Focus Statement
Students think about their roles as teachers in planning curriculum related to language and literacy by connecting their own early literacy experiences to those of the children they will teach.

Getting Ready for the Unit
This unit is designed to help students explore the language and literacy domain of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1* (PCF, V1) and learn how the PCF, V1 can be a resource as they plan curriculum to support young children’s essential development in language and literacy. It is suggested that you review the key topics for this domain to help determine how they can meet the needs of your students and your course. Although language and literacy is certainly a part of children’s integrated learning across domains, this unit is not intended to provide students with opportunities to plan how to integrate the content of the language and literacy domain across the other domains. Following the approach of this instructional guide, the focus of this unit—as with the other three domain units—is to help students learn about each domain individually before addressing integration across domains. The topic of integration is addressed in Unit 7 of this instructional guide.

As described on page 9 in Chapter 1, “Introduction to the Framework,” of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1*, the framework builds on the four domains in the *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1* (PLF, V1). The PCF, V1 is organized by the same domains, strands, and substrands that are in the PLF, V1. However, some components of the PCF, V1 are presented at the domain level while others are at the strand and substrand level.

In this unit on language and literacy, the 12 domain guiding principles and the listing of environments and materials are at the domain level while the vignettes with accompanying teachable moments and planning learning opportunities and interactions and strategies are at the foundation level within each strand and substrand. However, the PCF, V1 uses slightly different wording to describe the language and literacy foundations—skills or areas—and combines the foundations at the 48-month and 60-month levels into one skill or area. For example, the foundations “Speak clearly enough to be understood by familiar adults and children” and “Speak clearly enough to be
understood by both familiar and unfamiliar adults and children” are worded “Speak clearly” in the curriculum framework.

As mentioned previously, the PCF, V1 follows the content and structure of the PLF, V1. Therefore, it is very important that instructors are familiar with the language and literacy domain in the foundations before working with the domain in the PCF, V1.

If students need an introduction to or a refresher on the language and literacy strands, substrands, and foundations, you may want to review “Language and Literacy: Piecing Together the Language and Literacy Domain Puzzle” (Activity 2 of the Instructional Guide for the PLF, V1, Language and Literacy Domain). It is recommended that students use the PLF, V1 as a guide when they do this activity. Or you could have students read the introductory and language and literacy chapters in the PLF, V1 prior to class.

It will also be helpful if students have a basic knowledge of young children’s language development and what early literacy is. Information on these topics can be found in the PLF, V1 on pages 49-55 and pages 71-88. A very brief description of oral language is presented on pages 98-99 of the PCF, V1. There are glossaries related to the language and literacy domain on page 89 of the PLF, V1 and pages 323-325 of the PCF, V1.

It is also important for instructors and students to be familiar with the English-language development domains in both the PLF, V1 and PCF, V1 as it is strongly recommended that the English-language development and language and literacy domains from the foundations and framework be used in tandem. *Preschool English Learners: Principles and Practices to Promote Language, Literacy, and Learning, 2nd ed.* (PEL Resource Guide) is another important resource for both instructors and students.

Some of the active learning in the key topics involves students making observations in preschool classrooms. Therefore, it may be helpful to have a list of programs that students can visit if your college does not have a preschool class on campus. It will also be helpful to have photographs or video clips of classrooms to use during class sessions, especially if it may be difficult for students to visit programs.

Reflection activities are recommended for each key topic as a way to have students understand and begin to implement the following overarching principle from the PCF, V1: “Time for reflection and planning enhances teaching” (PCF, V1, pp. 5 and 8). If you have students keep journals, suggest that they write their responses to the suggested reflection questions in their journals. Consider providing 10-15 minutes at the end of each class session as that may help students appreciate the value of this process.
Motivator and Connection to Experience

Before You Start
As an introduction to this unit on language and literacy, it may be helpful for students to connect their own early literacy experiences to those of the children they will teach and begin to think about their roles as teachers in planning curriculum related to language and literacy.

A guided visualization is suggested to help students begin to think about teaching language and literacy to young children based on some of their own early experiences in learning to read and write. This visualization is similar to the one in the instructional guide for the language and literacy foundations: “Exploring Our Early Connections to the Language and Literacy Foundations.” As with any activity in which students are asked to reflect on past experiences, there may be students whose memories will not be positive ones. It is important to acknowledge this and allow students to participate in the discussion as much or as little as they choose. If possible, encourage students to think of what might have made the experience less negative and more supportive or positive. How much you choose to explore these possibilities depends on the student’s readiness and willingness as well as your level of experience and comfort in engaging in this kind of discussion. It is also recommended that a short break be planned after this activity so that there is an opportunity for students to deal with any strong emotions that may have surfaced.

You may wish to record the students’ responses to the last two discussion questions and save them as reference points for future work in this unit. Responses captured as a Word or PowerPoint document projected through an LCD projector or on flip chart paper instead of on a white board will facilitate their later use.

If you are having students keep a journal, you may want them to write down brief responses to the visualization questions. You could also have them write their own answers to the last two discussion questions.

Active Learning
Getting it started
Explain that you are going to ask the students to think about when and how they learned to read and write. You are going to do this by asking them some questions that will require them to reach into their memories. It may be helpful if they close their eyes during the exercise, but, of course, that is their choice. Encourage them to sit comfortably and try to minimize any distractions in the room (e.g., close the door, remind students that cell phones should be on silent).
Here are some questions that you may wish to use:

- What is your earliest memory of being exposed to books and reading? Who was part of this experience? Where and when was it?

- Do you remember anyone sharing and reading books with you? Who was this person? When did they do this? How often? What was it like? What did you do?

- What other book and reading experiences do you remember?

- How were you taught to read? Was learning to read a pleasant or challenging experience?

- What was the first word you remember learning how to write? How did you learn this?

**Keeping it going**
Ask for volunteers to share some of their memories. Encourage the students to be as specific as they can when describing their experiences—how old they were, the name of a book, who read to them, the way they learned to read, what they liked or didn’t like about books and reading.

**Putting it together**
Then have a class discussion about the experiences that were shared by asking students these questions:

- What are some things that stand out for you from people’s remembrances?

- Which ones resonated with you? Which ones surprised you?

- Why is it helpful to think about the ways we learned to read and write?

- What are some themes that emerged from these experiences?

What do you want to remember as you plan curriculum to support young children’s development in listening, speaking, reading, and writing?
Close the activity by restating that the purpose of the exercise was to have students begin to think about the role of adults in helping children develop strong language skills and early reading and writing skills. The exercise focused on learning to read and write because most of us can’t remember when and how we developed language. However, as teachers of preschool children, the students will be planning appropriate environments and experiences to promote children’s language as well as literacy development.
What is your earliest memory of being exposed to books and reading? Who was part of this experience? Where and when was it?

Do you remember anyone sharing and reading books with you? Who was this person? When did they do this? How often? What was it like? What did you do?
Language and Literacy

- What other book and reading experiences do you remember?
- How were you taught to read? Was learning to read a pleasant or challenging experience?
- What was the first word you remember learning how to write? How did you learn this?

Language and Literacy

- What are some things that stand out for you from people’s remembrances?
- Which ones resonated with you? Which ones surprised you?
- Why is it helpful to think about the ways we learned to read and write?
Language and Literacy

- What are some themes that emerged from these experiences?
- What do you want to remember as you plan curriculum to support young children’s development in listening, speaking, reading, and writing?
Unit 4 – Language and Literacy
Key Topic 1: Organization and Rationale of the Language and Literacy Domain

Focus Statement
Students explore the rationale for including the language and literacy domain in the California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1 and learn how the domain is organized. They also become familiar with the guiding principles for this domain.

Before You Start
There are three major content areas for this key topic: rationale for the domain, organization of the domain, and guiding principles for the domain. Each of these content areas is addressed through a set of active learning experiences designed to help students gain an overview of what is in the language and literacy domain and where to find these elements for future use. A more in-depth examination of the content of the language and literacy domain is provided in the other three key topics for this domain.

If students have already done Key Topic 1 in Unit 1 of this instructional guide that covers the curriculum framework’s overall organization and the four domains or have explored the organizational structure of one of the other domains, they will already be fairly familiar with how each domain is structured. In that case, you may choose to do a review of the structure of the language and literacy domain and skip the content on the domain structure as you go through this key topic. Additionally, the tabbing in the subtopic below on “Organization of the Language and Literacy Domain” is very similar to the tabbing in Key Topic 1, Unit 1.

The PCF, V1 contains questions for reflection at the end of each strand in the language and literacy domain. These questions focus on teachers’ practices and experiences—either of those in the vignette or of the students. The reflection questions in this key topic are to help students think about the overall content and structure of the language and literacy domain in the PCF, V1 and how this knowledge of the domain might be useful in their work.

The following are suggested considerations for some of the active learning experiences:

• **Subtopic 1: Rationale for the Language and Literacy Domain.** In the “Getting it started” and “Keeping it going” segments, it is suggested that students record their ideas on large Post-it® notes that can then be posted on the wall. Half sheets of
paper and tape can also be used.

- **Subtopic 2: Organization of the Language and Literacy Domain.** In the “Getting it started” segment, small notes or other markers (e.g., Post-it® notes, flags, page markers) are suggested to be used as tabs for the PCF, V1. In the “Keeping it going” segment, students are asked to create a visual representation of the organizational structure of the language and literacy domain. Materials could include large easel pad sheets, colored markers, scissors, tape/glue, and colored paper.

- **Reflection:** If students are being asked to keep journals, the suggested questions could be used to guide their journaling. Or you may choose to use your own questions or let students write on their own.

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**Information Delivery**

The following content from the *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1* and the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1* could be used as part of an introduction to or review of language and literacy for students when they begin this unit.

**California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1:**

- Discussion of the language and literacy strands and substrands (pp. 49-55)
- Review of the research for each strand (pp. 71-88)
- Glossary related to language and literacy (p. 89)

**California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1:**

- Components of oral language (pp. 98-99)
- Research findings (pp. 99 and 138)
- Glossary related to language and literacy (pp. 323-325)
- Relationship of the language and literacy domain and the English-language development domain (pp. 10-13 and pp. 178-179)

This content may be delivered through lectures and/or assigned readings.

It may also be helpful to review the strands and substrands for the language and literacy domain as part of the introduction to
this key topic. They can be found on page 109 of the PCF, V1 and are listed here for reference:

- Listening and Speaking (strand)
  1.0 Language Use and Conventions (substrand)
  2.0 Vocabulary (substrand)
  3.0 Grammar (substrand)

- Reading (strand)
  1.0 Concepts about Print (substrand)
  2.0 Phonological Awareness (substrand)
  3.0 Alphabetics and Word/Print Recognition (substrand)
  4.0 Comprehension and Analysis of Age-Appropriate Text (substrand)
  5.0 Literacy Interest and Response (substrand)

- Writing (strand)
  1.0 Writing Strategies (substrand)

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**Active Learning**

**Subtopic 1: Rationale for the Language and Literacy Domain**

**Getting it started**
Have students read the introduction to the language and literacy domain on pages 98-100. Ask them to list any unfamiliar concepts or words on a large Post-it® note. Students are to write one word or concept per note and then post them on the wall.

Review each word or concept in a full class discussion. Remind students that some words may be in the glossary on pages 323-326.

**Keeping it going**
Next have students work individually, in pairs, or in small groups to identify the key points from the introduction. Write each key point on a Post-it® note or half sheet of paper. You could have students do this in or out of class but plan to have
some time during a class session to share and review the key points.

**Putting it together**
Ask students to form small groups of four to six to share their key points. If students have already been working in groups of more than three or four, they can remain in those groups. Have each group review key points generated by its members and prioritize the points.

Then have each group post their top three points on the wall. After all groups have posted their top three, review them and place similar ones together in a cluster. Ask the groups to then post their next three top points. These points can be added to a cluster if they are similar or can start a new cluster. Combine any similar new points into clusters as appropriate. Have the groups review any remaining key points and post them on the wall either with a cluster or as a new point. Do a final review to see if there are any additional clusters to form. A few key points may stand alone.

As a large group, come up with a sentence or phrase that captures the main idea of each cluster. Write each phrase or sentence on a larger piece of paper and post it above the cluster. Have a student or different students read aloud each phrase or sentence. Conclude with a discussion based on these questions:

- Which key cluster seems the most important to you?
- Why is this important when you think about planning language and literacy curriculum for young children?
- Which other key cluster ideas do you want to be sure to remember and why?

**Subtopic 2: Organization of the Language and Literacy Domain**

**Getting it started**
Begin by having students read or review the “Organization of the Framework” on pages 9-10 of the PCF, V1. Have them tab the following components in the language and literacy chapter in their copies of the PCF, V1:
- Domain Guiding Principles (pp. 100-103)
- Environments and Materials (pp. 103-108)
- Summary of the language and literacy strands, substrands, and foundations (p. 109)
- Strands (pp. 110, 128, and 158)
- Substrands (pp. 111, 117, 122, 129, 133, 140, 146, 151, and 159)
- Research Highlights (pp. 99 and 138)
- Engaging Families (pp. 126, 155-156, and 165-166)
- Questions for Reflection (pp. 127, 157, and 167)

After students have completed their tabbing, ask them to review the summary of the language and literacy strands and substrands on page 109 of the PCF, V1. Then have them review the appendix of the PLF, V1 on pages 176-179, which is a summary of the strands, substrands, and foundations for the language and literacy domain. This can also be found following this key topic as Handout 1. Have them compare the two summaries so that they see the parallel organization of the PCF, V1 and the PLF, V1.

It is important for students to understand that the PLF, V1 describes what children learn and the PCF, V1 describes how teachers can plan learning experiences. Emphasize that this parallel structure does not mean that teachers are to apply the curriculum framework in a one-to-one match to the foundations.

**Keeping it going**

Have students continue labeling their copies of the language and literacy domain of the PCF, V1 by tabbing the following elements:

- Vignettes and teachable moments for each substrand
- Interactions and strategies for each substrand (point out that these follow each vignette)

Either ask students to locate or point out these other elements that are included in the domain of the PCF, V1:
• Teacher Resources (p. 170)
• Appendix B, “Reflections on Research: Phonological Awareness” (pp. 304-312)
• Appendix C, “Reflections on Research: Alphabets and Word/Print Recognition (pp. 313-318)

**Taking it further**
Students further explore the structure of the language and literacy domain by creating a visual representation of the major elements that illustrates how they are related. Their graphics can take any form they choose, such as a chart, poster, mock Web page, or advertisement. Students are also to include some kind of key that briefly defines each component.

Students can do this exercise individually or in pairs or small groups. Small group work may help ensure that all students acquire an accurate understanding of the chapter’s structure as small group discussions could surface insights that individual students might miss.

**Putting it together**
Have the groups display their products and, after all the students have had a chance to look at the other groups’ work, discuss the following questions as a whole class:

• What stood out for you when you looked at these?
• What elements were familiar to you? Which ones were new?
• What patterns did you see in the organizational structure of the domain?
• What are some things you want to remember about this structure as a reference for your work?

**Subtopic 3: Guiding Principles for the Language and Literacy Domain**

**Getting it started**
Have students read the 12 language and literacy domain principles (PCF, V1, pp. 100-103). Ask them to write two key points for each domain principle. It is suggested that this exercise be done individually so that each student becomes
familiar with all 12 language and literacy domain principles.

**Keeping it going**
Ask for volunteers to share a key point for one of the domain principles until all 12 language and literacy domain principles have been discussed.

**Putting it together**
Conclude the examination of the 12 domain guiding principles by asking the students to respond to the following questions:

- Which domain principle(s) stood out for you?
- Which ones were familiar and consistent with what you already know about young children’s language and literacy development? Which ones were new to you?
- Why do you think these domain principles are relevant in planning curriculum to support children’s language and literacy development?
- Which language and literacy domain principle do you want to learn more about? How could you do that?

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**Reflection**
There are two sets of reflective questions offered for this key topic. The first specifically addresses the rationale, organizational structure, and domain guiding principles of the language and literacy unit:

- In thinking about the rationale, domain guiding principles, and organization of the language and literacy domain of the PCF, V1, what concepts or information stood out for you?
- What was clear? What might have been confusing?
- What was useful in helping you understand the overall content and structure of this domain?
- How might you apply this understanding in your current or future work? What additional supports might you need?

The second set is more general and can be used in this and other key topics:

- What ideas stood out most for you today?
- Which ones reinforced what you have already learned or experienced? Which ones gave you a new perspective or insight?
- How might you apply a new perspective to your work now or in the future?
- What further information or support do you need?
- What first step do you need to do?

Deeper Understanding

It is important for students to know that there is an extensive research base related to children's language and literacy development and the curriculum planning recommendations in this domain of the PCF, V1. One way for students to deepen their understanding of and appreciation for this research or evidence base is to have them select a research highlight from this chapter and then find one of the articles referenced in that highlight. Students are then to write a one- to two-page summary of the article that includes the following elements:

- Title and author(s)
- Publication information
- Key points
- Implications for practice
## Language and Literacy

### Listening and Speaking

#### 1.0 Language Use and Conventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At around 48 months of age</th>
<th>At around 60 months of age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Use language to communicate with others in familiar social situations for a variety of basic purposes, including describing, requesting, commenting, acknowledging, greeting, and rejecting.</td>
<td>1.1 Use language to communicate with others in both familiar and unfamiliar social situations for a variety of basic and advanced purposes, including reasoning, predicting, problem solving, and seeking new information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Speak clearly enough to be understood by familiar adults and children.</td>
<td>1.2 Speak clearly enough to be understood by both familiar and unfamiliar adults and children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Use accepted language and style during communication with familiar adults and children.</td>
<td>1.3 Use accepted language and style during communication with both familiar and unfamiliar adults and children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Use language to construct short narratives that are real or fictional.</td>
<td>1.4 Use language to construct extended narratives that are real or fictional.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 2.0 Vocabulary

| 2.1 Understand and use accepted words for objects, actions, and attributes encountered frequently in both real and symbolic contexts. | 2.1 Understand and use an increasing variety and specificity of accepted words for objects, actions, and attributes encountered in both real and symbolic contexts. |
| 2.2 Understand and use accepted words for categories of objects encountered and used frequently in everyday life. | 2.2 Understand and use accepted words for categories of objects encountered in everyday life. |
| 2.3 Understand and use simple words that describe the relations between objects. | 2.3 Understand and use both simple and complex words that describe the relations between objects. |
### 3.0 Grammar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At around 48 months of age</td>
<td>3.1 Understand and use increasingly complex and longer sentences, including sentences that combine two phrases or two to three concepts to communicate ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At around 60 months of age</td>
<td>3.1 Understand and use increasingly complex and longer sentences, including sentences that combine two to three phrases or three to four concepts to communicate ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.2 Understand and typically use age-appropriate grammar, including accepted word forms, such as subject-verb agreement, progressive tense, regular past tense, regular plurals, pronouns, and possessives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.2 Understand and typically use age-appropriate grammar, including accepted word forms, such as subject-verb agreement, progressive tense, regular and irregular past tense, regular and irregular plurals, pronouns, and possessives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Reading

#### 1.0 Concepts about Print

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At around 48 months of age</td>
<td>1.1 Begin to display appropriate book-handling behaviors and begin to recognize print conventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At around 60 months of age</td>
<td>1.1 Display appropriate book-handling behaviors and knowledge of print conventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2 Recognize print as something that can be read.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2 Understand that print is something that is read and has specific meaning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 2.0 Phonological Awareness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.1 Orally blend and delete words and syllables without the support of pictures or objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2 Orally blend the onsets, rimes, and phonemes of words and orally delete the onsets of words, with the support of pictures or objects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3.0 Alphabetics and Word/Print Recognition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At around 48 months of age</th>
<th>At around 60 months of age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Recognize the first letter of own name.</td>
<td>3.1 Recognize own name or other common words in print.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Match some letter names to their printed form.</td>
<td>3.2 Match more than half of uppercase letter names and more than half of lowercase letter names to their printed form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Begin to recognize that letters have sounds.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.0 Comprehension and Analysis of Age-Appropriate Text

| 4.1 Demonstrate knowledge of main characters or events in a familiar story (e.g., who, what, where) through answering questions (e.g., recall and simple inferencing), retelling, reenacting, or creating artwork. | 4.1 Demonstrate knowledge of details in a familiar story, including characters, events, and ordering of events through answering questions (particularly summarizing, predicting, and inferencing), retelling, reenacting, or creating artwork. |
| 4.2 Demonstrate knowledge from informational text through labeling, describing, playing, or creating artwork. | 4.2 Use information from informational text in a variety of ways, including describing, relating, categorizing, or comparing and contrasting. |

### 5.0 Literacy Interest and Response

| 5.1 Demonstrate enjoyment of literacy and literacy-related activities. | 5.1 Demonstrate, with increasing independence, enjoyment of literacy and literacy-related activities. |
| 5.2 Engage in routines associated with literacy activities. | 5.2 Engage in more complex routines associated with literacy activities. |
## Writing

### 1.0 Writing Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At around 48 months of age</th>
<th>At around 60 months of age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Experiment with grasp and body position using a variety of drawing and writing tools.</td>
<td>1.1 Adjust grasp and body position for increased control in drawing and writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Write using scribbles that are different from pictures.</td>
<td>1.2 Write letters or letter-like shapes to represent words or ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Write marks to represent own name.</td>
<td>1.3 Write first name nearly correctly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organization and Rationale of the Language and Literacy Domain

Summary of the Strands and Substrands

**Language**

Listening and Speaking

1.0 Language Use and Conventions

2.0 Vocabulary

3.0 Grammar
Summary of the Strands and Substrands

**Literacy**

**Reading**

1.0 Concepts about Print  
2.0 Phonological Awareness  
3.0 Alphabets and Word/Print Recognition  
4.0 Comprehension and Analysis of Age-Appropriate Text  
5.0 Literacy Interest and Response

**Writing**

1.0 Writing Strategies

Rationale for the Language and Literacy Domain

- Which key cluster seems the most important to you?  
- Why is this important when you think about planning language and literacy curriculum for young children?  
- Which other key cluster ideas do you want to be sure to remember and why?
• Domain Guiding Principles
• Environments and Materials
• Summary of the language and literacy strands, substrands, and foundations
• Strands
• Substrands
• Research Highlights
• Engaging Families
• Questions for Reflection

Organization of the Language and Literacy Domain

• Vignettes and teachable moments
• Interactions and strategies
• Teacher Resources
• Appendix B
  “Reflections on Research: Phonological Awareness”
• Appendix C
  “Reflections on Research: Alphabets and Word/Print Recognition”
Organization of the Language and Literacy Domain

- What stood out for you when you looked at these?
- What elements were familiar to you? Which ones were new?
- What patterns did you see in the organizational structure of the domain?
- What are some things you want to remember about this structure as a reference for your work?

Guiding Principles for the Language and Literacy Domain

- Language and literacy work together
- Children say or sign what they hear or see
- Children learn everywhere
- Children learn best from experiences that are interesting, useful, and fun
- Celebrate and support the individual
- Connect school and home
Guiding Principles for the Language and Literacy Domain

- Create a culturally sensitive environment
- Encourage children to take a turn
- Make thoughts more explicit to children by thinking out loud
- Support curiosity and confidence
- Create literacy-rich environments
- Observe children

Which domain principle(s) stood out for you?
Which ones were familiar and consistent with what you already know about young children’s language and literacy development? Which ones were new?
Guiding Principles for the Language and Literacy Domain

- Why do you think these domain principles are relevant in planning curriculum to support children’s language and literacy development?
- Which language and literacy domain principle do you want to learn more about? How could you do that?

Rationale, Organizational Structure, and Guiding Principles of the Language and Literacy Domain

- What concepts or information stood out for you?
- What was clear? What might have been confusing?
- What was useful in helping you understand the overall content and structure of this domain?
- How might you apply this understanding in your current or future work? What additional supports might you need?
What ideas stood out most for you today?
Which ones reinforced what you have already learned or experienced? Which ones gave you a new perspective or insight?
How might you apply a new perspective to your work now or in the future?
What further information or support do you need?
What first step do you need to do?

Research Highlight

Write a one- to two-page summary of an article chosen from the research highlight that includes the following elements:

- Title and author(s)
- Publication information
- Key points
- Implications for practice
Unit 4 – Language and Literacy

Key Topic 2: Getting to Know Environments and Materials That Support Language and Literacy Development

Focus Statement
Students become familiar with environmental arrangements and materials that can be used to support children’s progress in language and literacy and have opportunities to explore some ways they can be applied.

Before You Start
The following are considerations for some of the active learning experiences in this instructional guide key topic located on pages 106-109:

• Taking it further: Before doing this segment, it is important to have a sense of the students’ understanding of the content of the substrands. If students are beginning their work with the California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1 (PLF, V1) as well as the California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1 (PCF, V1), it may be helpful to have them complete the Handout 1 grid as a whole class or in pairs or groups. The purpose of this task is to have students develop enough familiarity with the environments and materials listed to be able to remember and use them in their teaching. It is also important to point out to students that many of the environmental characteristics and materials can support more than one of the language and literacy substrands.

• Another approach: If the students have not had much experience working in preschool programs, it may be helpful to use photographs as a beginning point for their observations. If you do this as a large group, you can also guide the observations and students can build on their classmates’ ideas.

• Reflection: Students think about how the framework suggestions can help to create a positive learning environment that supports all children’s development of language and literacy skills. The reflection can be done as a large group discussion that references the motivator activity or as an individual writing activity.

Information Delivery
The following PCF, V1 content could be used as part of an introduction to or review of environments and materials for students when they begin this key topic:

• Discussion of the daily schedule and daily routines (pp. 16-
The environment as part of curriculum planning (pp. 15-16)

Key points from the introduction (p. 103):

- How environments are arranged affects how children learn to talk, read, and write.
- Environments should foster language development, two-way communication, and development of literacy skills.
- Adults need to model language and literacy as well as provide instruction.
- Play spaces with literacy props that are interesting to children provide opportunities for children to congregate and make choices that support language and literacy.

This content could be delivered through lectures and/or assigned readings.

**Active Learning**

**Getting it started**

Ask students to read the introductory paragraph of the environments and materials section on page 103 of PCF, V1 and identify the key points.

Then have them review the environments and materials section in the language and literacy domain (PCF, V1, pp. 103-108). Point out that there are eight major characteristics of environments and materials listed in bold-faced type and that the fifth characteristic, “Centers or interest areas,” is further broken down into eight specific areas. Handout 1, following this key topic, lists these characteristics of environments and materials. Ask students to complete the section on how children’s knowledge and skills related to language and literacy are supported by these characteristics. Handout 2, intended for instructors, gives example answers for Handout 1. It may be helpful to go through one of the characteristics with the whole class to make sure the students understand the activity.

Students can work on the handout individually, in pairs, or in small groups. You may also assign specific characteristics to individual students or pairs/groups of students and then have
them share their responses with the whole class. Each student could then have a full resource sheet.

**Keeping it going**
Next have students go back through their lists of environments and materials and brainstorm concrete examples of each characteristic. For students who have little background or experience in early childhood education, you can suggest that they pull some examples described in the PCF, V1. Encourage students with more extensive experience or who are currently working in a preschool to cite examples from actual classrooms. You can have students work in their original groupings or as a whole class. If the students have a wide range of experience, it may be helpful for some students to do this as a large group.

**Taking it further**
If the students have reviewed the organization of the language and literacy domain and are familiar with its strands and substrands, they can revisit their lists of environments and materials and brainstorm which of those might support different substrands. By having students complete the grid provided as Handout 3 with the substrands on one axis and the environments and materials characteristics on the other axis, students can place an “X” where they see a link.

Before doing this segment, it is important to have a sense of the students’ understanding of the content of the substrands. If students are beginning their work with the PLF, V1 as well as the PCF, V1, it may be helpful to have them complete the grid as a whole class or in pairs or groups. The purpose of this task is to have students develop enough familiarity with the environments and materials listed to be able to remember and use them in their teaching.

If students have completed the grids in pairs or groups, discuss their selections as a whole group. Ask students to explain how they saw the substrand supported. Both the relationships identified (i.e., Xs on the grid) and explanations will demonstrate the range of students’ understanding of how planning environments and materials can support children’s language and literacy development. Be sure that students understand there may not be just one link between an environment/material and a specific substrand because an intentionally planned environment or material can support
language and literacy in many substrands.

**Another approach**
An alternative way to have students explore how environments and materials support language and literacy is to have them observe early care and education settings. This can be done in two ways: by showing photographs of different areas of a preschool classroom or by having students make classroom observations.

If you use photographs, you may show each one to the entire class and have students discuss them as a whole class exercise. Some of the discussion points listed in the “Putting it together” segment may be used. Or you may give specific photographs to groups of students to work on together.

If students can perform classroom observations, suggest that they take photographs of different areas of the classroom that show some of the materials or environmental arrangements from the PCF, V1. If the children will be present, make sure the students check with the teacher or administrator about photographing policies and protocols. Ask students to photograph or note at least five different examples and what language and literacy learning was being supported. If possible, have students also interview the teacher and find out why the teacher chose the materials and arranged the environment that you saw.

If many of your students are already working in preschool programs, students could use their own classrooms for the observation. They could then explain why they set up the environment and materials instead of interviewing the teacher.

You may choose to assign specific characteristics to individual students or groups of students for the focus of their observations. This would ensure a wider sampling of environments and materials for a large class discussion.

**Putting it together**
Students can summarize either type of observation through a written assignment or classroom presentation. They should include the following points:

- Descriptions of the examples of the environmental arrangements or materials they observed
• How these examples demonstrated planning by the teacher

• How these examples supported children’s language or literacy development (specifically listening and speaking, reading, and/or writing)

• Summary of the interview with the teacher

• One or two suggestions for other environments or materials they would plan for their own classrooms

If you have the students do presentations, you could also ask the other students if there are other recommendations they would make.

Reflection

There are two sets of reflective questions offered for this key topic. The first specifically addresses the environment and materials in the language and literacy domain:

• When thinking about planning the environment and materials for a preschool program to support children’s language and literacy development, which ideas stood out for you?

• Which ones seem to be easier to implement? Which ones might pose more challenges?

• What considerations should you keep in mind for ensuring that the environment and materials support children who are learning English or have disabilities? Reflect the families and communities of the children in the class?

• Where might you find additional support in setting up the environment and materials in a classroom to foster children’s language and literacy development?

The second set of questions are more general ones that were also suggested in the reflection for Key Topic 1 of this unit:

• What ideas stood out most for you today?

• Which ones reinforced what you have already learned or experienced? Which ones gave you a new perspective or insight?
• How might you apply a new perspective to your work now or in the future?
• What further information or support do you need?
• What first step do you need to do?

Deeper Understanding

Have students conduct a literature review to identify print and Web resources on early childhood environments. They are then to develop an annotated bibliography of resources on children’s environments with an emphasis on how the environment and materials support language and literacy in classroom settings. Remind students to keep in mind that they are looking for resources that support all children’s active learning, including children who are English learners and who have disabilities.
### Unit 4 – Language and Literacy

**Key Topic 2: Getting to Know Environments and Materials That Support Language and Literacy Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environments and Materials</th>
<th>How language and literacy skills and knowledge are fostered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily schedule</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large-group space</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small-group space</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family display space</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centers or interest areas</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dramatic play area</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Block area</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Unit 4 – Language and Literacy

**Key Topic 2: Getting to Know Environments and Materials That Support Language and Literacy Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environments and Materials</th>
<th>How language and literacy skills and knowledge are fostered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art area</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library or book area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Game area</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Math area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare materials that</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>maximize language or literacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arrange learning environments to</td>
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<tr>
<td>fascinate children and prompt</td>
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<tr>
<td>conversations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extend the classroom beyond its</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>walls</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Unit 4 – Language and Literacy

## Key Topic 2: Getting to Know Environments and Materials That Support Language and Literacy Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environments and Materials</th>
<th>How language and literacy skills and knowledge are fostered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily schedule</td>
<td>• Provides opportunities for conversations with adults and peers, exposure to print and writing and drawing materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large-group space</td>
<td>• Provides opportunities for children to participate in verbal and nonverbal communication ((e.g., songs, stories, games) with peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small-group space</td>
<td>• Allows teacher to adapt interaction levels and teaching strategies to individual children and have more individual interaction with each child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family display space</td>
<td>• Strengthens link with families of children in the classroom and provides opportunities to display print</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centers or interest areas</td>
<td>• Provides opportunities for children to communicate with other children during play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic play area</td>
<td>• Provides opportunities for children to create own play scenarios with accompanying language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block area</td>
<td>• Provides children with opportunities to learn spatial language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Language and Literacy: Handout 2 – Getting to Know Environments and Materials That Support Language and Literacy Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environments and Materials</th>
<th>Art area</th>
<th>Writing area</th>
<th>Library or book area</th>
<th>Science area</th>
<th>Game area</th>
<th>Math area</th>
<th>Prepare materials that maximize language or literacy</th>
<th>Arrange learning environments to fascinate children and prompt conversations</th>
<th>Extend the classroom beyond its walls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How language and literacy skills and knowledge are fostered</td>
<td>Provides opportunities to practice fine motor skills for later writing and starting to develop use of symbols</td>
<td>Increases children’s interest and engagement in writing</td>
<td>Provides opportunity for children to read and look at books</td>
<td>Provides opportunity for children to learn rich vocabulary, ask questions, describe their observations</td>
<td>Provides opportunities for children to hear and use language while playing language games</td>
<td>Provides opportunities for children to learn math vocabulary</td>
<td>Gives teacher opportunity to plan materials that reflect children’s home</td>
<td>Encourages children to use new vocabulary</td>
<td>Presents opportunities for children to experience print in their community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Unit 4 – Language and Literacy

**Key Topic 2: Getting to Know Environments and Materials That Support Language and Literacy Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environments and Materials →</th>
<th>Daily schedule for adult-child and child-child interactions</th>
<th>Large-group space</th>
<th>Small-group space</th>
<th>Centers or interest areas</th>
<th>Prep materials ahead of time</th>
<th>Arrange environments to facilitate children and prompt conversations</th>
<th>Extend classroom beyond walls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Strands and Substrands

#### Strand: Listening and Speaking

1. **1.0 Language Use and Conventions**
2. **2.0 Vocabulary**
3. **3.0 Grammar**

#### Strand: Reading

1. **1.0 Concepts about Print**
2. **2.0 Phonological Awareness**
3. **3.0 Alphabets and Word/Print Recognition**
4. **4.0 Comprehension and Analysis of Age-Appropriate Text**
5. **5.0 Literacy Interest and Response**

#### Strand: Writing

1. **1.0 Writing Strategies**
Environments and Materials That Support Language and Literacy

• How environments are arranged affects how children learn to talk, read, and write.
• Environments should foster language development, two-way communication, and development of literacy skills.
Environments and Materials That Support Language and Literacy

- Adults need to model language and literacy as well as provide instruction.
- Play spaces with literacy props that are interesting to children provide opportunities for children to congregate and make choices that support language and literacy.

Environments and Materials That Support Language and Literacy

- Descriptions of examples of the environmental arrangements or materials observed
- How these examples demonstrated planning by the teacher
- How these examples supported children’s language or literacy development
- Summary of the interview with the teacher
- One or two suggestions for other environments or materials you would plan for your own classroom
When thinking about planning the environment and materials to support children’s language and literacy development, which ideas stood out for you?

Which ones seem to be easier to implement? Which ones might pose more challenges?

What considerations should you keep in mind for ensuring that the environment and materials support children who are learning English or have disabilities? Reflect the families and communities of the children in the class?

Where might you find additional support in setting up the environment and materials in a classroom to foster children’s language and literacy development?
• What ideas stood out most for you today?
• Which ones reinforced what you have already learned or experienced? Which ones gave you a new perspective or insight?
• How might you apply a new perspective to your work now or in the future?
• What further information or support do you need?
• What first step do you need to do?
Focus Statement
Students become familiar with interactions and strategies that can be used to support children's progress in the language and literacy domain.

Before You Start
Because this key topic focuses on the interactions and strategies that support young children's language and literacy development, you may need to spend some time ensuring that students have a basic understanding of how children develop language and literacy, including children whose families' home language is not English. There is suggested content under “Information Delivery.”

It is also important to note that the English-language development foundations and the language and literacy foundations are recommended to be used in tandem with the curriculum framework. Although this key topic focuses on students becoming familiar with the language and literacy interactions and strategies in the California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1 (PCF, V1), students also need to know that they must acquire an understanding of children’s language development in their home language and their understanding and use of English when planning what interactions and strategies—and possible modifications to them—can support the children’s language and literacy learning (PCF, V1, pp. 178-179).

There are 74 interactions and strategies in Chapter 4 of the PCF, V1. These interactions and strategies are organized by the strands and substrands of the language and literacy domain and can be found after the vignettes presented in the nine substrands. Table 2 indicates how many interactions and strategies there are for each strand and substrand. This may help you determine the student groupings and assignments for the active learning.
Table 2. Total number of vignettes, interactions, and strategies for the language and literacy domain by strand and substrand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strands and substrands</th>
<th>Number of vignettes</th>
<th>Number of interactions &amp; strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strand: Listening and Speaking</strong> (PCF, V1, pp. 110-127)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 Language Use and Conventions</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0 Vocabulary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0 Grammar</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strand: Reading</strong> (PCF, V1, pp. 128-157)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 Concepts about Print</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0 Phonological Awareness</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0 Alphabets and Word/Print Recognition</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0 Comprehension and Analysis of Age-Appropriate Text</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0 Literacy Interest and Response</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strand: Writing</strong> (PCF, V1, pp. 158-167)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 Writing Strategies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1

Note to Faculty: A full list of the interactions and strategies is on pages 123-126 at the end of this key topic.

If students are just beginning their study of the PCF, V1, it may be helpful to do a review of its organizational structure before they start working on the interactions and strategies. You could use the “Getting it started” segment in Unit 4, Key Topic 1, Organization and Rationale of the Language and Literacy Domain, or reference Unit 1, Key Topic 1 of this instructional guide.
The active learning in this key topic is based on the vignettes. Students first identify and reflect on the interactions and strategies related to the vignettes and then observe preschool programs, through either videos or classroom visits, where they can see these interactions and strategies being implemented.

If you plan to have students do classroom observations, you may need to discuss how they can learn the protocols for conducting these observations. Also, remind them that what they will observe in one visit is a snapshot and not a comprehensive documentary of the program. It will not be possible to see examples of all strategies and interactions in a single observation.

**Information Delivery**

The following content from the *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1* and the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1* could be used as part of an introduction to or review of language and literacy for students when they begin this unit.

**California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1:**
- Discussion of the language and literacy strands and substrands in the *California Preschool Learning Foundation, Volume 1* (pp. 49-55)
- Review of the research for each strand (pp. 71-88)
- Glossary related to language and literacy (p. 89)

**California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1:**
- Components of oral language (pp. 98-99)
- Examples of research findings (pp. 99 and 138)
- Glossary related to language and literacy (pp. 323-325)
- Relationship of the language and literacy domain and the English language development domain (pp. 10-13 and pp. 178-179)

Information about the organizational structure of the PCF, V1 can be found in these places:
- Review of the organizational structure of the PCF, V1 (pp. 9-10)
• Unit 4, Key Topic 1, “Getting it started,” of this instructional guide

• This content could be delivered through lectures and/or assigned readings.

Active Learning

Getting it started

Begin the segment by reviewing with students the organizational structure of the PCF, V1. Explain that they will be focusing on the interactions and strategies that support children’s development of language and literacy knowledge and skills. Be sure the students understand that each substrand contains vignettes that are followed by teachable moments and interactions and strategies related to the vignette.

Assign students to one of the nine substrands. Depending on the number of students in your class, you may choose to have the students work individually, in pairs, or in small groups.

Ask students to read the vignettes and teachable moments in their assigned substrand and the interactions and strategies described for each vignette. As they do this, have them consider the following questions:

• Which interactions or strategies did the teacher in the vignette use? How were they used?

• Which interactions or strategies were not observed? How could they be included?

You may wish to have students then share examples of how they saw the strategies and interactions being observed so the whole class begins to develop some familiarity with identifying different interactions and strategies.

Keeping it going

Next have the students list the interactions and strategies for their substrand. Handout 1, which lists the interactions and strategies, is provided as a reference following this key topic.

It is suggested that you provide an opportunity for students to share their lists so the whole class sees a complete list of the interactions and strategies. For example, you may have students write each substrand’s list on a sheet of chart paper.
After giving the students time to review all the lists, have them respond to or discuss the following questions:

- What stands out for you from these lists?
- Where did you see some similarities in the interactions and strategies among the different substrands?
- Why do you think there are more interactions or strategies in some substrands than in others?
- How might you keep and organize these interactions and strategies so they could be a resource for you?

**Taking it further**
Next have students identify how these interactions and strategies support language and literacy in actual preschool classrooms. This can be done in two ways: by showing video clips of a preschool classroom or by having students make classroom observations.

If students are able to visit early care and education programs for at least two- or three-hour periods, have students arrange to conduct an observation visit. Explain that they are to observe a preschool classroom and identify examples of the interactions and strategies being used.

Depending on students’ experience and familiarity with the interactions and strategies, it may be helpful for students to focus on the interactions and strategies for one substrand during their observations. You may have students choose a substrand or assign several students the same substrand so that there is an opportunity to compare and discuss how interactions and strategies are implemented. Or you could assign different substrands to different students to allow for a wider breadth of examples. The following elements are suggestions for what students can include in their observations:

- Context of the activity (e.g., number of children, number and role of adults, description of the activity, where the activity was conducted, length of the activity)
- Observations (what children did and said, what adults did and said)
- Examples of interactions and strategies observed
• Which examples seemed to be intentionally planned
• Which examples seemed to be teachable moments (i.e., the teacher responded to something a child or group of children did or said)

If you use video clips instead of classroom observations, you can follow the same guidelines in assigning students and substrands. If the students do not have much experience, it may be helpful to show clips that highlight one substrand.

**Putting it together**
Whether the observations are done in preschool programs or of video clips, plan time for students to share their experiences in identifying examples of interactions and strategies. The following questions could be used in a class discussion:

• What interactions or strategies stood out for you?
• Which ones were easier to identify? Which ones were harder? Why?
• Did some strategies or interactions appear more frequently than others? Which ones?
• Did some strategies or interactions appear to be more effective than others? Which ones?
• Were there examples where an interaction or strategy was specifically designed for a child who is an English learner? Which ones?
• Which strategies or interactions might be difficult or not possible to observe in a single observation?
• What other strategies or interactions might have been used?

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**Reflection**

There are two sets of reflective questions offered for this key topic. The first specifically addresses the interactions and strategies in this key topic:

• What interactions and strategies stand out for you?
• Which interactions and strategies were the least familiar to you? Were they from primarily one substrand or across several substrands?
• Which interactions and strategies could apply in more than one substrand?

• What do you want to remember or do so that you can use these interactions and strategies in your work of supporting children’s language and literacy development?

The second set of questions are the more general ones suggested in the reflection for Unit 4, Key Topic 1:

• What ideas stood out most for you today?

• Which ones reinforced what you have already learned or experienced? Which ones gave you a new perspective or insight?

• How might you apply a new perspective to your work now or in the future?

• What further information or support do you need?

• What first step do you need to do?

Deeper Understanding

There are two suggestions for this segment; one allows students to examine the breadth of the interactions and strategies across the language and literacy strands and substrands while the other encourages students to do a more in-depth exploration of the interactions and strategies for one substrand.

To review the breadth of the interactions and strategies, have students list the language and literacy strands and substrands across the top of a paper. Then have them select a substrand and choose a strategy from the lists they developed in the “Keeping it going” segment. The students are to write the interaction or strategy in the appropriate column. Next have them look across the other strands and substrands and note if and how the interaction or strategy could be used in other substrands. Have them continue this process with the other interactions and strategies from their initial substrand.

There are many ways this exercise could be done. Students could work individually or in some kind of groupings and do all the interactions and strategies or an assigned set. It could be done in class or as an out-of-class assignment.
For an in-depth examination of a selected group of interactions and substrands, have students select one of the substrands and carefully review its interactions and strategies. Encourage them to choose an area that they are not as familiar with. Explain that they are to identify some research related to those interactions and strategies so they start to develop an understanding of their research base. Point out that the endnotes (PCF, V1, pp. 172-173), teacher resources (PCF, V1, p. 170), and references (PCF, V1, p. 171) in the framework could be starting points. Students are then to write a paper or prepare a presentation summarizing the research and explaining how the research findings support their chosen substrand’s interactions and strategies.
**Unit 4 – Language and Literacy**  
**Key Topic 3: Getting to Know Interactions and Strategies That Support Language and Literacy Development**

**Strand: Listening and Speaking Interactions and Strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substrand: Language Use and Conventions</th>
<th>Substrand: Vocabulary</th>
<th>Substrand: Grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set the stage for language use.</td>
<td>Build on children’s interests.</td>
<td>Talk one on one with children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledge children’s contributions.</td>
<td>What’s my name?</td>
<td>Know your families and individual children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play games and make them interesting and fun!</td>
<td>Language in, language out . . . Narrate!</td>
<td>Spin narratives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage in “getting to know you” conversations.</td>
<td>More word games.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model the use of language conventions and encourage children to do the same.</td>
<td>Detective work.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build on preschool children’s own experiences.</td>
<td>Routines: Here we go again!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use dramatic play and co-construct stories.</td>
<td>Language opportunities in children’s art.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Unit 4 – Language and Literacy
### Key Topic 3: Getting to Know Interactions and Strategies That Support Language and Literacy Development

### Strand: Reading Interactions and Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substrand: Concepts about Print</th>
<th>Substrand: Phonological Awareness</th>
<th>Substrand: Alphabets and Word/Print Recognition</th>
<th>Substrand: Comprehension and Analysis of Age-Appropriate Text</th>
<th>Substrand: Literacy Interest and Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide print props to support dramatic play.</td>
<td>Play language games that focus on blending sounds.</td>
<td>Use children’s printed names as labels and to support routines.</td>
<td>Read stories daily.</td>
<td>Make stories come alive and encourage the children to do the same.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide print props for a variety of play themes in the dramatic play and block areas.</td>
<td>Play language games that focus on segmenting sounds.</td>
<td>Use children’s printed names and letters in transition activities.</td>
<td>Plan support for story reading.</td>
<td>Use voice for expression and with variation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use print to designate interest areas.</td>
<td>Play language games that focus on deletion.</td>
<td>Use children’s names in teacher-guided activities.</td>
<td>Read a story several times over a few days.</td>
<td>Make story time not too long, not too short, but just right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use literacy terminology to help children learn it.</td>
<td>Sing songs and say poems each day.</td>
<td>Provide children’s names as a resource or reference.</td>
<td>Help children understand the words and sentences in a story.</td>
<td>Make reading and writing meaningful and useful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Unit 4 – Language and Literacy

#### Key Topic 3: Getting to Know Interactions and Strategies That Support Language and Literacy Development

#### Strand: Reading Interactions and Strategies (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substrand: Concepts about Print</th>
<th>Substrand: Phonological awareness</th>
<th>Substrand: Alphabetics and Word/Print Recognition</th>
<th>Substrand: Comprehension and Analysis of Age-Appropriate Text</th>
<th>Substrand: Literacy Interest and Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use print to support classroom routines.</td>
<td>Play with sounds by adding new verses to a familiar song.</td>
<td>Provide access to alphabet letters in a variety of contexts.</td>
<td>Discuss a story after reading it.</td>
<td>Seek children’s input.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read environmental print.</td>
<td>Use phonological awareness activities for transitions.</td>
<td>Focus on first letters and sounds in alphabet books and posters.</td>
<td>Model deeper levels of reasoning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use print as a tool to get things done and to record information.</td>
<td>Discuss rhyming word and words that begin with the same sound.</td>
<td>Point to each letter as its name is sung in a song.</td>
<td>Read information books.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Strand: Writing Interactions and Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substrand: Writing Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set up a well-stocked writing area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add new materials frequently to the writing area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide writing materials in other interest areas, inside and outside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embed writing in everyday transitions and routines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage children to write in the art interest area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respond sensitively to children’s emergent writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respond to children’s questions and requests for help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display children’s writing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Which interactions or strategies did the teacher in the vignette use? How were they used?

Which interactions or strategies were not observed? How could they be included?
Interactions and Strategies That Support Language and Literacy

- What stands out for you from these lists?
- Where did you see some similarities in the interactions and strategies among the different substrands?
- Why do you think there are more interactions or strategies in some substrands than in others?
- How might you keep and organize these interactions and strategies so they could be a resource for you?

Interactions and Strategies That Support Language and Literacy

- Context of the activity
- Observations
- Interactions and strategies observed
- Which examples seemed to be intentionally planned?
- Which examples seemed to be teachable moments?
**Interactions and Strategies That Support Language and Literacy**

- What interactions or strategies stood out for you?
- Which ones were easier to identify? Which ones were harder? Why?
- Did some strategies or interactions appear more frequently than others? Which ones?
- Did some strategies or interactions appear to be more effective than others? Which ones?

**Interactions and Strategies That Support Language and Literacy**

- Were there examples where an interaction or strategy was specifically designed for a child who is an English learner? Which ones?
- Which strategies or interactions might be difficult or not possible to observe in a single observation?
- What other strategies or interactions might have been used?
Interactions and Strategies That Support Language and Literacy

- What interactions and strategies stand out for you?
- Which interactions and strategies were the least familiar to you? Were they from primarily one substrand or across several substrands?
- Which interactions and strategies could apply in more than one substrand?

- What do you want to remember or do so that you can use these interactions and strategies in your work of supporting children’s language and literacy development?
Interactions and Strategies That Support Language and Literacy

- What ideas stood out most for you today?
- Which ones reinforced what you have already learned or experienced? Which ones gave you a new perspective or insight?
- How might you apply a new perspective to your work now or in the future?
- What further information or support do you need?
- What first step do you need to do?
Unit 4 – Language and Literacy
Key Topic 4: Universal Design, Individualizing, and Family Partnerships

Focus Statement
Students become familiar with the concepts of universal design, individualized curriculum decisions, and the rationale for family partnerships in the context of supporting children’s language and literacy development. Students also explore methods for approaching these three topics.

Before You Start
As stated in the introductory chapter to the framework, “a fundamental consideration in planning curriculum for individual children is being responsive to the competencies, experiences, interests, and needs each child brings to the preschool classroom” (California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1, p. 3). This requires being responsive to diverse cultural communities, languages, family structures, abilities, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

In addition to the diversity listed above, children enter preschool with a wide range of experiences related to early language and literacy development (PCF, V1, p. 98). Children’s parents may also have a wide range of language and literacy skills in their home language and/or English. Because language is such an essential skill for children’s learning and success in school, it is critical that students develop the knowledge and skills needed to foster the language and literacy development of any child who is in their classroom and partner with every family.

The English-language development foundations and the language and literacy foundations in the California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1 (PLF, V1) are recommended to be used in tandem with the California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1 (PCF, V1, pp. 178-179). An essential step in planning for individual children is considering each child’s development in her home language as well as her understanding and use of English. Reviewing the English-language development foundations and the English-language development chapter in the curriculum framework can inform teachers on ways to use the framework’s suggestions for the environment, materials, interactions, and strategies that support children’s learning in language and literacy.
To support these contributions in curriculum planning, this key topic is divided into three subtopics. Each emphasizes features of the curriculum framework that focus on working with each child as an individual: universal design, individualizing curriculum, and forming partnerships with families.

In the first subtopic, universal design, it is suggested that a guest speaker or a panel present to your class on considerations when planning for children with disabilities or special needs. Suggestions for presenters include early childhood special education teachers, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, assistive technology specialists, preschool teachers with experience in including children with disabilities in their classes, and parents of children with disabilities or special needs.

Please note that the same active learning segments for the Universal Design, Individualizing, and Family Partnerships subtopics are used in the social-emotional development, English-language development, and mathematics domains. Slight modifications are made in each domain to reflect its specific content.

Information Delivery

The following content from the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1* (PCF, V1) is referenced in this key topic and may be delivered through lectures and/or assigned readings:

- California’s Preschool Children (pp. 3-5)
- Universal Design for Learning (p. 13)
- Domain guiding principle for language and literacy: “Celebrate and support the individual” (p. 101)
- Overarching principle from the PCF, V1: “Individualization of learning includes all children” (pp. 7-8)
- “Partnering with families in curriculum planning” (p. 23)

The *Preschool English Learners: Principles and Practices to Promote Language, Literacy, and Learning, 2nd edition* (PEL Resource Guide), and its accompanying instructional guide are also good resources for the second subtopic on individualizing.

Active Learning

**Subtopic 1: Universal Design**

**Getting it started**

Begin by having students read the definition of and key
points about universal design for learning described in the framework (PCF, V1, p. 13). Write each approach (i.e., “multiple means of representation,” “multiple means of expression,” and “multiple means of engagement”) at the top of a sheet of chart paper. Because these concepts may be new to your students, it is suggested that you spend some time discussing each one by reviewing the examples provided in the PCF, V1 and providing some additional ones. Also encourage students to share any experiences they have had with adapting curriculum for young children with disabilities or special needs. Ask a few students to write these examples from the PCF, V1 under each heading.

**Keeping it going**

Point out to students that suggestions for adapting or modifying environments and activities can be found in the environments and materials, vignettes, and interactions and strategies. Assign students in pairs or small groups to different strands or substrands and ask them to review the interactions and strategies. Ask them to find those interactions and strategies that would be useful in working with children with disabilities or special needs. This could take some time because the suggestions are embedded in the text without any highlighting, so you may want students to do this as an out-of-class assignment.

Ask them to consider which ones they think they could carry out on their own and where they would need extra help or resources. Point out that Appendix D, Resources for Teachers of Children with Disabilities or Other Special Needs, could be a starting point for finding supports (PCF, V1, pp. 319-322).

**Taking it further**

Have students work individually or in small groups to review the suggestions from the environments and materials and interactions and strategies for adapting or modifying an activity or approach. (Students can use the list from the above segment, “Keeping it going.”) Have students write each suggestion on a half sheet of paper or large Post-it® note. Their task is to decide if the suggestion falls under “multiple means of representation,” “multiple means of expression,” or “multiple means of engagement.” Remind students that some suggestions may fall under more than one heading.
They then place the note on the chart paper with the appropriate heading. You could also have students do this by labeling three sheets of paper or three columns on a sheet of paper with the three approaches and writing the suggestions under their chosen heading. You may also wish to assign students specific suggestions instead of the whole list to review.

After students have finished posting their suggestions on the appropriate categories, discuss why they made their matches.

**Putting it together**
You may wish to conclude this subtopic by having students discuss the following questions:

- What are some of the key concepts in universal design?
- Which concepts were clear to you? Which concepts were confusing?
- What other questions do you have about universal design related to language and literacy?
- What resources do you think would be most helpful to you in your work?

**Another approach**
This could be done instead of the preceding exercises or in addition to them as an expansion.

Explain to students that they will be hearing from a guest speaker or panel to discuss considerations when planning for children with disabilities or special needs. Note that this is not intended as an in-depth exploration but as an introduction to some of the ways in which curriculum can be made responsive to the needs of all children.

Ask the presenters to address the importance of supporting children’s language and literacy development, ensuring that children with disabilities can communicate with their peers and adults in the class, and partnering with families. Provide the presenters with the information on universal design in the PCF, V1 on page 13 and ask them to include examples of how they’ve used some of the strategies suggested. If students are not familiar with special education, ask the presenters to also give a brief overview that includes a summary of the
assessment and IEP process; how services are provided; and ways that the special education teachers, therapists, and other specialists can work with teachers in preschool programs to figure out and/or provide the adaptations for each child who has a disability.

Ask the students to note examples of each of the three universal design approaches that the speaker or panelists describe that support language and literacy.

After the speakers have left, ask students to write any additional suggestions from the presenters on the chart papers or their own lists. Then have students respond to the following questions individually or through a class discussion:

- What information from the presenter(s) caught your attention or stood out for you?
- What are you most confident about in supporting the language and literacy development of children with disabilities? What concerns you?
- What new or different perspectives do you have? How has this presentation been helpful?
- What do you want to keep in mind when you are planning ways to modify or adapt the learning environment and experiences for children with disabilities to ensure their progress in language and literacy?

**Subtopic 2: Individualizing**

**Getting it started**
Begin this subtopic by reviewing the section in the framework titled “California’s Preschool Children” (PCF, V1, pp. 3-5). Have students find and summarize the key points and share them through a classroom discussion.

**Keeping it going**
Next have students read the sixth overarching principle, “Individualization of learning includes all children” (PCF, V1, pp. 7-8).

Ask students to give examples of differences they might see in
different children for each of the characteristics described in the sixth overarching principle: “. . . temperament, family and cultural experiences, language experiences, personal strengths, interests, abilities, and dispositions . . . ” Ask some students to chart or take notes of the examples.

Then continue the class discussion by reviewing the examples and asking the students to describe some of the implications of these individual differences in supporting children’s language and literacy development.

**Taking it further**
Assign a substrand to individual or groups of students and have them review the interactions and strategies for the assigned substrand. The students can reference the lists developed as Handout 1 in Unit 4, Key Topic 3, or you may provide them with a list. As they review the interactions and strategies, ask students to note ways that the strategy can help teachers get to know children individually. For example, in the PCF, V1 (pp. 112-113), the strategies “Acknowledge children’s contributions” and “Engage in ‘getting to know you’ conversations” in the substrand “Language Use and Conventions” can help teachers learn which children are more spontaneously verbal and which ones respond more when others initiate conversations.

After the students have had time to identify examples in their assigned strategies and interactions, ask for some students to share one or two of their ideas with the whole class. Continue the discussion until students have a good sense of how the interactions and strategies can support individualization for children.

**Putting it together**
Conclude this subtopic by having students consider the following questions that could help them get to know the individual characteristics of children who might be in their classrooms and how to plan for each child’s continuing progress in language and literacy:

- What kinds of documentation could you use to help you understand individual children in terms of their language and literacy?
- What are some ways you could get to know the families of individual children? About their language?
• How could you learn about the child’s community?

• How could you find out what things a child is interested in?

• What different kinds of information about the child could you obtain by observing him during the different parts of the daily routine?

• What are some ways you could determine each child’s strengths in his/her language and literacy development?

• How could you use this information to plan curriculum that supports each child’s language and literacy development?

**Subtopic 3: Family Partnerships**

**Getting it started**
Point out to students that there is a section entitled “Engaging Families” at the end of each strand (PCF, V1, pp. 126, 155-156, and 165-166). Ideas to give to families for use at home are listed in each of these sections. Assign groups of students a strand and have them list the strategies in their strand on pieces of chart paper—two strategies per sheet with blank space between the two strategies or as headings for two columns. They are then to list examples from the framework under each strategy and post their chart sheets on the wall.

**Keeping it going**
Next have the groups move to another sheet of strategies and add other ideas for implementing the strategy. This is similar to a brainstorming activity, so allow about 5 minutes per rotation and continue until all groups have added ideas to all the strategies.

**Taking it further**
Continue this exercise by having students review pages 3-5 of the PCF, V1, “California’s Preschool Children,” and identify examples of how children’s families are diverse.

Ask students to next think about other ways families are unique:

• Family composition in the home including primary caregivers, siblings, other family members

• Length of time in the United States
• Parents’ educational experiences in the U.S. or other countries
• Parents’ literacy skills
• Types of employment and work schedules
• Parenting beliefs and practices

Discuss how each of these characteristics might impact children’s language and literacy development.

Next have the students identify any considerations or additional ways to individualize the strategies for families. You could do this as a large group discussion or have the original groups add the considerations and additional strategies for their strand. Each group could then present its ideas.

**Another way**
Instead of having students brainstorm ways to implement the strategies for engaging families (described in “Keeping it going”), have students interview teachers and parents to identify examples. These interviews could be conducted in different ways:

• Students first ask teachers and parents for ways that they have partnered and the students then list these examples under the different strategies.
• Assign students different strategies and have them ask teachers and parents for examples for those specific strategies.

**Putting it together**
Conclude this subtopic by having students respond to these questions:

• What considerations or ideas about the impact and influence of families on children’s language and literacy development caught your attention?
• Which ones resonated with you because of your experiences with children and families?
• Which strategies or interactions do you think are most important to include in order to build strong partnerships with families that foster children’s language and literacy?
• What is a first step you would take in building these partnerships?

Reflection

You could have students reflect on this key topic by having them respond to the following questions for each subtopic or for the overall key topic. This could be done through journaling or as a discussion.

• What ideas stood out most for you today?

• Which ones reinforced what you have already learned or experienced? Which ones gave you a new perspective or insight?

• How might you apply a new perspective to your work now or in the future?

• What further information or support do you need?

• What first step do you need to do?

Deeper Understanding

There are two suggestions to engage students more deeply in this key topic:

• Students are to choose one of the three subtopics and interview a teacher and parent on the subtopic. The objective of the interview is to identify recommended practices that the teacher uses and that the parent has experienced in promoting children’s language and literacy development. Depending on your students’ background, you may wish to develop the interview questions in a class session before having students conduct and write up the interviews.

• There is an extensive body of research about the importance of reading and sharing books with children to support their language and literacy development. Have students identify some of this research and prepare a paper or presentation that includes the following content:
  • Summary of the research and findings
  • Adaptations for reading and sharing books with children with disabilities or special needs
• The role of families in reading and sharing books with their children
• Considerations in selecting and sharing books that reflect children’s individual interests, strengths, and development
Universal Design, Individualizing, and Family Partnerships

Universal Design

- Multiple means of representation
- Multiple means of expression
- Multiple means of engagement
Universal Design

• What are some of the key concepts in universal design?
• Which concepts were clear to you?
  Which concepts were confusing?
• What other questions do you have about universal design related to language and literacy?
• What resources do you think would be most helpful to you in your work?

Universal Design

• What information from the presenter(s) caught your attention or stood out for you?
• What are you most confident about in supporting the language and literacy development of children with disabilities? What concerns you?
Universal Design

- What new or different perspectives do you have? How has this presentation been helpful?
- What do you want to keep in mind when you are planning ways to modify or adapt the learning environment and experiences for children with disabilities to ensure their progress in language and literacy?

“Individualization of learning includes all children.”

http://www.wested.org/facultyinitiative/
Individualizing

- What kinds of documentation could you use to help understand individual children in terms of their language and literacy?
- What are some ways you could get to know the families of individual children? About their language?
- How could you learn about the child’s community?
- How could you find out what things a child is interested in?

- What different kinds of information about a child could you obtain by observing during different parts of the daily routine?
- What are some ways you could determine each child’s strengths in his/her language and literacy development?
- How could you use this information to plan curriculum that supports each child’s language and literacy development?
Family Partnerships

- What considerations or ideas about the impact and influence of families on children’s language and literacy development caught your attention?
- Which ones resonated with you because of your experiences with children and families?

Family Partnerships

- Which strategies or interactions do you think are most important to include in order to build strong partnerships with families that foster children’s language and literacy?
- What is a first step you would take in building these partnerships?
What ideas stood out most for you today?
Which ones reinforced what you have already learned or experienced? Which ones gave you a new perspective or insight?
How might you apply a new perspective to your work now or in the future?
What further information or support do you need?
What first step do you need to do?

Language and Literacy

- Identify research about the importance of reading and sharing books with children to support their language and literacy development.
- Prepare a paper or presentation, including:
  - Summary of the research and findings
  - Adaptations for reading and sharing books with children with special needs
  - The role of families in reading and sharing books with their children
  - Considerations in selecting and sharing books that reflect children's individual interests, strengths, and development