



Early Childhood Educator Workshop

Embracing the Science of Reading in our Early Childhood Classrooms

Featuring Tracie Wieczorek and Lesley Jennings
from Teaching Strategies



Saturday, October 4, 2025



Thank you to our sponsors: Indian River
County Children's Services Advisory
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Tracie Wieczorek and Lesley Jennings



Tracie Wieczorek is a trainer with Teaching Strategies' Early Literacy Certification program, where she supports educators in applying the Science of Reading in developmentally appropriate ways for young children. With over 15 years of experience as a preschool teacher, special educator, and reading specialist, she is dedicated to helping teachers build strong, research-based foundations in reading and writing that align with how young children learn best.

Tracie received her bachelor's degree in special education and teaching from Commonwealth University–Lock Haven and her Master of Education from East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania.



Lesley Jennings is the manager of Teaching Strategies' new Early Literacy Certification Program, a two-year program that builds early childhood educators' knowledge of foundational literacy skills so that they can confidently support young learners' journeys to reading and writing fluency.

Previously, Lesley worked at Teaching Strategies for three years as an educational consultant and spent 32 years in education as an early childhood teacher, literacy coach, instructional specialist, Head Start supervisor, and program supervisor for the Detroit Public Schools Early Childhood Department.

She received her bachelor's degree in early childhood education from Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia, and her master's degree in educational leadership from Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan.

The Science of Reading

What I know about the science of reading	What I want to find out about the science of reading

Leveraging the Science of Reading

Vocabulary

alliteration: an _____ repeated in two or more words (e.g., *ball, box, beanbag, basket*)

alphabetic principle: the concept of connecting individual and certain groups of _____ with specific _____ to read and write

high-frequency words: words that _____ in written materials—such as *a, an, and, that, the, and was*—and that are often taught through _____ techniques

irregular words: words that adults teach children to _____ without having to sound them out, because they don't follow the conventional _____ (e.g., *who, come, could, would, said, and does*)

onset and rime: in a word, the initial phonological unit of a syllable is the _____, and the vowel and ending consonant(s) are the _____ (e.g., the “mmmmm” and “-at” of the word “mat”)

orthography: the conventional _____ system of a language

phoneme: a single, distinct _____ in a language

phonemic awareness: the ability to hear and manipulate the _____ of spoken words

phonics: a method of teaching people to read by correlating _____ with _____ (letters or groups of letters)

phonological awareness: the understanding that _____ are made of up of _____

rhyme: corresponding sounds at the _____ (e.g., *at, bat, cat, mat, rat, sat*)

word attack skills: abilities related to _____ words based on _____ correspondence.



Expanding Young Children's Story Comprehension Skills

Review the examples. Consider adding some of your own ideas to the list. Discuss: How might I use what I already know about individual children to determine the "right" question or comment to use during book conversations?

Comment	Identify and Describe	Question
I'm thinking that... I'm wondering about... I'm trying to understand...	Illustrations Characters Setting Actions Problems Solutions	How would you describe _____? What does _____ mean? Why is _____ important? Why did _____? How did _____? How are _____ and _____ alike? What is different about _____ and _____? Why did _____ happen? What would happen if _____? How could _____ be used to _____? How is _____ similar to what you have heard in other stories?

Taking the Training Home

Think about what you have learned in today's discussions and activities. What changes/improvements can you make immediately? Within the next month? Within the next 6 months? What kinds of support and resources will you need to make the changes/improvements?

New Strategies	Resources	Person Responsible	Timeline

Tips for Storytelling

- Make up stories which feature a child in your group as the main character.
- Tell stories in which the main character does what the children did that day. The main character does not have to be a child.
- Invite family members to share stories about their life experiences.
- Use familiar storytelling phrases, such as, “Once upon a time...,” “They lived happily ever after,” “In a far-away land...,” and “The end.”
- Change your voice to portray different characters.
- Involve children by having them add sound effects or motions.
- Use props, such as old hats, puppets, and stuffed animals, as well as household items that can stand for something else, such as a pot for a helmet or a piece of fabric for a cape.
- Involve older toddlers and twos by encouraging them to repeat a refrain or supply a missing word.
- Take turns telling parts of a familiar story with older toddlers and twos.
- Laugh and have fun!

Exploring Language and Literacy Through Songs, Chants, Rhymes, and Fingerplays

1. Name of song, chant, rhyme, or fingerplay: _____

What language and literacy skills do children learn from this song, chant, rhyme, or fingerplay?

What other skills or information might children learn?

2. Name of song, chant, rhyme, or fingerplay: _____

What language and literacy skills do children learn from this song, chant, rhyme, or fingerplay?

What other skills or information might children learn?

Making Routines More Intentional and Meaningful

Routine 1: _____

What will you do differently?

What literacy skill(s) will it support?

Where will this be included on your *Weekly Planning Form* or other planning tool?

What kind of support do you need to implement your idea (for example, more information, additional materials, or someone who can model a technique for you)?

Routine 2: _____

What will you do differently?

What literacy skill(s) will it support?

Where will this be included on your *Weekly Planning Form* or other planning tool?

What kind of support do you need to implement your idea (for example, more information, additional materials, or someone who can model a technique for you)?

Relationship-Based Turn-Taking

C: Copy

- Copy *what* the child is doing, e.g., shaking the toy, dumping a bucket, or covering her face with a blanket.
- Copy *how* the child is doing it. Use the same actions, and similar words, grunts, or other vocalizations (e.g., “Ohhhh, ohhhh”).
- Copy the number of times or length of time the child uses the material. (For example, if the child pushes a car three times, you push the car three times. If he plays with the car for one minute, you play with the car for one minute.) Copy the number of sounds or words the child uses (for example, if the child says, “Ba-ba-ba,” you say, “Ba-ba-ba.”).

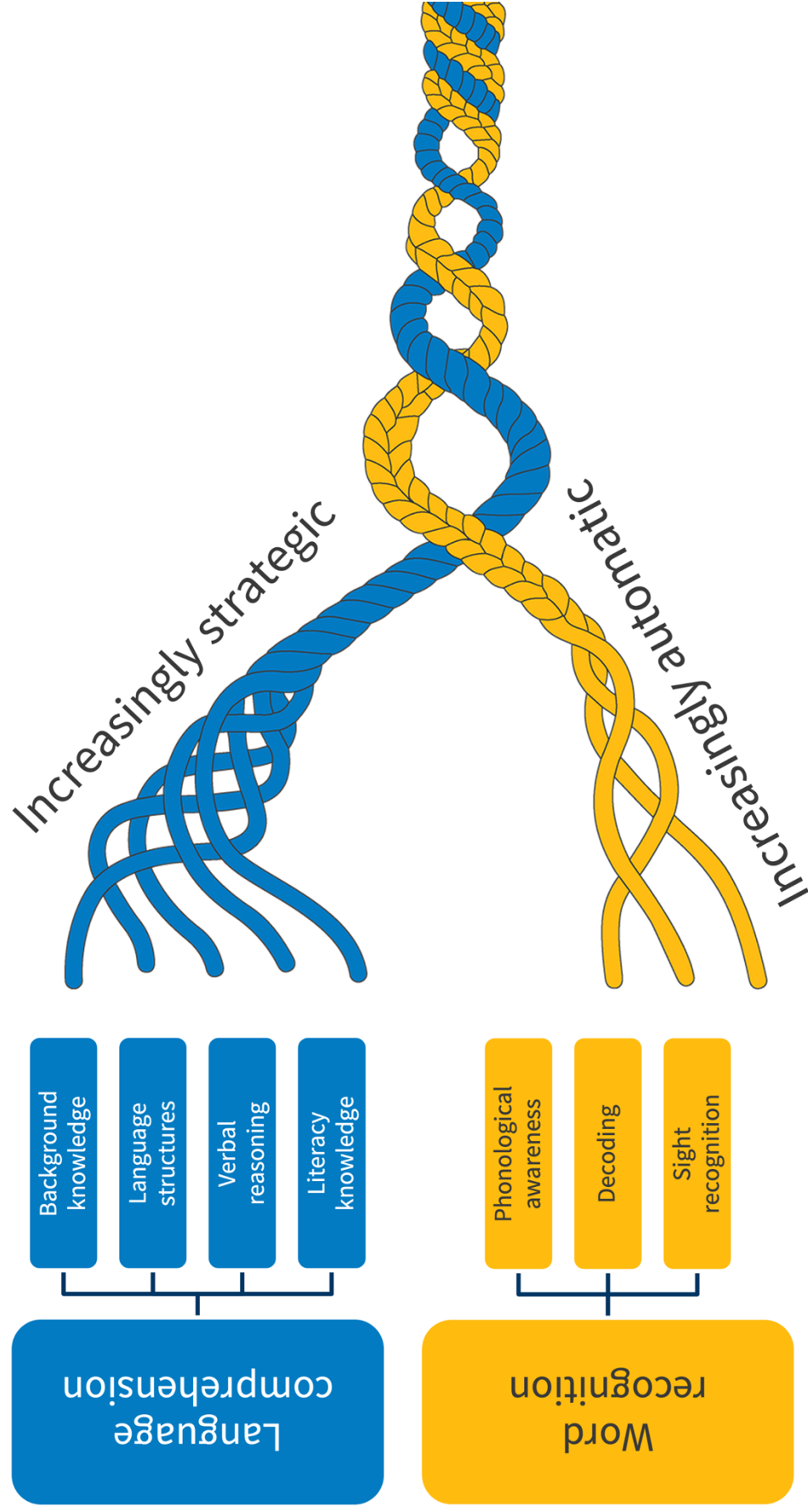
A: Acknowledge

- Acknowledge what the child is doing by labeling, explaining, giving words for her actions, and verbalizing the intent of the sounds she makes.
- Use exaggerated facial expressions and engage in activities the child is interested in to show him that his actions, words, and sounds are important and deserve a response.

B: Build the Relationship

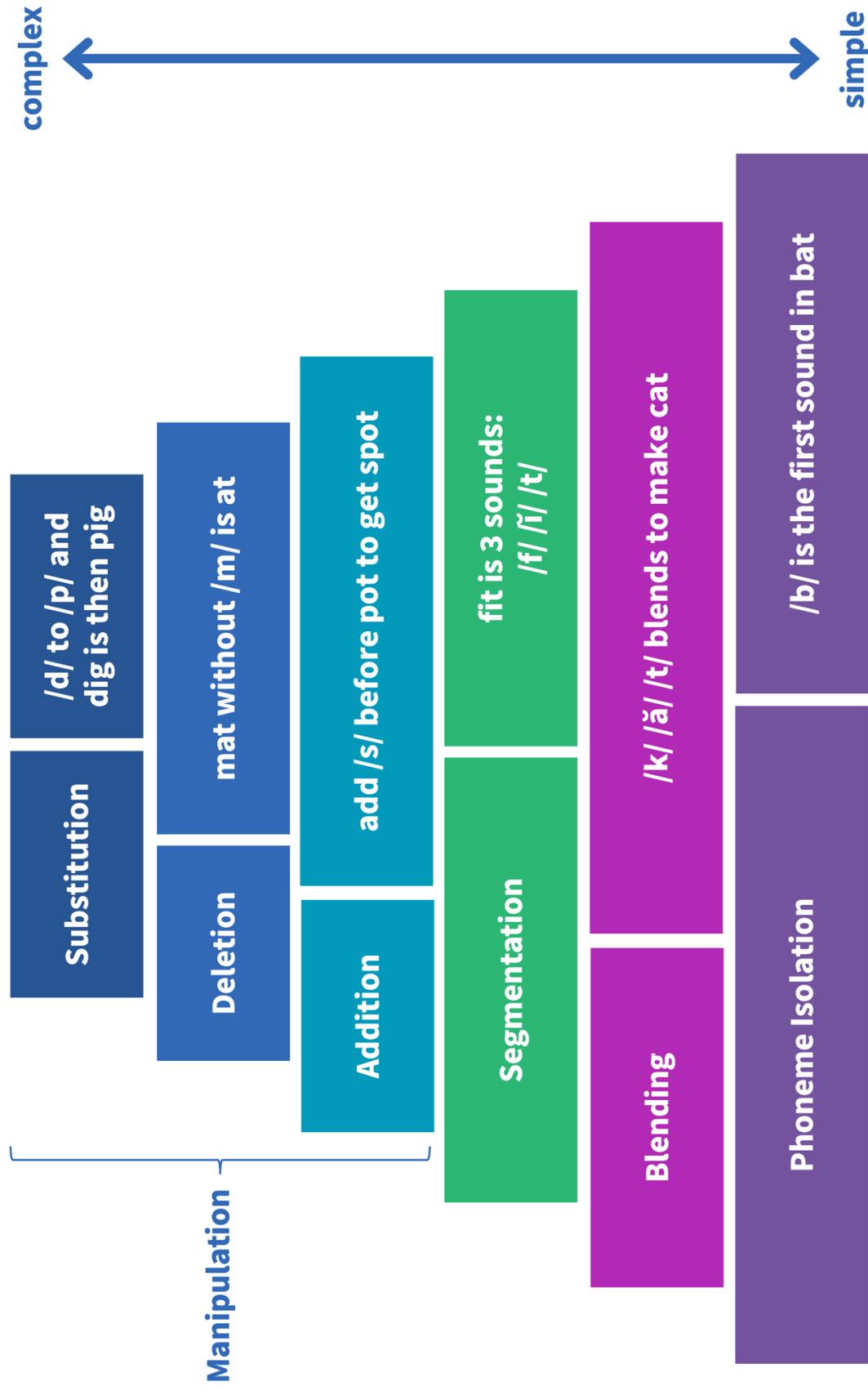
- Demonstrate a caring relationship with the child by the way you use your voice, facial expressions, words, and physical contact. This helps the child take turns and build a relationship with you.
- Remember that you and the child are equal partners in the conversation. No one dominates it.
- Communicate the way the child does, with actions, sounds, or words.

The Science of Reading: Scarborough's Reading Rope



Graphic modeled after the illustration from the Handbook of Early Literacy Research, by Susan B. Neuman and David K. Dickinson (2002) who re-envisioned researcher and author Hollis Scarborough's Visual metaphor of the Reading Rope.

The Science of Reading: Phonemic Awareness



Widely Held Expectations

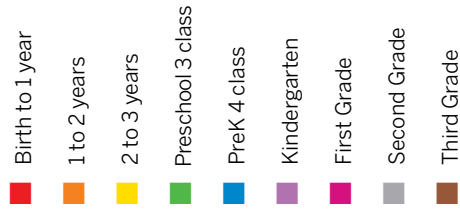
Below are the ranges for objectives with color-coded progressions for development and learning.

Objectives and Dimensions		Ranges (color-coded)									
SOCIAL–EMOTIONAL											
1.	Regulates own emotions and behaviors										
a.	Manages feelings										
b.	Follows limits and expectations										
c.	Takes care of own needs appropriately										
2.	Establishes and sustains positive relationships										
a.	Forms relationships with adults										
b.	Responds to emotional cues										
c.	Interacts with peers										
d.	Makes friends										
3.	Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations										
a.	Balances needs and rights of self and others										
b.	Solves social problems										
PHYSICAL											
4.	Demonstrates traveling skills										
5.	Demonstrates balancing skills										
6.	Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills										
7.	Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination										
a.	Uses fingers and hands										
b.	Uses writing and drawing tools										
LANGUAGE											
8.	Listens to and understands increasingly complex language										
a.	Comprehends language										
b.	Follows directions										

- Birth to 1 year
- 1 to 2 years
- 2 to 3 years
- Preschool 3 class
- PreK 4 class
- Kindergarten
- First Grade
- Second Grade
- Third Grade

Objectives and Dimensions		Ranges (color-coded)									
9.	Uses language to express thoughts and needs										
a.	Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
b.	Speaks clearly	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
c.	Uses conventional grammar	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
d.	Tells about another time or place		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
10.	Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills										
a.	Engages in conversations	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
b.	Uses social rules of language	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
COGNITIVE											
11.	Demonstrates positive approaches to learning										
a.	Attends and engages	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
b.	Persists	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
c.	Solves problems	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
d.	Shows curiosity and motivation	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
e.	Shows flexibility and inventiveness in thinking		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
12.	Remembers and connects experiences										
a.	Recognizes and recalls	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
b.	Makes connections	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
13.	Uses classification skills		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
14.	Uses symbols and images to represent something not present										
a.	Thinks symbolically	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
b.	Engages in sociodramatic play		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
LITERACY											
15.	Demonstrates phonological awareness, phonics skills, and word recognition										
a.	Notifies and discriminates rhyme		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
b.	Notifies and discriminates alliteration		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■





Objectives and Dimensions		Ranges (color-coded)								
c.	Notifies and discriminates discrete units of sound									
d.	Applies phonics concepts and knowledge of word structure to decode text									
16.	Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet									
a.	Identifies and names letters									
b.	Identifies letter-sound correspondences									
17.	Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses									
a.	Uses and appreciates books and other texts									
b.	Uses print concepts									
18.	Comprehends and responds to books and other texts									
a.	Interacts during reading experiences, book conversations, and text reflections									
b.	Uses emergent reading skills									
c.	Retells stories and recounts details from informational texts									
d.	Uses context clues to read and comprehend texts									
e.	Reads fluently									
19.	Demonstrates writing skills									
a.	Writes name									
b.	Writes to convey meaning									
c.	Writes using conventions									
MATHEMATICS										
20.	Uses number concepts and operations									
a.	Counts									
b.	Quantifies									
c.	Connects numerals with their quantities									
d.	Understands and uses place value and base ten									
e.	Applies properties of mathematical operations and relationships									
f.	Applies number combinations and mental number strategies in mathematical operations									

Objective 8 Listens to and understands increasingly complex language

a. Comprehends language

Not Yet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	Shows an interest in the speech of others • Turns head toward people who are talking • Recognizes familiar voice before the adult enters the room • Looks at favorite toy when adult labels and points to it • Responds to own name	Identifies familiar people, animals, and objects when prompted • Picks up cup when asked, "Where's your cup?" • Goes to sink when told to wash hands • Touches body parts while singing, "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes"	Responds appropriately to specific vocabulary and simple statements, and stories • Finds his favorite illustration in a storybook when asked • Listens to friend tell about cut finger and then goes to the Dramatic Play area to get a Band-Aid • Responds using gestures to compare the sizes of the three leaves	Responds appropriately to complex statements, questions, vocabulary, and stories when needed; offers opposites for frequently occurring verbs and adjectives; understands the difference between similar action verbs • Answers appropriately when asked, "How do you think the car would move if it had square wheels?" • Builds on classmates' ideas about how to fix a broken wagon and asks questions in order to better understand plans • Acts out the life cycle of a butterfly after the teacher reads a story about it and demonstrates <i>sip</i>, <i>drink</i>, and <i>slurp</i> to show how a butterfly eats • Plays a "hot, cold" game by giving and following directions with the words <i>hot</i> and <i>cold</i>	Checks for understanding of material presented orally by asking questions and making comments; demonstrates understanding of the differences between verbs and adjectives that are somewhat similar; uses context clues (e.g., known words, facial expressions, gestures) to determine meaning of unknown words or phrases from grade-level material • Watches a webcast of a famous speech and then asks questions about the content during class discussion • Listens to a classmate describe a fossil he found; asks and answers questions about the fossil in a follow-up conversation • Listens to another child explain why she used so many colors in her painting and says to the art teacher, "This one has so many colors. Mine looks kind of plain, but I can add some more paint to make it look exciting."	Demonstrates understanding of topic by asking clarifying questions and by recounting details from discussions or other information presented orally; indicates differences between closely related verbs and adjectives; determines meaning of unknown words using context clues from grade-level material • Following a discussion of the weather, writes a story with a classmate, and says, "Since it's a sunny day, we should write that the sun is <i>dazzling</i>." • Listens to a tour guide explain a mural on a city building and asks questions about some of the images and the issues they represent; later, shares the ideas in the mural with a peer	Uses knowledge from discussion to explain ideas and opinions about the topic; explains the main idea when presented with information in a variety of oral formats; uses context to understand literal and non-literal meanings; understands the difference between related words that describe states of mind or degrees of certainty (e.g., <i>might</i>, <i>must</i>, <i>will</i>) • After watching a video, answers questions concerning the main idea about how robots are used and offers supporting details; asks questions about robots during discussion and elaborates on others' understanding of the topic • When listening to a classmate read, comments that the phrase <i>had a ball</i> means they had a great time • After listening to the teacher read a mystery, says, "I suspected the mailman committed the crime, but Luis believed it was the lifeguard."								

Notes:

Objectives for Development & Learning

Birth Through Third Grade

Social–Emotional

1. Regulates own emotions and behaviors
 - a. Manages feelings
 - b. Follows limits and expectations
 - c. Takes care of own needs appropriately
2. Establishes and sustains positive relationships
 - a. Forms relationships with adults
 - b. Responds to emotional cues
 - c. Interacts with peers
 - d. Makes friends
3. Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations
 - a. Balances needs and rights of self and others
 - b. Solves social problems

Physical

4. Demonstrates traveling skills
5. Demonstrates balancing skills
6. Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills
7. Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination
 - a. Uses fingers and hands
 - b. Uses writing and drawing tools

Language

8. Listens to and understands increasingly complex language
 - a. Comprehends language
 - b. Follows directions
9. Uses language to express thoughts and needs
 - a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary
 - b. Speaks clearly
 - c. Uses conventional grammar
 - d. Tells about another time or place
10. Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills
 - a. Engages in conversations
 - b. Uses social rules of language

Cognitive

11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
 - a. Attends and engages
 - b. Persists
 - c. Solves problems
 - d. Shows curiosity and motivation
 - e. Shows flexibility and inventiveness in thinking
12. Remembers and connects experiences
 - a. Recognizes and recalls
 - b. Makes connections
13. Uses classification skills
14. Uses symbols and images to represent something not present
 - a. Thinks symbolically
 - b. Engages in sociodramatic play

Literacy

15. Demonstrates phonological awareness, phonics skills, and word recognition
 - a. Notices and discriminates rhyme
 - b. Notices and discriminates alliteration
 - c. Notices and discriminates discrete units of sound
 - d. Applies phonics concepts and knowledge of word structure to decode text
16. Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet
 - a. Identifies and names letters
 - b. Identifies letter-sound correspondences
17. Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses
 - a. Uses and appreciates books and other texts
 - b. Uses print concepts
18. Comprehends and responds to books and other texts
 - a. Interacts during reading experiences, book conversations, and text reflections
 - b. Uses emergent reading skills
 - c. Retells stories and recounts details from informational texts
 - d. Uses context clues to read and comprehend texts
 - e. Reads fluently
19. Demonstrates writing skills
 - a. Writes name
 - b. Writes to convey ideas and information
 - c. Writes using conventions

*Objectives for Development & Learning—Birth Through Third Grade, continued***Mathematics**

- 20. Uses number concepts and operations
 - a. Counts
 - b. Quantifies
 - c. Connects numerals with their quantities
 - d. Understands and uses place value and base ten
 - e. Applies properties of mathematical operations and relationships
 - f. Applies number combinations and mental number strategies in mathematical operations
- 21. Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes
 - a. Understands spatial relationships
 - b. Understands shapes
- 22. Compares and measures
 - a. Measures objects
 - b. Measures time and money
 - c. Represents and analyzes data
- 23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

Science and Technology

- 24. Uses scientific inquiry skills
- 25. Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things
- 26. Demonstrates knowledge of the physical properties of objects and materials
- 27. Demonstrates knowledge of Earth's environment
- 28. Uses tools and other technology to perform tasks

Social Studies

- 29. Demonstrates knowledge about self
- 30. Shows basic understanding of people and how they live
- 31. Explores change related to familiar people or places
- 32. Demonstrates simple geographic knowledge

The Arts

- 33. Explores the visual arts
 - 34. Explores musical concepts and expression
 - 35. Explores dance and movement concepts
 - 36. Explores drama through actions and language
- English Language Acquisition**
- 37. Demonstrates progress in listening to and understanding English
 - 38. Demonstrates progress in speaking English

Additional Objectives for Development and Learning resources are available. Please scan the QR code to access them.



NOTES



Save the Date!

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP SERIES 2025-2026

**SATURDAY,
NOVEMBER 15,
2025**

Learning to Play, Playing to Learn
Featuring Dr. Peg Oliveira from the
Gesell Child Study Center at Yale University
9 AM to 3 PM | Vero Beach Museum of Art

**SATURDAY,
MARCH 14,
2026**

**I'll Bring the Joy: Finding Purpose, Passion,
and Peace in Early Childhood Education**
Featuring Nefertiti Poyner
9 AM to 12 PM | Vero Beach Museum of Art

Thank you to our sponsors:
Indian River County Children's
Services Advisory Committee,
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Email Stephanie Harmody: Stephanie@ChildcareResourcesIR.org

Email Jensen McCord: Jensen@ChildcareResourcesIR.org



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- M.A with Early Childhood Emphasis - Early Childhood Policy Track
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Partner Schools Include:



Unsure about the financial cost of higher education?

The Higher Education Program can also help you navigate Florida's Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) program, helping to pay for your credential or degree, reducing or eliminating your cost.



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Coaching for



Early Educators

Collaborate with an experienced educator

Build

Build on your strengths as a teacher or director

Work

Work towards your classroom or school goals

Strengthen

Strengthen relationships with staff and parents

Implement

Implement ideas from professional development workshops



Amanda Gooch is an Educator with 14 years of teaching experience. In addition to a Bachelor's degree in Child Psychology and a Master's degree in Teaching from the University of South Florida, she holds her Florida Childcare Professional Credential Certificate and her Educator Certificate from the State of Florida Department of Education. Amanda has completed her Infant, Toddler, Pre-K, CLASS Observer certification through Teachstone and holds her University of Florida Lastinger Center for Early Learning Coaching Certificate. She believes that all children and educators are capable of success, no exceptions!



Todd W. Morrow received a Master of Science in Elementary Education and an Education Specialist degree in Leadership and Supervision both from Florida International University. Todd served as a teacher, assistant principal, and elementary school principal for 24 years in the Miami-Dade County School District. After relocating his family, he joined the Martin County School District where he served as a principal for six years. During his tenure he built strong community support and a lasting record of school-wide academic achievement. Todd Morrow has been recognized as a Principal of the Year by Citizen's Crime Watch of Miami-Dade County and as Principal of the Year by City Year. Todd is a certified CLASS Pre-K Observer and is working with Childcare Resources as an Early Childhood Education Coach assisting childcare providers throughout Indian River County. In addition to providing coaching to teachers and directors, Todd is pleased to offer Community of Practice for early childhood educators.



Contact A Coach To Get Started!

Scan the QR code or call 772-567-3202 ext. 114



Childcare Resources . 2300 Fifth Ave, Ste 149 . Vero Beach, FL 32960



Funding in part provided by Indian River County Children's Services Advisory Committee.



Childcare Resources of Indian River

Do you know a family struggling to pay the cost of childcare?

Childcare Resources offers affordable tuition assistance for families with children ages 6 weeks to 5 years who live in Indian River County, work or attend school full-time (30+ hours/week), and meet income requirements.

High-Quality Early Education

- Developmentally Appropriate Practice-based classrooms for students 6 weeks through 5 years
- All program sites are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

Family Wellness Resources

- Students are assessed twice annually to monitor progress toward developmental milestones
- On-site physical, occupational, and speech therapy services are available with a referral from the child's pediatrician
- Early childhood mental and behavioral health services are provided on-site

Family Support

- Parent engagement opportunities on early childhood education and development as well as other topics geared toward child and family success
- Case management services for resources and referrals



Courage - We are dedicated to elevating Early Childhood Education programs to benefit children and families in Indian River County.

Compassion - We treat all people with empathy and sensitivity, seeking a greater understanding of the challenges of the families we serve.

Resilience - We strive to instill hope and self-reliance in all stakeholders helping our students to thrive

Integrity - We have a unified belief that fairness, trust, and honesty are essential to sustaining successful relationships and to achieving results.

Relationships - We believe that fostering relationships are essential to empower our students and families to grow and flourish.



For more information, call
772-567-3202 or visit
ChildcareResourcesIR.org

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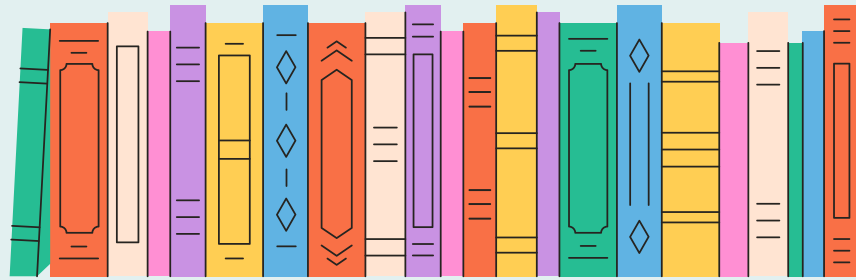


Indian River County
Children's Services
Advisory Committee





Thank You for Attending!



Childcare Resources Mission:

To elevate and promote the highest quality early childhood development and education in Indian River County, focusing on economically challenged children and families.

