

California Preschool/
Transitional Kindergarten
**Learning
Foundations**

**Language
and Literacy
Development**



For Three-to-Five-and-a-Half-
Year-Old Children in Center-Based,
Home-Based, and TK Settings



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Introduction

The language abilities children build in the first several years of life form the foundation for future language and **literacy** learning.¹ Having strong foundations in language and literacy in any language prior to kindergarten sets children up for strong reading comprehension in elementary school, as they will eventually move from learning to read to reading to learn. It is especially important for children at risk for **dyslexia** and other reading disabilities to build strong foundations in oral language and early literacy.² Children develop a strong basis in language and literacy by interacting with peers and adults, learning about print and sounds, and having opportunities to engage with reading and writing in playful, enjoyable ways.



About 59 percent of children age birth to five in California live in homes where a language other than English is used.³ Children who are learning more than one language are called **multilingual learners**. A growing body of research concludes that multilingual learning is a strength that can significantly contribute to many skills, including children’s academic, cognitive, language, and social skills.⁴ Children’s **home language** development also supports their

English language development, as a strong foundation in one language transfers when learning another.⁵ In addition, encouraging children’s home language development supports their positive cultural and linguistic identity development and strengthens ties with their families and communities.⁶ The same is true for children who speak a **variety of English** other than **General American English**, such as **African American English** or **Chicano English**, who come to school with knowledge and skills that support their continued learning and development.⁷

The Preschool and Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations (PTKLF) provide guidance to all California early education programs, including transitional kindergarten (TK), federal and state preschool programs (for example, California State Preschool Program, Head Start), private preschool, and family child care homes, on the wide range of language and literacy knowledge and skills that children age three to five and a half typically attain when attending a high-quality early



education program. Teachers can use the PTKLF to guide their observations and set learning goals for children and plan for developmentally appropriate, equitable, inclusive practice, including how to design learning environments and create learning experiences that promote children’s learning and development in the Language and Literacy Development domain. Early education programs can use the PTKLF to select and implement curricula aligned with the PTKLF, guide the selection of assessments aligned with the PTKLF, design and offer professional development and coaching programs for educators to support understanding and effective use of the PTKLF, and enhance preschool to third grade (P–3) continuity across learning goals and practice in language and literacy.

Organization of Language and Literacy Development Domain

Subdomains, Strands, and Sub-Strands

The domain of Language and Literacy Development includes two complementary subdomains: Foundational Language Development and English Language Development. The Foundational Language Development subdomain covers the foundations of language and literacy development in any language a child may be learning. It is designed for use with all monolingual and multilingual children. The English Language Development subdomain is designed for use with multilingual children who are learning English as an additional language around the time of entry in an early education program. Both subdomains are organized by the same strands, which are described here:

- **Listening and Speaking:** This strand focuses on the development of spoken and signed language. It addresses how children develop **vocabulary** and **grammar**, as well as their knowledge of how to use language to interact with others, communicate in meaningful ways, and learn about the world around them.
- **Foundational Literacy Skills:** This strand addresses skills that contribute to children’s future reading and writing development. These skills include **phonological awareness**, knowledge of alphabets and print, and an understanding of the concept of print.
- **Reading:** This strand focuses on children’s interest in and engagement with literacy, as well as their understanding of stories and informational texts that are read to them.
- **Writing:** This strand focuses on children’s beginning abilities to communicate ideas through writing.*

* The Foundational Language Development subdomain addresses the fine motor skills children develop as part of their path to writing. The English Language Development subdomain does not address fine motor skills needed for writing, as these are skills that are not specific to English.



Foundation Statements

Within each sub-strand in the Language and Literacy Development domain are individual foundation statements that describe the competencies—the knowledge and skills—that children can be expected to demonstrate in a high-quality early education program. Children develop these competencies at different times and in different ways within their home, school, and community contexts. The foundation statements are intended to help teachers identify learning opportunities they can support.

“Teacher” refers to an adult (for example, lead teacher, assistant teacher, child care provider) with responsibility for the education and care of children in an early education program, including a California State Preschool Program, a Transitional Kindergarten program, a Head Start program, other center-based programs, and family child care homes.

Age Levels

The Foundational Language Development subdomain uses age-based foundation statements. Age-based foundation statements describe what children may often know and be able to do as a result of their experiences and unique developmental journey in language and literacy. These statements are presented in two overlapping age ranges with full recognition that each child’s development progresses over the early years with growth spurts and periods of skill consolidation in different domains at different points in time:

- An “Early Foundation” addresses knowledge and skills that children often demonstrate between three and four-and-a-half years of age.
- A “Later Foundation” addresses knowledge and skills that children often demonstrate between four and five-and-a-half years of age.

The English Language Development subdomain does not use age-based levels. Descriptions of the English Language Development levels are provided in this document.

Use of Examples

For each level of any given foundation, examples illustrate the diverse ways children may demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Examples across the Early and Later foundation levels show development over time. The first one or two examples in each foundation are aligned across the Early and Later age levels. In English Language Development, the first example is aligned



across the three developmental levels: Discovering, Developing, and Broadening. Examples show how children may demonstrate a developing skill or knowledge as part of their everyday routines, learning experiences, and interactions with adults and peers. Examples also provide different ways in which children may demonstrate their developing skills in different contexts, whether indoors or outdoors, and in a range of activities throughout the day.

Multilingual learners possess foundational language abilities developed in the context of their relationships in their homes and communities. The use of their home language in the early education program serves as a powerful tool, supporting children's sense of belonging, bridging connections to their existing knowledge, and fostering deeper ties to their homes and communities. Examples in the home language of multilingual learners illustrate how multilingual children can further develop these foundational abilities by using their home language as part of their learning and daily interactions with peers and adults in the early education program. In instances where a teacher may not be fluent in a child's home language, various strategies can encourage multilingual learners to use their home languages, allowing them to leverage all of their linguistic capacities. To facilitate communication and understanding, the teacher can partner with staff or family volunteers who speak the child's home language. The teacher can also use interpreters and translation technology tools to communicate with families and gain insights about what a child knows and is able to do. All teachers should communicate with families about the benefits of bilingualism and how the home language serves as a critical foundation for English language development. Teachers should also encourage families to promote their child's continued development of the home language as an asset for overall learning.

Some examples include how the teacher may support children as they progress to the next level of development in the knowledge and skills of the foundation. Teachers may ask an open-ended question, scaffold learning by making a suggestion or giving a prompt, or comment on what a child is doing. The examples should help teachers gauge where a child's development is, consider how to support their development within their current skill level, and build toward the next skill level in that foundation. Furthermore, while the examples may provide teachers with valuable ideas for how to support children's learning and development as children build their knowledge or skill in language and literacy, the examples are a small subset of all the different strategies teachers may employ to support children's learning and development in this domain. At the end of this introduction, the section *How Teachers Can Support Children's Language and Literacy Development* offers ideas on ways to support children's learning and development in language and literacy. Additionally, callout boxes with tips and strategies for teaching are embedded throughout the foundations to guide practice in the domain.



Subdomain: Foundational Language Development

The Foundational Language Development subdomain identifies the foundations of language and literacy development in any language. This subdomain is intended for use with all monolingual and multilingual children:

- Multilingual children who speak two or more languages at home (for example, a child who speaks Spanish and English at home, or a child who speaks Mandarin and English at home)
- Multilingual children who primarily speak one language at home and are learning another at school (for example, a child who speaks Spanish at home and is learning English at school, a child who speaks English at home and is learning Yurok in a language revitalization program, or a child who uses **American Sign Language** [ASL] at home and is attending a school for the Deaf with instruction in ASL and English)
- Multilingual children who speak a language other than English at home and the same language at school (for example, a child who speaks Spanish at home and attends a Spanish-language program, or a child who speaks Mandarin at home and attends a Mandarin-language program) who may have some exposure to English
- Monolingual English-speaking children

The Foundational Language Development subdomain is intended for use in any early education program regardless of the language of instruction. Children can demonstrate the skills and knowledge listed in the foundations using their home languages or any other languages they are learning. Children who use varieties of English may use the features of their home variety as well as General American English. Since the domain addresses foundations of language and literacy in any language, the examples illustrate how linguistically diverse children may demonstrate the skills or knowledge described in the foundations. While many examples reference children speaking particular languages (such as Spanish, English, or Cantonese), the skills and knowledge demonstrated in these examples can apply to many different languages.

For some examples, such as those of children demonstrating knowledge of letter–sound correspondence, it is necessary to represent sounds within the text of the example. These sounds are represented in // marks; for example, /b/ is the sound that corresponds with the letter “B” in English. For a complete guide to pronouncing the sounds indicated throughout the examples, please refer to the Appendix of this domain.

While children who are multilingual learners may demonstrate foundational language and literacy knowledge in English, teachers should still refer to the English Language Development



subdomain when planning learning activities and instruction to enhance children’s development in English. Communication with families is a vital aspect of understanding and supporting a child’s language development, particularly when the child’s home language is not one the teacher understands or uses.

Subdomain: English Language Development

This subdomain identifies the foundations of English language development for children who are learning English as an additional language around the time of entry in an early education program. The English Language Development subdomain may be used for children learning English in **dual language programs** as well as early education programs in which English is the primary language of instruction. It is intended for use *together with* the Foundational Language Development subdomain.

While the English Language Development subdomain foundations represent children’s growing knowledge and skills in English, they are designed to recognize and encourage children’s continued use and development of their home languages. Learning English does not, and should not, replace children’s home language development. In addition, it is natural and helpful for both children and adults to draw on all of their language resources to communicate. As children develop their multilingual capacities, they learn to use these vast language resources to communicate effectively in different contexts with different people. The examples in the English Language Development subdomain illustrate how children use both their home languages and English to communicate.

Levels

Multilingual learners who are learning English as an additional language may enter an early education program with varying amounts of experience with English. As such, the English Language Development subdomain has three levels to account for differences in individual children’s ability to use English to communicate. There is no uniform pathway or predetermined rate for learning English as a second or additional language. Children will use knowledge from their home language and apply those concepts to support their learning in English. Children enter early education programs with their current knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and conversational norms in their home languages and cultures, but the extent to which their knowledge applies directly to



English may vary by language. For example, a child who speaks Spanish at home may have existing knowledge of alphabet letters and sounds that allows them to recognize the names and sounds of English alphabet letters relatively quickly. Alternatively, a child who speaks Mandarin at home may already have an understanding of print based on their exposure to Chinese characters but may require additional time and support to learn the names of English letters and the sounds associated with them.

English Language Development differs from the Foundational Language Development subdomain and all other domains in the Preschool/TK Learning Foundations because the three levels of the foundations focus on a child's skills and knowledge in using English rather than on their age. The three levels are labeled *Discovering*, *Developing*, and *Broadening*, described here:

- **Discovering:** Foundations at the Discovering level describe skills and knowledge children demonstrate as they engage with English for the first days, weeks, and possibly months in an early education program. Children increasingly recognize English speech and print, understand and use a few words, and interact with English-language books and literacy activities.
- **Developing:** Foundations at the Developing level describe children's abilities to interact more skillfully and knowledgeably in English. Children understand and express an increasing variety of ideas, wants, and observations while applying some rules of English grammar. They demonstrate a growing understanding of English print conventions and the alphabet, comprehend some information from books that are read to them, and experiment with writing using the English alphabet.
- **Broadening:** Foundations at the Broadening level generally represent skills and knowledge of children who are able to engage in most everyday interactions in English. Children at this level can use English across a range of contexts and interactions, both in spoken language and in print-based literacy activities.

A child may also be at different levels of English Language Development for different skills. For example, their listening and speaking skills may be at the Developing or Broadening levels, while some literacy skills in English may be new and therefore correspond to the Discovering level. In addition, the pace at which a child moves through the levels of different foundations may vary. The child may, for example, more quickly demonstrate Broadening-level knowledge of alphabet letters as compared to their development of English grammar. Other children may enter an early education program already at the Developing or Broadening level of each foundation due to some amount of prior experience with English. They may be able to apply knowledge from their home languages to some aspects of English but not to others. Children vary in their language



development. By considering the child’s level for each foundation individually, teachers can support children’s English language development in a way that is responsive to each child’s strengths and needs.

Because the English Language Development foundations are not written based on children’s ages, some of the skills and knowledge described in the Developing and Broadening levels may not be developmentally appropriate for younger children. For example, when considering one of the English Language Development foundations for Writing, a child would demonstrate development at the Broadening level when they are able to write a few recognizable English letters on their own. However, it may not be appropriate to expect to see this skill in younger preschool children. The Foundational Language Development subdomain should be used as a reference to determine what might be developmentally appropriate for the child’s age. This is different from the K–12 ELD standards, which are both grade based and skill based.

Diversity in Children’s Language and Literacy Development

Language use and conventions vary greatly by culture. Different cultures have different norms around aspects of language and communication such as eye contact, body language, gestures, tone of voice, and the ways in which children participate in conversations and address adults. Cultural differences are also present in the varieties of a language. Cultural variations in words and grammar are common within any given language. Languages do not have a single correct form. Diverse varieties of a language, such as African American English or Chicano English, use the full range of linguistic features to share meaning and add to the richness of the language community.⁸ Literacy traditions also differ by culture; for example, many cultures celebrate a tradition of oral language storytelling through which children develop literacy knowledge.⁹ Children who are learning more than one variety of English bring additional linguistic strengths, such as awareness about the features of language and when and how to use each variety.¹⁰ As children learn the language used in early education programs and beyond, they should be supported in maintaining and utilizing the strengths they bring from their home language varieties for their continued language development and continued connection to their home culture.

Research affirms the importance of seeing multilingualism as a strength, as it supports a child’s skills and knowledge in all their languages. Multilingual learners develop a vast array of language skills and are learning when and how to draw on their different skills to help them navigate different communication needs.¹¹ This practice is known as **translanguaging**, a term that refers to the ways individuals use the full range of their language knowledge to understand and



communicate.¹² One common aspect of translanguaging is often referred to as **code-switching**, when an individual uses two or more languages in a single conversation or within a single phrase or sentence. The use of translanguaging in educational settings can aid children’s understanding of ideas; support their home language development; and create strong connections between schools, families, and communities.¹³ Practices that support translanguaging also provide a critical resource for communities engaged in language revitalization efforts, such as Native nations and tribal communities.

A multilingual child will show a different, but just as effective, path of language development from a monolingual child.¹⁴ For example, a teacher who understands only one language (for example, English) of a multilingual child’s languages may assume the child knows fewer vocabulary words than their peers know. However, when considering the child’s vocabulary across *both* languages, a multilingual child usually knows about the same amount of vocabulary as their monolingual peers do. As a child learns their home language or additional languages, they may understand vocabulary and sentence structures even if they are not yet able to produce them. This possible asymmetry between understanding and using language is especially important to keep in mind when considering children’s development of English as an additional language. Children who are beginning to experience English may spend a period of time observing others around them.¹⁵ Even if they are not yet communicating in their new language environment, children are learning through observation and other forms of active participation.

Languages can be spoken or signed. Sign languages, such as ASL, are a form of language used by the **Deaf** community. The Foundational Language Development subdomain describes the development of children who use sign languages as their primary languages or in addition to other languages. In addition, the English Language Development subdomain describes the development of children whose home language is ASL and who are learning English in an early education program. Children who use sign language may be Deaf or hard of hearing; however, hearing children may also use sign language as their primary home language with family members.

Children with disabilities may also have developmental differences that impact the path of language development. **Autism spectrum disorder, speech or language impairment**, specific learning disabilities, Deafness, and developmental delays can impact the pace at which children learn different aspects of language and the ways they demonstrate their knowledge. Some children, for example, may understand language but may not speak. Children with speech or language impairments or other disabilities can still learn two or more languages, and being multilingual does not make speech or language impairments or other disabilities more



pronounced.¹⁶ Children who do not speak can learn to understand one or more languages and may communicate in different ways. Children with certain disabilities may take longer to speak or may use alternative ways of communicating, such as signing, gesturing, or using **augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices**. For children with disabilities, teachers should reference the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and regularly communicate with a child's IEP team to assist in making accommodations.

How Teachers Can Support Children's Language and Literacy Development

Support for children's language and literacy development should emphasize fun, play-based instruction and activities and joyful experiences. Effective language and literacy support also includes thoughtful planning and careful consideration of specific learning objectives, explicit instruction, inquiry-based learning, well-designed classroom environments, and intentional routines and interactions.

Learning Through Everyday Routines and Interactions

Children learn language every day, all day, in rich and varied interactions and learning experiences. These experiences occur in the child's home languages or English during regular routines and activities that support growth of vocabulary and grammar. Children learn through practice, such as having conversations with adults and other children and expressing their thoughts and opinions. Teachers can promote children's development in their home languages by encouraging children to use their home languages in the classroom, providing books in the home languages that children can access, and including children's home languages on signs and labels along with pictures (for example, labeling a bin for blocks with both **BLOCKS** and *BLOQUES*).

Setting Up Environments and Materials

Literacy development is supported by print-rich environments, with many different types of written materials, such as books, posters, toys, signs, and labels, in English or the home language. It is important to read to children every day from storybooks and informational books and support interest in literacy by offering materials for children to explore on their own and engage in songs, rhymes, and wordplay. Books that represent children's own cultural, ethnic, and language backgrounds are especially valuable, as they can engage children's interest in reading and support their comprehension.¹⁷



Planning Instructional Activities

Literacy instruction should be play based and developmentally appropriate. Important literacy skills, such as phonological awareness and letter–sound knowledge, are supported with more planned explicit instruction drawn from an evidence-based curriculum that follows a specific scope and sequence. This instruction



should be playful, including employing rhymes, active games, and hands-on materials. To support writing development, teachers can offer a variety of writing materials and surfaces. Children can write using pencils on paper, sticks in sand, crayons on easels, chalk on sidewalks, or fingers in shaving foam, among many other possibilities. Integrating reading and writing instruction together is a powerful mechanism for establishing foundational literacy skills. For example, instruction on letter–sound knowledge should include both reading (identifying the sound that a letter makes) and writing (writing letters to represent the sounds children are learning). Through literacy, children continue to develop their language skills and knowledge of other domains.

In a classroom where English is the primary language of instruction, teachers should also intentionally use effective practices to support multilingual learners’ engagement with instructional content. These practices include speaking in clear, direct English and giving the child additional time to respond, as well as scaffolding speech and literacy activities with gestures, actions, props, and other objects. Before reading English-language books, teachers can introduce key words that children will experience in the book as a way of aiding multilingual learners’ comprehension and vocabulary growth.¹⁸

Opportunities for Home Connections

Authentic, reciprocal communication between teachers and families fosters a strong home–school connection. Because children may demonstrate their language development in any languages or



language varieties they speak—including languages or varieties their teacher may not know or use—communication with families is necessary if teachers and family members are to understand and support children’s development. Teachers can:

- Establish partnerships with families that are built on mutual respect, trust, and two-way communication. Teachers can ask respectful, open-ended questions to establish trusted channels of communication.
- Learn from families about children’s language environments at home and the language goals families have for their children. This knowledge informs how the early education program can support children’s learning and development in a culturally and linguistically responsive way.
- Learn from families about what a child knows and is able to do. When they are unable to speak a child’s home language, the teacher can partner with staff or family volunteers who speak the child’s home language. The teacher can also use interpreters and translation technology tools to communicate with families.
- Communicate with families about culturally relevant storytelling, books, or games from home that can be integrated into the classroom environment and literacy activities. Teachers can invite parents to lead these activities.
- Collaborate with families to promote continued development of the home language. The use of the home language supports children’s sense of belonging, bridges to children’s existing knowledge, and enhances connections to children’s homes and communities. All teachers should communicate with families about the critical role families play in their child’s continued development of the home language as an asset to overall learning.

Engaging families is essential, particularly for multilingual learners and children who speak varieties of English.



Endnotes

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Language and Literacy Development

Foundational Language Development





Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations in the Subdomain of Foundational Language Development

Children communicate their language and literacy knowledge and skills in a variety of ways, both verbally and nonverbally. Their communication may include verbal ways of communicating in their home languages, the language of instruction, or a combination of languages, or through the use of augmentative and alternative communication devices. It may also include nonverbal ways of communicating such as drawing and modeling with different materials or expressing through movement, actions, or role-play.





Strand: 1.0 — Listening and Speaking

Sub-Strand: Vocabulary

Children who are multilingual learners are able to draw on their vocabulary knowledge in any language they know when learning and understanding the world. This is known as translanguaging. A child who is a multilingual learner may know some words in only one language and some words in more than one language. A multilingual child’s vocabulary includes the words they know in all of their languages together and is comparable to the vocabulary of a monolingual peer.

Foundation 1.1 Understanding and Using Vocabulary

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

Understand and use words for objects, actions, and attributes frequently experienced in everyday life, such as through play, conversations, or stories.

Early Examples

■ A child hands a peer the trucks when the peer communicates in English, “I want to play with the trucks,” during play.

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

Understand and use an increasing variety of words for objects, actions, and attributes experienced in everyday life, such as through play, conversations, or stories.

Later Examples

■ A child hands a peer the blue dump truck and digger but not the tractor or yellow dump truck when the peer communicates in English, “I want to play with the blue dump truck and the digger,” during play.

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Foundation 1.1 Understanding and Using Vocabulary

**Early
3 to 4 ½ Years**

**Later
4 to 5 ½ Years**

Early Examples (continued)

● A child shares in English to a teacher, “Um, I like to play with my superhero guy.” When the teacher replies, “Your superhero guy—tell me more about that,” the child explains, “He jumps up so high.”

While making cookies with play dough, a child explains in English and Punjabi to another child, “No, don’t eat them. They are ਕੱਚੀਆਂ.” (No, don’t eat them. They are raw.)

A child communicates in Vietnamese, “Tôi đang làm tòa lâu đài bằng gỗ” (I am making a wooden castle) to a peer while playing with blocks.

A child comments in Hmong to a peer, “Kuv nyiam koj lub tsho ntsuab!” (I like your green shirt!)

A child shows a teacher “train” on a communication card to request a story about steam trains.

Later Examples (continued)

● A child explains in English to a teacher, “Um, I like to play with my superhero guy.” When the teacher replies, “Your superhero guy—tell me more about that,” the child describes, “He sticks, he crawls, and he can jump higher than a huge skyscraper.”

A child comments in Spanish to a peer, “Mira los diamantes. ¡Cómo brillan! ¡La corona es mía porque yo soy el rey!” (Look at the diamonds. They are so shiny! The crown is mine because I’m the king!), while pointing at a crown during play.

When the teacher points to an image of the earth in a book and asks, “这是什么?” (What is this?), a child responds in Mandarin, “地球。它是一颗行星。” (The earth. It’s a planet.)



Foundation 1.2 Understanding and Using Words for Categories

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

Understand and use commonly experienced vocabulary to describe categories and the relationships within them.

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

Understand and use increasingly specific vocabulary to describe categories and the relationships within them.

Early Examples

■ After reading a book about zoo animals, a child brings a toy elephant, a toy goat, and a toy lion to the table and communicates in English, “Here are the animals for our zoo.”

● A child sorts wooden fruits and vegetables into one basket and plates and cups into another basket when the teacher asks in the child’s home language, “Can you please put away the food in this basket and the dishes in this one?”

When the teacher asks children to sort toys in a bin, a child puts away the animal toys and puts aside a small car while explaining in Mandarin, “这是小汽车, 不是 animal.” (This is a small car, not an animal.)

Later Examples

■ After discussing different kinds of reptiles, the teacher reads a book aloud and asks a child to point to pictures of reptiles in the book. They point to a snake, iguana, and a turtle, but not to the frog or fish.

● A child points to two bowls in the dramatic play area—one has an apple, a banana, and a mango and another has carrots, okra, and corn—and communicates in English to a peer, “These are fruits, and these right here are vegetables,” pointing to the appropriate bowl.

While two children play together, one tells the other in English and Cantonese, “You go get the furniture for the house. We need a 凳, a 台, and a bed.” (You go get the furniture for the house. We need a chair, a table, and a bed.)

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■ ● Matching icons indicate alignment of examples across age-ranges



(continued)

Foundation 1.2 Understanding and Using Words for Categories

**Early
3 to 4 ½ Years**

**Later
4 to 5 ½ Years**

Early Examples (continued)

While playing store, a child communicates in English to a peer, “I want to buy some food.” The peer shares in English, “OK. I have milk, bread, and arepas.”*

When painting at the easel, a child paints a picture intended to represent a doll and a toy stroller and communicates in Tagalog, “*Ito and baby ko at ang kanyang stroller, Ito and paborito ko na laruan.*” (This is my baby and her stroller. They’re my favorite toys.)

* Arepas are a type of cornmeal cake originating from Central and South America.

Later Examples (continued)

When making a pretend city, the teacher expresses in English, “Now, we need some vehicles. Vehicles take us places. I’m going to put a car and a motorcycle on the road.” A child picks up a toy bus and a truck and places them on the road as well.

A child tells the teacher, “*A mi me gusta jugar beisbol. Pero mi deporte favorito es el fútbol*” (I like to play baseball. But my favorite sport is soccer) during a mealtime discussion about what they like to do with their family.



Foundation 1.3 Understanding and Using Size and Location Words

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

Understand and use words to describe the size and location of objects (such as “tiny” and “on”), including simple comparisons (such as “bigger”).

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

Understand and use increasingly specific words to describe and compare the size and location of objects (such as “longer” and “between”).

In different languages, descriptive words are represented in different parts of speech. For example, in Spanish and English, many descriptive words are adjectives (such as tall or alto) or prepositions (such as behind or detrás de). In other languages, such as Korean, descriptive words are often verbs (for example “끼인다,” which means “tight fit”).

Early Examples

■ A child shouts in English, “High!” as they jump up to tap a wall above their head.

● During a movement activity, a child follows their teacher’s directions to move their body *forward* and *backward* and *low* and *high*.

A child explains in English, “I gotta put my lunch in the table” (using “in” instead of “on” like the word “en”^{*} in Spanish, the child’s home language).

* The Spanish word “en” can translate to the English words “in” or “on.”

Later Examples

■ A child shouts in English, “I can jump higher than Hakeem,” as they jump up to tap a wall above the peer’s head.

● During a movement activity, a child follows the teacher’s direction to move a scarf *beside*, *behind*, *in front of*, *toward*, and *away from* their body.

While planting seedlings during a small group activity, a child communicates to a peer in Farsi, “بیل و بده به من.” (Give me the shovel. Give it to me so I can make the hole deeper.)

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■ ● Matching icons indicate alignment of examples across age-ranges



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Foundation 1.3 Understanding and Using Size and Location Words

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

A child communicates in Arabic,
“عنده سيارات أكثر مني. بدي كمان سيارات.”
(He has more cars than me. I want
more cars.)

A child describes an art project in Spanish.
“Es el sol. Y el caballo está abajo del sol
porque está en el suelo.” (It’s the sun. And
the horse is under the sun because it’s on
the ground.)

Later Examples (continued)

After a teacher signs in American Sign
Language, “You seem upset, what is
wrong?” a child explains in American Sign
Language, “He has the longer one. Mine is
too short to reach the soap” when blowing
bubbles outside.

While playing in the block area, a child tells
another child in Spanish, “*Pon los bloques
azules enfrente de la torre. ¡Así hacemos
el río!*” (Put the blue blocks in front of the
tower. They can be the river!)



Mathematics and History–Social Science — The above foundation is similar to Mathematics foundation 3.1 on comparing measurable attributes of objects and Mathematics foundation 4.5 on understanding positions and directions. It is also similar to History–Social Science foundation 5.2 on communicating locations and directions. All three domains intentionally include foundations that address children’s understanding of objects’ locations. In Foundational Language Development, this foundation addresses children’s development of vocabulary words to understand and communicate these concepts.



Supporting Vocabulary Growth and Development

Children learn words in the context of interactions with peers and adults through play, instructional activities, literacy experiences, and everyday routines. In addition to using an evidence-based language and literacy curriculum with playful activities that follow a specific scope and sequence, to support children in developing more advanced and precise vocabulary in English or in the child’s home language during everyday interactions and routines, teachers can:

- Narrate what children are doing and name objects they are playing with. Consistently associating words with actions and objects helps solidify children’s understanding of the words.
- Introduce children to new words as part of conversations and activities. For example, teachers can use words to describe categories (such as “mammals” or “flower”) during science activities and vocabulary to describe shapes, relative size (such as “longest”), and position of an object (such as “on top” or “in between”) during math activities.
- Prior to planned learning activities, introduce new vocabulary using pictures, objects, or actions. For example, before a science activity building machines, teachers can introduce new objects, such as pulleys or levers, with their real names.
- Engage children in picture books, storytelling, and informational books. Teachers can select materials that relate to children’s own experiences, interests, or topics from the curriculum. Children may need to experience the same materials multiple times to learn the meaning of new words.
- Work with families and communities to support vocabulary learning in children’s home languages. Encourage family members to read books, sing songs, and tell stories in the home language. Family members can also help teachers learn to understand or communicate a few key words related to classroom activities in order to support the child in the classroom.



Sub-Strand — Grammar

Children draw on the linguistic resources from all their languages or language varieties to understand and communicate with others. This is called **translanguaging**. Multilingual learners demonstrate flexible use of vocabulary, sentence structures, and other nonverbal forms of communication from all of their languages to make meaning. Children may code-switch, which means they use two languages within the same sentence or conversation. For example, they may use the grammatical structures of one language while using vocabulary from both languages. Children who are learning more than one variety of English will use grammatical structures from the varieties of English they learn at home and in their community as well as in the early learning program.

Foundation 1.4 Using Grammatical Features and Sentence Structure

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

Use common word forms and sentence forms to express thoughts and ideas.

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

Use both common and less common word forms and sentence forms to express complex thoughts and ideas.

Languages use both **morphology** (combining or changing parts of words) and **syntax** (order of words in a sentence) to communicate meaning. Grammatical complexity will look different among languages, with some languages having more complexity in morphology and others having more complexity in syntax. In English and Spanish, children will learn to use sentences with two or more phrases and some irregular words that are heard less frequently.

Early Examples*

■ A child invites a peer to join play in the sandbox and says in English, “We’re making roads. This truck does cement. Wanna play too?”

Later Examples

■ A child invites a peer to join play in the sandbox and says in English, “We’re making cement. So we dug this out. But Adrian said we should build a spaceship.”

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Foundation 1.4 Using Grammatical Features and Sentence Structure

**Early
3 to 4 ½ Years**

**Later
4 to 5 ½ Years**

Early Examples (continued)

● A child communicates in English and Spanish to a bilingual teacher at drop-off, “*¡Maestra, mira, tengo shoes nuevos!*” (Teacher, look! I have new shoes!) while gesturing to their shoes. The teacher asks, “*Sí, ¿De dónde son?*” (Yes, where are they from?) The child answers, “*Mi abuela me los regaló ayer.*” (My grandma gave them to me yesterday.)

A child observes in Punjabi, “*ਚਿੱਟਾ ਕੁੱਤਾ ਕੁਰਸੀ ਤੇ ਬੈਠਾ ਹੈ।*” (The white dog is sitting on the chair) while listening to their mother read a picture book aloud at morning drop-off.

Later Examples (continued)

● At drop-off, while gesturing to their shoes, a child describes in English and Spanish to a bilingual teacher, “*¡Maestra, mira, tengo shoes nuevos! Tienen cintas blue. Me los regaló mi abuelita para el primer día de escuela.*” (Teacher, look! I have new shoes! They have blue shoelaces. My grandma gave them to me for the first day of school!) The teacher replies, “*And the blue laces match your blue sweater and backpack. ¿Es el azul tu color favorito?*” (And the blue laces match your blue sweater and backpack. Is blue your favorite color?)

While in the dramatic play area, a child communicates in a mix of Russian and English to a peer who also speaks Russian and English, “*You want to buy some фрукт? дай мне three dollars.*” (You want to buy some fruit? Give me three dollars.)

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Foundation 1.4 Using Grammatical Features and Sentence Structure

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

When a teacher says, “Wow, it looks like you have a heavy load in your wagon,” a child explains in English, “I’m pushing the wagon, and he’s pulling it!” during outdoor play.

In Mandarin, a child asks an assistant teacher to help take a puzzle from the shelf. “老师，我想玩那个 puzzle。你能给我拿出来吗？” (Teacher, I want to play with that puzzle. Can you get it out for me?)

Later Examples (continued)

A child comments in Mandarin, “第一页。全是花。还有蜜蜂还有昆虫” (The first page. All are flowers. And bees and insects), pointing to the pictures on the page while looking through a book about gardening with a Mandarin-speaking teacher who has asked the child to describe what they see in the book.

* The examples in this foundation illustrate developmentally appropriate grammar in the languages being spoken. Due to differences between the grammar of the example languages and English, the grammatical complexity is not always reflected in the English translation.



Sub-Strand — Language Use

Children learn the conversational and social norms specific to their languages, language varieties, and cultures. Children might learn different norms such as when and how to ask questions and initiate conversations with adults or the way to tell **narratives**. For example, in some cultures children are encouraged to listen to and observe others, while in other cultures children are encouraged to initiate conversations and ask questions to adults. As children learn a new language or language variety, they add new social norms to their repertoire.

Foundation 1.5 Asking Questions

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

Use questions to seek information and to clarify and confirm understanding.

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

Use questions and follow-up questions to seek information and to clarify and confirm understanding.

Early Examples

■ A child asks a peer in English, “Are you gonna feed the fishes?” The peer replies, “Yeah, I want a turn.”

Later Examples

■ A child asks a peer in English, “Is it your turn to feed the fish?” When the peer replies, “I don’t know,” the child responds, “Yeah, because yesterday, did you feed them?” When the peer communicates no, the child concludes, “OK, then it’s your turn.”

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Foundation 1.5 Asking Questions

**Early
3 to 4 ½ Years**

**Later
4 to 5 ½ Years**

Early Examples (continued)

● While reading a story out loud, a teacher pauses between pages to allow children to look at the pictures. A child points to a picture in the book and asks in English, “That’s where the library mouse live?” The teacher responds, “Yes, what do you see in the mouse’s home?”

A child asks a teacher in Ukrainian, “Це моя їжа?” (Is this my food?) after sitting down at the snack table.

A child asks a peer in Spanish, “¿Este va aquí?” (Does this go here?) while working on a puzzle.

Later Examples (continued)

● While reading a story out loud, a teacher pauses between pages to allow children to look at the pictures. A child points to a picture in the book and asks in English, “Why does he just eat the crumbs? Isn’t he hungry?” The teacher asks the small group, “Does anyone have an idea why the mouse eats crumbs for his lunch?”

A child asks a teacher about a peer in Spanish. “Teacher, ¿dónde está Yi-Yun?” (Teacher, where is Yi-Yun?) The teacher responds, “Yi-Yun no está aquí. Se quedó en casa hoy.” (Yi-Yun isn’t here today. She stayed home.) The child asks, “¿Por qué no vino? ¿Está enferma?” (Why didn’t she come? Is she sick?)

A child clarifies in Tagalog, “Wala kang mga kapatid? Talaga?” (You don’t have any brothers or sisters? None?) after a peer shares that they are an only child.



Foundation 1.6 Constructing Narratives

Early 3 to 4 1/2 Years

Use language to construct real or fictional short narratives.

Later 4 to 5 1/2 Years

Use language to construct real or fictional extended narratives that have several details or a plotline.

Early Examples

■ A child tells a peer in English the events of a favorite movie. "Cinderella's the girl. She wants to go to a party, but she has to have a dress and she didn't have one. She cried. And then a Mother Fairy made her dress."

● During mealtime, a teacher asks a child in Spanish, "¿Qué hiciste este fin de semana?" (What did you do this weekend?) The child describes in Spanish what they saw on a walk with their aunt over the weekend. "Fui al mercado con mi tía y vimos a un perro. Me dio mucho miedo." (I went for a walk with my aunt and we saw a dog. It scared me a lot.)

When a teacher asks a child about their weekend, the child tells the teacher, "I went to a ceremony. It's where we honor our ancestors. I was a little shy to dance, but then I did."

Later Examples

■ A child tells a peer in English the events of a favorite movie. "Cinderella's the girl from the movie, and first she has to do all the work. She wants to go to a party, but she has to have a dress and she didn't have one. She cried because everyone else got to go. And then a Mother Fairy made the mouses into a horsie. And then she danced with the prince and her shoe got lost, but then they lived happily ever after."

● During mealtime, a teacher asks a child in Spanish, "¿Qué hiciste este fin de semana?" (What did you do this weekend?) The child describes in Spanish what they saw on a walk with their aunt over the weekend. "Fui al mercado con mi tía. Vimos a mi amigo y después vimos a un perro. Estaba afuera. El perro era muy, muy grande. Me dio mucho miedo. A mi tía le gustan los perros. ¡A mí, no!" (I went to the market with my aunt. We saw my friend. And we saw a dog. It was outside. The dog was very, very big. It scared me a lot. My aunt likes dogs. But I don't!)

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Foundation 1.6 Constructing Narratives

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

A Deaf child signs in American Sign Language the story of “Little Red Riding Hood.” “I am a wolf. I am a mean wolf. I will capture her, and she must give me flowers. The lumberjack will come.”

A child describes in Hmong the pictures in a storybook to their little brother. About one picture, they explain, “*Tus me nyuam tsaug zog. Ntawm nov yog txhais khau, thiab.*” (The child is sleeping. Here are the shoes, too.)

Later Examples (continued)

A child tells their peer in English, “So, my Daddy and my Uncle Fefe play soccer. They play soccer every weekend. They have a blue soccer ball. But my soccer ball is a flying soccer ball. I can kick the ball so far it goes to the goal!”

A child tells a story in Vietnamese as they play with play dough. “*Đây là con rồng. Con rồng sống trên núi. Khi ngoài trời nắng ấm, con rồng bay khắp nơi.*” (This is a dragon. The dragon lives on a mountain. When it is warm outside the dragon flies all over everywhere.)



Foundation 1.7 Sharing Explanations and Opinions

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Share descriptions, opinions, and explanations.

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Share detailed descriptions, opinions, and explanations.

Early Examples

■ After a teacher says, “I see many colors in your painting. What are you drawing?” a child explains in English, “This is my unicorn that flies, and that’s a cloud, and that’s the unicorn’s horn.”

● A child communicates in English, “It dried up. We should put the lids on all the way next time.”

A child responds in Russian to their grandfather at pickup time when the grandfather asks why they are not wearing their sweater: “я не хочу его он очень колется.” (I don’t want it. It’s too scratchy.)

A child explains in Cantonese, “我最鍾意瀧滑梯，但是佢太熱啦。” (The slide is my favorite, but it gets too hot.)

Later Examples

■ After a teacher says, “I see many colors in your painting. Can you tell me about what you are drawing?” a child explains in English, “This is my rainbow unicorn that flies. I love unicorns. And that’s a cloud, and that’s the unicorn’s horn. I used the blue and red paints to make it purple because it’s my favorite.”

● A child communicates in English, “It dried up. ‘Cause we didn’t put the lids on all the way, so air got in and dried it. That’s how come we don’t have any more play dough.”

In the dramatic play area, a child tells a peer in Spanish, “Esa muñeca que tiene la cabeza muy grande, esa no me gusta.” (That doll has a very big head. I don’t like it.)

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■ ● Matching icons indicate alignment of examples across age-ranges



(continued)

Foundation 1.7 Sharing Explanations and Opinions

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

A child tells a peer in Farsi about their favorite topic, construction trucks, while pointing to the digger arm.
اون لودر نيست. اون بيل مڪانيڪيه.
”بين چون از اينه داره.
(That’s not a front loader. It’s a digger.
See, because it has this.)

Later Examples (continued)

A child is building with blocks after reading a book about how the Egyptian pyramids were built. The teacher asks, “What are you building?” The child explains in English, “A pyramid, remember? I’m starting with a small one. It’s not as big as in the book.”

After a Ukrainian-speaking teacher asks a child if they washed their hands for lunch, the child observes in Ukrainian, “Бачите, мої руки дуже чисті, але вони не мокрі, тому що я так довго - довго витирала їх рушником.” (See, my hands are very clean, but they aren’t wet because I dried them so long with a towel.)



Foundation 1.8 Participating in Conversations

Early 3 to 4 1/2 Years

Participate in back-and-forth conversations with adults and peers. Respond on topic for at least one turn in a conversation.

Later 4 to 5 1/2 Years

Participate in increasingly long and complex back-and-forth conversations with adults and peers. Respond on topic across several turns in the conversation.

Early Examples

Two children are playing in the sandbox. One asks their peer in English, "Lorena, are you hungry?" The peer nods. Then the first child replies in English, "Oh. Yeah. OK, I'm going to be your mom," and picks up a bowl to pretend to feed their peer.

A child communicates in English, "It's waving its arms," while reading a story about sea creatures. A teacher replies, "It's waving its arms. It's a sea star." The child replies, "Yeah, a sea star." The teacher asks, "How many legs does the sea star have?" The child counts the legs in the picture and replies, "One, two, three, four, five."

An Elder is reading a book to a child about fishing and says in English, "Look at how much *ya'nni** they caught!" The child replies, "I have eaten salmon before!"

Later Examples

Two children are playing in the sandbox. One asks their peer in English, "Lorena, are you hungry?" The peer says, "Yes!" Then the first child replies in English, "Oh. Yeah. OK, I'm going to be your mom." The peer pretends to cry like a baby, and the first child says, "What do you want to eat? Do you want your milky?"

A child communicates in English, "It's waving its arms," while reading a story about sea creatures. A teacher replies, "It's waving its arms. It's a sea star." The child replies, "Yeah, it looks like a star. That's why it's a sea star." The teacher asks, "How many legs does the sea star have?" The child replies, "Five. Like a star has five points. That's what makes it look like a star."

* *Ya'nni* means salmon in the Indigenous language of the Shasta Indian Nation.

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Foundation 1.8 Participating in Conversations

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

A child has a conversation in Spanish and English with a teacher after the child’s boot gets stuck in the mud and comes off. The child says, “Oh no. ¡Mira, está rota!” (Oh, no. Look, it’s broken!) The teacher asks, “¿Está rota la bota? ¿Que pasó?” (Is the boot broken? What happened?) Pointing at their boots in the mud, the child responds, “Look, teacher.”

A child responds in Korean, “네, 주세요 너무 배고파!” (Yes, please give it to me. I’m really hungry!) when a teacher asks if they would like more apples during snack time.

Later Examples (continued)

In Spanish, a child asks an Elder from the community who volunteers in the classroom, “¿Doña Lilia, me puede leer este libro?” (Ms. Lilia, could you read this book to me?) Doña Lilia responds, “Sí, es el libro del paletero que leímos la semana pasada. Cuéntame, ¿por qué te gusta este libro?” (Yes, that’s the book about the paletero* that we read last week. Tell me, why do you like this book?) The child responds, “¡Me gusta porque cuando hace calor mi papi me compra una paleta con el paletero!” (I like it because when it’s hot, my daddy buys me a popsicle from the paletero.) Doña Lilia says, “A mí me encantan las paletas. La de coco es deliciosa. A ti, ¿cuál te gusta más?” (I love ice pops. The coconut is delicious. Which one do you like best?) The child responds, “Me gustan las de coco y las de mango.” (I like coconut and mango ones.)

* A paletero is an individual who uses a pushcart to sell ice pops and other frozen treats in neighborhoods throughout Central and South America, as well as in communities throughout California.

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Foundation 1.8 Participating in Conversations

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Later Examples (continued)

Two children discuss their pets in Mandarin after looking at a book with pictures of animals, “我有一条小狗，才一岁，特别可爱。你有吗？” (I have a puppy, only a year old, very cute. Do you have one?) “我没有。但是我爷爷家有只大花猫，黄色的，可漂亮了！” (I don’t. But my grandpa has a big colorful cat, yellow, very pretty!) And the conversation continues.



Promoting Rich Language Use

Children learn vocabulary, grammar, and the social rules of language through conversations with adults and other children and by practicing language use in different contexts (such as at mealtime, when discussing a story, or in dramatic play).

Teachers can use many opportunities to engage children in extended conversations.

Teachers can:

- Ask open-ended questions that encourage children to respond with language beyond yes or no, for example, “What happened next?” or “Why do you think she feels angry?” Open-ended questions model how to ask questions, encourage conversation, and help children extend their narratives.
- Model language use by talking to children frequently about a variety of topics, including things they have experienced, activities they are going to do, or themes they have read about in books.
- Explain complicated topics using new language to start, and then explain in words that are more familiar to children.
- Promote back-and-forth conversations. Teachers can respond to children’s communication by expanding on what they have said, asking follow-up questions, and inviting them to elaborate.
- Encourage children to practice conversational skills in their home language with peers or community members who speak their home language.



Strand: 2.0 — Foundational Literacy Skills

Sub-Strand — Phonological Awareness*

Children’s abilities to isolate and blend individual vowel and consonant sounds, syllables, and tones in one language or language variety may transfer to another language they are learning. During phonological awareness tasks, when asked to identify the first sound of a word, children may use the sounds from their home language or the variety of English used in their home and community to identify an individual consonant sound, vowel sound, or syllable.

* Phonological awareness refers to an individual’s sensitivity to the sound structure of spoken language. It is an important skill that hearing children begin to acquire during preschool and continue to build in early elementary school as they learn to read. Please refer to the CDE resource on Senate Bill 210 language development milestones for children who are Deaf or hard of hearing (California Department of Education 2023).



Foundation 2.1 Isolating Initial Sounds

Early **3 to 4 ½ Years**

Match words that have the same first sound in speech, with adult support or the support of pictures or objects.

Later **4 to 5 ½ Years**

Isolate and pronounce the first sound of a word, with adult support or the support of pictures or objects.

Early Examples

■ During a wordplay activity, a teacher sorts a bird toy and a bug toy, saying, “Bird starts with /b/* and bug starts with /b/. What other animal starts with a /b/ sound?” A child grabs the bear toy and holds it up.

● A child named Marco meets a new assistant teacher named Marcela. Marcela observes, “My name, ‘Marcela,’ starts with ‘Mar.’ What other name starts with ‘Mar?’” The child replies, “Marco!”

Later Examples

■ During a wordplay activity, a teacher instructs, “Find the animals that start with a /b/ sound.” A child sorts the bird, bear, and bug toys together and says, “bear, /b/.”

● When a teacher asks, “Whose name starts with the sound /m/?” a child answers in English, “Marco!”

When a teacher of the Deaf asks using American Sign Language, “What signs use the forehead location?” a child signs, “dad, black, summer.”

* Characters that appear in / / markings (such as /b/) represent sounds. For a guide to pronouncing the sounds indicated throughout these examples, please refer to the appendix of this domain.

(continued on following page)

■ ● Matching icons indicate alignment of examples across age-ranges



(continued)

Foundation 2.1 Isolating Initial Sounds

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

When a teacher asks in Arabic, “بتقدر تفكر بإشي فيه حرف زي كلمة ‘طاولة’؟” (Can you think of something that has the same sound as “table?”) the child looks around the room, points to a toy airplane, and replies, “طيارة” (Airplane!).*

While sorting picture cards during a wordplay activity with a peer, a child places one with a bee next to one with an airplane and says in Spanish, “¡Mira! ‘Abeja’ y ‘avión’ son iguales.” (Look! “Bee” and “airplane” are the same.)**

* The words *طاولة* (table) and *طيارة* (airplane) in Arabic both begin with the same sound, /t/.

** The words “*abeja*” (bee) and “*avión*” (airplane) in Spanish both begin with the same vowel sound, /õ/.

Later Examples (continued)

While planting seeds with the class, a child identifies the vowel sound at the start of words introduced by the teacher in Spanish, such as the /õ/ in *agua* (water) and the /õ/ in *hoyo* (hole) (the “h” is silent in Spanish). The teacher prompts the child by providing guidance such as, “*La palabra ‘hoyo’ comienza con el sonido ...*” (The word “hole” begins with the sound ...) and pauses to let the child respond with the sound.

A child communicates, “/ũ/” when a teacher holds up an umbrella and asks, “What sound does this start with?”

While on a nature walk, a child participates in a game of *Veo, Veo* (a game similar to “I Spy,” but with a focus on sounds). A child with a disability runs and kneels next to a flower (*flor* in Spanish) when the teacher says in Spanish that they see something beginning with the /f/ sound.



Foundation 2.2 Recognizing and Blending Sounds

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

When presented with two single-syllable words (such as “sand” and “box”), blend them into a compound word in speech with adult support or the support of pictures or objects.

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

When presented with syllables and individual sounds, blend them into words in speech with adult support or the support of pictures or objects.

Languages vary in how syllables are segmented and in the lengths of compound words, which can have an impact on when a child learns to blend words together. Children learning languages without short compound words may not show the skill described in the early foundation. In English and Chinese, two-syllable compound words are common (for example, English: doorbell and raincoat; Chinese: 毛蟲 [caterpillar], a compound of “fur” and “insect,” and 電視 [television], a compound of “electric” and “look” or “see”). However, in Spanish, compound words are usually three or more syllables (for example, *paraguas* [umbrella] from the two words “stop” and “water” and *medianoche* [midnight] from the two words “middle” and “night”).

Early Examples

- A child plays a What’s That Word? game in English with a teacher while on a swing. With each push of the swing, the teacher communicates one part of a compound word (sun, shine) and then asks the child, “What’s that word?” The child responds, “Sunshine.”
- A child blends the words 飛 (fly) and 機 (machine) into 飛機 (airplane) during a Cantonese lesson while the teacher shows a picture of a plane.

Later Examples

- A teacher asks a child, “Can you put these sounds together to make a word? /s/-/ŭ/-/n/. /s/-/ŭ/-/n/. What word does that make?” The child responds, “Sun.”
- A child blends “*su tŭ*” (lion) in Vietnamese while playing with toy animals after a teacher says the syllables “*su*” and “*tŭ*” separately.

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(continued)

Foundation 2.2 Recognizing and Blending Sounds

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

While playing with dolls in the dramatic play area, a child responds in English, “hairbrush” when asked by a teacher, “What word do you get when you say ‘hair’ and ‘brush’ together?”

Later Examples (continued)

During a word game, a teacher says the names of nearby classroom items in Spanish, pronouncing each syllable separately. When the teacher says, “*lá-piz*,” a child responds, “*lápiz*” (pencil).

During a mealtime conversation, a child participates in a Guess the Food game in English. The teacher says two-syllable words (ta-co, su-shi, cra-cker, a-pple, bu-tter) and says each syllable distinctly. The teacher asks, “What food is this? Ta-co.” The child responds, “Taco.”

When it is time for children to wash their hands, the teacher calls them for their turns one by one by saying the syllables of their names distinctly. The teacher says, “The next person to wash their hands has a name with two parts: A-mit.” The child named Amit responds by moving from the circle to the sink to wash their hands.



Foundation 2.3 Participating in Rhyming and Wordplay

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

Recognize or participate in familiar rhymes or songs.

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

Produce rhyming sounds or words.
Rhymes may be imperfect and can be real or nonsense words.

Early Examples

■ A child participates with a teacher who is chanting in English, “One, two, buckle my shoe. Three, four, shut the door,” by saying the rhyming words, such as “two, shoe” and “four, door” and clapping.

● A teacher leads the group in a rhyming song, emphasizing the rhyming words at the end of each line. A child with a disability participates with the group by clapping during each rhyming word.

A teacher sings “*Pimpón*,” a Spanish-language song. “*Pimpón es un muñeco con manos de cartón / Se lava la carita con agua y con jabón.*” (Pimpón is a doll with cardboard hands / He washes his face with water and soap.) A child makes gestures and sings a few rhyming words in Spanish, such as *cartón* (cardboard) and *jabón* (soap).

Later Examples

■ A teacher chants, “One, two, buckle my shoe. Three, four, shut the ... ” and pauses for the child’s response. The child responds in English, “Door!” Then the teacher asks, “What else can rhyme with ‘four’ and ‘door’? Four, door, /m/ ... ” The child completes the word, saying, “More!”

● A child with a disability indicates the picture for “stop” on an augmentative and alternative communication board after a teacher asks in English, “What words rhyme with ‘pop’?”

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■ ● Matching icons indicate alignment of examples across age-ranges



(continued)

Foundation 2.3 Participating in Rhyming and Wordplay

**Early
3 to 4 ½ Years**

**Later
4 to 5 ½ Years**

Early Examples (continued)

A child joins in for the repeated words “Mack” and “black” when a teacher sings “Miss Mary Mack, Mack, Mack / all dressed in black, black, black” with a group of children. While the group learns the corresponding hand claps, the child claps along when saying the words “Mack” and “black.”

A child sings a good morning song in the Yurok Indigenous language. “*Skue-yen’ ’ue-koy ’ne-rah-cheen, Skue-yen’ ’ue-koy ’ne-rah-cheen, Skue-yen’ ’ue-koy ’ne-rah-cheen, Keech ’ee ’ roo kee ’ne-ruer-o-woo’-moh!*” (Good morning, my peers. Good morning, my friends. Good morning, my friends. It’s time for us to sing!)

Later Examples (continued)

A teacher invites a child’s mother to join the class to share a rhyming song from their home language. Together with their mother, the child sings a favorite Punjabi rhyming song for the class.

“ਉਤੇ ਪੱਖਾ ਚਲਦਾ ਹੈ
ਹੈਠਾਂ ਬੇਬੀ ਸੌਂਦਾ ਹੈ।
ਸੁੱਤੇ ਸੁੱਤੇ ਭੁੱਖ ਲੱਗੀ
ਖਾ ਲਉ ਬੇਬੀ ਮੂੰਗਫਲੀ।” (The fan runs above, while the baby sleeps below. While sleeping, the baby felt hungry. Baby, eat the peanuts.)

A child invents their own rhymes in English while playing with a peer, saying, “Hello, Phoebe. Hello, easy. Hello, teasy. Hello, peasy.”

A child rhymes using a mix of Spanish and English, “*La luna en una cuna eats tuna*” (The moon in a crib eats tuna) while playing in the dramatic play area.



Supporting Children’s Phonological Awareness Skills

Phonological awareness refers to children’s awareness of the sounds of language. Children’s phonological awareness helps them understand the relationships between sounds and letters or characters. In addition to using an evidence-based literacy curriculum with playful activities that follow a specific scope and sequence, to support children in developing phonological awareness during everyday interactions and routines, teachers can:

- Play games that focus on sounds and sound manipulation, such as isolating sound units and blending sounds together. For example, teachers can call out children’s names syllable by syllable and invite children to perform an action when they hear the syllables of their name. (In this example, a child named Ziyana stands up when hearing “Zi-ya-na.”) Teachers can play a rhyming game in which the teacher says a few rhyming words, followed by the first sound of another rhyming word for children to complete (for example, “‘Loose’ and ‘goose’ rhyme. How about ‘loose, goose, /m/...?’” allowing children to call out “Moose!”).
- Support children’s developing phonological awareness by emphasizing certain sounds in songs and rhymes, such as making exaggerated puffs of air on the /p/ sounds when saying, “Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,” or by moving and stomping on the rhyming words of songs.
- In the above activities, focus on the sounds. Using silly or nonsense words can be a fun way for children to demonstrate their understanding of the skill. A child may rhyme “moose,” “goose,” and “blabloose” or identify words like “car, kite, and... caloneybaloney!” as beginning with the same sound. Producing nonsense words is a way children may explore language playfully and demonstrate understanding without the pressure of thinking of a real word.
- Invite families to share songs and rhymes from their home languages with all the children in the class.



Sub-Strand — Alphabets and Print

A child who is a multilingual learner will demonstrate knowledge of alphabets and print in the language or languages in which they usually experience print. Multilingual learners who are learning two languages with similar alphabets, such as English and Spanish, may apply knowledge from one language to the other. For example, a child may recognize that the letter “N” makes the /n/ sound in both languages but may take longer to understand the letter–sound correspondence of the letter “J” because it makes a /h/ sound in Spanish and a /j/ sound in English.



Foundation 2.4 Identifying Letters

Early **3 to 4 ½ Years**

Match some letter names to their printed form. These will commonly be letters in the child’s first name.

If learning the alphabet in English, Spanish, or other languages using a similar alphabet, such as Tagalog, match some (about three to eight) uppercase letter names to their printed form.

Later **4 to 5 ½ Years**

Match many letter names to their printed form.

If learning the alphabet in English, Spanish, or other languages using a similar alphabet, such as Tagalog, match most (about 15 to 20) uppercase letter names and approximately half (about 12 to 16) of the lowercase letter names to their printed form.

This foundation applies only to languages that use an alphabet for written language (such as English, Spanish, Vietnamese, or Arabic). Mandarin and Cantonese use Chinese characters, which are different from an alphabet.

Early Examples

- Before reading a book to children, a teacher reads the title and invites children to name a few of the letters in the title. A child points to one or two letters in the title of the book and communicates the letter names aloud.
- When pulling out a basket labeled in Spanish “*BLOQUES*” (BLOCKS), a child points to the letter “B” and communicates, “B.”

Later Examples

- Before reading a book to children, a teacher reads the title and invites children to name the letters in the title. A child points to each letter in the title of the book and communicates the letter names aloud.
- When pulling out a basket labeled in Spanish “*BLOQUES*” (BLOCKS), a child reads each letter aloud.

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Foundation 2.4 Identifying Letters

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

During a game in which children find letters in the room, a child touches a sign that says “CRAYONS” when the teacher asks, “Can you find the letter ‘C’?”

A child points to a teacher’s mug that has “شكراً” (Thank you!) written on it in Arabic. The child says the letters “ش” and “ك” aloud while running their hands over the letters.

Later Examples (continued)

A child reads the letters “M-u-ñ-o-z” aloud when looking at a peer’s last name printed on their lunch box.

A teacher sets up an alphabet game by writing letters on the ground in chalk, then calling out instructions, such as, “Hop to the letter ‘J’!” or “Wiggle to the letter ‘E’!” to each child. A child with an orthopedic impairment rolls their wheelchair to the letter “G” written on the ground when the teacher calls out, “Zoom to the letter ‘G’!” They repeat the game for several more letters, wheeling to the letter called out by the teacher.

A child whose name is 진영 (Jin Young) looks at the name label on their cup and says each of the Korean hangul* letters aloud.

* Hangul is the Korean alphabet.



Foundation 2.5 Learning Letter–Sound Correspondence

**Early
3 to 4 ½ Years**

Recognize that letters or characters have sounds.

**Later
4 to 5 ½ Years**

Accurately identify or produce sounds associated with several letters or common characters with adult support.

If learning the alphabet in English, Spanish, or other languages using a similar alphabet, such as Tagalog, accurately identify or produce sounds associated with about half of the letters.

Early Examples

■ A child repeats after a teacher in English, hissing /s/ at the “S” page of an alphabet book.

● While working on an alphabet puzzle in Spanish, a child finds a piece with the letter “N.” The teacher says, “‘N,’ /n/, *naranja*” (orange), and the child repeats the /n/ sound the teacher has made.

A child points to Chinese characters on a sign and pretends to read them by making sounds out loud, although not necessarily the sounds that correspond to those characters.

Later Examples

■ A child looks through an alphabet book with a teacher. When the teacher says, “‘S.’ What sound does the letter ‘S’ make?” the child responds, “/s/.” The teacher repeats this question for several letters, asking what sound each one makes.

● While working on an alphabet puzzle in Spanish, a child picks up a piece with the letter “G” and a picture of a cat (*gato* in Spanish) and makes a /g/ sound. They repeat this with several more pieces, such as making an /ē/ sound for “I” (the appropriate sound in Spanish) and a /n/ sound for “N.” Sometimes the teacher prompts the child by saying, “‘N.’ *¿Cuál es el sonido de la letra ‘N’? ‘N’ como naranja.*” (“N.” What sound does “N” make? “N” like naranja [orange].)

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Foundation 2.5 Learning Letter–Sound Correspondence

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

A child shows the teacher a greeting card that has the word “Tết” (New Year). The teacher points to the letter “T” and asks in Vietnamese, “*Đây là chữ gì?*” (What letter is this?) The child replies, “tê”. The teacher continues, “*Chữ ‘T’ phát âm ra sao?*” (What sound does “T” make?) The child responds, “tờ.”

A child points to text in a book and asks in Mandarin, “*这个怎么说?*” (How do you say that?)

Later Examples (continued)

A child arranges magnetic Arabic letters on a magnet board. They pick up the letter ألف and make the sound /ă/. Then they repeat this action with several more letters.

After a teacher explains that the letter “J” in Spanish makes a sound like the letter “H” in English, a child whose home language is Spanish notices the letter “H” in the word “hot” on the weather chart. The child points to the “H,” making a /h/ sound.

A child traces the “可” in the character “河” with their finger and communicates in Mandarin, “ke,” demonstrating knowledge of the character even if their reading is inaccurate in the context.*

* In this example, the character “可” is pronounced “ke” when by itself, but the pronunciation changes slightly to “he” in the second compound character. By saying “ke,” the child demonstrates an initial understanding.

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Foundation 2.5 Learning Letter–Sound Correspondence

**Early
3 to 4 ½ Years**

**Later
4 to 5 ½ Years**

Later Examples (continued)

A child covers the letter “D” with dot stickers on a banner when the teacher prompts, “What letter makes the /d/ sound?” and repeats the action for several more letters.

While looking at a page in a book that shows an illustration of a cake, a child points to the word “kitchen” on the page and communicates in English, “That says, ‘cake.’ You know how I know? Because ‘cake’ starts with ‘K,’” demonstrating an initial understanding of the letter sounds.



Developing Children's Print Knowledge

It is important for children to learn in an environment filled with print, including books, signs, labels, and alphabet toys (such as alphabet blocks or magnets). In addition to providing a print-rich environment and using an evidence-based literacy curriculum with playful activities that follow a specific scope and sequence, to support children in developing early literacy during everyday interactions and routines, teachers can:

- Play games related to letters, characters, and sound knowledge. Teachers can set up games in which children find letters in the classroom or home, match letter cards, or find objects that begin with a certain letter sound (for example, “I’m looking for something that begins with ‘P.’ ‘P’ makes a /p/ sound. Can anyone find something beginning with the letter ‘P’?”).
- Model how print is read, such as slowly moving a finger under a word in the appropriate direction as the word is read aloud when reading together with a small group or an individual child.
- Demonstrate how print is used for communication in everyday activities. Teachers can point out signs and labels and track the text in a book to show how it is being read.
- Write down the thoughts and ideas children share in circle time or other times of the day. This supports children’s growing understanding that their ideas can be represented in writing. Teachers can invite children to tell stories or describe their artwork while the teacher writes down their ideas.
- Label items and artwork with children’s names and encourage them to learn to read and recognize their name.
- Provide print materials in a variety of languages. Teachers can work with families to find books and toys or write labels in children’s home languages to support the child’s knowledge of print.



Sub-Strand — Concepts About Print

A child who is a multilingual learner will demonstrate knowledge of print concepts in the language or languages in which they usually experience print.

Foundation 2.6 Understanding the Concept of Print

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

Recognize print as something that can be read and has meaning.

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

Identify the meaning of a few instances of familiar print in the environment.

Early Examples

■ A child points to a label on a cubby bin and asks in English, “What does this say?” The teacher replies, “This bin says ‘Dolls.’ D-O-L-L-S spells the word ‘dolls.’ We have words on the bins to tell us where everything goes.”

● A child points to a doormat with writing and communicates in English to a parent, “That says, ‘Hello!’” (although the mat actually says “Welcome”).

A child pretends to read a book in their home language by moving their finger across the words and making up a story out loud.

Later Examples

■ During cleanup time, a child sees two empty cubby bins on the floor. They place blocks in the cubby bin labeled “BLOCKS” and dolls in the cubby bin labeled “DOLLS,” having observed the teacher point out the words many times before.

● A child points to a doormat that says “Welcome” and communicates in English to a parent, “It says ‘Welcome’ just like ours!”

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■ ● Matching icons indicate alignment of examples across age-ranges



(continued)

Foundation 2.6 Understanding the Concept of Print

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

A child who is blind turns the pages of a book that has both print and braille. The child feels the words in braille and guesses in English, “I think this book is about a princess!” even though they have not yet learned how to read the words.

A child makes letter-like marks on paper and asks the teacher in Spanish to read what they have written. The teacher responds in Spanish, “*¿Por qué no lo leemos juntos? Tu empiezas. Dime lo que escribiste.*” (Why don’t we read it together? You start. Tell me what you’ve written.)

When looking at a bilingual book, a child points to a word printed in English or Chinese and communicates in Cantonese, “That says 小雞” (That says “chick”), although the word that is written does not actually say “chick.”

Later Examples (continued)

A child helps their teacher pass out classmates’ artwork to take home at the end of the day. When the child reaches a paper labeled with “EMIL,” the child reads the name of their closest friend, “Emily.” The teacher replies, “That’s very close! This paper is actually Emil’s. E-M-I-L. Do you see how close it is to ‘Emily?’ You recognized many of the same letters from Emily’s name, didn’t you?” As the teacher explains, they point to Emily’s name written on her artwork to compare.

A child points to their classroom name, *Pokum* (Sun), written outside the door in Maidu* and English and communicates in a mix of Maidu and English, “That’s us. We’re the *Pokums!*”

*Maidu is an Indigenous language in Northern California.



Foundation 2.7 Understanding Print Conventions

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

Display basic book-handling behaviors and knowledge of basic print conventions, such as turning pages in a single direction and recognizing the cover and title of a book.

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

Display increasingly sophisticated book-handling behaviors and knowledge of print conventions, such as turning pages one at a time and understanding the direction and orientation of print.

Early Examples

- A child opens a book and turns the pages in a single direction, although not necessarily one page at a time.
- When a teacher asks a child to find the title of an Arabic-language book, the child points to where the title is shown on the cover.

A child sits with their teacher on a mat near the bookshelf to read their favorite book. When the teacher asks in English, “What is this book about?” the child points to the title and says the name of the book, then pretends to read while pointing to print on each page, turning the pages in a single direction.

Later Examples

- A child turns the pages of a book one at a time in a single direction.
- While pretending to read a story to a doll in Arabic, a child tracks print from right to left and top to bottom (the appropriate direction when reading in Arabic).

A child uses their finger to track print from left to right, turning pages one at a time in the appropriate direction, while pretending to read a book to themselves in English.

A child communicates in Spanish and English, “*Había una vez*” (Once upon a time) at the start of a picture book and “the end” after reaching the last page.

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Foundation 2.7 **Understanding Print Conventions**

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

A child who primarily experiences print in Farsi holds a book with the book's spine on the right (the appropriate orientation when reading in Farsi). When recognizing the book is in English, the child turns the book so the spine is on the left, opens the cover, and begins turning pages from right to left.

A child with low vision feels the spine of the book to orient it in the correct position.

A child shares a Spanish-language book they brought from home, communicating the title and pretending to read the pages aloud in Spanish.

Later Examples (continued)

After a teacher suggests that a child bring a favorite book in their home language to share with the group, a child brings a book written in Chinese to share. The child turns the pages from right to left (the appropriate direction to turn pages when reading Chinese), showing the pictures and describing the story using a mix of Mandarin vocabulary from the book and English words known to their peers.



Strand: 3.0 — Reading

Sub-Strand — Literacy Interest and Response

A child who is a multilingual learner will demonstrate literacy interest in the language or languages in which they usually experience literacy.

Foundation 3.1 **Demonstrating Interest in Literacy Activities**

Early **3 to 4 ½ Years**

Demonstrate interest in and engagement with literacy and literacy-related activities.

Later **4 to 5 ½ Years**

Demonstrate interest in and engagement with literacy and literacy-related activities for progressively extended periods of time and with increasing independence.

Literacy and literacy-related activities include read-alouds, storytelling, singing, chanting, rhyming, engagement with books, and writing.

Early Examples

■ A child brings the teacher a book for them to read together in the child’s home language.

Later Examples

■ A child “reads”* aloud a section of a book in their home language that they have memorized word for word.

* In this example and others, the use of “read” or “reads” in quotation marks indicates that the child is acting as if they are reading.

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Foundation 3.1 **Demonstrating Interest in Literacy Activities**

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

- A Deaf child watches a teacher sign a story in American Sign Language.

A child who does not sit through an entire story time runs back to the circle for their favorite part of a book.

A child holds hands in a circle and swings them to the rhythm while the teacher sings a nursery rhyme with a small group of children outdoors.

A child watches with interest when the teacher writes their name on the drawing they have done. The teacher points to the child's name, reads it aloud, and spells it for the child, pointing to each letter one by one.

Later Examples (continued)

- A Deaf child communicates in American Sign Language, "I like this one!" when they find a copy of a book that their grandmother has read to them at home and then turns the pages of the book, smiling at their favorite parts.

A child with autism collects all the books on the bookshelf with pictures of trains, a topic in which they are interested. For several weeks, they "read" their favorite train book over and over each day.

A child pretends to write while playing office, scribbling on a notepad and talking on a toy phone.

The teacher reads a book about insects during circle time. A child asks the teacher to help them find other books about insects. The teacher helps the child find a few books, and the child sits down and looks through the books on their own.



Sub-Strand — Comprehension and Analysis of Age-Appropriate Text

A child who is a multilingual learner will demonstrate comprehension of text in the language or languages in which they usually experience literacy.

Foundation 3.2 Understanding Stories

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

Demonstrate basic understanding of main characters or events in a story after the child has experienced the story a few times.

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

Demonstrate understanding of details in a story, including knowledge of characters, events, and ordering of events, and use their increased understanding of story structure to predict what might come next when asked.

Ways the child may demonstrate understanding include answering questions, retelling, reenacting, responding with body language, and creating artwork. Children may demonstrate understanding of a story using any language they know.

Early Examples

■ After a teacher reads a story aloud on multiple occasions in the child’s home language, the child retells the story to peers or stuffed animals, leaving out some events and referring to other events out of order.

Later Examples

■ After experiencing a new story in their home language, a child retells the story to peers or stuffed animals, giving information about the characters and telling the events of the story mostly in order.

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Foundation 3.2 Understanding Stories

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

● After reading the Spanish-language story *Sábado (Saturday)* a few times, a teacher invites a child to share what the story was about. The child identifies a couple of the characters and a few main plot points of the story, communicating in Spanish, “*Ava y su mamá fueron a la biblioteca. Y fueron al salón.*” (Ava and her mom went to the library. And they went to the beauty salon.)

A child pretends to make bao* after experiencing several group read-alouds of *Amy Wu and the Perfect Bao*, a story about a child making bao with her family. The teacher notices the child’s play and prompts, “How did Amy and her family do it in the book?” The child shows the teacher how to punch the dough, roll it out, and pinch it together.

* Bao are steamed buns stuffed with savory and sometimes sweet fillings in the cuisine of Chinese communities.

Later Examples (continued)

● After reading the Spanish-language story *Sábado (Saturday)*, a teacher invites a child to share what the story was about. The child shares, “*Ava y su mamá estaban tristes. Todo les iba mal. Cancelaron cuentacuentos y los peinados se arruinaron en la lluvia. Pero Ava abrazó a su mamá. La quiere mucho.*” (Ava and her mom were sad. Nothing was working out. Story time was canceled, and their hair got ruined in the rain. But Ava gave her mom a hug. She loves her very much.)

When the teacher asks, “How will the bear get his hat back?” during a reading of *I Want My Hat Back*, a child communicates in English, “He’s going to get the rabbit!” focusing on the illustration and making a prediction about what will happen.

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(continued)

Foundation 3.2 Understanding Stories

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

A Deaf child communicates in American Sign Language, “I have two daddies, too,” after experiencing the book *And Tango Makes Three* about two daddy penguins, a few times.

An Elder from the child’s tribal community occasionally visits the class to tell stories. After having told several stories involving the character of a coyote,* the storyteller asks, “Why were the other animals afraid to help coyote?” A child replies, “Because he always plays tricks.”

* Coyote is a character who is a trickster in the stories of many Native nations and tribal communities.

Later Examples (continued)

A child uses stuffed animals and a table to create a puppet show with a peer, depicting the main events in a story in order.

While reading a book to a small group of children, a teacher asks, “How do you think the boy’s mother will feel when she finds out?” A child uses a card communication system to communicate “angry.”



Foundation 3.3 Understanding Informational Text

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

Demonstrate basic understanding of informational text after the child has experienced the text a few times.

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

Demonstrate deeper understanding of informational text using their abilities to make connections to previous knowledge, make inferences, and ask questions.

Ways the child may demonstrate understanding include answering questions, labeling, describing, playing, responding with body language, and creating artwork. Children may demonstrate understanding of a text using any language they know.

Early Examples

- After experiencing a book in their home language about seasons a few times throughout the week, a child uses red and yellow paint to paint a picture of leaves when the teacher invites the class to create a picture representing their favorite season.
- After several read-alouds of a book about the environment, the teacher invites children to name actions they can do in their community to help the earth. A child responds in Cantonese, “執乾淨啲 trash.” (Clean up trash.)

A child uses blocks to build an airport with peers after reading a book in their home language about airplanes and airports. The children make a mix of taller, larger, and smaller structures to represent the control tower, airport, and airplanes.

Later Examples

- After reading a book about seasons in a child’s home language, a teacher gives a prompt to draw a picture that resembles something they like to do in the fall. After the child finishes their drawing, they dictate the activity for the teacher to write across the bottom (for example, “I like to help my cousin plant seeds in the garden”).
- After a read-aloud of a book about the environment, the teacher asks children to discuss actions they can do to help the earth. A child responds that it is important to pick up trash so that our towns don’t get dirty and animals don’t eat trash by accident.

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Foundation 3.3 Understanding Informational Text

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

A teacher reads a book about Día de los Muertos* a few times during the week leading up to the holiday. The teacher leads the children in a discussion about which aspects of the book or holiday are interesting to them. A child with a disability draws orange flowers resembling marigolds (a flower that symbolizes Día de los Muertos), and then shows the drawing to their teacher. The teacher responds in Spanish, “¿Te gustaron los cempasúchiles?” (You liked the marigolds?) The child nods.

A child’s relative visiting the classroom sees the sunflower crafts made by the class and begins to explain to the child how seeds grow into sunflowers. The child responds by communicating in English, “I know. We learned it in our book,” gesturing to a book the teacher read to the class multiple times in the past week.

* Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) is a holiday honoring friends and family members who have died, celebrated in Mexico and communities of Mexican heritage.

Later Examples (continued)

After a teacher reads aloud the book *Round Is a Tortilla* (a book about shapes in a family’s everyday life, which includes Spanish words), a child draws a picture of their family eating watermelon slices and quesadillas cut into triangles and communicates about the shapes in their drawing and in the book. The teacher observes with the child that tortillas can be in the shape of a circle or a triangle, depending on whether they are cut.

After experiencing a book about octopuses, a child pretends to be an octopus storing ink, thinking up different reasons the octopus might need to protect itself.

After reading a book about staying healthy, which includes information on nutritious food choices, a teacher invites the class to draw pictures of some of their favorite healthy foods. A child draws a picture of blueberries, and the teacher asks the child whether they remember what blueberries can do for our bodies. The child communicates in Arabic and English, “Blueberries بتساعد عقلنا يكبر” (Blueberries help our brains grow.)



Supporting Children’s Engagement in and Comprehension of Reading

Children learn about themselves, their cultures, and the world around them through storytelling, storybooks, and informational books. Experiencing books and stories also supports children’s vocabulary and grammar development, as well as their understanding of how narratives are told. Forming a positive relationship with literacy in early childhood sets children up for lifelong learning. Teachers can support children’s engagement in and comprehension of reading in the following ways, which may be provided through an evidence-based literacy curriculum that follows a specific scope and sequence as well as through everyday interactions and routines. Teachers can:

- Create an accessible, comfortable reading area, such as a small bookshelf next to a few cushions and chairs, where children can explore books on their own.
- Provide and read books that reflect children’s diverse cultures, family structures, and home languages.
- Create opportunities to read in large groups, small groups, and one-on-one, in addition to opportunities where children can explore books on their own at different times during the day.
- Ask questions during and after reading. For example, ask why and how certain story events happen. Prompt children to connect their growing knowledge of the world to information they experience in books. For example, if the class is learning about different seasons, read informational books about seasons, or ask children to identify the season of a storybook setting based on the events and illustrations in the book.
- Invite families to share books, songs, and stories in their home language. For example, family members could do any of the following:
 - Visit the classroom and tell a story with a small group of children
 - Introduce a song in the home language during circle time
 - Provide a recording of themselves reading a book in the home language
 - Read a book in the home language one-on-one with a child at morning drop-off to support the child’s transition to the start of the school day



Strand: 4.0 — Writing

Sub-Strand — Writing Skills

A child who is a multilingual learner will demonstrate writing skills in the language or languages in which they usually experience print.

Foundation 4.1 Developing Fine Motor Skills in Writing

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

Experiment with grasp and body position using a variety of drawing and writing tools.

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

Adjust grasp and body position for increased control in drawing and writing.

Early Examples

- A child draws with a crayon using whole-arm movements and then rests their elbow on the table so they are moving only their forearm and wrist.
- A child draws with a thick piece of chalk while sitting or kneeling on the ground outside, gripping the chalk with all of their fingers.

Later Examples

- After a teacher has demonstrated how to hold a pencil between their thumb and two fingers, a child draws with a crayon held in the grip that was demonstrated, using mostly wrist motions with their forearm resting on the table.
- A child draws with a thin piece of chalk while sitting or kneeling on the ground outside, gripping the chalk with their thumb and two fingers. They rest their elbow on the ground for better control when they get to a more detailed part of their drawing.

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Foundation 4.1 Developing Fine Motor Skills in Writing

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

A child paints with a paintbrush, holding the brush in their fist. After a few minutes, they change hand positions so they are holding the brush with their fingers pointing down.

During an activity about shapes, a child uses one finger to draw shapes in shaving foam, copying the shapes a teacher is drawing for the whole group to see.

Later Examples (continued)

A child with low muscle tone sits in an adaptive chair and uses a marker with an adaptive pencil grip to write. The child rests their arm on the chair tray for support and moves their wrist while writing.

A child uses a pencil to write a pretend grocery list on a notepad they are holding and then puts the notepad on the table to write some more.



Sub-Strand — Writing as Communication

A child who is a multilingual learner will demonstrate writing knowledge and skills in the language or languages in which they usually experience print.

Foundation 4.2 Writing to Represent Sounds

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

(No foundation.)

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

Write, with adult support, a few recognizable letters that are intended to represent their corresponding sounds.

This foundation applies only to languages that use an alphabet (English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, and Arabic, among others). Mandarin and Cantonese use Chinese characters, which are different from an alphabet.

Writing to represent sounds requires knowledge of several other foundational skills, such as phonological awareness, fine motor skills, and letter–sound correspondence. Children at the Early age level (approximately 3 to 4½) are still developing many of these foundational skills; therefore, only children at the Later age level (approximately age 4 to 5½) are expected to demonstrate an ability to write letters to represent sounds.

Later Examples

A child draws a picture of a heart and looks at the teacher for help with labeling the picture in English. When the teacher prompts “/h/-/h/-heart,” the child writes the letter “H” below the picture. Then the teacher writes the letters “E A R T” on another piece of paper, saying each letter aloud as they write it for the child to copy.

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(continued)

Foundation 4.2 Writing to Represent Sounds

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Later Examples (continued)

While beginning to learn to use an adapted keyboard, a child presses the letter “T” when the teacher asks, “¿Cuál letra suena como /t/-/t/-/t/?” (What letter sounds like /t/-/t/-/t/?)

During a unit on animals, the class keeps a picture journal of the different animals they learn about. A child asks the teacher for help writing “Կենդանիներ” (animals) in Armenian on the front. When the teacher prompts “կ-կ-կենդանիներ,” the child writes the letter corresponding with the first sound, “Կ.”

Hearing the teacher call, “Mmmanzana” (apple), a child goes to a large piece of paper with the alphabet written on it taped to the wall. Using a cotton swab dipped in paint, the child makes small dots to trace over the letter “m” after the teacher has repeated “mmmanzana” a few times to emphasize the sound.

A child writes a recipe by drawing a few pictures of foods. The child writes the letter “B” next to a yellow shape and asks the teacher in English, “What comes next in ‘banana’?” The teacher responds, “Ba-na-na. In this word, the /ə/ sound is made with the letter ‘A.’ The letter ‘A’ can make a lot of different sounds!”



Foundation 4.3 Dictating Thoughts and Ideas to Be Conveyed in Writing

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

Engage in dictating thoughts and ideas when an adult offers to help with writing them down.

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

Demonstrate interest in conveying extended thoughts and ideas in writing, engaging the help of an adult.

Early Examples

■ With the group, a child counts how many new plants have sprouted from seeds they planted the week before, then communicates the number for the teacher to write on the growth chart hanging on the wall.

● A child with autism nods their head “yes” when the teacher asks if the child would like them to write a title on top of their drawing. The teacher points to the child’s drawing, which resembles a pumpkin, and asks, “What do you think we could call this? ‘My Pumpkin?’” The child nods again. The teacher writes “My Pumpkin” at the top of the drawing, sounding out the words as they write.

While listing community helpers and cultural leaders during circle time, a child communicates in English, “Drummer” for the teacher to write on the easel.

Later Examples

■ With the group, a child counts how many new plants have sprouted from seeds they planted the week before. The child reminds the teacher, “We have to write it down.” When the teacher writes the number, the child continues, “And they’re really big now. Write that they got really big now!” Next to the number, the teacher writes, “Now they are really big!” sounding out the words as they write them.

● A child writes their name at the top of a drawing, then asks their Vietnamese-speaking teacher in Vietnamese to write the description of the drawing underneath, “*Con thương bà của con.*” (I love my grandma.)

A child asks the teacher in Spanish to write “*Feliz cumpleaños, Tío Alfredo*” (Happy birthday, Uncle Alfredo) at the top of a card.

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(continued)

Foundation 4.3 Dictating Thoughts and Ideas to Be Conveyed in Writing

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

When a teacher asks a child in Cantonese if the child would like anything written at the top of their painting, the child asks the teacher in Cantonese to write “媽媽” (Mama) at the top, because they have made the painting for their mother.

Later Examples (continued)

A child makes up a silly story with another child and asks the teacher to write down the story as they dictate it.

During a unit learning about butterflies, a child draws pictures resembling butterflies on three pieces of paper, then dictates facts about butterflies for the teacher to write on each page in their “book.”



Foundation 4.4 Writing to Represent Words or Ideas

Early 3 to 4 ½ Years

Write using scribbles that resemble letters or characters and are distinct from pictures.

Later 4 to 5 ½ Years

Write a few recognizable letters or characters to represent words or ideas.

Children’s early writing includes drawing and dictation in addition to letters and characters.

If learning two different writing systems (such as Chinese characters and the Vietnamese alphabet), the child may write in a distinct style to represent each language.

Early Examples

■ A child writes squiggly lines across a paper, then communicates in English to the teacher, “I wrote a note for you!” The teacher replies, “Thank you! Can you read it to me?” The child responds, “It says, ‘I love you, Miss Tia.’”

● A child who primarily experiences print in Chinese draws blocky shapes, pointing to them and speaking out loud in Mandarin.

A child draws lines resembling letters under a picture they have drawn. They point to the letters and communicate in Tagalog, “*Trak*” (truck).

Later Examples

■ Asking the teacher to spell the words letter by letter, a child writes in English “I LOVE YOU” above a drawing of the child and the teacher. (In cases like this one, the child may not put spaces between words and may break up other words across lines or by changing direction.)

● A child uses their index finger to write the character “三” (three) with crooked lines in a tray of flour, then communicates to a peer in Mandarin, “我弟弟马上就三岁了。” (My brother is going to be three soon.)

During play, a child pretends to write a menu using a mix of letters and scribbles.

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(continued)

Foundation 4.4 Writing to Represent Words or Ideas

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Early Examples (continued)

A child makes scribbles with spaces in between them to resemble words in a sentence of alphabetic text in English.

Later Examples (continued)

A child draws a picture resembling two people. They write their own name at the top, then copy a peer's name by looking at the label on the peer's cubby, writing some of the letters backward or illegibly. The child communicates in Spanish, "*Mira, maestra. Somos yo y mi mejor amigo.*" (Look, teacher. It's me and my best friend.)



Foundation 4.5 Writing Own Name

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Write marks to represent own name.

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Write own name nearly correctly.

Early Examples

- A child makes a series of circles and lines, then asks for tape to hang their “name tag” by their cubby.
- A child writes marks and communicates in Spanish, “¡Mira! Es mi nombre.” (Look! It’s my name.)

A child writes four lines to form a backward “E” in the dirt using their finger, then communicates in American Sign Language, “‘E’ for Elia.”

A child asks the teacher for help writing their name. The teacher writes each letter one by one in yellow highlighter, saying the letter name aloud, prompting the child to trace over the highlighter, and guiding the child with directions. After the child has traced their name, they “write” it on their own, producing squiggly lines with one or two letters recognizable to the teacher. (The letters may not be recognizable to an adult who is unfamiliar with the child’s name.)

Later Examples

- A child writes three large Chinese characters representing their name, then asks in Cantonese for tape to hang their name tag by their cubby.
- A child whose home language is Spanish writes “VERóNiCA” with a backward “N.” They communicate, “This is my name in Spanish because it has this,” gesturing to the accent mark.

A child who is blind uses a braille to write their name, “g-i-a,”* in braille.

Starting too close to the edge of the paper so the second half of the name is written vertically down the right-hand side, a child named Keeshawna writes “KESHAWNA” (excluding one letter “E”) at the top of their drawing when asked by the teacher to write their name on their artwork.

* To indicate capital letters with a braille, an extra symbol is placed in front of the letter. A child who is first learning to write with a braille may not yet use capital letters.

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Foundation 4.4 Writing to Represent Words or Ideas

Early
3 to 4 ½ Years

Later
4 to 5 ½ Years

Later Examples (continued)

A child writes “刘” (Liu) to represent their surname in Chinese, writing some strokes shorter or longer than intended and leaving uneven amounts of space between strokes.



Supporting Children’s Early Writing

Writing is a complex endeavor for which many different foundational skills are needed: fine motor skills, working memory, an understanding of print, and letter–sound correspondence. Young children make significant strides in their writing development, progressing from unrecognizable scribbles to recognizable letters or characters. Young children typically learn to write uppercase letters before lowercase letters. Teachers can support children’s early writing skills through active, play-based learning activities, provided in an evidence-based literacy curriculum that follows a specific scope and sequence as well as during everyday interactions and routines.

Teacher can:

- Make writing a playful experience by using a variety of materials and surfaces, for example, writing with fingers in foam or sand, writing with sidewalk chalk on the ground, or using cotton swabs to write in paint.
- Support children’s development of fine motor skills through play. Working with play dough, cutting with child-safe scissors, lacing beads, playing with tongs or oversized tweezers, using water pipettes, and decorating with stickers or sequins are all ways children continue to develop the motor skills needed to write.
- Incorporate writing into daily routines so children learn that writing can be used to represent thoughts and ideas. For example, when children share their thoughts in response to a question asked during circle time, teachers can write each child’s response on a large easel next to their name, sounding out the words while writing them, even if the children are not yet expected to read the words.



- Model writing for children. Teachers might model both uppercase and lowercase letters during classroom activities and group writing activities (for example, when writing a group thank you letter to a classroom visitor). They may also use all uppercase letters when writing a word for a child to copy. For example, if a child asks for help labeling a drawing, a teacher can support the child's independent writing by printing the word in uppercase letters on a separate piece of paper, sounding out the word as they write, for the child to copy on their own. Children who are just beginning to learn to write letters may need additional support, such as line-by-line instruction or opportunities to trace letters.
- Provide writing materials for children to use during play. For example, a dramatic play area with toy food can have a small notepad or dry erase sheet that children can use as a menu or restaurant order pad.

Language and Literacy Development

English Language Development





Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations in the Subdomain of English Language Development

Children communicate their language and literacy knowledge and skills in a variety of ways, both verbally and nonverbally. Their communication may include verbal ways of communicating in their home languages, the language of instruction, or a combination of languages, or through the use of augmentative and alternative communication devices. It may also include nonverbal ways of communicating such as drawing and modeling with different materials or expressing through movement, actions, or role-play.





Strand: 1.0 — Listening and Speaking

Sub-Strand — Vocabulary

Foundation 1.1 Understanding Words

Discovering

Pay attention to English oral language and understand a few common English words, while relying mainly on intonation, facial expressions, and gestures of the speaker in interactions with adults and peers.

Developing

Demonstrate understanding of words in English for objects and actions as well as phrases encountered frequently in interactions with adults and peers.

Broadening

Demonstrate understanding of a larger set of words in English (for example, objects and actions, personal pronouns, possessives, and descriptive terms) in interactions with adults and peers.

Discovering Examples

■ During circle time, a child jumps with peers after several other children start jumping while singing “Five Little Monkeys.”

● A child follows the teacher and other children to the door when the English-speaking teacher communicates, “Outside time,” and gestures to the door.

Developing Examples

■ During circle time, a child stands up and gets a toy monkey from the shelf after listening to peers sing “Five Little Monkeys.”

● When the teacher communicates, “Time to go outside. Please get your jackets,” a child goes to line up by the outside door. They then see other children getting their jackets and go to get their jacket.

Broadening Examples

■ During circle time, a child says, “I goed to the doctor,” after listening to peers sing “Five Little Monkeys.”

● As the children are getting ready to go outside, the teacher holds up a jacket and asks one of the children, “Does this belong to you? Or is it Lai’s jacket?” The child takes the jacket and gives it to their peer Lai.

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Foundation 1.1 Understanding Words

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

A child pays attention to the teacher during circle time and raises their hand when the teacher asks a question, but then just looks and smiles when called on.

A child focuses intently on English-speaking children while they are playing with blocks and conversing in English.

A child picks up a plastic gorilla after another child communicates, “I saw big gorillas at the zoo,” recognizing the word “gorilla,” which is a **cognate** in Arabic, their home language.

Developing Examples

A child reaches for a small carton of milk when another child says, “Pass the milk, please.”

A child touches “ball” on their communication device while a teacher talks to a few children as they pick toys for outdoor play. The teacher responds, “You would like a ball? Do you want the big red ball or the little blue ball?” and holds both out for the child to select one.

A child gestures to a picture of a dog on the page of a book when asked in English, “Where is the dog?”

Broadening Examples

While playing with a dollhouse and props, a child puts pants on a doll when their peer asks in English, “Can you help me put pants?”

The teacher asks, “What did we do here?” while holding up a photograph of a recent field trip to a community dance. In response, a child with a disability runs in place then hops. The teacher describes the child’s movements and asks a follow-up question. “We ran and we hopped. What else do you remember from the community dance?”

A child whose home language is Spanish communicates, “It is on* my cubby,” when the teacher asks where their jacket is.

* The Spanish word “*en*” can translate to the English words “in” or “on.”



Foundation 1.2. Using Words

Discovering

Use English words, mainly consisting of concrete nouns.

Developing

Use varied English words, including an increasing number of concrete nouns and some verbs and pronouns.

Broadening

Use a wide variety of English words to share knowledge of concepts, including words across all parts of speech, with some inaccuracies.

Discovering Examples

■ A child mouths, “Tar,” after peers in chorus say “Star” when the teacher points to a picture of a star during circle time and asks, “What is this?”

● A child says, “yes,” to a peer who holds out glue to share during an art activity.

A child asks for the drum during music time.

A child names objects in the classroom aloud in English, such as “blocks,” “table,” and “play dough,” during free play.

Developing Examples

■ A child communicates, “Star,” when the teacher points to a picture of a star during circle time and asks, “What is this?”

● A child says, “Do art,” to a peer during an art activity.

After a teacher asks, “What do you see in this picture?” a child communicates, “She hide,” while looking with a teacher at the book *How to Find a Fox*, which is about a child on an adventure to find a fox.

A child expresses, “I make tortillas,” while playing outdoors in the sandbox with a peer.

Broadening Examples

■ A child communicates, “Twinkle star,” when the teacher points to a picture of a star during circle time and asks, “What is this?”

● A child says, “Sticky,” to a peer during an art activity that requires the use of glue.

A teacher says, “Tell me about what you are making with the play dough.” A child responds, “Look! I make a special cookie. You wanna eat it?”

A child communicates, “No more blocks. It’s empty,” in response to a peer asking how many blocks are left in the bin.

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■ ● Matching icons indicate alignment of examples across age-ranges



(continued)

Foundation 1.2 Using Words

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

A child whose home language is Russian requests, “vater” (an approximation of “water”), while pointing at the hose during a gardening project. The teacher responds, “Do you need water for your plants? Here is the watering can. We can fill it with the hose.”

Developing Examples

A child pretends they are going on a trip and tells a peer, “Put it in the mallet.” (“Mallet” is a **false cognate** of the Spanish *maleta* [suitcase].)

Broadening Examples

A child shares, “He’s grumpy!” while indicating the image of the grumpy monkey in a book read aloud many times by a teacher.



Supporting Vocabulary Growth and Development

Children who are learning English in a classroom setting will need support and instruction to build their vocabulary knowledge in English. Multilingual learners come to the classroom with a vocabulary foundation in their home language, which can contribute to their growth and development in English. Teachers can support vocabulary growth and development in English using strategies such as the following:

- When children first start learning English, teachers can make sure they understand the language around regular classroom routines, offering support as needed to help children move through their day. Support may include visual schedules, predictable routines, gestures, and repeating instructions using simple language.
- Before planned activities or book reading in the classroom, teach children the key English vocabulary to help them follow the activity by using gestures, showing real objects, or drawing pictures. For example, before reading a book about the life cycle of a flower, a teacher can make picture cards for “seed,” “sun,” “rain,” “bud,” and “flower” and briefly introduce each word before reading the book.
- Speak at a usual pace but speak clearly and repeat important words when needed. For example, when guiding children through a handwashing routine, teachers can give the instructions in short, clear steps, using the words “water” and “soap” in each step and supporting the child’s understanding by gesturing to the water and soap each time.



Sub-Strand — Grammar

Foundation 1.3 Using Grammatical Features

Discovering

Use one or two familiar English verbs as all-purpose verbs, with some inaccuracies.

Developing

Use some grammatical rules in English, such as using -s or -es for plural nouns and -ing for verbs, sometimes with inaccuracies.

Broadening

Broaden the use of English grammatical rules, such as irregular plurals or simple past tense verbs, sometimes with inaccuracies.

Discovering Examples

■ While playing with toy cars, a child communicates, "Lookit this! Lookit zoom!"

● When the teacher asks, "Why don't you build a tall tower with Min?" a child explains, "No want." The teacher follows up, "You don't want to play with Min?" The child says, "No, Min no" and shakes their head.

A child tells a teacher, "I do hole," while showing the teacher a hole they dug in the sandbox.

Developing Examples

■ While playing with toy cars, a child communicates, "Look! Look! Car zooming."

● When the teacher asks, "Why don't you build a tall tower with Min?" a child explains, "Min no wanna play."

A child communicates, "He leaving," as a peer puts their jacket on to leave with their grandmother at the end of the day.

A child describes, "There is two childrens," while pointing at a picture they drew.

Broadening Examples

■ While playing with toy cars, a child communicates, "Look! Look at this! My car is fast! It's zooming! And it falled down."

● When the teacher asks, "Why don't you build a tall tower with Min?" a child explains, "Min don't want to play blocks."

A child in the dramatic play area communicates, "I didn't weared that," in response to a teacher who asked if they wore aprons.

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Foundation 1.3 Using Grammatical Features

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Developing Examples

A child whose home language is Spanish comments, “*Yo quiero los trucks red*” (I want the red trucks), using the order of nouns and adjectives in Spanish.

Broadening Examples

A child whose home language is Spanish announces at drop-off, “My *prima* lost two teeth! *Y el Ratoncito Pérez* gave her a dollar.” (My cousin lost two teeth! And Pérez the Little Mouse [an equivalent of the Tooth Fairy] gave her a dollar.)



Foundation 1.4 Using Complex Sentence Structures

Discovering

Use words or phrases repeatedly experienced in English to communicate.

Developing

Use a few formulaic English sentence structures to communicate on a range of topics by switching out key words in a phrase.

Broadening

Use a variety of English grammatical forms, with some inaccuracies, to produce many different types of sentence structures.

Grammatical forms can include adding appropriate possessive pronouns (for example, your, my); conjunctions (for example, and, or); and other elements (for example, adjectives, adverbs).

Discovering Examples

- After a teacher asks, “Would you like some more to eat? You could have crackers or apple slices” while pointing to the named foods, a child says, “Cracker.”
- A child pulls the shovel away from a peer who took it from them and says, “No, no, no. Mine!”

Developing Examples

- After a teacher asks, “Would you like some more to eat?” and gestures to the food, a child says, “More crackers please.”
- A child pulls the shovel away from a peer who took it from them and says, “No, no, no. I’m using that!”

Broadening Examples

- After a teacher asks, “Would you like some more snack?” a child communicates, “Can I have crackers, please? They are crunchy.”
- A child says, “That’s her shovel! Put it back,” to a peer after the peer has picked up a shovel that another child was using.

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Foundation 1.4 Using Complex Sentence Structures

Discovering

Discovering Examples

A child recites, “Good morning,” with the class during the morning circle, a routine their teacher leads them in every morning.

A child says, “More,” and gestures at the pitcher containing milk during a family-style meal. A teacher responds, “You would like more milk?” and refills the child’s cup.

Developing

Developing Examples

A child whose home language is Spanish communicates, “I wanna cracker” and “I wanna *pelota*” (I wanna ball) at different times during the day.

A child explains, “This one’s mine,” while taking their jacket out of their cubby after a teacher asks, “Where is your jacket?” Later, while looking at other children’s artwork, the child communicates, “This is Aasif’s.”

A child whose home language is Mandarin observes, “I see flower” and “I see 小鸟” (I see bird) during a nature walk.

Broadening

Broadening Examples

During circle time, a child communicates, “My dog got hurt. So I take him to the doctor” when the teacher asks what they did last night.

After reading aloud a book about a trip to a park, a teacher asks, “What do you like to do when you go to parks?” A child shares, “I went to the park and had fun with my auntie!”



Sub-Strand — Language Use

Foundation 1.5 **Communicating Needs**

Discovering

Use single English words and nonverbal communication with English speakers, such as gestures or behaviors, to seek attention, make a request, or initiate a response.

Developing

Combine nonverbal communication and some English phrases to be understood by English speakers.

Broadening

Show increasing reliance on verbal communication in English to be understood by English speakers.

Discovering Examples

■ A child pulls the teacher’s hand and says, “Come.”

● A child communicates, “hands” and points to the sink after showing the teacher their glue-covered fingers. The teacher responds, “I see, you need to wash your hands! Let’s go to the sink together.”

After nap, a teacher asks, “What do you want to play with?” The child looks at the teacher and indicates a toy they want from the shelf.

Developing Examples

■ A child pulls the teacher’s hand and comments, “Come, help.”

● A child communicates, “wash hands,” after showing the teacher their glue-covered fingers. The teacher responds, “I see. You need to wash your hands! Let’s go together.”

A child expresses frequently experienced phrases, like “Let’s go!” or “Come on!” when heading outside to play with English-speaking peers.

Broadening Examples

■ A child pulls the teacher’s hand and comments, “I need help with shoes.”

● A child communicates, “Wanna wash my hands,” after showing the teacher their glue-covered fingers. The teacher responds, “Yes, it looks like your hands are really sticky. Let’s go to the sink together.”

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Foundation 1.5 Communicating Needs

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

A child pushes away their plate and says, “No” to indicate they are not hungry anymore.

A child communicates discontent by grimacing when a peer picks up a crayon the child had been using.

Developing Examples

A child whose home language is Spanish requests, “I want more! *¡Más rojo!*” (More red!) while indicating the empty container of red paint at the easel. A bilingual teacher responds, “You want more red paint? Let’s go find the bottle.”

Broadening Examples

A child, Enzo, communicates, “You have to share,” when they want a crayon another child, Reina, is holding. A teacher asks, “Reina, when you are done with the purple crayon, can you give it to Enzo?”

While working on a puzzle with a peer, a child asks their peer, “How do you do that?”



Foundation 1.6 Understanding Requests and Directions

Discovering

Follow simple directions in English when given additional contextual clues.

Developing

Follow directions in English that involve repeatedly experienced routines or contextual clues.

Broadening

Follow directions that involve more than one step, relying less on contextual clues.

Discovering Examples

■ During a science activity, a teacher tells the children, “We’re going to line up our rain gauges on the table. Place your bottle so you can see the numbers we wrote.” While a child watches their peers, the teacher says, “Your gauge can go here,” and pats a spot on the table. After the child puts their gauge down, the teacher says, “Now let’s turn it so you can see the numbers,” pointing to the numbers on the gauge and making a turning motion with their hands.

Developing Examples

■ During a science activity, a teacher tells the children, “We’re going to line up our rain gauges on the table. Place your bottle so you can see the numbers we wrote.” After a child follows their peers and puts their gauge on the table, the teacher says, “Turn it so you can see the numbers,” pointing to the numbers on the gauge and making a turning motion with their hands.

Broadening Examples

■ During a science activity, a teacher tells the children, “We’re going to line up our rain gauges on the table. Place your bottle so you can see the numbers we wrote.” A child puts their gauge on the table and looks for the numbers. The teacher makes a turning motion with their hands and says, “Remember, turn it so you can see the numbers.”

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Foundation 1.6 Understanding Requests and Directions

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

- A child follows peers to sit at the lunch table when the teacher communicates, “Time for lunch! Please sit at the table” and points to the table.

A child sits on a pillow after a teacher leads them to the carpet for story time and says, “Sit here for the story,” patting the pillow to indicate where to sit.

After a teacher explains, “Let’s roll up our sleeves” and mimes the action, a child pushes up their sleeves. The teacher then puts their own hands into the water at the sensory table, and the child copies this action.

Developing Examples

- A child goes to sit down when the teacher communicates, “Time for lunch! Please sit at the table.”

A child jumps when the teacher communicates, “Simon says jump!” during a game of Simon Says.

A child sits by a peer when the peer communicates, “Come sit here” and points to a place on the carpet as the teachers call children together for story time.

When the teacher announces, “It’s time to work in the garden,” a child who is blind uses their cane and moves with other children toward the door to go outside.

Broadening Examples

- A child washes their hands and then sits at a table when a teacher communicates, “Time for lunch! Please wash your hands and go sit at the lunch table.”

A child chooses a book and brings it to the teacher when the teacher requests, “Go get a book and bring it to me. I’ll read it with you!”

During an activity on measuring length, a teacher says, “I wonder how many red blocks we need to make a line as long as this dinosaur. Can you find all the red blocks and put them in a line the same length as this dinosaur? Then let’s count them.” The child places blocks in a line next to a toy dinosaur while counting, “One, two, three.”

While playing in the kitchen area, a child pretends to pour milk into the mixing bowl and stirs it in response to a peer saying, “Let’s make pancakes! Here’s the bowl. Add some milk and mix it. I’ll get the baby.”



Foundation 1.7 Asking Questions

Discovering

Use a frequently experienced question phrase (such as “What’s that?”) or use one or two English words with a rising pitch to ask questions.

Developing

Use a few question structures as a formula, filling in different words to ask about various topics.

Broadening

Use “who,” “what,” “why,” “how,” “when,” and “where” to produce questions in many forms to ask about a variety of topics in English.

Discovering Examples

■ A child holds out a firefighter’s hat and asks another child, “Want?”

● While pointing to a picture of a ladder in a picture book, a child asks, “What’s that?” The teacher explains, “That is called a ladder. It is like the ladder on the playground to get to the top of the slide.”

After a teacher asks, “What do you want with your lunch today?” a child asks, “Milk?” to request a carton of milk from a teacher while waiting to be served.

Developing Examples

■ A child asks another child in the block area, “You wanna play blocks?”
Later, the same child runs to the swings and asks another child, “You wanna play swings?”

● A child asks, “Is that a truck?” while gesturing at an image in a book about construction vehicles.

Broadening Examples

■ A child asks another child, “What do you want to play?”

● While looking at the pictures in a book with a peer, a child points at a purple train car and says, “I like the purple one. Which is your favorite?”

A child asks a peer, “Why you did that with the water?” when the peer pours water from a pitcher at the water table.

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Foundation 1.7 Asking Questions

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Developing Examples

A child asks, “How do this work?” to learn about a new toy. Later, the child asks, “How do make applesauce?” while the class is making applesauce for a snack. The teacher leading the activity explains, “The first step to make applesauce is to peel the apples. I have this tool we can use. It’s called a peeler. Let me show you how it works.”

Broadening Examples

After a teacher asks a child about their painting of a tree and points out, “I see how you used the blue at the top for the sky,” the child asks, “How do you make the sun?” while painting at the easel.



Foundation 1.8 Constructing Narratives

Discovering

Identify parts of real or fictional narratives using a few English vocabulary words.

Developing

Construct real or fictional short narratives using English vocabulary in a few simple English sentence structures.

Broadening

Construct real or fictional narratives by stringing together sentences with varied structures in English.

Discovering Examples

- During a classroom activity where children have brought in photos of their family doing things together, a teacher asks a child to describe their photo. The child pretends to roar like a lion and communicates, “Lookit! Scary!” when describing a trip to the zoo.
- A child describes a play activity in the block area with a peer, “Big house” and gestures to indicate size.

Developing Examples

- During a classroom activity where children have brought in photos of their family doing things together, a teacher asks a child to describe their photo. The child communicates, “I saw lion. Lion” and imitates a lion roaring, then communicates, “I was scared,” when describing a trip to the zoo.
- A child describes a play activity in the block area with a peer. “Me and Fatemeh build a big house. And big windows.”

Broadening Examples

- During a classroom activity where children have brought in photos of their family doing things together, a teacher asks a child to describe their photo. The child communicates, “I saw lots of animals. The lion roared so loud, and it was so scary!” when describing a trip to the zoo.
- A child describes a play activity in the block area with a peer. “I’m the builder. I build the big house with Fatemeh. Our house has big windows too. And when we are finished, people will live there.”

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Foundation 1.8 Constructing Narratives

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

A child communicates, “Baby” and pretends to cry after a teacher asks about their new sister. The teacher responds, “Your baby sister cries a lot? What does your mommy do when she cries?” The child mimes rocking the baby.

A child with a speech impairment says “All,” an approximation of “Ball,” while pointing at the soccer ball in a picture book.

Developing Examples

A child whose home language is Spanish communicates to a bilingual teacher about what they saw on a recent nature walk. “I see bird. I see bug. *Y una mariposa muy bonita. Y regresamos a la escuela.*” (And a really pretty butterfly. And we went back to school.) The teacher replies, “You saw a bird, and bug, and *una mariposa muy bonita*, a beautiful butterfly?”

A child draws a picture and tells a teacher while gesturing at the page, “See? The car goes fast. The bus goes fast. The police says, ‘Stop!’ The end.”

Broadening Examples

A teacher asks a child, who has painted a pony sitting on a cloud, “Do you want me to write your story down?” The child dictates a story to the teacher, gesturing with their hands. “There was a big pony with sparkly wings. Giant sparkly wings. It flew up into the sky. Really, really high!” The teacher asks, “What happened next after the pony flew into the sky?” and the child continues their story.

A child tells a teacher about a conflict that came up while they were playing “family” with two peers. “I was the mommy, and Mai was the baby. I told her to sleep and be quiet. But she not listen, and I got mad at her.”



Foundation 1.9 Sharing Explanations and Opinions

Discovering

Use English vocabulary and gestures to share descriptions, opinions, and explanations.

Developing

Use a few simple sentence structures to share descriptions, opinions, and explanations.

Broadening

Use varied sentence structures to share descriptions, opinions, and explanations.

Discovering Examples

■ A child tells a peer, "Mix, mix, mix" and gestures while explaining how to eat bibimbap.*

● A child shows a teacher an adhesive bandage on their knee and expresses, "Owie."

* Bibimbap is a Korean dish made of rice mixed with other ingredients such as meat and vegetables.

Developing Examples

■ A child tells a peer, "You go mix, mix, mix. You eat" and gestures while explaining how to eat bibimbap.

● A child shows a teacher an adhesive bandage on their knee and expresses, "Owie. I fell down."

While sharing their pictures from a kite festival, a child tells the class, "It big dragon."

A child with autism points to "I want" and "swing" on a playground communication board as they enter the playground.

Broadening Examples

■ A child tells a peer, "First, you mix it all up. Then, you eat. But I don't like the parts when it's crunchy" and gestures while explaining how to eat bibimbap.

● A child points to an adhesive bandage and expresses, "I fell down and my mom found this purple one. But I like my rainbow ones more."

A child explains to a peer, "Teacher says we have to wear our hats. It's too sunny, so we have to wear our hats. My hat's wet because it got in the water."

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Foundation 1.9 **Sharing Explanations and Opinions**

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

In response to the teacher asking in English, “What do you see on this page?” referring to an image in a book about thunderstorms, a child says, “Rain” and gestures with their arms to indicate wind and noise. The teacher responds while pointing to the image, “Yes, it’s a thunderstorm. It is raining, and there’s lightning. Lightning is the bright flash of light.”

A child points to their painting and communicates, “Wabow” to describe a rainbow.

Developing Examples

A child whose home language is Spanish observes, “The *oruga* eats leafs” (The caterpillar eats leafs) in response to a bilingual teacher asking what they notice about the caterpillars they are observing during a science activity. The teacher replies, “Yes, *las orugas*, the caterpillars, eat leaves. Once they eat enough leaves and grow big enough, they can make their cocoon to turn into a butterfly. Do you see any cocoons?”

Broadening Examples

A child communicates to a peer who offers to trade balls, “No. I don’t like that ball because it’s not bouncy. This ball goes so high when it bounces.” A teacher who overhears the children asks, “Would you like to help me add more air to the balls so they are bouncier?” The child says, “I didn’t know that could get more bouncy.”

A child tells a peer, “No, only the horse and the cow are on the farm,” while playing with toy animals in a sand tray.



Foundation 1.10 Participating in Conversations

Discovering

Engage in conversation with English speakers, by mostly listening and responding with a few English words, gestures, or other nonverbal responses.

Developing

Converse with others using frequently heard vocabulary in English, often using short, commonly used sentences and phrases and a few repeated grammatical structures, sometimes with inaccuracies.

Broadening

Engage in conversations in English using increasingly complex vocabulary and varied grammatical structures, sometimes with inaccuracies.

Discovering Examples

■ A child points to a dandelion when the teacher asks, “Can you find the yellow flowers?”

● A child says to a peer, “Play?” and points to the play dough. The peer asks, “Let’s play together?” and the child says, “OK.”

When a peer wearing firefighter dress-up clothing communicates, “I’m a firefighter!” a child shares, “Me too!”

Developing Examples

■ A child points to a dandelion and says, “It yellow,” when the teacher asks, “Can you find the yellow flowers?”

● A child says to a peer, “I do play dough.” The peer asks, “Let’s play together?” and the child says, “Yes, together.”

Broadening Examples

■ A child points to a dandelion and says, “There’s a yellow one, but it will get white and puffy and we can blow it,” when the teacher asks, “Can you find the yellow flowers?”

● A child says to a peer, “I want to play with play dough. I can use the roller, and that makes it flat. What are you playing now?” The peer asks, “Can I play too?” and the child says, “Yes, let’s do play dough together.”

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Foundation 1.10 Participating in Conversations

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

A child participates in a conversation with a peer whose home language is English by using “huh?” and “what?” combining the words with matching gestures and facial expressions.

During a snack time conversation, in response to a teacher asking, “What did you do yesterday?” a child whose home language is Spanish responds, “*Fui al parque con mi abuelita y mis primos. Y compramos ice cream.*” (I went to the park with my grandma and my cousins. And we bought ice cream.)

Developing Examples

A child whose home language is Spanish communicates, “Need color. Need color, teacher,” during an art activity. When the teacher asks, “Which one?” the child responds, “*Morado. Purple.*” (Purple, purple.)

After a teacher says, “Tell me about your drawing,” a child describes, “I make a big, big tree. *¡Un árbol enorme!*” (I make a big, big tree. An enormous tree!) while reaching their arms up high. The teacher says, “Wow, that is very big.”

Broadening Examples

A child whose home language is Spanish asks a peer whose home language is also Spanish, “You don’t like *arañas*?” (You don’t like spiders?) and the peer responds, “No, I don’t like *arañas* because they are too scary.” (No, I don’t like spiders because they are too scary.)

A child expresses to their teacher, “My auntie has a lot of kids.” The teacher responds, “Your auntie has a lot of kids? How many kids does your auntie have?” The child replies, “Like this much” and shows five fingers. The teacher asks, “How many is that?” The child replies, “Five.”



Promoting Rich Language Use

Children learn from having opportunities to experience and use rich and varied language. Children learn English vocabulary and grammar from hearing stories in English, participating in extended conversations, listening to peers and adults, and having opportunities to share their thoughts and ideas in English that go beyond communicating needs or following simple directions. Through these interactions, they can practice and continue to develop communication skills in English. Teachers can promote rich language use in English in the following ways:

- Teachers can support children’s grammatical development by repeating and expanding on what children say, using grammatically complete sentences without directly correcting the child. For example, if a child communicates, “Want it,” a teacher might reply, “You want to use the markers?”
- During group activities, children can support each other’s language use. Teachers can pair children who are learning English with peers who are proficient in English. For example, in an activity where children are doing a scavenger hunt in pairs, teachers can have children who have different levels of English proficiency work together.
- Teachers can promote children’s use of English to communicate by modeling phrases they can use. For example, during a music lesson, a teacher can prompt a child, “You could ask him, ‘May I have a turn with the tambourine?’”



Strand: 2.0 — Foundational Literacy Skills

Sub-Strand — Phonological Awareness

Foundation 2.1 Recognizing and Segmenting Sounds

Discovering

Recognize and produce sounds of spoken English.

Developing

Match English words that have the same first sound in speech, with adult support or the support of pictures or objects.

Broadening

Isolate and pronounce the first sound of a word in English, with adult support or the support of pictures or objects.

Discovering Examples

■ While playing on their own, a child practices saying, “la la la, ra ra ra,” frequently pronouncing the two sounds in a way that sounds the same.

Developing Examples

■ During a class reading of a book about forest animals, the teacher asks, “Lion, giraffe, leopard— which words start with the same sound?” while pointing to the pictures. A child responds, “Lion, leopard!”

Broadening Examples

■ While the group eats lunch, the teacher says, “I see someone eating something that starts with a /l/ sound. Who is eating something that starts with /l/?” A child gestures at their lunch box and says, “Lentils!”

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■● Matching icons indicate alignment of examples across age-ranges



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Foundation 2.1 Recognizing and Segmenting Sounds

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

- As a teacher points to objects in a book and names them in English, a child repeats the words in English.

After a teacher reads the book *Llama Llama Red Pajama* aloud in English, the teacher explains in Spanish, “*¿Se dieron cuenta que cuándo leí el cuento dije /lama/? Pero en español decimos /yama/. Suenan diferente pero parecido.*” (Did you notice that when I was reading the story, I said /lama/? But in Spanish we say /yama/. They sound different but similar.” After this explanation, a child whose home language is Spanish practices saying “llama” over and over, alternating the English /l/ sound and Spanish /y/ sound (“/lama/ /yama/, /lama/ /yama/”).

Developing Examples

- While experiencing a picture book with a teacher, a child points to a picture of a snake and communicates, “It’s a snake.” The teacher responds, “Snake. /s/-/s/-snake. Can you find something else on this page that starts with the same sound as sssnake?” After some time, when the child does not answer the teacher prompts, “I see a /b/-/b/-branch, a /l/-/l/-leaf, and a /s/-/s/-snail. Which one has the same sound as /s/-/s/-snake?” The child points to the snail.

A Deaf child uses American Sign Language to communicate to a classmate, “Our names both start with the letter ‘N.’”

The teacher communicates, “I’m thinking of words that start with /m/. ‘Mouse’ starts with /m/. What else starts with /m/?” A child thinks for a moment, then communicates, “Mama.”

Broadening Examples

- While looking at a picture book with a teacher, a child points to a picture of a snake and communicates, “It’s a snake.” The teacher replies, “Snake. What sound does ‘snake’ start with?” The child responds, “/s/.”

A child draws a picture of a deer and tells a peer, “/d/ is for deer. Like me, Dmitry!”

When the teacher asks, “Can you find something that starts with /p/?” a child runs to a table and brings back a pencil and paper.

While trying to label a picture of a birthday cake they drew, a child asks the teacher which letter makes the /k/ sound at the start of “cake.”



Foundation 2.2 Recognizing and Blending Sounds

Discovering

Recognize and produce sounds of spoken English.

Developing

When presented with two single-syllable English words (such as “sand” and “box”), blend them into a compound word in speech, with adult support or the support of pictures or objects.

Broadening

When presented with syllables and individual sounds, blend them into English words in speech, with adult support or the support of pictures or objects.

Discovering Examples

■ During an outdoor small-group phonological awareness activity, a child practices saying the vowel sounds in out, “out, /ow/, /ow/, out.”

● While playing by themselves, a child says words quietly with the same consonants and different vowel sounds, like “hat, het, hit.” (The child may not know the meaning of all the words and may produce a mix of real and nonsense words.)

Developing Examples

■ During an outdoor small-group phonological awareness activity, a child blends “out” and “side” into “outside” and “sun” and “shine” into “sunshine” when prompted by the teacher.

● While playing with cars, a child says, “Vroom vroom! It’s a race.” A teacher says, “That kind of car has a special blended name like we have been practicing. What word do you get if you put together ‘race’ and ‘car’?” The child says, “Racecar!”

Broadening Examples

■ During an outdoor small-group phonological awareness activity, children blend the sounds in words that identify things in the environment after a teacher says the individual sounds. The teacher looks around, then says the sounds, “/b/-/ûr/-/d/.” A child points toward a bird in a nearby tree and says, “Bird!”

● While a child plays with toy cars with a teacher and a few peers, the teacher says, “Let’s practice blending sounds. What word do you get if you blend together /k/-/är/?” The child responds, “/k/-/är/, car!”

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Foundation 2.2 Recognizing and Blending Sounds

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

A child repeats a peer’s name and the first syllable of their name. “Caden, cay, cay, cay.”

While playing with toy train tracks, a child whose home language is Korean practices saying “ramp” and “lamp,” a consonant sound difference that does not exist in their home language. A teacher observes and says, “The trains go up the ramp. And this is the lamp that lights up the tracks,” enunciating the words “ramp” and “lamp” while pointing to the objects.

Developing Examples

A child with autism whose home language is Cantonese indicates “baseball” on a communication tablet when a teacher asks, “What word do we make when we put ‘base’ and ‘ball’ together?”

While the children are getting their belongings to go home, a child communicates, “Backpack” when a teacher asks, “What do you get when you put ‘back’ and ‘pack’ together?”

Broadening Examples

A child blends the individual sounds /d/-/õ/-/g/ together into “dog” during an activity in which the teacher tells the children the sounds and shows a picture of a dog.

While in circle time, a child blends the syllables of their name together into “Mateo” after a teacher communicates, “I’m going to say the sounds in your name. When you hear the sounds of your name, say your name and you can leave the rug. Ready? ‘mah-teh-oh.’” After saying their name, Mateo leaves the rug.



Foundation 2.3 Participating in Rhyming and Wordplay

Discovering

Attend to and participate in frequently experienced simple songs, poems, and fingerplays in English, with gestures and some key words.

Developing

Repeat or recite parts of simple songs, poems, and fingerplays that emphasize rhyme in English.

Broadening

Repeat, recite, produce, or initiate simple songs, poems, and fingerplays that emphasize rhyme in English.

Discovering Examples

- A child participates during a class sing-along of “Itsy Bitsy Spider” by making some gestures and smiling with peers.
- A child moves and stomps in the rhythm of the story during a small group reading of *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* when the teacher encourages the children to sing along to the words they know and stomp to the words “boom boom.”

Developing Examples

- A child participates during a class sing-along of “Itsy Bitsy Spider” by joining in for the rhyming ends of the verses: “waterspout” and “spider out.”
- A child sings during a small group reading of *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* when the teacher encourages the children to sing along with the words they know and stomp to the words “boom boom.”

Broadening Examples

- After a class sing-along of “Itsy Bitsy Spider,” a child sings the song to themselves, changing the later lines in a silly way. “Down came the rain and washed the spider *pout*. Out came the sun and dried up all the *snout*.”
- A child chants, “Chicka chicka boom boom, Will there be enough room?” after a teacher has read *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* to the group multiple times that week.

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Foundation 2.3 Participating in Rhyming and Wordplay

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

A child joins in saying, “Uh-oh” with peers who are chanting “Going on a Bear Hunt,” led by the teacher.

A child claps along with a small group as a teacher leads them in “Clap, Clap, Clap Your Hands” before beginning a book read-aloud.

Developing Examples

A child joins a peer who is chanting, “One, two, buckle my shoe, three, four, shut the door ... ” by rhyming with the words, “two, shoe” and “four, door” and clapping.

A child participates in a class sing-along of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,” singing rhyming words and key phrases, such as “Twinkle, twinkle, little star,” and “what you are,” but not the entire song.

Broadening Examples

A child quietly sings, “Comin’ down the track, clickety-clack,” lyrics from a favorite song.

A child communicates, “Cindy. Bindy. They’re almost the same!” when talking to a peer about their own name (Bindy) and the peer’s name (Cindy).



Supporting Children’s Phonological Awareness Skills

Phonological awareness refers to a child’s awareness of the sounds of a language and the rules for combining those sounds into words. Before children can learn phonological awareness in English, they need familiarity with the sounds of English. Learning vocabulary and language use in English helps set the groundwork for phonological awareness. Teachers can support children’s understanding of English sounds and phonological awareness by providing explicit instruction while attending to the following:

- Teachers can sing songs, recite nursery rhymes, poems, and chants, and read aloud in English, allowing children to listen and join in.
- Languages have different sounds. For example, some languages do not have distinct /r/ and /l/ sounds, so words with these sounds will need to be said clearly and pointed out to children so they can practice recognizing and making those sounds.
- Children may need extra practice using sound combinations that do not exist in their home language. For example, not all languages use sounds that blend consonants together (such as /sm/ in “smell” or /sts/ in “forests”). Also, some languages do not have any words that end in a consonant sound. A child whose home language follows these rules, and does not have consonant blends, may initially pronounce the word “snack” as “su-na-cku” because they are applying the sound rules from their home language. To support children learning sounds and sound combinations in English, pronounce words clearly and give children authentic learning experiences with time to practice new sounds or provide opportunities for them to practice new words in the context of meaningful interactions.
- Phonological awareness skills transfer more or less from one language to another, so if a child already understands how to blend sounds or segment sounds in their home language, they will be able to apply those skills to familiar words in English.



Sub-Strand — Alphabets and Print

Many children enter an early education program recognizing some letters and letter sounds in their home language. Children who experience print in a language that uses an alphabet similar to the English alphabet (such as Spanish or Tagalog) may transfer this knowledge to English quickly. Therefore, educators may notice their knowledge begins at the Developing or Broadening stage. On the other hand, children who have experienced print in a language that uses a different writing system (such as Arabic or Mandarin) may take additional time to recognize letters or identify letter sounds in English.

Foundation 2.4 Recognizing and Identifying Letters

Discovering

Recognize the first letter in their own name in the English alphabet.

Developing

Accurately identify a few letters of the alphabet in English.

Broadening

Accurately identify many uppercase and some lowercase letters of the alphabet in English.

Discovering Examples

■ The class plays a game seeking letters in the classroom. The teacher sets up a turn for a child named Anh, saying, “‘Anh’ starts with ‘A.’ Anh, can you find the letter ‘A?’” and gestures to an alphabet chart on the wall. The child points to the letter “A” on the chart.

Developing Examples

■ The class plays a game seeking letters in the classroom. A child touches the “S” on a drawer labeled “Spoons” when the teacher asks, “Can you find the letter ‘S?’”

Broadening Examples

■ The class plays a game seeking letters in the classroom. A child touches the “S” on a drawer labeled “Spoons” when the teacher asks, “Can you find the letter ‘S?’” The child continues finding letters as the teacher names them, some uppercase and some lowercase, on various signs and posters.

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Foundation 2.4 Recognizing and Identifying Letters

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

- A child whose home language is Spanish points to a calendar on the wall that lists the month and days of the week in English. The child notices the first letter of their name, “D,” and communicates, “¡D’ como Diego!” (“D” like Diego!), using the English pronunciation of the letter.

A child whose home language is Spanish shows their parents their cubby and communicates, “*Mi nombre empieza con esta letra, la ‘M,’*” pronouncing the letter name in Spanish and then in English. (My name starts with this letter, “M.”)

Developing Examples

- A child whose home language is Spanish points to a calendar on the wall that lists the months and days of the week in English, saying a few of the uppercase letters out loud in both English and Spanish.

While helping the teacher hand out carpet squares, each with a name on it, a child points to the first letter of another child’s name and communicates, “N,” then does the same for a few other names.

A child flips through an illustrated book of the alphabet, quietly saying the names of a few familiar English letters.

Broadening Examples

- A child whose home language is Spanish points to a calendar on the wall that lists the month and days of the week in English, saying each uppercase letter and some lowercase letters out loud in both English and Spanish.

A child names several individual uppercase and lowercase letters as the teacher writes them with chalk outside.



Foundation 2.5 Learning Letter–Sound Correspondence

Discovering

Demonstrate awareness that English alphabet letters have sounds.

Developing

Accurately identify or produce the sound associated with one or two letters in the English alphabet.

Broadening

Accurately identify or produce the sounds of a few letters of the English alphabet (about 5–10), with adult support.

Discovering Examples

- While experiencing an alphabet book with a teacher, a child repeats the /t/ sound the teacher makes at the “T” page of the book.
- A child sits on a carpet printed with alphabet letters, repeating sounds of the letters after the teacher has made the sounds.

Developing Examples

- While experiencing an alphabet book with a teacher, a child points to the page with “T” and makes a /t/ sound when the teacher prompts, “What sound does the letter ‘T’ make?”
- While the group sits on the outside of a carpet printed with alphabet letters, the teacher asks, “Which letter sounds like /n/?” The child moves to the letter “N.”

Broadening Examples

- While experiencing an alphabet book with a teacher, a child points to a few different letters on the pages and makes the corresponding sounds when the teacher prompts the child for the letter sounds.
- While the group sits on the carpet printed with alphabet letters, the teacher asks, “Which letter sounds like /n/?” A child moves to the letter “N.” The child takes two more turns during the game, accurately identifying two more letters.

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Foundation 2.5 Learning Letter–Sound Correspondence

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

A child whose home language is Arabic points to an English word in a book and asks, “كيف بتحكي هاي؟” (How do you say this?)

Developing Examples

A child indicates the letter “S” on a communication board when a teacher asks, “What letter makes the /s/ sound, like in ‘sssit’ or ‘sssand’?”

During a small group activity with letter tiles, a child makes a /p/ sound when the teacher asks, “What sound does the letter ‘P’ make?”

Broadening Examples

While playing with alphabet magnets, a child makes the corresponding sound for several of the letters they touch, sometimes after being prompted by the teacher.

A child whose home language is Spanish points to letters on a banner with the English alphabet and makes the corresponding sounds. When they reach the letter “J,” they make the /j/ sound and then communicate that in Spanish, “J” makes a /h/ sound.



Sub-Strand — Concepts About Print

Many children enter an early education program with an understanding of the concept of print in their home language. Children who experience print in a language that uses an alphabet similar to the English alphabet or that has similar print conventions (such as how print is laid out in text or the direction the pages are turned) may transfer their knowledge to English relatively quickly and may begin at the Developing or Broadening level. For example, Spanish and Tagalog use a similar alphabet and have similar print conventions. On the other hand, children who experience print in a language that uses a different writing system (such as Arabic or Mandarin) may begin at the Emerging level and take additional time learning to recognize print or understand print conventions in English.

Foundation 2.6 Understanding the Concept of Print

Discovering

Interact with materials representing the letters of the English alphabet.

Developing

Demonstrate awareness that they are interacting with English print.

Broadening

Demonstrate awareness of English print as something that can be read and has specific meaning.

Discovering Examples

■ A child plays with blocks that have letters on them and picks one up to look at the letter more closely.

Developing Examples

■ A child plays with blocks that have letters on them, softly singing, “A, B, C, D ...”

Broadening Examples

■ A child plays with blocks that have letters on them, putting several letters in a line and pretending to read the “word” in English that they have made.

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Foundation 2.6 Understanding the Concept of Print

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

● During free play time, a child looks at an alphabet chart on the wall. Seeing the child observing the chart, a teacher points to each letter while saying the alphabet.

A child flips through the pages of a book written in English.

A child uses alphabet stamps to print letters on paper.

Developing Examples

● A child looks at an alphabet chart on the wall for a minute, then communicates, “ABCs” to the teacher. The teacher responds, “Yes, the ABCs,” and points to each letter while saying the alphabet.

A child whose home language is Mandarin brings in their Mandarin-language copy of *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* and finds the English version in the classroom to show that they are the same. The child points to the Mandarin version, “棕熊，棕熊，你看到了什么？” and communicates the title in Mandarin, then points to the English version and communicates, “Brown Bear.”

Broadening Examples

● While looking at a labeled weather chart on the wall, a child points at a word next to a picture of a sun and asks the teacher if it says, “hot.” The teacher responds, “This word is spelled with the letters ‘S-U-N-N-Y.’ That spells ‘sunny.’” After the child repeats, “sunny,” the teacher continues, “Let’s see if we can find the word ‘hot.’ This word over here has the letters ‘H-O-T.’ Those letters make the word ‘hot’!”

A child whose home language is Cantonese points to a word in an English-language picture book and communicates, “嗰就系 fire truck” (That says fire truck.) (The child’s action demonstrates understanding of print having a specific meaning, whether or not the word the child uses is accurate.)

A child points to a sign on a cabinet door that says “CRAYONS,” and asks, “What does that say?”



Foundation 2.7 Understanding Print Conventions

Discovering

Engage and interact with English-language books. Demonstrate understanding of a few general book-handling behaviors, such as turning pages one at a time in a single direction.

Developing

Demonstrate understanding of a few book-handling behaviors or print conventions specific to English, such as turning pages from right to left and recognizing the front cover of a book.

Broadening

Demonstrate understanding that print in English is organized from left to right, top to bottom and that pages are turned from right to left when a book is read.

Discovering Examples

■ While sitting with a child in the library corner, a teacher pulls *The Snowy Day* off the bookshelf and tells the child, “This book is called *The Snowy Day*. It’s one of my favorite books,” pointing to the title as they say the name of the book. The teacher allows the child to sit with the book for a few minutes, turning the pages one at a time to study the pictures, while the teacher points and comments about elements of the pictures. Then the teacher asks the child if they would like to read the book together.

Developing Examples

■ During a group reading of *The Snowy Day*, a teacher invites a child to turn the pages of the book. The child turns the pages in the appropriate direction.

Broadening Examples

■ During a group reading of *The Snowy Day*, a teacher invites a child to turn the pages of the book and be a reading helper. The child turns the pages in the appropriate direction and points to the top left side of the text to indicate the teacher should begin reading there.

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Foundation 2.7 Understanding Print Conventions

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

● A child whose home language is Farsi pretends to read an English-language book to themselves, turning the pages from left to right (the direction to turn pages in a Farsi-language book).

A child with a fine motor delay chooses a book in English from the library shelf for the teacher to read to the group. They assist the teacher by opening the book and turning the pages using craft sticks that have been taped to the pages for support.

Developing Examples

● During circle time, a child whose home language is Farsi turns the page of a big book written in English from right to left (the direction to turn pages in the English writing system) when the teacher indicates it is time to turn the page.

A child whose home language is Korean turns an upside-down English-language book right side up and communicates, “여기서 시작하자” (Let’s start here) when sitting and “reading” with another child in a rocking chair.

A child sits in a chair with a favorite stuffed animal and an English-language book, pretending to teach the animal to read. The child tells the animal, “You do it like this,” opening the book from the front cover and turning the pages from right to left (the direction in the English writing system). They communicate about the illustrations on each page in a mix of Arabic and English.

Broadening Examples

● A child whose home language is Farsi turns the pages of an English-language book one at a time, talking quietly to themselves in a mix of Farsi and English words. They turn the pages from right to left and track the print with their finger, moving from left to right (the directions in the English writing system).

A child communicates, “Once upon a time,” when looking at the first page of an English-language book, then looks through the book and communicates, “The end,” when reaching the last page.



Supporting Children’s Knowledge of Alphabets and Print in English

An understanding of alphabets and print concepts in English supports lifelong development in English-language literacy. Teachers can support multilingual learners in developing strong foundational literacy skills in English through playful explicit instruction:

- Many children may enter an early education program with an understanding that letters or characters can be used to represent thoughts and ideas, although the writing system of their home language (such as Mandarin or Farsi) might look very different from the English alphabet. Teachers can support these learners with an environment filled with English-language print (such as English-language books, posters, and labels) and by explicitly demonstrating that the print is the English language’s way of conveying concepts in writing. For example, teachers can point to letters and words as they are read aloud and sound out words as they model writing.
- Children who experience print in a language that uses an alphabet similar to the English alphabet (such as Spanish or Tagalog) may enter an early education program with an understanding of some letter names and sounds in their home languages. Teachers can support these children by pointing out similarities and differences in the two languages. For example, a teacher may explain that the letter J makes a /h/ sound in Spanish but a /j/ sound in English.
- To support all children’s developing alphabets knowledge, play games related to the English alphabet. When classrooms contain books, signs, labels, and posters, games can involve finding letters that appear in the classroom environment. Games can also involve identifying letter sounds. For example, teachers can write letters in sidewalk chalk outside, then ask children to move to the appropriate letter corresponding to a sound (such as, “Jump to the letter that sounds like /g/-/g/-/g/!”).



- Partner with staff who speak the home languages of children and families to understand the reading conventions of the home language. For example, learn about whether the language uses an alphabet where letters represent a sound, characters that represent words or meanings, or a combination of these. It is also helpful to understand whether text in the child’s home language is read from right to left or left to right.
- Model how English print is read. When reading aloud, slowly “underline” a word or block of text using a finger, moving from left to right. Invite children to help turn the pages in the appropriate direction, providing explicit instruction when needed.



Strand: 3.0 — Reading

Sub-Strand — Literacy Interest and Response

Foundation 3.1 Demonstrating Interest in Literacy Activities

Discovering

Attend to English-language literacy activities.

Developing

Demonstrate interest in and engagement with English-language literacy activities.

Broadening

Demonstrate interest in and engagement with English-language literacy activities with increasing independence.

Literacy and literacy-related activities include read-alouds, storytelling, singing, chanting, rhyming, engagement with books, and writing.

Discovering Examples

- A child attends to the pictures of an English-language storybook the teacher is reading aloud. The teacher invites the child to move closer to the book so they have a more direct view of the pictures.
- A child stands in a circle with the group as the teacher chants a nursery rhyme in English, occasionally swaying along with the other children.

Developing Examples

- After listening to the teacher read a book aloud in English, a child turns the pages of the book and pretends to read it aloud to themselves using a mix of their home language and English.
- A child claps along to a familiar chant or rhyme in English, calling out frequently repeated words.

Broadening Examples

- After spending time in the class garden, a child chooses a favorite English-language book about planting a garden from the library corner and pretends to read by turning the pages.
- A child asks the teacher if the group can sing their favorite English-language nursery rhyme. The teacher replies that they can and asks if the child would like to stand next to the teacher in the circle to help lead the group.

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Foundation 3.1 Demonstrating Interest in Literacy Activities

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

A child pays attention while a teacher writes in English on an easel.

A child turns the pages of a nearby English-language picture book when children are asked to play or read quietly before nap time ends.

Developing Examples

A child whose home language is Korean shows an English-language book about growing a garden to their grandma at pickup time and communicates, “할머니 이것봐. 우리마당에있는 꽃하고 똑같아.” (Look, Grandma! The book has flowers like the ones in our garden.)

While looking through an English-language book about construction vehicles, a child whose home language is Spanish points to a picture of a bulldozer and asks, “¿Qué es esto?” (What’s that?)

Broadening Examples

A child whose home language is Spanish pulls a copy of *I Am Enough* off a bookshelf and asks, “What’s this book?” They then sit and turn the pages, quietly narrating what they see in a mix of Spanish and English.

A child whose home language is Mandarin tells the teacher, “我要给你读本书” (I’m going to read to you), then picks up a book from the table and pretends to read it aloud in English, making up the story as they go along.

While playing school with other children, a child pretends to be a teacher writing on an easel, narrating what they are writing in English.



Foundation 3.2 Participating in Read-Aloud Activities

Discovering

Pay attention to an adult reading a short English-language book.

Developing

Engage in read-aloud activities with English-language books when the language is predictable or repetitive and communicate about the content of the books.

Broadening

Engage in read-aloud activities with English-language books and communicate about the content of the books.

Children may communicate about books using English, their home language, or gestures or other nonverbal responses.

Discovering Examples

- A child pays attention while a teacher reads an English-language picture book about gardens.
- A child listens to the teacher and looks at the ladybug puppet in the teacher’s hand and the pages of a book during a read-aloud of *The Grouchy Ladybug* in English.

Developing Examples

- A child counts, “One, two, three, four,” together with other children when the teacher invites the group to count the number of strawberries in a picture in an English-language book about gardens.
- After the teacher has read *The Grouchy Ladybug* in English several times, a child joins the teacher and peers in saying the repetitive lines aloud during a few of their favorite pages.

Broadening Examples

- While the teacher reads an English-language book about gardens, a child communicates, “There’s a garden in my neighborhood. It doesn’t have strawberries. It has peppers growing.”
- During a read-aloud of *The Grouchy Ladybug* in English, a child whose home language is Spanish communicates to a Spanish-speaking assistant teacher, “¡Es una mariquita mala! Siempre está enojada, como mi hermano.” (It’s a mean ladybug! She’s always mad, like my brother.)

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Foundation 3.2 Participating in Read-Aloud Activities

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

A child moves closer to see and touch props as the teacher introduces English vocabulary before reading an informational book aloud in English.

A child brings a teacher a favorite English-language book and then sits beside the teacher as the teacher reads aloud. The teacher gestures to the images that correspond to the text, such as pointing to a broom in an illustration while reading a sentence about using a broom, and the child attends to the pictures.

Developing Examples

While reading *There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly* in English with the class, a child joins in the motions for each phase. After the class has read together, the child moves their hands to represent a fly buzzing around.

A child whose home language is Mandarin imitates the motions the teacher makes to accompany an English-language story, such as stomping through grass. They communicate, “我在跺脚！” (I’m stomping!)

Broadening Examples

Pointing to an orca during a read-aloud of an English-language book about whales, a child calls out, “I like that one! It’s black and white.”

When the teacher asks, “What does the boy see?” during a small group read-aloud in English, a child with a disability whose home language is Spanish points to “moon” on their communication board, then points out the picture of the moon on the page in the book.



Sub-Strand — Comprehension and Analysis of Age-Appropriate Text

Foundation 3.3 Understanding Stories

Discovering

Use pictures or other supports (such as objects or gestures) to understand major characters and details in an English-language story.

Developing

Demonstrate understanding of a few major characters and events in an English-language story, including some details that are conveyed only through the words of the story, after experiencing it a few times.

Broadening

Demonstrate understanding of major characters and events in an English-language story, including details that are conveyed only through the words of the story, after experiencing it for the first time.

Ways the child may demonstrate understanding include answering questions in English or their home language, retelling in English or their home language, reenacting, responding with body language, and creating artwork.

Discovering Examples

■ A teacher tells an English-language fable about a lion and a mouse aloud using hand puppets. After the story, a child moves around on the floor with a peer pretending to be a mouse.

Developing Examples

■ After experiencing an English-language fable about a lion and a mouse a few times, a child communicates, “The mouse help.” The child makes a biting motion, referring to a plot point in the fable where the mouse chews through a rope to help the lion.

Broadening Examples

■ While experiencing an English-language fable about a lion and a mouse for the first time, a child communicates, “Now they can be friends,” referring to the end of the fable, when the mouse has been kind to the lion.

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Foundation 3.3 Understanding Stories

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

- During a read-aloud of an English-language book, a teacher points to a picture of a character in the book and says, “This is the boy’s grandma, his *abuela*.” A child points to the illustration and repeats, “Grandma.”

After telling a story in English with a felt board, the teacher asks a child in Spanish, “*Cuéntame, ¿qué pasó en el cuento?*” (Tell me, what happened in the story?) The child, whose home language is Spanish, points to the felt boat with a man on it and expresses, “*Había un hombre en un barco.*” (There was a man on a boat.)

A teacher reads an English-language story about an apple tree while the children glue pictures of apples to a large paper tree. A child participates, communicating “apple” when they pick up their picture after being prompted by the teacher.

Developing Examples

- After a teacher reads an English-language book a few times, the child communicates, “Him went on a plane,” describing an event in the story. The teacher replies, “The boy flew on an airplane. Where did he go?” The child responds, “His family,” accurately understanding that the boy went on a trip to visit his family.

After experiencing *Green Eggs and Ham* a few times, a child makes a face to indicate “Yuck!” when the teacher asks, “Do you like green eggs and ham?”

After a teacher has read *Full, Full, Full of Love* a few times, a child whose home language is Vietnamese communicates, “*Bạn đã cố lấy kẹo vì bạn đói bụng*” (The kid tried to get the candy because he was hungry) at the corresponding part of the story.

Broadening Examples

- After a teacher reads a book in English one-on-one with a child and asks, “Which part of the story was your favorite?” the child responds, “The grandma was funny. She said funny things to the boy.” The teacher replies, “I thought she was funny, too. How do you think the boy in the story felt about his grandma?”

During story time in English, a child with a disability whose home language is Spanish uses a card communication system to communicate that the character in the story feels lonely.

After story time in English, a child whose home language is Korean communicates, “*늑대가 나올때 좋아*” (I like the part when the wolf comes out), describing an event in the story, to their assistant teacher who also speaks Korean.



Foundation 3.4 Understanding Informational Text

Discovering

Use pictures or other supports (such as objects or gestures) to understand a few major details in an English-language informational text.

Developing

Demonstrate understanding of a few major details about an English-language informational text, including details that are conveyed only through the words of the text, after experiencing it a few times.

Broadening

Demonstrate understanding of a few major details about an English-language informational text, including details that are conveyed only through the words of the text, after experiencing it for the first time.

Ways the child may demonstrate understanding include asking or answering questions in English or their home language, labeling or describing in English or their home language, playing, responding with body language, and creating artwork.

Discovering Examples

■ After the group reads a few English-language books about animal habitats, children take turns grouping cut-out pictures of animals into columns of “sea animals” and “desert animals.” After observing a few children take their turns, a child picks up a picture of a coyote and places it under the “desert animals” column.

Developing Examples

■ After repeatedly experiencing the same English-language book about desert animals in group read-alouds, a child points to a page with a jackrabbit and communicates, “It’s fast. A fast rabbit,” stating a fact they have learned from the book.

Broadening Examples

■ During a read-aloud of an English-language book about desert animals that the teacher reads to the class for the first time, a child communicates with surprise, “Coyotes like to eat animals?” confirming a fact they have just learned from the book. The teacher replies, “Yes, coyotes do eat other animals, like birds and lizards. What other animals like to eat birds?” prompting the children to remember a fact they learned on a previous page of the book.

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Foundation 3.4 Understanding Informational Text

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

● During a read-aloud of an English-language book about emotions, a child imitates the facial expressions in the pictures in the book when the teacher points them out. The teacher supports the child by describing the pictures in the book, such as, "This girl is feeling angry."

A child brings an item from home that is connected to the pictures in an English-language book that was read aloud the previous day.

After the teacher reads to the group a book about animals, a child draws a picture resembling a turtle, one of the animals illustrated in the book.

Developing Examples

● During the third read-aloud of an English-language book about emotions, the teacher pauses on the page about feeling "angry" and asks, "What is something that makes you feel angry?" A child whose home language is Armenian turns to an Armenian-speaking peer and shares, "Երբ ընկերս վերցնում ա խաղալիքս" (When my friend takes my toy).

After the group reads *Families, Families, Families!* (a book representing different family structures using illustrations of animals) a few times, a child draws a picture of the family members they live with.

Broadening Examples

● After reading an English-language book on emotions to the group for the first time, the teacher asks, "What is something that makes you feel angry?" A child whose home language is Armenian turns to an Armenian-speaking peer and shares, "Երբ ընկերս վերցնում ա խաղալիքս" (When my friend takes my toy).

After experiencing a new English-language book about construction vehicles, a child plays with toy dump trucks and repeats a fact that was stated in the book.

During a read-aloud of *Fry Bread*, a child recognizes the ingredients being described and jumps in to communicate about some of the ingredients they use while cooking with their mother.

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Foundation 3.4 Understanding Informational Text

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

After observing a teacher read *Birds Make Nests*, a child coils a blanket on a chair to resemble a nest, then puts a few blocks in the middle, pretending they are eggs.

Developing Examples

After several read-alouds of an English-language book on stopping the spread of germs, a child shares a recent family experience, using words from the book such as “My mom cough. My dad cough. I wash my hands. I scrub.”

Broadening Examples

After a read-aloud of *Seeds Move!* the children plant seeds together. One segment of the book discusses seeds that travel by floating down rivers before taking root in the ground. A child rests their seeds on top of the dirt, then communicates, “A seed floats,” quoting from the book. The teacher responds to the child elaborating that some seeds float in water before they are planted in the earth.



Supporting Children’s Comprehension of Reading in English

English-language books provide rich learning opportunities for multilingual learners. As children’s understanding of English develops, they are able to participate more actively in English-language read-alouds and understand what is being read. In turn, experiencing English-language books helps support children’s growing vocabulary and grammar in English by providing exposure to rich language that includes complex grammar and increasingly sophisticated, topic-specific vocabulary. Teachers can support children’s comprehension of reading in English in the following ways:

- Teachers can select storybooks and informational books that contain pictures to support children’s understanding. In addition, teachers can select a wide variety of books, including books that represent children’s diverse backgrounds, rhyming books, and books with repetitive or predictable text.
- Teachers can introduce important new vocabulary before reading books to help the child follow along with the text.
- Teachers can incorporate the use of physical objects or pictures to support children’s understanding of what is being read. For example, teachers can invite children to examine images that match the text in a book.
- Teachers can ask questions about what has been read together. When children are first starting to use English, to encourage a child to practice the English they have learned, teachers might begin by asking questions that specifically focus on the English words the child already knows, such as who, what, and where questions. As children progress in their use of spoken English they will be able to express their thoughts more completely, and teachers can adjust their questions to allow them to do so.
- Children may understand the English being read to them before they are able to express their own reactions, opinions, or explanations in English. Allow children to demonstrate their understanding of a book in ways that do not require speaking in English. This includes drawing and reenacting, as well as communicating about the book in their home language.



Strand: 4.0 — Writing

Sub-Strand — Writing as Communication

Foundation 4.1 Writing to Represent Words or Ideas

Discovering

Write scribbles to represent words and ideas in English.

Developing

Write letter-like scribbles to represent words and ideas in English, with adult support.

Broadening

Write a few recognizable letters to represent words and ideas in English independently.

Children may use drawing or dictating in addition to early writing to represent words and ideas.

Discovering Examples

■ A child makes small, controlled scribbles. A teacher asks, “What did you write?” The child communicates, “Happy birthday,” while tracking what they wrote with their finger.

Developing Examples

■ A child asks the teacher for help writing “Happy birthday.” The teacher prints the words on a piece of paper, saying each letter one by one and demonstrating how to form each letter. The child attempts to mimic the teacher’s motions, producing lines that resemble letters but are not yet clearly recognizable, such as two vertical lines for the “H.”

Broadening Examples

■ A child asks the teacher for help writing “Happy birthday.” The teacher prints the words on a piece of paper and says each letter out loud one by one. The child slowly prints each letter as the teacher says it, writing some letters backward or illegibly.

(continued on following page)

■● Matching icons indicate alignment of examples across age-ranges



(continued)

Foundation 4.1 Writing to Represent Words or Ideas

Discovering

Developing

Broadening

Discovering Examples

● During a unit on animals, the class makes a collaborative book for which each child creates a page about a favorite animal. A child draws a picture resembling a lizard, then scribbles at the top of the picture where a title would go, communicating, “Lizard.” The scribbles are not yet recognizable as letters but are distinct from the drawing.

A child holds a note that has a small paragraph of English text written by the teacher. Underneath the writing, the child draws squiggly lines, occasionally separated by spaces, to resemble English words in the form of a paragraph.

While playing restaurant a child scribbles on a piece of paper, pretending to take a peer’s food order, hands the paper to another child, and communicates, “Eggs, thank you.”

Developing Examples

● During a unit on animals, the class makes a collaborative book for which each child creates a page about a favorite animal. A child draws a picture resembling a lizard, then makes deliberate letter-like marks using straight and curved lines at the top of the picture where a title would go, communicating, “Lizard.”

A child whose home language is Mandarin draws a picture of a heart for their grandmother. The child points to their curly letter-like marks underneath and explains, “This says ‘heart,’” then makes straight, boxy marks under those and explains, “Now it says, ‘我爱你, 奶奶。’” (Now it says, “I love you, Grandma.”)

During a group vote, a child looks at samples written by the teacher and copies “N-O.” The teacher assists by showing the child the order and direction of the lines that make up the letters. The child hands the card to the teacher to cast their vote.

Broadening Examples

● During a unit on animals, the class makes a collaborative book for which each child creates a page about a favorite animal. A child draws a picture resembling a lizard, then asks the teacher for help writing “Lizard” at the top. The teacher prints the word on a piece of paper, then guides the child letter by letter in copying the word. The child writes a recognizable “L,” “I,” and “D,” and makes slanted lines that closely resemble the remaining letters.

A child who is blind uses a braille to braille “f” for *fall* when the children are drawing and writing about their favorite seasons.

With help from a teacher with spelling, a child whose home language is Spanish writes “MAMA” in blue crayon. Then they write “MAMA” in green crayon underneath and explain that the blue is Spanish, and the green is English.



Foundation 4.2 Writing Own Name

Discovering

Write marks to represent their own name in the English alphabet.

Developing

Copy their own name in the English alphabet.

Broadening

Write their first name independently in the English alphabet nearly correctly.

Many children enter preschool with a developing ability to write their names in the writing system of their home language. Children whose home language uses an alphabet similar to the English alphabet (such as Spanish or Tagalog) should be encouraged to continue using specific letters or markings that do not occur in English (such as é or ñ) if those markings occur in their names.

Discovering Examples

- A child writes squiggles resembling letters, then points to the squiggles and communicates their name, “Narineh.”
- A child named Malik uses chalk to write a circle and lines on the sidewalk. A teacher asks, “Malik, what have you written?” The child replies, “Malik.”

Developing Examples

- After the teacher has written “NARINEH” at the top of Narineh’s drawing, the child picks up a marker and carefully copies “N-A-R-I-N-E-H” below.
 - A child traces their name, “M-A-L-I-K,” in dark blue chalk after a teacher has written the letters in light yellow chalk on the ground for the child to trace.
- A child uses an adaptive keyboard to copy the letters of their name, “A-M-A-R,” that the teacher has taped to the child’s lunch box.

Broadening Examples

- A child writes their name, “NARINEH,” on their own at the top of their drawing.
- A child uses chalk to write their name, “MALIK,” on their own on the sidewalk after a teacher suggests, “Let’s see you write your name.”

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(continued)

Foundation 4.2 Writing Own Name

Discovering

Discovering Examples

A child whose home language is Arabic makes a series of straight and slightly curved lines in a tray of flour using their finger, then communicates, “كَتَبْتُ اسْمِي” (I wrote my name.)

Developing

Developing Examples

A child signs a card to their grandmother by bringing the card to their cubby and looking at their name on the cubby label while copying “Alex Zheng.” The child writes the letter “Z” backward, and a few of the lowercase letters (such as “e” and “g”) are written as scribbles.

While sitting on their carpet square labeled with their name, a child traces their name, “YICHEN,” with their finger.

Broadening

Broadening Examples

A child writes their name, “MEi,” on their own at the top of a painting, with the “M” sideways.

A child uses a dot marker to form “DAE-HYN” on their own, forgetting the “U” in Dae-Hyun, their name.



Supporting Children’s Early Writing in English

All children need teacher support and planned instruction to learn to write. By incorporating writing in authentic, meaningful ways throughout the day, teachers can show children the value of writing to convey ideas. Several factors impact the ways in which the ELD foundations in Writing apply to an individual child. These factors include the child’s developmental readiness to write, their current knowledge of writing in their home language, and the similarity between writing in their home language and in English. Teachers can support children’s early writing in English by doing the following:

- Teachers can support children’s English writing by providing access to English print, such as books, alphabet posters, or handmade letter cards, and providing tools to make letters, such as English alphabet stamps or keyboards.
- Teachers can provide children with authentic opportunities to express themselves in English-language writing, such as by contributing to a collaborative class book or writing a card to a peer in English.
- Children who are learning to write in a home language that uses an alphabet similar to the English alphabet (such as Spanish or Tagalog) may demonstrate skills and knowledge that are at or beyond the Broadening level of the ELD foundations for Writing. Teachers can highlight the similarities and differences between the two written languages to the child and encourage them to use writing to represent thoughts and ideas in both their home language and English.
- Teachers can provide additional support to children whose home language uses a writing system that differs significantly from the English alphabet. For example, a child who is learning to write in a script such as the Arabic alphabet or Chinese characters will need increased support when learning to write English letters, such as repeated modeling and direct instruction in forming letters line by line.



Glossary

African American English. A variety of English spoken by some Black Americans that has its own grammar, vocabulary, and rules of pronunciation. African American English may also be known as African American Vernacular English or Black English.

American Sign Language (ASL). The sign language commonly used in the United States and much of Canada. Many different sign languages (such as Mexican Sign Language and Nicaraguan Sign Language) exist throughout the world. Sign languages have their own vocabulary and grammar; they are not “signed versions” of spoken languages.

augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) device. A tool used by individuals with impairments in speech-language production and/or comprehension to improve functional daily living. AAC uses a variety of techniques and tools, including, but not limited to, picture communication boards and speech-generating devices.

autism spectrum disorder. Autism means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.

Chicano English. A variety of English spoken by Mexican Americans and other Latinx people in California and the southwest that has its own grammar, vocabulary, and rules of pronunciation. Chicano English is different from mixing Spanish and English while speaking (see **translanguaging**) and is spoken both by people who are multilingual and by those who speak only English. Chicano English may also be known as Mexican American English.

code-switching. The use of two or more languages within a single phrase, sentence, or conversation. Code-switching is a skill that falls under the more encompassing term **translanguaging**.

cognate. A word in one language that is the same as or similar to a word in another language due to having the same origins (for example, the English word “accident” is a cognate of the Spanish word “*accidente*”). Recognizing cognates between languages is one way children can leverage or use their linguistic resources as they develop multilingual capacities.



Deaf. Deafness means a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, that adversely affects a child’s educational performance.

dual language program. A program that provides language learning and instruction in English and another language, in which home language development and English language development (ELD) are promoted and supported with a systematic, intentional educational plan.

dyslexia. Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

false cognate. A word in one language that appears similar to a word in another language but whose meaning does not have the same origins (for example, the Spanish word “*ropa*” [clothing] sounds like the English word “rope,” but the meaning of the two words is not related).

General American English. A term that refers to a variety of English not specifically associated with one particular geographic area or demographic. Often used in educational settings, General American English may also be known as Standard American English or Standard English.

grammar. The rules of a language that govern the construction of words, phrases, and sentences to communicate meaning.

home language. A language spoken in a child’s family or home.

literacy. The ability to communicate through reading and writing.

morphology. Rules of a language for combining or changing parts of words to convey meaning. For example, in English, verb endings change to indicate tense, as in *dances*, *danced*, or *dancing*.

multilingual learner. A child who is learning two or more languages at the same time, or a child who is learning English while continuing to develop their home language.



narrative. An account of events or a story about something that has happened. Young children’s narratives often relate to their personal experiences.

phonological awareness. Sensitivity to the sound structure of spoken language.

speech or language impairment. Speech or language impairment means a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a child’s educational performance.

syntax. The rules governing the order of words in phrases and sentences in a language. Every language has different rules of syntax. For example, in English, descriptive phrases often put an adjective before a noun (for example, “a black cat”). However, in Spanish, adjectives usually come after a noun (for example, “*un gato negro*,” in which the words translate literally to “a cat black”).

translanguaging. A multilingual individual’s use of their full language repertoire—all of their knowledge about language—by drawing from all of their languages without separation. Translanguaging encompasses many skills and behaviors, such as code-switching, that allow a multilingual individual to use language fluidly.

variety of English. There are many varieties of English spoken within the United States and across the world, which are sometimes called dialects. These varieties include, but are not limited to, General American English, African American English, and Chicano English. Speakers of different varieties of English can understand each other most of the time, but varieties of English have different grammatical rules and vocabulary. All varieties of English are valid and valuable for interacting with family and community members as well as in the classroom.

vocabulary. The words within a language. Vocabulary may also be used to describe the words an individual child understands or uses.



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Appendix

The below table provides a guide to pronouncing the sounds indicated in the examples of the Language and Literacy domain. The symbols in this table represent common sounds in English. Many of these sounds also occur in other languages.

English Phenomes

Symbol	As heard in...	Symbol	As heard in...
/ā/	angel, rain	/g/	gift, dog
/ă/	cat, apple	/h/	happy, hat
/ē/	eat, seed	/j/	jump, bridge
/ĕ/	echo, red	/l/	lip, fall
/ī/	island, light	/m/	mother, home
/ĭ/	in, sit	/n/	nose, on
/ō/	oatmeal, bone	/p/	pencil, pop
/ö/	octopus, mom	/r/	rain, care
/ŭ/	up, hum	/s/	soup, face
/ōō/	oodles, moon	/t/	time, cat
/öö/	put, book	/v/	vine, of
/ə/	above, sofa	/wh/	what, why
/oi/, /oy/	oil, boy	/w/	wet, wind
/ou/, /ow/	out, cow	/y/	yes, beyond
/aw/, /ô/	awful, caught	/z/	zoo, because
/är/	car, far	/th/	thing, health
/ôr/	four, or	/th/	this, brother
/ûr/	her, bird, turn	/sh/	shout, machine
/b/	baby, crib	/zh/	pleasure, vision
/k/	cup, stick	/ch/	children, scratch
/d/	dog, end	/ng/	ring, finger
/f/	phone, golf		

Source

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