# **Virtual Kit: Learning to Read: Early Literacy Birth to Five**

**Kit QT**

Early childhood is a critical period for young children's language and literacy development. The children most at-risk for reading difficulties in the primary grades are those who enter kindergarten with less verbal knowledge, less phonological awareness, less letter knowledge and less familiarity with the basic purposes and mechanism of reading and writing (National Early Literacy Panel, 2008). The primary prevention of reading difficulties is to ensure that young children develop strong language skills and engage in meaningful experiences filled with print, literacy play, storybook reading, and writing (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

The National Early Literacy Panel NELP (2008) conducted a synthesis of scientific research in the early literacy skills of children birth through five. They identified the knowledge, skills and abilities that young children need to learn to improve later literacy development. Based on the NELP Report, four areas have emerged as important for young children's early literacy experiences: oral language (speaking and listening), phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, and print knowledge (National Institute for Literacy, 2009). Effective emergent literacy experiences must be designed to support the "whole child" through integrated learning experiences throughout a child's day (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). These experiences should be intentionally designed and can be provided through a combination of adult-directed and child-initiated learning opportunities that take place within activities that are meaningful and engaging to young children.

Families and professionals have an opportunity and responsibility to incorporate language and literacy enhancing experiences into children's daily lives. To do this, they must understand the most current research in early literacy and the evidence-based practices associated with supporting young children's language and literacy development. This Virtual KIT was designed to provide an overview of early literacy, birth to five.

**Show me now! (I need this tomorrow.)**

These websites will help you find an evidence-based practice, or the evidence base for your practices.

* [Kansas Guide to Learning Literacy: Birth to Five Years](http://community.ksde.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=mGa80anlsXw=&tabid=5899&mid=14457) (.pdf)
* [Lead for Literacy](http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=lesaux&pageid=icb.page541445)

**What does this look like in practice? (I have a little more time to read about this.)**

* [Developing Early Literacy: A Report of the National Early Literacy Panel](http://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/NELPReport09.pdf) (.pdf)
* [The Role of Children's Interest in Early Literacy and Language Development](http://earlyliteracylearning.org/cellreviews/cellreviews_v4_n5.pdf) (.pdf)
* [Children's Active Participation in Reading and Storytelling can Enhance Early Literacy Learning](http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org/cellpapers/cellnotes_v1_n2.pdf) (.pdf)
* [The Foundational Role of Vocabulary and Comprehension in Early Literacy](http://vimeo.com/15739132)
* [Implementing Effective Practices to Support Young Children's Social Emotional, Language and Early Literacy Development](http://earlyliteracylearning.org/TACSEI_CELL/START_HERE.html)
* [What Works for Early Language and Literacy Development](http://www.childtrends.org/?publications=what-works-for-early-language-and-literacy-development-lessons-from-experimental-evaluations-of-programs-and-interventions)

**What does the ECRC have on this topic?**

Below are selected resources from the Early Childhood Resource Center. For additional resources related to the literacy go to the KITS Early Child Resource Center and click on ECRC catalogue, or email ECRC.

BeBruin-Parecki, A. (2007). Let's read together: improving literacy outcomes with the adult-child interactive reading inventory (ACIRI), Baltimore, Md.: Paul H. Brookes.

Enz, B. (2009). Assessing preschool literacy development: informal and formal measures to guide instruction, Newark, Del.: International Reading Association.

Hamilton, C. E. (2011). PAVEd for success: building vocabulary and language development development in young learners, Baltimore, Md.: Paul H. Brookes.

Howes, C. (2011). Dual language learners in early childhood classrooms, Baltimore, Md.: Paul H. Brookes.

Justice, L. (2008). Achieving excellence in preschool literacy instruction, New York: Guilford Press.

Justice, L. (2010). Engaging children with print: building early literacy skills through quality read-alouds, New York: Guilford Press.

Kliewer, C. (2008). Seeing all kids as readers: a new vision for literacy in the inclusive early childhood classroom, Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

McGee, L. & Richgels, D. (2003). Designing early literacy programs strategies for at-risk preschool and kindergarten, New York: Guildford Press.

McGee, L. M. (2007). Transforming literacy practices in preschool: research-based practices that give all children the opportunity to reach their potential as learners, New York; Scholastic.

Neuman, S, Dickinson, D (eds.) (2011). Handbook of Early Literacy Research, Vol. 3, New York; Guilford Press.

Roberts, T. A. (2009). No limits to literacy for preschool English learners, Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Roskos, K. (2009). Oral language and early literacy in preschool: talking reading and writing, Newark, Del.: International Reading Association.

Smith, M.W. (2008). Early language and literacy classroom observation tool, pre-k (ELLCO), Baltimore, Md.: Paul H. Brookes.

Vukelich, C. (2009). Building a foundation for preschool literacy: effective instruction for children's reading and writing development, Newark, Del.: International Reading Association.

**How can I find training materials on this topic?**

* [Center for Early Literacy Videocasts](http://earlyliteracylearning.org/cellvideos.php)
* [CONNECT Module: Dialogic Reading Practices](http://community.fpg.unc.edu/connect-modules/learners/module-6/introduction?o=nectac)
* [Center for Early Literacy Learning](http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org/train_coach1.php)
* [Webinar: Common Core and Early Literacy: Webinar: The Foundational Roles of Vocabulary and Comprehension in Early Literacy](http://vimeo.com/15739132)
* [Webinar: How Early Learning Guidelines Transition to the Common Core in Kindergarten](http://vimeo.com/53617947)
* [Building a Foundation for Literacy for Learners with Deaf-Blindness](http://literacy.nationaldb.org/training-materials)

**What if I still need help?**

Contact KITS to request assistance.

**Evaluation**

Please take a minute to complete a brief survey located on the Virtual Kits page on the website to let us know what you think about this virtual kit, and what other topics you would like to see addressed in the future.

**References:**

Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S. (Eds.). (2009). Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age eight. Washington D.C: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

National Early Literacy Panel. (2008). Developing early literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel. Washington DC: National Institute for Literacy.

National Institute for Literacy. (2009). Early Beginnings: Early Literacy Knowledge and Instruction. Jessup, MD: U.S. Department of Education.

Snow, C., Burns, M. S., & Griffin, P. (Eds.). (1998). Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.