

## CHAPTER 24

# Joyful and Equitable Literacy: The Intersection of Access and Opportunity

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## Organizations with Open-Access Literacy Information and Resources

We acknowledge the barriers teachers face in accessing knowledge and high-quality instructional tools, paywalls being the most obvious barrier. Fortunately, increasingly more high-quality, open access information and resources are available through reliable organizations. In our experience, the following are organizations that provide reliable information and resources; however, we still recommend taking a critical lens to any all information regardless of the source.

- › Cox Campus: [www.CoxCampus.org](http://www.CoxCampus.org)
  - Free Cox Campus course—"Implicit Bias in Education." To access this course, click Learn, then Social-Emotional Health.
- › Florida Center for Reading Research: <https://fcrr.org/educators>
- › Maya's Book Nook: <https://mayasbooknook.com>
- › National Center on Improving Literacy: <https://improvingliteracy.org>
- › National Center on Intensive Intervention: <https://intensiveintervention.org>
- › Project READY: Reimagining Equity and Access for Diverse Youth: <https://ready.web.unc.edu/section-1-foundations/module-8>
- › The Reading League: [www.thereadingleague.org](http://www.thereadingleague.org)
- › Reading Rockets: [www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org)

## Sample Language and Reading Routine: Oral Language

Daily group times such as circle time and morning meeting provide opportunities for children to practice and build their oral language skills, offering a natural context to support listening comprehension and oral expression. Children need ample opportunities throughout the day to be able to rehearse their language including structure (phonology, morphology and syntax), meaning (semantics), and function (pragmatics) through discourse with peers and adults. Creating safe, low-stakes contexts enables you to facilitate children's oral language skills as they build their capacity in academic language.

The following example illustrates how teachers can facilitate and scaffold students' listening and language during child-led conversations.

Language and Reading Routine		
<b>Routine</b>	Language and reading	
<b>Content/skill</b>	Listening comprehension and oral expression	
<b>Instructional approach</b>	Facilitation	
<b>Format</b>	Whole group during morning meeting. (The example is of a teacher–student interaction. However, a teacher could have several short one-to-one interactions in a whole group setting. This is an opportunity for children to practice listening as well as speaking.)	
Strategy	Description	Example
<b>Tune in</b>	Listen to students as they talk with a partner. Use their interests and ideas to guide the conversation and “push in” academic vocabulary along with complex sentence structure.	“It sounds like you had an <i>interesting</i> weekend that was full of <i>extraordinary</i> events! Tell Joaquin more about what you did.”
<b>Ask open-ended questions</b>	Ask students questions that elicit an expanded response; avoid questions requiring a simple yes or no response. This provides them an opportunity to practice listening comprehension and oral expression.	“How did you and your brother <i>construct</i> the sandcastle?”
<b>Lift language</b>	Intentionally scaffold students’ language. Do this for all students regardless of their language skills. Children with low and above age-appropriate language skills can benefit from scaffolding.	<p>For students struggling with expression, scaffold with close-ended questions:</p> <p>“Tell me about the supplies you used to <i>construct</i> the sandcastle. What did you do with the shovel?”</p> <p>For those with age-appropriate language skills, scaffold to include other <i>wh</i>-questions:</p> <p>“It seems like you really had an interesting weekend constructing sandcastles! After you built the sandcastle, what did you and your brother <i>construct</i> next?”</p> <p>“Tell me how you felt once you and your brother finished constructing your castle.”</p>

## Language and Reading Routine

<b>Keep it going</b>	Engage in a back-and-forth exchange of ideas by asking additional questions. This exchange can be with one child or as a group discussion.	"What else can we construct in our classroom?"
<b>Supports for executive function</b>	Provide ample time for students to process questions and responses. Repeat questions and/or responses aloud.	
<b>Considerations for accessibility and equity</b>	<p>Focus on the content and making meaning rather than hyper-focusing on structure. For children whose first language or dialect differs from General American English, linguistic tasks require "translation," which may increase the cognitive demands. Make space for low-stakes, semi-structured conversations where students can express themselves without having to use academic language structures. You might choose to model academic language for students during conversations without calling explicit attention to differences in language structure. For example, recast a student's sentence by responding, "Yes, they were all eating lunch outside" when a student shares the observation that "They [classmates] was all eating outside." Your response is intentional and does not distract from the content of the conversation.</p> <p>Allow for various modalities of expression; actions, gestures, and drawing can be used to scaffold oral language.</p>	
<b>Considerations for joy</b>	Infuse intentional questions that provide opportunities for children to speak about their feelings, thoughts, and emotions.	

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