

BUILDING LITERACY COMPETENCIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

With

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(30 minutes)

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ABOUT THE VISUALS

The majority of this video was filmed in five classrooms. The fluent reader at the beginning of the video and the older children within the body of the film are in an after-school program in Oakland, California. The three year olds in the video are in the same school district run neighborhood center.

Four year olds are seen in a classroom in a public school early childhood classroom in Denver and a community college children's center in San Luis Obispo, California. The kindergarten children are in a classroom in Westminster, Colorado, a suburb of Denver.

INTRODUCTION

There is some sense of urgency for the attainment of universal literacy. Rather than politicized debates or dependence on quick fixes, the emphasis in the last few years has been on careful examination of the precursors of reading. It is on this body of research that this video is based.

Organization of this film includes two sets of competencies:

- **UNDERLYING COGNITIVE COMPETENCIES**
that are necessary for all formal education

And

- **LITERACY SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES**
which are divided into two subgroups:

Communicative Aspects of Literacy
And
Literacy Skills

UNDERLYING COGNITIVE COMPETENCIES

- **Oral Language Fluency**
Comes from verbal communication with young children about a variety of subjects that interest them
- **Fine Motor Coordination**
Dexterity and control learned through many activities, including “paper cookies”
- **Symbolic Thought**
Words are symbols as are drawings and props- Children are shown interpreting their own maps, “reading” environmental print and responding to new vocabulary
- **One-to-One Correspondence**
Matching is illustrated with a Lotto game
- **Self-Regulation Skills**
Focused attention, deliberate memory, planning, monitoring own actions
Importance of dramatic play for developing self-regulation
Illustrated with space dramatic play

LITERACY SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES

Communicative Aspects of Literacy-

Motivate us to read and write.

These competencies continue to develop all during life

- **Purpose of Reading:** *Understanding that print conveys messages*
- **Concepts of Print:** *Basic conventions that describe the relationship between the organization of a printed text and the processes involved in reading this text*
Examples include learning to turn pages, starting at the beginning of a book, learning that print is from left to right, etc
- **Comprehension of Text:** *Understanding the vocabulary and narrative of a story*
Story time should be part of daily activity of children at home and in groups
Importance of multiple readings of a book for young children

LITERACY SKILLS

- **Phonological Awareness:** *Ability to focus on the sound structure of words, rather than on their meaning or role in grammar*
Children are seen sounding out the syllables in their names, singing and creating rhymes and nonsense words

Phonemic awareness: *Ability to break individual words into their component sounds*
This is an advanced form of phonological awareness- Illustrated with Elkonian boxes

Phonics: *Instructional practice that emphasizes the system of rules for connecting sounds to letters*
- **Letter Recognition:** *Ability to identify a letter either by its name or the sound it makes*
Due to the arbitrary nature of the English alphabet, this is not an easy task for young children
Start with familiar letters
Children generally tend to first use capital letters
- **Alphabetic Principle:** *Idea that a sequence of letters in a written word represents a sequence of sounds in a spoken word.*
Children without this understanding produce “words” with all the same letters
- **Sound/Symbol Correspondence:** *Ability to relate speech sounds to the letters that represent those sounds*
First attempts result in “inventive or creative” spelling
English does not have a completely reliable system of sound/symbol correspondence
- **Encoding:** *Process of representing sounds with letters and spoken words with written words.*
Incorporates skills of phonological awareness, sound/symbol correspondence etc. Child seen writing a single word in invented spelling
Is not considered to be writing in the larger sense of conveying meaning
- **Decoding:** *Process of converting written words into spoken words*
Child is seeing reading a set of word cards
Involves several processes

For reading and writing to occur, the Skills of Literacy have to come together with the Communicative Aspects of Literacy

Graphically shown with bricks and mortar

creating a structure

Children reading books

Child sending a written message to another

Reading and writing continue to evolve throughout life although most important foundations are set down in early childhood

BUILDING LITERACY OUTLINE

Underlying
Cognitive
Competencies

Oral Language Fluency
Fine Motor
Coordination
Symbolic Thought
One-to-One
Correspondence
Self Regulation Skills

LITERACY SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES

Communicative
Aspects of
Literacy

Literacy
Skills

Purpose of Reading
Concepts of Print
Comprehension of Text

Phonological awareness
Letter Recognition
Alphabetic Principle
Sound Symbol
Correspondence
Encoding
Decoding

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GROWING MINDS: COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD (1996) 25 minutes

PLAY: A VYGOTSKIAN APPROACH (1996) 26 minutes

HOW CHILDREN LEARN (1997) 23 minutes

SCAFFOLDING SELF-REGULATED LEARNING IN PRIMARY CLASSROOMS (1996) 35 minutes

ERIK H. ERIKSON: A LIFE'S WORK (1991) 38 minutes