

Chapter 5 Online Resources

Independent Literacy Centers that Support Learning in Text Level C

The activities you put in your literacy centers should provide engaging practice of the learning taking place at the small group table. Literacy center goals for readers working in Level C should center around the following:

1. Fluency with letters and known words both in reading and writing;
2. Increasing the amount of high frequency words so children can use them to monitor their reading and write quickly;
3. Hearing sounds in sequence when writing unknown words;
4. Decoding unknown words in reading.

LETTERS AND SOUND CENTER

Ending Sound Picture Sorts

Once children are proficient at beginning-sound picture sorts, you can introduce ending-sound sorts. Just like sorting by initial sounds, children will say the word slowly, isolate the ending sound, and sort the picture accordingly. Children can use picture cards in a pocket chart, picture stamps, or individual picture sets for these activities.

Rhyming Activities

Being able to hear rhymes and produce rhymes are important phonological skills. Through the year, we put rhyming games and activities in our letter and sound center, so children can develop and practice these skills.

- Rhyming picture cards (Figure 5.1)—children use a set of picture cards and match up the two picture cards that sound the same or rhyme.

2 Intentional from the Start: Guiding Emergent Readers in Small Groups



FIGURE 5.1
Rhyming Picture Cards

- Rhyming puzzles (Figure 5.2)—children complete rhyming puzzles that have two to five pieces and focus on one rhyme for each puzzle.



FIGURE 5.2
Rhyming Puzzles

- Rhyming picture sorts (Figure 5.3)—we provide students with picture cards they can sort by rhyme. Depending on the ability of the child, they may sort two, three, or four rhymes at a time.



FIGURE 5.3
Rhyming Picture Sorts

- Rhyming stamps—we have sets of rhyming stamps. They are very versatile for matching activities and sorting activities children can create themselves and take home.
- Rhyming games (Figure 5.4)—there are plenty of engaging rhyming games you can purchase or make yourself. The Florida Center for Reading Research (<http://www.fcr.org>) is a good site for downloadable rhyming materials.



FIGURE 5.4
Rhyming Games

WORD CENTER

Individual Word Lists

Although there are lots of high frequency word lists, most school districts determine which list and words your children will focus on while they're with you. Several times a year, we use our list to assess what high frequency words our children are learning and which ones they still need to work on. In kindergarten, we begin assessing this knowledge in November and December. In first grade we begin in September. After the initial assessment, we've found it to be beneficial to give each child their own copy of the full list of words with the words they were able to read highlighted (Figure 5.5). They keep their list in their book box for easy access during time in literacy centers.

When they engage in activities at the word center, students can refer to their list to decide what words they want to practice and what word(s) they want to learn. It is a huge motivator to complete a list of words and often the learning is collaborative! Children share their knowledge about the words they know with each other and help each other learn new ones. Once a child can read all the words on their list, they move on to learning the next list.

the	it	they	we	come
of	he	I	can	me
and	was	at	up	mom
a	for	be	like	cat
to	on	this	look	zoo
in	are	have	go	dad
is	as	from	see	dog
you	with	am	no	all
that	his	yes	my	here

FIGURE 5.5

The different highlighter colors indicate when a child has learned a word.

Letter Stamps

Children love letter stamps and ink pads! We encourage you to figure out a good organizational system for your stamps to make using them efficient. We like to use craft bead boxes or tackle boxes (Figure 5.6). We label the sections and give each letter its own home in the box. We also encourage you to discuss how to use and practice using the materials appropriately or a mess will ensue (Figure 5.7).



FIGURE 5.6

Letter Stamp Set



FIGURE 5.7

Luke and Annie are practicing words using letter stamps.

Here are a few ideas for how to use letters stamps in the word center:

- Stamping words—children can stamp the names of classmates, family names, words from their word list, words from around the room, and so on.
- Read It, Trace It, Write it, Stamp It (Figure 5.8)—this activity can be used with premade sheets. These sheets are helpful to teach the children the task. Children read the word, trace the word, write the word, and stamp the word. Later in the year, the activity can be modified. Children may choose to use word cards or their word lists. Children pick a word, read it, write it with a pencil, write it with a marker, and then stamp it. They repeat this process for each new word.



FIGURE 5.8

Read It, Trace It, Write It, Stamp It

Letter Construction Set

We move our letter construction set from the letters and sounds center (introduced in the online resources for Chapter 3, page 4) to the word center. Students can use their word lists to construct words they know and words they want to learn (Figures 5.9, 5.10, and 5.11).

**FIGURE 5.9**

Andrew and Cash are building words together.

**FIGURE 5.10**

Finley has made my.

**FIGURE 5.11**

Laiauni has made the.

WRITING CENTER

By the time the children are reading in Level C, we expect them to transition from labeling to writing sentences about their pictures at the writing center. The choice of what to write about still belongs to them. Card making, list writing, note writing, story writing, play writing—the possibilities in this center are endless and naturally differentiated.

LISTENING CENTER

Even as children gain confidence in their reading, they still benefit from having books read to them, so we keep adding new QR codes of good stories and nonfiction books for them to enjoy! Since children are beginning to write more independently around this time, you might want to consider adding a response element to your listening center as a choice. Children can listen to a book, draw, and write about:

- their favorite part of a story.
- their favorite story.
- something they learned.

READING CENTER

Not only do we want our children to fall in love with books, we also want them to fall in love with other types of print. To do that, it is important to offer different options in your reading center. For students who are beginning to read unpatterned texts, you might add:

- **Poetry journals.** Children love to illustrate poems and songs and then reread or sing them over and over again. They keep these books in their individual book boxes.
- **Magazines.** Children, just like adults, like to thumb through magazines looking at vibrant pictures and browsing interesting articles. *Ranger Rick Jr.*, *Ranger Rick*, *Highlights*, and *National Geographic* are just a few of the most popular ones.
- **Big books.** Add a big book version of a popular story you have shared as a class to your reading center and see what happens! Children flock to these books because of their size and because reading is a classroom community event. Children collaboratively enjoy the pictures and retell the story.
- **Class books.** In our classrooms, we like to create class books using interactive writing, dictation, or independent writing. Our topics are varied but the end project is always a book, which we place in our reading center, so students can enjoy reading it again and again (Figures 5.12 and 5.13).

**FIGURE 5.12**

Wyatt is showing a class created book.

**FIGURE 5.13**

Kyleigh and Natalie are reading a class book together.