

For **CLASSROOM-BASED** early childhood educators

Additional skill-building exercises to help teachers provide everyday literacy activities

Thank you for accessing these additional exercises to support utilization of the CELL Early Literacy Learning Model. Three practice activities are provided below to help teachers develop skills in providing everyday literacy opportunities based on children's daily routines and activities.

The exercises offer teachers ways to practice, evaluate, and reflect about the literacyrich potential of everyday routines. The intent is to take these practice activities into the classroom to provide teachers with an authentic, hands-on experience utilizing components of the CELL learning model.

Exercise 1

Activity:

Think about daily activities such as meal time, outdoor play, classroom play within learning centers, toileting and diapering, etc. Now think about ways you can incorporate literacy within those daily routines. Write down these literacy ideas and use with children this week.

Evaluate:

- How many opportunities did children have to participate in literacy activities during the daily routine?
- Which literacy activities were formal? Which literacy activities were informal?
- How did the children participate in the literacy activities? What opportunities did children have to explore print? What opportunities did children have to explore language?
- How did you support children in exploring the literacy activities?

Reflect:

Thinking about the literacy activities you just provided during a daily routine answer the following questions:

- Were you able to increase how often children get to participate in everyday early literacy learning activities?
- Were you able to increase the number of everyday early literacy learning activities?
 - Were you able to increase the variety of early literacy learning opportunities?
- Were you able to increase participation in those literacy activities that occur frequently and provide lots of literacy learning opportunities?

Exercise 2

Activity:

Make the CELL Early Childhood Classroom Interest Tool (below) form easily accessible by taping it on the wall or using a clipboard. The version below is for **preschool** classroom teachers. You can locate a version of the tool for **infant/toddler** teachers on the CELL website at: www.earlyliteracylearning.org/ta_pdf/ec_classrm_ints_tool.pdf. Read and follow the instructions below:

Early Childhood Classroom Interests Tool

Preschool Classrooms

How To Use This Tool To Identify Children's Interests:

This form provides an easy way to pinpoint interests that are shared by groups of young children. You can use the results as a guide for developing activities that will appeal to the group's interests. In this way you can help the children in your program experience creative, interest-based learning activities that they will find truly engaging, beneficial, and fun!

Follow These Easy Steps:

- 1. Look, listen, and observe your students. Focus on what the children are doing and saying. Try to look beyond the obvious to discover what materials or activities capture the children's imaginations.
- 2. Read through the sample interest activities printed in the boxes on the following two pages. In the blank boxes, write additional interests you've observed among the children in your class. Then, while thinking of one child in your class at a time, write his or her first name in three boxes under the three activities you believe hold the greatest interest for him or her. Repeat this process for each class member, writing their first names in the boxes with their three top interests or assets.
- 3. After indicating all of your class members' greatest interests, consider the chart as a whole. Which activities have the most children's names under them? Write these in the "Top Class Interests" space on the last page.

Date:	Teacher:	
Program Name:		
Class Members' Names:		

Exercise 2, continued

Playing with alphabet letters/ letter stamps	Acting out stories	Listening to and talking about favorite stories
Coloring pictures	Dictating stories about friends, activities, dreams	Having "conversations" with dolls, stuffed animals
Using finger paints	Doing fingerplays	Looking at books
Making books of pictures or photographs	Looking at picture books	Playing games (for example, board games, word games)
Making up rhymes, songs, etc.	"Writing" and drawing with sidewalk chalk	Singing songs
"Writing" or scribbling on paper	"Drawing" maps for trucks, buildings, treasure hunts	Reading signs when taking walks

Exercise 2, continued

"Writing" and reading on computers	Using recipes, menus, etc., in the cooking area	Drawing with crayons or markers	
Making signs for the classroom and class activities	Using play dough, silly putty	"Writing" notes, letters, or journals	
Dressing up in costumes and making up stories	Listening to and saying nursery rhymes, children's poems	Telling stories with puppets	
Telling stories with a storyteller	Other:	Other:	
TOP CLASS INTERESTS:			
Notes:			



Evaluate:

- What types of activities did the children engage in most frequently? Were there
 any patterns that emerged? Did anything surprise you as being a literacylearning activity?
- Did you observe any additional literacy learning activities that were not on the tool? How were the children engaged within that activity?
- How did you know children were engaged in these activities? Did they work hard at the activities? Did they do the activities over and over?
- What was your role when children were exploring these everyday interest-based literacy activities? How did you support their exploration?

Reflect:

By using the Early Childhood Classroom Interest Tool were you able to...

- Identify literacy activities that are a part of the child's everyday experiences?
- Identify classroom activities that could provide the child interest-based early literacy learning opportunities?
- Identify everyday classroom activities that are likely to help the children learn and practice emerging early literacy abilities?

Exercise 3

Activity:

This practice is about providing children with formal and informal literacy learning opportunities. Use a daily schedule like the one below to plan formal and informal literacy learning opportunities over the course of a week. Next begin to provide and facilitate these activities over the course of a week with the children.

	ACTIVITY SETTINGS						
TIME							

Evaluate:

- How often did the activities occur throughout the day?
- How did these activities provide opportunities for language learning?
- How did these activities provide opportunities for practicing literacy skills?
- What was your role within the activities? In what ways were you involved in the formal activities? In what ways were you involved in the informal activities? Did the children respond differently to the informal versus formal activities? How so?

Reflect:

By using the daily schedule to plan formal and informal literacy activities . . .

- Were you able to increase how often children get to participate in interest-based everyday early literacy learning activities?
- Were you able to increase the number of interest-based everyday early literacy learning activities?
- Were you able to increase the variety of early literacy learning opportunities?
- Were you able to increase participation in those literacy activities that occur frequently and provide lots of literacy learning opportunities?