



Early Childhood Specialties

Teacher Training, Tools & Toys

www.EarlyChildhoodSpecialties.com

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Five Playful Practices That Foster Language and Literacy Development for Infants and Toddlers

By the end of this training, successful participants will:

- ✓ Identify 4 benefits of play for children's language and literacy development
- ✓ Participate in 5 practices that foster language and literacy development
- ✓ Plan at least 3 activities in each of the 5 practices to implement in their classrooms

BENEFITS OF PLAY FOR CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE AND LITERACY:

Language Development:

- PLAY** > is the best way infants and toddlers learn _____ and how the world works
- > helps toddlers learn to put their thoughts into words
 - > helps toddlers learn to think _____
- which helps them understand that words can stand for real objects or experiences

Emergent Literacy

When children play, they are developing literacy skills from:

- hearing language spoken around them
- a _____ - and _____-rich environment
- hearing stories read aloud to them

5 Playful Practices That Foster Language and Early Literacy Development (<https://kdl.org/young-children/>)

1. **LOVE – Maximize Love, Manage Stress**

Express affection

Encouraging

Routines

Managing Stress

Playful Activity Ideas for Loving:

Connecting Activities: include emotional warmth, close contact and playfulness

*(See <https://www.piercecountylibrary.org/files/library/wiggleticklesall.pdf>)

2. TALK Sing and Point (See video: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/5-steps-for-brain-building-serve-and-return/>)

- * Talk directly to infants and toddlers as often as you can
- * Tell stories and stretch _____, using complex language
- * Talk to your child about many different events, ideas and stories

Playful Activity Ideas for Talking:

- Most of your day should be in interactions with individual or small groups of children
- Use diapering and other routine times to talk with children individually, do fingerplays and lovies*
- Have conversations with children as if with friends
 - Share your own experiences and feelings
 - Ask toddlers what they think instead of quizzing them
- Use books to have “serve and return” interactions with infants and toddlers

Singing

- * helps infants & toddlers learn new words
- * slows down language so children can hear the different _____
- * is a fun bonding experience with your children — whether you're a good singer or not!
- * develops listening and _____ skills

Playful Activity Ideas for Singing:

- Sing simple songs to infants, including some with hand movements
- Provide baby-safe instruments for children to play while listening to recorded music
- Modify the words in well-known songs or ask older toddlers to fill in the blanks
- Expose children to music from other cultures, especially their own (see www.mamalisa.com)
- Use songs to tell stories with puppets, pictures, or props

(www.zerotothree.org/resources/1514-beyond-twinkle-twinkle-using-music-with-infants-and-toddlers)

Read books to get you singing together, such as *Over in the Meadow (A Barefoot Singalong)* by Jill McDonald

3. COUNT – Group and Compare

Playful Activity Ideas for Counting:

“Two Little Eyes”

(Point to child’s features as mentioned)

- * Two little eyes to look around.
- * Two little ears to hear each sound.
- * One little nose to smell what’s sweet.
- * One little mouth that likes to eat.

<https://www.piercecountylibrary.org/files/library/wiggleticklesall.pdf>

4. PLAY – Explore through Movement and Play

Playful Movement Activity Ideas:

(From: Torbert, M. & Schneider, L.B. (1993) *Follow me too: A handbook of movement activities for three- to five-year-olds*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.)

- **Follow Me** - Face the group with your arms held in a specific position. Invite the players to join the game: “Put your arms like my arms.” Then assume a new pose. (p. 89)
- **Arrows** – As you point to an arrow, children move both their arms in the direction of the arrow. (p.48)
- **Can You?** – Children act upon your directions: reach up high, stand up, sit down, turn around, etc. (p. 69)

Also read books that invite play and movement, such as *From Head to Toe* by Eric Carle.

5. READ – And Discuss Stories

Reading together

- * is the single most effective way to help young children become proficient readers
- * develops _____, comprehension, and general knowledge
- * introduces children to “rare” words that they may not hear in everyday conversation

Playful Activity Ideas for Reading:

- Keep reading time short and snuggly
- Make reading interactive – involve the child as much as you can
- Create your own books with pictures of your children, their families and your classroom
- Make the story come alive with different voices and body movements
- Read books that invite children’s participation (See: www.zerotothree.org/resources/304-how-to-introduce-toddlers-and-babies-to-books)

Resources

- Bailey, B. A. (2000). *I love you rituals*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.
- Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University. (n.d.) *Brain architecture*. <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/serve-return-interaction-shapes-brain-circuitry/>
- Zero to Three <http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/early-language-literacy/earlyliteracy2pagehandout.pdf>
- Kent District Library <https://kdl.org/young-children/> <https://kdl.org/young-children/ready-to-read/success-basics/>
- Leiderman, R. C. & Sami, W. S. (2012), *Let's play and learn together: Fill your baby's day with creative activities that are fun and enhance development*. Beverly, MA: Four Winds Press.
- Schickedanz, J. (2013). *So much more than the ABCs: The early stages of reading and writing*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.
- Torbert, M. 2005. Using active group games to develop basic life skills. *Young Children* 60 (4), p. 73-75.
- Torbert, M. & Schneider, L.B. (2005) *Follow me too: A handbook of movement activities for three- to five-year-olds*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.
- Wiggles, Tickles & Rhymes*. (n.d.) Pierce County Library. <https://www.piercecountylibrary.org/files/library/wiggleticklesall.pdf>

*Enjoy playing with your infants and toddlers as
you foster their language and literacy!*