associations through a variety of strategies
- l. Encourages children to write for a variety of purposes throughout the day
- m. Engages children in shared writing for a variety of purposes at various times throughout the day

The Creative Curriculum® and Coaching to Fidelity

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool, Guided Edition, Volume 4: Language & Literacy

Note: "ITE" is an abbreviation meaning *Intentional Teaching Experiences*, which are one of the curriculum's *Daily Resources*. The abbreviation "LL" indicates that the primary objective of the ITE is related to language development and literacy learning.

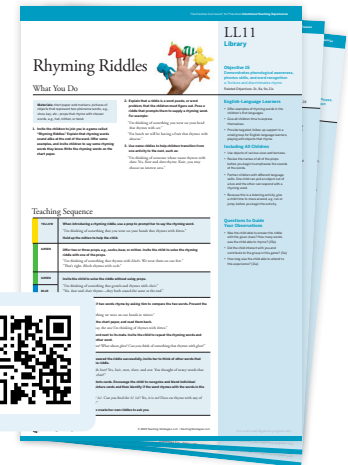
Component	Description	Effective Strategies
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Phonemic Awareness

As children begin to understand how language works, they become aware that language is made up of words that are grouped together. When preschool children play with words, they often play with phonemes. For example, if you sing, "Tow, tow, tow your boat, gently down the stream," the children will probably say, "No! That's not right! It's row." In this playful way, they are demonstrating how they pay attention to phonemes.

- Provide many varied opportunities for children to listen to and respond to language.
- Share books, stories, and songs that include rhymes and/or alliteration.
- Engage children in games that play with language.

Example of a related *Daily Resource* ITE LL11, "Rhyming Riddles"



Phonics

A reliable sign that children have developed a good understanding of the sounds of language is that they connect printed symbols to their corresponding sounds. For example, they connect *M* with /m/. It's important not to speak of *phonemic awareness* and *phonics* interchangeably, since one is strictly auditory (phonemic awareness) and the other is about sound-symbol correspondence (phonics).

- Focus on letters and words as part of meaningful activities.
- Talk about letters, sounds, and words as children dictate to you.
- Help children create a personal word collection to use in their own writing.

Example of a related *Daily Resource* ITE LL07, "Letters, Letters, Letters"



The Creative Curriculum® and Coaching to Fidelity

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool, Guided Edition, Volume 4: Language & Literacy

Component	Description	Effective Strategies
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Fluency

Children can become fluent readers when they have many opportunities for practicing reading aloud, when they are read to, and when they are given models of the different ways to read.

- Conduct read-alouds, including repeated read-alouds of a single text.
- Offer a variety of reading materials (e.g., books, poems, informational texts).
- Encourage storytelling and retelling of stories they have heard.

Example of a related Daily Resource
ITE LL33, "Clothesline Storytelling"

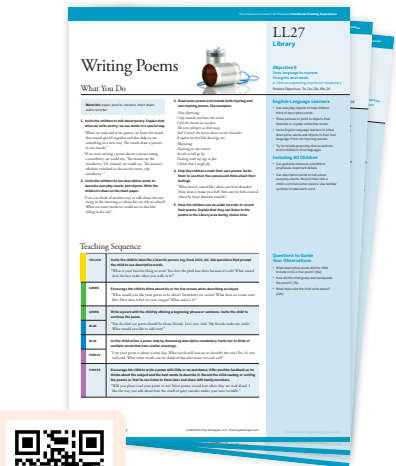


Vocabulary

The best way to help children build and increase their vocabulary is to provide opportunities for children to hear and experience language through both age-appropriate interaction with a wide variety of texts (children's fiction, nonfiction, poetry, songs, rhymes) and spontaneously through authentic, interesting experiences.

- Serve as a good language model.
- Highlight, repeat, and reinforce new words.
- Define new words in ways that build on children's existing knowledge.
- Ask and encourage children to ask questions, particularly open-ended questions that call for extended responses.
- Provide multiple opportunities for children to engage in conversations.

Example of a related Daily Resource
ITE LL27, "Writing Poems"



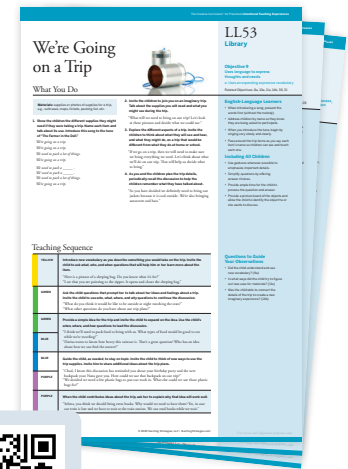
The Creative Curriculum® and Coaching to Fidelity

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool, Guided Edition, Volume 4: Language & Literacy

Component	Description	Effective Strategies
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Comprehension Young children develop comprehension skills through experiences that promote oral and written language skills (discussions, sociodramatic play, retellings, and engaging read-alouds). Most important is the teacher's role in helping children connect new information and experiences with what they already know.

- Build background knowledge and vocabulary through language games and materials.
- Encourage children to ask questions.
- Help children understand language by rephrasing when necessary.
- Read with children daily and talk about the story before, during, and after reading.
- Conduct repeated read-alouds of a single text, with successive instances serving increasingly complex instructional goals.



Example of a related Daily Resource
 ITE LL53, "We're Going on a Trip"



GOLD®

GOLD® is an observation-based, rater-mediated assessment tool designed to help teachers derive meaning and purpose from the formative assessment process. Learning progressions—codified in the 38 research-based objectives for development and learning that serve as the backbone of both GOLD® and *The Creative Curriculum*®—articulate the expected paths that children across all demographic subgroups typically take when acquiring knowledge, skills, and abilities

in the areas most highly correlated to success at school. The learning progressions demonstrate how more complex skills are built on foundational skills. Thus, when teachers use GOLD® to document evidence of an individual child’s learning, they may be able to determine how to best scaffold the child’s continued development. For each component of the science of reading, GOLD® includes the following learning progressions.

Component	Objective from Teaching Strategies® Objectives for Development and Learning	Relevant Dimensions of Each Objective
Phonemic Awareness	Objective 15 , “Demonstrates phonological awareness, phonics skills, and word recognition”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 15a, “Notices and discriminates rhyme”• 15b, “Notices and discriminates alliteration”• 15c, “Notices and discriminates discrete units of sound”
Phonics	Objective 15 , “Demonstrates phonological awareness, phonics skills, and word recognition” Objective 16 , “Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 15d, “Applies phonics concepts and knowledge of word structure to decode text”• 16a, “Identifies and names letters”• 16b, “Identifies letter-sound correspondences”
Fluency	Objective 18 , “Comprehends and responds to books and other texts”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 18a, “Interacts during reading experiences, book conversations, and text reflections”• 18b, “Uses emergent reading skills”• 18e, “Reads fluently”

Component	Objective from Teaching Strategies® Objectives for Development and Learning	Relevant Dimensions of Each Objective
Vocabulary	Objective 9 , "Uses language to express thoughts and needs"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9a, "Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary" • 9b, "Speaks clearly" • 9c, "Uses conventional grammar"
Comprehension	Objective 18 , "Comprehends and responds to books and other texts"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18c, "Retells stories and recounts details from informational texts" • 18d, "Uses context clues to read and comprehend texts"

When teachers consult the progressions, they see which relevant skills are developmentally appropriate for each age group and grade-level, giving them ready access to two essential pieces of individualized assessment information.

1. Is each child developing as expected (either at, above, or below the widely held expectation for their age group or grade level) in this area?
2. What knowledge, skills, and abilities should my instruction be supporting next for each child?

To illustrate the helpful information included in each of these progressions, let us describe one here. Objective 15a, "Notifies and discriminates rhyme," describes the following widely held expectations for children's development of this skill.

- During the second and third years of a child's life, we can expect that he will be able to join in rhyming songs and games.
- During the third year of a child's life and during the time a child spends in a three- and four-year-old preschool program, we can expect that she will learn to fill in missing rhyming words and spontaneously generate words that rhyme with a given word.
- During the four-year-old preschool year and kindergarten year, it is expected that a child will be able to decide if two words rhyme.
- During kindergarten and first grade, a child will typically learn to generate a group of rhyming words when given a word and then learn to generate rhyming words without a prompt word, identify rhyming words in written text, and use an understanding of rhyming to decode unfamiliar text.

ReadyRosie®

ReadyRosie® is an evidence-informed, research-based family engagement and early learning resource that schools and programs can share with families. ReadyRosie® is designed to give families confidence in their ability to support their children’s development in intentional ways

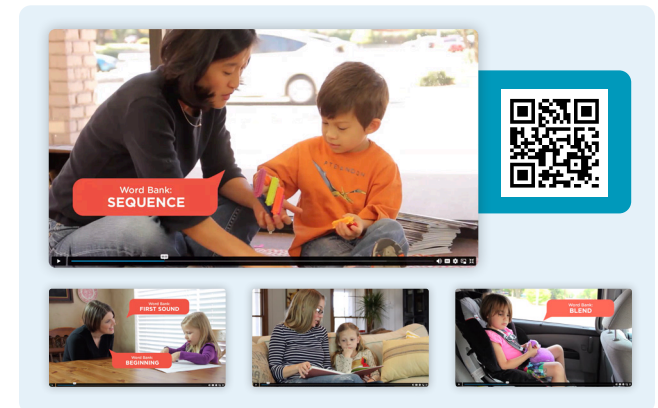
and encourage them to share their unique knowledge of their children. The backbone of ReadyRosie® is its collection of Modeled Moments, which are videos of real children and families that demonstrate simple, effective ways to support children’s learning.

Component	Description	Modeled Moments videos to share with families
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Phonemic Awareness

Families can boost children’s phonemic awareness skills through games, songs, and rhymes that play with the sounds of language.

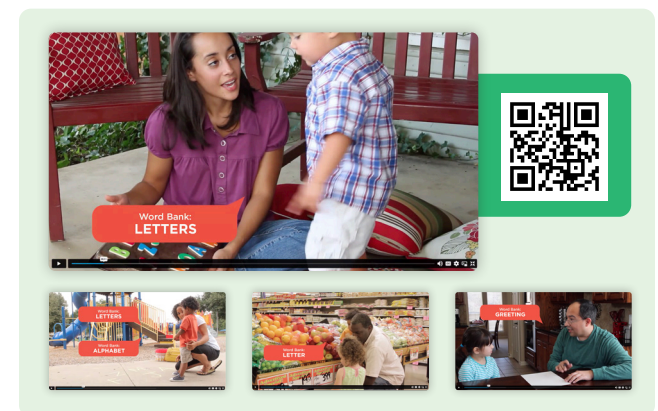
- Sequence of Sounds
- Listen, My Children
- Retelling the Story
- Echo Game



Phonics

Families have the power to make learning about letters and their sounds interesting and fun.

- Magnetic Letter Mix-Up
- Stomp the Letter
- Letter Hunt
- Thank-You Note



Component

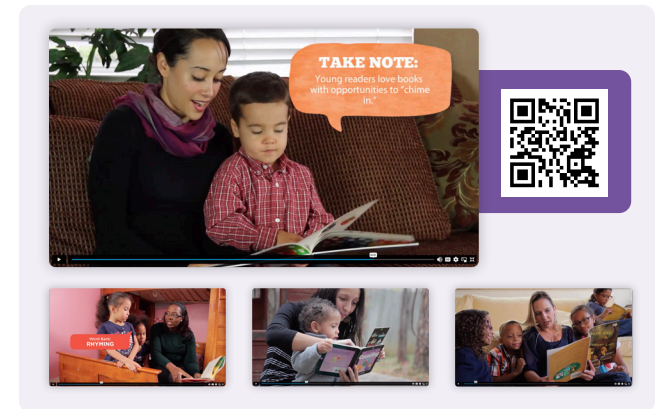
Description

Modeled Moments videos to share with families

Fluency

Families who know the joy of sharing books and stories with children also know that these experiences strengthen both children’s skills and family bonds.

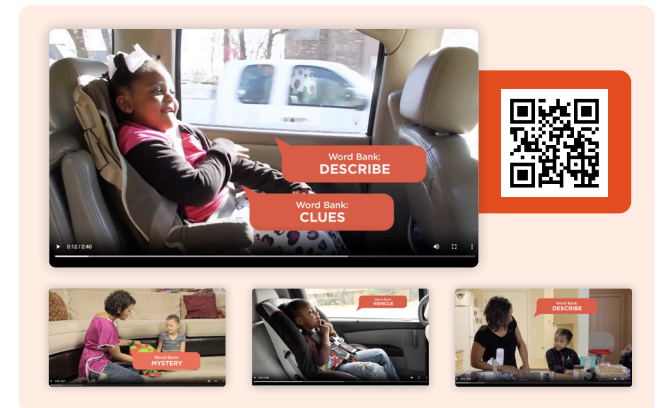
- Chime In
- Finish the Rhyme
- Reading Routines for Early Readers
- Model Expressive Reading



Vocabulary

Families can help children build a strong vocabulary by talking with them about their daily lives, asking and answering questions about the world around them, and sharing books and stories.

- I’m Thinking of an Animal
- Pantry Talk Description
- Mystery Bag
- How Many Can You Name?



ReadyRosie®

Component	Description	Modeled Moments videos to share with families
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Comprehension Families are in a unique position to help their children build the background experiences and vocabulary necessary for strong comprehension skills. All it takes is engaging in and talking about their everyday interactions at home and the many places they visit as a family.

- Act It Out
- Funny Reading
- Book Bag Descriptions
- My Favorite Part

