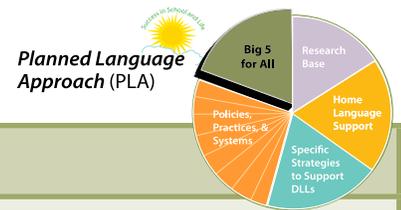


The Big 5



Alphabet Knowledge and Early Writing



As children develop alphabet knowledge they learn to recognize and name upper- and lowercase letters of an alphabet. They also learn that there are sounds associated with each letter. Children's early writing progresses from making marks, scribbling, and drawing, to eventually forming letters. Children's developing writing reflects their growing understanding of how written language works (Rowe & Neitzel, 2010; Shagoury, 2009).

Background Knowledge



From birth, children have daily experiences with people, objects, and places that they store in their memory. Over time, this stored information becomes more complex. This sets the base for future learning. Knowledge includes all of the information that children learn about themselves, other people, and the world around them. Children gain background knowledge through their wide and varied interactions with people (Neuman & Roskos, 1997). Background knowledge includes cultural norms and expectations, emerging scientific understandings about how objects work, and other information about the world. Background knowledge expands as children connect new learning to knowledge they have already stored (Pinkham, Kaefer, & Neuman, 2012).

Book Knowledge and Print Concepts



When children experience written language in their day-to-day lives they begin to understand that print communicates meaning (i.e., print is speech written down) (Justice & Kadaravek, 2004). When children are read to and involved in book reading, they also learn about how books work. Environmental print, which includes street signs, advertisements, logos, etc., is the first way young children gather meaning from print. Children develop print concepts when they become aware of and develop ideas about how written language works.

Oral Language and Vocabulary



Oral language is often divided into receptive and expressive language. Children develop receptive language as they begin to understand language, even before they can express it themselves. They develop expressive language as they are able to speak the sounds, words, and sentences of their language. A key aspect of oral language development is the acquisition of vocabulary (Harris, Golinkoff, & Hirsh-Pasek, 2011). Oral language also includes being able to participate in extended conversations such as telling stories or recalling related life events (Cazden, 2001).

Phonological Awareness



Children develop phonological awareness as they learn to recognize that language can be broken into words, syllables, and smaller pieces of sound. Phonological awareness also includes the ability to manipulate sounds by identifying, segmenting, blending, and substituting sounds (Schickedanz & Collins, 2013).

References for the Big 5

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This document was prepared under Grant #90HC0001 for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, by the National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic>

