



LITERACY FOR ALL: PART 1 — EXPECTATIONS

WHAT IS A STANDARD?

The content of this article was developed from information from the Iowa Department of Education's website: www.corecurriculum.iowa.gov

Every parent has expectations of what his or her child should or should not do. We expect them to look both ways before crossing the street or to not throw sand at the playground.

What about the classroom? What do we expect them to learn in school? This is exactly what a standard is — **an expectation of what a student should know and be able to do**. Standards provide a roadmap for parents, teachers, and students.

Standards:

- Do not tell teachers **how** to teach.
- Do lay out the knowledge and skills students should have so that teachers can build the best lessons and environments for their classrooms.
- Do help students and parents by setting clear and realistic goals for success.

Standards are a first step — a key building block — in providing our young people with a high-quality education.

Standards are a first step — a key building block — in providing our young people with a high-quality education. To truly be effective, they must be accompanied by quality instruction and authentic assessments.

What literacy standards guide Iowa schools?

The State Board of Education voted to adopt the Common Core Standards as part of the Iowa Core which all school districts and accredited nonpublic schools are required to fully implement in grades 9-12 by July 1, 2012 and grades K-8 by the 2014-2015 school year.

What is the Iowa Core?

The Iowa Core provides a guide to delivering challenging and meaningful content to students that prepares them for success in life. The Iowa Core identifies essential concepts and skills for kindergarten through 12th grade in literacy,

mathematics, science, social studies, and 21st century skills. It also includes direction for teachers regarding effective instruction and assessment. It takes learning to a deeper level by moving students beyond superficial knowledge to deep conceptual and procedural knowledge. It also enhances student engagement by emphasizing interesting, robust, and relevant learning experiences.

Full implementation is accomplished when the district or school is able to provide evidence that an ongoing process is in place to ensure that each and every student is learning the essential concepts and skills of the Iowa Core. A school that has fully implemented the Iowa Core is engaged in an ongoing process of data gathering and analysis, decision making, identifying actions, and assessing impact around alignment and professional development focused on content, instruction and assessment. The school is fully engaged in a continuous improvement process that specifically targets improved student learning.

What does it offer Iowa students?

The intent of the Iowa Core is to ensure that all Iowa students have access to the challenging and meaningful curriculum that prepares them for success in postsecondary education and the emerging global economy.

How does this apply to my special needs student?

The Standards should be read as allowing for the widest possible range of students to participate fully from the outset and as permitting appropriate accommodations to ensure maximum participation of students with special education needs. For example, for students with disabilities **reading** should allow for the use of Braille, screen-reader technology, or

continued on page 2

The Parent Training and Information Center of Iowa exists to serve families of children with disabilities. The PTI of Iowa is a statewide service of ASK (Access for Special Kids) Resource Center, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping families of children with disabilities.

The contents of this newsletter were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. The contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government. Products and services described herein are not endorsed by ASK or the U.S. Department of Education.

continued from page 1

other assistive devices, while **writing** should include the use of a scribe, computer, or speech-to-text technology. In a similar vein, **speaking** and **listening** should be interpreted broadly to include sign language.

On each goal page of the IEP there are statements of both the State of Iowa Core Content Standard and District level Benchmark(s) related to the stated academic skill. This is used to compare a student's current level of performance with the grade level expectation. However, IEP goals are not limited to academics alone. They may include other goals such as behavior or social skills. Some of these goals may not have a direct link back to the Iowa Core.

What does it offer Iowa educators?

The intent of the Iowa Core is to provide a tool for Iowa school districts and educators to use in assuring that essential subject matter is being taught and essential knowledge and skills are being learned. The Iowa Core also provides a foundation

for school districts to implement graduation requirements more effectively and meaningfully.

What is Not Covered by the Standards?

The Standards set grade-specific guidelines but do not define the intervention methods or materials necessary to support students who are well below or well above grade-level expectations. No set of grade-specific standards can fully reflect the great variety in abilities, needs, learning rates, and achievement levels of students in any given classroom. However, the Standards do provide clear signposts along the way to the goal of educational options after high school and career readiness for all students.

How can I find out more about the Iowa Core?

You can find more information about how the Iowa Core Curriculum works and what the specific grade level standards are by going to the Iowa Department of Education's website. <http://www.corecurriculum.iowa.gov>

Learning Disabilities Association of Iowa (LDA-IA)

LDA-IA IS:

- a voluntary, non-profit organization of parents, professionals, and other interested persons who are dedicated to improving the lives of children, youth, and adults with learning disabilities.
- a state affiliate of The Learning Disabilities Association of America.

OUR GOALS ARE TO:

- encourage an understanding of children, youth, and adults with LD.
- provide information about learning disabilities to parents, teachers, administrators, and other interested individuals.
- encourage further development of available and appropriate educational programs for all students with LD.
- encourage development of comprehensive college and university programs for teacher education in learning disabilities.
- promote vocational and career education.
- develop affiliate chapters throughout the state to provide local support to students with LD and their families.
- *serve as advocates for the rights of children, youth, and adults with LD.*



MEMBERSHIP IN LDA AND LDA-IA IS ONLY \$30/YR!

See www.lda-ia.org for details.

LDA-IA
5665 GREENDALE RD., STE. D
JOHNSTON, IA 50131

Phone: 515-280-8558
Toll-free IA: 888-690-5324
Fax: 515-243-1902
E-mail: kathylda@askresource.org

HAPPILY BUILDING SNOW FORTS

by Karen Thompson, Executive Director, ASK Resource Center

According to *Really Important Stuff My Kids Have Taught Me* by Cynthia Copeland Lewis, **"It feels a lot colder when you're shoveling snow than when you're building a snow fort"**. A dear friend gave me the book as a gift a number of years ago. It has been on my desk ever since, and I pick it up frequently when I need a little perspective. Isn't that what kids are for, after all? I hope that this issue of *The PTI Press* provides you with some new perspectives as well. Engaging yourself and your children in a fun-filled, natural learning environment is one of the best ways to reinforce the foundation needed for success. And, literacy, success, and snow forts, for that matter, are built differently by each one of us.

I have been with ASK for five months now. I am so honored to be working with so many passionate people! Parents and service providers alike have a clear dedication to the kids whose lives they touch, and to continuing to advance disability work for the benefit of those who will flourish because of it.

While I have met many of you and learned your stories; few have heard much about me. Disability advocacy has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. My dad suffered a brain injury from a massive stroke when he was 32. I was 13 months old. We were told he would not talk, walk, or regain any level of independence. On the contrary, he walks, talks, drives, and to this day lives quite independently. He is happy to chart a course to prove a person wrong any time it is suggested that there might be something he cannot do.

I was diagnosed with Dyslexia at age 7. Like my dad, was told I "could not". I "could not" go to college and "would not likely" be able to read fluently or graduate high school. I do read slowly, **AND** fluently, and I graduated college with honors and without supports. Thanks be to my elementary Special Education teacher, Mrs. Belamy, who made reading fun! Now it is my kids' turns. Both of my children have ADHD. While they may approach learning a bit differently; they know there are plenty of significant achievements ahead of them.

I served in volunteer positions working with persons with disabilities throughout high school and college.

My senior thesis project studied various aspects of the ways our society reacts to the visibly disabled. I began my professional career in Nebraska working with adults with disabilities in Supported Employment. Since then, I have worked predominately in counseling, case management, and program administration for Link Associates, House of Mercy, and the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH). For the last 6 years, I have directed the Sexually Transmitted Disease Program for IDPH. While the subject matter was a bit of a detour from what had been my main focus; the issues facing the populations I was serving remained strikingly constant. I was still serving people who had fallen through the cracks of a system that is meant to protect them and help them succeed. My time with IDPH taught me a great deal about how to effectively develop and execute results based programs. However, I always knew I would eventually return home to working with persons who are differently abled – like me. I am thrilled that ASK has given me the opportunity to build more snow forts!



OUT OF IDEAS?

Attention! Parents and Educators!

If you're having TROUBLE resolving DIFFERENCES over educational services and issues, try using a RESOLUTION FACILITATOR to get things going again.



An OBJECTIVE third party can help SMOOTH out the rough spots and SPEED you towards a SUCCESSFUL outcome for all involved.

CALL the ASK Family Resource Center for more INFORMATION

(515) 243-1713



www.iepquality.iowa.gov

Iowa's Guidance For Quality IEPs

For more information contact:

Sharon Hawthorne

Sharon.hawthorne@iowa.gov

515-281-5461

Or

Kiersten Hensley

Kiersten.hensley@iowa.gov

515-281-4123

Topics on IEP Website Include:

Foundations of Iowa's IEP

The IEP Team

Initial IEPs

IEP Reviews

Reevaluations

Amending the IEP

IEP Requirements for 3-5 yr olds

Interim IEPs

IEPs for Private School Children

Adding New Goal Area

Secondary Transition

Assistive Technology

Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Blind or Visually Impaired

Least Restrictive Environment

PLAAFP

Measurable Annual Goals

Progress Monitoring Procedures

Special Education Services

Services, Supports and Activities

Districtwide Assessments

Prior Written Notice

Extended School Year Services

Autism and ASD

Medicaid

Prohibition on Mandatory Medication

PROMISES YET DELIVERED

by Martin J. Ikeda, Ph. D., Director of Special Education and Chief of the Bureau of Student and Family Support Services, Iowa Department of Education

This is first in a series of articles on work being done at the Iowa Department of Education.

The Civil Rights legislation of the 1960s crafted a promise: equal opportunity to life outcomes regardless of race, gender, national origin, and disability status. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) offered financial support for implementing programs for students with disabilities determined eligible for services. While we have done well identifying students as disabled, meeting IDEA timelines, and providing constellations of services to meet needs, we have not yet been able to fully deliver on the promise of equal life opportunities.

The Iowa Department of Education's Bureau of Student and Family Support Services (SFSS) at the Iowa Department of Education is embarking on the ambitious journey of eliminating achievement gaps for students with disabilities by 2020. The State Board of Education has similar goals for all students in Iowa, and many school and AEA administrators have agreed that the work for us now as a system, is delivering equal opportunities for students with disabilities to access competitive employment or post-secondary education.

To that end, there are work teams in SFSS charged with ensuring day-to-day operations like data reporting, finance, and legal matters, are addressed so that Iowa can keep the funding flowing into the state to support students with disabilities. For 2011-2012, work priorities in SFSS include understanding services to students with Autism, addressing instruction in reading and mathematics for students with IEPs, developing more sensitive and efficient

data for understanding school climate, understanding mental health challenges, and providing transition experiences to create more equitable opportunities for students with disabilities upon graduation.

Efforts in literacy include: supporting teachers of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities with reading instruction (Emily Thatcher in partnership with the University of Northern Iowa); teaching diagnostic and instructional strategies to teachers of students with disabilities (Rhonda McFadden and Sandy Nelson in collaboration with Great Prairie AEA with additional support from Davenport Community Schools); and developing progress monitoring tools better aligned to grade level content and achievement standards (Michelle Hosp).

The DE appreciates the challenges that families of children with disabilities face, and as Bureau Chief, I respect the contributions of the Parent Educators and the Parent Training Information Center. I am committed to working with all partners in education, to taking 10 steps, one step each year, resulting in eliminating the achievement gap in 10 years. The actions taken this year include: (a) communicating a vision, (b) meeting with parents and school staff to understand challenges, (c) reshaping the work of the bureau and how consultants partner and are evaluated, and (d) engaging in conversations in the Bureau and the Department on what indicators will be used to judge our progress.

Will it be an easy task? No. Will we get there? I don't know. I do know this: your kids deserve our best effort, and that, I can give you.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ADOLESCENT LITERACY AND OLDER STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

*A Report from the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD)**

NJCLD advocates for effective reading and writing instruction for struggling older students, especially those with learning disabilities (LD). This report describes the adolescent literacy problem (grades 4 to 12), its consequences, and contributing factors. Guiding principles for assessment, instruction, and professional development, as well as recommendations for short-term and future consideration, are addressed.

Literacy is a complex set of skills that includes the interrelated processes of reading and writing required within varied socio-cultural contexts. Reading requires decoding, accurate and fluent word recognition, and comprehension at the word, phrase, sentence, and text levels. Writing requires automatic letter formation and/or keyboarding, accurate and fluent spelling, sentence construction, and the ability to compose a variety of different text structures with coherence and cohesion.

The Problem

Significant numbers of adolescents do not read and/or write at levels sufficient for meeting the demands of the 21st century. Emphasis on early reading and writing alone is insufficient for the ultimate goal of improved literacy for all. A similar investment must be made in reading and writing instruction for older students. Evidence shows that intensive, high-quality literacy instruction can help struggling students acquire the skills they need to succeed in high school and beyond.

The Consequences of Literacy Problems for Adolescents with LD

Students with LD are often inadequately prepared for the academic challenges presented from grade four to post-secondary settings. They often drop out of high school at higher rates than the general population. Low achievement in literacy correlates with high rates of poverty and unemployment. For the older student with LD, opportunity for intervention decreases markedly

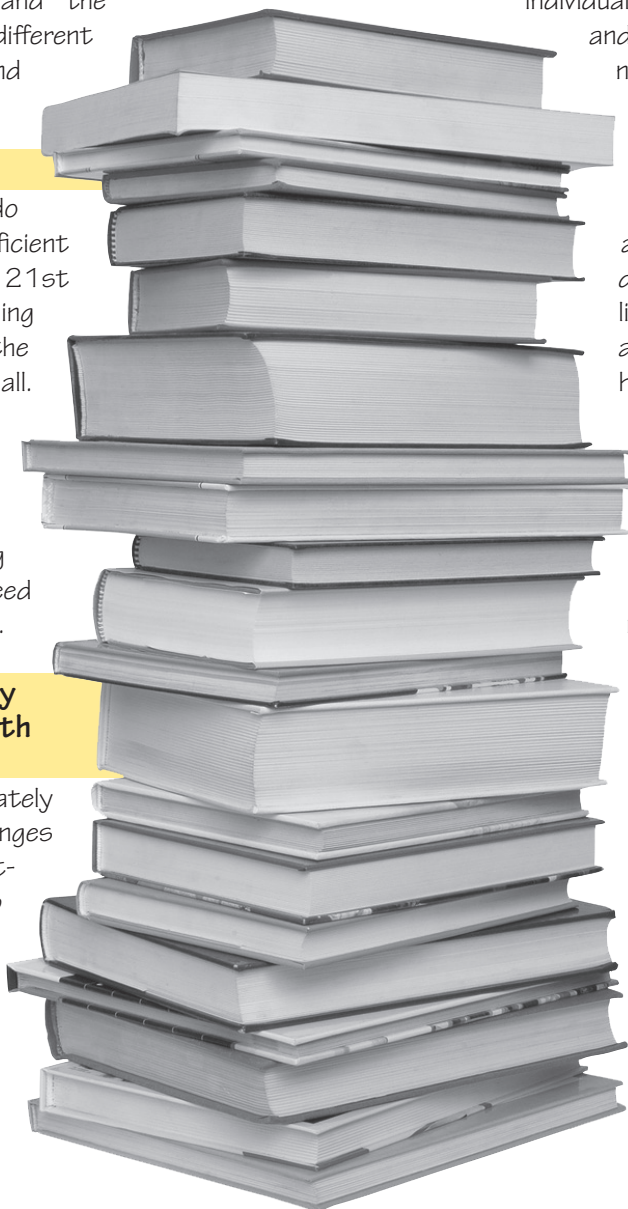
when the student exits the public school system. Moreover, the 25 fastest growing professions have greater than average literacy demands while the fastest declining professions have lower than average literacy demands.

Contributing Factors

Adolescents with LD often have persistent receptive and expressive oral language deficits that become more pronounced as demands increase in areas such as vocabulary, content specific knowledge, organization and retrieval of semantic information, basic and complex syntax, and higher-order semantic processing. Students with LD often have difficulty maintaining motivation and persistence at the levels necessary for academic success. They may have limited awareness of their individual pattern of strengths and challenges and the remediation and accommodations needed to support their progress.

Students with LD whose native language or culture differs from the language of literacy instruction have additional challenges. It is essential to distinguish between students whose limited linguistic proficiency is due to a language difference from those who have a concomitant LD.

Many adolescents with LD transition to secondary education with under-developed language, literacy, and executive functioning skills, and struggle to meet grade-level expectations. As the demands of the curriculum increase and expectations escalate, gaps in literacy skills between students with and without LD widen; this problem is most extreme for students who have not received services earlier in their educational careers. The primary years serve as a preparatory springboard for higher grade levels when students are expected to think more abstractly and successfully access language-based information and skills requiring increased levels of integration across content areas.



continued from page 5

Educational context may contribute to the difficulties faced by adolescents with LD. Traditional school organizational structures may not be designed to accommodate the continuum of instructional services required to adequately address the literacy needs of adolescents with LD.

Guiding Principles for Assessment

Assessment should lead to appropriate instructional planning, whether or not an individual student meets eligibility criteria for special education services. Assessment for the older student requires a team-based, comprehensive approach that often necessitates the collection of multiple forms of information, including standardized tests, qualitative analysis of student work samples, observation, and self-report measures. A Response to Intervention (RTI) approach may provide data for the purposes of both instructional planning and eligibility for special education services (NJCLD, 2005). Assessment should be conducted by professionals with expertise in adolescent learning; individualized to address each student's cognitive, academic, social, behavioral, motivational, and/or emotional needs; sensitive to linguistic and cultural factors; and responsive to the student with late-emerging problems.

Guiding Principles for Instruction

Literacy instruction at the middle and secondary levels requires a continuum of services that is differentiated according to the individual learning needs of each student. The principle of universal design addresses this need through the use of inclusive instructional strategies that benefit a broad range of learner characteristics and abilities. Students who continue to struggle — whether with reading or written expression — need targeted instruction at differentiated levels of intensity to address specific difficulties. Some students, particularly those with LD, require sustained and intensive combinations of classroom instruction, remediation, and accommodations that are individualized, explicit, systematic, and relevant.

Guiding Principles for Professional Development

Professional development is pivotal for creating informed learning environments, providing quality instruction, and developing the expertise needed in schools. While special educators and other specialists are primarily responsible for remediation, both general education and special education teachers must be accountable for the development of literacy skills that are critical to the acquisition of content area knowledge.

It is essential that teacher preparation programs include the explicit teaching of what is known about the science of reading and writing so that educators acquire the knowledge and skills critical to effective literacy instruction. The precise design and delivery of ongoing professional development should be

differentiated according to professional expertise, experience, and responsibility.

All educators require the knowledge, skills, and attitudes identified as critical for literacy instruction, as well as an understanding of digital literacy and its impact in the general and special education setting. Professionals responsible for assessment, diagnosis, or delivery of remediation require a thorough understanding of language, reading, and writing development and disabilities as well as evidence-based instructional practices.

Recommendations

This NJCLD paper addresses critical issues related to the literacy needs of adolescents with LD and advocates for effective reading and writing instruction for these students. To improve adolescent literacy, key areas requiring attention include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Research initiatives and implementation of best practices
 - A. Assessment;
 - B. Use of RTI and other alternative approaches for the purposes of identification, instructional planning, and progress monitoring;
 - C. Instructional approaches;
 - D. Use of universal design to meet print and digital literacy demands;
 - E. Learner profiles.
2. Professional development planning and practices
 - A. Current science and research-informed practices;
 - B. Differentiation based on professional roles and responsibilities.
3. Educational priorities, policies, and practices
 - A. Organizational restructuring;
 - B. Continuum of services;
 - C. Shared responsibility for literacy instruction.

** This is an official document of the NJCLD. To read more about the work of the 13 organizations that comprise the NJCLD and to download the full report, please visit www.ldonline.org/njclld.*



LITERACY FOR ALL: PART 2 — TOOLBOX

PARENTS ARE THE FIRST TEACHERS

by Kathy Specketer, State Coordinator, Learning Disabilities Association of Iowa

Young children develop literacy skills at different rates. This can cause concern if your toddler or preschooler doesn't seem to be progressing as quickly as other children, especially if there is a history of reading problems in your family. You can do a great deal to prepare your child for the world of words.

As a parent, you are your child's first and best teacher. Like some parents, you may not feel qualified to teach your child. Actually, there is very little you can do wrong -except not take an interest in his or her learning.



Learning to Read

More than 20 years of research has identified 3 key skill areas necessary for learning to read:

- **Language Awareness:**
Knowing and manipulating sounds heard in words
Knowing word meanings (vocabulary) and how words in sentences express ideas
- **Print Knowledge:**
Identifying the names and sounds of letters
Understanding that letters make words and words make sentences
- **Emergent Writing:**
Knowing that writing letters and words communicate ideas
Knowing how to form letters and combine them to form words
Understanding that text goes from left to right on the page

Beginning at birth, you can turn everyday activities into learning opportunities. You can promote a love of learning that is enhanced as the child grows and enters school. Here is some basic information to get you started:



Reading is Teaching

From the day your child is born, reading should be a daily activity. When you read to your child, they learn about written language, tone of voice, facial expressions and that reading is a fun thing to do.

- It is not too early to read to your infant. It introduces the sounds and rhythms of language and gradually teaches the meaning of words in their world.

- As they become interested in looking at the pictures and illustrations, use the opportunity to discuss and expand their knowledge. To teach awareness of letters and words, show them the shapes of letters and point out simple words. Follow text with your finger to show the left-to-right direction of words on the page.



Talking is Teaching

During the preschool years your child's brain is developing very quickly. Even though your daily activities may seem boring to you, to your child they provide a view into the world.

Engage your child in discussions and expand his knowledge as much as possible. When he connects words and language to daily experiences, he is likely to seek out more exciting information to satisfy his normal curiosity.



Working/Playing is Teaching

When your child is in the kitchen with you, ask him to taste, smell, feel and describe the different foods. Talk to him while you prepare meals and answer his questions. Be sure to ask him what he thinks the answer is, which will stimulate his creativity.



First Teacher Siouxland Can Help

With all the information that is available to parents, deciding how to work with your preschooler can be overwhelming. First Teacher Siouxland (www.firstteachersiouxland.org) is a research-based program designed to help parents and teachers to ensure that 4 and 5 year old children are developing the skills necessary to become successful readers. First Teacher Siouxland provides parents and teachers with information, materials and support. First Teacher Siouxland will provide you with any of the materials posted on their website, FREE of charge! Simply email the Project Coordinator, Eileen Lord at eileen@firstteachersiouxland.com or the Learning Disabilities Association of Iowa at kathylda@askresource.org.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Reprinted with permission from the Iowa Reading Association www.iowareading.org

Students do better if they can see a purpose in what they are doing. This is particularly true of boys. Where a typical girl may be more willing to “do school”, boys often become frustrated when they cannot see how the reading relates to anything important in their lives. Help your students find purpose in their assignments by connecting the story or topic to their lives.

Ask if your student has ever faced a problem similar to the one the main character in the book is facing. For example, has he or she ever had to make a hard decision or deal with a disappointment? Is the main character like him or her, or totally different? How so? If the book is nonfiction, ask your child how the information he or she is reading compares to other facts known about this topic. Is this new information? Does it conflict with what he or she has thought about this topic before? How might this new information be used?



Help Us Go Green (and save some green)



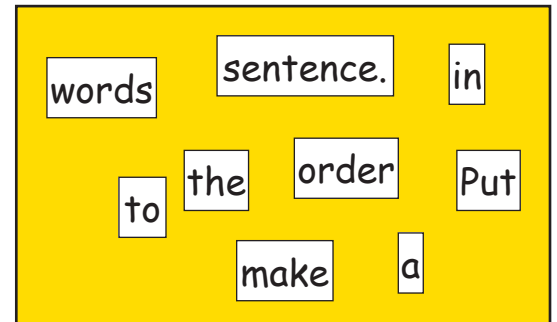
If you are interested in receiving
the newsletter electronically,
send an email to info@askresource.org
or call 800-450-8667.

ON THE HOME FRONT: READING BOOKS WITH REPEATED LINES

The following article is reprinted with permission from Center for Disability Studies in Literacy Language and Learning University of Northern Iowa.

A great way to help a child recognize frequently used words is by reading books with repeated lines and doing activities related to the book. You can find a list of books that repeat at: <http://www.aacintervention.com/repeat1.htm>. Most of the books on this list can be found at your local library. Here are some activity ideas:

- **Read the book together one time through.**
If your child uses a switch, record the repeated line on a switch, for your child to hit when the repeated line is read.
- **Write or type one of the repeated lines in large print.** Cut out individual words and shuffle them. Help your child put the words back in the correct order. Check the book to make sure you are right. Then glue the words to a sheet of paper and draw a picture to go with the sentence.
- **Make up your own version of the repeated book, using experiences from the child's life.**
- **Ask your child's teacher for suggestions of titles of repeated line books that are appropriate for his/her age and reading level.**



If you need other modifications to help your child be successful in this activity, please don't hesitate to call the CDSL!!!

We will travel throughout **IOWA** to present to YOU!

PTI Trainings Include:

The Six Principles of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Skills for Effective Parent Advocacy

R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

Creating Solutions

The Journey to Adulthood: What Every Parent Needs to Know

Getting and Keeping the First Job

Contact us @ 800-450-8667 to set up a presentation.

HAVING FUN WITH LEARNING

by Alison Bell, Iowa Statewide Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC)

It has been said in a variety of ways that **"Families are a child's first and most influential teacher."** Our children learn important skills and knowledge both at school and at home. How can we partner with schools so children can achieve their goals, develop their full potential, and participate fully in their community?

Family routines and special events provide a rich backdrop for important and meaningful learning. Children need many meaningful experiences to develop background knowledge. Through "hands on, minds on" experiences we develop important knowledge about how the world works. We continue to develop background knowledge throughout our lives. We know children who have had rich experiences have an easier time learning to read, develop math skills, and understand science concepts. Making learning a part of your family routine can help your child develop important background knowledge for life-long learning.

Family routines that support learning include:

CONVERSATIONS

Talking with your child may be one of the most important things you can do to support learning. Giving your child many opportunities to talk with you will develop vocabulary, social skills, and reflective thinking. Talk with your child about things he or she is interested in (e.g.). Make comments about your child's interests. Ask open-ended questions to find out what your child is thinking. Follow your child's lead. Listen carefully for opportunities to start conversations: sports, friends, food, a special TV program may all offer a starting point for conversation. Have fun! We all learn best when we are engaged in activities that we enjoy.

MEAL PREPARATION

In addition to talking time during family meals, cooking together can provide valuable learning experiences. Children practice literacy skills when they read recipes, information on food

packages, and learn new ingredient vocabulary. They learn math skills while measuring and selecting appropriate cooking utensils. They learn science when observing the changes that occur during the cooking process. All this while having great fun!

LEISURE TIME

We all enjoy our leisure time. This is a special time families can spend with their children. Surround your child with books and magazines. Read with and to your child. Select reading material together. Follow your child's lead. Younger children may be interested for shorter periods of time. If your child sees that you value and have fun reading, they will too!

All children have creative tendencies. What activities do you have at home that allow for creative learning? Buttons, fabric, construction paper, wrapping paper, and ribbon can provide for crafts that allow for creativity. It is not the product that is important, but the process. Children learn problem solving, hand-eye coordination, and perseverance during the creative process. An inexpensive digital camera can provide endless hours of experimentation and creativity for older children. Your child will enjoy these activities even more, if he or she has the opportunity to experience them with a family member.

What about the outdoors? We know physical activity supports cognitive development. Playing catch, going for walks, and gardening all develop life long skills that promote health and learning.

Families can use the time they have with their children having fun exploring their world while, at the same time, supporting learning. This valuable time together will help ensure our children will develop the critical social-emotional, physical, language and thinking skills necessary to be an active participant in their community.



TALKING WITH YOUR CHILDREN

Language development is one of the most important life-long skills. Talking with your young children about their day promotes language and social-emotional development. Parents want their children to be successful and research shows that their involvement makes a difference. These questions may help you start conversations that will strengthen family connections and support success. Don't feel you have to ask every question listed below. Browse through and select the questions that are most appropriate for the age of your child and the time available. The possibilities are endless and the results priceless.

Questions to ask your kids after, "How was your day?"

1. What was the funniest thing that happened today?
2. What was the most interesting?
3. What stories can you tell me about your friends?
4. What could you show me that you learned today?
5. What was the worst thing about school/ preschool/ child care today?
6. What can you tell me about your snack/ lunch?
7. What do you do when you are upset or unhappy at school?
8. What is your favorite thing to do at school?
9. When you have trouble with something, what do you do?
10. If you drew a picture of how your day went today, what would it be?
11. What do you do best at childcare/ preschool/ school?
12. What did you have the most fun doing today?
13. When you need help with doing something, what do you do?
14. What was the nicest thing you did for someone today?
15. What did you not do today that you wish you had done?
16. What are some of your favorite books at child care/ preschool?
17. What do you like most about being at school/ preschool/ child care?
18. What are the names of your friends that you played with today?
19. What are you looking forward to tomorrow?
20. What will you remember most about your day today?
21. What helps you have a good day?
22. What is the first thing you do when you get to school?

This article is reprinted with permission from Great Prairie AEA 14. It first appeared in the Parent Educator Connection Fall, 2010.

WWW.ASKRESOURCE.ORG

The ASK Resource Center website is full of useful information.

PTI Press Newsletter



Check it out!

Links to Other Organizations and Web Resources

ASK History and Mission

Calendar of Events

Helpful Publications

ASK Resource Center
5665 Greendale Road, Suite D
Johnston, IA 50131

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
DES MOINES IA
PERMIT NO. 5153

Parent Training and Information Center of Iowa



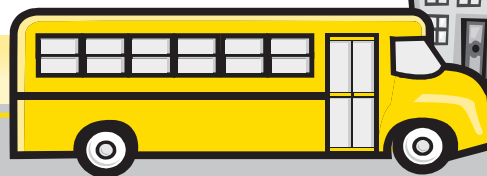
Education begins with a good IDEA.

Disability Information, Advocacy and Technical Assistance

Ph: (515) 243-1713 • Toll Free: (800) 450-8667

Fax: (515) 243-1902 • TDD: (800) 735-2942

info@askresource.org -- <http://www.askresource.org>



THE SUMMER READING SLIDE

www.iowareading.org

Research shows that:

- children lose one to three months of learning every summer. They forget the skills they worked so hard on during the school year. Then they have to make that up in the fall. You can help prevent this loss. Keep your kids reading!
- reading just six books during the summer may keep a struggling reader from regressing. When choosing the six, be sure that they are just right- not too hard and not too easy. Take advantage of your local library. Ask for help selecting books that match your child's age, interests, and abilities. Libraries often run summer reading programs that motivate kids to read, so find out what's available in your area.

ASK BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Mary Jankowski (President), Kim Whiting, Al Takemoto, Lisa Arechavaleta, Jennifer Harris, Amy Thoms-Starr, Fred Venable III, Jenna Luksetich Garcia