Over the years, we’ve spent time refining the structure of our independent literacy center time. We questioned whether it’s important to have a lot of literacy centers with no student choice or fewer literacy centers with a variety of options within each independent literacy center. After lots of back and forth, we kept returning to the importance of student choice and decided to go with five literacy centers that help us meet our instructional goals for our emergent readers while offering them lots of choices (see Figure I.1).

The activities and materials at each center vary throughout the year and can be differentiated. The following links offer literacy center suggestions that correlate with the lessons in *Intentional from the Start* to help you think about the specific choices you can offer your emergent readers within these five components as they develop across a gradient of skills into readers, writers, and self-directed learners.

**FIGURE I.1**
*Independent Literacy Centers*