TATS Talks with Professionals

ABOUT SUPPORTING LITERACY

Creating Literacy-rich Preschool Environments –

Supporting Language and Vocabulary

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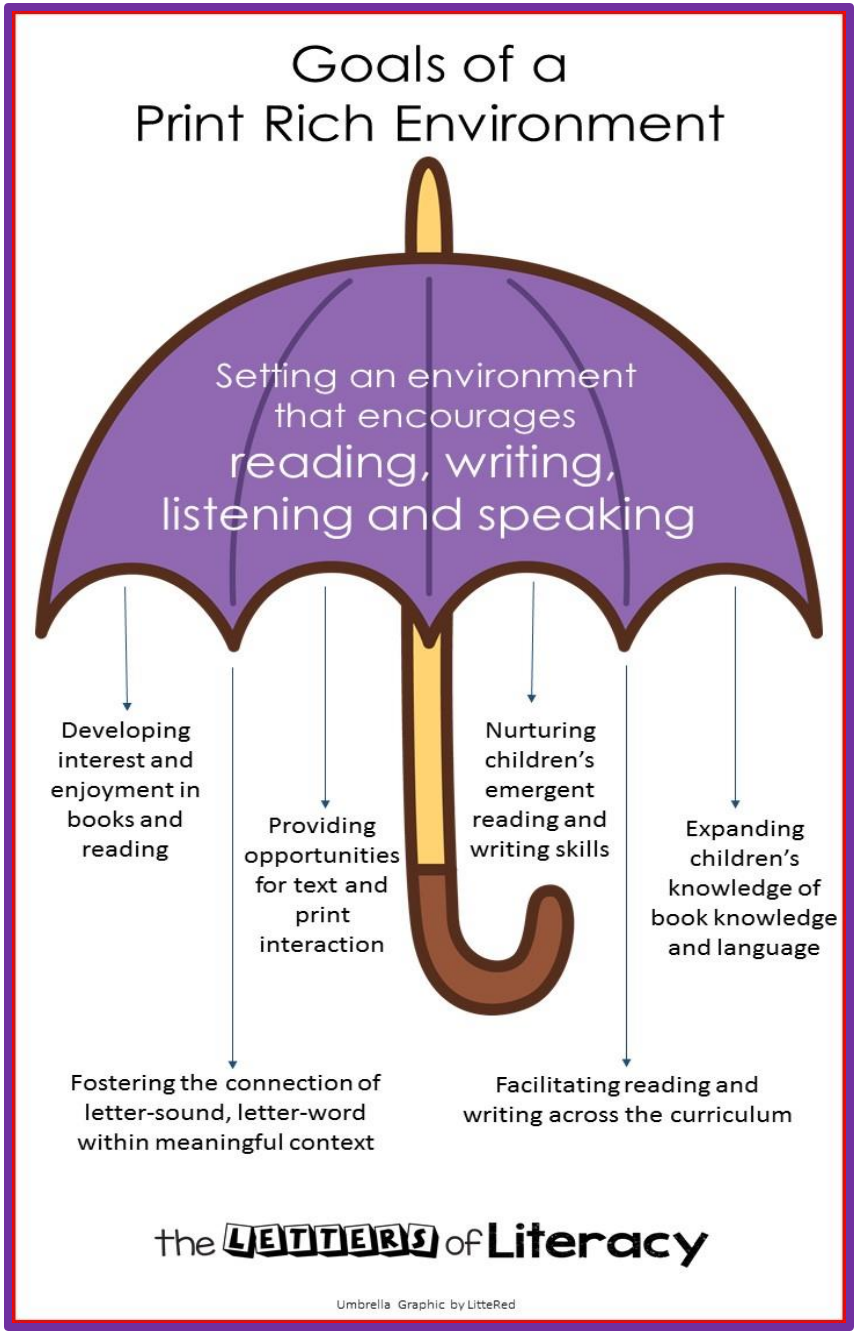
Literacy-rich and print-rich are often used interchangeably. They refer to an environment that supports all four domains of language: **reading, writing, speaking and listening.**

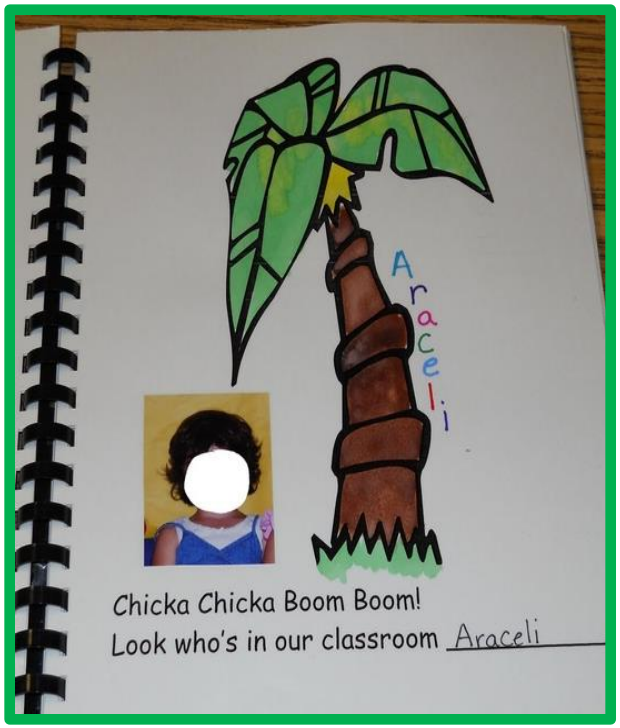
Literacy and print rich classrooms provide support with a variety of printed and literacy-related materials. These materials are incorporated throughout the daily routines, activities, and centers.

Most importantly, the environment supports literacy, vocabulary, and language throughout the day and across activities; not in isolation but integrated into at every opportunity.



Literacy/Library Center

Sharing books with children not only motivates them to learn to read but also promotes learning in other areas.



How to Create the Center:

- Include books related to topics you are exploring in your thematic units
- Rotate books so that children build skills and discover new interests
- Keep a few class favorite books in the center
- Display books on low shelves
- Provide stuffed animals, puppets
- Create a listening center nearby with recorded books and books with songs
- Organize books into shelves or baskets related to topics or themes (label the categories)

Accommodations/Supports:

- Include simple picture books that are high-interest
- Include class-made books with photos of the children and of functional environmental text

Ideas for Accommodations and Supports to Meet the Needs of all Children

Increase physical access to books

- Choose durable books with clear pictures and simple text.
- Consider optimal physical positioning for a child's comfort and stability.
- Attach "page fluffers" to help separate the pages. Use velcro or textured fabric to help the child hold the book in place.
- Include materials with large print, bright and contrasting colors.
- Include recorded stories with sound effects to help teach story structure.

Literacy/Library Center

Ideas for Accommodations and Supports to Meet the Needs of all Children

Boost cognitive access to books

- Simplify books by shortening sentence text as you read.
- During shared reading, give students props such as stuffed animals and photographs that correspond to the story.
- Use highlighter tape to emphasize important words that relate to pictures or plot.
- Introduce graphic symbols and pictures that help support the story.
- Help children connect their own familiar experiences to the characters and plots.
- Make simple classroom books that catch a child's interest.
- Choose or make interactive books

Writing Center

Writing materials encourage children's language development and self-expression. Children can build the fine motor skills needed for writing (for example, pencil grip, hand-eye coordination).

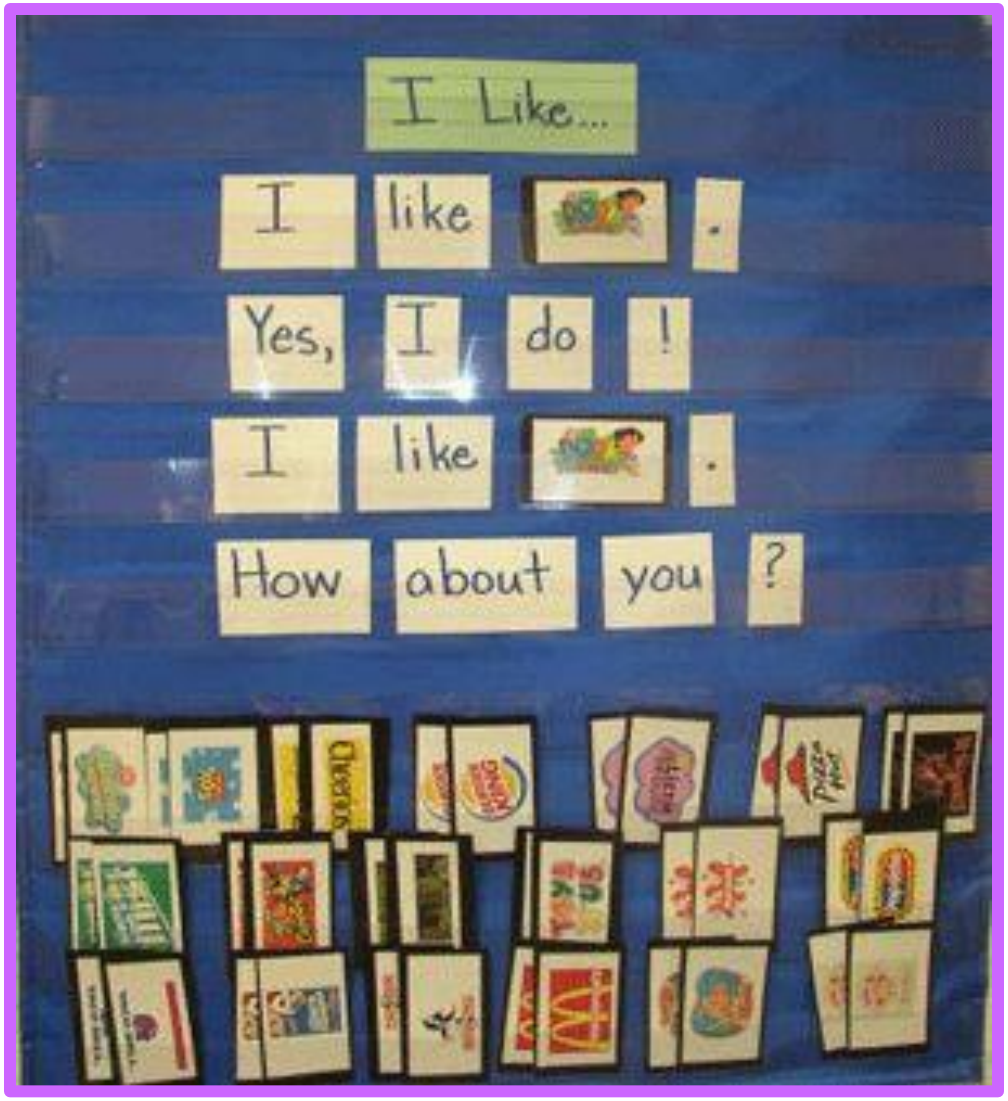
How to Create the Center:

- Provide a variety of writing tools, paper, and other kinds of writing surfaces
- Post a list of children's names, post photos with labels, charts of environmental text
- Provide book-making materials such as hole puncher, stapler, yarn
- Provide ready-made blank books
- Provide "mailboxes" for children and adults (label mailboxes with names and photos)

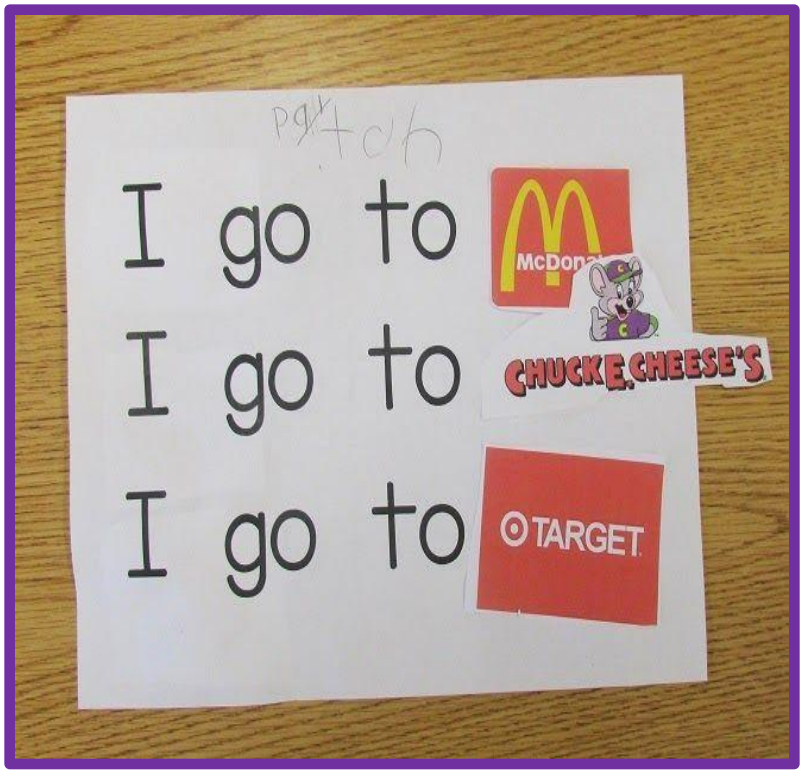
<u>Accommodations/Supports:</u>

- Provide adapted writing tools along with large-area surfaces
- Include magazines with photos of interest for cutting out and gluing
- Encourage expression and communication by allowing children to dictate or "show" what they want to write

Writing Center Activity



Literacy and Writing Centers Activities



Science Center

Children discuss their discoveries with one another and practice looking up information in nonfiction books and texts.

How to Create the Center:

- Include materials for small group activities so children can expand on their interests
- Label items such as magnifying glasses, rulers, balance scales and provide photos to give ideas for their uses
- Include books, writing materials, photos and pictures related to science topics (dinosaurs, animals, plants, weather)

Accommodations/Supports:

- Include simple materials such as cause and effect toys and real-life objects. Label these and provide examples for using them.

Dramatic Play Center

Children take on roles, express their ideas and develop plans for play, talk with one another and their teachers, and include reading and writing in their play.

How to Create the Center:

- Include props and play materials related to places and events that are familiar and interesting to children
- Include items for recreating a home, grocery store, office, restaurant, doctor's or veterinarian's office, barber/beauty shop. Label these with text and photos
- Include paper, pencils, clipboards, magazines, and file folders for children to use in play scenarios
- Include items to read such as tickets, price tags, and signs

<u>Accommodations/Supports:</u>

- Include social books and social scripts to illustrate ways to play in the center and use of the materials
- Label with photos of actual items to help children generalize

Block or Dramatic Play Center

Block Center

Children create and follow a plan for building and describe or label their creations. They relate building and objects in the center to real-life situations.

How to Create the Center:

- Include books related to building, signs, transportation, farms, airports
- Label types of blocks as well as props
- Rotate books so that children build skills and discover new interests
- Provide photos of ideas of structures to build
- Include paper and writing materials so that children can label their structures

Accommodations/Supports:

- Provide props such as types of transportation for sorting and classifying activities
- Include examples and step-by-step visuals for building with wooden blocks as well as lego-type blocks

Block Center

Ideas for Accommodations and Supports to Meet the Needs of all Children

Increase participation in play centers

- Give children an easy-to-follow recipe with pictures and magnetic-backed food icons to stick on cookie sheets.
- Include picture icons with printed words along with velcro-backed pictures for making menus, “writing” shopping lists, or pretending to cook in dramatic play.
- Display dress-up theme pictures labeled with the corresponding text (princess, doctor, pirate). Help children use these visuals, a word board, or AAC to “tell a story” of the character.

References and Resources

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