

**ANATOMY of a STORYTIME LITERACY MESSAGE:
RESEARCH, ENCOURAGEMENT, and IDEAS in 60 SECONDS or LESS**

The Arapahoe Library District (CO) developed a template for literacy messages in response to the release of ECRR2 and to staff feedback requesting more early literacy instruction and more support for providing messages to parents and caregivers in storytime. The template is designed to help structure early literacy information in a manner that is robust in content and fluid and confident in delivery.

4-part Template for Literacy Messages

- Parents, when you do this activity,
- your children learn this early literacy skill.
- This helps them become a good reader because what we know from research.
- Doing this early literacy practice with your children will help them get ready to read!

Sample Message Using Template

ECRR1 Skill: Vocabulary ECRR2 Practice: Singing

- Parents, when you sing lots of songs with your children,
- they learn some words that we don't use in regular conversations.
- This will help them become a good reader because kids with big vocabularies have an easier time understanding what they read.
- Singing with your child will help them get ready to read!

For More Information

Presented by Melissa Depper, Librarian, Child and Family Library Services, Arapahoe Library District

I love to talk and learn about early literacy and storytimes,
so don't hesitate to contact me with questions or thoughts:

mdepper@ald.lib.co.us Twitter: @MelissaZD

Visit my blog Mel's Desk to read "Early Literacy Storytime" posts
combining storytime activity ideas with literacy messages based on this template.



(Link to Mel's Desk Early Literacy Storytime posts)

More literacy activity & message samples below.

Storytime Activity	Literacy Message
<p>Display and promote song picture books from the E 782.42 section during your storytime, or read and sing a book from this section.</p> <p><i>Practice: Singing</i></p>	<p>Parents, when you use picture books to share and sing familiar songs, your children learn that the things they love can be found in books. This helps motivate them to become good readers because they know books contain things they like. Singing with your children helps them get ready to read.</p> <p><i>Skill: Print Motivation</i></p>
<p>Sing an “animal noises” song in storytime, like Old MacDonald Had a Farm, or When Ducks Get Up in the Morning, or Fiddle-I-Fee.</p> <p><i>Practice: Singing</i></p>	<p>Parents, when you sing songs with animal sounds in them, your children are really learning to hear the sounds PEOPLE say. This will help them become good readers because being able to hear all these sounds helps them sound out words when they read. Singing with your children will help them get ready to read.</p> <p><i>Skill: Phonological Awareness</i></p>
<p>Play a sorting game with the children—give them construction paper shapes and ask them to bring up all of the squares, then the triangles, etc. You could also sort clip art pictures to match your theme—different kinds of bugs, or things that go.</p> <p><i>Practice: Talking</i></p>	<p>Parents, when you talk about same and different with your child, they start to learn how to compare things themselves. This helps them be a good reader because they will use the same skills to learn the differences in letter shapes! Talking with your child will help them get ready to read.</p> <p><i>Skill: Letter Knowledge</i></p>
<p>Make toilet paper tube “binoculars” for the children in your storytime, or just look through your cupped hands as pretend binoculars. Ask them to look around the room and discover something that they see—then have them describe what they’re looking at to their grownup.</p> <p><i>Practice: Talking</i></p>	<p>When you take turns describing what you see with your children, you are giving them a chance to hear new words and practice the words they already know. This will help them become a good reader because kids with big vocabularies have an easier time recognizing words as they read. Talking with your child will help them get ready to read!</p> <p><i>Skill: Vocabulary</i></p>
<p>Hand out scarves (or ribbons, or “magic wands”) to the children, and have them do what you do. Babies and parents can move their scarves up, down & around. Toddlers can make rainbows (arcs), circles, or zigzags. PreKs can follow along as you make letter shapes (“Let’s start up here and make a big swoop down and around for a C!”)</p> <p><i>Practice: Writing</i></p>	<p>Grownups, when you and your kids play with scarves or ribbons or magic wands, your children are building strong arm muscles and starting to learn about lines and shapes. These muscles and ideas will help them when they are learning to write. Playing with your children will help them get ready to read and write.</p> <p><i>Skill: Letter Knowledge</i></p>

<p>Make a list on a whiteboard or poster paper of objects or ideas from one of your books, songs, or activities. You might list all the things Pete the Cat steps in, or all the animals in your version of Old MacDonald. Have the children help you build the list, then read it back to them when you're done.</p> <p><i>Practice: Writing</i></p>	<p>Parents, when you make lists of interesting things with your child, it gives them a different way to think about and learn new words. This helps them become a good reader because kids encounter words in many different ways when they read. Writing with your child will help them get ready to read.</p> <p><i>Skill: Vocabulary</i></p>
<p>Pretend you don't know how to hold a book or where to start reading it. Hold it upside down and backwards, then let the children correct you! If they don't, then correct yourself. "I can't read the book like this!" Try to open up the spine; turn to the last page first, and so forth.</p> <p><i>Practice: Playing</i></p>	<p>Grownups, when you explore the book itself with your child, they learn not just the story inside but how the book works. Kids who know how to hold and use books before they go to school can start right away learning how to become good readers. Playing with your children helps them get ready to read.</p> <p><i>Skill: Print Awareness</i></p>
<p>Tell "Going on a Bear Hunt" twice—once with you leading, and once with the kids telling you what comes next and acting it out. Use flannel pieces or other props as visual cues.</p> <p><i>Practice: Playing</i></p>	<p>Grownups, when you act out a story with your children, they learn how to put story events in order. This helps them become good readers because understanding sequence is a comprehension skill. Playing with your children helps them get ready to read.</p> <p><i>Skill: Narrative Skills</i></p>
<p>For one of your books, think of 2 or 3 open-ended questions to ask during the course of your reading. One technique is to put your questions on sticky notes on the back cover!</p> <p><i>Practice: Reading</i></p>	<p>Parents, remember when I asked the kids _____? When you ask questions that don't have a yes and no answer, it helps children learn to use new words and to think about what they're reading. This will build their comprehension skills and help them become good readers. Reading with your children will help them get ready to read.</p> <p><i>Skill: Narrative Skills</i></p>
<p>Read a rhyming book to the children.</p> <p><i>Practice: Reading</i></p>	<p>Grownups, when you read rhyming books to your child, they learn to hear how rhyming words sound the same at the end and different at the beginning. Hearing the separate sounds in words helps good readers sound words out when they read. Reading with your child will help them get ready to read.</p> <p><i>Skill: Phonological Awareness</i></p>