

## Creating a Literacy Rich Environment

- ✓ **Surround children with literacy.**
  - **TIP:** Create a print rich environment by placing a variety of print materials around the room: student work, children’s names, labels, charts, songs, books, poems, graphs, signs, word walls, magazines, posters, dictionaries, lunch charts, diagrams, sign-in charts, menus, etc.
  - **TIP:** Make literacy materials (alphabet cards, words cards/lists & children’s names) and writing materials (pencils, crayons, paper) readily accessible to children. Consider these materials “transportable” by allowing children to take them to the location where they are working.
  - **TIP:** To support independent reading, provide each student with his/her own book basket with books that the student can read fluently. Refresh the books throughout the year as the students progress.
  
- ✓ **Provide an Inviting Book Area.**
  - **TIP:** Create an area in the classroom that contains books from a variety of genres, cultures and levels (e.g., 50% literary texts & 50% informational texts). A good rule of thumb is to provide about 5-8 books per child so that there are plenty of choices.
  - **TIP:** Make the area inviting by making it a cozy nook, using the bookshelves and other furniture to help define the space. Consider furnishing the area with comfortable seating, a rug and lighting.
  - **TIP:** Use the space for multiple activities, such as book browsing, independent reading, buddy reading, listening to stories, and retelling stories (e.g., flannel board, puppets, props).
  
- ✓ **Create a well-stocked Writing Area.**
  - **TIP:** Create an area in the classroom that contains tables & chairs and a variety of writing materials (pencils, crayons, markers, variety of paper; stencils, alphabet stamps); book making supplies (construction paper, hole punch, staplers, glue, tape); reference materials (alphabet, word cards, classmates’ names, word lists, dictionaries).
  - **TIP:** Containers such as baskets, shoe bags, & cubbies help to keep the space organized.
  - **TIP:** Use the space for multiple activities, such as writing messages, letters notes & stories, making books, writing letters and books. Children may work independently or with others.
  
- ✓ **Provide numerous opportunities for Shared Reading.**
  - **TIP:** Shared book reading is “the single most powerful way to promote children’s vocabulary and understanding of a topic” (Neuman, 2007, p. 13). Provide opportunities to allow children to purposefully engage with the print & interact with adults during read-alouds daily.
  - **TIP:** Help children understand what you are reading while you are reading by modeling how to read, thinking aloud, telling, explaining, clarifying and questioning.
  - **TIP:** Read a book multiple times! This helps children get to know the book & build rich vocabulary. Each time it’s read they’ll notice new things as you draw their attention to different characteristics of the book. This doesn’t have to happen all in one week- bring back a favorite several months later to revisit.
  
- ✓ **Share Your Love of Reading & Writing.**
  - **TIP:** Be a role model as you read for pleasure and for information; write emails, notes and newsletters to communicate with others; and tell stories with enthusiasm and excitement. Your passion is contagious!