



**Able Young Readers,  
Healthy Growing Bodies:  
Connecting Early Literacy to Health**

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**NEMOURS IS WORKING  
TO CLOSE THE  
ACHIEVEMENT GAP AND  
ENSURE EVERY CHILD  
RECEIVES A BRIGHT START  
FOR SCHOOL AND FOR LIFE**



# EXTENDING OUR REACH

PARENTS

POLICY MAKERS

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

PRE-K AND K EDUCATORS

EARLY CHILD CARE EDUCATORS

COMMUNITIES

*Did you know...*



*Did you know...*

**LITERACY** IS THE SINGLE,  
STRONGEST PREDICTOR OF ADULT HEALTH.



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**LITERACY** IS THE SINGLE,  
STRONGEST PREDICTOR OF ADULT HEALTH.  
SUCCESS IN READING IS ESSENTIAL TO A CHILD'S WELL BEING



*Did you know...*

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  - This is a major health issue
- Results in the disruption of academic, cognitive, behavioral, social and emotional development



**NEMOURS BRIGHTSTART!**  
**OUR VISION**  
**IS TO HELP EVERY CHILD**  
**BECOME**  
**A READER**

## *Objectives*

- Identify the impact that reading ability has on the health of children, adolescents and adults
- Explore best practices to enhance early literacy interactions
- Share tips to involve, engage and empower families as they establish a foundation for future reading success



*Let's Take a Poll...*



# Consequences: Reading Skills Are Tied to a Longer, Healthier Life

By [HEALTHY NEWS](#) | October 20, 2014

Older people who lack "health literacy" — that is, they cannot read and understand basic medical instructions — may be paying a high price. A new study finds that they appear to have a higher mortality rate than more-literate patients.

As the authors note, education levels have long appeared to play a role in longevity: one study found that people who did not graduate from high school lived an average of nine years less than graduates.

The explanation, researchers have suggested, may be that better education tends to result in better jobs, housing, food and health care. But, writing in the July 23 Archives of Internal Medicine, researchers say that one particular characteristic of a poor education, low reading skills, may also account for much of the problem. The study was led by Dr. David W. Baker of the Paulding School of Medicine at Northwestern University.



The researchers based their findings on a study of 3,000 Medicare patients over more than five years.

At the beginning of the study, the patients were asked about their health and backgrounds, including whether they had a health literacy test, a reading and math test.

More than 60 percent of the patients were described as having low reading skills. But about a tenth were described as having "strong" reading skills. In the following years, those with inadequate reading skills were the most likely to die, even when overall education and other social factors were taken into account.

The most common cause of death in the group was cardiovascular disease, with a rate of more than 10 percent. The rate for those described as health-literate was 5 percent.

# IMPROVING READING SKILLS AND IMPROVING HEALTH

By [The PHCD Team](#) | October 2, 2014  
 0 Comments | Community Health, Healthy Living, Pealuma, Pealuma District, Sonoma County

**When kids can't read, they can't succeed.**

The statement above is a driving force behind [Schools of Hope](#), an early reading initiative designed to help children read at or above grade level by pairing them with a trained community volunteer who reads with them for 30 minutes at least once a week. The Pealuma Health Care District recently signed on to become an official SOH Outreach Partner, helping to raise awareness and recruit volunteers for this fantastic program as it expands its reach in Pealuma.

**When kids can't read, they can't succeed.**

Now you may be wondering why a health care organization would undertake such an effort. And the answer can be explained by taking SOH's motto one step further: **And when they can't read, they can't succeed.** PHCD strongly believes that improving literacy among our lowest residents is one of the greatest health prevention practices we can undertake. Third grade reading proficiency is a strong predictor of many educational successes later in life, from high school graduation to college attendance to advanced degree attainment. [Literacy and Health](#) is showing that education is one of the greatest predictors of living health. Simply put, the more schooling individuals have, the better their health is likely to be.

Here in Pealuma, just over half of our lowest residents in one of the greatest health prevention practices we can undertake. Third grade reading proficiency is a strong predictor of many educational successes later in life, from high school graduation to college attendance to advanced degree attainment. [Literacy and Health](#) is showing that education is one of the greatest predictors of living health. Simply put, the more schooling individuals have, the better their health is likely to be.

PHCD is committed to ensuring that every SOH site within our district boundary gets every volunteer it needs. To sign up to be a volunteer this spring, call the SOH recruitment partner, Volunteer Center of Sonoma County at 573-3359 x121 or visit the [United Way of Sonoma County SOH Website](#). Or, reach out to us; we'll direct you where you need to go.

PHCD is committed to the health and well being of our residents and this means ensuring every one of our children is achieving literacy success!



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- The US Department of Education

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- **inadequacy**
- **embarrassment**
- **low self esteem**



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- **physical health**
- **emotional health**
- **mental health**

*Let's Take a Poll...*

# *Myth or Fact?*



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The number of years of schooling correlates with reading ability.

Illiteracy affects more women than men.

Most will freely admit that they do not know how to read.

Did you know that positive interactions with adults during infancy determine a child's path to future reading success?





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-National Institute for Literacy



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“Many pediatricians now believe that a child who has never held a book or listened to a story is NOT a fully, healthy child.”

- America Reads



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“Babies whose families frequently read to them are more likely to read at the right time.”

-Kids Health



# *Did you know...*

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- exposed to the sounds and patterns of their language
  - know more words
  - greater language comprehension



## The lack of positive interactions early on can create several challenges in the lives of infants.

- Missed opportunities to build a strong bond
- Language delay due to fewer periods of communication
  - Motivation to learn may be diminished
  - Acquire less information about the world around them
- Fewer opportunities to develop listening, memory and vocabulary skills



Did you know that the effects of poor language development can be observed as early as 18 months of age?



# *Did you know...*

“Children who are engaged in less conversation with their caregivers before age three, hear fewer words and have smaller vocabularies than children who have richer early language experiences.”

-Ounce of Prevention



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“85% of brain development occurs by age three.”

-For Our Babies





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“By age three, a 30,000,000 word gap is evident among children of diverse home environments.”

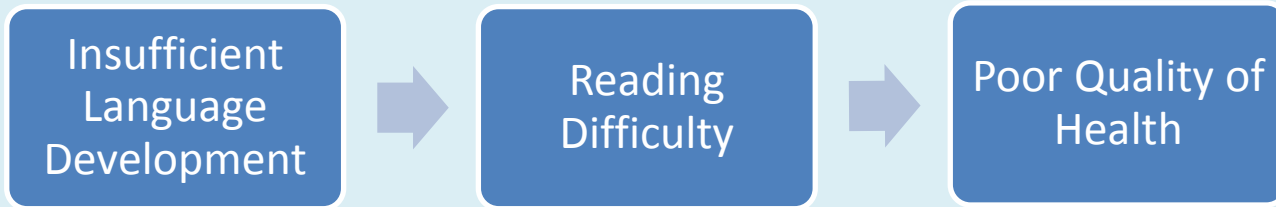
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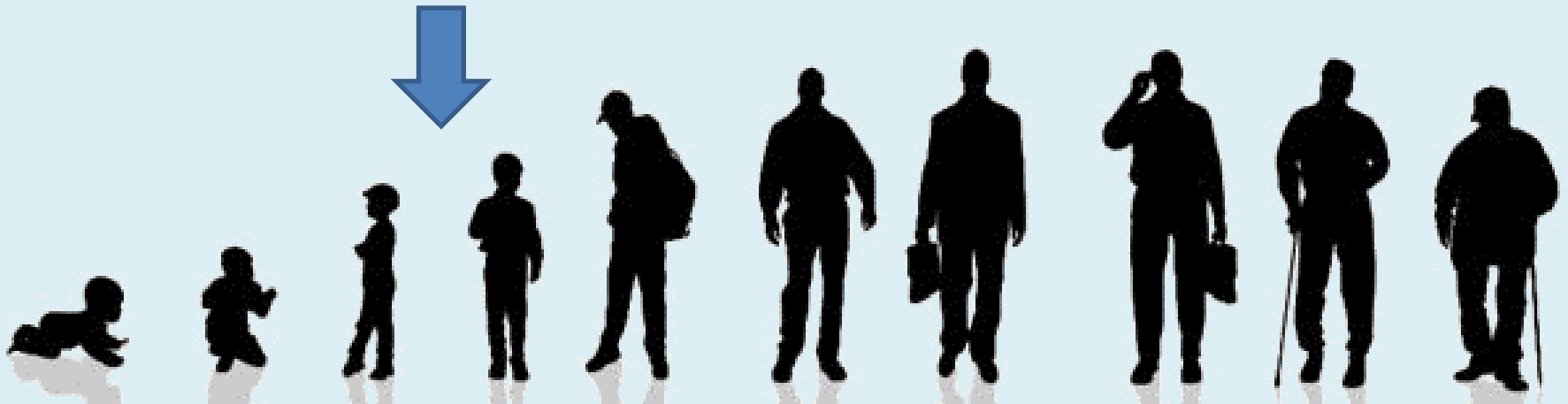


## The lack of language-rich environments create several challenges in the lives of toddlers.

- Use of sounds versus words during communication
- Depend on gestures and body language to communicate
  - Withdrawn or shy behavior with others
  - Irritation or tantrums when needs are not met
  - Difficulty interacting socially with peers
    - Poor problem solving skills

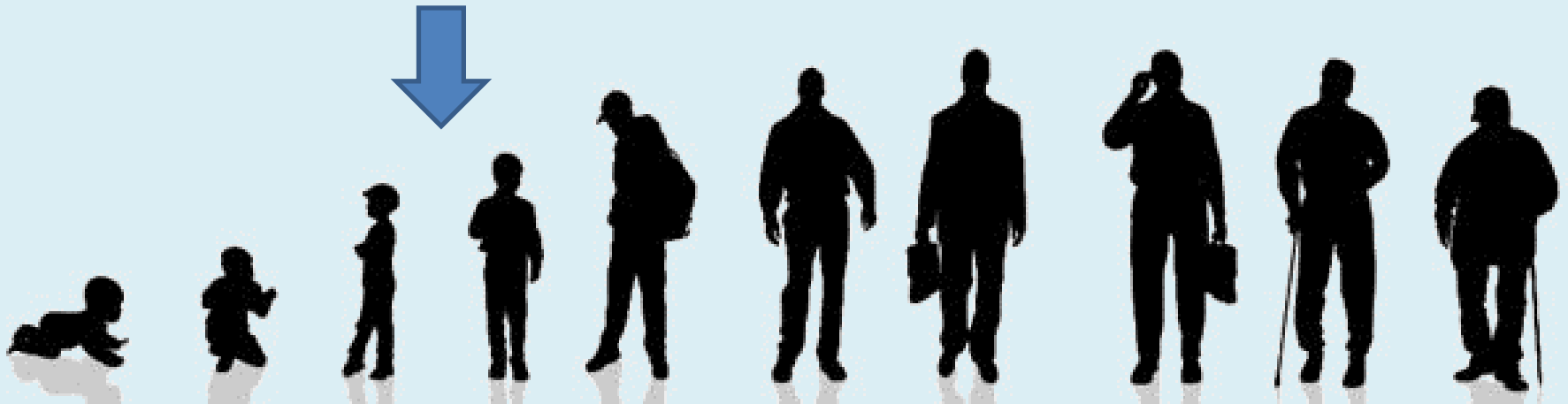


Did you know that the effects of low reading ability can be seen in early childhood?



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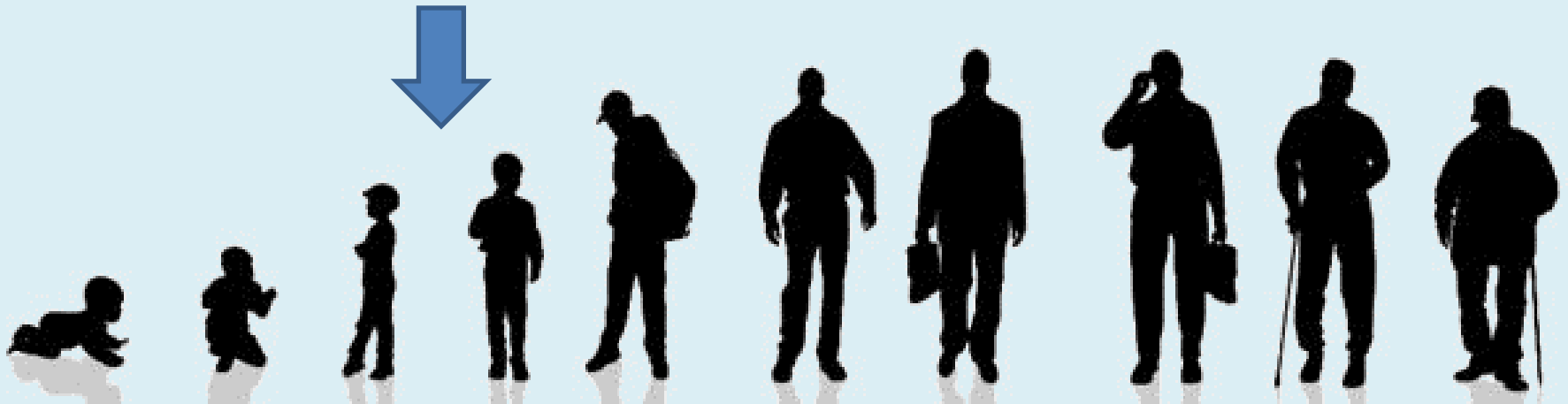
“65% of 4th graders nationwide scored “below proficient and 32% scored “below basic”

-National Assessment of Educational Progress



## Inability to read or low reading ability can create several challenges in the lives of young children.

- Huge gaps in academics and learning
  - Decreased motivation to read
- Difficulty creating and maintaining relationships with peers
  - Decline in confidence and poor self image
    - Difficulty within the family systems



Did you know that reading difficulty continues to disrupt cognitive, physical, emotional and mental health in adolescence?

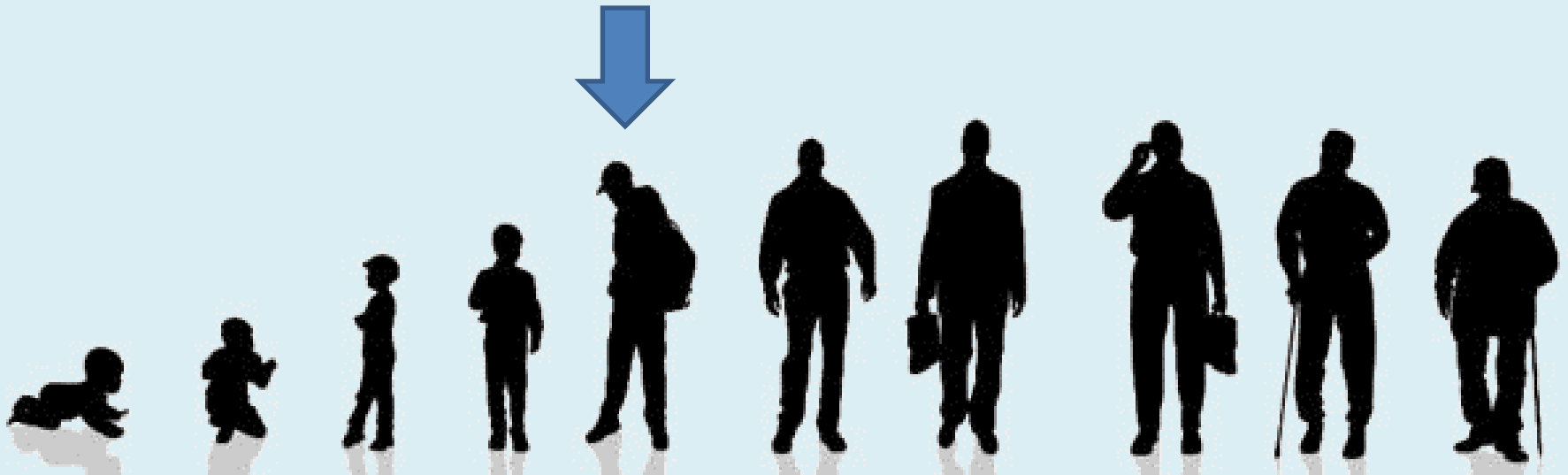




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“Two thirds of eighth graders do not read at grade level.”

-NAEP Reading



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“47% of students who took the ACT in 2009 did not meet the College Readiness Benchmark.”

-ACT

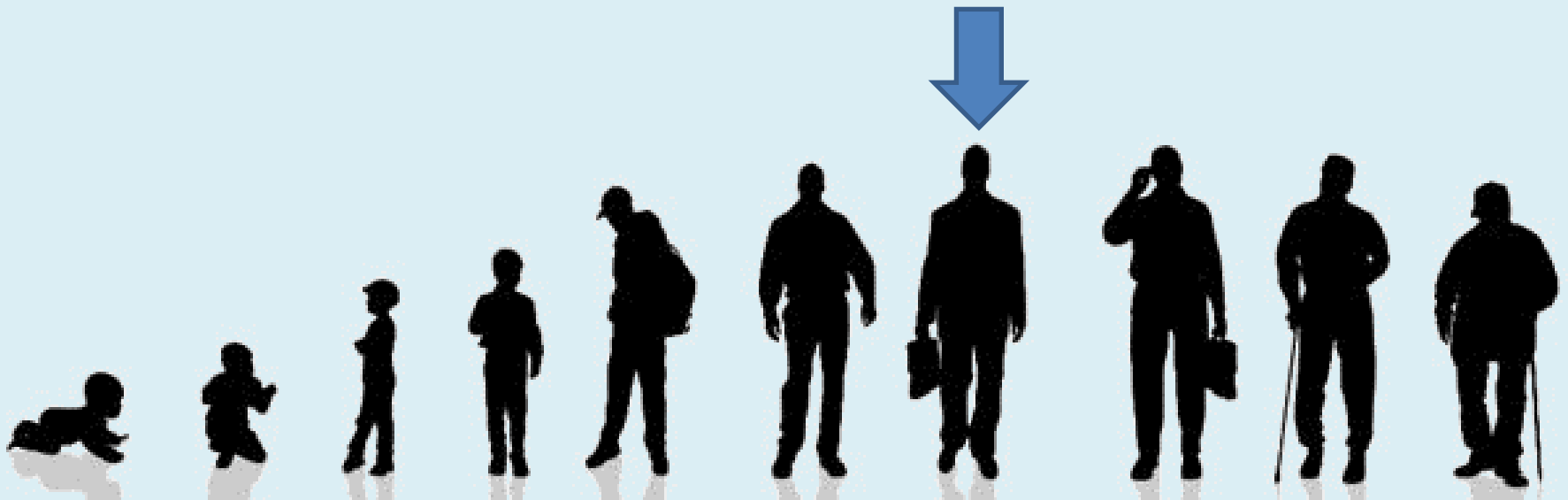


**The inability to read proficiently during adolescence adds to the symptoms of low academic achievement with unsafe behaviors.**

- Poor mental health and depression
- Lower self worth and life satisfaction
- Increased use of alcohol and other substances
  - Higher drop out rates



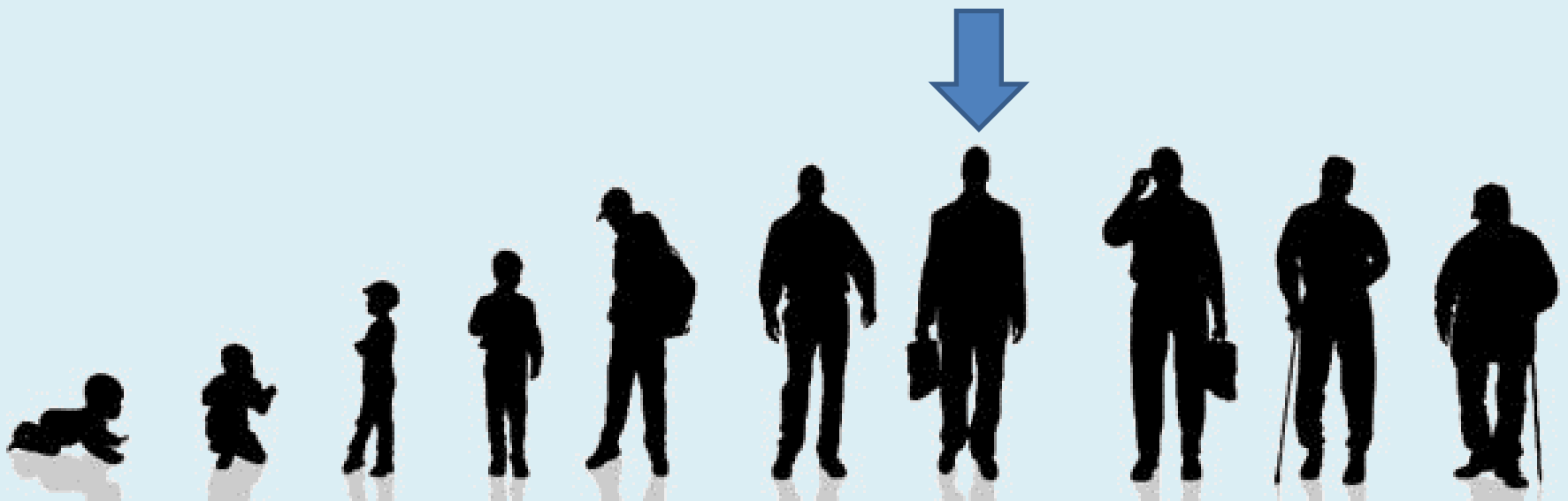
Did you know that the destruction of low reading ability continues into adulthood, where many researchers now focus on the grave consequences during the adult years.



*Did you know...*

“Only 30% of college graduates have high level literacy skills.”

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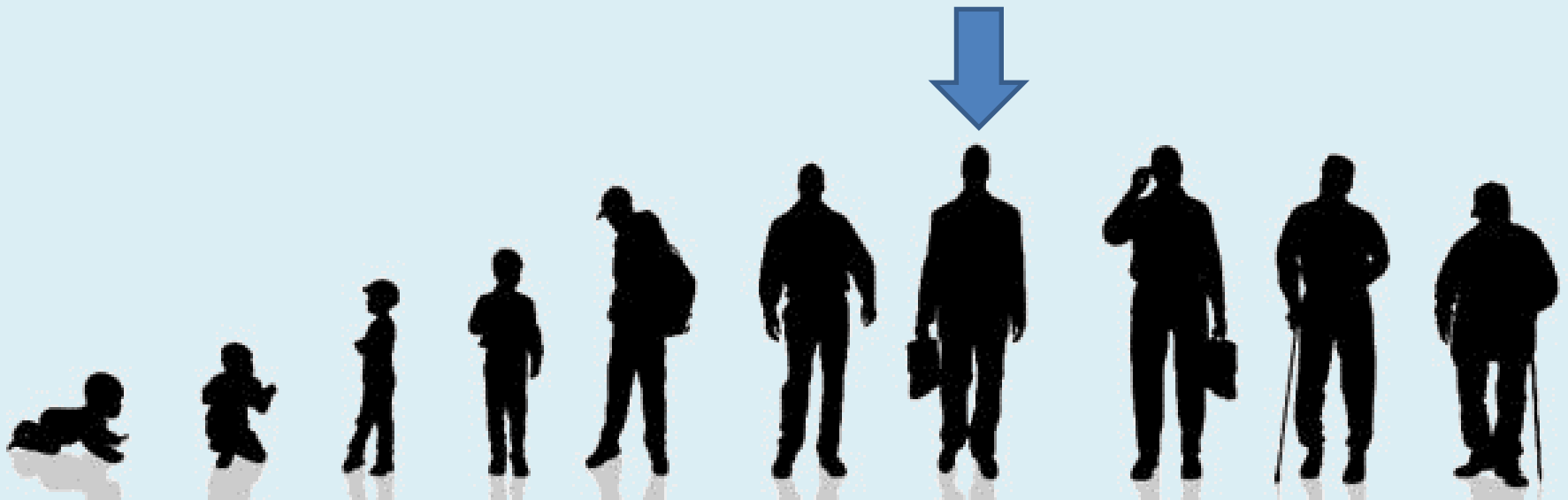


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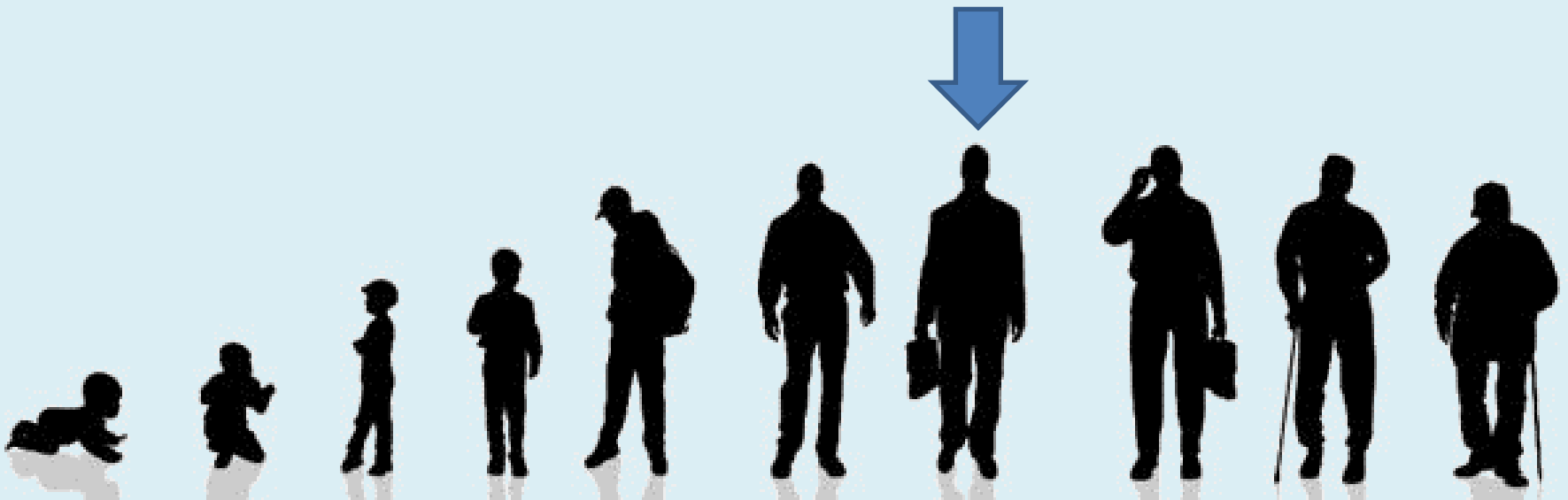


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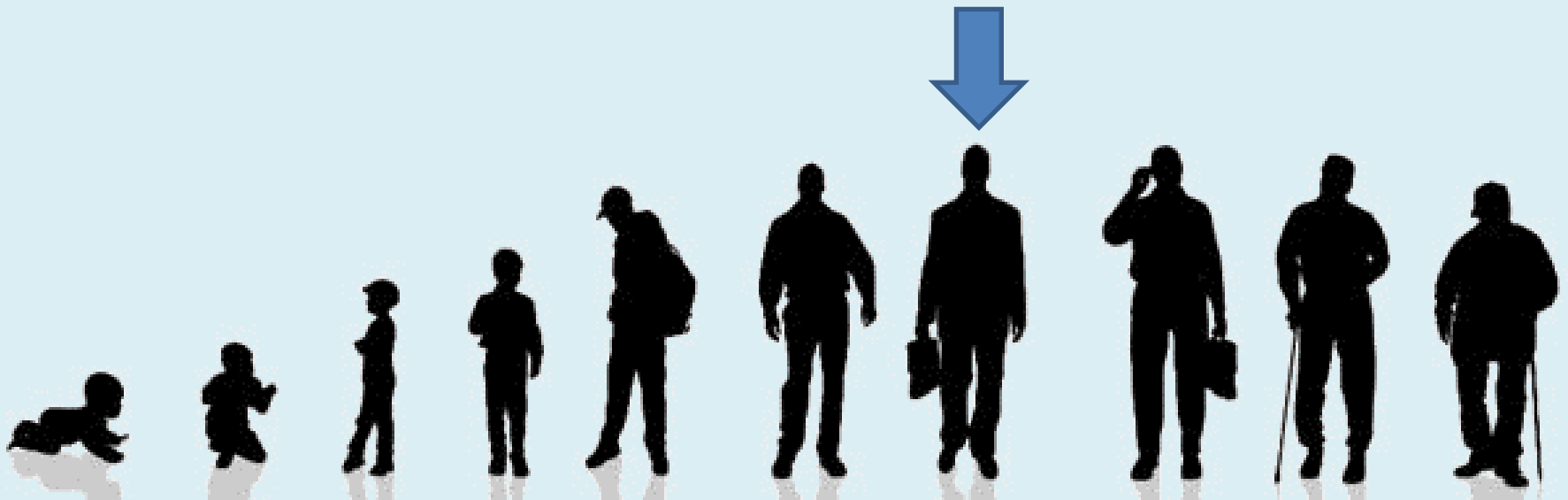
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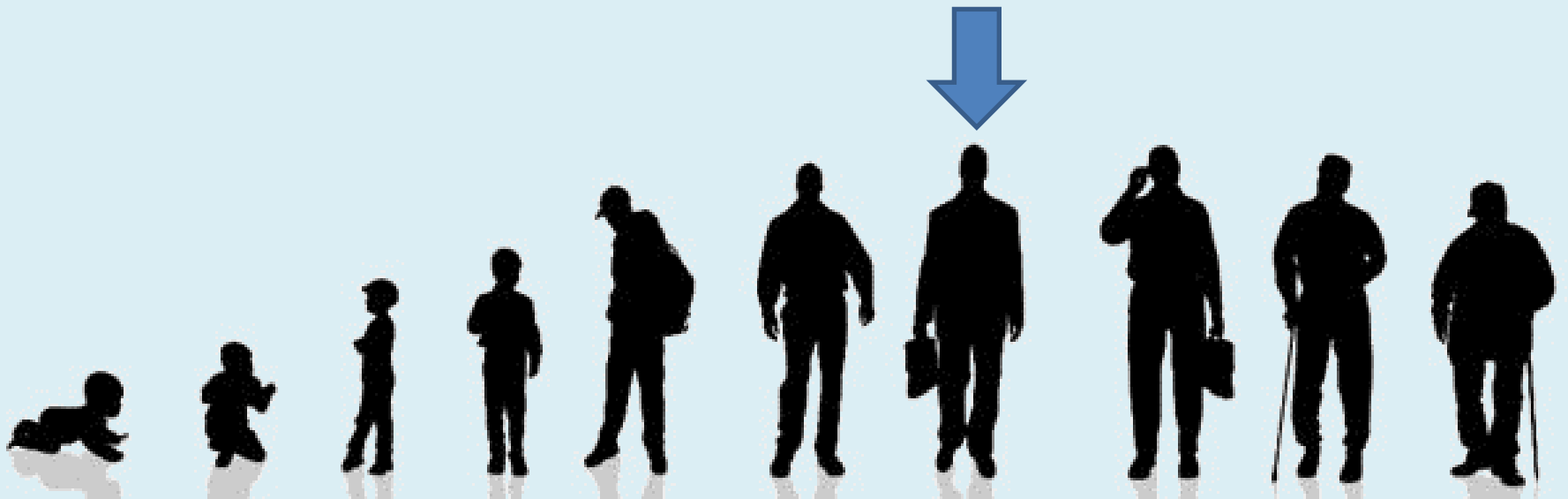


“Researchers have discovered that adults with poor reading and comprehension skills have disproportionately **higher** medical costs, **increased** number of hospitalizations and **more** perceived physical and psychological problems than do literate persons.”





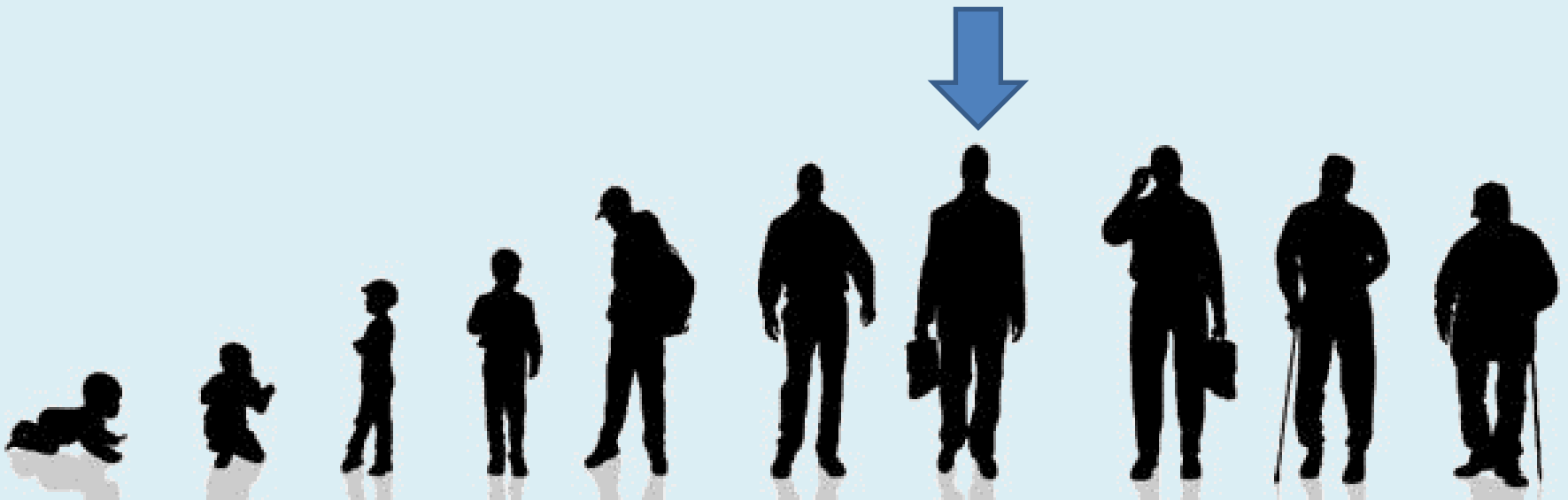
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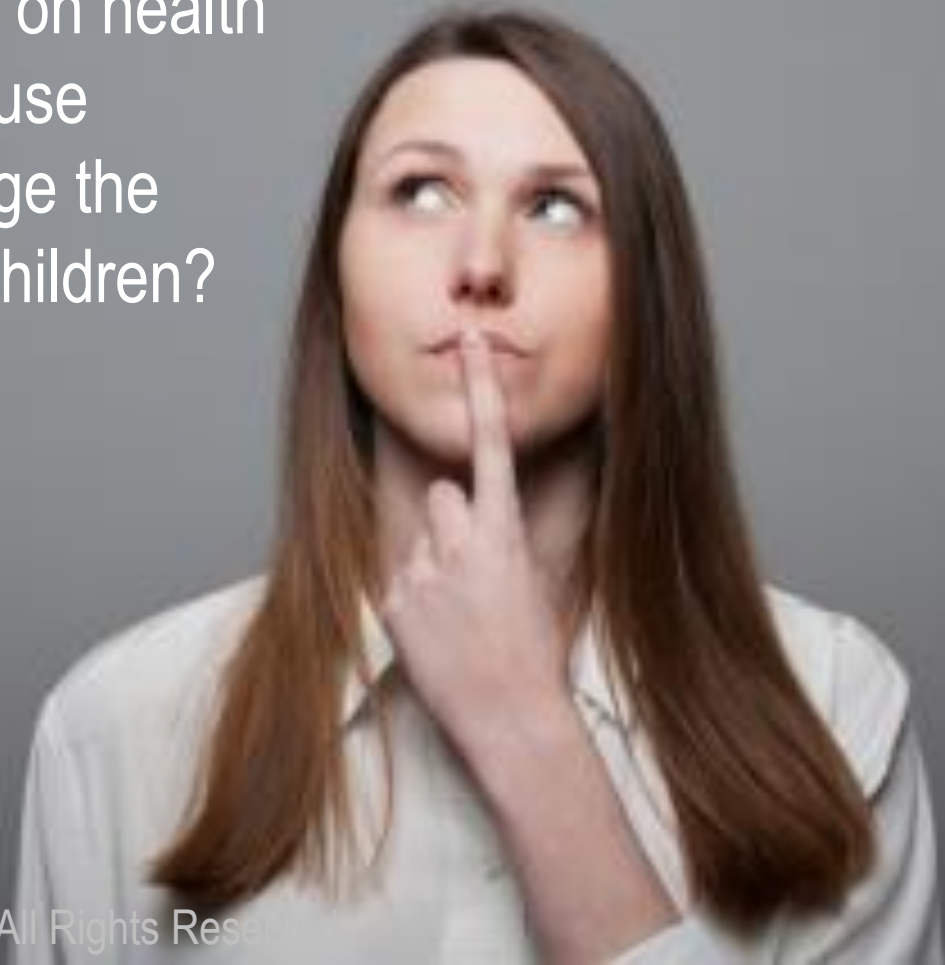
**Low reading ability may have a direct effect on adult health through the inadequate use of health care services.**

- Schedule fewer physicians visits and preventative visits
- Less likely to understand and follow medical treatment plans
  - Inability to take prescriptions correctly



# *Let's Reflect*

Given the data about the effects of reading ability on health over time, how will you use this information to change the path of your work with children?



Happy readers.  
Healthy kids.

**EARLY INTERVENTION  
IS THE KEY TO PREVENTING  
THE SYMPTOMS THAT OFTEN  
ACCOMPANY  
LOW ACADEMIC  
ACHIEVEMENT**

- **LOW SELF ESTEEM**
- **LACK OF INTEREST IN SCHOOL**
- **POOR BEHAVIOR**







# Goals

By the end of this segment, you will be able to...

- Identify proven, research-based strategies that increase connections to foundational literacy skills
- Apply these strategies to improve overall health of young, diverse learners

# *Strategies for Educators*

- Be Explicit
- Teach Systematically
- Make It Multisensory
- Ensure Success
- Keep It Simple



# *Explicit Instruction*

***Instruction that guides diverse learners and supports their learning through clear and efficient delivery.***



# *Explicit Instruction*

- Explain what you want children to learn with **simple, concrete terms**



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  - Maintain a **high level** of **teacher-child interaction**
    - Provide **specific and positive feedback**

# *Why Use Explicit Instruction?*

- Provides exposure to specific words, phrases and language
- Benefits children who have a **limited vocabulary** or **language delay**
- Provides opportunities for positive feedback which many children have not experienced due to the absence of adult-child **interactions**
- Improves **listening** and **comprehension** skills with clear, specific instruction

# *Strategies for Educators*

- Be Explicit ✓
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# *Systematic Instruction*

***Instruction that follows a logical sequence of steps to build familiarity with concepts in early literacy.***



# *Systematic Instruction*

- Introduce skills slowly and **gradually** over time

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- Use activities that **build** on previously taught information
- **Integrate** and **connect** foundational literacy skills
  - Teach each **step**, one at a time
  - Provide **hints** or **assistance**

# Why Use Systematic Instruction?

- The gradual learning provides a **scaffolding** for children who struggle with foundational literacy skills and demonstrate a **cognitive delay**
- The **adequate pacing** of instruction may help to reduce anxiety and confusion that some struggling learners may experience, improving **mental health**

# *Strategies for Educators*

- Be Explicit ✓
- Teach Systematically ✓
- Make It Multisensory
- Ensure Success
- Keep It Simple





# *Multisensory Instruction*

***Instruction that encourages children to use many sensory pathways simultaneously, addressing the preferences of ALL learners.***



# *Multisensory Instruction*

- Combines **visual, auditory, kinesthetic** and **tactile** experiences

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# *Multisensory Instruction*

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- Opportunities to provide **individualized** instruction
  - Provide a **variety** of materials
- Engage through **hands-on** and **movement** activities

# *Why use Multisensory Instruction?*

- Makes learning fun and enjoyable through active play, creating **motivation to learn**
- Supports **brain development** through use of multiple pathways
- Strengthens **physical development** through kinesthetic and tactile learning experiences
- Acquire information about the world around them through **senses**

# *Strategies for Educators*

- Be Explicit ✓
- Teach Systematically ✓
- Make It Multisensory ✓
- Ensure Success
- Keep It Simple





# *Successful Connections*

***Successful connections are made when we create a positive learning environment that has a focus on learning, while remaining upbeat, encouraging and fun.***



# *Successful Connections*

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  - Set **reachable** goals for each child
    - Begin with **small** goals
- Guide mastery of skills with **multisensory** support
  - **Reassure, recognize** and **reward** children

# *Why Ensure Success?*

- Provides positive recognition to improve **self worth** and **self esteem**
- Creates an environment where contributions are encouraged and valued, meeting the **emotional needs** of children
- Strengthens **responsive and nurturing relationships** which many children are without
- Increases the **confidence** of diverse learners with praise

# *Strategies for Educators*

- Be Explicit ✓
- Teach Systematically ✓
- Make It Multisensory ✓
- Ensure Success ✓
- Keep it Simple





# *Simple Activities*

***Effective early literacy activities can be simple and quick and yet still provide children with developmentally appropriate ways to make meaningful connections to foundational literacy skills.***



# *Simple Activities*

- **Prioritize** objectives and stick to the essentials

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# *Simple Activities*

- **Prioritize** objectives and stick to the essentials
  - **Limit** concepts to one or two at a time
- Be **respectful** of each child's needs, abilities and attention span
- Provide **repetition and review** as mastery cannot be expected immediately
  - Keep sessions **short...and FUN!**

# *Why Keep it Simple?*

- Fewer and clearer objectives **reduce anxiety**
- Repetition and review increases the **confidence** and **self esteem**
- Simple and fun activities increases **motivation to learn**
- **Less** time for **misbehavior**

# *Strategies for Educators*

- Be Explicit ✓
- Teach Systematically ✓
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# *Video Clip*





# *What Did You Notice?*

## **Be Explicit!**

- Clear behavioral expectations
- Explicit explanation of goals
- Modeling and demonstration

## **Be Systematic!**

- Series of steps

## **Make It Multisensory!**

- Evidence of visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile learning

## **Ensure Success!**

- Warm relationships
- Support and guidance
- Specific and positive praise

## **Keep It Simple!**

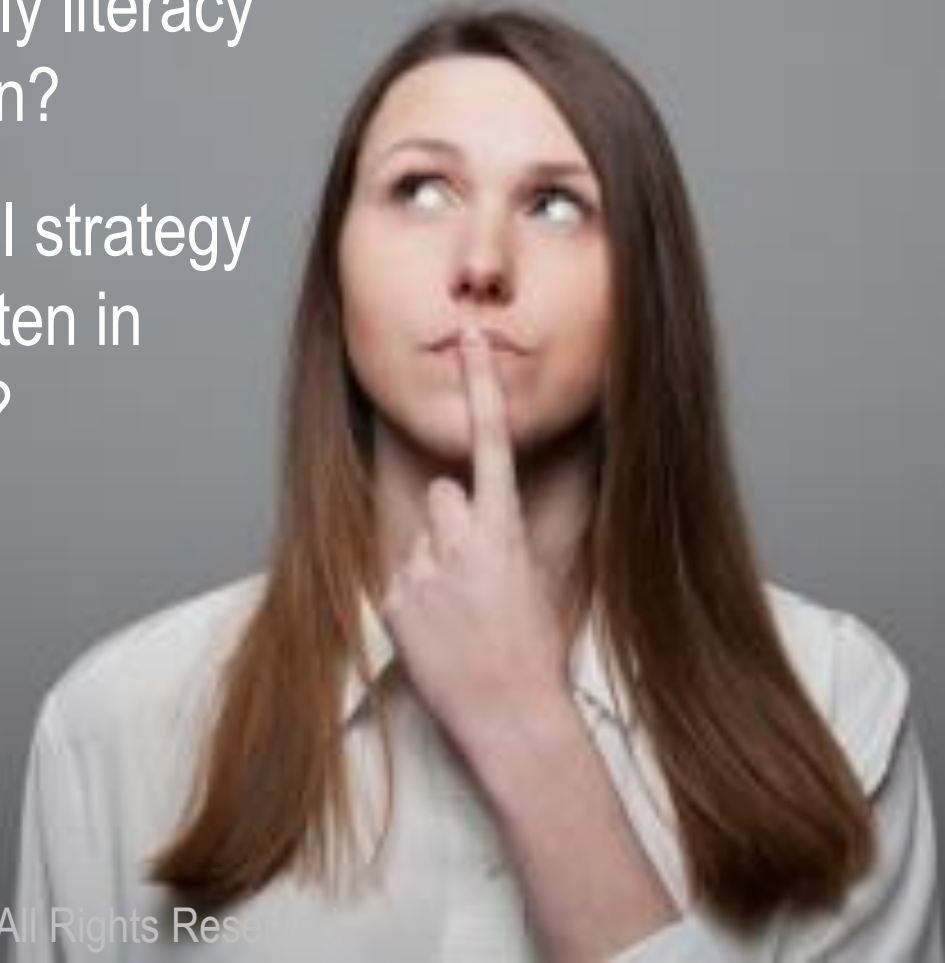
- Two minute activity
- Simple objective
- Review throughout

# *Let's Reflect*

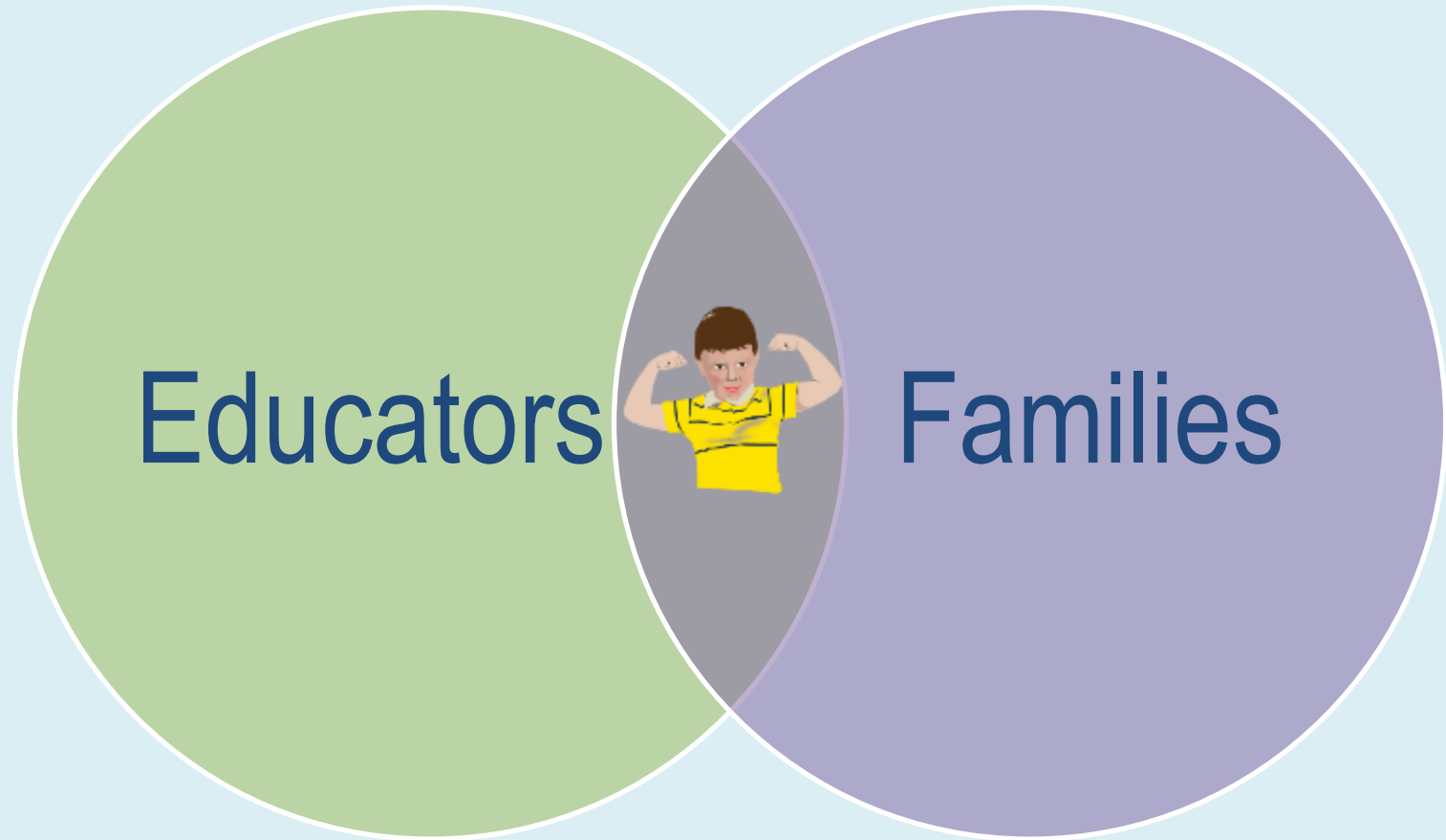
Identify one instructional strategy you use well in your early literacy interactions with children?

Identify one instructional strategy you will include more often in your work with children?

- Be Explicit
- Teach Systematically
- Make It Multisensory
- Ensure Success
- Keep It Simple



# *Family Connection*





# Goals

By the end of this segment, you will be able to...

- Support families as they build a foundation for future reading success
- Identify tools and resources that enhance language and literacy development



**ONE OF THE  
BIGGEST PREDICTORS OF  
A CHILD'S SUCCESS IN  
SCHOOL  
IS WHAT HAPPENS  
AT HOME**

Did you know that family beliefs about the value of reading play an important role in whether children interact with printed materials in the home?

# *Did you Know...*

“Children who grow up in homes where books are available go further in school than those who do not.”

-Pre-K Now



## *Did you Know...*

“Children who grow up in homes where books are available go further in school than those who do not.”

-Pre-K Now

“Increased family engagement in educational programs is linked to increases in child reading achievement as well as other academic successes.”

-Pre-K Now

*Experts say...*

# *Experts say...*

## Positive Attributes:

- (+) families are lifelong educators
- (+) families are a child's first and most important teacher
- (+) most want to help their children

# *Experts say...*

## Obstacles and Barriers:

- (-) families experts on their children, not literacy experts
- (-) negative personal experiences with school and education
- (-) stress or difficulty with communication since families speak many languages other than English
- (-) diverse levels of educational backgrounds influence work life
- (-) limited access to powerful tools and resources



*What Can We Do?*

# *We can...*

- **Educate** families regarding the connection between literacy development and child health
- **Encourage** families to play, read and talk together
- **Promote** rich literacy learning experiences
- **Increase** the frequency of positive interactions
- **Improve** the quality of responsive and nurturing relationships

*Choose activities that...*

## *Choose activities that...*

- help parents and caregivers take an active role in their child's development

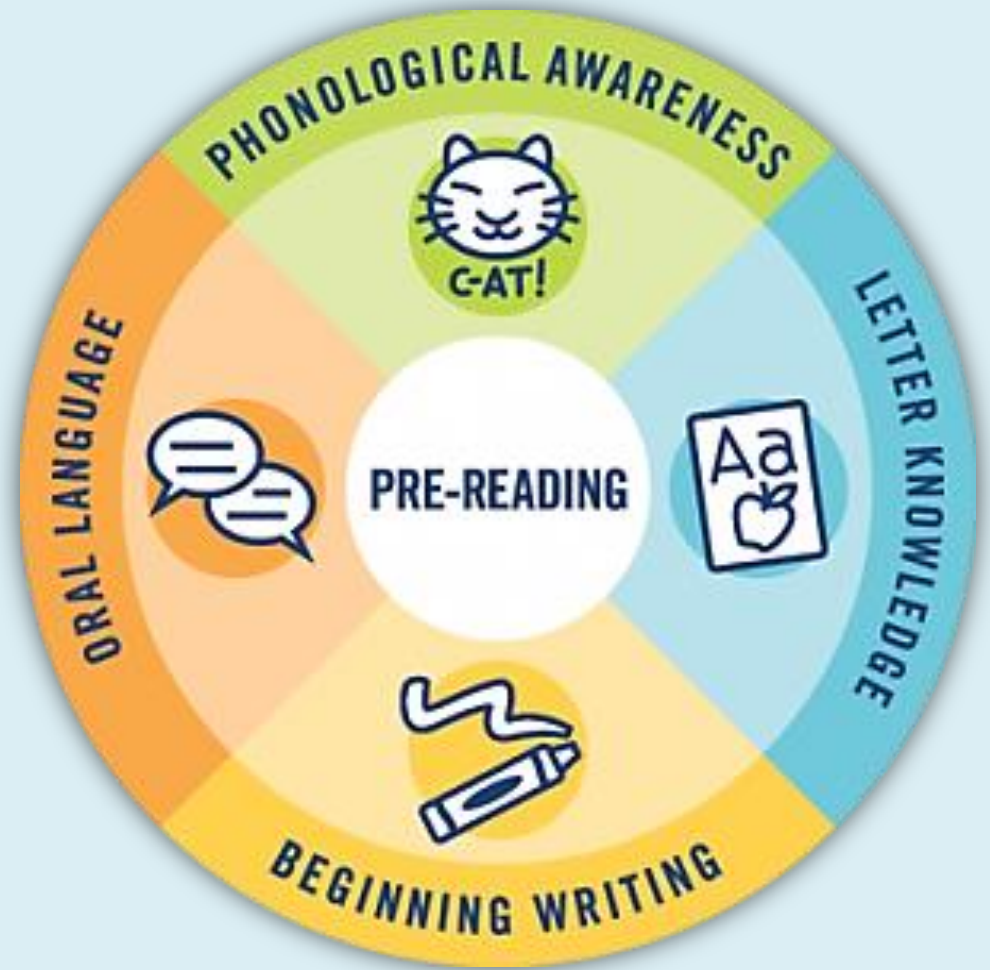


## *Choose activities that...*

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- reinforce classroom instruction and support the learning that is happening in school

# Choose activities that...

- help parents and caregivers take an active role in their child's development
- reinforce classroom instruction and support the learning that is happening in school
- introduce families to foundational literacy skills





**Phonological Awareness** is the understanding that spoken words can be divided into parts and each of those parts can be manipulated.



**Letter Knowledge** is the recognition and naming of letter names and letter sounds as well as the general understanding that print and pictures are processed differently.



**Beginning Writing** includes the understanding that we can show our thoughts through drawing and writing.



**Oral Language** includes the ability to understand spoken language and speak clearly to communicate with others.



# Phonological Awareness

## Infants and Toddlers

- Songs
- Stories
- Nursery Rhymes





# Phonological Awareness

## Infants and Toddlers

- Songs
- Stories
- Nursery Rhymes



## Prekindergarteners

- Syllables
- Compound Words
- Beginning Sounds
- Ending Sounds

# Letter Knowledge



## Infants and Toddlers

- Alphabet Books
- Letter Search
- Letter Play (puzzles or magnetic letters)





# Letter Knowledge



## Infants and Toddlers

- Alphabet Books
- Letter Search
- Letter Play (puzzles or magnetic letters)



## Prekindergarteners

- Letter Names
- Letter Sounds
- Letter Shapes



# *Beginning Writing*

## Infants and Toddlers

- Scribbling
- Finger Painting
- Collaging







# Beginning Writing

## Infants and Toddlers

- Scribbling
- Finger Painting
- Collaging



## Prekindergarteners

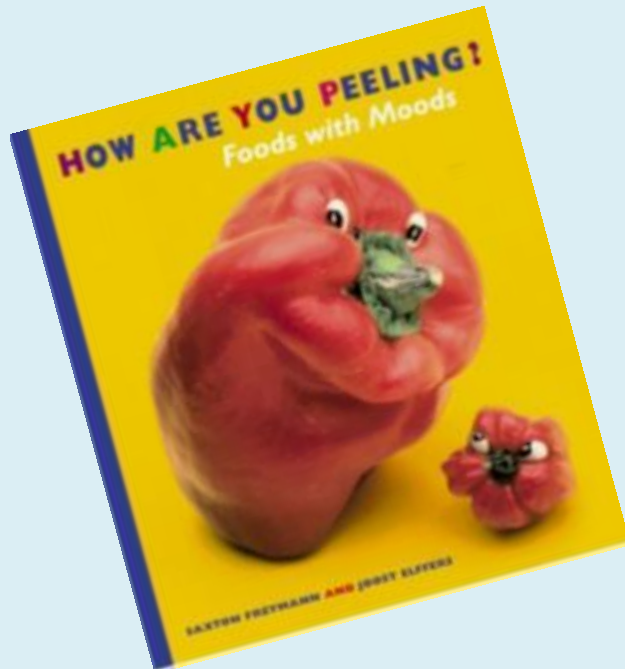
- Name Writing
- Letter Tracing
- Air Writing

# Oral Language



## Infants and Toddlers

- Talking
- Reading
- Back and Forth Exchanges

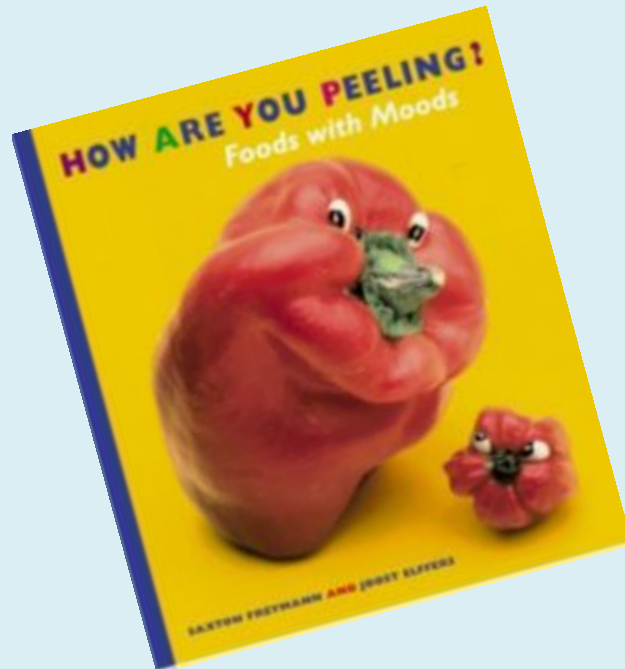


# Oral Language



## Infants and Toddlers

- Talking
- Reading
- Back and Forth Exchanges



## Prekindergarteners

- Conversations
- Story Telling
- Book Retelling

[www.readingbrightstart.org](http://www.readingbrightstart.org)



The image shows the full desktop version of the Reading BrightStart website. The header is teal with the logo "Nemours Reading BrightStart!" and navigation links: "Reading Skills by Age", "Articles for Parents", "At-Home Activities", "Recommended Books", and "About Us". The main banner features a woman reading to a young girl, with the text "Keep Your Child On Track." and a sub-heading "We're here to help you get your child on track to be a good reader and keep moving ahead. Know the milestones, take the screener and enjoy the activities!". A blue owl icon is on the left, and an orange button says "TAKE THE PRESCHOOL READING SCREENER". Below the banner is a green navigation bar for "Pre-Reading Milestones" with icons and labels for "Birth-5 Months", "6-11 Months", "12-17 Months", "18-23 Months", "24-31 Months", "3 Years", "4 Years", and "5 Years". The "What's New" section has a video player with a play button and the text "Why is the Preschool Reading Screener so important? Watch and learn." with a "READ MORE" button. Below this are three featured content cards: "September's Featured Article: Does Your Kindergarten Struggle with Beginning Reading Skills?", "September's Featured Activity: Oreo Glove Painting", and "September's Featured Book: Chu's First Day of School". Each card includes a brief description and a "Learn More" button. The footer contains a newsletter sign-up, copyright information for 2016, and social media icons for Facebook and Twitter.



# Articles for Parents

Nemours Children's Health System Home About Nemours BrightStart! Who is Nemours? Sign Up for E-Newsletter Our Partners Contact Us

Reading BrightStart!  
Reading Skills by Age Articles for Parents At-Home Activities Recommended Books

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## Articles for Parents

Browse a variety of reading topics from our experts in brain science, early learning and reading to help your child get on the path to reading success. Find tips to help build important reading skills from choosing the right book to read to ideas to make reading a part of your (and your child's) routine.

### Showing Up Every Day Makes A Difference!

Did you know that about one in 10 children in kindergarten and first grade are absent from school more than nine days a school year? These kids are missing instructional time essential for learning to read, and it's hard to make up for that loss.

### Using Children's Books to Help Manage Health Issues

Children with health issues can face unwelcome changes to their daily routines and relationships. For kids with health issues, the right books can help alleviate the mental and emotional burdens that accompany an illness.

### Let's Do It Again . . . and Again! Why is Repetition Important to Learning?

ReadingBrightStart.org has been designed to foster repetition through novel and creative activities. Repetition helps to improve speed, increases confidence, and strengthens the connections in the brain that help children learn.

Your child. Our promise.

Take the Free Preschool Reading Screener for children age 3-5

Reading BrightStart! Home

About Nemours BrightStart!

Reading Skills by Age

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## Ten Strategies to Help Your Child Become a Confident Writer



The first experiences children have with drawing and writing will shape their writing development as well as their interest and enthusiasm for writing. You can create a home literacy environment that will positively support your child's early attempts and will help her successfully advance through the often difficult and complex process of beginning writing.

Beginning writing occurs in stages that should be respected and celebrated. Some of these stages include:

- scribbling
- shapes that resemble letters
- random letters written together to resemble a word
- labeling pictures with beginning sounds
- experimenting with different spellings of words

Parents can promote fun and enjoyable writing experiences for all stages of beginning writing with the following ten strategies.

### 1. Create an Inviting Space for Drawing and Writing

Young children need a comfortable and inspiring space that allows them to experiment with drawing and writing. This may include appropriately sized tables and chairs as well as a sturdy work surface. If the lack of space or equipment is an issue, consider creating a cozy area with bean bags, throw pillows, and soft lighting.

### 2. Provide a Variety of Writing Tools

Offer your child the opportunity to experiment with different writing tools such as pencils, crayons, markers, colored pencils and chalk. Include magnetic writing surfaces and gel boards if your child has difficulties with the typical writing tools.

### 3. Provide a Variety of Writing Surfaces

Provide an assortment of paper, including large and small sheets of paper, lined and unlined paper, note pads, stationery and envelopes. You might also consider providing other writing surfaces such as a chalkboard, easel, clip board or dry-erase board.

### 4. Allow for Appropriate Drawing and Writing Opportunities

To help your child progress through the stages of writing, provide consistent and varied opportunities for her to draw and write each day or as often as possible.

### 5. Teach by Example

It is very important for young children to see the adults in their lives writing. It sends the message that writing is a form of communication. For this reason, find every opportunity to include your child in the writing process. The next time you make a shopping list, write a letter or model a drawing, invite your child to participate.

### 6. Allow Children the Freedom to Make Choices

Remember...young children *should* be able to express themselves freely through drawing and writing. Often, we lose sight of that goal and place pressure and high demands on young writers. Each child's choice to express his or her thoughts, ideas and feelings should be accepted, acknowledged and praised.

### 7. Provide Support and Guidance

Our role in the development of early writing is to provide encouragement and create confidence. Young children require support and guidance. Try these effective techniques:

- provide visual support (pictures or illustrations)
- provide verbal instructions to allow your child to construct an image in multiple steps

# Home Activities

Home > At-Home Activities

Reading BrightStart! Home

About Nemours BrightStart!

Reading Skills by Age

Articles for Parents

**At-Home Activities**

Birth to 5 Months

6 to 11 Months

12 to 17 Months

18 to 23 Months

24 to 35 Months

3-Year-Olds

4-Year-Olds

5-Year-Olds

Recommended Books



## At-Home Activities



The best way to fine tune your child's reading skills is to find time to practice every day. And most kids learn better when they're doing something they want to do, not because they have to. These kid-approved activities and games are fun and help build reading skills. They're simple enough to make part of your routine: during playtime, at meals and snacks, or when you're out and about.

### Recommended Activities

Sort activities by:

#### **New** Cabinet of Curiosity

**Oral Language** **24 to 36 Months**

**Prep:** 3 Minutes / **Activity Time:** 1-2 Minutes

In this game, you will combine a two-year-old's love of games and their natural curiosity into a sneaky game that develops an attention to language.

[Read More](#)



#### **New** Flip Your Lid!

**Oral Language** **18 to 23 Months**

**Prep:** 3 Minutes / **Activity Time:** 3 Minutes

Here is playful way to help your toddler develop his oral language, listening and thinking skills, which are all crucial to the development of literacy.

[Read More](#)



#### **New** Hall of Shapes

**Letter Knowledge** **24 to 36 Months**

**Prep:** 3 Minutes / **Activity Time:** 1-3 Minutes

At about two years old, children begin to notice the different shapes, lines and circles that appear in printed materials. Create a Hall of Shapes to help your child notice the features of print.

[Read More](#)

A promise to help every child reach their full potential.

[LEARN MORE](#)



**Nemours**  
Children's Health System  
Bridges to Wellness



#### **New** Ready, Set, Action!

**Oral Language** **4-Year-Olds**

**Prep:** 10 Minutes / **Activity Time:** 15 Minutes

Action words can be particularly difficult for children to learn. Here's an activity to help make learning action words fun!

[Read More](#)



#### **New** My Color Folder

**Letter Knowledge** **4-Year-Olds**

**Prep:** 15-20 Minutes / **Activity Time:** 5-10 Minutes

Make a folder game to help your child practice color words. It's an easy, inexpensive way to create a fun and interactive activity for your preschooler.

[Read More](#)



#### **New** Let's Make a Frame!

**Beginning Writing** **4-Year-Olds**

**Prep:** 5-10 Minutes / **Activity Time:** 15-20 Minutes

Through an easy sequence of folds, you and your child can make a picture frame out of paper. This activity is a fun, creative way for your child to practice both fine motor and beginning writing skills.

[Read More](#)



#### **My Letter is Lost!**

**Letter Knowledge** **4-Year-Olds**

**Prep:** 2-3 Minutes / **Activity Time:** 5-7 Minutes

This activity gives your child lots of opportunities to practice pairing of letter names and letter sounds.

[Read More](#)



#### **Mangos for Matilda**

**Beginning Writing** **4-Year-Olds**

**Prep:** 5 Minutes / **Activity Time:** 15-20 Minutes

Extend your child's learning through an imaginative writing activity designed to help her think about food allergies.

[Read More](#)

# Recommended Books

Home > Recommended Books

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About Nemours BrightStart

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Recommended Books

Birth to 3 Months

6 to 11 Months

12 to 17 Months

18 to 23 Months

24 to 35 Months

3-Year-Olds

4-Year-Olds

5-Year-Olds



## Recommended Books



### Why These Books?

The following books have been carefully selected by the Nemours BrightStart! early literacy specialists based on a number of characteristics such as:

- appropriateness for the age level
- quality of literature and appealing illustrations
- variety in genre
- appeal of the story or subject matter
- selection of well-known and less-known authors
- literary awards earned, such as the Caldecott Award

These books provide opportunities to teach children the four skills shown to predict reading success:

- oral language
- letter knowledge
- phonological awareness
- book knowledge

Keep your child excited about reading by checking back for new book lists and trying the suggested activities with other books your child enjoys.

### May's Featured Books

Sort books by: All Characteristics | All Ages | Sort

**Llama Llama mad at mama** New **Llama Llama Mad at Mama**

18 to 24 Months | Picture/Concept | Predictable Text

Have you ever gone shopping with your child on a day when he just doesn't want to go? That's what happens when Mama Llama takes her little one, Llama Llama, out for a day of shopping.

[Read More](#)

**Tuck Me In!** New **Tuck Me In!**

18 to 24 Months | Picture/Concept

This adorable, interactive book lets your toddler learn about and tuck in different baby animals during their bedtime, a perfect way to get him ready for sleep at his bedtime!

[Read More](#)

**Brush, Brush, Brush!** New **Brush, Brush, Brush!**

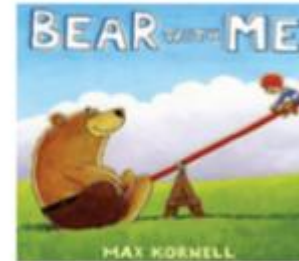
18 to 24 Months | Language | Picture/Concept

This cute, informative book with illustrations by Alicia Patron will show your toddler how fun it can be to brush her teeth!

[Read More](#)



## Bear With Me



Author: **Max Kornell**

4 Year-Olds | Storybooks

When Owen's parents bring home a bear named Gary to complete their family, Owen is not happy at all. Gary is new and different - and Owen is expected to share his parents, his room and even his toys! Though it takes Owen time to get used to Gary, he grows to love him and all the ways Gary brings joy to his life.

### Before, During and After Reading

- + Before the Story
- During the Story

#### Oral Language

**Discuss what you read and see.** Owen talks about how his mom and dad brought home a surprise. Ask your child what he thinks that surprise could be. Talk about the illustrations as you read the book, especially the pages that are illustrations without text. Ask your child what he sees, what he thinks is happening or what he thinks will happen.

#### Letter Knowledge

There are two *b* words that repeat throughout the story: bear and blocks. Point out that both bear and blocks begin with the letter *b* and that *b* makes the /b/ sound. As you read, encourage your child to find other words that begin with *b*, like the words bedtime and backyard. Reinforce the letter name, *b*, and the letter sound, /b/.

This can be done with different letters, like the letter *s*. Find words that begin with that letter; tell your child the letter name and its sound.

- + After the Story







# Take the Free Preschool Reading Screener for children age 3-5

1. Answer the questions
2. Scores are calculated
3. Receive a customized action plan

The screenshot shows the home page of the Preschool Reading Screener. It features a navigation bar with three buttons: "Start", "Answer Reading Readiness Questions", and "Results & Action Plan". The "Start" button is highlighted. Below the navigation bar is the title "Preschool Reading Screener" and a subtitle "This Screener is intended only for parents of children ages 3, 4 and 5." There is a red asterisk indicating a required field. The form includes a certification statement "I certify that I am a legal adult in my state of residence \*", radio buttons for "Child's age?" (3, 4, 5), "Child's gender:" (MALE, FEMALE), a dropdown menu for "State of Residence", and another dropdown menu for "Child's ethnicity/race:". A disclaimer at the bottom states "Screener is not intended for diagnostic purposes. See your child's pediatrician if you suspect your child is struggling with developing age-appropriate skills." A "Get Started" button is located at the bottom left.

The screenshot shows the "Answer Reading Readiness Questions" page. It features a navigation bar with three buttons: "Start", "Answer Reading Readiness Questions", and "Results & Action Plan". The "Answer Reading Readiness Questions" button is highlighted. Below the navigation bar is the title "Preschool Reading Screener" and a subtitle "Read each of the following 31 items and check 'Yes' if you are confident your child routinely succeeds with that item. If you are not confident your child is successful with the item, check 'No.'" There are two sections of questions: "Oral Language" and "Letter Knowledge". Each section has a list of items with "Yes" and "No" radio buttons. The "Oral Language" section includes 10 items, and the "Letter Knowledge" section includes 8 items. At the bottom, there is a section for "Phonological Awareness" with a question mark icon.

**Oral Language**

- Yes No Likes listening to stories that I read aloud \*
- Yes No Follows simple two- and three-step directions \*
- Yes No Continuously understands and uses new words \*
- Yes No Retells a basic sequence of steps from an activity (such as baking cookies) or a story \*
- Yes No Connects own feelings and experiences to stories we read together \*
- Yes No Answers questions about experiences and stories in complete sentences \*
- Yes No Identifies common signs in the community (restaurants, stores) \*
- Yes No Uses a variety of descriptive words when talking (such as "gigantic," "excited," "frustrated," "patient," "ridiculous") \*
- Yes No Asks questions to clarify or extend conversations \*

**Letter Knowledge**

- Yes No Recognizes his or her own name in print \*
- Yes No Sings, says or recites the letters of the alphabet \*
- Yes No Names some letters, especially those in his or her name \*
- Yes No Points correctly to some letters as I name them \*
- Yes No Points correctly to some letters as I name the letter sound ("Which letter makes the /b/ sound?") \*
- Yes No Says the correct letter sound as I point to letters ("What sound does this letter make?") \*
- Yes No Can identify at least 18 uppercase letters as I point to them \*

**Phonological Awareness**





Nemours  BrightStart!

**Thank You!**

