




EARLY LITERACY SKILLS

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Overview

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What is Early
Literacy?

2

Areas of
development
affected

3

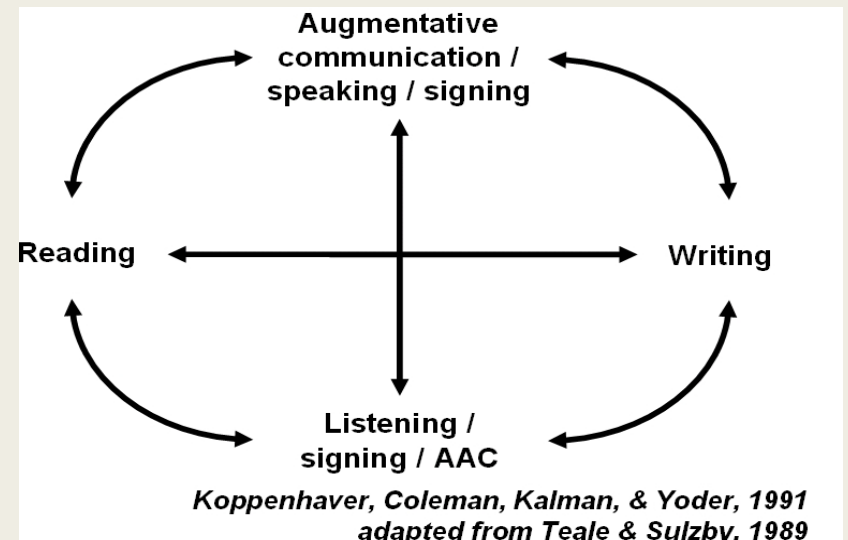
Strategies to
promote early
literacy skills

What is Early Literacy?

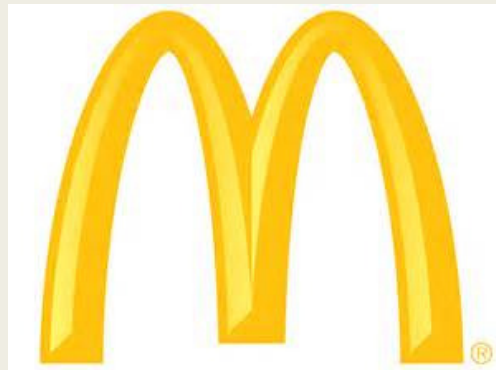
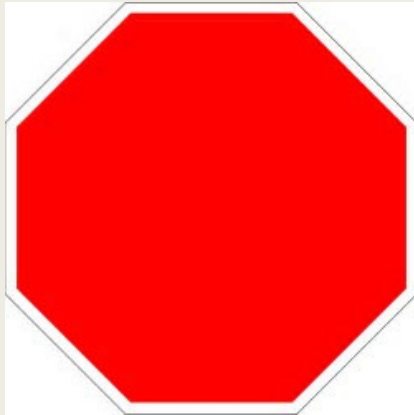
- Oral language and concept development are the foundation of literacy
- Begins at birth
- Has to be established before formal instruction in braille or print can begin

Literacy and Communication

- Infants and toddlers learn to:
 - *listen*
 - *speak (or use AAC)*
 - *read*
 - *write*
- At the same time
- In an interconnected way



Understanding Symbols



Key Components of Early Literacy

- Auditory discrimination/phonemic awareness
- Comprehension of language
 - *Based on own experiences*
- Introduction to the alphabet
- Pragmatics (print/braille)
- Pre-writing opportunities

<https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/helping-young-children-develop-emergent-literacy-skills>

Introduce, Expose, and Surround!



- Language-rich environment
- Access to books/braille
- Family conversations

Areas of Development

Not Just Books!

- Cognitive – Concepts, pragmatics (print/text awareness)
- Language/Communication (Receptive and Expressive) – letter sounds, rhymes
- Motor Skills – posture/core strength, upper body strength, holding a book, opening/closing a book, turning pages, scribbling
- Self-Help – choosing a book, initiating stories, independently finding materials
- Social – bonding, book sharing, connecting experiences to real life
- Vision/Compensatory – pictures, print, tactile images, braille

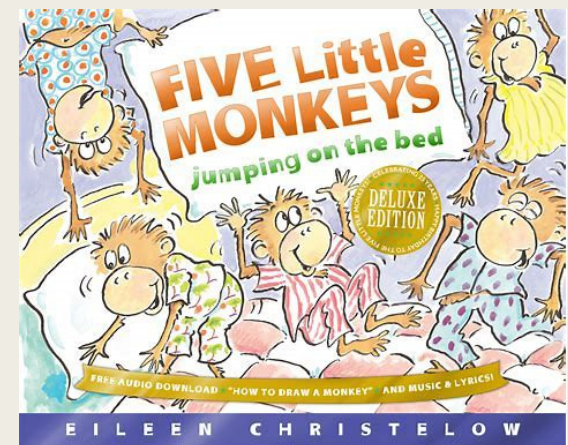
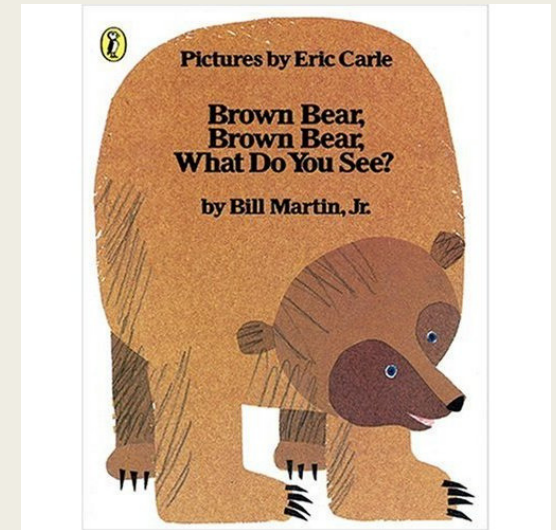
Cognitive and Language/Communication Strategies

- Encourage your child's active engagement
 - Help turn to the next page ("turn the page")
 - Use interactive language ("Do you remember...?")
 - Find the "top" or "bottom" of the page
 - Learning what a book is and its parts



Predictable books

- Rhyme, rhythm, and repetition
 - *Children fill in the repeated or rhyming word*
 - *Can sing and act out the story*
- Examples:
 - *Brown Bear*
 - *Five Little Monkeys*
 - *Goodnight, Moon*
 - *Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes*



Story Boxes/Bags and Story Boards

- Use actual objects to illustrate the story
- Let your child explore that object
- Have your child find that object



Story Buckets

- Bucket full of items to “illustrate” the story
- Can also make buckets based on concept
 - *Summer bucket*
 - *Dinosaur bucket*
 - *Birthday party bucket*
 - *Letter “B” bucket*



Story Bars and Concept Bars

- Hang items associated with the story from the toy bar
- Can make toy bars based on concept
 - *Seasonal*
 - *Color*
 - *Shapes*
 - *Textures*
 - *Holidays*





Alpha Boxes

- Provides exposure and exploration
- Pair initial sounds with letters of the alphabet

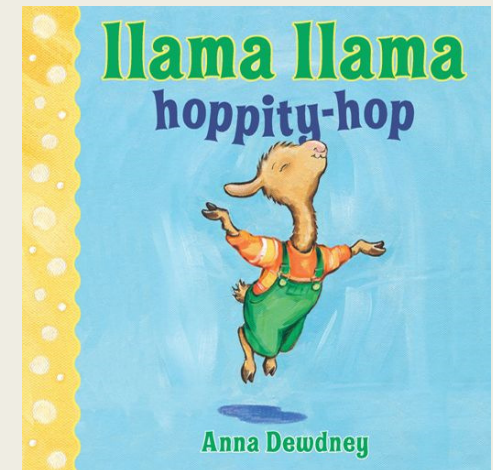
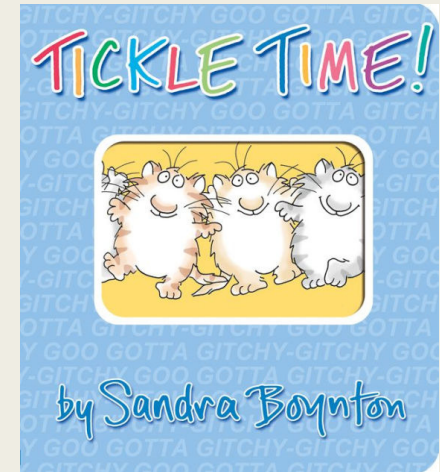
Motor Skills Strategies

- Help Turn the Page
 - Board books
 - Adapt pages so they are easier to turn
 - Stagger popsicle sticks
 - Add colorful round stickers to make “tabs”
 - Add raised textures to keep pages separate



Motor Skills Strategies

- Sitting and holding a book
- Set up an art table
- Encourage your children to be active
- Scavenger Hunts
- Acting out actions in story
 - Llama Llama Hoppity Hop
 - Going On A Bear Hunt
 - Tickle Time



Motor Skills Strategies

- Strengthen hands and fingers
 - Bilateral hand use
 - Isolating finger use
 - Scribbling
 - Pushing buttons
 - Ripping paper
 - Walking the ball
 - Playing with playdough



Vision/Compensatory Strategies

- Enhance what you already have!
 - Braille labels for items around home
 - Add MEANINGFUL textures to books
 - Adding a texture to pictures so your child can “find” the object
 - “Find The Textures/Braille”
 - Helps with learning to identify/discriminate textures
 - Helps with learning directions (top, bottom, left, right)
 - Helps with tactual search



Vision/Compensatory Strategies

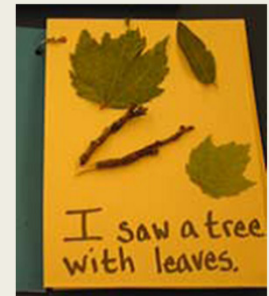
■ Find The Object Visually

- Have your child find requested picture; may have to add colored paper or fabric
- Same object on each page
- Helps with learning directions (top, bottom, left, right)
- Helps with visual scanning
- Helps with object identification
- Helps with point/follow a point



Vision/Compensatory Strategies

- Make Tactile Experience Books
 - Based on your child's experience
 - Incorporate real objects from event to recall activity
 - Straw from a milkshake
 - Coin used to pay to get on merry go round
 - Bark or blades of grass from playground



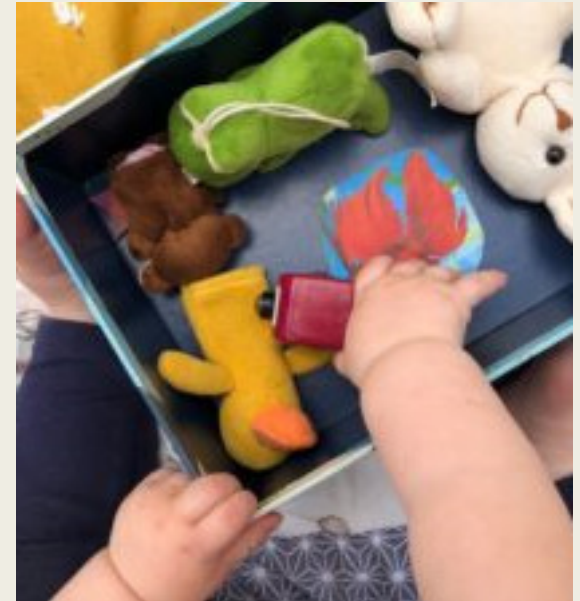
Self Help and Social Strategies

- Verbally label and describe what your child is feeling, smelling, and hearing
- Make it part of your daily routine
- Make the stories MEANINGFUL to your child
 - Meaningful experiences
 - Meaningful adaptations



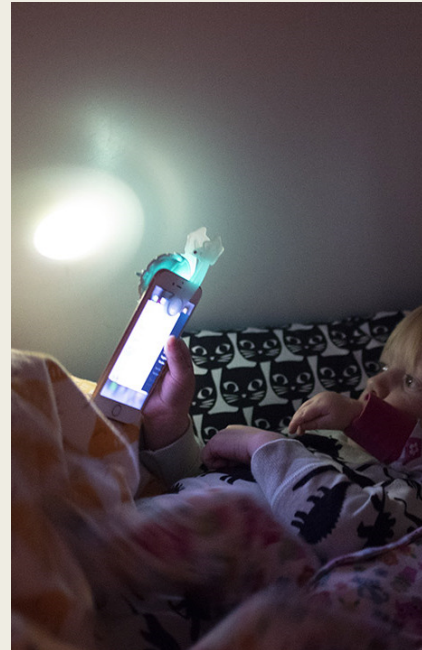
Self Help and Social Strategies

- Song Boxes
 - *Row Row Your Boat (boat)*
 - *Itsy Bitsy Spider (toy spider)*
 - *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star (star)*
 - *Wheels On The Bus (bus)*
- Make it part of your daily routine
 - May help with transitions



Self Help and Social Strategies

- Moonlite Storybook Projector
- [Moonlite - A Storybook Projector For Your Cell Phone \(mymoonlite.com\)](http://mymoonlite.com)
- Can purchase kits and individual stories
- Excellent opportunity for family time



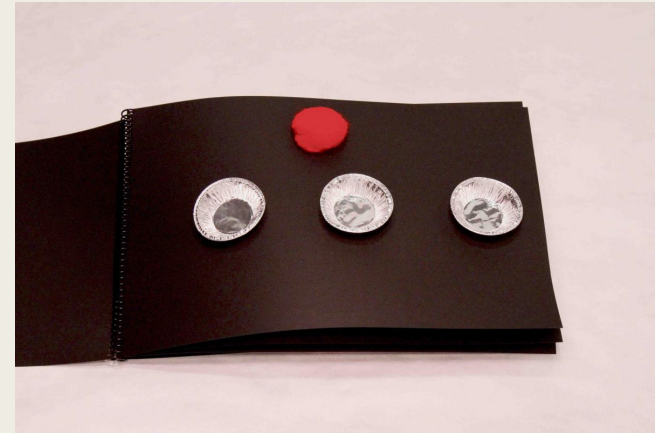
CVI Early Literacy Strategies

- Must consider visual skills/CVI phase
- Must consider understanding of symbols
- What is the goal?
 - *Learning concepts*
 - *Creating vision opportunities*
 - *Building understanding of 2D images*

Phase 1

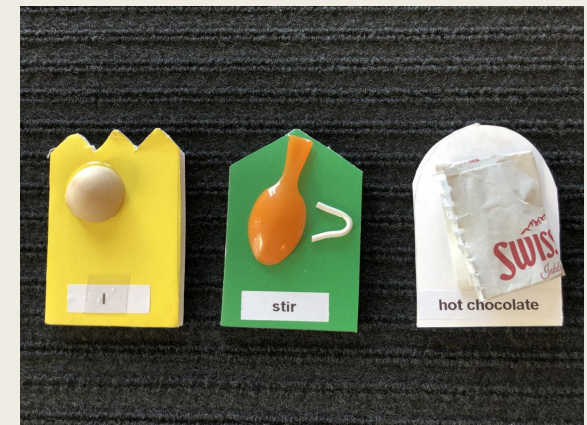
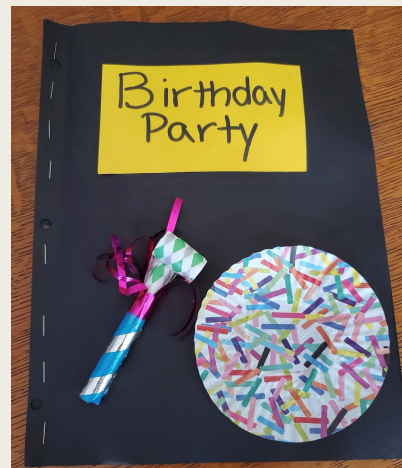
- Child has not yet achieved appropriate fixations
- Compensatory skills are very important for learning concepts/vocabulary
- Use objects/textures as mentioned in previous slides
- Encourage looking with light, color, and/or reflective material
- Maximize vision supports (distance, clutter, lighting, field) for vision opportunities

<https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/blog/overview-literacy-children-cvi>



Early Phase 2

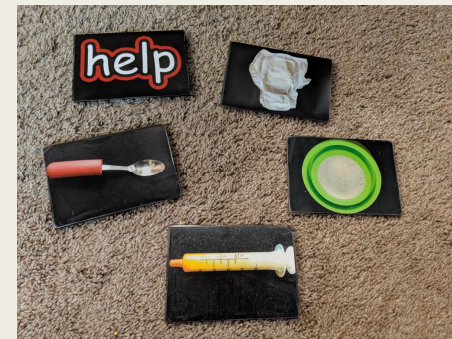
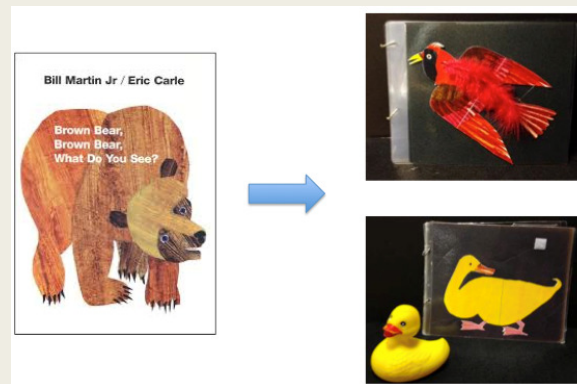
- Child is just beginning to achieve appropriate fixations
- Visual field still important (slant board)
- Look and touch may not be simultaneous
- Routines-based experience stories



<https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/strategies/hot-chocolate-tactile-connections-experience-story>

Late Phase 2

- Real photos
- Pair objects with photos/pictures
- Think about presentation – positioning, visual field, array



<https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/blog/transitioning-object-schedule-system-photos-child-cvi>

Phase 3

- Focus on vision but keep supports (hearing, touch, smell)
- Backlighting still important for some students (lightbox or tablet)



<https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/resources/cvi-friendly-videos>

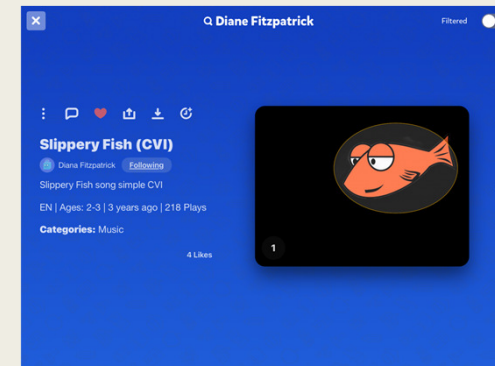
Digital Books

- Paths to Technology – resource library of ready made digital books
- Using photos of child's own/favorite objects is more meaningful and motivating
- Use photo album, PowerPoint/Keynote, or ibooks
- Simplify images

<https://www.perkinselearning.org/technology/teacher-created-resource-library/book-library>

Tiny Tap App

- Free version for families
- Teacher version is free for now
- Create books or borrow from library
- Many excellent settings – black background, search images with no background, highlight area to tap, etc
- Can use own photos or internet images



<https://www.perkinselearning.org/technology/blog/tinytap-app-cvi-friendly-books-and-games>

Resources

- Seedlings Braille Books (3 Free Books Per Year)
<http://www.seedlings.org/>
- Paths To Literacy (Strategies & Resources)
<http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/>
- Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (Braille Tales Print/Braille Book Program - 6 Free Books Per Year until 6 years)
<http://www.aph.org/dolly-partons-imagination-library/>
- National Braille Press (Hands On! Books for Blind Children)
<http://www.nbp.org/>

Questions?

- Illinois School for the Visually Impaired (ISVI)
 - Birth to 3 Program
 - [IDHS: Birth to Three Program \(state.il.us\)](http://idhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=129313)
 - Calendar of Events
 - <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=129313>

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