

# 4 Early language and literacy domains: objectives for children's learning and strategies for library staff as educators



# Early language and literacy domains: objectives for children's learning and strategies for library staff as educators

This section presents language and literacy objectives for children's learning and corresponding strategies that library staff as educators can use to support this learning. Each table focuses on a specific early language and literacy domain, and is organised according to age:

- (1) phonological awareness (Table 3)
- (2) alphabet & letter knowledge (Table 4)
- (3) concepts of print (Table 5)
- (4) oral language and vocabulary (Table 6)
- (5) background knowledge (Table 7)
- (6) print motivation (Table 8).

*Learning Objectives for Children and the Educator Strategies to Support Children's Learning* overlap, especially in relation to the youngest children. Although the framework is organised according to age, many of the teaching strategies are similar across the age ranges and are relevant to all situations (for example, to model and demonstrate enthusiasm for books and pleasure in reading). The framework has been designed specifically for use in libraries, where the size and composition of the literacy sessions are unknown in advance. For this reason, it is not possible to provide detailed learning objectives and teaching/educator strategies for adult-child interaction.

The term *strategies* refers both to specific approaches and broad practices you may employ in order to help children achieve different language and literacy learning objectives.

The section *Notes specific to my community* will enable you to highlight the linguistic and cultural factors which will influence your plans. To identify these factors, you may draw on The Library Community Analysis (see Section 3) completed by your team.

Please note that we have referred to the person who brings the child(ren) to the library as the *caregiver*. This person could be a parent, grandparent, nanny or other guardian.

## 4.1. PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

Phonological awareness is children’s ability to distinguish different sound patterns (intonation, rhythm, rhyme) and break speech into sound units of different sizes (words; onset-rime; syllables; individual speech sounds/phonemes).

Table 3 corresponds to Section 4.3 of the **Literature Review**.

**Table 3. Phonological Awareness: Learning objectives for children and corresponding strategies for library staff**

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS	BIRTH TO 12 MONTHS	12 - 24 MONTHS	2 - 3 YEARS	3 - 5 YEARS
<b>Literacy learning objectives for children</b>	<p>For children to:</p> <p>Listen to the patterned language of nursery rhymes.</p> <p>Respond physically to the rhythm and beat of rhymes and songs (e.g. kicking legs, moving arms, bouncing).</p>	<p>For children to:</p> <p>Begin to do actions during simple finger games and songs.</p> <p>Vocalise during group songs and rhymes.</p>	<p>For children to:</p> <p>Join in chants of familiar stories and rhymes.</p> <p>Respond physically to action songs and rhymes.</p>	<p>For children to:</p> <p>Act out rhymes in a variety of volumes and speeds (e.g. clapping loudly and softly, or slowly and fast, whispering).</p> <p>Fill in missing word of familiar rhymes.</p>
<b>Educator strategies to support children’s learning</b>	<p>Invite caregiver to interact face-to-face with infant.</p> <p>Share ‘tips’ with caregivers on ways to interact with infant.</p>	<p>Use simple rhymes when greeting and farewelling children.</p> <p>Allow plenty of time for children to make transition from one activity to the next.</p>	<p>Read books which involve action words, animal noises, and other playful language.</p> <p>Ask simple questions (e.g. What sound does a dog/cat/snake/other animal make?).</p>	<p>Pause during familiar rhymes, for children to fill in missing word (oral cloze).</p> <p>Ask children to name objects in pictures starting with a particular letter (e.g. b for ball, bat, baby and bottle).</p>

Notes specific to my community:

## 4.2. ALPHABET AND LETTER KNOWLEDGE

Alphabet and letter knowledge includes knowing the names of the letters of the alphabet and their corresponding sounds.

Table 4 corresponds to Section 4.3 of the **Literature Review**.

**Table 4. Alphabet and Letter Knowledge: Learning objectives for children and corresponding strategies for library staff**

ALPHABET / LETTER KNOWLEDGE	BIRTH TO 12 MONTHS	12 - 24 MONTHS	2 - 3 YEARS	3 - 5 YEARS
<b>Literacy learning objectives for children</b>	Not applicable	Not applicable	For children to: Recognise that there is a connection between words and pictures. Label familiar objects in books.	For children to: (Begin to) identify some letters (e.g. first letter of one's name). Guess the beginning sound of some words.
<b>Educator strategies to support children's learning</b>			Invite children to name objects in pictures. Have environmental print (e.g. 'Exit' sign; labels; print on packaging) of different kinds visible in library space.	Draw attention to letters on the page. Finger point to some words in books as you read them aloud.

Notes specific to my community:

### 4.3. CONCEPTS OF PRINT

Concepts of print involves understanding how books and print function and their conventions (e.g. how books are organised and handled; print directionality); and the ability to distinguish print from images and understanding that both can (co)construct meaning.

Table 5 corresponds to Section 4.3 of the **Literature Review**.

**Table 5. Concepts of print: Learning objectives for children and corresponding strategies for library staff**

ALPHABET / LETTER KNOWLEDGE	BIRTH TO 12 MONTHS	12 - 24 MONTHS	2 - 3 YEARS	3 - 5 YEARS
<b>Literacy learning objectives for children</b>	For children to: Physically touch, explore and manipulate a range of board books. Watch other children and adults handling books.	For children to: Recognise that print and pictures are visually distinct on the page. Develop book handling skills (e.g. turning pages).	For children to: Begin to understand that print conveys meaning. Further develop concepts such as orientation and directionality.	For children to: Develop concepts of authorship, illustration, and book layout. Verbalise responses to characters and other textual elements
<b>Educator strategies to support children's learning</b>	Have attractive books readily available for babies to touch and handle. Talk to caregivers about the value of sharing books with babies.	Model book handling skills. Use language for talking about language, books, print and literacy (e.g. 'page', 'book', 'pictures' and 'words').	Point out environmental print in library (e.g. 'Exit', 'Loan Returns' signs) and explain its meaning. Read books in which print is visually distinct from picture and draw children's attention to print.	Allow wait time for children to respond. Share your own responses to book with children.

Notes specific to my community:

## 4.4. ORAL LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

Oral language and vocabulary includes knowledge of words and ability to use them and other features of oral language to communicate effectively in different situations.

Table 6 corresponds to Section 4.3, Section 5.1 and Table 2 of the **Literature Review**.

**Table 6. Oral language and vocabulary: Learning objectives for children and corresponding strategies for library staff**

ORAL LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY	BIRTH TO 12 MONTHS	12 - 24 MONTHS	2 - 3 YEARS	3 - 5 YEARS
<b>Literacy learning objectives for children</b>	For children to: Engage in one-to-one interactions with caregivers. Participate in turn-taking games with caregiver.	For children to: Recognise that pictures in books relate to real world objects and events. Enact actions depicted in books (e.g. touch your toes; turn around).	For children to: Enjoy simple narratives about familiar experiences e.g. meals, playing, losing a favourite toy. Hear new words used in context.	For children to: Encounter unusual words in books. Gain experience with the language features of different genres.
<b>Educator strategies to support children's learning</b>	Explain to caregivers the importance of talking to babies. Model ways of talking to babies.	Read simple books which represent familiar objects and events. Allow plenty of time for children to make connections between the pictures and words.	Read both narrative and concept books, with different artistic styles and content areas. Explain new concepts necessary to comprehend meaning in book.	Read both narrative and information books. Explain unusual words before reading to enhance comprehension. Talk about words and concepts after reading and re-read book at least once.

Notes specific to my community:

## 4.5. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Background knowledge refers to knowledge of the physical, biological and social world and human experience in it.

Table 7 presented below corresponds to Section 4.3 of the **Literature Review**.

**Table 7. Background knowledge: Learning objectives for children and corresponding strategies for library staff**

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE	BIRTH TO 12 MONTHS	12 - 24 MONTHS	2 - 3 YEARS	3 - 5 YEARS
<b>Literacy learning objectives for children</b>	<p>For children to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Touch or handle a variety of picture books.</li> <li>Look at pictures of familiar scenes from their local community.</li> </ul>	<p>For children to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognise their own lives in the picture books they see.</li> <li>Listen to songs and rhymes in home language(s) and English.</li> </ul>	<p>For children to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make links between their experiences and the experiences described and depicted in picture books.</li> <li>Point out and name things they know about in the pictures.</li> </ul>	<p>For children to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discover new information about topics of interest e.g. dinosaurs.</li> <li>Enjoy more complex and diverse narrative texts.</li> </ul>
<b>Educator strategies to support children's learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage caregivers to interact with babies in their home language(s) (e.g. nursery rhymes, lullabies).</li> <li>Explain to caregivers the importance of talking to babies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide books about topics and experiences familiar to all toddlers (e.g. babies, animals).</li> <li>Provide multilingual and multicultural books and other materials.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose books where pictures give clues to meanings of words, especially for children from diverse backgrounds.</li> <li>Make connections between pictured objects and children's lives (e.g. Do you have a pet? Have you seen a fire engine?)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about book content before reading.</li> <li>Ask children questions about their experiences in relation to the picture book.</li> </ul>

Notes specific to my community:

## 4.6. PRINT MOTIVATION

Print motivation refers to the willingness to engage in literacy practices that involve print such as reading and writing.

Table 8 presented below corresponds to Section 4.3 of the **Literature Review**.

**Table 8. Print motivation: Learning objectives for children and corresponding strategies for library staff**

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE	BIRTH TO 12 MONTHS	12 - 24 MONTHS	2 - 3 YEARS	3 - 5 YEARS
<b>Literacy learning objectives for children</b>	<p>For children to:</p> <p>Enjoy looking at pictures and vocalising.</p> <p>Engage with caregivers by moving to the rhythm of songs and rhymes.</p>	<p>For children to:</p> <p>Enjoy watching other children and being part of the group.</p> <p>Physically respond to patterned language (e.g. finger rhymes).</p>	<p>For children to:</p> <p>Be able to identify with characters in books who are like themselves.</p> <p>Choose a book to borrow and take home.</p>	<p>For children to:</p> <p>Have the opportunity to talk about their responses to books.</p> <p>Choose a book in an area of interest to borrow and take home.</p>
<b>Educator strategies to support children's learning</b>	<p>Demonstrate enthusiasm through voice and body language.</p> <p>Choose books which are relevant to children's and their families' culture and language.</p>	<p>Demonstrate your enthusiasm for books and reading.</p> <p>Choose books that invite children to respond physically (e.g. clapping, stamping, wriggling).</p>	<p>Choose books which are free from gender bias and cultural bias.</p> <p>Choose books where pictures give clues to meanings of words, especially for children from diverse backgrounds.</p>	<p>Talk about your own responses to books and make your thinking 'visible' (e.g. 'poor bear').</p> <p>Make the books you read available to children for exploration after the session.</p>

Notes specific to my community: