



*Professional Learning Module
Emergent Writing for Early Learners*

Glossary of Terms

1. **Authentic writing** opportunities allows children to choose their writing topic and encourages them to write for an actual “real life” purpose and audience.
2. **Benchmarks** are more precise than standards and are set to reflect the level of skill and knowledge that should be demonstrated by a child at the end of the experience for each age range.
3. **Conceptual knowledge** includes learning the function of writing. In this domain, young children learn that writing has a purpose and that print is meaningful (i.e., it communicates ideas, stories, and facts).
4. **Emergent literacy** is a term that is used to explain a child's knowledge of reading and writing skills before they learn how to read and write words.
5. **Emergent reading** includes alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness along with the motivation for and appreciation of reading.
6. **Emergent writing** means that children begin to understand that writing is a form of communication and their marks on paper convey a message
7. **Fine motor skills** involve the use of small muscles that control the hand, finger, and thumb and are important as children perform self-care tasks such as feeding themselves buttoning and zipping their clothes.
8. **Generative knowledge** describes children’s abilities to write phrases and sentences that convey meaning. It is the ability to translate thought into writing that goes beyond the work level (Puranik & Lonigan 2014).
9. **Interactive Writing** is similar to shared writing except that you are “sharing the pen” with the children. As you “share the pen,” you will pause and think aloud and ask children questions to help support them in connecting the writing process to their developing print knowledge and phonological awareness skills.
10. **Invented Spelling** is a developmental writing stage in which some or all of the sounds are written in the order they are heard, for example, “pnk” is pink.
11. **Phonological awareness** is the ability to pay attention to the sounds in spoken language and know that the structure of spoken language is made up of units, or chunks, of sound.
12. **Procedural knowledge** is the mechanics of letter and word writing (e.g., name writing) and includes spelling and gaining alphabet knowledge. Learning the alphabetic code (including how to form letters and the sounds associated with each letter) is an essential component of gaining procedural knowledge.
13. **Reflective Practice** involves stepping back, examining your teaching and thinking about what made an activity, lesson or experience successful (or not) and how it might be improved or changed for better learning outcomes for children.
14. **Shared Writing** is a strategy for teachers and children to work together to write a message. Shared writing is an opportunity for teachers to show children different reasons for writing and how to record messages on paper.
15. **Standards** are based on what we know about children, including what they should know and be able to do along a continuum of development.
16. **Taking Dictation or “transcribing”** as children talk about their picture is a powerful strategy for teaches to use to model the writing process with young children. Dictation is also an excellent way to support the composition process (mechanics of writing, procedural knowledge) and children’s language skill development at the same time.