



## EMERGENT WRITING PRESENTER NOTES

This guide walks you through presenting the emergent writing in-service suite for American Indian/Alaska Native programs (AIAN). This in-service suite includes PowerPoint slides and supporting materials. The main PowerPoint presentation and optional slides were developed for all professional audiences (teachers, home visitors, family child care providers) working in AIAN programs or supporting AIAN children and families. Additionally, separate PowerPoint slides were developed for use with home visitors. Learning activities, tip sheets, and activity sheets are appropriately labeled for their intended audience.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Presenter PowerPoint Slides
- Introductory Video (found on the ECLKC website)
- Projector and Audio Equipment
- Flip Chart or Large Paper
- Markers

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- This presentation provides participants with information to support children's writing development and connect emergent writing to cultural lifeways, values, and practices to support school readiness.
- Encourage participants to view this presentation and think about how it pertains to AI/AN children in their center or home-based settings.
- Adaptation boxes individualize this training for your specific training group.

### LIST OF AVAILABLE CONTENT:

#### HANDOUTS

- What is Culture?
- Tips for Education Staff—Multicultural Principles for Early Childhood Leaders
- Making It Work Cycle
- Emergent Writing Stretches Across ELOF Domains
- Tips for Families—What is Emergent Writing?
- Tips for Education Staff—Supporting Emergent Writing
- Tips for Education Staff—Supporting Children who are Learning a Tribal Language
- Tips for Home Visitors—Supporting Children who are Learning a Tribal Language
- Learning Activity for Education Staff—Supporting Emergent Writing
- Learning Activity for Home Visitors—Supporting Emergent Writing
- Learning Activity for Families—Supporting Emergent Writing
- Learning Activity for Education Staff—Studying Children's Emergent Writing
- Learning Activity for Home Visitors—Studying Children's Emergent Writing
- Learning Activity for Families—Studying Children's Emergent Writing
- Tips for Education Staff—Engaging Families
- Tips for Home Visitors—Engaging Families



- Activities for Families—Emergent Writing at Home
- Tools for Supervisors and Coaches—Planning for Emergent Writing
- Helpful Resources

OPTIONAL HANDOUTS

- Head Start Performance Standards Support Writing, Language, and Culture

OPTIONAL SLIDES

- Optional Slide 1: Head Start Program Performance Standards Support Writing
- Optional Slide 2: Head Start Program Performance Standards Support Writing
- Optional Slide 3: Head Start Program Performance Standards Support Language and Culture
- Optional Slide 4: Head Start Program Performance Standards Support Language and Culture

OPTIONAL SLIDES FOR HOME-BASED CARE (HOME VISITORS ONLY)

- HV Optional Slide 1: Title Slide
- HV Optional Slide 2: HSPPS Support Writing
- HV Optional Slide 3: HSPPS Support Language and Culture
- HV Optional Slide 4: HSPPS Support Language and Culture
- HV Optional Slide 5: HSPPS Support Writing
- HV Optional Slide 6: Center-Based and Family Child Care Practices
- HV Optional Slide 7: Home Visit Practices
- HV Optional Slide 8: What’s Different for a Home Visitor?
- HV Optional Slide 9: Theory of Change for Home-Based
- HV Optional Slide 10: Parents Can Support Early Writing
- HV Optional Slide 11: Parents Can Support Later Writing
- HV Optional Slide 12: Learning Activity: Writing in your Setting

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

SLIDE	HANDOUTS NEEDED	HOME VISITOR POWERPOINT ADAPTATION	HOME VISITOR HANDOUTS	OPTIONAL SLIDES	OPTIONAL HANDOUTS
1. Writing Introduction		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Replace with HV Optional Slide 1</li> </ul>			
2. Every Individual is Rooted in Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is Culture?</li> <li>▪ Tips for Education Staff- Multicultural Principles for Early Childhood Leaders</li> </ul>				
3. Two-Eyed Seeing					



SLIDE	HANDOUTS NEEDED	HOME VISITOR POWERPOINT ADAPTATION	HOME VISITOR HANDOUTS	OPTIONAL SLIDES	OPTIONAL HANDOUTS
4. Emergent Writing Stretches Across ELOF Domains					
5. Emergent Writing Stretches Across ELOF Domains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emergent Writing Stretches across the ELOF Domains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HV Optional Slides 2-5</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optional Slides 1-4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HSPPS Support Writing, Culture, and Language</li> </ul>
6. House Framework for Effective Teaching Practices					
7. House Framework for Effective Teaching Practices					
8. Making It Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making It Work Cycle</li> </ul>				
9. Language and Culture Matter					
10. Not all Languages are written					
11. Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Practices					
12. Objectives		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insert HV Optional Slides 6-9 after Objectives</li> </ul>			
13. Emergent Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is Emergent Writing? (F)</li> </ul>				
14. Definition of Emergent Writing					
15. Early Stages of Emergent Writing Development					



SLIDE	HANDOUTS NEEDED	HOME VISITOR POWERPOINT ADAPTATION	HOME VISITOR HANDOUTS	OPTIONAL SLIDES	OPTIONAL HANDOUTS
16. Early Stages of Emergent Writing					
17. Middle Stages of Emergent Writing					
18. Middle Stages of Emergent Writing					
19. Late Stages of Emergent Writing					
20. Late Stages of Emergent Writing					
21. Supporting Emergent Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting Emergent Writing (ES)</li> </ul>				
22. Parent, Family, and Community Engagement					
23. Creating a Learning Environment					
24. Supporting the Earliest Stages of Writing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace with HV Optional Slide 10</li> </ul>			
25. Supporting Middle and Later Stages of Writing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace with HV Optional Slide 11</li> </ul>			
26. Supporting the Emergent Writing of All Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting Children who are Learning a Tribal Language (ES)</li> <li>Learning Activity: Supporting Emergent Writing (ES, F)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting Children who are Learning a Tribal Language (HV)</li> <li>Learning Activity: Supporting Emergent Writing (HV, F)</li> </ul>		
27. Pre-writing Strategy: Story knife					



SLIDE	HANDOUTS NEEDED	HOME VISITOR POWERPOINT ADAPTATION	HOME VISITOR HANDOUTS	OPTIONAL SLIDES	OPTIONAL HANDOUTS
28. Activity: Writing in your Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning Activity: Studying Children's Emergent Writing (ES, F)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace with HV Optional Slide 12</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning Activity: Studying Children's Emergent Writing (HV, F)</li> </ul>		
29. Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging Families (ES)</li> <li>Emergent Writing at Home (F)</li> <li>Helpful Resources</li> <li>Tools for Supervisors and Coaches</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging Families (HV)</li> <li>Emergent Writing at Home (F)</li> </ul>		

ES: Indicates Tips/Activity Sheet for Education Staff

HV: Indicates Tips/Activity Sheet for Home Visitor

F: Indicates Tips/Activity Sheet for Families



## SLIDE 1:

Welcome and Introductions:

- Begin the training by giving participants background information about yourself.
- Give participants an opportunity to introduce themselves. Encourage them to use their tribal language to introduce themselves.

## ICEBREAKER

- Have participants write their full name with their dominant hand. Now have them switch hands and try to write their full name again. Ask the following questions:
  - What was it like to write your name with your non-dominant hand? What were your initial feelings?
  - What skills did you use writing with your non-dominant hand?
    - Physical skills
    - Cognitive skills
    - Social and emotional skills
  - How and when did you learn to write in your native language?

Tell participants: These are some of the same feelings that children may feel when they begin writing. It takes trying out some new skills when learning to write. Furthermore, not all tribal communities have a written language, so it is important to be aware and knowledgeable of the various ways families support children's development through stories, traditions, and through tribal lifeways. Today we will explore early writing for children birth to age 5. We will discuss the stages of writing and how to support children's writing development in each stage. We will also learn how writing is connected to the Early Learning Outcomes Framework and school readiness.

## ADAPTATION FOR HOME VISITORS:

- Replace current slide with HV Optional Slide 1



## SLIDE 2:

As we explore emergent writing, it is important to recognize that culture influences beliefs and behaviors. As cited in Multicultural Principles for Early Childhood Leaders, Principle #1, “culture influences every aspect of human development and is reflected in childrearing beliefs and practices.” Let’s define culture and discuss how it influences the way we present and learn these concepts in this in-service suite.

Culture is:

- A set of values, knowledge and traditions.
- Always changing and evolving.
- Language, art, morals, and customs.
- Child rearing and educational practices.

Culture is important because:

- It links the home and classroom environments.
- It enhances children’s learning experiences.
- It affects the way children learn.
- It influences what families and communities think is important.

Provide time to discuss culture and their definitions.

## RESOURCE

Multicultural Principles for Early Childhood Leaders, Learning Extension Principle 1: Every Individual is Rooted in Culture:

<https://eclkc.obs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/multicultural-principles-learning-extensions-principle-01.pdf>

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: What Is Culture?
- Handout: Tips for Education Staff—Multicultural Principles for Early Childhood Leaders



## Two-Eyed Seeing



*“Two-Eyed Seeing asks us to see our strengths, the best in our ways of knowing, while also asking us to respect and celebrate our differences. Two-Eyed Seeing acknowledges the necessity of formal structure yet that it must be permeable to and receptive of new understandings and opportunities, i.e., understandings associated with ‘Spirit of the East’ which brings the ‘gift of newness, of transformation.’”*



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### SLIDE 3:

NOTE TO PRESENTER:

Read the slide.

The descriptive label Two-Eyed Seeing seeks to avoid portraying the situation as a “clash of knowledges” or as contributing to “knowledge domination or assimilation.” We recognize that in one set of circumstances we may choose to call upon the strengths within Indigenous science, and Western Science in another set of circumstances. Thus, Two-Eyed Seeing will often require a “weaving back and forth” between these two perspectives.

It intentionally and respectfully brings together our different knowledges to motivate people, Aboriginal\*, or non-Aboriginal alike to leave the world in a better place. This keeps the opportunities for our youth (in the sense of Seven Generations) from being compromised by our inaction.

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RESOURCE:

Integrative Science/Toqwa’tu’kl Kjjitaqnn: The story of our journey in bringing together Indigenous and Western scientific knowledges: <http://www.integrativescience.ca/uploads/articles/2011-Bartlett-Integrative-Science-Mikmarwey-Debert-Chapter-17-proofs.pdf> (page 4)





# Writing Stretches Across ELOF Domains



		CENTRAL DOMAINS				
		APPROACHES TO LEARNING	SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	COGNITION	PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR, AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
▲ INFANT/TODDLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Cognition	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development	
● PRESCHOOLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Mathematics Development	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development	
			Literacy	Scientific Reasoning		



## SLIDE 4:

The ELOF provides language to help teachers, family child care providers, and home visitors understand child development from a western perspective and support children’s development of skills that they will need to succeed in school. Home visitors support families’ understanding of child development and promote engaging interactions between parents and their children. It provides a guide for the implementation of effective program and teaching practices that promote strong outcomes for all children, including children with disabilities or suspected delays, children who are dual language learners, and those speaking or learning to speak and write their tribal language.

Head Start Program Performance Standards state that “A program that serves American Indian and Alaska Native children may integrate efforts to preserve, revitalize, or restore, or maintain the tribal language for these children into program services.” Our challenge as a program is incorporating cultural traditions, values, and lifeways into our day-to-day work. We need to help children develop the skills identified by the ELOF while supporting a child’s cultural identity.

Writing is embedded in multiple ELOF goals within the Approaches to Learning, Language and Literacy, Cognition, and Perceptual Motor and Physical Development domains.



## Writing Stretches Across ELOF Domains



- Approaches to Learning
  - Initiative and Curiosity (Infant)
  - Creativity (Infant/Toddler & Preschool)
- Language and Literacy
  - Language and Communication (Infant/Toddler)
  - Literacy (Preschool)
- Cognition
  - Imitation and Symbolic Representation and Play (Infant/Toddler)
  - Counting and Cardinality (Preschool)
- Perceptual Motor and Physical Development
  - Fine Motor (Infant/Toddler & Preschool)



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### SLIDE 5:

#### FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

- Emergent writing begins with children's natural initiative and curiosity—found in the Approaches to Learning domain. This domain is about how children learn, rather than what they learn. Young children begin to show interest in object and materials in their environment and use creativity through drawing and painting to increase their understanding and learning.
- Provide meaningful, intentional, and targeted opportunities to infuse culture into the classroom so young children can develop these critical skills while fostering cultural identity and pride.
- By 8 months of age, children's perceptual motor and physical development allows them to intentionally reach for writing materials and use growing hand-eye coordination skills to make marks on paper and enjoy exploring language and literacy using various writing materials.
- By 36 months toddlers understand that written symbols have meaning which is found in the Cognition domain.

#### FOR PRESCHOOLERS

- Preschoolers communicate in many ways, including writing and drawing, to creatively express their thoughts and ideas through their many approaches to learning.
- Children exercise their literacy skills by writing. This area of development ranges from drawing and scribbling to making letter-like forms to using invented spelling.
- Preschoolers begin to understand how print works when looking at words and letters. They also begin to understand number symbols and can associate a quantity with the written numerals, growing in the Cognition domain.
- In physical development, preschoolers begin drawing simple shapes like circles. As they develop, they begin drawing letter-like forms. By the end of preschool, children begin to hold writing materials with moderate levels of precision and control—using a pincer grasp when holding a writing tool.
- Teach children in their tribal language to connect writing skills to their families, cultures, and developmental goals. Storytelling remains a big part of many indigenous cultures. Stories are passed down from generation to generation and remain a primary form of preserving history, passing down traditions, and sharing customs.



- Many AIAN cultures engage children in family and community cultural activities. Through these hands-on experiences, children make necessary connections between their cultural values and their perspective of the world around them. Native American children tend to be more visual learners, learning through observation and demonstration as taught by their parents and/or elders.

Written language looks different from tribe to tribe. Understand what writing looks like for the children you work with (symbols, pictures, tilde, etc.) and incorporate familiar words in the learning environment. Allow children to see their written home or tribal language and offer opportunities to practice writing. For cultural groups without a written language, talk with families about including storytelling or non-written language into the learning environment.

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: Emergent Writing Stretches Across ELOF Domains

#### OPTIONAL FOR HS/EHS:


- Insert: Optional Slides 1-4
- Handout: Head Start Performance Standards Supports Emergent Writing, Culture, and Language

#### ADAPTATION FOR HOME VISITORS:


- Insert: HV Optional Slides 2-5
- Handout: Head Start Performance Standards Supports Emergent Writing, Culture, and Language



# Framework for Effective Practice



... 15-Minute ...  
In-Service Suites



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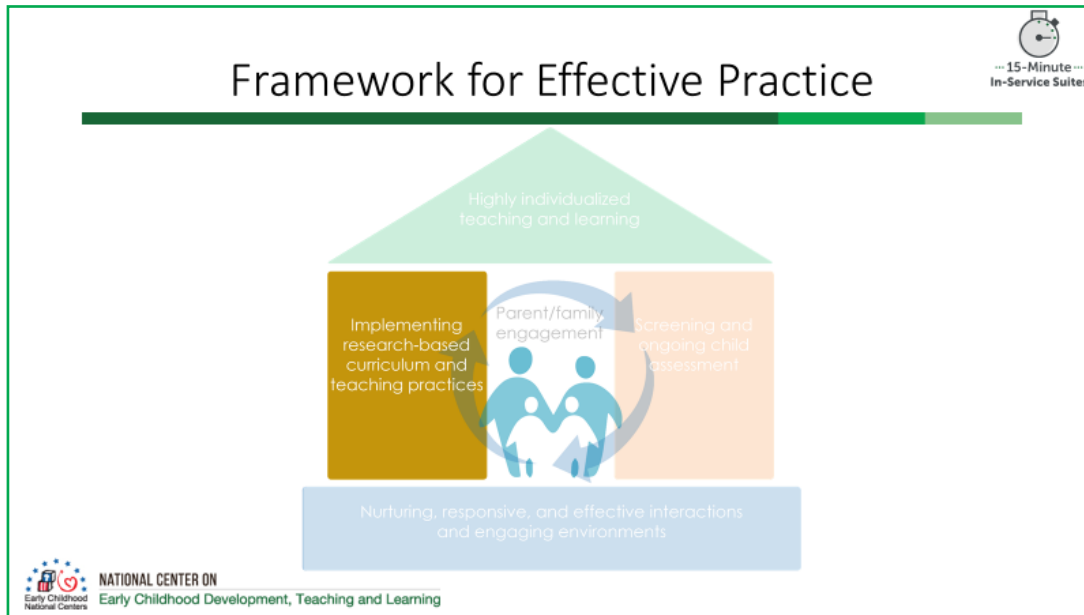
Early Childhood National Centers

**SLIDE 6:**

The Framework for Effective Teaching Practices is known as the House. The House represents five integral components of quality teaching and learning.

- The foundation: Nurturing, responsive, and effective interactions and engaging environments
- The first pillar: Implementing research-based curricula and teaching practices
- The second pillar: Screening and ongoing child assessment
- The roof: Highly individualized teaching and learning
- The center: Parent and family engagement

When connected with one another, they form a single structure—the House Framework—that surrounds the family in the center. As we implement each component of the house—in partnership with parents and families—we foster children’s learning and development.



### SLIDE 7:

Here, we focus on the left pillar—implementing research-based curriculum and teaching practices. It’s important to keep in mind that setting up the classroom and supporting emergent writing promotes a highly engaging environment for young learners (part of the foundation of the House Framework). Remember that at the center of this framework is the family. Teaching practices must support the ways learning takes place in traditional Native American cultures, respecting individual learning styles and cultural values.

Although most children will progress through the different writing levels around the same time, it will also be important for teachers to individualize teaching practices and for home visitors to support parents as they cater to each child and provide learning opportunities that support their development. Children can learn these skills through engaging environments and interactions during cultural activities at home and in the community.



## Making It Work is a Resource

We were always trying to integrate culture into the curriculum—the science domain, the math domain, etc. Then we realized that culture should be at the base, serving as the foundation, the building block for curriculum development. It was an amazing paradigm shift! We are now making huge gains in integrating language and culture into our early childhood programming.

—The Red Cliff Early Childhood Center



The Making It Work Cycle



### SLIDE 8:

NOTE TO PRESENTER:

Read the quote. Briefly introduce the Making It Work (MIW) cycle.

Making It Work is a resource you can use to connect the dots.

Tribes and native communities have always known what research now tells us—when programs integrate culture and language into the classroom’s daily activities of and engage families in those activities, children are supported in

- developing a positive sense of self;
- achieving successful child outcomes;
- learning two languages; and
- knowing their community, family, and cultural values, which promotes their resilience and well-being.

RESOURCE:

Making It Work (2017): <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/no-search/making-it-work-2017.pdf>

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: Making it Work Cycle



## Language and Culture Matter

...15-Minute...  
In-Service Suites

Without language, the canoe, paddle, water, seat, the birds you hear are different than what our ancestors experienced. If you know the language, then you know what our ancestors heard, saw, felt, and experienced.

—Zalmai “Zeke” Zahir,  
University of Oregon



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### SLIDE 9:

NOTE TO PRESENTER:

Put the slide up and let participants read it. Point out how important language and culture is in everyday activities in the classroom. Keep this in mind as we talk about emergent writing and learning.





## Not All Languages Are Written!

... 15-Minute ...  
In-Service Suites

- Not all Native American languages have a standard writing system
- The importance of oral language for the preservation of cultural knowledge
- Tribal Language Revitalization in Head Start and Early Head Start



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### SLIDE 10:

It is important to note that not all Native American languages have a standard system of writing. Some tribes have worked with linguists and other means to develop a system, however there are some that believe their language should not be written at all. For instance, some Shoshone believe that “writing the language down offers a path for outsiders to potentially exploit cultural knowledge that is intended only for Native people.” Another perspective is that of the WWII Code Talkers, who maintain an oral language. Native American soldiers used their Native language to pass on tactical messages that could not be deciphered by the enemy.

In addition, others have struggled with a written form of their language due to the varying dialects within their language.

Keep in mind language is not literacy! Language is the spoken or signed system for communication and literacy is the way the language is represented using a writing system.

It is important to note that The Office of Head Start has developed many resources to help support Native language teaching and learning.

### RESOURCES:

Broncho, S. 2016. How Do You Learn a Language That Isn't Written Down?

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/how-do-you-learn-language-isnt-written-down>

A Report on Tribal Language Revitalization in Head Start and Early Head Start

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/report-tribal-language-revitalization.pdf>






# Culturally and Linguistic Responsive Practices

... 15-Minute ...  
In-Service Suites

## Sources of Developmentally Appropriate Practices

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graph TD; A["Daily Program Operations/Service Delivery"] --- B["Child Development Research"]; A --- C["Individual Child Assessment"]; A --- D["Cultural & Linguistic Contexts of the Child, Family, & Community"]
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SLIDE 11:

When we look at AIAN programs, the most striking difference is that the foundation for learning is the child’s culture, language, and involvement with families and community. Effective teaching practices embed culture and language within everyday activities and the classroom environments.

RESOURCE:

Multicultural Principle 4  
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/principle-04-english.pdf>



## Session Objectives



- **Identify** the significance of young children’s emergent writing for school readiness
- **Describe** what emergent writing looks like in young children
- **Implement** practical ways to begin to support emergent writing in your care setting
- **Learn strategies** to use the *Steps and Introduction to Making It Work Guide* to integrate culture and language in lesson plans to assist with integration of culture and language in lesson plans for writing



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### SLIDE 12:

- By the end of this presentation you should be able to: (Read the objectives.)
- Ask if anyone wants to request something, they want to be able to do by the end of this session

### ADAPTATION FOR HOME VISITORS:

- Insert HV Optional Slides 6-9 to provide a foundation on home visiting practices



## Emergent Writing

Overview & Development

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### SLIDE 13:

Today, we're going to focus on understanding and supporting young children's emergent writing. We will begin with an overview of what we mean by "emergent writing," followed by an overview of the stages of emergent writing.

It is important to note that there may be differences in how native children develop emergent writing. Some may be founded in traditional native culture and language, others grow up in western cultural traditions, and often you'll see a combination of both.

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: Tips for Families—What is Emergent Writing?



## Definition of Emergent Writing

- Children’s early attempts at writing begin with random marks and drawings and advances to invented and conventional spelling
- Children as young as 2 years understand that writing has meaning and communicates ideas



### SLIDE 14:

- Children’s earliest attempts at written communication are often called “emergent writing.” As we’ll see and discuss in the following slides, this includes everything from scribbles, to drawing, to invented, and, eventually, more conventional spelling. These stages are important to writing development and adults should encourage and promote.
- Even children’s drawings, with no attempts at letter or word writing, provide us with the important insight that children are beginning to understand that writing, even in this early form, communicates ideas or feelings. They are learning how printed language works.
  - Research shows that children as young as 2 may begin to imitate writing to convey meaning (see Byington & Kim, 2017, Rowe & Neitzel, 2010, and Dennis & Votteler, 2013).



## Early Stages of Emergent Writing



Children often write in drawings or scribbles without using letters.



### SLIDE 15:


- In the earliest phases, children draw (of various skill levels) and scribble to convey meaning. They don't have letter knowledge and do not use letters (at least not intentionally) in their writing.
  - Important note: Most children generally go through key stages on the path to emergent writing. As with nearly all areas of child development, however, it is important to know that children progress at different rates and may display skills across multiple stages at the same time. Thus, the stages we will discuss in this presentation serve as a general guideline to the developmental progression of writing in young children. The stages we discuss here are often presented differently in various models of early writing. That is, some models will combine stages you see here, resulting in fewer distinct stages of writing. It's important to recognize the general development patterns, from drawing all the way to conventional spelling.
- Keep in mind all the skills and abilities that are involved in emergent writing—including fine motor coordination and cognitive understanding that one thing (like a first letter) can stand for something like a child's name. The ELOF mentions these foundational skills and abilities.


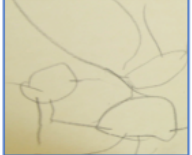

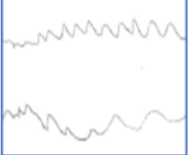
### REFERENCES:


Gentry, J.R. 2007. Breakthrough in Beginning Reading and Writing: *The Evidence-Based Approach to Pinpointing Students' Needs and Delivering Targeted Instruction*. New York, NY: Scholastic Inc.



## Early Stages of Emergent Writing



0. Pre-drawing	1. Drawing	2. Scribbling	3. Wavy Scribbles/Mock Handwriting
			
Random marks without meaning attached to them	Drawings that represent writing	Marks or scribbles the child intends to be writing	Wavy scribbles that have left-to-right progression; child pretends to write words

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### SLIDE 16:

Here, we discuss the first stages of emergent writing—drawing, scribbling, and wavy scribbles or mock handwriting.

0. **Pre-drawing:** Infants may explore writing materials by making random marks on paper. Their marks do not carry meaning and are not intended to communicate thoughts or messages. These marks are mostly an exploration of the writing material or joy of making marks on a page.
1. **Drawing:** Children use drawings to represent writing. Drawing is the root of representational thought (the idea that a symbol can stand for something else) and the precursor to writing.
2. **Scribbling:** In this stage of writing, children may make writing scribbles (not to be confused with early scribbles that are simply drawings or pictures). Writing scribbles are marks children create to convey some sort of written message.
3. **Wavy Scribbles or Mock Handwriting:** Children make lines of wavy scribbles (again, not to be confused with early scribbles that are intended to be drawings or pictures) to symbolize language structure—right to left and top to bottom (English, Spanish, etc.). Writing scribbles are marks children create with the intent of conveying some sort of written message, just as in the previous stage. Children may verbalize their message as they are writing their message. Often, when you ask children to “read” their scribbles, they will make up some sort of message as they point to their work. Children’s writing scribbles may be accompanied by a drawing to represent their text.

### REFERENCES:

Byington, T. A., & Kim, Y. 2017. “Promoting Preschoolers’ Emergent Writing.” *Young Children* 72 (5). <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/nov2017/emergent-writing>



## Middle Stages of Emergent Writing Development

...15-Minute...  
In-Service Suites

Children begin to understand that writing includes specific symbols (letters) and follow certain patterns, but they do not yet understand or have letter-sound correspondence.



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### SLIDE 17:

- In the middle stages of writing development, children begin to understand that writing includes specific symbols (letters) and follows certain patterns (left to right, top to bottom in most languages). However, they do not yet understand or have letter-sound correspondence. They do not know that certain letters stand for certain sounds, or that certain letters go together to form words.
- Additionally, children can often write their name and rely largely on non-alphabetic symbolic cues to “read” (e.g., McDonald’s sign—they know the writing below the yellow arches reads “McDonald’s”; Stop sign—they know the red octagon means stop; etc.).
- Children see letters and use them, not alphabetically. They don’t know how letters represent sounds, rather, they just know that writing is supposed to include letters.

### REFERENCES:

Gentry, J.R. 2007. Breakthrough in Beginning Reading and Writing: *The Evidence-Based Approach to Pinpointing Students’ Needs and Delivering Targeted Instruction*. New York, NY: Scholastic Inc.







## Late Stages of Emergent Writing Development



Children begin to understand and intentionally use letters to represent sounds, often starting with representing beginning sounds, then moving to ending sounds, middle sounds, and invented and more conventional spelling.



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### SLIDE 19:


- In the later phases of writing development, children begin to understand and intentionally use letters to represent sounds.
- Children will start understanding the beginning sounds of words and write using the first letter or the first letter followed by a string of other letters or scribbles.
- Children move to ending sounds. For example, they may spell dog “dg” since they are aware of the beginning sounds and now understand or hear the ending sound of words.
- Lastly, children will fill in the words with middle sounds—the beginnings of invented and more conventional spelling.




### REFERENCES:


Gentry, J.R. 2007. Breakthrough in Beginning Reading and Writing: *The Evidence-Based Approach to Pinpointing Students' Needs and Delivering Targeted Instruction*. New York, NY: Scholastic Inc.



## Late Stages of Emergent Writing



<p><b>7. Invented Spelling</b></p>  <p>Invented or phonetic spelling; different ways to represent the sounds in words; often, the first letter of the word or beginning and ending sounds represent the entire word</p>	<p><b>8. Beginning Word and Phrase Writing</b></p>  <p>Words with beginning, middle, and ending letter sounds; short phrases</p>	<p><b>9. Conventional Spelling and Sentence Writing</b></p>  <p>Correct spelling of words, generally the child's name and simpler or familiar words; sentences with punctuation and correct use of uppercase and lowercase letters</p>
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### SLIDE 20:

Here, we discuss the late stages of emergent writing: invented spelling, beginning word and phrase writing, conventional spelling, and writing sentences.

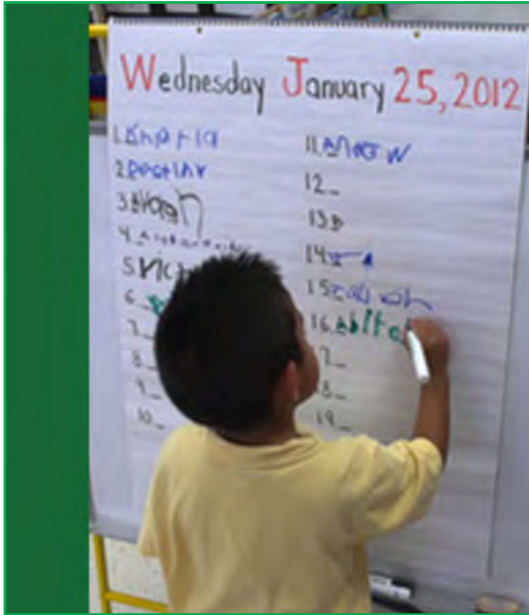
7. **Invented Spelling:** Children start to use invented or phonetic spelling (writing at least some of the *sounds* they hear). Invented spelling is the beginning of phonics. Children begin associating sounds with letters. It's not conventional spelling, but it's the child's invention of words and is a huge step forward in language and literacy development. Often, children will first write the first letter of a word to represent the full word (e.g., child will write "B" when intending to write "bike"). Children then move into also including some ending sounds (e.g., may write "BK" for "bike." Some children will also write "BC" for bike, because they do not know when to use C or K).
  - It is very, very important to support and encourage this invented spelling! It is a sign that children are beginning to make the connections between letters and the sounds they make—even if they are using the wrong letter, like writing "BC" for "bike".
  - Keep in mind that words with complex beginning and ending sounds (e.g., "Sh", "Ch," "Tr", and the like) may be difficult for children to fully hear and parse out the sounds, so you may not see children writing these sounds just yet.
  - If children use the wrong letter for the word and use a letter that makes the same sound, don't discourage them. Do not change the child's writing to the conventional spelling. At this stage, it can be detrimental to children's writing and discourage them from sounding out words on their own.
8. **Beginning Word and Phrase Writing:** Children add some middle sounds in word to beginning and ending sounds in their writing. For example, children may write "BIK" or "BIC" for "bike." Children may also start writing short phrases, perhaps beginning with those they have seen written by the teacher or in books. This moves into novel phrases children come up with on their own.
9. **Conventional Spelling and Sentence Writing:** Children start using conventional (correct) spellings of some words, particularly "easy" words or words they are familiar with. You can still expect to see some invented spellings. Further, children will begin writing full, yet simple, sentences, perhaps even using ending punctuation. They may even begin using some correct upper and lowercase letters (usually starting sentences and their name with uppercase letters, but not yet using them for all other proper nouns).



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REFERENCES:

Byington, T. A., & Y. Kim. 2017. "Promoting Preschoolers' Emergent Writing." *Young Children* 72 (5).  
<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/nov2017/emergent-writing>.



## Supporting Emergent Writing

Practical Tips and Tools

### SLIDE 21:

There are many activities and practices teachers, parents, and other caregivers can use to support children's practice and love of writing. We will discuss some ideas here. Don't forget to check out the tips, tools, and resources for this in-service suite on the ECLKC!

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: Tips for Education Staff—Supporting Emergent Writing

## Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

Culturally and linguistically responsive environments can only be created by engaging and partnering with families, Elders, and the community. Establishing a partnership with families and the community is crucial for children's learning and later success in life.



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### SLIDE 22:

Since the beginning of time, parents, families, and communities have taught their children everything they need to know to become successful members of society.

Children are active learners and take in this kind of information, including cultural knowledge and language, through their physical and social experiences. Programs must develop teaching methods and create learning environments that reflect the cultures and languages of the children they serve.

Create culturally and linguistically responsive environments by engaging and partnering with families, Elders, and the community. Establishing a partnership with families and the community is crucial for children's learning and later success in life.

Making It Work suggests ways early childhood staff can intentionally create cultural and language activities for children, families, elders, and community members. It also helps staff align these efforts with their program's Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework. The PFCE Framework identifies seven family outcomes, all of which are listed on page 20 in Steps and Introduction to Making It Work:

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/no-search/making-it-work-2017.pdf>

### RESOURCES:

National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (NCPFCE)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/about-us/article/national-center-parent-family-community-engagement-ncpfce>

For additional examples for children ages three to five, see Making It Work Section 3: Pilot Program Examples.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/making-it-work-section-03-pilot-program-examples.pdf>



## Creating A Learning Environment



To ensure that you are fully supporting children's learning, you must understand what is valued, honored, and expected in each child's home culture and be able to explain exactly how and what you are doing to support and take advantage of each child's optimal ways of learning.



### SLIDE 23:

#### SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CREATING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- How are children's ideas incorporated into the learning environment?
- How can children be respectfully redirected?
  - visual cues
  - verbal support
  - suggestions
  - directions
- What subtle cues can redirect children?
- How do materials in the classrooms reflect the values and frame of reference of the community (e.g., does the posted alphabet have Tribal language and English; are the references local foods, animals, etc.)?
- Are there cultural tools, regalia, colors, etc., in the classroom?
- What questions can adults ask respectfully?
- How do staff use local cultural examples to teach concepts?
- Do staff ask why, how, and when questions?
- How do staff encourage and affirm student persistence?
- How (or if) do adults encourage back-and-forth exchanges? Do they
  - support tribal language and vocabulary?
  - plan vocabulary to support concepts?
  - intentionally expand and extend vocabulary?

#### RESOURCE:

Steps and Introduction to Making It Work:

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/no-search/making-it-work-2017.pdf>. See page 18





## Supporting the Earliest Stages of Writing



- To support pre-drawing, early drawing, and scribbling:
  - Provide writing materials for children and encourage their use
  - If children can talk, ask them to tell you about their drawing
  - Revisit children's drawing the next day and have children again tell you what it is or says



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### SLIDE 24:

The tips on this slide are particularly useful for supporting children who are just beginning in writing. This may include infants and young toddlers, children who have or are suspected of having a delay or diagnosed disability, or children who are dual language learners learning to write in both their home language and English.

- To support pre-drawing, early drawing, and scribbling:
  - Provide children with writing materials and encourage their use. This can include paper, cardboard, and wood for children to write and draw on and lots of different kinds of tools to write with such as crayons, markers, paint, etc. You and the children can determine which materials are appropriate. For example, it takes a while for finger muscles to develop and most children under 3 are more comfortable holding a larger “fat” pencil or crayon. Don't be afraid to let children take the lead here, making random marks and scribbles as they please.
    - Remember—there's a difference between drawing to convey meaning and drawing as an art activity. We don't want to take over and make sure children's drawings are perfect if they're trying to convey a message. Let them “write” as they please!
  - Provide lots of writing examples in the environment, such as labels for toys, centers, and children's cubbies.
  - Model writing for children to see. When writing messages on the daily board or writing notes home to parents, speak out loud and write the words on paper to build the connection between spoken and written language.
- Promote language development as children draw and write. If children can talk, ask them to tell you about their drawing or scribbles.
  - If children tell you about their drawing or scribbles, write below or on the back of their work to capture their message. This can be as simple as a label for their drawing (e.g., “dog”) or a longer message (e.g., The dog is big). Make sure that you're using conventional writing and that it doesn't take over the child's work.
    - Drawings can serve as an important scaffold for later writing (Thompson, 2005, 21). For example, if children make writing scribbles on their page, encourage them to draw a picture that will help them remember their message.



- Revisit children’s drawing the next day and have children again tell you what it says.
  - For toddlers or older children, you can even revisit children’s drawings or scribbles later. Having children draw a picture to accompany their scribbles (or any writing, even at more advanced stages) can help children to re-read their writing later.
  - Having children revisit or re-read their writing helps to instill the idea that a piece of writing conveys one message; it doesn’t change meaning each time they read it (unless it’s been edited, of course).

#### ADAPTATION FOR HOME VISITORS:

- Replace current slide with HV Optional Slide 10





## Supporting Middle and Later Stages of Writing



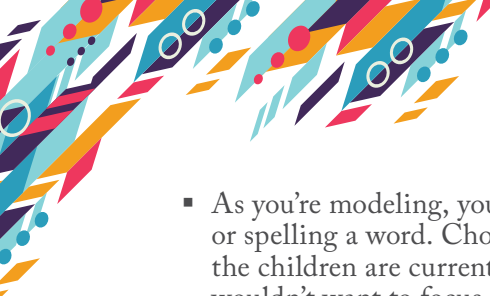
- Start with name writing
- Model writing throughout the day and in different contexts
- Engage in shared and independent writing with children
- Include authentic opportunities for writing throughout the day
- Encourage peer scaffolding

Remember... you are supporting a *process*, not an outcome.

### SLIDE 25:

Use similar strategies to support the middle and later stages of emergent writing.

- Start by writing the child's name
  - For most children, their first experiences writing letters, spelling, and using uppercase and lowercase while writing their names (Both-de Vries & Bus, 2008). This early writing experience helps children learn that string of letters (words) and writing in general has a purpose.
  - “Name writing proficiency provides a foundation for other literacy knowledge and skills; it is associated with alphabet knowledge, letter writing, print concepts, and spelling (Cabell et al., 2009; Drouin & Harmon, 2009; Puranik & Lonigan, 2012)” (Byington & Kim, 2017).
  - Ways to incorporate writing children's names.
    - Use sign-in sheets and routines at check-in or check-out. At first, they may write their names in wavy scribbles, then include more letter-like forms, and even some letters. They'll likely start by writing just the first letter of their name, before moving into writing their entire name (some letters may be backwards at first). It is also important to remember that most children will begin by using all uppercase letters. Eventually, they will learn to use more conventional uppercase and lowercase letters.
    - Include meaningful opportunities for children to write their names, such as labeling their work or belongings or writing their names during a dramatic play theme!
    - Talk with children about their names. Notice how many names start with the same letters, the length of the children's names, and names that rhyme. Communicating with children about their names also helps to build their phonological and print awareness.
- Model writing throughout the day and in different contexts.
  - It is important for children to see adults model the writing process correctly.
  - When modeling writing in the classroom (or even the home), don't be afraid to use self-talk to talk out loud while you're writing. For example, if you're writing the Message of the Day, model your thought process while planning what you will write. For example, “Let's see. I want to write about what we're going to do outside today. We're going to play ball and do chalk drawings. I know, I'll write, ‘We will play ball outside today.’” You can then write and re-read your message. Importantly, you can also re-read your message later in the day, perhaps after you've gone outside and played ball.



- As you're modeling, you can also point out some of the mechanics of writing, or practice sounding out or spelling a word. Choose 1 or 2 quick things to focus on in a message. Be sure you're focusing on what the children are currently learning. For example, if most of your kids are at the scribbling stage, you wouldn't want to focus on conventional spelling and punctuation!
- Also, don't be afraid to model writing in different content areas. For example, write down your observations and draw your predictions during science. Use writing in the dramatic play area by writing down a menu, a grocery shopping list, or someone's order. Lastly, model writing while you write notes home to parents. These activities help build children's connection between everyday experiences and writing.
- Engage in shared and independent writing with children.
  - Have children describe their drawings to you or dictate their messages. You can also create opportunities for children to engage in independent writing. You can even use a hybrid model where you do some of the writing and so do children. For example, during group time children may take turns telling the group about their trip to the zoo while you write down the key points. Or children can draw a picture about their trip to the zoo and you can write what the children say or encourage them write it themselves!
- Include authentic opportunities for writing throughout the day.
  - Write for a purpose and set up the environment such that children do the same. One great way to do this is to set up your centers with writing materials and prompts. Include reasons to write in each center. The NAEYC article Promoting Preschoolers' Emergent Writing includes a table with some great ideas for each typical classroom center (Byington & Kim, 2017).
- Encourage peer scaffolding.
  - Encourage children to work together in their writing. They might write a story together or check in with a friend, if they're not sure which letter they should use when trying to sound out a word. This supports both children's writing, fosters social and emotional skills, and builds a strong sense of community.
- Organize your classroom.
  - Create a literacy-rich classroom and provide children with opportunities to see written words and use various materials to write and draw. Have a word wall with common words the children use. Give children individual notebooks to write in, record their science observations, or to tell you about their weekend.
  - Offer different kinds of writing materials and tools outside of paper, crayons, and paint. Try technology such as tablets, laptops, and old cell phones (for pretend texting) as a form of written communication.
- Finally, it is important to remember that you support a process, not an outcome. While children may start writing during their time with you, this process will not be complete or perfected by the time they leave your care. Writing skills develop across the school years and beyond! Your job is to support children's growth in the process and learn to enjoy writing.

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#### REFERENCES:

Byington, T. A., & Y. Kim. 2017. "Promoting Preschoolers' Emergent Writing." *Young Children* 72 (5).  
<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/nov2017/emergent-writing>

Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. 2018. "Planning Language Approach (PLA): Big 5 for All."  
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/article/planned-language-approach-pla-big-5-all>

#### ADAPTATION FOR HOME VISITORS:

- Replace current slide with HV Optional Slide 11



## Supporting the Emergent Writing of All Children

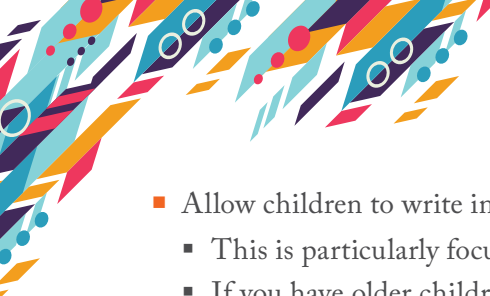


- Accept all levels of children’s writing
- Accept children’s writing errors as learning or teaching opportunities
- Be mindful of children’s physical abilities to write
- Allow children to write in whatever language they are most comfortable
  - Be aware of general differences between writing in English and writing in children’s tribal language



### SLIDE 26:

- Accept all levels of children’s writing.
  - Take the time to discover the writing stages children are in. Know that children develop and progress in different ways and at different paces. Meet the children where they are in their writing to move them forward. Working above the child’s current writing level will only frustrate you both, perhaps discouraging children from wanting to write at all.
  - Don’t forget, drawing to convey meaning is an early form of writing!
  - When children scribble to convey meaning, it’s a fundamental step toward conventional writing. If children’s scribbles are non-sensical, encourage children by asking them to describe what they wrote and then write it down on their paper, with their permission.
- Accept children’s writing errors as learning or teaching opportunities, but also keep realistic expectations, based on children’s stage of writing.
  - This applies to all children but can become especially important for children who are suspected of having a delay or disability or who are dual language learners (DLLs) and who may have another form of writing that is particular to their culture.
  - As with all learning, a big part of the writing process involves making errors.
  - For all children, it’s important to try to understand why they make the errors, and to also think about whether the errors are to be expected based on their stages of writing. For example, you would expect a child at the Letter String stage to write long strings of letters with no spaces, and you wouldn’t expect them to sound out words.
  - When children make errors in their writing, we want to make sure we’re not overwhelming them by jumping in and getting them to fix every error, as this may leave them overwhelmed and discouraged. Choose one or two small errors (such as writing lowercase bs and ds in the right direction) to focus on and address with children.
  - Some children may not have the fine motor skills they need to grip a crayon or marker. For children who have motor challenges associated with writing, use assistive devices and technology, such as a tablet or laptop, to help them communicate and practice writing.



- Allow children to write in whatever language they are most comfortable
  - This is particularly focused on children who are dual language learners and tribal language learners.
  - If you have older children in your care whose home language follows a different structure than English, be sure you are aware of the general differences between the languages (e.g., different types of characters, different directionality, etc.). This could help explain any errors children make or confusion they may have. If you don't speak the children's home language, ask family members or members of the community to explain these differences for you.
  - Be sure to have examples of children's written home language in books, posters, signs, etc. so that children can see the familiar print in their learning environment.
  - Please see the tip sheets and resources page for additional information and links to other resources that you mind find helpful.

\*\*Keep in mind that when talking about children who are DLLs and children who are learning or developing a Tribal language, it is important know that these two terms have different meanings for each population. For example, Tribal programs do not identify themselves with being DLLs.

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: Tips for Education Staff—Supporting Children who are Learning a Tribal Language
- Handout: Learning Activity for Education Staff—Supporting Emergent Writing
- Handout: Learning Activity for Families—Supporting Emergent Writing

#### ADAPTATION FOR HOME VISITORS:

- Handout: Tips for Home Visitors—Supporting Children who are Learning a Tribal Language
- Handout: Learning Activity for Home Visitors—Supporting Emergent Writin
- Handout: Learning Activity for Families—Supporting Emergent Writing



## Prewriting Strategy: Story Knife



- What is story knifing?
- Drawing while storytelling
- Peer-to-peer interaction
- Drawing as a prewriting strategy



*Tamaa-i-tamakut yaaruitni pencil-aaqelqaqut wangkuta.*  
(The story knives were our pencils.)- Neva Rivers, 2002



### SLIDE 27:

“In the native Yup’ik communities of southwestern Alaska, it was once common to see groups of young girls crowded around a circle in the mud, engaged in a curious sort of game. One would be telling the others a story while simultaneously drawing intricate symbols with a knife on a flattened canvas of mud. The practice is known as storyknifing, a Yup’ik tradition of mysterious origin that is estimated to be around three hundred years old.”

Symbols vary from village to village and they illustrate the story being told.

Boys understand the symbols, but story knifing is traditionally an activity for girls.

This is an example of how the Native community uses drawings and symbols.

As children are learning to write, they begin with drawings and symbols. If they experience storytelling with symbols, they will observe the relationship between symbols and language, which is also writing! Pay close attention to children’s drawings and prewriting as they learn to connect symbols and language.

### RESOURCE:

Telling Stories on the Ground

<https://www.neh.gov/humanities/2015/septemberoctober/statement/telling-stories-the-ground>



## Activity: Writing in Your Setting



- Select samples of children’s writing from your care setting, and review their drawing and writing
- In which stage(s) of emergent writing are children?
  - Don’t forget to consider whether the sample shows children’s teacher-supported or independent writing
- What supports can you put in place during writing for children to help them develop in this area?
- What learning opportunities can you put in place to encourage children to practice writing in a fun and meaningful way?



### SLIDE 28:

If you have time, have participants go through the activity on the slide. This can get teachers and home visitors thinking about the content covered in the presentation, as it relates to the specific children with whom they work.

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: Learning Activity for Education Staff—Studying Children’s Emergent Writing
- Handout: Learning Activity for Families—Studying Children’s Emergent Writing

#### ADAPTATION FOR HOME VISITORS:

- Replace current slide with HV Optional Slide 12
- Handout: Learning Activity for Home Visitors—Studying Children’s Emergent Writing
- Handout: Learning Activity for Families—Studying Children’s Emergent Writing





# Review

...15-Minute...  
In-Service Suites

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## SLIDE 29:

- Children as young as 2 begin to understand that writing has meaning and communicates ideas.
- Most children go through key stages on the path to emergent writing. As with nearly all areas of child development, however, it is important to know that children progress at different paces, and may often display skills across multiple stages at the same time.
- Provide writing materials and encourage children to use them. This can include paper, crayons, markers, and technology like tablets and laptops, etc. If children can talk, ask them to tell you about their drawing or scribbles. Revisit children’s drawing the next day and have children tell you what it is or says. Model writing throughout the day and encourage both independent and peer scaffolding!
- Remember—you are supporting a process, not an outcome.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Handout: Tips for Education Staff—Engaging Families
- Handout: Activities for Families—Emergent Writing at Home
- Handout: Helpful Resources
- Handout: Tools for Supervisors and Coaches

### ADAPTATIONS FOR HOME VISITORS:

- Handout: Tips for Home Visitors—Engaging Families
- Handout: Activities for Families—Emergent Writing at Home