

## ***Language and Literacy:*** **Using Children's Books to Explore the Language and Literacy Foundations**

<b>Strands:</b>	<b><i>Listening &amp; Speaking</i></b>	<b><i>Reading</i></b>	<b><i>Writing</i></b>
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### **GETTING READY**

**Instructional Component(s):** In-Class Activity; Out-of-Class Activity; Assessment

**Strands:** This activity can be used to deepen understanding of all strands, especially the *Listening and Speaking* and *Reading* strands.

**Focus:** Students explore how the foundations can be found in shared book reading experiences.

### **AFTER PARTICIPATING IN THIS ACTIVITY**

Students will demonstrate **knowledge** and **skills** that are consistent with an increased understanding and application of the concepts addressed in this activity.

***Students will demonstrate an understanding of:***

- The language and literacy domain of the PLF, V1, including strands, substrands, foundations, and examples of foundations (*Standards 1, 5, & 6*)\*
- How to select and use books to support children learning the skills described in the language and literacy domain of the PLF, V1 (*Standards 1, 4, & 5*)\*
- The importance of book sharing and having positive reading experiences for young children and their families, including children who are English learners and families whose home languages are other than English (*Standards 1, 2, 4, & 5*)\*

***Students will be able to:***

- Discuss and reflect upon the concepts and content in the language and literacy domain, including strands, substrands foundations, and examples of the foundations (*Standards 1, 5, & 6*)\*
- Develop and implement activities using books that support children learning the skills described in the language and literacy domain of the PLF, V1 (*Standards 1, 4, & 5*)\*
- Support children and families to engage in book sharing and reading activities at home, including children who are English learners and families whose home languages are other than English (*Standards 1, 2, 4, & 5*)\*

\* See Appendix A

## ***Language and Literacy:*** **Using Children’s Books to Explore the Language and Literacy Foundations**

### ***Before you start***

Research has shown that shared book reading with young children promotes the development of many early language and literacy skills. This activity provides students with an opportunity to become familiar with the ways adults can use books to support children learning the different skills described in the foundations.

It is also important to consider how to support shared book reading with children who are English learners and with families whose home languages are other than English.

Collect a variety of preschool children’s books—including home language books and some wordless books—for this activity.

### **Getting it started**

Have students work in pairs or in small groups of three or four and let each group select a book. Students role-play a story time—one student is the teacher reading the book to the other students who are the preschoolers. The teacher should engage the children in the book reading as much as possible.

Each pair or small group then reviews the foundations and identifies specific foundations they felt were demonstrated through their book-reading experience. The students should explain why they selected those foundations. Have students use the outline of the foundations in the appendix (PLF, V1, pp. 176-179) or provide them with the handout used in the “Piecing Together the Language and Literacy Domain Puzzle.” You may also wish to give them the handout attached to this activity.

### **Keeping it going**

Next pair the groups and have the groups share their lists of foundations. Encourage the groups to note any similarities and differences in their lists of foundations. Then have all the groups post their lists for the rest of the class to review.

**Putting it together**

Slides 2-3

Have the students take a few minutes to look at all the lists. Summarize the activity by having the whole class discuss the following questions:

- Which foundations were listed most frequently on the lists? Which ones appeared infrequently?
- Which foundations seemed obvious? Which ones surprised you?
- What are some key points about the link between shared book reading and the foundations?
- How could you share these key points with families?

**Taking it further**

Slide 4

You can extend the exploration of the links between shared book reading and the foundations by having students discuss one or more of the following scenarios:

- What should be considered when sharing books with children who are English learners?
- What should be considered when sharing books with children who have disabilities?

**Another way**

Ask each student to bring to class a favorite children's book suitable for preschoolers. Students could then do the first part of the activity individually with their own books, or the students could share their books in their assigned small group. Students then complete the activity as described.

**Taking it out of class**

Slide 5

Have students read the Arnold and Whitehurst article "Accelerating Language Development Through Picture Book Reading: A Summary of Dialogic Reading and Its Effects," which is listed in the references for the language and literacy chapter of the *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1* (PLF, V1).

Ask students to write a summary of dialogic reading that they could share with parents. The summary should include a description of dialogic reading, why it supports the development of children's language and literacy skills, how it relates to the foundations, and suggestions for how parents could practice this strategy with their children.

**Assessment**

Slide 6

Ask students to do a one-minute paper. On a half sheet of paper or an index card, ask students to write a one-sentence response to each question:

- What is one way that teachers can help families understand the relationship between the foundations and book-sharing activities?
- What is one way that teachers can support parents who have very low literacy skills in feeling comfortable doing book-sharing activities with their children?

**Using Children’s Books to Explore the Language and Literacy Foundations**

<b>Foundation</b>	<b>How foundation was demonstrated</b>

**HANDOUT:**  
Using Children’s Books to Explore the  
Language and Literacy Foundations