



English as an additional language: Annotated resource list

This annotated resource list suggests materials useful as a starting point for professional reading and discussion for teachers who support children learning English as an additional language.

Resources are arranged from the most applicable to the more general.

It is recommended that you allocate approximately 45 minutes to read and reflect on the information provided.

Introduction

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Biliteracy

Charmain Kenner's works show how home and school complement each other in fostering young children's biliterate development. Her books are accessible, enjoyable and informative, with abundant real-life anecdotes and examples of children's work.

Becoming Biliterate (2004)

In her 2004 book, *Becoming Biliterate*, Kenner looks at ways that classrooms can provide a more diverse curriculum and recognise the contributions of home and community to children's literacy learning. Each chapter concludes with ideas for multilingual literacy experiences:

- finding out about children's home and community literacy learning
- promoting literacy in diverse languages in the classroom
- developing children's writing in different languages and scripts
- exploring difference and connection between children's literate worlds
- understanding the teaching systems of bilingual families.

While the book focuses on six-year-olds in England, there is much of interest here for kindergarten teachers in diverse Australian settings.

Kenner debunks the assumption that exposure to multiple languages and scripts confuses children. Moreover, she shows how children learn concepts about print in home languages that are transferable to English. There is much food for thought here; stories and examples from the book would work well as provocations for professional development activities.

Home Pages (2000)

In her 2000 book, *Home Pages*, Kenner looks at how the gap between home and classroom can be bridged by teachers of young bilingual children. The book argues for two-way communication, focusing in particular on the flow of literate resources from home to school. It offers ideas for:

- finding out about home literacies
- creating multilingual classroom environments with resources from home and community
- encouraging children as writers of home language and English
- helping children investigate the writing systems of their different languages
- developing children's knowledge of symbols and text design, including visual literacies.

Each chapter concludes with a list of practical ideas for creating a multilingual classroom for four year-old children — none of which require the teacher to speak the children's home languages.

C Kenner 2004, *Becoming Biliterate: Young children learning different writing systems*, Trentham Books, Stoke on Trent.

C Kenner 2000, *Home Pages: Literacy links for bilingual children*, Trentham Books, Stoke on Trent.

Phonological awareness activities

This book is helpful for teachers across the early childhood years. For kindergarten teachers, the activities on syllables, rhyming and alliteration are of interest. While these activities are not designed specifically for children who use English as an additional language, they are valuable for teachers in diverse settings.

E Love & S Reilly 1995, *A Sound Way: Phonological awareness — activities for early literacy*, Longman, Melbourne.

Literacy's beginnings: Supporting young readers and writers

This is a comprehensive literacy education text. It describes the development of literacy in a series of chapters addressing successive ages: the foundation years (0–3); the novice years (3–5); the years of experimenting (5–7); and the years when conventions become established (6–8).

Each of these chapters looks at the characteristics of children who are learning English as an additional language. The chapter on kindergarten-age children describes the English language demands made of bilingual children in the classroom and the transfer of literacy knowledge and skill across languages. Examples are drawn from Chinese, Hebrew, Spanish and Korean. In this regard the book complements Kenner's work with young biliterate children in England (see Biliteracy above).

In addition, a whole chapter is devoted to the needs of diverse learners, including children who are learning English as an additional language. This chapter contains a useful continuum for understanding the development of oral language from the initial "silent phase" through acquisition of basic communicative language to academic language. There are many practical ideas and activities for adjusting activities for English language learners. The section on adaptation of storybook reading is particularly useful.

The detailed information about oral language development complements that provided by Hadaway, Vardell and Young (see Literature-based instruction ... below).

LM McGee & DJ Richgels 2008, *Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting young readers and writers*, Pearson, Boston.

Helping young children learn language and literacy

This book is a comprehensive language and literacy text for the early childhood years. It is underpinned by the assumption that young children are emergent literates who arrive in the classroom with literacy resources from home and community. The aim is to enable teachers to draw these resources into teaching and learning activities that connect with children's literate capabilities. This is a book that can assist teachers to resist the creeping worksheet culture; it is rich with inspiration for literacy learning activities that build on the emergent reading and writing capabilities children acquire at home and in the community prior to formal instruction.

One of the strengths of the book is a series of "special features" that suggest ways teachers can help children become bilingual and biliterate. In addition, many of the other teaching ideas from the book are likely to be of interest to teachers in diverse settings. The ideas for creating a print-rich classroom that capitalises on children's skills in reading environmental print are especially useful.

C Vukelich, J Christie & B Enz 2002, *Helping Young Children Learn Language and Literacy*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston.

Teaching language and literacy in the early years

This book contains many suggestions for activities involving rhyme and rhythm that may be useful in diverse contexts. It is not directed specifically at teachers of children who are learning English as an additional language.

D Godwin & M Perkins 2002, *Teaching Language and Literacy in the Early Years*, 2nd edn, David Fulton Publishers, London.

Literature-based instruction with English language learners

This text focuses on students who are learning English as an additional language, providing developmental information for learners from the early years to the senior years. An overview of the development of oral proficiency in an additional language is a particularly useful feature – and a complement to the fine-grained developmental information provided by McGee and Richgels (see Literacy's beginnings above).

This book provides ideas for developing English as an additional language through literature. The sections on interactive reading and poetry are useful for kindergarten teachers in diverse settings.

NL Hadaway, SM Vardell & TA Young 2002, *Literature-Based Instruction with English Language Learners K–12*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston.

Literacy-building transition activities

This collection of transition activities contains many ideas that can be used to create productive activities for kindergarten programs in linguistically and culturally diverse settings. Many involve play with the sounds of English and engaging ways to promote phonological awareness for reading development. It is applicable to all young learners of English.

EB Church 2008, *Literacy-Building Transition Activities: Dozens of quick and easy activities that infuse learning into every minute of the day*, Teaching Resources, New York.

Strategies for teaching English learners

This is a comprehensive US text for teachers of school-aged English language learners. It suggests singing games and jazz chants that would enhance a kindergarten program.

LT Diaz-Rico 2004, *Teaching English Learners: Strategies and methods*, Pearson, Boston.

More information

- Queensland kindergarten learning guideline, pp. 59–61 and Continua of learning and development, pp. 31–37, available at: www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/10192.html
- Further resources for teachers to support children who speak English as an additional language are available at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/12974.html under 'Inclusion and diversity':
 - English as an additional language: Intentional teaching strategies
 - English as an additional language: Making judgments.