

Building Blocks

The Four Blocks Kindergarten Program

Dr. Dottie Hall

Director of the Four Blocks Center at Wake Forest University

halldp@wfu.edu

Resources

- "Month by Month Reading, Writing, & Phonics for Kindergarten" (Hall & Cunningham, 1997)
- Predictable Charts (Hall & Williams, 2001)
- Making Alphabet books to Teach Letters & Sounds (Hall, 2002)
- Interactive Charts (Hall & Loman, 2002)
- Shared Reading (Hall & Fuhrmann, 2002)
- Administrators Guide to Building Blocks (Hall, Arens, & Loman, 2002)
- Writing Mini-Lessons for Kindergarten (2003)
- Centers for K (Hall & Loman, 2004)
- Building Blocks "Plus" Bulletin Board Set (1999)
- Centers Bulletin Board Set (2004)
- Building Blocks Plan Book (2000)





**Building Blocks
for
Kindergarten**



**Four-Blocks™
for
Grades 1-3**



**Big Blocks
for
Grades 4+**

Carson-Dellosa Publishing Company, Inc.

Why not Four Block in Kindergarten?

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- The past three decades have taught us much about how young children learn to read and write.
- Young children see themselves as capable regardless of their entering literacy level.
- We need to recognize the developmental differences in kindergarten students.
- We integrate Guided Reading, Self-Selected Reading, Writing, and Working with Words with the themes that are part of the kindergarten day.
- This is consistent with how K teachers teach!

“Developmentally Appropriate”

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A developmentally appropriate kindergarten is like a good home, where children can learn through playing, cooking, watching, listening, acting, reading, or pretend reading and writing or pretend writing. It is place where they can explore their environment, ask questions, and answer questions. It is a place where the teacher is like a parent: reading to the children and talking about the stories they read; writing for children and allowing them to write for different purposes; having time to explore the the community on field trips, and talking about those experiences together. It is a place where children clean up after themselves, learn more about familiar and unfamiliar topics (usually called themes), and learn more about what interests them most--themselves. Most importantly, it is a place where children learn that reading provides both enjoyment and information, and they develop the desire to learn to read and write.

Hall and Cunningham, 1997, p.2

The Building Blocks

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- Desire to Learn to Read and Write
- Language Concepts
- Print Concepts
- Phonemic Awareness
- Interesting Words
- Letters and Sounds

What Activities Build These Blocks?

- Reading to children - both fact and fiction
- Reading with children- shared reading of predictable big books
- Providing opportunities for children to read by themselves.
- Writing for children
- Writing with children (predictable charts)
- Providing opportunities for children to write by themselves.
- Developing phonemic awareness (oral)
- Working with letters and sound or phonics (written)
- Learning some interesting to them words

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Daily Teacher Read Aloud

What do you read aloud to your class?

- Bookstores sell 80% of fiction to females.
- 80% of informational books to males.

The Teacher Read-Aloud should include

- Fiction and Non-Fiction (or informational books)
- Old Favorites and New Books
- Favorite Authors
- Favorite Book Characters
- ABC and Rhyming Books
- Emergent Readers
- Books to Learn From
- Subjects and topics you are teaching about (Math, Social Studies, Science, etc.)
- Bibliotherapy

Reading With Children
Shared Reading, Echo/Choral Reading
Provides children an opportunity to:

- experience print
- take notice of what print is doing p. 41
- experience words
- experience pictures
- talk about relationships between pictures and print
- experience reading with expression

Nursery Rhymes & Traditional Songs

- Mary Wore Her Red Dress
- The Wheels on the Bus
- Little Bunny Foo Foo
- Over in the Meadow
- Three Little Kittens
- Old MacDonald Had a Farm
- Five Little Monkeys
- Holiday songs—Five Little Pumpkins, Jingle Bells

Echo and Choral Reading

Five little monkeys jumping on the bed!
One fell off and bumped his head.
Mama called the doctor and the doctor said.
“No more monkeys jumping on the bed!”
Four
Three
Two
One
So five little monkeys fell fast asleep.
“Thank goodness,” said mama..

Shared Reading with Big Books

is the best way to do
Guided Reading in Kindergarten

---they all can read

---it is a multilevel activity

Choosing a book for Shared reading

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- Book must be predictable by pictures or repetitive print.
- Book should be enjoyable and appealing to the children.
- The book must be able to “take students someplace” conceptually. Most teachers spend a week or two reading, rereading, acting out the story, building connections to themes.

The Perfect Day

It's a Perfect Day



Abigail Pizer

Before:

- Take a picture walk
- Work on vocabulary

During: Read it to the children then do a shared reading. . .

After:

- Act it out

Winter

- In winter it is _____. (cold, warm, hot)
- I wear a _____ to school. (coat, jacket, hat, sweater)
- Sometimes I wear _____. (mittens, boots)
- We need to feed the _____. (birds, animals, cats, dogs)
- We make _____ in the winter. (snowballs, snowman, bird feeders)

After doing this with the class put it in a center to do independently. Pictures on the cards help!

Making a Mitten Book

The boy lost his mitten.

Along came a _____.
In the mitten he went.

Along came a _____.
In the mitten he went.

Along came a _____.
In the mitten he went.

Along came a _____.
In the mitten he went.

Along came a _____.
In the mitten he went.

Along came a _____.
In the mitten he went.

The mitten popped. Out came the _____,
_____, and the _____.

Souvenirs

•Making "souvenirs" of the stories you read with your class. Examples:

•A washtub for Mrs. Wishy-Washy

•A bear with a book for Moonbear Likes Books

•A caterpillar out of an egg carton for The Hungry Caterpillar

Children Reading *By Themselves*

- Early in the year ---in Centers
- Later ---at their seats or anywhere in the room
- Let the children choose books from baskets or tubs
- Let them “read” the books
- Teacher circulates and encourages

In Kindergarten ---teach there are three ways to read:

- 1.) Read the words
- 2.) Retell the story
- 3.) Read the pictures

Writing

Writing *for* children -Morning Message

Dear Class,

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Today is Wednesday.

We will go for a walk today.

Love, Mrs. Hall

Talk as you write.

Let the children see what you say you can write!

Count the sentences, words, letters; ask "What do you notice?"

Later in the Year

- Finding words they know
- Finding words that start like
- Helping with the message
- Interactive Writing----children writing words they know---writing *with* children

Predictable Charts- Writing *with* Children

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Five Day Cycle:

- Day 1 & 2: Dictation of the sentences
- Day 3: "Touch reading" their sentences
- Day 4: "Sentence builders" as a class then children build their individual sentences
- Day 5: Making a class book

Children Writing *By Themselves* in Kindergarten

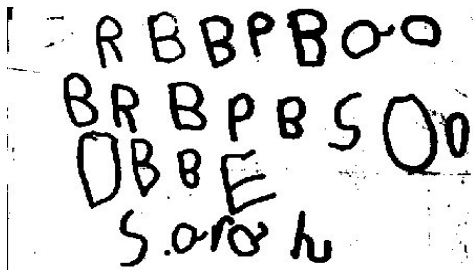
- Know the stages
- Begin with writing for and with children

Emergent Writing: Scribbling



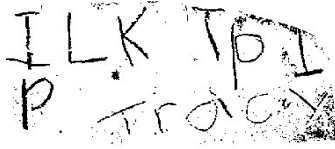
Gentry's Stage 1

Emergent Writing: Random Letters



Gentry's Stage 1

Beginning sounds and sometimes ending sounds are written as heard



Gentry's Stage 2

Beginning and ending sounds and vowels you can hear.



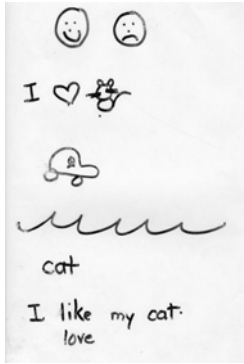
Gentry's Stage 3

Consonant sounds and many of the vowel sounds.



Gentry's Stage 4

The First Writing Mini-Lesson



Writing Conferences:

The teacher coaching/cheering!

With daily practice students improve

High frequency words are correct because of the morning message.

They are told to use their “phonics” spelling

New Zealand findings:

•If publishing is not a part of writing, there is a lack of interest among children.

•If publishing is casual, lack of writing interest among children.

•Publishing determines a purpose and audience which leads to a higher level of writing and a desire to write.

Publishing in Kindergarten

Publishing in a Building Blocks (K) Classroom

Students are ready to publish when they can write with phonics spelling, know letter sounds, and how to form letters

- The goal is one published book per child
- Be a cheerleader not an editor
- Published writing in Kindergarten is not perfect writing
- Children may not be able to read what has been corrected for them
- Find many ways to share, celebrate, students' writing

Publishing in Kindergarten

Coach child to write a complete story

- Write at least 5 sentences about a topic
- Sentences are capitalized and punctuated
- Phonetic spelling is accepted
- Dedication page and "All About the Author" page dictated to teacher
- Type completed story on the computer
- Printed sentences are cut apart and glued on separate sheets of paper
- Teacher and student discuss illustrations

Words

How do we read words?

How should we teach phonics?

What is phonemic awareness?

Mckee 1

The question of instruction in phonics has aroused a lot of controversy. Some educators have held to the proposition that phonetic training is not only futile and wasteful but also harmful to the best interests of a reading program. Others believe that since the child must have some means of attacking strange words, instruction in phonics is imperative.

Mckee 2

There have been disputes also relative to the amount of phonics to be taught, the time when the teaching should take place and the methods to be used. In fact, the writer knows of no problem around which more disputes have centered.

Paul McKee—1934 (p. 191)

How Do We Decode Words???

perzam
driting
chinique
morphophobia
manufacturing

How Do We Decode Words???

spew
spate

A spate of people gathered when the oil began to spew out of the ground.

Three Ways to Teach Phonics

1. Synthetic Phonics---sound it out
Most commercial products
Ex: "c"- "a"- "t" blend it together "cat"
2. Analytic Phonics---rules
Most basal programs
Ex: tail 2 vowels, 1st one is long
3. Decoding by analogy---brain based
Using what you know to figure out what you don't know!
Ex: ten and boy can read "enjoy"

Phonemic Awareness

•Phonemic awareness is not knowing which letter makes which sound. That is phonics!

•Phonemic awareness is the ability to manipulate sounds.

•Phonemic awareness is the best **predictor** of success in learning to read.

How do Children Develop Phonemic Awareness?

- 40-50% of children come to school with sufficient phonemic awareness.
- Children who have phonemic awareness also know some letter names and can track print.
- Children who have phonemic awareness know some words---Michelle, Mommy, MacDonalds

How did these Children Develop Phonemic Awareness?

- Someone read to them--especially rhyming books and alphabet books.
- Someone encouraged their beginning attempts at writing.
- Someone played "silly" rhyming and other word games with them.

How can We Help Children Develop Phonemic Awareness?

- Read to them--especially rhyming books and alphabet books.
- Encourage their beginning attempts at writing.
- Play "silly" rhyming and other word games with them.

Rhyming Books

- Nursery Rhymes
- Dr. Seuss

- Read-Aloud Books for Developing Phonemic Awareness by Hallie Yopp
The Reading Teacher, 1995.
Children's books to develop phonemic awareness-for you and parents, too!
Michael F. Ortiz The Reading Teacher, 1998

Alphabet Books

- Simple Books with just a few words on a page.
- Some also rhyme!

- Make class and individual alphabet books.

Assessing Phonemic Awareness

Children who have phonemic awareness can:

- say rhyming words
Hop on _____. "I can't." said the_____.

- tell if words begin the same
Bill, birthday Bill, cake

Assessing Phonemic Awareness

•segment words into sounds
C-A-T F-I-SH G-OA-T

•blend sounds into words
T-I-M = Tim J-O-SH-U-A = Joshua

We teach and review letters and sounds
with “**Getting to Know YOU**”

“Getting to Know You”

1. Draw a name or choose a child each day to be “student of the day”
2. Let the child lead the “cheer” for his/her name (“Give me a J (“J”) . . .
3. Let the child tell about his/herself
---favorite color, food, things to do, etc.
4. Cut his/her name apart and have the child rearrange the letters in a pocket chart.
5. On a large piece of drawing paper write his/her name together and draw a picture

Getting to Know You (Interactive Charts)

- My name is _____. (children's names)
- I am _____ years old. (four, five, six, seven)
- My favorite color is _____. (red, green, blue, orange, brown, yellow, black, purple)
- I like to eat _____. (pizza, hamburgers, macaroni & cheese, tacos, fried chicken)
- I like to play _____. (football, basketball, soccer, tag, red rover, t-ball)

Writing with "Phonic" Spelling

- Teach segmenting by modeling "stretching out" the words.
- Use Interactive Writing--Sharing the pen!
(Word Matters--Pinnell & Fountais, 1998)
- Encourage and applaud all attempts.

Making Words in Kindergarten

The children "become the letters" and
make words with patterns

(EX. at, bat, cat, hat, fat, etc)

Environmental Print

- Children bring their cereal boxes from home
- Bring in bags from fast food restaurants
- Bring in logo from stores: Target, Walmart, etc
- Bring in favorite crackers, drinks, etc

Word Wall

- Names
- Environmental print
- Pictionaries
- High frequency words - after experiences with them (I can. . . I like. . . I saw . . .)
- The best kindergarten Word Wall is a print rich environment!

Centers are an important part of
Kindergarten Classrooms

Children need “cognitive clarity”

I know what I am trying to do and why.

“I am trying to learn my letter and sounds so I can figure out words and read.”

Sample Day in Building Blocks

- Arrival
- Announcements, attendance
- “Big Group”
Calendar, Weather
Getting to Know You
- Morning Message
- Predictable Chart
- Shared Reading
- “Special” (ex. Music)
- Literacy Activities/
Journal Writing
- Lunch
- Math
- Centers
- Outdoor PE
- Cool Down/Storytime
- Quiet Time
- Dismissal

(p.17-27)

How to Start

Opening: Reading to children

Getting to Know You ----NAMES!

Songs and Finger Poems (Phonemic Awareness)

Morning Message

Predictable Chart

Echo/Choral reading with Nursery Rhymes

Later the shared reading of predictable big books

Journal Writing (Model and Coach)
