



Self-Guided Learning Module

Everyday Literacy Activities



What is this CELL self-guided module?

The purpose of this self-guided module is to share information about:

- The definition of everyday literacy activities
- How to identify everyday literacy activities
- How everyday literacy activities provide opportunities for learning
- How to increase the breadth and depth of learning opportunities



Pause and think about everyday literacy activities before you proceed

- What are everyday literacy activities?
- Why are everyday literacy activities important to a child's literacy learning?
- What are some examples of everyday literacy activities?

Proceed through the self-guided module with your responses in mind.

What are everyday literacy activities?

- Everyday literacy activities refer to events that occur daily in homes, classrooms, and other locations that provide opportunities for early literacy learning.
- They should be interest-based, happen frequently, and provide opportunities for language learning and the acquisition and use of literacy abilities.

What are everyday literacy activities?

- Everyday literacy activities can be either **formal** or **informal**.
- **Formal literacy activities**, also referred to as structured activities, tend to be more adult-directed and tend to occur in more planned learning situations.
- **Informal literacy activities**, also referred to as unstructured activities, tend to be more child-directed and tend to occur within daily routines (such as dressing, eating meals, etc).



Why are everyday literacy activities important to a child's literacy learning?

- Everyday literacy activities are important to a child's literacy learning because they provide opportunities throughout the day for a child to practice and become competent in early literacy abilities.
- They are easy to use because they are incorporated into daily activities and routines. These provide opportunities for early literacy learning more informally at home and in the community as well as more formally in the classroom setting.



What are some examples of everyday literacy activities?

Examples of everyday literacy activities include driving in the car, making grocery lists, doing the dishes, ordering food at a restaurant, taking a walk, changing clothes, and saying hello and goodbye.



Introduction:

What are everyday literacy activities?

Everyday literacy activities need to:

- Be interest-based
- Provide opportunities for language and literacy learning
- Provide opportunities to acquire and use literacy abilities
- Happen frequently (or could happen frequently)



Illustration:

Examples of Everyday Literacy Activities

- Interest-based:

A child who loves birds will enjoy drawing, writing, talking and reading about birds

- Opportunities for language learning:

Conversation with peers and adults during everyday activities, such as talking about the birds seen during a walk outside

- Opportunities to practice literacy skills

Some examples include reading and writing: reading a book about birds, finding bird-related items in a catalog



Introduction:

Everyday Literacy Activity Continuum

Everyday literacy activities can be informal or formal, or anywhere in between, depending on the context in which the activity occurs.

Informal Literacy Activities

Formal Literacy Activities





Illustration:

Informal Literacy Activities

- Unstructured activities
- Primarily directed by child, with adult being a facilitator (i.e., less adult-directed)
- Tend to occur within daily routines than in planned learning situations (for example, car rides, grocery stores, diapering, dressing)
- Occur in the context of literacy-rich environments



Illustration:

Formal Literacy Activities

- Structured activities
- Tend to be more adult-directed
- Tend to occur in more planned learning situations
- Can occur when an adult organizes or leads a child in a learning activity with a specific goal of enhancing literacy development
- Occur in the context of literacy-rich environments

Illustration:

Tools for Identifying Everyday Literacy Activities

Early Childhood Classroom Interests Tool

- Tool to help teachers identify interest-based early literacy activities for the children in their classroom.
- This tool can be accessed from the CELL website at: www.earlyliteracylearning.org.

Practice:

Everyday Literacy Learning Activities

Think about the children in your classroom or that you know well and complete the *Early Childhood Classroom Interests Tool*



Early Childhood Classroom Interests Tool

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 chart on the following 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?

Playing with alphabet letters/ letter stamps	Acting out stories	Listening to and talking about favorite stories	"Writing" and reading on computers	Using recipes, menus, etc., in the cooking area
Coloring pictures	Discussing stories about friends, animals, events	Having "conversations" with stuffed/real animals	Dressing with anyone or nothing	Dressing up in costumes and making up stories
Using finger paints	Doing fingerplays	Looking at books	Making signs for the classroom and classroom rules	Listening to and saying nursery rhymes
Making books of pictures or photographs	Looking at picture books	Playing games (for example, board games, word games)	Using play dough, silly putty	Telling stories with puppets
Making up rhymes, songs, etc.	Writing and drawing with sidewalk chalk	Singing songs	"Writing" notes, letters, or journals	Telling stories with a storyteller
"Writing" or scribbling on paper	"Typing" messages for books, balloons, treasure hunts	Reading signs when taking walks	Other: _____	Other: _____

Evaluation:

Everyday Literacy Activities

- What activities were your children interested in?
- Were there any new interests revealed? What are they?
- What activities surprised you as being literacy-based?



Reflection: Everyday Literacy Activities

Complete the
Everyday Literacy Learning Activity Checklist



Everyday Literacy Learning Activity Checklist

This checklist can be used with or by parents or practitioners to use the key features of using everyday literacy activities as the basis for learning. The checklist can be used to engage in a discussion about how to use interest-based participation to provide everyday early literacy learning activities. Complete the checklist by indicating if you did (*Yes*) or did not (*No*) have the opportunity to help the parent or practitioner use the practices.

<i>Did the parent or practitioner...</i>	Yes	No
1. <i>Identify</i> the family or classroom activities that are the child's <i>everyday routines, experiences</i> , etc.?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. <i>Identify</i> those family or classroom activities that do or could provide the child <i>interest-based early literacy learning opportunities</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. <i>Select</i> interest-based family or classroom learning activities where any one activity provides lots of different <i>early literacy opportunities</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. <i>Select</i> interest-based family or classroom activities that are especially likely to help the child <i>learn and practice emerging early literacy abilities</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. <i>Select</i> interest-based family or classroom activities that encourage the child to try to <i>use early literacy behaviors in different ways</i> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This checklist is a publication of the Center for Early Literacy Learning (CELL), funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (H220000030). Copyright © 2009 by the Carolina Reading Packet Institute, Asheville, North Carolina. (www.packet.org)

Introduction:

Learning Opportunities

- Everyday literacy activities provide opportunities for early literacy learning at home, in classrooms, and in a child's community.
- Opportunities for early literacy learning need to be provided frequently.
- Opportunities for early literacy learning should be increased both across (breadth) and within (depth) literacy activities.

Illustration:

Breadth and Depth

- **Breadth**—Provide a wide range of activities.

In other words, focus on one interest and provide a wide range of activities based on that interest.

- **Depth**—Spend time engaging in the activity.

Explore and expand on the child's interest.

Depth is about opportunities within an interest-based activity.

In other words, find opportunities within a specific interest-based activity.



Illustration:

Breadth and Depth

- **Breadth**—Provide a wide range of activities based on child interest

For example, if a child is interested in trains, make available books and songs about trains.

- **Depth**—Spend time engaging in the activity. Explore and expand on the child's interest using many approaches.

For example, when a child is playing with trains, ask questions about where the train is going; add people or traffic signs.



Illustration:

Tools for Increasing Breadth and Depth of Everyday Literacy Activities and Learning Opportunities

- Tool to assist practitioners to plan for and remember literacy learning opportunities and activities they want to do with children
 - Daily Schedule
 - Reminder Tool
- These tools are designed to help teachers increase opportunities for literacy learning both across (breadth) and within (depth) literacy activities



DAILY SCHEDULE

Child's Name _____ Parent's Name _____ Date _____

TIME	ACTIVITY SETTINGS						



Early Literacy Learning Activities for My Child

REMEMBER TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____





Practice:

Learning Opportunities

Choose a child interest and describe activities that you would incorporate to expand the learning experiences to create breadth and depth. Include some literacy specific activities.

Here are some ideas:

- Drums or other musical instruments
- Pretend play cooking
- Building with blocks
- Bugs
- Trucks

Evaluation:

Learning Opportunities

- Were the activities:
 - Part of the child's everyday life experiences?
 - Interest-Based literacy learning opportunities?
 - Likely to help the child practice emerging literacy abilities and develop new ones? What were the literacy activities?
- Could the everyday literacy activities:
 - Happen often?
 - Allow the child to try to use language in different ways?
 - Allow the child to experience and use literacy in different ways?
- Could you increase the breadth and depth of the activities even more?



Reflection:

Everyday Literacy Learning Opportunities

Complete the *Increasing Everyday Child Learning Opportunities Checklist*

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Increasing Everyday Child Learning Opportunities Checklist

This checklist can be used with parents or practitioners to provide interest-based everyday early literacy learning opportunities for young children. The checklist is used to ensure key characteristics of the early literacy learning practices are implemented during your interactions with a parent or practitioner. Complete the checklist by indicating if you did (Yes) or did not (No) have the opportunity to help the parent or practitioner use the practices.

Did you help the parent or practitioner . . .	Yes	No
1. Use a reminder list, calendar, or other kind of activity schedule to provide the parent or practitioner a way of ensuring a child experiences interest-based everyday early literacy learning activities?		
2. Increase <i>how often</i> the child gets to participate in interest-based everyday early literacy learning activities?		
3. Increase the <i>number</i> of interest-based everyday child early literacy learning activities?		
4. Increase the <i>variety</i> of interest-based everyday child early literacy learning activities?		
5. Increase the <i>number</i> of child early literacy learning opportunities in any one family, community, or classroom activity?		
6. Increase the <i>variety</i> of child early literacy learning opportunities in any one family, community, or classroom activity?		
7. Increase <i>participation</i> in those activities that occur frequently and provide lots of early literacy learning opportunities?		

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Thank You!

- Thank you for accessing this CELL self-guided learning module!
- Remember, you can access other CELL self-guided modules on the CELL website at www.earlyliteracylearning.org