

# Reading

## Creating an Engaging Interest Center

### What Children Are Learning

- Infants and toddlers learn pictures have meaning
- Preschoolers and school-age children learn letters make up words
- Children of **all** ages learn the following:
  - Respect for books and how to use them properly
  - How to retell familiar stories
  - How to connect literature to real life experiences
  - Sounds have symbols (letters) and letters have meaning (words)



### Developmental Skills Typically Acquired

As children develop, they will show increasing abilities with the following:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vocabulary and language skills</li><li>• Attention span</li><li>• Taking turns</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Listening skills</li><li>• Imagination</li><li>• Looking at pictures</li><li>• Turning pages (motor skills)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Putting sounds together to decode words</li><li>• Pre-reading abilities, such as reading in sequence, left to right, and top to bottom</li></ul> |
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**NOTE: This is not an exhaustive list as children develop according to their own individual timelines. Children have unique paths for language and reading development; support them at their own pace.**



### Materials and Storage

#### Reading Environment

- Create a cozy, inviting space with soft/washable pillows, stuffed animals, and beanbag chairs.
- Include a table and chairs for writing and drawing activities.
- Place bookshelves with books at the children's eye level with covers visible.

**NOTE: Appropriately monitor children and include variations based on interest and developmental skills.**

#### Reading Materials

- Include vinyl, cardboard and cloth books for infants and toddlers.
- Provide books with quality text and colorful, interesting illustrations and pictures.
- Connect stories and props with children's interests and prior experiences.
- Include books that introduce new knowledge and answer children's questions, in addition to books with rhymes, poems, songs and fingerplays.

#### Storage



Organize items using baskets or tubs with a picture of each item that belongs inside. Place them within children's reach.

Contact the OECOSL Child Care Support Line at 1.800.299.1627 for assistance.



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### Best Practices

- Connect** books to children's relevant, real life experiences while reading with them.
- Model** and encourage children to use props and puppets to retell stories.
- Discuss** how to care for books and classroom materials by handling them with respect.
- Locate** the reading center in a quiet area in your program setting.
- Encourage** children to access and enjoy books on their own.
- Rotate** books to reflect children's interests and topics of study.
- Integrate** language and literacy opportunities into all learning centers.
- Write** dictated words for young children's stories and description of pictures.
- Sing** songs, share rhymes, and play with sounds of words.



### Activities and Project Ideas

#### Pictures

- Create a picture book of familiar family members. Play a game by asking, "Who is this?"
- Post each child's picture and/or printed name in the learning environment.
- Place pictures of familiar songs on the walls. Use the pictures as you sing the songs.



#### Culture

- Introduce children to new cultures using authentic books, props, songs, and posters.
- Use a felt board or create classroom books to retell familiar stories and experiences.



#### Model

- Practice visual and physical story reminders.
- Print words about topics of interest, including home languages, and display them in the learning environment for discussions.



#### Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) for Age Groups

Infants	Toddlers	Preschoolers	School-Agers
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### Family Engagement

Encourage family engagement by recommending they include reading as part of regular routines and experiences. Suggestions include the following:

- Use new vocabulary words that children learn in your program.
- Ask children what their favorite topics are and obtain books about them.
- Show photos as you talk about an experience (for example, "Remember when you...first you...next you...lastly, you...").



#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **New Words** <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/literacy/learn-new-words>
- **Building Your Child's Vocabulary** <https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/building-your-childs-vocabulary>
- **Eight Tips for Creating Homemade Books** <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/eight-tips-creating-homemade-books>
- **The Reading Chair** <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/fall2021/reading-chair-fall-21>

