Chapter 16 Notes

I. Introduction
   a. Two pertinent questions preschool teachers ask themselves concerning print and teaching children to write in printscript:
      i. Is it appropriate to offer lessons (activities) that teach print letter recognition and formation at this age?
      ii. How is instruction in printscript undertaken?
   b. Ideas about the child’s development of writing (printing) skill has undergone a major change
      i. Preschool children are seen as writers
      ii. Older ideas promoted the idea that teaching children to print and read should not be undertaken until children are in kindergarten or first grade
         1. Was believed that at that stage children are mature enough or possess the readiness skills that would make these tasks much easier
         2. Writing and reading skills were thought to be different from listening and speaking skills
         3. Speech was accomplished without direct or formal teaching over a long period, beginning in infancy
         4. Educators have revised their thoughts
   c. Concept of early literacy suggests that the foundations of literacy develop from a child’s early experiences with print before the onset of formal reading instruction
      i. Educators take children’s writing seriously and they listen to their intended message and support writing development
   d. Symbol making is the essence of what it means to be human
      i. Young children often talk about what they have done, constructed, and drawn, and they “read” meaning into their creations, a meaning they wish to communicate to others
      ii. Through talk with others, children invest their marks with meaning
      iii. Giving attention to children’s work prompts children to translate their work’s meaning to the interested adults
      iv. It is believed that this type of child speech paves the way for the eventual use of children’s written forms
   e. At some point, children gain the insight that print is categorically different from other kinds of visual patterns in their environment
      i. Eventually, they learn that print symbolizes language and can be produced by anyone
      ii. Children also begin to realize that print holds information
      iii. Educators urge teachers to help children see that print holds ideas, observations, stories, and plans
   f. A review of current research with preschoolers would agree that:
i. Adult-child shared book reading that stimulates verbal interaction can enhance language (especially vocabulary) development and knowledge about concepts of print

ii. Activities that direct young children’s attention to the sound structure within spoken words, and to the relationships between print and speech can facilitate learning to read with greater ease

g. Preschool children already know something about the world of print from their environment

   i. Most children form primitive hypotheses about letters, words, and messages, both printed and handwritten

   ii. West, Denton, and Germino-Hausken, studying kindergartners, found 37 percent of children entering kindergarten have a basic familiarity with print

   iii. Widely held view that learning to read and write will be easier for the child who has had rich preschool literacy experiences than for the child who has had little or limited literacy opportunities

h. Much of young children’s writing is a kind of exploratory play, common in the developmental beginnings of all symbolic media

   i. Print awareness and beginning printing skill and reading awareness and beginning reading skills are now viewed as developing at younger ages, simultaneously with children’s growing understandings of a number of other symbol systems

   ii. Print awareness describes the child’s sensitivity to the presence and use of print in the environment

   iii. When supported by an educative environment, young children compose connected written discourse using emergent forms long before they hold conventional ideas about writing

       1. Children’s scribbling, drawing-used-as-writing, non-phonetic strings of letters, and invented spellings are now accepted and honored as reflecting underlying understandings about writing

i. Early childhood educators have always had children that asked questions and displayed early attempts and interest in printing

   i. Before they have begun to consider how the words they say may be coded into print, and how the sounds of speech are coded in print, preschool children can:

       1. Respond to and learn about visual features of print

       2. Know some letters

       3. Write some words

       4. Make up pretend writings such as letters to people

       5. Dictate stories they want written

   ii. Through informal daily literacy events and adult-child interactions (such as making useful signs), children learn the many purposes and the power of print in their lives and in those of adults
1. Adults expect children to talk before they read but may not have noticed that children are interested in writing before they can read

j. Alphabet letters appear in four-year-olds' drawings
   i. Young children go through the motions of reading books, and some have a keen interest in numbers and measurement
   1. Supports the idea that children are attempting to make sense out of what they encounter and are expanding their understandings of symbol systems on a number of fronts

k. Children do not leap from illiteracy to an understanding that our writing system is alphabetic
   i. They may have:
      1. Hypothesized many conclusions
      2. Tried writing with a variety of their own inventions after puzzling over the relationship between print and speech

l. Professional practice promotes teachers’ supporting, welcoming, and recognizing child efforts and accepting correct and incorrect child conclusions about printing, just as they accepted and supported incorrect or incomplete speech and welcomed it
   i. Earlier practice may have led some teachers to either ignore or defer supportive guidance in printing
      1. Rationale being that this instruction would come later in the child’s schooling
   ii. Teachers are encouraged to have faith in children’s ability to discover and develop their own writing theories and symbol systems, as they did when they taught themselves to speak
      1. This takes place in a print-rich environment with responsive adults
      2. Some educators worry about providing too many literacy-focused activities, materials, and furnishings in classrooms, that may displace other toys and other curriculum
         a. This, they suggest, may turn children’s play into literacy work

m. Teachers must be willing to introduce, demonstrate, and discuss print’s relationship and use in daily activities to pique child interest
   i. Optimal developmental opportunities can be missed in the very best equipped and print-prolific classroom environments
   ii. An environment conducive to a child’s development of print awareness as a place where print is important and where interactions with print are a source of social and intellectual pleasure for individual children and the people who surround them
iii. Preschoolers who observe and interact within a print-rich environment with sensitive and responsive teachers may discover:

1. Print is different from other kinds of visual marks and patterns
2. Print appears on all kinds of surfaces and objects
3. Print is almost everywhere
4. Adults read picture books aloud but also read silently at times
5. Print symbolizes oral language
6. Print holds information
7. Lots of different people and children know how to print and know what print says

n. Through being read to frequently, preschoolers may know:
   i. Where one starts reading on a page
   ii. That reading moves from left to right
   iii. That at the end of a line, the reader returns to the left margin
   iv. That pages in a book are in a sequence usually starting with page 1
   v. There is a difference between letter, word, and sentence
   vi. There are spaces between words
   vii. There are marks, called punctuation marks, that have different names and meanings
   viii. There are uppercase (big) and lowercase (little) letters

o. Preschoolers will also discover a number of other print-related concepts
   i. Also may become aware that written language functions to label, communicate, remind, request, record, and create

p. A child will not learn the name of the letter “B”, the sound of the letter “B”, or how to print it, simply by being with adults or by being with an adult who likes to read
   i. Children learn these critical concepts because adults take the time and effort to teach them in an exciting, engaging, and understanding manner

q. Writing awareness and beginning writing attempts make more sense to children who have experienced an integrated language arts instructional approach
   i. Areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing are interrelated
   ii. Child’s ability to see how these areas fit together is commonly mentioned in school goals
   iii. Adults in classrooms communicate with others daily—both orally and in written form
      1. Written communication offers daily opportunities for teachers to point out print’s usefulness
      2. Print’s necessity can be discussed and shared
r. Increased focus on children’s early reading success in the United States has provided additional impetus for researching early writing and reading relationships
   i. Increasing number of experts believe children establish early ideas about printing (writing) that serve as a basis for early printing and reading attempts
   ii. Some children can print a word (or many words) the first day they enter kindergarten and a good number of children come to school believing that they can write
      1. Their first attempts to print concentrate on messages rather than perfection
      2. Generations of children have been asked to learn the letters of the alphabet, sound-symbol correspondences, and a vocabulary of sight words before they learned to write or read
   iii. If the same were true of learning to speak, children would be asked to wait until all letter sounds were perfected at age seven or eight before attempting to speak
      1. Early on, children begin to understand that reading is getting meaning from print and they become increasingly aware of the different functions and uses of written language
s. Based on the notion that the child constructs from within, piecing together from life experiences the rules of oral language, educators believe that if children are given time and supportive assistance, they can crack the writing and reading code by noticing regularities and incongruence, thus creating their own unique rules
   i. Children would progress at their own speeds, doing what is important to them and doing what they see others do
   ii. Without formal instruction, they experiment with and explore the various facets of the writing process
   iii. They decorate letters and invent their own symbols, sometimes reverting to their own inventions even after they are well into distinguishing and reproducing different, recognizable alphabet letters
   iv. Some children expect others to know what they have written, regardless of their coding system
t. Natural curiosity leads children to form ideas about print and its use in their lives
   i. It can be assumed that children know little or nothing about written language before they receive formal instruction
   ii. However, evidence indicates that children have extensive knowledge of some aspects of written language
u. A few children may have developed both phonological awareness and phonemic awareness
i. Researchers report that about 15 percent of three- and four-year-old children can identify words that began with a particular phoneme and about 25 percent can reliably identify rhyming words.

ii. Tests designed to measure print awareness have been found to predict future reading achievement.

v. Children who live in an alphabetical, literate environment begin to hypothesize that there are relationships between oral and written language.

w. Concept of writing readiness began with some important figures from the past that influenced the directions that early childhood education has taken.

i. Became popular to talk about writing readiness as being that time when an average group of children acquired the capacity, skills, and knowledge to permit the group to accomplish the task.

ii. Would be difficult to find a center that does not use some elements of each of the three approaches in the instructional program.

II. Starting From a Different Place

a. At about 16-20 months, some toddlers become interested in scribbling.

i. One sees them grasp a drawing or marking tool in their first and use it in sweeping, whole-arm motions to make marks.

ii. Motions:
   1. Can be vigorous, rhythmic, scrubbing and repetitive
   2. May include sharp stabs at the paper

b. Scribbling involves decision making.

i. Coincides with young children’s emerging sense of autonomy.

ii. Children make decisions about line, color, and the placement of marks on the paper.

   1. Also use and gain control over the tools of their home and classroom (crayons, markers, pencils, paper, etc.) if it is regarded as a valued activity.

c. Teachers need to consider all enrolled children ready to learn and progress in language and literacy, with each child possessing a different past experience.

i. Past opportunity may have dramatically molded the individual child’s literacy behaviors and language competency.

ii. Teachers hope to expand language competencies that exist and introduce children to new activities and opportunities.

d. Much of young children’s writing is exploratory.

i. When children show interest and share in discussions about written marks, they begin to understand print’s meaning and functional use.

ii. Through personally motivated and personally directed trial and error, children try out various aspects of the writing process.
Sometimes interact and collaborate with peers who are more literate

Competent others help and eventually children function without supportive assistance

Should one systematically teach writing tool grip?

Although, somewhat controversial, some early programs are providing implicit instruction for 3 and 4 year olds on how to grip a writing tool

1. These programs purposefully provide broken crayons (ones of a short length) that glide well and promote young children’s use of a finger gripping motion rather than whole hand grasping
2. Children are shown what these programs believe to be the most efficient and comfortable finger gripping position
   a. They feel that this allows the best control of the writing tool and aids eventual speed in writing (printing)
3. Children who have already found their own unique grip are shown a second way they can choose to adopt
4. Program plans include enjoyable activities that promote small motor control with a finger pinching action such as picking up small objects
5. The ‘right’ tool grip instruction entails holding the writing tool between a bent thumb and a first finger (index) pointed at the tool’s marking tip with the tool resting on the middle finger with the ring and little finger bent inward toward the palm

Some educators are less enthusiastic about this instructional approach for many reasons including research that points out that about half of all three-year-olds have already mastered the grip

1. Other educators feel child motivation and interest is paramount before grip instruction takes place
2. Advocates counter by describing a writing fundamentals curriculum that:
   a. Is without pressure
   b. Is game-like
   c. Uses songs with clever rhythms to introduce concepts and terms
3. Each early childhood program will decide how or if grip instruction or writing fundamentals instruction will be included in its program
4. Parents frequently demonstrate a writing grip similar to their own, and educators usually initiate instruction with a child who demonstrates awkwardness or frustration
a. A right handed teacher may find this difficult with the left-handed child for the paper is slanted in a different direction than for right handed children
b. Teachers routinely tape or secure writing paper to tables or large surfaces so the paper won’t slip away from early writers or they may show how holding the paper with the other hand solves the problem

III. Research in Writing Development
a. Ferreiro and Teberosky identified three developmentally ordered levels
b. First level
   i. Children:
      1. Search for criteria to distinguish between drawing and writing
      2. Realize straight and curved lines and dots are present but organized differently in print
      3. Reach the conclusion that print forms are arbitrary and ordered in a linear fashion
      4. Accept the letter shapes in their environment rather than inventing new ones
      5. From literacy-rich environments recognize written marks as “substitute objects” during their third year
c. Second level
   i. Children:
      1. Look for objective differences in printed strings
      2. Do not realize there is a relationship between sound patterns and print
d. Third level
   i. Children:
      1. Accept that a given string of letters represents their name and look for a rational explanation of this phenomenon
      2. May create a syllabic hypothesis
      3. May print letter forms as syllables heard in a word. Example: i c (i see)
      4. May develop knowledge about particular syllables and what letters might represent such a syllable
      5. May look for similar letters to write similar pieces of sound
      6. Begin to understand printing uses alphabet letters that represent sounds
        a. Consequently, to understand print, one must know the sound patterns of words
e. What conclusions of this landmark research may affect language arts program planning and early educators’ interaction techniques?
   i. Teachers will note attending children’s active attempts to understand print
1. Will realize each child constructs her own ideas and revises these understandings as more print is noticed and experienced

f. The seemingly strange questions children ask or off-the-wall answers some children give in classroom discussions about print may now be seen as reflecting their inner thoughts at crucial points in their print knowledge

g. As teachers view children’s artwork, they will see more readily early print forms, and they will continue their attempts to provide literacy-rich, print-rich classroom environments

h. Some preschoolers demonstrate that they know the names and shapes of alphabet letters
   i. May also know letters form words and represent sounds.
   ii. Might have grasped the idea that spoken words can be written and then read
   iii. May be able to express daily uses of written words

i. Why would a young child write or pretend to write? I
   i. Not an easy motor task
      1. Is it simple imitation, or done for adult reaction?
      2. Do children do so because there is an inner drive to know or become competent?
      3. Research has yet to answer these questions
   ii. Teachers conjecture reasons with each young child they meet who has beginning printing skills
      1. Reasons are not as important as teacher reaction and plan to provide additional opportunities to nourish and expand what already exists

IV. Young Children’s Progress

a. Baker and Schiffer suggest that learning to write begins as children:
   i. Gain familiarity with the alphabet
   ii. Learn about writing instruments
   iii. Recognize simple words in everyday places

b. At some point, children learn that written marks have meaning
   i. Just as they sought the names of things, they now seek the names of these marks and, later, the meanings of the marks
   ii. Because each child is an individual, this may or may not happen during the preschool years

b. Preschool children may recognize environmental print words before they know the name of any alphabet letters
   i. This is termed sight reading
   ii. Some preschool children may recognize most of the children’s names in their group
   iii. Quite a few researchers believe a period of time exists when a young child conceives of a certain alphabet letter as representing a person or object
      1. At that point, the child may say, “‘B’, that’s my name.”
iv. A child may not understand that the alphabet is a complete set of letters representing speech sounds used in writing, but rather, she may have a partial and beginning view of the alphabetic principle
d. Writing (printscript) is complex
   i. Many subcomponents of the process need to be understood
   ii. Development may occur at different rates, with spurts and lags in different knowledge areas
   iii. Besides the visual learning of letter features and forms, the ability to manually form shapes, and knowing that writing involves a message, a writer must listen to the sounds of her inner speech and find matching letters representing those sounds
   iv. Because letter follows letter in printing, the child needs to make continuous intellectual choices and decisions
e. Many events happen between the ages of three and five
   i. Children begin to vary their marks and move from imitation to creation
   ii. Children produce a mixture of real letters, mock letters, and innovative symbols
   iii. Messages are readable
f. These actions signal several new behaviors and child discoveries:
   i. They are attending to the fine features of writing, noting shapes and specific letters
   ii. They are developing an early concept of sign—the realization that symbols stand for something
   iii. They are recognizing that there is variation in written language
g. Children refine and enlarge these concepts by experimenting with writing
   i. They draw, trace, copy, and even invent marks and letter forms of their own
h. Print awareness is usually developed in the following sequence:
   i. The child notices adults making marks with writing tools
   ii. The child notices print in books and on signs
   iii. The child realizes that certain distinguishable marks make her name
   iv. The child learns the names of some of the marks—usually the first letter of her name
i. Usual sequence in the child's imitation of written forms follows:
   i. The child's scribbles are more like print than artwork or pure exploration
   ii. Linear scribbles are generally horizontal with possible repeated forms
      1. Children’s knowledge of linear directionality may have been displayed in play in which they lined up alphabet
blocks, cut out letters and pasted them in a row, or put magnetic board letters in left-to-right rows

iii. Individual shapes are created, usually closed shapes displaying purposeful lines

iv. Letter-like forms are created

v. Recognizable alphabet letters are printed and may be mirror images or turned on sides, upside down, or in upright position

vi. Words or groupings of alphabet letters with spaces between are formed

vii. Invented spelling appears

1. May include pictured items along with alphabet letters

viii. Correctly spelled words with spaces separating words are produced

V. Invented Spelling (Developmental Spelling)
a. Invented spelling is something children do naturally

i. Temporary phenomenon that is later replaced with conventional spelling

ii. Teachers, until the mid to late 1980s, gave young children the idea that until they learned to read, they needed to write only those words they had memorized or copied

iii. Research has changed educational philosophy and methods

1. Suggests children’s literacy emerges during a span of several years

2. As young children slowly begin to understand what letters mean and how to string them together, some children will invent spelling

3. Often, the beginning consonant sound of a particular word is printed

4. A whole sequence might shortly appear and consist of single-letter words

b. Invented spelling stage casts teachers in the role of detectives trying to ascertain meanings that the child may perceive as obvious

i. In their early attempts to write, preschool children invent a system of spelling that follows logical and predictable rules before they learn the conventional forms

ii. Vowels are commonly omitted in invented spellings

iii. Words appear that may look like a foreign language (dg for dog, and jragin for dragon)

c. Identifiable stages in invented spelling:

i. Spelling awareness—alphabet letters represent words

ii. Primitive spelling with no relationship between spelling and words—numbers and letters are differentiated

iii. Pre-phonetic spelling—initial and final consonants may become correct

iv. Phonetic spelling—almost a perfect match between the symbols and sounds
1. Some vowels are used
2. Some sight words may be correctly spelled

v. Correct spelling
d. Invented spelling serves as an important stage in the process of deciphering the sound-symbol system of written language
   i. Believed that at this point, phonics becomes important to children
   ii. Early on, the child selects letters in her inventive spelling that have some relationship to how the word is pronounced
      1. Large items like “elephants” may be written in huge letters and with more letters than small objects, because the child is operating under the misconception that bigger necessitates more letters
      2. Names of letters may represent words (u for you) or parts of words
   iii. Young writers’ invented spelling use personal logic rather than or in conjunction with standard spelling
      1. Child’s strategy of using a name of a letter has a frustrating side
      2. There are only 26 alphabet letters in the alphabet but almost twice that many phonemes or sound units
         a. What do children do when they encounter a sound for which there is no ready letter-name match?
         b. They use a system of spelling logic based primarily on what they hear but also influenced by subconscious knowledge of the general rules of language usage and of how sounds are formed in the mouth when spoken

  e. What should an early childhood educator do when confronted with invented spelling in a child’s work?
     i. Faith that children who are given help will evolve toward conventional spelling is needed
     ii. Sowers states that invented spelling gives young writers early power over words
        1. Believes that professional writers don’t worry about correct spelling on their first drafts and neither do inventive spellers
  f. Many primary teachers write out the standard spelling for words below a child’s invented spelling
     i. By doing so, teachers honor the original but give children experiencing the tension between their spelling inventions and regular standard spellings further information
        1. Enables interested children to compare
     ii. Inventive spellers who realize their spelling differs from text in books and the world around them may experience frustration and confusion

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iii. Teachers at this juncture may introduce phoneme spelling by “sounding out” words that they print
g. Some educators recommend putting a small teacher translation on papers containing invented spelling
   i. They record the child’s intended message (or a translation of what the child has tried to write) using small letters on a remote corner of the page or on its back
      1. Can be a satisfying arrangement if the child has no objection to the practice
   ii. Also gives the teacher the opportunity to observe and hear the child decode his message in his own words
h. In this way a family examining “sent home papers” can possibly understand the thought processes the child used to write the message and understand the child’s great accomplishment
   i. Parent-teacher discussion is usually necessary for parents to realize that beginning attempts are not immediately corrected
i. Teachers need to use these techniques carefully with older preschoolers, being mindful of the child’s inventiveness and pride in her work
   i. Many preschoolers object to teachers adding any marks on their papers
j. When a child asks the teacher to write a specific word, the teacher has a chance to help the child with letter sounds (rather than letter names), saying d-o-g as she writes it
   i. Time permitting, the teacher can add, “It starts with the alphabet letter d, like Dan, D-a-n.”

VI. Goals of Instruction
a. Providing experiences that match a child’s interests and abilities is the goal of many centers
   i. Most schools plan activities for those children who ask questions or seem ready and then proceed if the child is still interested
   ii. Others work with children on an individual basis, and yet others believe in providing a print-rich environment where the child will progress naturally with supportive adults who also model an interest in print and point out uses of print in daily activities
   iii. Teachers should plan activities involving authentic writing (printing), that is, writing done for the “real world” rather than for contrived school purposes
      1. An authentic written message often involves a child’s need or desire
      2. Possible to combine these approaches
b. As with other language abilities, goals include stimulating further interest and exploration
   i. Should be done in such a way that the child is not confused by instruction that is too advanced or boring
c. Important goal concerning print awareness is relating writing to other language arts areas
   i. Almost impossible to not do so
   ii. Teachers are encouraged to consciously mention connections so that children will understand how writing fits in the whole of communicating
   iii. A teacher’s goal would include the ability to print every lowercase and uppercase alphabet letter in excellent form, offering children the best model possible

VII. Coordination
   a. Children’s muscle control follows a timetable of its own
      i. Control of a particular muscle depends on many factors
      ii. A baby can control her neck and arms long before her legs
      iii. A child’s muscle control grows in a head-to-toe fashion
      iv. Muscles closer to the center of the body can be controlled long before those of the hands and fingers
      v. Large-muscle control comes before small-muscle control
   b. Precise writing is extremely difficult for three- and four-year-olds, who typically grasp writing tools in their fists and guide them with movements started at the shoulder, elbow, or wrist
      i. With the pivot and the writing tool point so far apart, children can’t help but write large
         1. Preschoolers’ spatial skills are limited, it’s difficult for them to construct and combine lines in the ways that writing lessons often demand
         2. Four-year-olds who do have advanced fine motor skills that allow them to hold a pencil in a well-controlled finger and thumb grasp

VIII. Cognitive Development
   a. Realization that written symbols exist is a first step in writing
      i. Discovery that written language is simply spoken language, ideas, or communication is another step
      ii. Mental growth, which allows a child to see similarities and differences in written symbols, comes before the ability to write
      iii. Child recognizes that a written mark is a shape made by the placement of lines
   b. Seven prerequisite skill areas for handwriting:
      i. Small-muscle development and coordination
      ii. Eye-hand coordination
      iii. Ability to hold writing tools properly
      iv. Ability to form basic strokes (circles and straight lines)
      v. Letter perception
      vi. Orientation to printed language, which includes a desire to write and communicate, including the child’s enjoyment of writing her own name
      vii. Left-to-right understanding
c. The last three skills deal with the child’s cognitive development

IX. Play and Writing
a. Print, signs, and writing imaginary messages often become part of a dramatic play sequence
i. During play, children may pretend to read and write words, poems, stories, and songs, and they may actually make a series of marks on paper
ii. Play encourages children to act as if they are already competent in and able to control the activity under consideration
iii. Through pretend play, they may feel they are already readers and writers
   1. At least a beginning move toward eventual literacy takes place
iv. Children observe families using reading and writing in their daily lives
   1. These activities are given status
   2. Early childhood teachers can build on children’s early attitudes by modeling, demonstrating, and providing dramatic play opportunities involving print, which promote collaborative peer printing

X. Drawing Experience
a. A young child scribbles if given paper and a marking tool
i. As the child grows, the scribbles are controlled into lines that she places where desired
ii. Gradually, the child begins to draw circles, then a face, later a full figure, and so on
iii. Children draw their own symbols representing what they see around them
iv. Educators urge teachers to examine one child’s drawings over a few weeks time and discover the child is working on a basic plan
   1. Perhaps, a child makes the same pattern or schema again and again
      a. May seem as if the child has learned a plan of action which produces the pattern or schema
      b. Gives the child enough control over pencil and paper to play with variations, which often leads to new discoveries
   v. The length of time it takes this process to develop differs with each child.

b. A profound connection exists between experience and ability in drawing and interest in and ability to write
i. Drawings and paintings not only communicate children’s thinking (when they reach the level of drawing that is representative of the environment) but also often display early attempts to create symbols
1. Some of these symbols may be recognized by adults, but others seem to be unique and represent the world in the child's own way
2. Children often want to talk about their work and create stories to accompany graphics
c. Because alphabet letters are more abstract than representative drawing, most educators suggest that drawing precedes writing
   i. One research study identified a characteristic that was common to almost all children in the research study who read early and continued to hold their lead in reading achievement
   1. Children were described by their parents as “pencil-and-paper kids,” whose starting point of curiosity about written language was an interest in scribbling and drawing

XI. Writing and Exposure to Books
a. Probably the most common experience that promotes a child’s interest in print is hearing and seeing picture books read over and over
   i. Through repeated exposure, the child comes to expect the text to be near or on the same page as the object depicted
   ii. Two- and three-year olds think that pictures in a book tell the story; as they gain more experience, they notice the reader reads the print, not the pictures
   iii. Memorized story lines lead to children’s questions about print on book pages
   iv. Once a word is recognized in print, copying that word onto another piece of paper or manipulating magnetic alphabet letters to form the word is a natural outgrowth
   v. This activity usually leads to parent attention and approval and further attempts
   vi. Scribblers, doodlers, drawers, and pencil-and-paper kids are all labels researchers have used to describe children who have an early interest in writing, and much of what they do has been promoted by seeing print in their favorite books
b. Stages are believed to exist starting with a stage in which the text and the picture are not differentiated
   i. Then children begin to expect that the text is a label for the picture
   ii. In a third stage the text is expected to provide cues with which to confirm predictions based on the picture
c. Some important concepts that young children gradually understand concerning print are:
   i. The print, not the pictures in a book, tells the story
   ii. There are alphabet letters
   iii. Words are clusters of letters
   iv. There are first letters and last letters in words
   v. Alphabet letters exist in uppercase and lowercase
   vi. Spaces in printing are there for a reason
vii. Punctuation makes words have meaning
d. Children may notice the left-to-right and top-to-bottom direction of printing and also the left-page-first directional feature
e. Promotion of the idea that print and text is used for different purposes and that it appears in different forms depending on its purpose is important
   i. Road signs have large block print and maybe colorful and reflective so that it alerts pedestrians and drivers both day and night
   ii. This fact is an example of both purpose and form
   iii. Lists of print words, newspapers, dictionaries, and poetry usually look different from picture book text whose purpose usually is to tell a story
f. The acquisition of skills in writing and reading and the development of the attitude that books are enjoyable are not simply academic or technical learning
   i. These skills flourish with a warm physical and emotional base with shared enjoyment and intimacy
   ii. Most experts believe considerable support exists for the notion that oral language provides a base for learning to write
   iii. Importance of emotionally satisfying adult-child interactions in all areas of language arts cannot be overestimated
g. Alphabet books
   i. Children’s books in print before the twentieth century were mostly informational and moralistic
      1. Alphabet books suited the then-prevailing public view that a good children’s book should promote child learning
      2. Presently, library collections for young children include alphabetic books
      3. Although many are in print and some are classic favorites, new titles continually appear
      4. Said that almost every author of young children’s literature yearns to develop a unique alphabet book
   ii. Recommended titles include:
         a. A girls can be anything theme
         a. Suits toddlers and preschoolers with colorful, and playful illustrations
          a. Preparing for a birthday party with the a b c’s
a. Alphabet letters A to Z introduced through Alice’s chronological daily activities [like breakfast in bed]

   a. The overnight bag brought for an overnight stay with grandpa yields A to Z objects

iii. When children are asking for alphabet letter names and alphabet letters are appearing in their art or writing, alphabet books can become favorites
   1. Teachers notice that a first interest in alphabet letters often appears when the child sees her printed name and then notices similar letters in friend’s names

iv. Ideas for ways to build alphabet books into further classroom activities:
   1. Paint on a giant alphabet letter shape
   2. Hide an alphabet letter in a large drawing and have children search for it
   3. Make a class alphabet book by outlining large alphabet letters on pages and encouraging interested individual children to decorate a letter
   4. Create a “Who looked at this book today?” chart
      a. Add children’s names to the chart if they browsed the book

XII. Planning a Program for Print Awareness and Printing Skill
a. Program planning is often done on an individual basis, but standards have been initiated and used as a basis for program planning in an increasing number of child development centers
   i. If group instruction is planned, it deals with general background information concerning print use during the school day and how it relates to children’s lives, including print use in the home and community

b. A great deal of spontaneous and incidental teaching takes place
   i. Teachers capitalize on children’s questions concerning mail, packages, signs, and labels
   ii. In most preschool settings, print is a natural part of living, and it has many interesting features that children can discover and notice when teachers focus attention on print

c. Most teachers realize that children will explore graphic symbols on their own, often inventing as they go and constructing and revising understandings as they proceed.
   i. A supportive classroom environment that allows children to design their own route to further knowledge about print
      1. It is critical for children to have a literacy-rich, risk-free environment that includes time to invent, to play, and to experiment with written language for meaningful
purposes in an authentic context while interacting with knowledgeable others
2. Such experiences allow children to work through questions and perplexities, and to build conceptualizations and understandings in ways meaningful to them
   a. As children compare their inventions with the written language around them, particularly their names, they deepen their understandings of the complexities of our written language system
d. A discussion is necessary here concerning the practice of asking the child to form alphabet letters and practice letter forms
   i. Multiple dangers in planning an individual or group experience of this nature
   ii. One has to consider whether a child has the physical and mental capacity to be successful and whether the child has an interest in doing the exercise or is simply trying to please adults
e. Logical progression in learning about letters is to first learn letter names and then learn letter shapes
   i. Child then has a solid mnemonic peg to which the percept of the letter can be connected as it is built
   ii. Activities such as singing the alphabet song, reading alphabet books, and playing with alphabet magnets or puzzles help preschoolers learn letters
   iii. Uppercase letters are larger and research suggests the easiest form for preschoolers
f. Parents often offer only uppercase letters when asked by their child to print
   i. Before learning to read, a child will need to know both forms
   ii. Preschools often present “big” and “little” together in the school’s visual environment
   iii. It is the uppercase letters that most children recognize when they enter kindergarten and preschool and kindergarten teachers print children’s names with an uppercase first letter followed by lowercase letters in printscript
g. Teachers encourage children to print ("write") their own names on their artwork when they believe children have an interest in printing
   i. Any child attempt is recognized and given attention
   ii. These teachers may also say, “May I write your name on the back? With two names, one on the front and one on the back, we will find your work quickly when it’s time to leave school.”
   iii. Teachers print names on the upper left corner of the children’s work because that is the spot reading starts on any given page written in English
h. Early writing instruction is not a new idea
i. Maria Montessori, a well-known educator and designer of teaching materials, and numerous other teachers have offered instruction in writing (or printing) to preschoolers.

ii. Montessori encouraged the child’s tracing of letter forms using the first two fingers of the hand as a prewriting exercise
   1. Observed that this type of light touching seemed to help youngsters when writing tools were later given to them
   2. Designed special alphabet letter cutouts as one of a number of prewriting aids, which were thought to help exercise and develop small muscles and create sight-touch sensations, fixing the forms in memory.

iii. In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England, a gingerbread method of teaching alphabet letters was developed
   1. As a child correctly named a letter-shaped cookie or a word formed by cookies, she was allowed to eat it (or them).

i. Author recommends print activity planning that concentrates on awareness of print and its uses in everyday life plus helpful teacher interaction and encouragement given to children who show more than a passing interest
   i. When a child asks for information concerning print or asks to be shown how to print, she is displaying interest and following her own curriculum.

j. How to make the ABCs developmentally appropriate
   i. When a print-rich classroom environment includes books, charts, labels, printed children’s names, and other functional daily use of print in the classroom’s daily activities, children are bound to see alphabet letters as a natural part of their world and develop curiosity about them.

ii. Teachers examine activities and take advantage of teachable moments
   1. Educators realize alphabet knowledge prompts phonemic awareness
   2. Teachers promote children’s fluency in naming alphabet letters
   3. Fluency can be defined as speed and accuracy
   4. Children fluent in alphabet letter names can recognize and correctly name alphabet letters without hesitation, thereby indicating that letter names have been well learned.

iii. Introduction of alphabet books is probably the most common and professionally acceptable vehicle for teaching letter names, followed only by the alphabet song
   1. Alphabet activities can be enjoyable and game-like or can be a natural outgrowth of daily schedules and happenings.
iv. Alphabet-related activities include:
   1. Name of the Day
   2. Alphabet Letter Sorting Game
   3. Alphabet Chart Game

v. Designing Game Activities
   1. When designing games, remember that in developmentally appropriate games:
      a. Everyone gets a turn
      b. Clear directions (rules) are introduced
      c. Everyone wins
      d. Competition is inappropriate
      e. Cooperation is promoted
      f. Praise or prizes are omitted
      g. Musical games are enjoyed
      h. Movement games are wiggle reducers if they end on a cooling down note
      i. Every child who wants to play is included
      j. Game parts or visuals are sturdy
      k. Frustrating game elements should not be included

   2. Remember also that these games are meant to promote listening skills and problem solving
      a. Recommended that alphabet letters be introduced
      b. Most early childhood program staffs specifically designate exactly which letter form they will offer first and affirm alphabet letters named by children in either uppercase or lowercase
      c. Teaching the sounds of alphabet letters is an instructional decision based on children’s age, interest, and ability
      d. Schools decide if it is developmentally appropriate and whether it is done only on a one-to-one basis

XIII. Environment and Materials
   a. Children’s access to drawing tools is important so that children can make their own marks
      i. Suggested that teachers create a place where children can comfortably use these tools
      ii. Early childhood materials that help the child use and gain control of small arm and finger muscles in preparation for writing:
         1. Puzzles
         2. Pegboards
         3. Small blocks
         4. Construction toys
         5. Scissors
         6. Eyedroppers
b. Most schools plan activities in which the child puts together, arranges, or manipulates small pieces
   i. Sometimes called tabletop activities and are available for play throughout the day
   ii. Teacher can encourage the use of table-top activities by having the pieces arranged invitingly on tables or resting on adjacent shelves

c. Examples of materials common in print-immersion classrooms:
   i. Labels—pictures or photographs accompanied by corresponding words
   ii. Charts and lists—charts that convey directions, serve as learning resources (pictures and names of children in alphabetical order), organize the class (attendance roster or class calendar), show written language as a reminder (children sign-up lists)
   iii. Materials and activities—various materials, including alphabet toys, puzzles, stamps, magnetic letters, and games, along with clever teacher-made materials or commercial furnishings, such as blocks, stuffed alphabet-shaped pillows, alphabet rugs, and wall hangings
   iv. Books and other resources—a variety of books and magazines, poetry, newspapers, computer software, picture dictionaries, riddle and novelty books, and other printed material

d. Early childhood centers create rooms that are full of symbols, letters, and numbers in clear view of the child
   i. Room print should reflect teacher and child interests
   ii. Many toys have circles, squares, triangles, alphabet letters, and other common shapes

e. Recommended symbol size for preschool playroom display is at least 2 to 2 1/2 inches in height or larger

f. Labeling
   i. Labeling activities revolve around the purpose and function of labels and signs in daily life
   ii. In a classroom, many needs usually exist
      1. A “Park bikes here” sign alerts bike riders to the proper storage area and may prevent yard accidents and be useful for a child looking for an available bike
   iii. A labeling activity initiated by a teacher to introduce the need for road signs and environmental signs can lead to an activity in which children decide the appropriate wording

   iv. Common classroom labeling includes:
      1. Artwork
      2. Name tags
      3. Lockers and storage areas
      4. Belongings
5. Common objects in the room, such as scissors, paper, crayons, fishbowl, chair, water, door, window, sink
6. School areas, such as block, library or reading center, playhouse, art center, science center
7. Place cards for snacks
g. Display areas
   i. Display areas often include the following.
      1. Magazine pictures with captions
      2. Current interest displays
      3. Bulletin boards and wall displays with words
      4. Wall alphabet guides (Aa Bb . . .)
      5. Charts
      6. Child’s work with explanations, such as “Josh’s block tower” or “Penny’s clay pancakes”
      7. Folding table accordian
      8. Signs for child activities
h. Message-sending aids
   i. Classroom mailboxes, suggestion boxes, and message boards are motivational and useful
   ii. Writing short notes to children piques an interest about what is said
   iii. Large-sized stick-on notes are great for this purpose and can be attached to mirrors, plates, toys, and so on
i. Teacher-made materials, games, and toys
   i. Brightly colored alphabet letters from felt, cardboard, sandpaper, leather, plastic
   ii. Games with letters, numbers, or symbols alphabet cards games with names and words
   iii. Greeting cards
   iv. Hats or badges with words
j. Writing centers
   i. Writing centers are planned, teacher-stocked areas where printing is promoted
      1. A writing center can be a separate area of a room, or it can exist within a language arts center
      2. Child comfort and proper lighting are essential, along with minimized distractions
      3. Often, dividers or screens are used to reduce outside noise and activity
      4. Supplies and storage areas are provided at children’s fingertips so that children can help themselves
      5. Teacher displays or bulletin board areas that motivate printing can be close by
      6. If water-based marking pens are provided, pens with distinct bright colors are preferred
ii. Through dialogue and exploration at a writing table or center, children are able to construct new ideas concerning print and meaning in a supportive mini-social setting

iii. There should be a variety of paper and writing tools
   1. Printing stamps and printing ink blocks, a hole punch, and brads are desirable
   2. Old forms, catalogs, calendars, and computer paper may be inviting
   3. Scratch paper (one side already used) or lined paper and crayons placed side-by-side invite use
   4. Most local businesses or offices throw away enough scratch paper to supply a preschool center

iv. Colored or white chalk has an appeal of its own and can be used on paper, chalkboards, or cement
   1. For variety, use oil pastels, which have bright colors or soft-lead pencils on paper
   2. Most schools install a child-high chalkboard
      a. Table chalkboards are made quickly by using chalkboard paint obtained at hardware or paint stores and scrap wood pieces
   3. Easels, unused wall areas, and backs of furniture can be made into chalkboards

v. Primary print typewriters and computers capture interest
   1. Shape books with blank pages and words to copy and trace appeal to some children, as do large rub-on letters or alphabet letter stickers (these can be made by teachers from press-on labels)
   2. Magnetic boards and magnetized letter sets are commonly mentioned as the favorite toy of children interested in alphabet letters and forming words

vi. Letters, words, and displays are placed for viewing on bulletin boards at children’s eye level
   1. Displays in writing centers often motivate and promote print

XIV. First School Alphabets
   a. Parents may have taught their children to print with all capitals
      i. Early childhood centers help introduce the interested child to the letter forms that are used in the first grades of elementary school
   b. In kindergarten or first grade, printing is done in printscript, sometimes called manuscript printing or in a form called D’Nealian print
      i. Centers should obtain guides from a local elementary school, because letter forms can vary from community to community
   c. Teachers need to be familiar with printscript (or any other form used locally)
      i. Easier for a child to learn the right way than to be retrained later
ii. All printing seen by young children in a preschool should be either printscript, using both uppercase and lowercase letters, or D’Nealian style

iii. Names, bulletin boards, and labels made by teachers should model correct forms

iv. Printscript letters are formed with straight lines, circles, and parts of circles

d. The D’Nealian form, developed by teacher-principal Donald Neal Thurber and introduced in 1978, has grown in acceptance

i. Popularity stems in part from its slant and continuous stroke features, which provide an easy transition to slant and stroke used in cursive writing introduced to children after second grade

ii. Thurber notes that it takes 58 strokes to print the circle-stick alphabet but it only takes 31 strokes to print the same in D’Nealian

e. Numbers in printed form are called numerals

i. Children may have used toys with numerals, such as block sets

ii. Young children will probably hold up fingers to indicate their ages or to tell you they can count

   1. They may start making number symbols before showing an interest in alphabet letters

   2. Numeral forms are also available from elementary schools

   3. The numeral forms in one geographical area may also be slightly different from those of another town, city, or state

XV. Beginning Attempts

a. In beginning attempts to write, children commonly grasp writing tools tightly and press down hard enough to tear the paper

   i. With time and the mastery of small muscles, children’s tense, unschooled muscles relax and forms and shapes start to resemble alphabet forms and recognizable shapes

   ii. Deep concentration and effort are observed

   iii. All attempts are recognized and appreciated by early childhood teachers as signs of the children’s growing interest and ability

b. Orthographic awareness is the ability to notice and use critical features of the graphic symbols in written language

   i. Children learn what makes a letter unique and that these features are often very finely drawn

   ii. Visual difference between the alphabet letters n and m, or n and h are subtle, but many preschoolers have no difficulty

   iii. Educators realize that each child’s knowledge is a very personal matter, with children finding their own ways of weaving understanding around a letter to help them remember it and reproduce it

XVI. Planned Activities—Basic Understandings
a. Most planned activities in this language arts area, and most unplanned child-adult exchanges during the school day, involve basic understandings
   i. Rules exist in this graphic art as they do in speech
      1. Children form ideas about these rules
b. Print concerns the use of graphic symbols that represent sounds and sound combinations
   i. Symbols combine and form words and sentences in a prescribed grammatical order
   ii. Alphabet letters are spaced and are in upper-case and lowercase form
      1. They are written and read from left to right across a page
      2. Margins exist at beginnings and ends of lines, and lines go from the top to bottom of pages
      3. Punctuation marks end sentences, and indentations separate paragraphs

XVII. Daily Interactions and Techniques
a. The teacher uses a natural conversational style rather than a formal teaching tone
b. Putting the children’s names on their work is the most common daily use of printscript
   i. Teacher asks the children whether they want their names on their work
   ii. Many young children feel their creations are their very own and may not want a name added
   iii. When a paper is lost because it has no name on it, children see the advantage of printing a name on belongings
c. All names are printed in the upper left corner of the paper, if possible, or on the back if child requests
   i. Trains the children to look at this spot as a preparation for reading and writing
   ii. Children’s comments about their work can be jotted down at the bottom or on the back of their papers
      1. Teacher can be prepared to do this by having a dark crayon or felt-tip pen in a handy place or pocket
      2. Dictation is written without major teacher editing or suggestions concerning the way it is said
      3. Teacher can tell the child that the teacher will be writing down the child’s ideas and then follow the child’s word order as closely as possible
      4. Some teachers prefer to print the statement, “Chou dictated these words to Mrs. Brownell on May 2, 2008,” before or after the child’s message
      5. Most teachers would print the child’s “mouses went in hole” as “mice went in the hole,” which is minor editing
6. All child-dictated printing should be in printscript, using both uppercase and lowercase letters and proper punctuation
d. When a child asks a teacher to print, the teacher stands behind the child and works over the child’s shoulder (when possible)
   i. Allows the child to see the letters being formed in the correct position
      1. If the teacher faces the child while printing, the child sees the letters upside down
   ii. Some teachers say the letter names as they print them
e. Letters or names written for the child should be large enough for the child to distinguish the different forms (more than 1 inch high)
   i. May seem large to an adult
f. Some schools encourage teachers to print examples on lined paper if a child says, “Make an a.” or “Write my name.”
   i. Others suggest that teachers blend letter sounds as they print words
   ii. Many centers expect teachers to respond to the child’s request through conversation and by searching for letters on alphabet charts
      1. Encourages the child to make her own copy before the teacher automatically prints it
g. Teacher techniques often depend on the circumstances of a particular situation and knowledge of the individual child
   i. One technique common to all centers is supportive assistance and voiced appreciation of children’s efforts
   ii. Teachers can rejoice with a young child over approximations of intent in writing, just as we do with a toddler who makes an imprecise attempt to say a new word
h. Children may show their printing attempts to the teacher or point out the names of letters they know
   i. Positive statement to the child is appropriate
      1. With these comments, the teacher encourages and recognizes the child’s efforts
   ii. Often, the child may have the wrong name or form for a letter
      1. Teacher can react by saying, “It looks like an alphabet letter. Let’s go look at our wall alphabet and see which one” or may simply say, “Look. You made a w.”
   i. Encourage, welcome, and keep interest in print alive by providing attention
      i. Children have many years ahead to perfect their skill
      ii. Most important thing at this early stage is that they are interested in the forms and are supplied with correct models and encouragement
j. One technique is to have children who ask for letter forms trace over correct letter models or symbols
i. Can be done with crayons, felt-tip pens, or other writing tools
ii. To explain the meaning of the word trace, the teacher gives the child a demonstration

k. When reading charts or books to children, a teacher may move her hand across the page beneath words
i. Done to emphasize the left-to-right direction in reading and writing and separations between words
ii. Introducing authors’ names periodically helps children realize that they also can create stories, and what they create can be written

XVIII. Environmental Print in Daily Life

a. A teacher of young children makes connections between print and daily classroom happenings
i. Not difficult, but it does require teacher recognition and purposeful action
ii. Print can be noticed starting with children’s names and print on clothing, shoes, food, toys, and almost every object in the classroom, including light switches and faucet handles
iii. Print is part of classroom life.

b. Children need to learn what print can do for them in satisfying personal needs
i. Makes print real
ii. Children become aware of print by using it for real and meaningful purposes when they dictate and write stories, make signs for the block area, read names on a job chart, write messages, look for EXIT signs, follow recipes, have conversations and discussions, or listen to stories.”
iii. Children may need teacher assistance in recognizing the usefulness of written messages
iv. Many instances of sending or reading print messages are possible during a school day

c. Teachers look for functional activities such as:
   i. Making necessary lists of children’s names with children.
   ii. Making holiday or special occasion cards
   iii. Making group murals and labeling parts at a later date
   iv. Writing what-we-found-out activities
      1. Can be done with many discovery experiences
   v. Classifying experiences
   vi. Sharing the lunch or snack menu by discussing printed words on a chart or chalkboard
   vii. Making classroom news announcements on a large sheet of paper posted at children’s eye level
   viii. Creating a large-sized classroom journal that will allow the teacher a daily or weekly opportunity to model writing with a class-dictated sentence
1. Teacher can also talk about how she is doing her writing aloud while using a large sheet of paper
2. First step would be a joint discussion concerning what is to be written
   a. Teacher can then think aloud as she writes leveling her comments to the children’s ability
   b. Depending on the class and its ability, the teacher may not ‘think aloud’ about the sounds of the letters, but as journaling progresses she may choose to do so depending on the philosophy of the program
3. Teachers using journaling must know how each alphabet letter is to be formed
4. Daily sheets can be bound with large metal rings making a class big book
   a. Child art is often attached to the blank area under the sentence
   b. Large sheets are used to large teacher print is easily observed by a group of children

ix. Using children’s name

XIX. Writing Table or Area
   a. Many classrooms include a writing table or area for children’s daily free-choice exploration
      i. Stocked with different paper types, a variety of writing instruments, alphabet letter stencils, letter stamps, and letter model displays, this type of setup makes daily access available and inviting
      ii. Just providing a writing center is not enough
         1. Teachers need to be in it daily, as motivators and resources
      iii. Some writing areas have considerable use
         1. In other classrooms, teachers spend little or no time there
         2. Whether a writing center appeals to children, grabs children's attention, and is child-functional depends on the ingenuity of teachers
   b. Respecting “I'll do it my way!"
      i. Recognizing that children need time as well as opportunity, teachers notice individual children involve themselves in classroom literacy events based on their maturity and interest
      ii. When a child senses a reason and develops a personal interest in writing or reading, she acts on her own timetable
         1. Seems to exist at this point a desire to do something the child’s own way, retaining ownership for early literacy behaviors
            a. Child who examines a classroom alphabet chart and then copies letter forms may choose to share
her marks with other children and avoid the teacher
b. Another child the same age may prefer to consult
the teacher
c. Other children may ask, “What’s this say?” or
“What’s this called?”

2. In all situations, teachers aim to preserve and promote
each child’s idea of competency as a writer or reader

XX. Left-Handed Children
a. Left-handedness or right-handedness occurs as the child’s nervous
system matures
   i. Preschool teachers notice hand preferences when children use
writing tools
   ii. Some children seem to switch between hands as though hand
preference has not been established
   iii. Most left-handers use their right hands more often than right-
handers use their left hands
   iv. Writing surfaces in preschools should accommodate all children,
and both right-handed and left-handed scissors should be
available
b. Teachers should accept hand preference without attempting to change
or even point out a natural choice
   i. Seating left-handed children at the ends of tables (when
possible) during activities or making sure left-handers are not
crowded against right-handers is a prudent course of action

XXI. Lined Paper
a. Some children acquire the necessary motor control and can use lined,
printed paper, so some programs provide it
b. Lines can easily be drawn on a chalkboard by the teacher
   i. Provides a large working surface and an opportunity for children
to make large-size letters

XXII. Chart Ideas
a. Printscript can be added to playrooms by posting charts that have
been made by the teacher
   i. Charts can be designed to encourage the child’s active
involvement
   ii. Pockets, parts that move, or pieces that can be added or
removed add extra interest
   iii. Charts made on heavy chart board or cardboard last longer
      1. Clear contact paper can be used to seal the surface
   iv. Some ideas for charts include:
      1. Experience charts
      2. Color or number charts
      3. Large clock with movable hands
      4. Chart showing the four seasons
      5. Picture story sequence charts
6. Calendars  
7. Room task charts (“helpers chart”)  
8. Texture charts (for children to feel)  
9. Poetry charts  
10. Recipe charts using step-by-step illustrations  
11. Classification or matching-concepts charts  
12. Birthday charts  
13. Height and weight charts  
14. Alphabet charts  
15. Rebus charts  

b. Many teachers make “key word” charts  
i. Key words can be words inspired by a picture-book title, character, and so forth  
ii. The chosen word is printed by the teacher at the top of a chart, and then the teacher asks a small group some leading question  
iii. Children’s offered answers are put below the key word on the chart  
iv. This activity suits some older four-year-olds, especially those asking, “What does this say?” while pointing to text  

c. Charts of songs or rhymes in the native languages of attending children have been used successfully in many classrooms  
i. Parent volunteer translators are often pleased to help put new or favorite classics into their native tongue  

d. A technique adopted in many schools involves using a color-code system when recording individual child contributions to a group dictated chart  
i. Enables a child to return to the chart and find his comments  

e. Easy to see that placing pictures alongside print makes the task of choosing easier  
i. Simple pictures are drawn by the teacher  
ii. Best charts relate to classroom themes or happenings  
f. In making a chart, first draw sketches of the way words and pictures could be arranged  
i. With a yardstick, lightly draw on guidelines with a pencil or use a chart liner  
ii. Next, add printscript words with a felt-tip pen or dark crayon  
1. Magazines, old elementary school workbooks, old children’s books, and photographs are good sources for pictures on charts  
2. Brads or paper fasteners can be used for movable parts  
3. Book pockets or heavy envelopes provide a storage place for items to be added later to the chart  

XXIII. Experience Charts and Stories  
a. Purpose is to have children recognize that spoken words can be put in written form
i. Most centers keep large chart-making paper and felt tip markers or thick black crayons in stock for chart making

b. After an interesting activity, such as a field trip, visit by a special speaker, party, celebration, or cooking experience, the teacher can suggest that a story be written about the experience
   i. Large sheet of paper or chart sheet is hung within the children’s view, and the children dictate what happened
   ii. Teacher prints on the sheet, helping children sort out what happened first, next, and last

c. Chart stands
   i. Homemade chart stands can be made by teachers
   ii. Commercial chart holders, chart stands, chart rings, and wing clamps are sold at school-supply stores
   iii. Teachers using charts daily will attest to preferring commercially manufactured chart stands because of their mobility and stability

d. Letter patterns
   i. Commercially made letter patterns or teacher-made sets are useful devices that can be traced for teacher use in game making or for wall displays
      1. Made of sturdy card stock or oak tag paper
      2. Can be quickly and easily traced

XXIV. Chart Books
   a. A number of books called chart books, big books, or easel books are in print.
      i. These giant books are poster size and easily capture children’s attention
      ii. Print stands out and cannot be missed
      iii. Creative teachers have produced their own versions with the help of overhead projectors that enlarge smaller artwork
         1. Chart paper or poster board is used

XXV. Generating Story Sentences
   a. Story sentence activities are similar to chart activities
      i. Child or a small group of children becomes an author
      ii. After a classroom activity or experience, the teacher encourages generating a story (a written sentence)
         1. Activity is child-centered thereafter, with the teacher printing what the child or group suggests
         2. Teacher can use a hand-wide space between words to emphasize the end of one word and spacing between words, and may talk about letters or letter sounds found at the beginning or end of children’s names.
         3. Not unusual for all children in a four-year-old group to recognize all the names of other students in their class. Individual children’s ideas and contributions are accepted, appreciated, and recognized by the teacher,
and generated sentences are read and reread with the group

4. Long strips of chart paper or rolled paper can be used
5. Story sentences are posted at children’s eye level

b. Interactive and scaffolded writing
   i. Interactive, or shared, writing times take place in many kindergartens and first-grade classrooms
   ii. Kindergarten strategy is receiving an increased amount of use and attention from educators
      1. Educators define interactive writing as an instructional context in which a teacher shares a pen—literally and figuratively—with a group of children as they collaboratively compose and construct a written message
      2. Children participate in every element of the writing process—deciding on a topic, thinking about the general scope and form of the writing, determining the specific text to write, and writing it word by word, letter by letter
      3. Rereading, revising, and proofreading take place during and after the experience and usually lead to a child’s (or children’s) reading words, phrases, sentences, and the whole of what has been written
   iii. Using the interactive writing process, a teacher focuses attention on letter sounds, names, forms, left-to-right and top-to-bottom progression, spaces between words, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
      1. Researchers believe interactive writing is an instructional strategy that works well for children of all linguistic backgrounds
   iv. Looking at a skilled kindergarten or first-grade child composing and constructing a message, one finds the child must:
      1. Think about and keep in mind the message
      2. Choose a first word
      3. Decide where to place it on the paper
      4. Consider what alphabet letter she knows makes the wanted sound
      5. Remember how the letter is formed
      6. Manually form it
      7. Decide if there are other sounds and other letters needed
      8. Know when the word ends
      9. Know a space is needed before the next word
   v. Immediately, an early childhood educator can see foundational understandings concerning writing must have been well learned
  vi. Teachers who work with a child one-on-one might define scaffolded writing as a process that involves supportive teacher assistance that enables a child to do what he can’t do by
himself, but may be able to do if parts of the writing task are gradually handed over to the child

vii. Bennett-Armistead et al. suggest scaffolded writing consists of the following steps:

1. Ask the child the message he would like to write
   a. He may say something like “I played with my friend Matt yesterday.”

2. Repeat this message to the child

3. Draw one line for each word using a highlighter or ball point pen
   a. Have the child write one “word” per line at the level that is most comfortable for the child

4. Read and reread the message together as necessary, as he writes, to help him remember the whole message

XXVI. Parent Communication

a. A conversation with or note to the parents of a child who has asked about or started printing can include the following:
   i. Teacher has noticed the child’s interest in printing alphabet letters, numerals, and/or words
   ii. Teacher is including a printscript and numeral guide for parents who wish to show their children the letter forms at home
   iii. Early childhood center encourages printing attempts but does not try to teach printscript to every child
      1. Many children are not interested, and others would find it too difficult at their present developmental level
   iv. Parent can help by having paper and writing tools for the child at home and by noticing and giving attention to the child when she comes to the parent with written letters
   v. Children who start printing early often write letters and numerals in their paintings
      1. Printing may be backward, upside down, or sideways; this is to be expected
      2. Many parents worry unnecessarily when this is noticed

b. Parents also may need an explanation concerning child-dictated papers or child printing, which teachers accept rather than edit or correct

c. Centers plan parent meetings for joint discussion of the appropriateness of printing instruction during preschool years
   i. If the center’s position is clear, staff members will be able to give articulate answers concerning the center’s programming
   ii. Most parents are responsive when teachers explain to them that early child dictation is written with only minor editing, respecting early attempts
      1. As children become more skilled, more teacher corrective help is offered
iii. Assurance teachers give parents that they will provide both basic experiences and opportunities on an individual basis most often satisfies the parents' need to know that the school cares about each child's progress.