

# Promoting Literacy for All Students



## *Literacy includes, but is so much more than, reading alone.*

- ❖ Students with disabilities are often not given the chance to be literate. Some individuals with significant disabilities or intellectual disabilities receive no literacy education at all.
- ❖ Other learners with disabilities receive a literacy education that focuses only on isolated skills (for example, identifying letters and sounds) and rarely have opportunities to learn alongside peers without disabilities and participate in such meaningful activities as reading literature, discussing ideas, writing or sharing stories.

## *Views of Literacy have changed.*

- ❖ They now include recognizing symbols, listening, speaking recognition of items from stories, literacy related art or drama.
- ❖ Students can simultaneously learn the alphabet and the beginning of reading and be allowed to let literacy develop in meaningful ways across the day.










## *If you want to support literacy for your child...*



- ❖ You will need materials that match their ability level and interest.
- ❖ Create time for your child to have less support and more opportunities to read parts of text, to make up their own stories (pretend to read) while looking at books and opportunities to read conventional text.
- ❖ Providing materials that are relevant and tied to the same curriculum or subject other children their age are learning.



## Here are common stages of literacy learning:

Enrichment	Transitional	Conventional
<p><b>The most common form for this is reading a book to your child.</b> Participation is often encouraged. As they develop their literacy skills, books should be chosen that include more complex ideas, concepts, story lines and language patterns. <b>You can also read common signs in the community,</b> magazines or other enrichment opportunities with your child.</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 20px 0;">  </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graphics Heavy</li> <li>• Develop language</li> <li>• Build background knowledge</li> <li>• Support learning concepts about print and the reading experience</li> <li>• Engage and develop the love of reading</li> </ul> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 20px;">   </div>	<p>For most young children without disabilities, this transition happens rapidly. Often parents, teachers, and children aren't quite sure how or when it happened. Suddenly, the child was reading. For students with disabilities, this transition often lasts for an extended period of time. <b>The challenge is to encourage educational teams, parents and students to keep up the effort</b> long enough by providing materials the continue moving the student through the literacy-learning continuum.</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 20px 0;">  </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an increased focus on text, rather than the language and graphics components</li> <li>• Support students in using the skills and strategies they developed through experiences with enrichment texts and other print-based activities</li> <li>• Support students in developing simple word-reading strategies</li> <li>• Close picture-to-text match when independent text reading is expected</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>	<p><b>Essentially, they are using word-based strategies to read both familiar and unfamiliar words in texts.</b> Within this framework, Conventional Texts often appear to be the easiest of the three text types. That is because at this level the focus is on independent application of word reading strategies.</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 20px 0;">  </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simple text</li> <li>• Simple sentence structure</li> <li>• Minimal use of pronouns to avoid confusion with referents</li> <li>• Consistent sentence structures within a given book</li> <li>• Heavy repetition of individual words within a given book</li> <li>• Heavy use of high frequency and decodable words</li> <li>• Length of story is short. Minimal cueing with graphics and other scaffolds</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>

## Ideas to Promote Literacy

<p><b>Reading to students</b> can improve their fluency, help them access content they could not access on their own, and expose them to a range of language, human interaction, and emotions.</p>	<p><b>Everyday opportunities to recognize signs, logos, or familiar places.</b> Point them out, discuss what letter they start with, reinforce by visiting if possible or other ways to emphasize how important recognizing landmarks, signs or letters is for everyday interactions.</p>	<p><b>Let your child explore a “story kit” filled with objects related to the story</b> (e.g., the kit for <i>A River Ran Wild</i> [Cherry, 1992] could be filled with a map of the Nashua River, a little vial of water, a pressed wildflower, and a small plastic frog)</p>
<p><b>Give your child a copy of the same book</b> so they can follow the story as you read.</p>	<p><b>Give your child a highlighter and let them highlight words</b> you read in their own book.</p>	<p><b>Give your child an adapted version of the book</b> (e.g., one with extra pictures, large type, or laminated pages) so they can follow along.</p>
<p><b>Give your child something text-related to fidget with</b> as the story is read (e.g., the student fidgets with a train car as the teacher reads a chapter about transportation);</p>	<p><b>Have a range of books available and investigate what types of materials your child prefers</b> and that will create more enjoyment and engagement.</p>	<p><b>Give your child a puppet</b> to hold during the story and let him perform parts of the book on his own or to you.</p>
<p><b>Story Elements Chart:</b> During and after reading or listening to a text or watching a story or video that a student chooses, create a story elements chart to answer questions about and make relationships between key details in the text. Some examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Who are the main characters?</li> <li>○ Which one do you like? Why?</li> <li>○ What happened in the story?</li> <li>○ How did the story make you feel?</li> </ul>		
	<p>Young children are often encouraged to <b>trace letters in tactile media</b> such as sand, paint or foam, in the belief that the action of tracing directs children’s attention to a letter, which facilitates learning. This may be something your child enjoys.</p>	
<p><b>Consider using an iPad, or other electronic device</b> that can make the experience potentially even more rewarding by providing a tactile (touching) experience combined with immediate reward, such as a letter displayed on the screen or read aloud by a prerecorded voice.</p>		

### Sources

- [Use details to ask and answer questions about a text \(Inclusive Big Idea #1\) | TIES Center](#)
- Supporting the Literacy Learning of Students with Autism. Adapted from: P. Kluth (2007). “A Land We Can Share”: Teaching Literacy to Students with Autism. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing
- [Inclusive Literacy Learning: Five Ways to Reach and Support All.](#)
- [20 Ways to Adapt the Read Aloud.](#)