

EARLY LITERACY SUPPORT PROGRAM

SIMCOE COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

STEP
"A"



Simcoe County
District School Board



Early Literacy Support Program

Purpose: The Early Literacy Support Program (ELSP) is designed for **year one** kindergarten students that are struggling to acquire necessary foundational literacy skills (concepts of print, phonological awareness, and phonics). The goal is to identify and remove barriers to student learning and achievement both within and beyond the kindergarten program. This program is intended to supplement the whole class comprehensive literacy program. Students identified for the program will receive an additional 10 - 15 minutes a day, five days a week of intensive support.

Essential Components of Step A: oral language, rhyme, alliteration, sentence segmentation, syllables

Assessment Considerations:

- The primary tool for data gathering is Anecdotal (Pedagogical) Documentation, capturing what children are saying, doing and representing.
- In order to determine which students might benefit from this support program, consider gathering assessment data using the [SCDSB Phonological Awareness Inventory](#) in addition to your professional judgement. The following screener will help you identify strengths and areas of need in phonological pre-reading skills.
 - [Developmental Continuum](#)
 - [SCDSB Phonological Awareness Inventory Long Form](#)
 - [SCDSB Phonological Awareness Inventory Short Form](#)
- Formative Assessment is key. Ongoing observation and documentation are essential.
- Sharing of documentation of children's THINKING/LEARNING between educator teams throughout the year is encouraged.
- It is expected that [teachers and early childhood educators will collaborate](#) in observing, monitoring, and assessing the development of the children in Kindergarten and in communicating with families and that the teacher will ensure that the appropriate Kindergarten Communication of Learning templates are fully and properly completed and processed. Data captured during planning time periods is shared with the Kindergarten Educator Team to inform the writing of the progress reports.
- Students will participate in ELSP until the educators feel that they will be successful in the regular classroom literacy program without the need for additional intensive support. If a student has achieved most of the learning goals outlined in Step A, they are ready to progress to Step B.

Multilingual Learning Considerations

- Students who are learning multiple languages take longer to acquire multiple language systems. It is most appropriate for multilingual learners to participate in the regular classroom program to acquire English sounds, symbols, vocabulary, and phrases.
- Multilingual students should have time to orient their phonological awareness to the English language before being considered for this program. If students have phonological awareness in any language, it will transfer to English. Above and beyond this program, multilingual students who already have phonological awareness will still require explicit instruction to orient the sounds to letters they may not have in their first language, spelling patterns, and to the many rules of the English language. These skills are above and beyond phonological awareness.

- It must be noted that as a result of the ongoing pandemic, multilingual students are taking longer to acquire the English language than in normal times, as exposure to English in the classroom and community have been impacted significantly. Students should continue to be provided with ample time to acquire these language skills before being admitted into the ELSP program.
- Consider using the [K STEP Framework Draft](#) for multilingual students in regards to assessment and instruction.

Suggested Timeline

- Learning happens best when students and educators have a relationship with one another. It is necessary that both educators spend time getting to know all students in the class.
- Once students have settled into the regular classroom program, gather assessment data on all of your students using the tools mentioned above.
- Using this information, determine which students would benefit from the additional intensive support. (See **Assessment Considerations**)
- Students will participate in ELSP until the educators feel that they will be successful in the regular classroom literacy program without the need for additional intensive support. If a student has achieved most of the learning goals outlined in Step A, they are ready to progress to Step B.
- Consider reading the following article [The Environment is a Teacher, by Karen Callaghan](#) and these [tips and tricks](#) to help build relationships with students throughout the year.

Planning Time Considerations:

The following supports and processes should be considered when implementing the ELSP during a planning time period.

- Scheduling planning time so that it is not happening either at the beginning or end of the school day;
- Scheduling a single, dedicated planning time (PT) teacher for Kindergarten.
- Having all educators (PT, Regular Classroom Teacher (OCT) and Designated Early Childhood Educator (DECE) work collaboratively to plan, assess and monitor the progress of all students.
- ELSP small groups consist of no more than 4 students at a time; two small groups can be served during one planning time period.
- Groupings should be based on student needs and should be changed as student needs change (i.e. placing students that continue to need greater focus on a particular skill together or moving some students from each group to the subsequent step of the program.)
- Student levels should not be publicly posted within the classroom.
- Ideally, students not participating in the ELSP should be engaged in open meaningful play/exploration that allows for one educator to be on the floor to help [respond, challenge, and extend student learning](#) - while the other educator engages in small group instruction.
- Once ELSP small group instruction is underway, the PT teacher maintains a shared responsibility with the DECE for the health and safety and instruction of all students. If necessary, the educator delivering ELSP is expected to pause or end small group instruction, to support the broader instructional program.
- Recognizing that it is not always possible to connect with the OCT and DECE prior to each planning time block, PT teachers are expected to check in with the DECE upon entering the classroom to establish an instructional plan;
- For successful ELSP implementation, the broader Kindergarten team (PT, RCT and DECE) must collaborate to establish planning time routines and instructional plans. Together the team should consider what will be happening before, during and after ELSP small group instruction.
- It is important to minimize transitions for young learners. Educators should avoid interrupting learning and make every effort to align whole group instruction with a natural transition. A natural transition occurs when the students are required to stop play due to an essential transition in the

school day (e.g. arrival, nutrition break, recess, home time, outdoor learning, library, gym). Whole group learning should align with natural transitions

PT teachers, like all teachers, are responsible for:

- building responsive relationships with students;
- observing students engaged in inquiry/play and providing, where necessary, provocations to initiate or extend learning;
- sharing in the documentation of learning (given the limited time that PT teachers are in the classroom, it is helpful if the RCT and DECE provide specific look-fors);
- providing whole group instruction;
- supporting transitions;

How Does the PT Teacher Contribute to Ongoing Assessment and Reporting?

- It is expected that PT teachers contribute to both the documentation and the analysis of the evidence of learning and that they are contributing to the larger body of evidence for all students based on observations and conversations conducted when not engaged in ELSP small group instruction. More specifically, PT teachers who are implementing ELSP will contribute individualized comments towards the Communication of Learning for ELSP participants. These comments will, at minimum, contribute to the “Demonstrating Literacy and Mathematics Behaviours” frame and are to be worded in the format of key learning, growth in learning and next steps for learning.

Sample Planning Time Schedules:

BEGINNING OF BLOCK PLANNING TIME SCHEDULE 40 MIN	
TIME	ACTIVITY
10 min	Whole Group Phonological Awareness Skills Activity • Short; no more than 10 minutes • Ensure there is an entry point for all students
10 min	Small-Group Instruction Following 5 Day Cycle Lesson Plan (for one small group) • Small homogeneous groups of 1-4 students.
10 min	Small-Group Instruction Following 5 Day Cycle Lesson Plan (for one small group) • Small homogeneous groups of 1-4 students.
10 min	Enter Play and Embed Literacy Learning For All • Oral language development • Responding challenging extending learning • Building relationships

END OF BLOCK PLANNING TIME SCHEDULE 40 MIN	
TIME	ACTIVITY
10 min	Enter Play and Embed Literacy Learning For All • Oral language development • Responding challenging extending learning • Building relationships
10 min	Small-Group Instruction Following 5 Day Cycle Lesson Plan (for one small group) • Small homogeneous groups of 1-4 students.
10 min	Small-Group Instruction Following 5 Day Cycle Lesson Plan (for one small group) • Small homogeneous groups of 1-4 students.
10 min	Whole Group Phonemic Awareness Skills Activity • Short no more than 10 minutes • Ensure there is an entry point for all students

[Phonological Awareness Resources](#)

[Teaching Letter Sounds in a Developmentally Appropriate Manner](#)

[Phonological Awareness Activities for Families](#)

Step A: Oral language, rhyming, sentence segmentation, alliteration, syllables

DAY ONE		
PROCESS:	CONSIDERATIONS:	LEARNING OUTCOMES:
❑ Pick a short shared text that includes rhyming words (poem, song, nursery rhyme book.) Ensure that you are selecting texts that are engaging, culturally relevant and representative of diverse identities and perspectives. Culturally diverse nursery rhymes resource list. ❑ Read the text to the students ❑ Have a conversation based on the text ❑ Educator writes utterances (keywords) on chart paper or whiteboard ❑ Based on the conversation and keywords identified, create and say a short sentence. Use blank cards or any manipulatives to model segmenting the sentence into its individual words. Another option is to invite the children to count the words with fingers in an exaggerated way; tuck the 'story' into your fist and into your pocket; pull the 'story' out of your pocket and repeat reciting/counting the words again. ❑ Students think of a sentence and use cards to show how many words. ❑ During a <i>*natural transition</i> engage all students in a whole group segmenting activity.	★ Educators must explicitly teach the students the new terms for the first few weeks. ★ A short sentence consists of 3-5 words.	Learning Goal: ✓ I will learn to hear and see the individual words in sentences Success Criteria: ✓ I can talk about pictures, videos and experiences ✓ I can count the number of words in a sentence ✓ I can show the number of words in a sentence with blank cards

*It is important to minimize transitions for young learners. Educators should avoid interrupting learning and make every effort to align whole group instruction with a natural transition. A natural transition occurs when the students are required to stop play due to an essential transition in the school day (e.g. arrival, nutrition break, recess, home time, outdoor learning, library, gym). Whole group learning should align with natural transitions.

Step A: Oral language, rhyming, sentence segmentation, alliteration, syllables

DAY TWO		
PROCESS:	CONSIDERATIONS:	LEARNING OUTCOMES:
★ Revisit the text from day one (using a shared reading structure - see Guides to effective instruction Reading K-3, p 114) ★ Educator explicitly teaches about alliteration, exposing students to the letter shape and the sound NOT the letter name (the big black bug blew big bubbles) ★ Educator models playing with alliteration by coming up with increasingly longer phrases that start with the same letter. The educator may invite students to think of words that begin with the same letter and phoneme (sound). For example, yellow yo-yo, cool classy car or pretty purple pelican's party. ★ Explicitly point out the letter that was used. Reinforce the sound of the letter and have students experience the letter in three dimensions. For example, use plasticine, sand tray, finger paints, etc. ★ Once students have created their letter shape, have them share with their peers emphasizing the letter sound and visual features ★ Share a letter with students and discuss the sound it makes. Select four cards (sample photo cards) and ask students to identify which word doesn't belong. Educator holds up each photo card as they say the word and then places it on the table in front of the students. For example, bed, bag, fan, bug. ★ During a <i>*natural transition*</i> engage all students in a whole group experience that reinforces alliteration	★ Refer to Teaching Letter Sounds in a Developmentally Appropriate Manner ★ It is not necessary for students to know all letter names and sounds to move on to the next stage of the program ★ Be careful of sounds that have more than one letter that makes them, e.g., Silly Sally Somersaulted in the City ★ When creating your alliterative sentence, use words that start with the same phoneme and letter.	Learning Goal: ✓ I will learn to hear the first sound in a word Success Criteria: ★ I can hear the first sound in a word ★ I can create an alliterative phrase/sentence ★ I can recognize and show the visual features of letters

*It is important to minimize transitions for young learners. Educators should avoid interrupting learning and make every effort to align whole group instruction with a natural transition. A natural transition occurs when the students are required to stop play due to an essential transition in the school day (e.g. arrival, nutrition break, recess, home time, outdoor learning, library, gym). Whole group learning should align with natural transitions.

Step A: Oral language, rhyming, sentence segmentation, alliteration, syllables

DAY THREE		
PROCESS:	CONSIDERATIONS:	LEARNING OUTCOMES:
❑ Revisit the text from day two (invite students to read the text together) ❑ Educator and students play with rhyming words with a focus on rhyme identification - what words in the text don't rhyme (cat and happy), what words do rhyme (cat and sat) ❑ Play a rhyming game with students ❑ During a <i>*natural transition</i> engage all students in a whole group experience that reinforces rhyming	★ Some students will continue to struggle with rhyme. Continue to practice but avoid putting pressure on the student. If students are progressing well with the other phonological awareness skills, rhyme should not hold them back from moving to the next step. ★ Research indicates that rhyme on its own isn't as closely associated with reading success as the progression of other phonemic awareness skills.	Learning Goal: ✓ I will learn to identify words that rhyme Success Criteria: ✓ I can hear that rhyming words have the same medial and final sounds

*It is important to minimize transitions for young learners. Educators should avoid interrupting learning and make every effort to align whole group instruction with a natural transition. A natural transition occurs when the students are required to stop play due to an essential transition in the school day (e.g. arrival, nutrition break, recess, home time, outdoor learning, library, gym). Whole group learning should align with natural transitions.

Step A: Oral language, rhyming, sentence segmentation, alliteration, syllables

DAY FOUR

PROCESS:	CONSIDERATIONS:	LEARNING OUTCOMES:
❑ Revisit the text and invite one of the students to point to the words as you read together. The purpose is to have students identify how many words are in the sentence by clapping, tapping, cue cards, etc. ❑ Educator explicitly teaches that words are made up of chunks called syllables (beats) ❑ Educator models playing with syllables (e.g., clapping, jumping, counting, representing syllables using blank cards or manipulatives, etc.) ❑ Children have an experience that reinforces syllables (see resources) ❑ During a <i>*natural transition</i> engage all students in a whole group experience that reinforces syllables	★ When having students identify the words in the sentence and syllables in a word, ensure you select a different tool/manipulative/action. For example, cue cards for words in the sentence and clapping for syllables.	Learning Goal: ✓ I will learn how to recognize syllables in words Success Criteria: (Choose One) ★ I can clap out the syllables ★ I can count the syllables ★ I can repeat the syllables ★ I can represent syllables with blank cards or manipulatives

*It is important to minimize transitions for young learners. Educators should avoid interrupting learning and make every effort to align whole group instruction with a natural transition. A natural transition occurs when the students are required to stop play due to an essential transition in the school day (e.g. arrival, nutrition break, recess, home time, outdoor learning, library, gym). Whole group learning should align with natural transitions.

Step A: Oral language, rhyming, sentence segmentation, alliteration, syllables

DAY FIVE		
PROCESS:	CONSIDERATIONS:	LEARNING OUTCOMES:
❑ Students read the shared text together ❑ Students identify a one-syllable word, two-syllable word etc from the shared text ❑ Select a game from the syllable resources to apply the students' understanding ❑ During a <i>*natural transition</i> engages all students in a whole group experience to wrap up the week.		Learning Goal: ✓ I will learn how rhyming, sounds and syllables are all part of learning to read Success Criteria: ★ I can hear the sounds in words, and show this with manipulatives ★ I can use manipulatives to show the syllables in a word

*It is important to minimize transitions for young learners. Educators should avoid interrupting learning and make every effort to align whole group instruction with a natural transition. A natural transition occurs when the students are required to stop play due to an essential transition in the school day (e.g. arrival, nutrition break, recess, home time, outdoor learning, library, gym). Whole group learning should align with natural transitions.

Sample Alliteration Photo Cards

