

EARLY LITERACY SUPPORT PROGRAM

SIMCOE COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

**STEP
"B"**



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 B: rhyme, onset and rime, phoneme isolation

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 B: Rhyming, onset and rime, phoneme isolation

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 with students ❑ Educator selects one word from the text ❑ Have students generate words that rhyme with the word ❑ Write words on a chart as student identify rhyming words ❑ Have students discuss what those words have in common (the rime). ❑ During a <i>*natural transition</i>, engage all students in a whole group rhyming activity.	★ Educators must explicitly teach the students the new terms for the first few weeks. ★ 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 other phonemic awareness skills. ★ Nonsense words are acceptable.	Learning Goal: (pick one) ✓ I will learn to identify rhyming words from an unfamiliar text ✓ I will learn to connect rhyming sounds with letters Success Criteria: ★ I can hear that the onset of the word is different from the rime.

*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.

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DAY TWO		
PROCESS:	CONSIDERATIONS:	LEARNING OUTCOMES:
❑ Revisit the text from day one (using a shared reading structure - see <u>Guides to effective instruction Reading K-3</u>, p 114) ❑ Building on the list students made the day before help students to identify what makes these words part of a word family ❑ When they have identified the word family educators highlight the rime ❑ Using the rhyming words from the co-created list (word family) practice isolating the initial phonemes in words, the onset sound. ❑ Practice initial phoneme isolation using a game (see resources) ❑ During a <i>*natural transition</i> engage all students in a whole group activity that focuses on onset and rime.	★ Rhyme relates to phonemic awareness (what we hear) and rime relates to phonics (the letters that are used to make the sound). For example, care and pair rhyme because they sound alike, but they don't have the same rime. The rime for care is -are. The rime for pair is -air. Think of rime as the word family.	Learning Goal: ✓ I will understand what makes a word family. ✓ I will learn how to manipulate the onset of words with word family endings. ✓ I will continue to learn that rhyming words have the same medial and final sounds Success Criteria: ★ I can move the onset and rime tiles to make new words in a word family.

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DAY THREE		
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) ❑ Using photo cards, such as the SEL photo cards provided to all Kindergarten classrooms, show students the photo card and have them identify the initial (onset) sound. ❑ If students are successful in identifying these sounds, use onset and rime tiles to blend the sounds to create words that rhyme. ❑ During a <i>*natural transition</i>, engage all students in a whole group activity that focuses on onset and rime.	★ If students are struggling to identify the initial sound then more work must be done on this skill (see resources) ★ In place of photo cards other activities from this resource can be used.	Learning Goal: ✓ I will learn how to hear and isolate the initial sounds (onset) of word families to make new words Success Criteria: ★ I can hear and isolate the first sound of a word

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DAY FOUR		
PROCESS:	CONSIDERATIONS:	LEARNING OUTCOMES:
❑ Revisit the text from day one (using a shared reading structure - see <u>Guides to effective instruction Reading K-3</u>, p 114) ❑ Continue to practice blending onset and rime by using activities in the resources. ❑ During a <i>*natural transition</i>, engage all students in a whole group activity that focuses on onset and rime.	★ The onset is the initial consonant, blend or digraph in a single syllable word. Not all words have onsets including words like 'oar', ★ The rime is the first vowel phoneme that is followed by all other phonemes, like at in cat.	Learning Goal: ✓ I will learn how to hear and isolate identify the final sounds (onset) of word families to make new words Success Criteria: ★ I can hear and isolate the first sound of a word ★ I can hear and identify the rime of a word

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DAY FIVE		
PROCESS:	CONSIDERATIONS:	LEARNING OUTCOMES:
❑ Using letter manipulatives, create a rime and place it on the table. The educator identifies the rime and purposefully places a choice of letters that students can blend with the rime to create a word. ❑ Students will use one of the words and create a visual representation of this word (drawing, drawing with a label, or writing the word) ❑ During a <i>*natural transition</i>, engage all students in a whole group activity that focuses on onset and rime.	★ Stages of Writing Development ★ pictures, letters, and inventive spelling accepted.	Learning Goal: ✓ I will learn how to connect the initial and final sounds to letters Success Criteria: ★ I can hear and isolate the first sound and last sound

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