



Center for Early Literacy Learning

For **HOME-BASED** early childhood educators

Additional exercises for building skill in **RESPONSIVE TEACHING** techniques

Thank you for accessing additional practice activities for follow-up support with the CELL Early Literacy Learning Model. Three exercises are provided below to assist home visitors/early intervention practitioners in understanding and implementing responsive teaching.

These exercises provide the home visitor/early intervention practitioner with more opportunities to practice, evaluate, and reflect about responsive teaching. The intent is to take these activities into the home and community to give the practitioner authentic, hands-on experiences utilizing the components of the CELL model.

Exercise 1

Activity:

Read the vignettes below from the *CELLpractices* parent practice guide for infants, titled **Babble On**. Write down examples of the following responsive teaching techniques that occur in the anecdotes:

- **Paying attention**
- **Responding promptly**
- **Introducing new information**
- **Supporting/encouraging new child behavior**

Say It Again, Daddy!

Taylor and her father are playing together on the floor with her favorite toys and stuffed animals. Dad describes what 8-month-old Taylor is doing. He talks to her about all that is going on. Dad uses animal sounds like *baa-baa* and *moo-moo* while playing with toy animals. He asks Taylor to say the sounds. She tries her best to repeat what her dad says. Whatever she says (for example, *maa-maa* for *moo-moo*), her father repeats the sounds. This gets Taylor to say it again. This back-and-forth play is a favorite activity for Taylor. She watches, listens, and tries to repeat the sounds her dad makes.

Happy Talk!

A few months have passed since 14-month-old Brynna has learned to say *da-da*, *ga-ga*, *ba-ba*, and other babbling sounds. She loves to just lie in her crib after waking, repeating everything she can say over and over. Brynna's mother plays a sound game with her when she goes into her room to pick her up. She looks at Brynna and says, "Has Brynna been talking again? What are you saying?" This

Exercise 1, continued

excites her baby and she starts babbling again. Mom repeats the sounds while talking about what her daughter is doing. ("You are so good at saying *ba-ba*. Say *ba-ba* again!") After three or four back-and-forth bouts of talking, Mom asks, "Can you say *ga-ga*, *ga-ga*?" Brynna tries to repeat the sounds. She doesn't always get it right, but she seems pleased with her effort.

Play Prompts Babbling

Amber is 9 months old. Her mother has found fun ways to help her daughter babble as part of games they play together. Amber has difficulties with muscle strength and especially her facial muscles which makes it hard for her to make sounds. Mom has solved this problem by helping her daughter to babble on! One game they play is *Mouth Patting*. Mom gently pats Amber's mouth while saying *ma-ma-ma* or some other babbling sound. This gets her daughter to make the same or similar sounds each time her mouth is patted. When Mom stops, Amber gets excited and starts moving her lips to tell Mom to "do it again." Amber's mother tries different babbling sounds each time the game is played. Her daughter does her best to repeat the sounds.

CELLpractices is a publication of the Center for Early Literacy Learning (CELL), funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (H326B060010). The opinions expressed, however, are those of CELL and not necessarily those of the U.S. Department of Education. Copyright © 2010 by the Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute, Asheville, North Carolina (www.puckett.org).

Evaluate:

- What aspects of responsive teaching seemed to occur most often?
- How did parents respond to their children's interests?
- What are some of the ways children responded when the adults used responsive teaching techniques?
- How were children engaged in the activities?

Reflect:

Think about your visits with parents and children each week and answer these questions:

- What aspects of responsive teaching are you using consistently?
- What aspects of responsive teaching do you need to use more often? What aspects do you find challenging?
- How will you support a parent in understanding and using the techniques of responsive teaching to support their child's literacy experiences?

Exercise 2

Activity:

During a home visit this week, practice the steps of Responsive Teaching.

- **Pay Attention**—take a closer look at the child as an individual and his/her interests
- **Respond promptly & appropriately** to the child's behaviors when noticing a particular interest or moment of frustration.
- Interact with the child by **introducing new information** based on the child's interests such as expanding on the child's contributions or challenging and encouraging the child to do something different.
- As the child engages in play, take opportunities to **ask the child questions and to comment on behaviors and accomplishments**. Note any new skills developed and provide opportunities for their use.

Immediately following the visit, write down how you addressed each step of Responsive Teaching.

Evaluate:

- Did you identify any new interests when you increased your focus of attention? If yes, what were the interests?
- How did the child react when you responded promptly?
- What new information did you introduce to the child based on his/her interests?
- Did you prompt the child with additional questions, or offer specific comments? If so, what were some of your questions and comments?

Reflect:

- Did you do the following things during the visit:
 - Engage the child in interests-based early literacy learning activities?
 - Use different materials or arrange the environment to engage the child in using early literacy behaviors in new and different ways?
 - Allow the child plenty of time to initiate interactions with people or objects in the activities?
 - Pay attention to and notice when and how the child uses or tries to use early literacy behaviors in interactions with people and objects?
 - Respond promptly and positively to the child's use of early literacy behaviors in ways that match the amount, pace, and intent of the child's behavior?
 - Respond to the child's use of early literacy behaviors with comments, joining in the interactions, and making gestures to support child engagement in the activity?
 - Encourage the child to elaborate on his/her use of early literacy behaviors in ways that are increasingly more complex?
- How will you support a parent in understanding and using the techniques of responsive teaching to support their child's literacy experiences?

Exercise 3

Activity:

- Observe a parent during a home visit this week. Try to identify occasions when the parent uses steps of Responsive Teaching.
- Did the parent do the following? List examples.
 - **Pay attention**
 - **Respond promptly & appropriately** to their child's behaviors
 - Interact with the child by **introducing new information** based on the child's interest(s)
 - As their child engages in play, take opportunities to **ask the child questions and comment on behaviors and accomplishments.**
- Immediately following the visit, write down your parent observations with specific examples.

Evaluate:

- What aspects of responsive teaching did the parent use with the child?
- Did the parent use the child's interests to promote literacy learning opportunities?
- How did the child respond when the parent used responsive teaching techniques? Did the parent notice or comment on the child's response?
- What aspects of responsive teaching were strengths and/or challenges for the parent?

Reflect:

How will you use the information from this observation to assist the parent in learning and using responsive teaching techniques to promote his/her child's literacy learning experiences?