Chapter 17 Notes

I. Introduction
   a. Was once thought that there was a magic age when all children became ready for "sit-down" reading instruction
      i. Now believed that early childhood teachers at every level must be considered teachers of reading, even if they do not offer formal reading instruction
      ii. Teachers of young children need to be actively engaged in providing experiences that will build children’s language and eventually lead children to become readers
         1. Experiences are deemed appropriate if they match the individual child’s level of language development and promote new competence in oral and written language
         2. When children learn to read, they use what they know about oral language to comprehend written language
   b. Age-appropriate activities that promote early literacy and prepare children for the discovery of reading include those that involve:
      i. Understanding oral language
      ii. Awareness of print
      iii. Intimate experiences with picture books
      iv. Dramatization
      v. Listening
      vi. Musical activities
      vii. Diverse kinds of language arts
   c. A strong literacy (language arts) curriculum is thought to be tremendously valuable but in itself not enough
      i. Neuman and Roskos state that reading achievement in the earliest years may look like it's just about letters and sounds – but it’s not
         1. Successful reading consists of knowing a relatively small store of unconscious procedural skills, accompanied by a massive and slowly built-up store of conscious content knowledge
            a. It is knowledge and the disposition to want to learn more that encourages children to question, discover, evaluate, and invent new ideas and that enables them to become successful readers
   d. Clear from research that the process of learning to read is a lengthy one that begins very early in life
      i. A lot of teacher effort during preschool years involves setting up young children to learn to read with ease
      ii. Many experts have discussed children’s disposition to read, stating that this disposition can be defined as:
         1. A desire
         2. A positive attitude toward the act of reading
3. A feeling that reading is worthwhile, enjoyable, and fun
   iii. Adams’ definition includes the knowledge that one can find
   helpful or important information if one can read

e. There is now empirical evidence that differences in pre-literacy
   experiences are associated with varied levels of reading achievement
   during the early years of elementary school
   i. Children who begin school with few experiences in and less
      knowledge about literacy are unable to acquire the prerequisites
      quickly enough to keep up with formal reading instruction in the
      first grade

f. Preschoolers who are given training in phonological awareness evince
   significant acceleration in their later acquisition of reading
   i. Pre-readers’ letter knowledge was found to be the single best
      predictor of first-year reading achievement, with the ability to
      discriminate phonemes ranking a close second
   ii. Strickland believes a child’s ability to write his own name is also
      a predictive characteristic
   iii. Children who will probably need additional support for early
      language and literacy development should receive it as early as
      possible
   iv. Preschool practitioners should be alert for signs that children
      are having difficulties

g. Children who may need special help
   i. Research has identified characteristics of children who are likely
      to begin school less prepared:
      1. Living in low-income families or poor neighborhoods
      2. Having limited English proficiency
      3. Being slated to attend an elementary school where
         reading achievement is chronically low
      4. Speaking a dialect of English that differs substantially
         from one used in schools
      5. Having specific cognitive deficiencies, hearing
         impairments, and early language impairments
      6. Having parents who have a history of reading problems
   ii. Preschool educators are increasingly involved in individual state
      efforts to increase children’s present and future ability to learn to
      read with ease
      1. Have been identified as instrumental and important
         contributors to their elementary school educators’ efforts
         to increase child success
   iii. Early childhood educators are looking closely at what their
      individual language arts curricula contain and how to provide
      supportive assistance for those individual children and individual
      families they assume to be at risk
   iv. Research-derived indicators for potential problems include:
1. In infancy or during the preschool period, significant delays in expressive language, receptive vocabulary, or intellectual capacity (IQ)
2. At kindergarten or elementary school entry, delays in a combination of abilities, including:
   a. Letter identification
   b. Understanding of the functions of print
   c. Verbal memory for stories and sentences
   d. Phonological awareness
   e. Lexical skills such as naming vocabulary
   f. Receptive language skills in the areas of syntax and morphology
   g. Expressive language
   h. Overall language development
v. Prior experiences necessary for young children to acquire reading skill:
   1. Children have had experiences in early childhood that fostered motivation and provided exposure to literacy in use
   2. Children get information about the nature of print through opportunities to learn letters and to recognize the internal structure of spoken words
   3. Children get explanations about the contrasting nature of spoken and written language
vi. Optimal environments in preschool and kindergarten require teachers who are well prepared and highly knowledgeable and who receive ongoing administrative support
   1. Forms of support can include in-service training, financial aid, tutoring or mentoring, administrative participation and communication, and other assistance

II. Reading
a. The language arts approach and whole-language approach to reading consider reading as one part of the communication process
   i. Language arts are interrelated instead of separate, isolated skills
   ii. Teacher is responsible for showing the relationship between the various areas of language arts
      1. Goal is to help children understand that communication is a whole process in which speaking, listening, using written symbols, and reading those symbols are closely connected
b. In the past, the logical connection between listening, speaking, using written words, and reading was overlooked
   i. Subjects were often taught as separate skills, and the natural connection between each area was not clear to children
ii. In language arts, whole-language, or natural approach, the connection (the way these areas fit together) is emphasized

c. Preschool teacher realizes that certain skills and abilities appear in children before others, as well as appearing concurrently
i. One researcher studied the literacy development of a group of four- and five-year-old children exposed to prenatal maternal drug use
   1. Believes the children’s literacy development was appropriate and similar to unexposed four- and five-year-old children

d. Early learning experiences in listening and speaking serve as a foundation for further language and communication
i. Children’s beginning ideas about print, writing, and reading form concurrently, and children may display understanding and skill in all of these areas

e. Activities with young children can move easily from listening, speaking, seeing, or using printscript to beginning reading attempts: from passive to active participation
i. Many preschool youngsters are able to read most of the names of the children in their group after being exposed to the daily use of name tags

f. Past and current thinking concerning early reading instruction
i. The National Reading Panel Report and the Elementary Education Act deal with ways to improve early literacy instruction and prepare young preschool children for school success
   1. Suggests that instruction in early literacy needs to be organized and systematic and identifies areas on which to concentrate during instruction:
      a. Phonemic awareness
      b. Phonics
      c. Comprehension
      d. Vocabulary
      e. Fluency
   2. Also highlights the importance of qualified teachers in developing successful readers

ii. Early childhood educators have increased recognition that young children, especially disadvantaged ones, often need concentrated instructional support
   1. These children should learn important skills and strategies that they would have difficulty discovering on their own
   2. Teachers are doing more assessment and documentation to help them identify children’s individual needs and progress
a. Their efforts include attention to guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice and standards
b. They are planning a full and well-balanced early childhood language arts curriculum

iii. Why is phonemic awareness mentioned so frequently in early childhood literacy readings and in center’s program goals?
   1. Because at the beginning of kindergarten it is one of the two best predictors of how well children will learn to read during their first 2 years of school
   2. Involves how children learn to read and write words and the unique structure of the English writing system

iv. Ehri states that:
   1. To remember how to decode new words, beginners must know how to blend phonemes
   2. To remember how to read individual words, beginners must be able to segment words into phonemes that match up to graphemes and phonemes and store them in memory

v. Professional literature urges preschool teachers to use an integrated approach to language arts
   1. Concerns over national literacy and children’s reading success have promoted study and discussion
   2. Many state legislatures have passed new child literacy laws reacting to the enactment of the Federal Reading Excellence Act
   3. Most experts recommend a literature-based program for both elementary school and preschool. Ideal classrooms are described as “language rich” or “literacy developing”
      a. Key ideas presently stress instruction offered in meaningful contexts with children developing strategies to achieve skills they view as useful to them

vi. Many researchers agree that early school experiences play a crucial role in the child’s future literacy development
   1. Believe teachers should explore effective ways to facilitate language learning by involving children in authentic language uses

vii. There is thought to be both older and contemporary literature and language-related activities that have depth, meaning, and linguistic charm
   1. Meaning and comprehension are aided by discussion and familiarity and can be guided by sensitive teachers who also monitor the appropriateness of what is offered

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i. Some families may hold the mistaken idea that their child will have an educational advantage if he receives formal reading instruction in preschool

   1. Early childhood educators can explain that foundational literacy experiences and activities are a standard part of a quality preschool curriculum and that individual growth activities are planned for each child based on his developing capabilities.

   2. There have been instances of young children reading before kindergarten, and some parents and educators still promote formal, sit-down instruction with three- and four-year-olds.

      a. Cullinan attempted to stem this practice and explained that a major fallacy in basing programs on early reading studies is that children who learned to read early did not do so from exposure to formal reading instruction.

         i. Goes on to state that findings show that children who learned to read early were the ones who:

            1. Were read to
            2. Showed interest in paper and pencil activities
            3. Were interested in visual distinctions in signs and labels

      b. Children who learned to read while quite young did so by discovering decoding in responsive, literacy-enriched family situations.

ii. Most early childhood experts and educators fear that concentrating on early reading-skill instruction may reduce time for play and take away symbolic enrichment time.

   1. Play provides the interaction of imagery, imitation, and language, which builds a foundation necessary for learning to read.

iii. Researchers have yet to find that early reading instruction is advantageous or better than later instruction.

   1. Starting formal academics too early may actually do more harm than good.

   2. Some educators point out that formal reading instruction in Denmark, where illiteracy rates are very low, is delayed until age seven.

   3. Studies show that children who are pushed to read early may not be such avid readers when they’re older, while their classmates who started slower may read often and spontaneously.

   h. Standards, benchmarks, and behaviors.
i. Based on work sponsored wholly, or in part, by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), a publication titled *A Framework for Early Literacy Instruction: Aligning Standards to Developmental Accomplishments and Student Behaviors: Pre-K through Kindergarten* is available
1. A standard is defined in the publication as a general statement that represents information, skills, or both that a child (student) should understand or be able to do by the end of their pre-K school experience
2. A benchmark is defined as a subcomponent of a standard

ii. The authors state that their publication was not intended as an assessment checklist and that curriculum should not be “dumbed-down” versions of higher-grade benchmarks

iii. Supporting knowledge listings in reading and writing standards will be of particular interest to early childhood educators and provide clarity as to the purposes of their planned activities and daily interactions
1. Preschool teachers will be more able to recognize emerging preschool behaviors after studying the document in total

iv. In examining supporting knowledge sections of the publication, early childhood educators may be able to more effectively examine their language arts curriculum, their teaching behaviors, and their daily interactions

v. Most states have developed state reading standards for public school instruction that are available from state departments of education

i. Standards for reading teacher preparation

i. *Standards for Reading Professionals*, developed by the professional standards and ethics committee of the International Reading Association (IRA), is a reference used by community colleges, college and university faculties, and state departments of education
1. Designed to guide the development of elementary school teacher preparation programs and the evaluation of teacher candidates and their training programs through the use of identified candidate performance-based assessment
2. Standards recognize five categories of professionals:
   a. Paraprofessional (2-year degree with specific course work)
   b. Classroom teacher
   c. Reading specialist/literacy coach
   d. Teacher educator
   e. Administrator
ii. Newly graduated reading professionals must demonstrate they can meet the needs of all students and that they possess the following capabilities or attitudes:

1. Candidates have knowledge of the foundations of reading and writing processes and instruction
2. Candidates use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, methods, and curriculum materials to support reading and writing
3. Candidates use a variety of assessment tools and practices to plan and evaluate effective reading instruction
4. Candidates create a literate environment that fosters reading and writing by integrating foundational knowledge, use of instructional practice, approaches and methods, curriculum materials, and the appropriate use of assessments
5. Candidates view professional development as a career-long effort and responsibility

III. Teacher Awareness of Child Interest and Understanding
   a. Each child will probably hold a totally different view concerning reading
      i. Possible understandings a preschooler may have include:
         1. Pictures and text have different functions
         2. Print contains the story, and the words the reader says come from the pictures
         3. Stories tend to have some predictable segments and features
         4. It is possible to write messages
         5. There are words, and written words are made up of letters
         6. Letters are arranged from left to right
         7. Letters appear in linear fashion to represent the sequence of sounds in spoken words
         8. Spaces delineate word boundaries
         9. Letters come in capitals, in small print, and even in script, but they all have the same significance
         10. Some marks are used to show beginnings and ends of text
   b. Ability to read is present if the child understands and acts appropriately when he sees a printed word
      i. Child must be able to understand the concept that:
         1. All “things” have a name
         2. The name of the thing can be a written word
         3. The two are interchangeable
         4. The “word symbols” can be read
   c. Most teachers have had children “read” to them from a favorite, memorized storybook
i. Generally, a word from the book will not be recognized out of context and read by the child when seen elsewhere
ii. However, this behavior (imitative reading) can be an indication of early literacy development
d. A child may develop the ability to recognize words because of an interest in printing letters
   i. Another child may pick up the sounds of alphabet letters by listening and finding words that start with the same letter
   ii. Books and stories can also lead children into early interest and recognition of words
   iii. Some children have the ability to distinguish one word from another by sight and can easily remember words
      1. Other children do not develop this ability until a later age
e. Early readers are children who have a desire to read and who have had interactions with others who have answered their questions and stimulated their interest
   i. A few children will read between the ages of four and five, but many will not have the capability or interest to read until a later age
   ii. About one to three preschoolers out of a hundred can read simple books
   iii. Teacher should be aware of each child’s capabilities
   iv. Educators remind teachers that reading pictures is beginning reading
   v. In daily observations and verbal conversations, a child’s responses give valuable clues
      1. Wrong answers are as important as the right ones
f. Attempts to identify young children’s emerging ideas about the act of reading have been undertaken
   i. Children were asked what they knew about reading at age three and the study continued through ages five or six
   ii. The following developmental sequence seemed apparent to the researchers:
      1. Young children:
         a. See reading as one aspect of social interaction
            i. Children comment, look at illustrations, and observe page turning
         b. Notice that readers’ eyes are on the book’s pages, and if asked to read the book themselves, they will:
            i. Turn pages (front to back)
            ii. Label objects or actions aloud
            iii. Talk to themselves, asking rhetorical questions
            iv. Speak memorized lines or words
c. May show they realized a story has a meaningful sequence of actions or events that is reflected in the illustrations
   i. Some children “read” from the pictures
   ii. Other children may mimic an adult’s oral reading style
   iii. May realize each book tells a unique story, and believe the reader has memorized it word for word
   iv. Grasp the idea that print tells the story and provides clues to the reader
   1. Sounding out of simple words may begin
   v. Use different and varied strategies to interpret the print

g. Kindergarten teachers facing a wide range of enrolled children’s language arts abilities often attempt to assess children’s progress in:
   i. Letter identification
   ii. Phonemic awareness (sound-symbol relationships)
   iii. Sight words
   iv. Concepts of words
   v. Printing skill

h. In a typical kindergarten class, children’s literacy skills and functioning may span a 5-year range
   i. Some may possess skills typical of three-year-olds and others, those of eight-year-olds
   ii. Informal testing is common
   iii. Common informal testing probes and questions include:
       1. Cards with an uppercase and lowercase printscript alphabet are displayed one by one
          a. “What alphabet letter do you see?”
          b. “Can you tell me the sound it makes?”
          c. “Do you know a word that starts with this letter?”
       2. The child is given paper and pencil
          a. “Please write alphabet letters you know.”
          b. “Tell me about the letters you’ve written.”
       3. The child is asked to write known words
          a. “Write all the words you know.”
          b. “Can you write your name?”
       4. The child is presented a list of common sight words
          a. “Do you know any of these words?”
       5. The child is asked to describe/tell about his favorite book
          a. Individualized activities can become an easier task when assessment data have been gathered

i. Cambourne has identified “reading-like” child behaviors:
   i. Recreating text from memory, turning pages randomly
ii. Recreating a text from pictures only (each picture represents a complete text—no continuity of story line)

iii. Same as 1 and 2, with a continuous story line that may or may not match the text in the book

iv. Recreating text from memory, running eyes and/or finger over text but not one-to-one matching of print with meaning

v. Just turning pages, frontward and backward, but obviously engaging with pictures

vi. Sitting next to someone else engaged in behaviors 1 through 5 and sometimes collaborating with or intervening in others’ reading-like behavior

j. Child knowledge of alphabet letters
   i. In comparing two children—one who knows the alphabet and reads a few words and one who crudely writes his own name and makes up barely understandable stories—one may conclude that the first child is bright
      1. Creativity and logic are important in literacy development, and the second child may be outdistancing the first by progressing at his own speed
      2. Literacy at any age is more than merely naming letters or words
      3. Their fluency and ease at recognizing letters is also deemed important
      4. The speed and accuracy of letter naming is an index of the thoroughness or confidence with which the letters identities have been learned."
      5. Children’s effortlessness may indicate an ability to see letters as “wholes” and then see words as patterns of letters
   ii. Other educators suggest it is other knowledge that is learned along with the ability to name letters that is crucial
      1. More often than not, alphabet letter names are first encountered in the alphabet song (to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”) or in alphabet books at ages two, three, and four
      2. Children usually memorize the oral names of a few alphabet letters
      3. Children then develop a sense that different letter shapes have different names, and it is an easy jump to children understanding that their names are different in print than their friends’ names
         a. “That’s my letter,” a child may say when encountering a letter in the environment that is similar to or the same shape as the first letter of his first name
iii. Teachers and parents need to understand that young children have 2 to 4 years to master the letter shapes before entering kindergarten, and instruction in letter recognition usually is begun during preschool years
   1. Goal is to ensure that letter shapes are highly familiar and recognizable to the children before they are faced with the task of learning the letters' sounds or, more generally, of learning to read words

iv. The sounds that letters make are commonly introduced after the names of the letters are well learned, but some programs choose to introduce the letter name and sound together
   1. Still other programs follow the recommendation of McGuiness and call letters by their sounds

v. Understanding the alphabetic principle involves the knowledge that there is a systematic relationship between letters and sounds

vi. A child’s grasp of the alphabetic principle may be the single most important step toward acquiring the code that eases early reading
   1. Many pre-readers figure this out without adult help

vii. Letter-to-sound correspondence teaching has currently and historically been the subject of countless arguments and disputes among reading instruction professionals
   1. Some teachers believe the answer may be that, although knowing the names of letters helps some children remember sounds, it helps others induce them

viii. Increasingly, early childhood educators are finding or creating new ways to include more focus on alphabet letters by:
   1. Capitalizing on opportunities to point out print and its uses in classroom life
   2. Saturating their classrooms with print
   3. Reading quality picture books with ABC themes

ix. Not beneficial to force print instruction, rather teachers should draw it into conversations and design an environment where print is hard to miss

x. Head Start programs are using the Head Start Outcomes Framework to guide their program goals
   1. They are working on preschool children’s ability to identify at least 10 alphabet letters, their knowledge of sound-letter associations, their ability to pay attention to separate and repeating sounds, their ability to form lines and circles, and their attempts to form alphabet letters
   2. These teachers are also busy relating the uses and functions of print to young children’s lives

k. Word recognition
i. Typical four-year-old relies on idiosyncratic cues to identify words, rather than intuitively making use of letter sounds

IV. A Closer Look at Early Readers

a. Researchers studying both gifted children and early readers notice that parents overwhelmingly report that they have read to their children from birth on or from the time the children learned to sit up
   i. Research shows that early readers who learned to read without systematic instruction had one common experience, despite their different backgrounds:
      1. They were all introduced to books between the ages of three and five
   ii. Frequently, parents also spend time with their young child using the computer or other kinds of electronic media—both educational program and entertainment varieties
   iii. Someone reads books aloud on a regular basis
   iv. Many reading experts believe children who achieve at an outstanding level have families that did not impose their learning priorities upon their very young, but instead followed the child’s lead, emphasizing play and a rich, stimulating environment rather than formal instruction

b. Studies of the early reader indicate that the child was usually exposed to a variety of reading material and enjoyed watching educational television, spending close to equal time in both pursuits
   i. An interest in print characterizes precocious readers, and their parents are described as responsive
   ii. Many child-centered family activities were part of the early reader’s family lifestyle
      1. These children seemed fascinated and obsessed with the alphabet
      2. Parents reported that they:
         a. Answered questions
         b. Read to the child
         c. Engaged in play activities with letters and words but had not set out with a systematic plan to teach reading

c. Supportive efforts to ease children’s difficulty in learning to read can include:
   i. Finding good books in which the pictures closely match words
   ii. Prompting, “will you point to the words as you read them?”
   iii. Letting children ponder the problem that what they are saying does not match the number words they are pointing to in the print and hoping children self-correct themselves
   iv. Saying, “great self-correcting,” when it happens
   v. Watching for confusion and modeling the strategies readers use when they encounter problems

d. Effective strategies that early readers use to help themselves include:
i. Orienting themselves to a book as a whole
ii. Studying the pictures to heighten their sense of what the words say
iii. Guessing at what the print probably says
iv. Checking to confirm or disprove their guesses
v. Pointing to words
e. For early readers, many experienced teachers recommend books with repetitive, patterned text and books with a jazzy, rhythmic phrase on every page that may change just a word or two as text moves ahead
i. Teachers watch out and avoid books that consist of meaningless, silly ditties
ii. Looking for logical books that are both interesting and tailored to a child’s life and past experience is the prudent course of action
f. Suggested books include:
g. What should happen when a child expects to learn to read the first day of school or kindergarten?
   i. Many kindergarten teachers suggest a teacher should “make it happen”
      1. The child should go home after the first day able to read a simple sentence
         a. This enhances the child’s perceptions that he can read
         b. A big portion of the battle to improve children’s self-esteem occurs and allows the child to believe in himself

V. How Shared Reading is Done
a. Many pre-kindergartens, kindergartens, and lower elementary school classes conduct group reading activities called shared readings
i. Often, 14 by 17 or larger books, called Big Books, or teacher-made charts are introduced, discussed, and read
ii. On a first reading, the book’s cover and illustrations are examined
iii. Predictions about the story or other content take place
iv. Text is large, and colorful illustrations are directly connected to the text
v. Words are repeated frequently
vi. After a first reading, children may be prompted to share something they noticed in the book
vii. While reading, the teacher puts one hand under each word and moves from top to bottom and left to right
viii. Children may be asked to guess words or predict story outcomes

b. Shared reading promotes both letter and sound recognition, especially after repeated readings
   i. In the course of shared reading, children query what a particular word says, notice that some words rhyme, and notice words with the same sound or letter
   ii. Teacher encourages discussion and children’s touching or pointing to book features
   iii. Pleasant attitudes toward the experience are built through accepting and appreciating each child’s comments and ideas
   iv. Both fiction and nonfiction titles are used.

c. Vocabulary and early readers
   i. Child vocabulary is strongly related to child comprehension and child ease of learning to read
      1. Reading comprehension involves applying letter-sound correspondence to a printed word and matching it to a known word in the reader’s oral vocabulary
      2. Oral vocabulary is a key in making the transition from oral to written forms
      3. Many studies agree that reading ability and vocabulary size are related
   ii. In trying to measure children’s vocabulary, one finds different vocabularies exist
      1. Receptive vocabulary is seen in toddlers, who follow requests such as “get Grandpa’s brown shoes,” before they can say the words
      2. Productive vocabulary is used when we speak or write to another
      3. Oral vocabulary refers to words that are recognized in speaking or listening
      4. Reading vocabulary refers to words that are used or recognized in print
         a. Many young children can be described as having a reading vocabulary when they correctly recognize street signs and commercial fast-food symbols
      5. Sight vocabulary is a subset of reading vocabulary
         a. A sight word is immediately recognized as a whole and does not require word analysis for identification

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b. Early childhood teachers rarely know the size of preschoolers’ sight vocabularies unless they do assessments.
   i. When they do, they find some preschoolers have amazingly large ones

iii. Early childhood educators consciously promote and prompt vocabulary development
   1. Relish and model an interest in words, their definitions, and dictionary use
   2. New words enter children’s vocabularies daily in a developmental environment
   3. Teachers explain new words and relate them to children’s experience by giving examples
   4. Sight vocabulary words are composed of alphabet letters that can be named and sounded out, so-called teaching moment naturals
   5. Kindergarten classrooms (and some preschools) have word charts, word lists, word walls, words used for labeling, and words in displays
   6. Preschools have abundant alphabet letters and words used in functional ways

iv. Considerable study suggests a small vocabulary is one major determinant of poor reading comprehension for Latino children and others who lag in readiness in the first grades of elementary school
   1. Every effort in early childhood centers is made to aid children’s oral vocabulary and work toward depth of understanding through:
      a. Firsthand experience
      b. Exposure to books
      c. Classroom discussion
      d. Play with peers
      e. Scheduling of frequent daily literacy events

v. Some preschools develop a “Words I Know” file box for children who wish to have one
   1. Can be taken home occasionally
   2. Words are dictated by children then printed by the teacher
   3. An oblong box with strips of sturdy paper works well
   4. Printing with a wide-tip black marker is recommended
   5. Strips can be used for tracing and other activities, when appropriate
   6. Some preschoolers have sizable sight word vocabularies, as was mentioned
7. Sylvia Ashton-Warner believed, as do many other early childhood educators, that first words have intense meaning for a child
   a. Ashton-Warner’s conviction gave rise to her articulation of what she called the organic reading method, which used key vocabulary for teaching reading and writing

VI. Objectives
   a. Differences exist in the objectives of instruction between:
      i. Educators who believe in readiness activities, and
      ii. Educators who advocate natural self-discovery of reading skills
   b. First group hopes to facilitate learning and enjoyment of reading
   c. Second group foresees the child’s experimentation—creating ideas about reading, based on his notions of the use of writing and reading, and attempting to crack the code with supportive assistance
   d. Both groups favor a print-rich classroom, and objectives in many programs are based on a consideration of a blending of the two positions
      i. Both groups also agree that experiences with classic and quality literature and dramatic activity help children’s early literacy
   e. Programs that choose to include reading readiness among their instructional goals (objectives) plan activities that promote the following skills and attitudes:
      i. Recognizing incongruities—the ability to see the inappropriateness of a situation or statement, such as “The mouse swallowed the elephant”
      ii. Recognizing context clues—realizing that pictures on the same page give visual clues to the words
      iii. Acquiring the ability to listen
      iv. Building vocabulary through firsthand experiences
         1. Recognizing likenesses and differences
         2. Identifying through sight and sound
         3. Rhyming
         4. Increasing memory span
         5. Recalling sequence and content
         6. Following directions
      v. Increasing speech output
         1. Developing attitudes of each child’s ability and worth
         2. Increasing imaginative and creative speech
      vi. Building critical thinking and problem solving with language
         1. Identifying through clues
         2. Classifying, sorting, and organizing
         3. Developing concepts and recognizing relationships
         4. Anticipating outcomes
         5. Seeing cause-and-effect relationships
      vii. Developing self-confidence—attitudes of competence
viii. Increasing interest and motivation through enjoyment of and success in language activities
ix. Developing left and right awareness
x. Developing positive attitudes toward books and skills in book use
   1. Turning pages
   2. Storing and handling books with care
f. Phonemic awareness, the awareness that words are composed of sounds, is important in facilitating learning to read
   i. What can early childhood educators do to encourage phonemic awareness?
   ii. Reading experts suggest literature that focuses on some kind of play with the sounds of language to help children “naturally” develop awareness
   iii. Books including alliteration, rhyme, repetition, and sound substitution fit this category
g. Educators seriously consider each child’s attitude development concerning reading times and reading in general
   i. In both their actions and words, teachers convey their attitudes
   ii. If actions and words value reading and express enthusiasm (and joy) for finding out what enjoyment or information is possible in a book, young children also tend to adopt an “Oh boy, a book” orientation
   iii. They may then accept the idea that reading books can be a pleasurable pursuit

VII. Sequence of Reading Behavior
a. In the absence of adult intervention that emphasizes another sequence, children generally seem to develop reading and writing abilities as follows:
   i. Child develops an awareness of the functions and value of the reading and writing processes before becoming interested in acquiring specific knowledge and skills
   ii. Child is likely to give greater attention to words and letters that have some personal significance, such as his name or the names of family, pets, and so forth
   iii. Child develops both reading and writing skills simultaneously as complementary aspects of the same communication processes, rather than as separate sets of learning
   iv. Child develops an awareness of words as separate entities (as evidenced when he dictates words slowly so that the teacher can keep pace in writing them down) before showing awareness or interest in how specific letters represent sounds
   v. Child becomes familiar with the appearance of many of the letters by visually examining them, playing games with them, and so forth, before trying to master their names, the sounds they represent, or their formation
vi. Child becomes aware of the sound similarities between high-interest words (such as significant names) and makes many comparisons between their component parts before showing any persistence in deciphering unfamiliar words by blending together the sounds of individual letters

b. Teacher will probably encounter a few preschool children who have already learned how to read simple words and simple books, but there may be others reading at much higher levels
   i. Some children, usually older four-year-olds, seem quite interested in alphabet letters, words, and writing
   ii. Teachers know the center’s goals for each child

c. Important for teachers to be able to help the child’s existing reading abilities and actively plan for future reading skill

d. The transition to kindergarten
   i. A relatively new entity, the transitional kindergarten, exists in some communities
      1. May have a curriculum designed to support each child’s early skill or at-risk status through special summer intervention classes and/or increased parental and community participation in the child’s learning
      2. Its goal is to offer children a transitional period to enhance their effectiveness as pre-readers
      3. Goals of most transitional programs involve both child self-regulation and social interaction
      4. Social interaction skills include:
         a. Playing appropriately with others
         b. Collaborating
         c. Planning play directions
         d. Sharing
         e. Taking turns
         f. Approaching peers to play
         g. Knowing some of the other children’s names are social interaction skills
      5. Self-regulation includes:
         a. Watching peers to find out what is expected
         b. Imitating behaviors
         c. Following classroom routines and rules
         d. Changing behavior when necessary
         e. Waiting
         f. Standing in line
         g. Taking care of personal items
      6. To perform some of these tasks the child needs to accept the teacher as an authority figure
   ii. Communication goals that a transitional program might target are similar to those targeted in preschool, such as:
      1. Responding to teacher questions
2. Offering ideas in group discussions
3. Expressing needs, fears, and feelings
4. Following simple “school-talk” directions
5. Remembering items and actions previously seen or heard
6. Knowing how to appropriately ask for adult help

iii. In a transitional program, children are expected to listen when it is time to listen, sit when it is time to sit, and finish assigned tasks
iv. Child’s ability to make a transition from a parent at arrival and back to parent’s authority at departure is another program goal

VIII. Reading Methods
a. Research studies conducted to try to pinpoint the one best reading method for teaching children to read have concluded that there is no proven best method
b. Position statement developed by the International Reading Association reads:
   i. “There is no single method or single combination of methods that can successfully teach all children to read. Therefore, teachers must have a strong knowledge of multiple methods for teaching reading and a strong knowledge of the children in their care do they can create the appropriate balance of methods needed for the children they teach.”
c. Important factors seem to be the teacher’s:
   i. Enthusiasm for the method or technique used, and
   ii. Understanding of the method used
d. Ideal situation for a child learning to read is a one-to-one child/teacher ratio, with the reading activity suited to the child’s individual capacity, learning style, and individual interests
   i. Difficult to fulfill in an early childhood learning center because of the number of children per group and the many other duties required of a teacher
   ii. Other limitations can include the teacher’s:
      1. Amount of training
      2. Knowledge of a variety of methods to teach reading
      3. Ability to plan interesting and appropriate activities within a print-rich classroom
e. What preschool teachers need to understand is that advocates of many differing methods used to teach reading agree that a rich, strong base in quality children’s literature and well-developed oral language and listening skill aid success in whatever reading method is eventually used
f. Most educators including Farstup acknowledge that even with repeated reform efforts and the existence of data that demonstrates the overall success of public schools, many students, especially minority and poor children, fail to succeed in learning to read
Reading instruction integrates attention to the alphabetic principle with attention to the construction of meaning and opportunities to develop fluency.

i. Report’s definition of integration:
   1. “Integration means precisely that opportunities to learn these two aspects of skilled reading should be going on at the same time, in the context of the same activities, and that the choice of instructional activities should be part of an overall coherent approach to supporting literacy development, not a haphazard selection from unrelated, though varied, activities.”

How best to teach beginning reading may be the most politicized topic in the field of education.

i. Shanahan notes arguments about whole language, phonics, and the best way to teach children to read have been epidemic.

The natural approach

i. Popular approaches to reading include what has been termed natural reading:
   1. Basic premise of this method centers on the idea that a child can learn to read as he learned to talk, that is, with adult attention and help with early skills.
   2. Advocates feel children learn to read in a literate society the same way they learned to talk, walk, draw, sing:
      a. By seeing and hearing reading modeled skillfully for us.
      b. By noticing and understanding that this is an interesting and useful thing to do.
      c. By being invited to join the process with those who can do it better than we can.

ii. In the natural approach, an interest in print (words) leads to invented spelling and reading:
   1. Organic and natural reading systems propose that children learn to read by authoring from their own experiences, and by being exposed to great classic literature as well as child-authored literature.

iii. Educators associated with natural reading include Ashton-Warner, Johnson, and Fields:
   1. Well-known work of Allen has led to a method called the language-experience approach and can be thought of as a popular early form of the natural method.
   2. Stauffer points out the specific features of the language-experience approach that he believes make it especially appropriate for young children:
      a. A base in children’s language development and firsthand experiencing.
b. Stress on children’s interests, experiences, and cognitive and social development  
c. Respect for children’s need for activity and involvement  
d. Requirement for meaningful learning experiences  
e. Integration of school and public library resources with classroom reading materials  
f. Encouragement of children’s creative writing as a meaningful approach to using and practicing reading and writing skills  

iv. Johnson, influenced by the work of Sylvia Ashton-Warner, recommends starting five-year-olds reading through a procedure that elicits children’s images  
1. Images are then connected to printed captions  
2. Individual important images merge as meaningful words to be shared with others through sight reading  
3. Slowly, visual discrimination, capitalization, sentence sense, phonetics, and punctuation are accomplished at each child’s particular pace  

v. Sylvia Ashton-Warner’s method of teaching reading inspired a whole generation of teachers during the 1960s  
1. Thompson believes Ashton-Warner gives today’s teachers an early model for teaching multicultural children to read  
   a. Describes Ashton-Warner’s techniques, stating that what she called her “scheme” for working in the New Zealand bicultural context may be, in some very basic ways, universally adaptable to intercultural or transcultural education for the new millennium  
      i. Organic teaching requires the teacher to listen to the pupils, to truly hear them and encourage what is important to them, and to use that as the working material for teaching and learning.  
      ii. This concept, Ashton-Warner asserts, embodies the kind of attitude necessary for building transcultural bridges for sharing understanding of cultures, ultimately a possible direction leading to peace in our shrinking global village  

vi. Author recommends, as most teacher-training programs recommend, the early childhood educator’s reading of Ashton-Warner’s book *Teacher*, for it is as pertinent today as it was more than 45 years ago
vii. To many people, the terms natural and organic methods and language-experience and language arts approaches are synonymous and describe the same or similar methods of reading instruction
1. Robisson recommends the language-experience approach to young children’s teachers because this method is a natural way to build on children’s expressive and cognitive activities and because it is flexible and adaptable
   a. Suggests that new teachers collect a large repertoire of activities from the many writers who have contributed to the development of this method
2. Because no one reading method is superior, teachers should be able to use features of phonic, linguistic, or sight-word recognition that seem useful at any given time

viii. Language arts approach to reading instruction introduces children to written words through their own interest in play, through their enjoyment of speaking, and by listening to language
1. Often, children’s first experience with written words comes from their own speech and actions
2. Emphasis is on the fact that words are part of daily living

ix. Educators’ attitudes toward reading instruction have been influenced by various factors:
1. Current research
2. Some American children’s struggle to read
3. Poor national reading performance
4. Children’s lack of school success because of their reading ability

x. Natural and organic approaches have lost favor
1. They are thought to be incomplete—good as far as they go, but not as systematic or explicit as they might be

j. The whole-language movement
i. Whole-language advocates believe in offering children meaningful and functional literature in full literary texts rather than through worksheets or dittoed handouts
   1. Emphasizes the interrelated nature of the language arts
   2. Believes that learning in any one area of language arts helps learning in others
ii. Approach is similar to what is termed the natural-language approach in early childhood books, journals, and professional teacher-training literature
   1. Approach is a philosophy that suggests that children learn language skill by following the natural learning behavior that governs the way they learn to talk, and that
writing, listening, reading, and speaking activities grow from a child’s experiences and interests

2. Teacher directs natural curiosity into activities that develop skills

iii. All sorts of literature (instead of basal readers) are used in whole-language classrooms, including posters, comics, classic literature, quality books, magazines, and newspapers, to mention a few

1. Poetry, songs, chants, and simple drama activities are among the language activities offered
2. Whole-language teacher presents opportunities for learning and development by relating activities to a single theme
3. Spontaneous conversational exchanges are typical and seen as enhancing and extending learning
4. Teachers using this approach draw attention to connections between speaking, writing, and reading by saying things like, “I heard you say boat. This is how you write that. Now let’s read it.”
5. Usually no ability-grouped reading circles, and classrooms are described as busy, active, and full of talk

iv. K. Goodman has listed basic beliefs that most early childhood educators attempting whole-language instruction believe are crucial:

1. Whole-language learning builds around whole learners learning whole language in whole situations
2. Whole-language learning assumes respect for language, for the learner, and for the teacher
3. The focus is on meaning, not on language itself, in authentic speech and literacy events
4. Learners are encouraged to take risks and invited to use language, in all its varieties, for their own purposes
5. In a whole-language classroom, all the varied functions of oral and written language are appropriate and encouraged

v. Critics point out that there are no formulas for planning, developing, organizing, and managing whole-language curriculum

1. Consequently, whole-language teachers with similar philosophies may differ in what curriculum they present
2. Other criticism usually centers on the teacher’s ability to assess each child’s reading progress and the lack of instruction in phonics

vi. Walmsley and Adams speak about the challenge apparent in translating whole-language theory into practice
1. State that letting go some or all of the traditional teacher's control of the classroom's activities and behaviors does not come easily to teachers, even if they subscribe to a child-centered philosophy
   a. Believe that the consequences of liberating oneself from traditional practice are often not easy to accept
   b. State that many of the teachers are finding it hard to adjust to a changed classroom environment, even though few of them have serious doubts about the instructional philosophy they have newly embraced

vii. Walmsley and Adams predict the whole-language movement will survive but not dominate American public education
   1. Has proved to be true
   2. Exclusion of phonics instruction by some whole-language teachers and lower reading achievement test scores in some whole-language classrooms has caused additional concern

viii. Many educators today believe that whole language has become a full-fledged, although still evolving, theory of learning and teaching
   1. Exemplifies a constructionist view of learning, believing concepts and complex processes are constructs of the human brain
      a. Therefore, research suggests the greater the intellectual and emotional involvement in learning, the more effectively the brain learns, uses, and retains what is learned

k. Literature-based reading programs
   i. A literature-based reading curriculum has been adopted or recommended in many states
   ii. Au describes literature–based instruction as involving a continuum of strategies to be applied as children move up through the grades in elementary school:
      1. Shared reading
      2. Guided reading
      3. Guided discussion
      4. Literature discussion groups (also known as literature circles or book clubs)
   iii. Two strategies are used and considered important across the grade levels:
      1. Teacher-read-alouds
      2. Sustained silent reading
iv. Teachers using this approach to reading instruction usually fall into three groups (or types) depending on how “literature-based” is defined and carried out in their classrooms:
1. Literature-based readers
   a. Basal reading programs that use literature content texts are adopted
   b. In about 80 percent of these texts, the stories are faithful to the original writing
   c. Books are based on selections of stories, not whole books
   d. Teachers’ guides and workbooks suggest fragmented kinds of word study and fill-in-the-blank exercises
2. Basalization of literature
   a. A literature-based reading program uses real books to study but treats them as basal readers
3. Comprehensive literature program
   a. Literature permeates the curriculum
   b. Teachers:
      i. Read aloud to children
      ii. Give children a choice of real books for their own reading
      iii. Make use of the fine informational books that we have today to use literature in every area of the curriculum
      iv. Encourage children’s response to books through discussion, drama, art, and writing
   c. Primary goal is to produce children who not only know how to read but also become readers
v. Educators are examining New Zealand’s literature-based reading approach
   1. New Zealand is recognized as the most literate country in the world
   2. Their instructional approach is similar to whole-language theory put into practice
   3. The instructional model was instituted after educational research pointed to the success of literature-based models
      a. An influx of culturally diverse children who were not adequately progressing in reading prompted New Zealand’s use of new instructional methodology
I. Decoding—phonetic—reading approach
   i. Decoding, using a phonetic approach to reading instruction, is based on teaching children the 44 language sounds
(phonemes), which are 26 alphabet letters and combinations (graphemes)

1. Assumes that, to read, children first must be able to "decode"
   a. Must be able to pronounce the letter sequences they see on a page based on what they know about the link between spelling and sound
2. An underlying skill is phonemic awareness, the understanding that words, even simple ones like cat, are composed of individual sounds called phonemes, which make a difference in meaning
   a. Only one phoneme makes the difference between rope and soap

ii. Although phonetic approaches differ widely, most users believe that when children know which sounds are represented by which letters or letter combinations, they can “attack” an unknown word and decode it
   1. Some schools using this approach begin decoding sessions when all sounds have been learned
      a. Others expose children to select sounds and offer easily decoded words early
   2. A few phonetic approach systems require teachers to use letter sounds exclusively and later introduce the individual letter names, such as a, b, c, and so forth

iii. Five “word-attack” (or decoding) skills are helpful in the complicated process of learning to read:
   1. Picture clues—using an adjacent picture (visual) to guess at a word near it (usually on the same page)
   2. Configuration clues—knowing a word because you remember its outline
   3. Context clues—guessing an unknown word by known words that surround it
   4. Phonetic clues—knowing the sound a symbol represents
   5. Structural clues—seeing similar parts of words and knowing what these symbols say and mean

iv. Phonics may be most useful when a reader already has some general notion of what a word should be

v. Cunningham, who attempted to identify the best way to teach phonics, cites the findings of The National Reading Panel, stating that it reviewed experimental research on teaching phonics and determined that explicit and systematic phonics is superior to non-systematic or no phonics, but that there is no significant difference in effectiveness among the kinds of systematic phonics instruction
1. Also found no significant difference in effectiveness among tutoring, small-group, or whole-class phonics instruction

vi. Advocates of phonetic instruction are often critical and vocal about the exclusive use of any one reading approach that neglects phonics

1. Most teachers recognize that some children can learn to read with little or no phonetic instruction
2. Also note that many children may have difficulty without it

m. Look-and-say method

i. Many of the children who do read during preschool years have learned words through a “look-and-say” (whole-word) approach

1. When they see the written letters of their name or a familiar word, they can identify the name or word
2. They have recognized and memorized that group of symbols
3. It is believed that children who learn words in this fashion have memorized the shape or configuration of the word
   a. They often confuse words that have similar outlines, such as “Jane” for “June” or “saw” for “sew.”
   b. May not know the alphabet names of the letters or the sounds of each letter
4. This approach was prevalent in public school reading instruction in the twentieth century, but it is rarely used today
5. Children who are good at noticing slight differences and who have good memories seem to progress and become successful readers

n. Other approaches to reading instruction

i. Many elementary school districts emphasize that their approach to reading instruction is a combined or balanced approach

1. Offers a rich diet of quality literature and literary experiences plus a sound foundation of phonics

ii. Gowen defines a balance reading approach as follows:

1. “A balanced reading approach is research-based, assessment-based, comprehensive, integrated and dynamic, in that it empowers teachers and specialists to respond to the individual assessed literacy needs of children as they relate to their appropriate instructional and developmental levels of decoding, vocabulary, reading comprehension, motivation, and socio-cultural acquisition, with the purpose of learning to read meaning, understanding, and joy.”

iii. Morrow and Asbury recommend and describe a comprehensive approach as follows:
1. “A comprehensive approach that acknowledges the importance of both form (phonetic awareness, phonics mechanics, etc.), and function (comprehension, purpose, meaning) of the literacy processes, and recognizes that learning occurs most effectively in a whole-part-whole context. This type of instruction is characterized by meaningful literacy activities that provide children with both the skills and the desire to achieve proficient and lifelong literacy learning.”

2. State that there are multiple experiences with:
   a. Word study activities
   b. Guided, shared, silent, collaborative, independent, and content-connected reading and writing
   c. Oral reading to build fluency

3. Believe that reading and writing take place in whole-class, small-group, one-on-one, teacher directed, and social center settings in which children can practice what they have learned
   a. Materials used include instructional texts, manipulatives, and meaningful children’s literature
   b. Instruction is spontaneous, authentic, and not only involves students in problem solving, but it is also direct, explicit, and systematic

iv. Cassidy and Cassidy’s survey of 25 literacy leaders from the boards of prominent literacy organizations found that scientific evidence-based reading research and instructional approaches are the hottest topics in literacy learning

v. Other survey topics of very decided interest were:
   1. Reading comprehension
   2. Direct/explicit instruction
   3. English as a second language learners
   4. Fluency
   5. High-stakes assessment
   6. Literacy coaches/reading coaches
   7. Phonemic awareness
   8. Phonics
   9. Political/policy influences on literacy

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from whole language and silent reading to intensive phonics and oral reading

1. Other eras include:
   a. Phonics era (1956–1964)
   b. Language, literature, and discovery-learning era (1965–1974)
   c. Individualized specific skills instruction era (1975–1986)
   e. Phonics and oral reading era (1996– )

iii. In a review of current reading instruction, one finds the terms balanced, eclectic, research-based, accountable, phonetic awareness, phonics instruction, fluency, comprehension, and alphabetic

1. Field of reading instruction seems to lack consensus concerning what constitutes the best practices for the teaching of reading

iv. Educators believe that understanding different eras, trends, and schools of thought can make a real contribution to children’s literacy learning and reading success

1. Teachers can influence most schools and construct their own version of best practices in reading instruction particularly if they get results

v. Standards, assessment, and accountability are current factors in public school classrooms

1. No Child Left Behind Act is driving change
2. School boards and school districts are promoting reading instruction based on standards
3. Teachers and teacher groups realize their instructional methods and strategies must match and fit within identified language arts parameters
4. Testing will take place, and the results will be published
5. Every effort is being made to make parents and early childhood educators aware of the foundations of literacy, particularly the language skills and abilities necessary for successful participation in kindergarten

a. These include:
   i. Phonological and phonemic awareness
   ii. An understanding of the alphabetic principle
   iii. Alphabet letter recognition
   iv. Social and group skills
   v. Concepts about print
   vi. An adequate vocabulary
   vii. Oral language
   viii. Listening ability
ix. Early reading
x. Writing and invented spelling development
xi. Visual-perceptual skills

IX. The Reading Recovery Program
a. Reading Recovery (RR), a well-known beginning reading intervention program, was designed for first-graders experiencing difficulty learning to read
   i. Provided one-on-one tutoring by teachers who received extensive training in beginning reading theory and practical application
   ii. Marie Clay, a New Zealand educator, is credited as being the “architect” of the program
b. Teacher-tutors’ daily routine with identified children included:
   i. Rereading of familiar books
   ii. Working with alphabet letters
   iii. Writing a sentence
   iv. Learning a new book
c. Tutored lessons lasted 30 minutes and continued for 12 to 20 weeks, or until the child reached the level of the classroom’s middle level reading group
d. RR evaluation studies conducted by Shanahan and Barr found that children who received Reading Recovery instruction make sizable gains in reading achievement during the first grade year, comparing favorably with those of higher achieving first graders who received only classroom instruction, along with compensatory support
e. Other researchers suggest that earlier intervention aimed at preventing problems would yield more powerful benefits than later attempts of remediation
   i. Intervention should occur before problems are apparent
f. RR, a model used by many other later tutoring programs, has its critics
   i. These criticisms mention RR’s use of an incidental, student-centered approach to phonics and vocabulary development and its expense
g. Controversy exists concerning the stability of RR student gains
   i. Some evaluators believe gains diminished substantially during the students’ third and fourth school years

X. The Role of Story Times and Book-Reading Experiences
a. Many teachers who are faced with the responsibility of teaching reading believe that the ease in learning to read is directly related to the amount of time a child has been read to by parents, teachers, and others
b. Books have a language of their own; conversation is quite different
   i. Books are not just written oral conversation but include descriptions, primarily full sentences, rhythm, dialogue, and much more
ii. As adults read books to young children, they adopt special voices and mannerisms and communicate much differently from everyday speech
   1. Through repeated experience, children learn that illustrations usually reflect what a book is saying
      a. This knowledge helps them make educated guesses of both meanings and printed words adjacent to pictures

c. Storybook sessions are reading sessions and can greatly affect the child’s future with books
d. If teachers wish to evaluate how well they are doing in making books important to children in their programs, the following set of questions will help:
   i. During free-choice periods, how many children go to the library corner and look at books by themselves?
   ii. How many requests to read during the day do adults get from children?
   iii. How many children listen attentively during story time?
   iv. How many books have been borrowed by parents during the week?
   v. Which books have become special favorites, as shown by signs of extra wear?

XI. Parents’ Role in Reading
a. Parents often want to find ways to help their children succeed in school
   i. Because the ability to read is an important factor in early schooling, parents may seek the advice of the teacher
b. Many programs keep parents informed of the school’s agenda and goals and the children’s progress
   i. Early childhood center’s staff realizes that parents and teachers working together can reinforce what children learn at home and at school
c. Suggestions for parents who want to help their children’s language and reading- skill development:
   i. Show an interest in what children have to say
      1. Respond to children, giving clear, descriptive, full statements
   ii. Arrange for children to have playmates and to meet and talk to people of all ages
   iii. Make children feel secure
      1. Encourage and accept their opinions and feelings
   iv. Develop a pleasant voice and offer the best model of speech possible
   v. Encourage children to listen and to explore by feeling, smelling, seeing, and tasting, when possible
   vi. Enjoy new experiences
      1. Talk about them as they happen
2. Each community has interesting places to visit with young children
vii. Read to children and tell them stories
   1. Stop when they lose interest
   2. Try to develop children’s enjoyment of books and knowledge of how to care for them
   3. Provide a quiet place for children to enjoy books on their own
viii. Make an alphabet book with your preschooler
ix. Listen to what children are trying to say rather than how they are saying it
x. Have confidence in children’s abilities
   1. Patience and encouragement help language skills grow
xi. If parents have questions about their children’s language skills, they should consult the children’s teachers