Chapter 6 Readings


B. Combined Standards in Pre-K Language Arts

The following is a “merged” standards list from a variety of sources, including a number of state and federal associations and other well-regarded groups. Programs without standards who intend to use these as program goals should realize that they are not categorized by age level or level of difficulty but rather represent what a group of professional educators might believe children should accomplish before kindergarten entrance.

They have been sorted into separate identified language arts categories. Some may seem to fit into more than one category and some repetition exists.

Listening Skills

The child

- understands and follows simple oral directions.
- can hear an initial phoneme in a word and knows if it is removed.
- can hear a final phoneme in a word.
- can hear if a word is or is not a rhyming word in word pairs such as day and say, toy and boy, and bed and shoe.
- can repeat a simple sentence.
- increases her listening vocabulary and begins to develop a vocabulary of object names and common phrases.
- becomes increasingly sensitive to the sounds of spoken words.
- begins to identify rhymes and rhyming sounds in familiar words, participates in rhyming games, and repeats rhyming songs and poems.
- begins to attend to the beginning sounds in familiar words by identifying that the pronunciations of several words all begin in the same way.
- enjoys listening to and discussing storybooks and nonfiction books read aloud.
- begins to identify a few consonant letter-sound correspondences in words in familiar rhymes, poems, and chants, including those with alliteration.
- follows directions that involve several actions.
- identifies sounds in the environment and distinguishes between them.
- shows an interest, pleasure, and enjoyment during listening activities by responding with appropriate eye contact, body language, and facial expressions.
- listens to stories read and reread aloud by adults and recalls prior knowledge in order to predict outcomes.
• listens to books and poems that include repetitive and rhythmic elements.
• experiments with word sounds.
• occasionally just listens to stories without being involved.
• shows growing interest and involvement in listening to and discussing a variety of fiction and nonfiction books and poetry.
• shows increasing ability to discriminate and identify sounds in spoken language.
• shows growing awareness of beginning and ending sounds of words.
• progresses in recognizing matching sounds and rhymes in familiar words, games, songs, stories, and poems.
• shows increasing ability to discriminate and identify sounds in spoken language.
• shows growing ability to hear and discriminate separate syllables in words.
• listens to another with attention and, by age five, without distraction or interruption.
• makes judgments about what she hears and tells parts of stories she liked or parts that are frightening.
• understands an increasingly complex and varied vocabulary.
• listens and responds to one-, two-, then three-step directions.
• listens and responds appropriately in conversations and group interactions by taking turns and generally staying on topic.
• shows pleasure and enjoyment during listening activities, smiling, laughing, and responding in appropriate ways.
• listens for details.

Speaking Skills
The child
• uses new vocabulary and grammatical construction in own speech.
• shows a steady growth in speaking vocabulary.
• uses new vocabulary in everyday communication.
• refines and extends understanding of known words.
• attempts to communicate more than her current vocabulary will allow and borrows and extends words to create meaning.
• links new learning experiences and vocabulary to what is already known about a topic.
• begins to create, play with, and invent words by substituting one sound for another.
• asks questions and makes comments about the information and events from books.
• connects information and events in books to real-life experiences.
• begins to retell some sequences of events in stories.
• asks questions to extend her ideas.
• links new experiences to vocabulary she already knows.
• uses increasingly complex sentence structures.
• begins to use words for a variety of purposes.
• uses words that describe a rationale for organization.
• builds vocabulary to describe attributes, classify, and group things by criteria and explains that things go together.
• talks about what she is doing, what she did, and how she did it.
• engages peers in conversations that becomes increasingly complex.
• extends and expands conversations with others.
- uses puppets to create conversations.
- expresses self through speaking in small groups and in front of the whole group.
- takes part in dictating labels, messages, and news so she sees that the words said can be written and then read to others.
- retells the events of a story.
- asks appropriate questions about stories.
- tells her own personal narratives or stories of daily life.
- begins to use new vocabulary from literature in another context.
- relates their own experiences and feelings with those of a character in a book.
- makes predictions about what might happen next from contextual clues.
- begins to compare, predict, and draw conclusions through everyday experiences and play.
- interprets and conveys meaning through nonverbal communication.
- participates in singing, nursery rhymes, dramatic activities, storytelling, and poetry that are representative of her own culture and that of others.
- develops increasingly complex and abstract use of language.
- begins to create stories and records of events in an organized way.
- retells a story by putting key incidents from the story in pictorial format in chronological or logical order.
- uses language to initiate and enter play situations and communicate with peers through role-play, sequence of events, expression of feeling (for example, dramatizing taking an order at a restaurant or fighting a fire, making rules, negotiating).
- plans, makes choices and decisions, and verbalizes them.
- articulates sounds according to developmentally appropriate expectations.
- offers verbal or pictorial evidence from a book to support her understanding.
- demonstrates progress in abilities to retell and dictate stories.
- contributes her knowledge by describing objects and experiences to others through verbal language, sign language, gestures, or other appropriate means according to her abilities.
- participates in meaningful experiences that foster oral language in both individual and group settings (for example, reciting nursery rhymes, songs, or jingles; repeating and dramatizing familiar stories).
- retells information from a story read aloud.
- progresses in abilities to initiate and respond appropriately in conversation and discussions with peers and adults.
- progresses in clarity of pronunciation and toward speaking in sentences of increasing length and grammatical complexity.
- describes previous experiences and relates them to new experiences or ideas.
- asks questions to obtain information.
- uses language to express relationships, make connections, describe similarities and differences, express feelings, and initiate play with others.
- joins singing, finger plays, chanting, retelling, and inventing stories.
- uses language to communicate and negotiate ideas and plans for activities.
- uses complex sentence structure, such as compound sentences.
- begins to experiment with words that describe relationships, such as more, less, most, same, fewer, and none.
- begins to make guesses or predictions based on personal observations and the information available to her.
• requests favorite stories, poems, and songs.
• is able to sing songs or recite nursery rhymes or poems.
• begins to ask “how” and “why” questions.
• begins to use appropriate voice level, phrasing, sentence structure, and intonation.
• begins to take turns in conversations and to stay on topic.
• begins to respond in complete sentences.

Writing (Print Awareness)
The child
• understands that print carries a message by recognizing labels, signs, and other print forms in the environment.
• understands that letters are different from numbers.
• begins to understand that print runs from left to right and top to bottom.
• begins to understand some basic print conventions and that letters are grouped to form words and that words are separated by spaces.
• begins to recognize the association between spoken and written words by following the print as it is read aloud.
• begins to associate the names of letters with their shapes.
• uses known letters and approximations of letters to represent written language.
• understands that writing is used to communicate ideas and information.
• shows increasing awareness of print in classroom, home, and community settings.
• develops growing understanding of the different functions of forms of print, such as signs, letters, newspapers, lists, messages, and menus.
• names the letter that begin her name.
• notices and is able to name letters that begin names of friends, family members, and common environmental graphics.
• recognizes that letters are grouped to form words.
• begins incorporating letter-like scribbles in drawings and other artwork.
• makes her name using rubber stamp alphabet blocks or plastic, wooden, or flannel board letters; constructs name using play dough; types it on a computer; or writes it.
• plays at making lists and pretends to write other messages.
• gains meaning from printed messages and labels.
• uses pretend writing in play by writing notes and signs to post in the play area.
• uses what she knows about letter-sound relationships to invent own spelling.
• picks out other words that begin with the same letter or sound as her name.
• becomes aware of grammar and punctuation through exposure to written language.
• begins to draw pictures or use letters to write stories about experiences, people, objects, and events.
• realizes there are uppercase and lowercase letters.
• writes messages as part of play and other activities (for example, drawing, scribbling, making letterlike forms, using invented spelling and conventional letter forms).
• attempts to write own name on own work.
• asks adults to write (asks for labels on block structures, dictation of stories, lists of materials needed for a project).
• shows an understanding that symbols carry meaning by identifying the meaning of common symbols (for example, recipe charts, icons on computers, rebuses).
• recognizes print in the local environment.
• recognizes own name in a variety of contexts.
• recognizes that letters form words.
• recognizes that it is the print that is read in stories.
• becomes aware of the use of punctuation in familiar stories and the cues punctuation provides.
• knows that pictures and print convey meaning, beginning with recognition of symbols and the written form of her own name and familiar letters of words found in their environment.
• begins to experiment with words that describe relationships, such as more, less, most, same, fewer, and none.
• begins to understand that symbols may be used to represent objects and events.
• begins to use tables, charts, and graphs in a systematic manner to represents meaningful information and relationships.
• begins to interpret information presented in graphic form.

Reading (Readiness)
The child
• can read symbols (rebus) when given a word for the symbol.
• begins to identify some high-frequency words when close to kindergarten age.
• demonstrates an interest in books and reading through body language and facial expressions.
• does attempt to read independently.
• shares books and engages in pretend reading with other children.
• enjoys visiting the library.
• recognizes favorite books by their covers.
• can select books to read based on personal criteria.
• becomes increasingly familiar with narrative form and its elements by identifying characters and predicting events, plot, and the resolution of a story.
• begins to predict what will happen next in a story.
• imitates the special language in storybooks and story dialogue and uses it in retellings and dramatic play.
• makes attempts to connect the sounds in a word with its letter forms.
• can play at reading, pretending to read to self and others.
• begins to recognize, duplicate, and create patterns and uses them to make predictions.
• begins to use the names for numbers and associates number words with collections or sets of objects counted, including zero.
• identifies the letter that begins her name and its sound.
• becomes aware of grammar and punctuation through listening to and experimenting with oral language.
• generates ideas with teacher support.
• can when given a book upside down, turn it right side up.
• can turn pages from the front of the book to the back.
• can use left-to-right directionality, making the left-to-right sweep when turning pages.
• can select favorite stories.
knows the titles and, by age five, the authors of favorite books.
• at about five years of age, knows she can be an author and engages in making books.
• identifies specific words in books by framing them with her hands.
• demonstrates knowledge of the concept of “book,” “line,” “sentence,” “letter,” “end,” and “beginning.”
• recognizes that a variety of print letter formations and text forms are used for different functions (for example, grocery list, menu, store sign, telephone book, newspaper, and magazine).
• exhibits reading-like behavior (for example, pretends to read to self and others and reads own writing).
• begins to identify the role of the “author” and the “illustrator” of books that are read or that she creates.
• responds to and discusses a variety of literature, including fairy tales, folktales, rhymes and poems, and fiction and nonfiction.
• begins to understand a variety of cultures, traditions, and histories through listening to stories and participating in activities.
• begins to make connections between books or stories and personal experiences and classroom learning.
• develops an appreciation for books and learns to handle/care for them (for example, how to hold books in the correct position and turn pages from front to back, how to treat them with respect).
• can be actively involved in story reading/telling experiences (for example, responds to questions, makes inferences about characters’ motivations, talks about the meaning of words, makes up rhymes).
• enjoys a variety of modes of storytelling/reading (for example, flannel boards, puppetry, creation of own books and having one’s own work bound and accessible for revisiting).
• develops a sense of time/sequence of events.
• learns that books are rich sources of information.
• identifies a familiar story from a key feature, such as illustrations or from recognition of key words.
• begins to recognize the contribution of the illustrator to a book.
• can supply his/her own versions of words that fit rhythms and rhymes in various books, poems, and songs.
• can, through exposure to high-quality children’s literature, predict logical next steps in a story, ask questions about stories, and dramatize stories.
• selects books, tapes, and music related to things she is interested in or is learning about.
• uses a variety of media to experience stories.
• learns that oral language has a written counterpart—that words represent objects/actions.
• can find the commonalities and differences in various books.
• recognizes the difference between facts and fiction around a common theme.
• identifies elements of cause and effect from stories read aloud and from everyday situations.
• begins to identify the essential ideas/components of stories (setting, characters, theme, plot, problem—what the story was about, what the main character did or learned).
• begins to look at stories with critical lenses by analyzing the “five Ws” (who, what, where, when, why).
• shows growing interest in reading-related activities, such as asking to have a favorite book read, choosing to look at books, drawing pictures based on stories, asking to take books home, going to the library, and engaging in pretend reading with other children.
• progresses in learning how to handle and care for books; knowing to view one page at a time in sequence from front to back; and understanding that a book has a title, author, and illustrator.
• displays as growing interest and involvement in listening to and discussing a variety of fiction and nonfiction books and poetry.
• can use picture clues to infer and predict what happens next in a story.
• begins to become phonemically aware—the ability to hear separate sounds.
• can repeat parts of stories and poems.
• is aware of syllables by clapping to these in words, songs, or poems.

The Child Learning English

The child
• can listen with increasing attention.
• can listen for different purposes.
• enjoys listening to and responding to books.
• listens to and engages in several exchanges of conversations with others.
• listens to tapes and records and shows understanding through gestures, actions, and language.
• listens purposefully to English-speaking teachers and peers to gather information and shows some understanding of the new language being spoken by others.
• perceives differences between similar sounding works.
• produces speech sounds with increasing ease and accuracy.
• tries to experiment with new language sounds.
• experiments with and demonstrates a growing understanding of the sounds and intonation of the English language.
• engages in various forms of nonverbal communication with those who do not speak her home language.
• can use single words and simple phrases to communicate meaning in social situations.
• makes attempts to use new vocabulary and grammar in speech.