

Queensland kindergarten learning guideline

Professional development | Resources



English as an additional language: Intentional teaching strategies

This resource is the second in a series of three that provide information about strategies for teachers to support children who speak English as an additional language (EAL).

1. Building literacy learning partnerships
2. Intentional teaching strategies
3. Examples of observable behaviours.

It is recommended that you allocate approximately 30 minutes per resource to read and reflect on the information provided.

Introduction

This resource provides examples of intentional teaching strategies. It is divided into the following three sections:

- Developing comprehension
- Playing with sounds
- Developing literacy.

Literacies are diverse and complex social practices; different communities have particular ways of taking from words and create different pathways to literacy for young children.

Moreover, words stand less alone than they once did; images, movement, music, gesture and sound effects are ubiquitous in digital textual worlds. Multiple languages, dialects and scripts add to the complexity and diversity of literate practice. For children who use English as an additional language the multilingual, multimodal literacies of home and kindergarten are rich with learning opportunities.

SB Heath 1983, *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Developing comprehension	Playing with sounds	Developing literacy
<p>Children’s encounters with texts often include more expert readers or writers who mediate and ‘scaffold’ the text use and conventions, playing a vital role in meaning making¹.</p>	<p>The richer the experiences of sound, the greater the possibilities for developing young children’s inventiveness and sharing enjoyment. Opportunities to use language in playful ways often arise out of very common everyday experiences².</p>	<p>Weave literacies from children’s interests, families, communities and popular culture into a classroom culture³.</p>
<p>Comprehension skills transfer across speaking, viewing and reading. Intentional teaching of comprehension at kindergarten lays the foundations for reading comprehension.</p> <p>Teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider differences between the learning of children who use English as a first language and those who use it as an additional language • recognise differences among English language learners, e.g. the comprehension skills of a child who begins learning English at kindergarten differ from those of a child who has been learning English since birth. 	<p>Young children delight in the strongly patterned language of nursery rhymes, riddles, jingles, chants, songs, poems and rhyming stories.</p> <p>While having fun and playing with language, children build foundations of reading: they come to feel the beat of syllables and to recognise and create rhymes and alliteration.</p> <p>EAL learners develop this awareness of sound as they hear their own voices, chant, recite, sing and play with both their first language and English.</p>	<p>Children’s multilingual literacy experiences at home and in the community are a resource for learning in kindergarten.</p> <p>Even if you do not speak a child’s home language, encouraging children and their families to bring their literate practices to kindergarten supports literacy development.</p> <p>This respects and promotes children’s prior knowledge and skills that transfer easily to English, e.g. the understanding that spoken language can be written down.</p>




Note: Teachers create opportunities for intentional teaching (see over) beginning in a one-on-one learning environment. As children become more confident, they transition to small and large group learning contexts.

¹ C Jones Diaz & N Harvey 2002, ‘Bilingual identities and literacy’. In L Makin & C Jones Diaz (eds) *Literacies in Early Childhood: Changing views, challenging practice* (pp. 175–95), MacLennan & Petty, Sydney. p.187.




² M Ross 2000, ‘Bilinguality and making learning possible in the early years’. In M Datta (ed), *Bilinguality and literacy: Principles and practice* (pp. 38–57), Continuum, London. p. 50.

³ E Gregory, S Long & D Volk 2007, ‘Many pathways: Implications of syncretic literacy studies for practice and research’. In E Gregory, S Long & D Volk (eds) *Many Pathways to Literacy: Young children learning with siblings, grandparents, peers and communities* (pp. 221–25), Routledge Falmer, New York. p. 223.


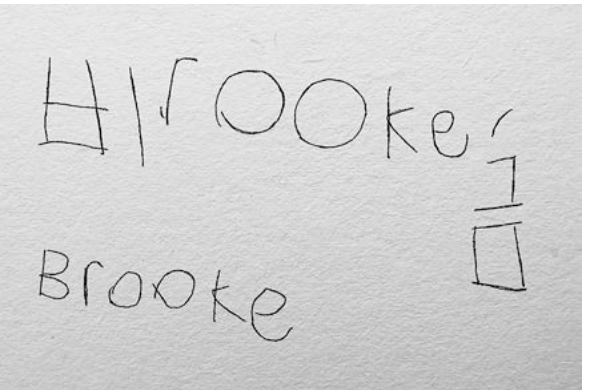

Developing comprehension

Intentional teaching strategies for interacting	Intentional teaching strategies for conversing	Intentional teaching strategies for sharing
		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assume children understand more than they can say. • Recognise the 'silent period' of additional language learning (children can't say the words but can understand and respond nonverbally). • Look for ways children can display their understanding of texts physically, e.g. mime, matching/sequencing pictures, doing actions. • Expect children to show what they know and can do using nonverbal cues. • Expect children to need to hear language many times before they attempt to repeat it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a small number of familiar routines in pairs and small groups during oral activities around texts. • Create a shared language of common vocabulary and sentence structures to use when talking about texts, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What's going to happen next? – What was your favourite part? – Where is the ...? – Who ...? Which ...? • Model responses to texts and questions about texts, e.g. 'I think ...' or 'I liked ...' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide multifaceted books into small, manageable segments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – introduce a new segment each day – each day review previous segments and read the new segment several times – use illustrations, objects or drama to introduce 3–4 new words with each segment – use nonverbal language to highlight new words as you read – ask easily answered questions ('Who? What? Where? Which?') – at the end of each session, summarise the text so far.

Playing with sound

Intentional teaching strategies for playing with the sounds of language	Intentional teaching strategies for participating in sound activities	Intentional teaching strategies for remembering and making up rhymes
		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match the rhythm: children march, stride or pretend to run around the room while the teacher recites nursery rhymes with strong rhythm, e.g. Jack and Jill, The Grand Old Duke of York, Hickory Dickory Dock, Tom Tom the Piper's Son, Wee Willie Winkie. • Clap, beat, tap, click, nod, swivel heads or stomp feet to identify the syllables in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – children's names during transitions, e.g. Benjamin, Mei-Lin, Ed-ward, Be-ni-ta. – classroom activities incorporated in the daily program, e.g. paint-ing, cut-ting, col-lage, blocks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a listening area provide audio-recordings or movies, e.g. an iPad with a nursery rhyme app, a computer with links to nursery rhyme websites, or recordings made by the teacher and the class. Include the possibility to record children. • Encourage children to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – use jazz chants, rap, hip-hop or skipping action rhymes in play – use skipping rhymes in classroom transitions or to invite a peer to play, e.g. 'I like toast; I like tea / I'd like [name peer] to play with me'. – play with props and repeat a rhyme, e.g. 'Hey diddle diddle: toy cat, dog and cow, toy violin, a moon, dish, spoon'. – play action games, e.g. Ring-a-Ring-a-Rosie, London Bridge, or do the actions to Rock-a-Bye-Baby. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage children to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – supply the rhyming word during readings of a familiar text or fill in the blanks in rhyming games, e.g. 'Rain rain go away / come again another _____' – innovate on a nursery rhyme by changing the end rhyme, e.g. 'Baa baa black sheep, have you any jam / yes sir, yes sir and some ...' – match pictures of people, places and things that rhyme, e.g. pictures of a cat and bat, a man and a van. – make up silly sentences using rhyming words from a text, e.g. 'I eat the feet of the seat'. – record rhyming words and add to it over several days, e.g. dog, frog, log ... – take turns adding to a rhyming story, based on objects pulled out of a box, e.g. 'The dog was sleeping and ... the frog was hopping and ... I was on the log ...'

Developing Literacy

Intentional teaching strategies for becoming aware of writing	Intentional teaching strategies for participating in literacy activities	Intentional teaching strategies for connecting with multilingual texts
		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite parents/carers or other family members who are literate in the child's home language to write in that language to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – prepare materials for use at kindergarten, e.g. write labels for objects in the room – engage in demonstrations of real-life activities, e.g. emailing or texting family or friends while children watch and copy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use display boards (static or interactive) to help children understand symbols, images and letters to 'read' texts in their home language or Standard Australian English (SAE). • Create an alphabet frieze or book by pasting or electronically inserting symbols, images and words for each letter of the alphabet. • Conduct a literacy walk during which children view, discuss, and photograph or video symbols, images, letters and words used at kindergarten. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage children to look closely at multilingual texts. • Compare two items in different languages to see what is the same and what is different. • Encourage children to 'write' symbols, images, letters and words to create own texts in home language and SAE. • Connect home language to SAE, e.g. 'Both of these say 'dog'.'

More information

- Queensland kindergarten learning guideline 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'.