Print Awareness and Print Concepts

Print Awareness

Print awareness is an exciting and important piece of the early literacy puzzle. In developing print awareness a child begins to understand what print looks like, how it works, and the fact that print carries meaning (Strickland & Schickedanz, 2004). Print awareness can increase when adults take the time to point out and explain the print that is everywhere in the child’s natural world. This environmental print is all around us. It is words and phrases paired with the golden arches that mean McDonalds. It is part of the logos and signs, on cereal boxes and billboards that we see everywhere (Kassow, 2006).

Research suggests that as the child develops, so does his or her awareness that the print he or she sees carries meaning. Meaning is first provided by the familiar visual clues around the print; such as, the shape of a soda bottle, the picture or activity associated with letters or words. Families can support growth in print awareness by providing print rich environments for children where they can see and interact with materials containing print (ELM, 2005). Thus, pretend stores, pretend libraries and make-believe restaurants with menus provide opportunities for children to learn about print in developmentally appropriate ways that are meaningful to them. With help, a child will begin to understand the difference between the visual clues and the print itself.

Children demonstrate print awareness when they scribble on a piece of paper and bring it to an adult, asking, “What does this say?” They know that marks on paper have meaning and that a reader can decipher those marks. It can be frustrating when a child is constantly asking, “What does this say?” however adults should celebrate this successful beginning to a lifetime of reading (Kassow, 2006).
Some ways to encourage print awareness:

- Read with your child every day!
- Play “I Spy” games in the car or in the grocery story to “discover print”
- Read yourself! Model reading books, magazines, newspapers, the mail, messages, etc.
- Let your child see you write; tell them what the words say as you put them on paper.

**Print Concepts**

Along with understanding that print has meaning, print concepts are other important pieces of the literacy puzzle that provide a framework for the process of beginning to read. These pieces help children understand what a book is all about. Children can begin this process when families read to them. Children discover through conversations about books that each book has a title, an author, and an illustrator. They also learn how to hold a book, where a book begins, and how to turn the pages. When families point to a few words and pictures as they read, children learn to follow the meaningful print and begin to understand the differences between print and pictures (Schickedanz & Caspergue, 2005). Families should be encouraged to point to words occasionally but not so often that they take away from the joy of the story they are reading.

There is much more to explore. Within print concepts there are other puzzles to be solved called the “concept of word” and the “concept of letter.” Strickland and Schickedanz (2004) suggest that as children develop, their knowledge about books increases through shared reading. Children begin to understand that meaningful print is made up of individual words with spaces between. When families occasionally point out that the written words on the page are matched to the words spoken when reading aloud, children also begin to understand how oral language is represented by words. Each word is a puzzle in itself, that is made up of individual letters of the alphabet, each with its own shape and name (Whitehurst & Lonnigan, 2001).

Children love to explore and discover. When families read to children with knowledge about the important pieces of early literacy, they offer exciting opportunities for children to discover how the puzzle of reading goes together.
Tips for Supporting Families of Children that are English Language Learners (ELL)

- Find games that the entire family enjoys. Include games with key vocabulary words that children can learn at home.
- Send home a book titled “My Word Book.” This book will include a set of pictures with words to expand the child’s vocabulary. Families may want to write the words of these pictures in the child’s native language too.

Tips for Supporting Families of Children with Special Needs

- Bring home a few extra napkins with the logo of a favorite restaurant. Being able to have additional opportunities to handle something up close can be beneficial. Saving and reusing some cups with logos can also be helpful. “Do you want the McDonald’s cup or the KFC cup?”
- Let your child point to the title or the area of the page where the words begin in order to increase his or her attention and focus to the concepts of print.
Print Awareness

AGENDA

Welcome
Learning Objective
Read Aloud
Icebreaker: What are Print Concepts?
Environmental Print
Making Reading and Writing Meaningful
Make and Take: Environmental Print Matching Game
Closing

Welcome 3 minutes

• Welcome participants.
• Introduce presenters and other personnel.
• Introduce the facility and cover “housekeeping,” such as location of bathrooms, telephones, and vending machines.
• Establish or review existing ground rules with the participants’ input.

Learning Objective 2 minutes

• Families will learn strategies to teach print concepts.
• Families will understand how to use their environment as a tool to teach their children about print.
• Families will learn strategies to teach their children that print has meaning.

Read Aloud 5 minutes

Feature a book from the list suggested for this session, emphasizing the bookmark, “Reading and Print.” Demonstrate a model read-aloud.
Print Concepts 15 minutes

By reading aloud, families can share important information about print awareness and print concepts. Children learn that print has meaning and that print is an important way to share information.

Provide enough children’s books for every two people to use for this activity.

Find a partner and introduce yourself. One person will be the child and the other person will be the adult. The adult will follow the tips under the ‘before you read’ section of the “Reading and Print” book mark. Practice the five tips (four in Spanish) and then switch roles.

Environmental Print 10 minutes

Find a partner and brainstorm a list of all the logos and store names and symbols your child can recognize. Example: “McDonald’s”

Presenter Tip

Record list on an overhead projector, chart paper, chalkboard or white erase board.

Handout 1 • Making Reading and Writing Meaningful

Environmental print is all around us. It is all of the logos and signs we see everywhere. It is the golden arches that we all know means McDonalds. Think of all the clues in the world around you that your child “reads.” Cereal and snack boxes, soda and juice cans, street and store signs are examples of print in our environment that children can often “read” by recognizing the familiar symbols. This is one example of print awareness.

Distribute and review the handout.

Environmental Print Matching Game 15 minutes

This matching game is a fun way to help your children become aware of print in the environment.

Be sure to allow participants the time to practice playing. They may want to pair up and pretend that one is the adult and one is the child.
Closing 5 minutes

Review main points of the workshop:

- **Recognizing familiar symbols in the environment, using writing (even scribbles) to communicate an idea, and knowing that words are different from drawings are all examples of print awareness.**
- **Print awareness is an important step on the road to learning to read!**

Encourage parents to come to the next workshop. Give time, date and place.

Distribute and collect evaluations.
Print Awareness and Print Concepts

Suggested Books

Bunny Cakes by Rosemary Wells
Bunny Mail by Rosemary Wells
City Signs by Zoran Milich *
I Read Signs by Tana Hoban *
I Read Symbols by Tana Hoban *
School Bus by Donald Crews
Signs by Susan Canizares
Signs at the Store by Mary Hill

*Picture books that can be used with families with children that are English Language Learners (ELL)
Environmental Print Matching Game

Materials

• One game board and one set of matching cards printed on card stock per participant
• One file folder per participant
• One small envelope per participant
• One piece of clear contact paper (page-size) per participant
• Scissors, one pair for every two participants
• Glue Stick, one for every two participants

Directions

• Open file folder and attach the game board with solid grid lines on the right side of the folder using the glue stick. Cover the board with contact paper. The edges of the contact paper should overlap onto the folder.
• On the bottom left side of the folder, attach the envelope using a glue stick. Store the matching cards in the envelope.
• Cut the matching cards out along the dotted grid lines. Store them in the envelope until needed.

Activity

• Present the game board to your child.
• Explain that the game can be played a couple of ways.
• Encourage your child to review the cards and label them if possible.
• Label the cards with your child by pointing at the word on each card as you say it.
• Assist your child with matching the cards to the game board.
• Tell your child that you will call out a word and he or she should place the correct card on the game board. Reverse the role and allow your child to call out the word while you match the card to the game board.
• Tell your child to listen very carefully while you say only the beginning sound of the word. Have him or her choose the appropriate card according to the beginning sound that you make.
• Have your child label the beginning sound. “What letter has the s-s-s-s-s sound? What letter has the m-m-m-m sound?”

• Practice creating rhyming words with your child by saying “What sounds/rhymes like drop, pop, and flop?” Create silly rhyming words such as “Feerios, Meerios, Zeerios.”

• Spread three cards out on the table in a row. Have your child identify which picture is first, second and last. Put cards in a row and have them identify which card is at the top, middle and bottom.

• Have a word race with your child. Spread two cards on the table and say the names as quickly as possible while clapping your hands. Encourage your child to say the names as quickly as they can. Add additional cards to increase the challenge.

• At every opportunity, point out and label words for your child. Point out fast food restaurants, store names, signs on buildings, billboards, words in magazines, on food containers, etc.
Señales y logos en el entorno de su niño y los juego de parejas

Materiales

- Un tablero de juego y un juego completo de cartas con logos y señales por participante
- Una carpeta pequeña por participante
- Un sobre pequeño por participante
- Una pieza pequeña de papel contacto (tamaño carta) por participante
- Una tijera para por cada dos participantes
- Una goma de pegar en barra por cada dos participantes

Direcciones

- Abra la carpeta y pegue el juego a la mano derecha. Cubra el juego con los dibujos con papel contacto. Lo que sobre de papel contacto se utilizara para pagar el sobre.
- Pegue el sobre en la mano izquierda inferior de la carpeta. Use la goma de pegar para pegarlo. Este sobre sirve para guardar las tarjetas de juego.
- Corte las cartas de juego y Guarde las cartas dentro del sobre.

Actividad

- Muestre el juego a su niño.
- Explique que el juego se puede jugar de maneras diferentes.
- Anime a que su niño revise y nombre las cartas.
- Identifique cada carta mientras apunta a cada una de ellas.
- Ayude a su niño encuentre las parejas.
- Dígale que puede identificar una de las cartas y luego ponerla sobre el borde de juego. Reverse la actividad al decirle a su niño que identifique una carta y usted la pondrá en el lugar correcto.
- Dígale que escuche cuidadosamente al comienzo de cada palabra para que busque otra que comience con el mismo sonido.
- Deje que su niño identifique el sonido inicial. ¿Que letra comienza por el sonido s-s-s-s-s-s-s-s?
• Ponga tres cartas en la mesa una al lado de la otra y pregúntele a su niño cual es la primera la segunda y la tercera. Luego pongas las tres cartas en forma vertical y pregúntele su niño cual es la de arriba, la del medio y la ultima.

• Haga una competencia de palabras. Ponga las cartas en la mesa y haga que su niño las identifique lo más rápido posible a la vez que aplaude. Añada más cartas para hacerlo más difícil.

• En cualquier oportunidad, apunte y diga el nombre de una palabra. Apunte a los nombres de restaurantes, tiendas, pancartas, envases de comida y periódicos.
# Environmental Print Game

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ONE WAY</th>
<th>MEN</th>
<th>EXIT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RR</td>
<td>STOP</td>
<td>TRAFFIC SIGNAL AHEAD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOMEN</td>
<td>DO NOT ENTER</td>
<td>RECYCLE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Making Reading and Writing Meaningful

Ideas for Families of Preschoolers

Choose activities that best suit your child's interests

• Call attention to the different types of written materials in your home such as labels, newspapers, magazines, and greeting cards.

• Point out print in the environment such as billboards, menus, signs, and names of restaurants.

• Talk to children about the letters and words you are writing when you write a message to a family member. Encourage them to help you write part of the message.

• Provide print materials such as menus, tickets, maps, and catalogues for children to use in pretend play.

• Involve children as you create a grocery list. Talk about the names of some of the letters and words as you write them.

• Cook with children and let them help you follow the recipe.

• Ask children to help you identify cereal boxes during breakfast.

• Cut labels from snack boxes such as Teddy Grahams and glue them into a homemade book titled *Snacks We Like*.

• Write a note and put it in your child's lunch box or book bag.
Aprendiendo a Leer y Escribir de Una Manera Interesante

Haga que la Lectura y la Escritura Sean Significativas

Ideas para los padres de niños en edad preescolar

• Llame la atención del niño usando los distintos tipos de materiales escritos disponibles en su hogar, tales como etiquetas, diarios, periódicos, revistas y tarjetas de saludos.

• Señale las palabras impresas que ven a su alrededor como las carteleras, letreros de anuncios, menús, señales viales y nombres de restaurantes.

• Hábleles a los niños acerca de las letras y las palabras que usted está escribiendo cuando escriba un mensaje a un miembro de la familia. Anímelos a ayudarle a escribir parte del mensaje.

• Proporcioneles materiales impresos para jugar, tales como menús, boletos, mapas y catálogos para que los niños los usen en juegos de “mentiritas”.

• Haga que los niños participen en hacer una lista de compras del mandado. Mencione los nombres de algunas de las letras y las palabras mientras las escribe.

• Cocine junto con los niños y deje que le ayuden a seguir la receta.

• Pídales a los niños que le ayuden a identificar las cajas de cereales durante el desayuno.

• Corte las etiquetas de las cajas de bocadillos - tales como Teddy Grahams y péguelas en un libro hecho en casa titulado Nuestros Bocadillos Preferidos.

• Escríbale una nota y póngala dentro de la lonchera de su niño.
Read aloud to your child everyday.

It’s the best thing a family can do to support success in reading!

**Tips for a Great Read-Aloud Time**

- Snuggle up! Put your arm around your child.
- Let your child select a book.
- Make sure your child can see the book.
- Read slowly and with expression.
- Talk about the pictures.
- When finished, ask your child “What did you like best about this book?”
- Have fun!

The next day, ask your child to tell you about the book you read last night.
A read-aloud time is a great chance to point out concepts of print. The focus of the read-aloud time is the story. Once or twice a week, you might want to include some of the suggestions below.

**Before you read:**
- Point to the front and the back of the book and say, “We will read from the front to the back.”
- Point to the title and say, “This is the title. The title is the name of the book.”
- Be sure to say, “This is the author. The author is the name of the person who wrote the words in the book.”
- If there are drawings in the book say, “This is the name of the illustrator. This is the person who drew the pictures.”
- Turn to the place where you will start reading. Say, “I will start reading here.” Point to the first word where you will begin reading. Then say, “I will read in this direction.” Slide your finger under the first line showing that you will read from left to right.
Lea en voz alta a su niñ@ todos los días.

¡Este es la mejor actividad que un miembro de la familia puede hacer para apoyar el éxito en la escuela!

**Consejos para que su lectura en voz alta sea exitosa.**

Acurúñesele, ponga su brazo alrededor de su niñ@.

❖ Deje que su niñ@ seleccione el libro.
❖ Este seguro que su niñ@ puede ver cada página del libro.
❖ Lea lentamente y con expresiones.
❖ Hable acerca de los dibujos.
❖ Cuándo termine, pregúntele “¿Qué fue lo que más te gusto de este libro?”
❖ ¡Diviértanse!
❖ Al día siguiente pregúntele que le cuente acerca de la historia que leyeron la noche anterior.

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❖ Al día siguiente pregúntele que le cuente acerca de la historia que leyeron la noche anterior.
Leer en voz alta le da la oportunidad de hablar acerca de los conceptos de la escritura. El objetivo principal de leer en voz alta es la historia o el cuento. Sin embargo, una o dos veces por semana usted puede añadir otros conceptos. Aquí está una lista de sugerencias:

**Antes de leer:**
- Apunte a la parte de enfrente y de atrás del libro y diga, “Nosotros comenzamos a leer desde la parte de enfrente hasta la de atrás.”
- Este seguro de mencionar, “Este es el autor. El autor es la persona que escribe las palabras en el libro.”
- Si hay dibujos diga, “Este es el nombre del ilustrador. Esta es la persona que hace los dibujos del libro.”
- Llegue a la parte donde usted va a comenzar a leer. Diga, “Yo voy a comenzar a leer aquí apuntando a la primera palabra donde va a leer. Luego diga, “Yo voy a leer en esta dirección.” Mientras desliza su dedo de izquierda a derecha.
Print Awareness

Evaluation

Please circle the response that best represents your thoughts:

1. I understand that reading to my child will help my child understand how print functions.
   - definitely
   - somewhat
   - not sure

2. I will look for ways to draw my child’s attention to print in our home and community.
   - definitely
   - maybe
   - not sure

3. I will remember to show my child what I am writing more often.
   - definitely
   - maybe
   - not sure

4. I plan to use the environmental print matching game.
   - never
   - sometimes
   - often

5. One thing that I learned in this session ________________________________
   ________________________________________

6. What could make this session better ________________________________
   ________________________________________
Conceptos de escritura y lectura

Evaluación

Por favor marque la respuesta que mejor refleje sus opiniones.

1. Yo entiendo que el leerle a mi niño lo ayudara a que entienda los conceptos de la escritura.
   
   definitivamente   más o menos   no estoy seguro

2. Yo planeo llamar más la atención a la escritura, logos, señales que están alrededor de mi niño.
   
   definitivamente   más o menos   no estoy seguro

3. Yo planeo enseñar a mi niño lo que estoy escribiendo más a menudo.
   
   definitivamente   más o menos   no estoy seguro

4. Yo voy a usar al juego de signos y señales con mi niño.
   
   definitivamente   más o menos   no estoy seguro

5. Una cosa que aprendí en esta sesión es:__________________________________________

6. Que hubiera podido hacer esta sesión mejor:________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________