

Literacy Development
Accomplishments by ages
From Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children's Reading Success
By the National Research Council, 1999

Birth to Three-Year-Old Accomplishments:

- Recognizes specific books by cover.
- Pretends to read books.
- Understands that books are handled in particular ways.
- Enters into a book-sharing routine with primary caregivers.
- Vocalization play in crib gives way to enjoyment of rhyming language, nonsense word play, etc.
- Labels objects in books.
- Looks at picture in book and realizes it is a symbol for real object.
- Listens to stories.
- Requests/commands adult to read or write.
- May begin attending to specific print, such as letters in names.
- Uses increasingly purposeful scribbling.
- Occasionally seems to distinguish between drawing and writing.
- Produces some letter-like forms and scribbles with some features of English writing.

Three- to Four-Year-Old Accomplishments:

- Knows that alphabet letters are a special category of visual graphics that can be individually named.
- Recognizes print in the local environment.
- Knows that it is the print that is read in stories.
- Understands that different text forms are used for different functions of print (e.g., a list for groceries is different than the list on a menu).
- Pays attention to separable and repeating sounds in language (e.g., in Peter, Peter, Pumpkin Eater: Peter Eater).
- Uses new vocabulary and grammatical constructions in own speech.
- Understands and follows oral directions.
- Is sensitive to some sequences of events in stories.
- Shows an interest in books and reading.
- When being read a story, connects information and events to real-life experiences.
- Questions and comments demonstrate understanding of literal meaning of story being told.
- Displays reading and writing attempts, calling attention to self: "Look at my story."
- Can identify about 10 alphabet letters, especially those from own name.
- Writes (scribbles) message as part of playful activity.
- May begin to attend to beginning or rhyming sounds in salient words.

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Kindergarten Accomplishments:

- Knows the parts of a book and their functions.
- Begins to track print when listening to a familiar text being read or when rereading own writing.
- "Reads" familiar texts emergently, i.e., not necessarily verbatim from the print alone.
- Recognizes and can name all uppercase and lowercase letters.
- Understands that the sequence of letters in a written word represents the sequence of sounds (phonemes) in a spoken word (alphabetic principle).
- Learns many, though not all, one-to-one letter-sound correspondences.
- Recognizes some words by sight, including a few very common ones ("the", "I", "my", "you", "is", "are").
- Uses new vocabulary and grammatical constructions in own speech.
- Makes appropriate switches from oral to written language styles.
- Notices when simple sentences fail to make sense.
- Connects information and events in texts to life and life experiences to text.
- Retells, reenacts, or dramatizes stories or parts of stories.
- Listens attentively to books the teacher reads to class.
- Can name some book titles and authors.
- Demonstrates familiarity with a number of types or genres of text (e.g., storybooks, expository texts, poems, newspapers, and everyday print such as signs, notices, labels).
- Correctly answers questions about stories read aloud.
- Makes predictions based on illustrations or portions of stories.
- Demonstrates understanding that spoken words consist of sequences of phonemes.
- Given spoken sets like "dan, dan, den," can identify the first two as the same and the third as different.
- Given spoken sets like "dak, pat, zen," can identify the first two as sharing one same sound.
- Given spoken segments, can merge them into a meaningful target word.
- Given a spoken word, can produce another word that rhymes with it.
- Independently writes many uppercase and lowercase letters.
- Uses phonemic awareness and letter knowledge to spell independently (invented or creative spelling).
- Writes (unconventionally) to express own meaning.
- Builds a repertoire of some conventionally spelled words.
- Shows awareness of distinction between "kid writing" and conventional orthography.
- Writes own name (first and last) and the first names of some friends or classmates.
- Can write most letters and some words when they are dictated.

WRITING DEVELOPMENT

Carolyn P Casey

EARLY CONNECTIONS

- Enjoys the feel of the utensils.
- Often uses their whole body to explore the writing materials.
- Makes random marks on various surfaces.
- Often surprised to see the marks "appear" on their paper.
- Engages in repeated scribbling.

EMERGENT WRITER

Pre-emergent:

- Makes purposeful marks and purposeful scribbles.
- Includes some form such as circles to the scribbling.
- Enjoys copying and tracing.
- Often scribbles (cursive writing) with pictures to represent words.

Emergent:

- Pictures tell more of the story than the words.
- Words or word parts label a picture rather than tell the story.
- Work is often unfinished as the child jumps into another activity.
- Demonstrates developmental spelling.
- Uses a few known words; name, mom, no.

THE DEVELOPING WRITER

- Purposefully uses print to communicate.
- Continues to use pictures to tell the story.
- Often writes one sentence to a page, or story part.
- Simple stories usually consist of 3-6 related thoughts.
- Has a small but developing reading and writing vocabulary.
- Uses developmental spelling to learn conventional spellings.
- Increasing known writing vocabulary.

THE INDEPENDENT WRITER

- Uses mainly conventional spellings.
- Writes stories of varying length and purpose.
- Takes on new roles.
- Includes conventions after demonstrations.

THE SKILLED WRITER

- Reflects. • Compares. • Questions. • Critiques.
- Uses many forms/voices.
- Writes beyond personal experience.

READING DEVELOPMENT

Carolyn P. Casey

EARLY CONNECTIONS

- Plays with books.
- Attracted to the colors, textures, and designs.
- Enjoys the close relationship with the reader.
- Explores with their whole body- mouth, hands and feet.
- Finds pleasure in hearing someone read.

EMERGENT READER

Pre-emergent:

- Creates text. Can repeat simple and familiar text.
- Copies reading behavior.
- Enjoys the "sounds" and use of language, can mimic sounds.
- Strong gross motor needs.

Emergent:

- Plays with language- rhymes, sings ABC's.
- Enjoys predicting text and reading along as they are being read to.
- Understands the meaning comes from the print.
- Recognizes familiar words in books and in the environment.
- Can identify a letter and a word in text.
- Can use beginning consonant sounds to find words in text.
- Can voice match simple text.
- Developing book knowledge; front, back, pages, author...
- Establishes L-R, & T-B reading patterns.

THE DEVELOPING READER

- Has a known but expanding reading vocabulary
- Expands book knowledge; title page, chapters, punctuation.
- Established consonant sound association, focused on vowels.
- Strengthens and demonstrates strategies to derive meaning from the print.
- Achieves success with word families.
- Reads simple text.

THE INDEPENDENT READER

- Reading vocabulary too long to note.
- Reads new text on first introduction.
- Changes voice and tone to match text.
- Demonstrates strong strategies as he/she reads.
- Books are a learning tool as well as a pleasurable activity.

THE SKILLED READER

- Uses critical thinking skills as he/she reads.
- Uses multiple strategies for successfully reading a variety of genre.
- Can skim a text to look for major points and understandings.
- Includes opinion and reflective thinking when discussing meaning.
- Skips boring parts, uses short cuts for tough vocabulary.
- More discriminating about choices, often wants information about author.