

Linnea Puckett

EDUC 304- Research Paper

Literacy goes by different definitions. Alberta Education describes literacy as the desire and ability to engage in one's language to understand and communicate meaning into one's life (Alberta Education). Britannica describes literacy as the ability to communicate signs or symbols that represent language (Britannica). Lastly, 3P Learning sees literacy as a complex understanding of reading and writing (Jackson Best). The literacy definition I connect to the most would be Alberta Education's definition. The desire and ability to engage in one's language to understand and communicate meaning into one's life. When learning to read and write, I found myself understanding concepts better when they meant something to me.

The eight components of the literacy program are; phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, listening, and speaking. Phonological awareness is defined by Reading Rockets as "a broad skill that includes identifying and manipulating units of oral language – parts such as words, syllables, and onsets and rimes"(Reading Rockets). Phonological awareness is critical to teaching any language and any alphabetic system. Victoria State Government states; "Developing strong competencies in phonological awareness is important for all students, as the awareness of the sounds in words and syllables is critical to hearing and segmenting the words students want to spell, and blending the sounds in words that students read" (education.vic.gov.au). According to Reading Rockets, some examples of classroom practices that encourage the growth of phonological awareness are; Rhyming games and Elkonin boxes. Rhyming is a big part of phonological awareness. Rhyming games include ideas such as creating rhyme books where students draw pictures of things that rhyme or cut out things that rhyme from magazines and put them in their book. Elkonin Boxes

are useful to phonological awareness for segmenting words into individual sounds. According to Reading Rocket; “To use Elkonin boxes, a child listens to a word and moves a token into a box for each sound or phoneme. In some cases, different colored tokens may be used for consonants and vowels or just for each phoneme in the word” (Reading Rocket).

Phonemic Awareness according to Reading Rocket is “The ability to notice, think about, and work with the individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Manipulating the sounds in words includes bending, stretching, or otherwise changing words” (Reading Rocket). Much like Phonological awareness, Phonemic awareness is important for teaching because it helps children connect the letter-sound relationship to read and spell words. According to *Phonemic awareness helps beginning readers break the code*; “... it (Phonemic awareness) plays a critical role in learning skills requiring the manipulation of phonemes—specifically word recognition and spelling” (Priscilla L. Griffith, Mary W. Olson). Some classroom practices of Phonemic awareness to use are; Stories like *Don't Forget the Bacon*, and writing experiences. The story *Don't forget the Bacon*, is a fun story about a kid that makes his way to the store with a list. According to *Phonemic awareness helps beginning readers break the code*, The boy walks down the streets rehearsing the list, but he switches phonemes in some words which lead to the words on the list changing. Having the children role-play the story will encourage growth in Phonemic awareness. Writing experiences is more than just simply writing or copying things in a notebook. It is about children getting a chance to connect their oral language understanding into words on a page. According to *Phonemic awareness helps beginning readers break the code* “When children write they have to face head-on the problem of mapping spoken language onto written language” (Priscilla L. Griffith, et. al).

Phonics According to *National Literacy Trust* is “Matching the sounds of spoken English with individual letters or groups of letters” (literacytrust.org.uk). Phonics instruction is important because it connects phonemes with written letters so that student can transfer their knowledge of sounds to the printed words. It helps students recognize unfamiliar written words by sounding them out. Classroom practices that encourage the growth of phonics are relatively similar to Phonemic awareness and Phonological awareness. Some simple classroom practices according to *How to teach kids to read through phonics* are; I spy but have them look for something based on a sound instead of the letter, like “I spy something that says aaa.” Also, Bingo is a great source too. “Bingo is another very versatile game that can be used to practice sound and letter recognition. Simply decide what you want to work on and place those into suitably sized grids (9x9 works well). These could be initial consonants, vowel digraphs, or pictures of nouns” (Shane Mac Donnchaidh).

Fluency according to Reading Rocket is “The ability to read with speed, accuracy, and proper expression” (Reading Rocket). Fluency is important to teach because it helps children understand the expression and speed at which a book should be read. It is the part of the reading that makes a book interesting to a kid. Children love listening to stories that use voices for each character, giving the character flavor. Some classroom practices that can encourage fluency are; Read aloud. Children listen to a teacher reading a book and this encourages fluency because they can listen to how the teacher reads it. They will listen to the voice modulation, pausing, and expression. Another example would be group reading, this is very similar to read aloud. Working in a group, students can give each other criticism about how something sounded when they were read aloud to the group by a student. This can help with correction and encourage the student to change how they read in the future.

Comprehension according to *K12 Reader* is “The act of understanding what you are reading” (k12reader.com). Being able to read is important for sure but if you cannot comprehend what you are reading then what is the use, right? This is why it is so important to teach reading comprehension. Some Classroom practices that would help with comprehension are; Story questionnaires, where students are asked questions related to the story varying in level and depth, and Short storyboards. Students listen to a short story and after they must put pictures associated with the story in order on a board with the assistance of fellow peers and teacher.

Vocabulary according to Reading Rocket is “The words we must understand to communicate effectively’ (Reading Rocket). Vocabulary is important to teach because many times children will see a new word and not truly understand what it means. With vocabulary, a student gets an understanding of what the word means in the context it is in. Classroom practices to use are; Simple vocab list. Have a list of words you learn during the day at school for students to go over and use in the future. Word of the day is also very useful, have a word that is defined on the board in the morning that will be used during the day of class in many contexts.

Listening is simply described as taking in the information or instruction given to you orally and applying it. The importance of teaching listening is pretty simple. If you don’t teach children to listen to what is being said, then how will they ever learn what you are trying to teach? Some classroom practices that encourage listening are; Read aloud. If you read the book aloud, this encourages students to listen to you. Also, listening games like Simon says, Mother may I, and What time is it, Mr. Fox. Each game requires students to listen carefully to what the teacher says to advance in the game.

Speaking is described as oral (or computerized and sign in the case of mute/deaf) communication used between people. Teaching children how to speak in public is a skill that will

prove useful for future endeavors in Education or careers. Some Classroom practices that encourage speaking are; Oral presentations/speeches where you allow a student to present on a topic of interest to them or related to what you have been learning in the classroom. And call and answer practice where you ask a question that has a general answer or you give a statement that you want students to echo and you have the whole class participate in answering or echoing.

Works cited;

What is literacy? (2001). Alberta Education.

<https://education.alberta.ca/literacy-and-numeracy/literacy/everyone/what-is-literacy/?searchMode=3>

Foley, J. M. (2019, August 28). *literacy | Definition, History, & Facts*. Encyclopedia

Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/literacy>

Best, J. (2021, February 2). *What is Literacy and Why is it Important?* 3P Learning.

<https://www.3plearning.com/blog/literacy-important/>

Phonological and Phonemic Awareness. (2016, April 14). Reading Rockets.

<https://www.readingrockets.org/helping/target/phonologicalphonemic>

Phonological awareness. (2020, March 18). Education and Training.

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/literacy/readingviewing/Pages/litfocusphonological.aspx#:~:text=%E2%80%8B%E2%80%8B%E2%80%8BPhonological%20awareness,such%20as%20rhyme%20and%20alliteration>

Rhyming Games | Classroom Strategy. (2020, October 26). Reading Rockets.

https://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/rhyming_games

Elkonin Boxes | Classroom Strategy. (2019, December 9). Reading Rockets.

https://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/elkonin_boxes

Griffith, P. L., & Olson, M. W. (2004). *Phonemic awareness helps beginning readers break the code*. c2s2_4phonawhelps.doc.

http://lcwu.edu.pk/ocd/cfiles/Professional%20Studies/CoC/B.Ed.-408/c2s2_4phonawhelps.pdf

What is phonics? (2017). National Literacy Trust.

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/information/what-is-literacy/what-phonics/>

Donnchaidh, S. M. (n.d.). *A guide to teaching phonics (with activities)*. Literacy Ideas.

Retrieved February 24, 2021, from

<https://www.literacyideas.com/how-to-teach-phonics>

Fluency. (2016, April 14). Reading Rockets.

<https://www.readingrockets.org/helping/target/fluency>

What is Reading Comprehension? (2014, August 21). Reading Worksheets, Spelling, Grammar, Comprehension, Lesson Plans.

<https://www.k12reader.com/what-is-reading-comprehension/>

Vocabulary. (2019, December 10). Reading Rockets.

<https://www.readingrockets.org/helping/target/vocabulary>

