



L.E. Phillips Memorial
Public Library

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University of Wisconsin
Eau Claire

Read[!]

WITH TLC

Science-Based Strategies for
Supporting Emergent Literacy at Home



Dear Caregivers,

Read with TLC: Science-Based Strategies for Supporting Emergent Literacy at Home is a model developed out of collaboration with the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (UWEC) and the L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library. The passage of Act 20¹ in Wisconsin in 2023 had a notable impact on reading curriculum, prompting schools to change instructional approaches and spurring discussions on literacy outcomes and resource allocation across the state. You may have noticed a change in your child's reading program at school or heard conversations about Science of Reading in the media.² As a result of these changes, caregivers contacted their public library with questions about Science of Reading and how to best support their children's reading development. This project was funded by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at UWEC.

Science of Reading refers to evidence-based approaches to literacy instruction grounded in research from education, psychology, and linguistics.³ Science-Based Reading Instruction, required by Act 20, refers to instructional methods identified through rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures. Instructional methods are considered science-based when the research has been: 1) independently peer reviewed, 2) replicated by other researchers, and 3) agreed upon within the research community.⁴

Read with TLC is a comprehensive resource designed to help you nurture the foundational skills necessary for your child's journey into reading and writing. In developing this model, researchers at UWEC reviewed literature on emergent reading development and instruction. We unpacked the research and identified critical skills that set a foundation for formal reading instruction. Furthermore, we provide practical strategies, engaging activities, and tips for cultivating a love for language and literacy in young children. Whether through playful interactions, immersive experiences, or purposeful interventions, you play a pivotal role in fostering your child's literacy skills. Thank you for joining us on this journey!

Angela Jones, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor
Special Education and Inclusive Practices
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

Student Researchers

Anna Gates
Anna Knopse
Madi Berndt

Jerissa Koenig

Early Literacy Outreach Librarian
L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library



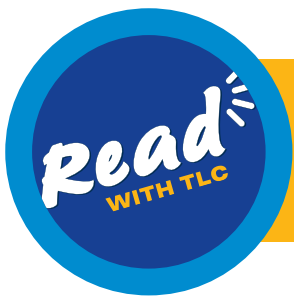
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READ WITH TLC INTRODUCTION

Research on emergent literacy identified 3 areas thought to be causally related to long-term reading achievement:⁵

1. **ORAL LANGUAGE:** the words children understand and use as they interact with and make sense of their environments. Robust oral language increases accessibility and understanding of text as children begin formal reading instruction.⁶
2. **PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS:** the ability to recognize and manipulate sounds of spoken language including alliteration, rhymes, syllables, onset and rime, and individual phonemes. These skills set a foundation for phonics instruction when children enter elementary school.⁷

3. **PRINT KNOWLEDGE:** understanding how text functions, book conventions, and letter knowledge. Along with phonological awareness, print awareness sets the foundation for formal phonics instruction.⁸

Understanding words, sounds, and text are critical for preparing our children for formal reading instruction and building a strong foundation for long-term reading achievement. However, it is important to understand instruction in these emergent reading skills often looks more like play than traditional “reading”. Years of research have identified that routine and play-based experiences are most effective in preparing young children for reading.⁹

FOUR COMPONENTS

Read with TLC was developed through engagement with peer reviewed literature on emergent literacy. This model is comprised of 4 components:

Read with Me

Captures strategies to support print awareness through shared reading and daily routines.

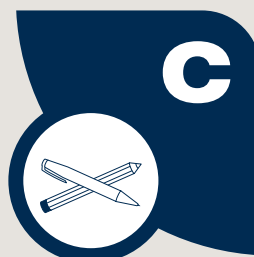


Talk with Me

Targets oral language development through purposeful verbal interactions during every day and special experiences.

Create with Me

Engages all 3 areas of emergent literacy as children express themselves through art and written language.¹⁰



Listen with Me

Practices phonological awareness through fun and playful games.

Read with TLC combines decades of research on emergent literacy with insights into how children learn, drawing on the daily experiences of families. Additionally, we provide activity examples for each

component and local resources you can use to help facilitate your child's emergent literacy development and set the foundation for formal reading instruction.



READ WITH TLC

READ WITH ME

As you read with me, you help me develop print knowledge including text functions, book handling, and letter identification.¹¹ Research tells us that HOW you read with me is just as important than how often you read with me.¹² Also, while reading books together on a regular basis helps to build a strong reading foundation, there are many meaningful ways we can read together throughout our daily routines.¹³ You help promote my print knowledge when you:

1. Show me print in my environment. This helps me learn about the ways we use text every day.
2. Ask questions as we read together. This helps me make connections with what we read.
3. Track text and let me turn pages. This helps me learn about directionality and book concepts.
4. Talk about letter formation. This helps me learn about the different shapes of letters. Remember, it is normal for me to mix up visually similar letters like b, d, p, and q.¹⁴ It is okay, I just need practice!

RESOURCES

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Family Resource Center of Eau Claire



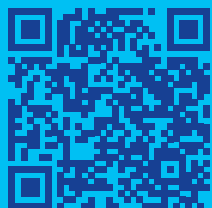
Early Literacy Coalition of the Greater Chippewa Valley



Chippewa Valley Little Libraries



L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library Book Lists



ACTIVITIES

Menu Reading

When we are at a restaurant or ordering food, help me read the menu. Point at what we are reading and track left to right. Help me notice what letters I see on the menu by talking about letter shapes.

Grocery List Checker

As we are shopping, let me read off items on our grocery list and check them off. I can use paper and pencil or check boxes on a grocery app.

Dialogic Reading

As we read together, ask me questions about the pictures, characters, and ideas in the story. Help me make connections between what we are reading and our daily lives and experiences. Books from Dolly Parton's Imagination Library have ideas on the inside cover for dialogic reading!

Alphabet Hopscotch

Create a game of hopscotch, but instead of numbers, use letters! As we play, talk about the names and shapes of the letters.





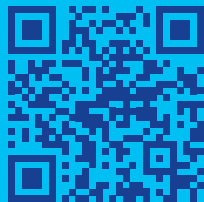
READ WITH TLC **TALK WITH ME**

As you talk with me, you help me practice my oral language skills including listening, speaking, vocabulary, and grammar.¹⁵ Research says the most important way for me to improve my oral language skills is by having conversations with the adults in my life. Having a conversation requires me to think and reflect on the words being used so that I can learn to create meaningful responses.¹⁶ You help promote my oral language when you:

1. Share new experiences with me. This helps me understand the meaning of words.
2. Describe what you see and think. This helps me learn the structure of language and how to turn my thoughts into sentences.
3. Use words I don't know. This helps build my vocabulary.
4. Extend and ask questions. This helps me practice my language skills and expand my knowledge of the world around me.

RESOURCES

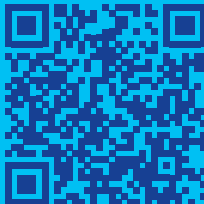
**Children's Museum
of Eau Claire**



**Eau Claire
Community Gardens**



**L.E. Phillips Memorial
Public Library
Event Calendar**



**Eau Claire City
Parks and Rec**



ACTIVITIES

Puppet Show

Let's put on a puppet show together! We can create dialogue about things we've done together or new things we are going to do. Help me practice new vocabulary as our puppets act out different scenes.

Baking

Let me help you bake. We can name the different ingredients, talk about what the ingredients look and taste like, and how the batter changes as we mix and bake.

Go Fish

Let's play go fish using cards with pictures to help build my vocabulary! We can make our own playing cards using pictures we take or drawings we make.

Nature Walk

As we go for walks, talk about what you see, hear, and feel. Help me build my vocabulary by teaching me new words as we experience new things! We can compare leaves, name different sounds, and talk about how the weather feels.





READ WITH TLC

LISTEN WITH ME

When we listen together, I am practicing phonological skills where I identify, understand, and play with sounds in our spoken language.¹⁷ As we hear sounds in our environment, you can help label them and determine when sounds are the same or different. When we play games with words and sounds, I'm focusing on identifying and producing sounds, which will help prepare me to connect sounds to specific letters when I begin formal reading instruction in school.¹⁸ As I play with syllables in words, I am breaking apart words and preparing for later reading decoding, which will also help with my comprehension.¹⁹ You help promote my phonological awareness when you:

1. Label sounds in my environment. This helps me build listening skills that help process and store sound information.
2. Play with sounds in words. This helps me understand that words are made of different combinations of sounds.
3. Play rhyming games. This helps me create and hear syllables that are the same or different.
4. Create alliterations. This helps me focus on a specific sound, which will help connect sounds to letters when I start formal reading instruction.

RESOURCES

**L.E. Phillips Memorial
Public Library:
Picture Books That Rhyme**



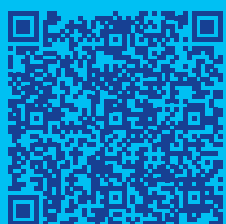
**Listen to music at the
Sounds Like Summer
Concert Series**



**Listen to nature while
hiking in Eau Claire!**



**Reading Rockets:
Phonological and
Phonemic Awareness
Activities**



ACTIVITIES

Sound Walks

Take a walk with me and listen to sounds in our environment (e.g. city sounds, sounds by the river, live music, etc.) Talk with me about what sounds we hear. Ask me how they are the same or different.

Rhyming Ball

Roll a ball to me. Say two words. If the words rhyme, I will roll the ball back. If the words don't rhyme, I can come up with a word that rhymes with one of your words and then roll the ball back.²⁰

Guess My Sound

Have me guess a letter or word based on sounds. (e.g. "I'm thinking of a letter that makes the sound /m/", "I'm thinking of a word that has the sounds /s/ /a/ /t/").²¹

Sound Spy

Variation of "Eye Spy" using sounds and rhymes (e.g. "I hear with my little ear, a fruit that starts with the sound /b/", "I hear with my little ear, something that rhymes with man").²²





READ WITH TLC CREATE WITH ME



As we create together I am practicing emergent writing skills, which combine oral language, print knowledge, and phonological awareness.²³ I practice writing through exploration with different materials and modalities, creating representations of my ideas. When I express myself through creating, making marks, and writing (even if it looks like scribbles to you), I am learning how print carries meaning.²⁴ When we talk about my creations and you write about what I made, I learn how written and spoken language are connected. You help promote my writing development when you:

1. Encourage me to create using different materials. This helps me explore ways to show my ideas.
2. Write labels on my creations. This helps me see how text represents ideas and spoken language.
3. Make lists with me. This helps me play with writing while organizing ideas and growing my vocabulary.
4. Let me make up spellings. This helps me learn about letter and sound relationships.

RESOURCES

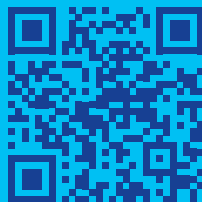
**L.E. Phillips Memorial
Public Library: Dabble Box
Makerspace Open Lab**



**L.E. Phillips Memorial
Public Library:
Library of Things**



**Check out the Create
room at the Children's
Museum of Eau Claire**



**Create together at the
Eau Claire Chalk Fest**



ACTIVITIES

Alphabet Book

Let's make an alphabet book together! We can find words, pictures, or photos for each letter of the alphabet. Let me write the letters!²⁵

Dictation Creation

Let me tell you a story while you write exactly what I say. Then I can draw pictures to describe the story. Or you can tell me a story and let me draw or write what is happening. We can read our story together at the end.

Chart the Weather

Let's go outside or use a weather app to explore the weather. We can then draw pictures and use words and numbers to represent the weather and temperature for the day.²⁶

Creation Stations

Create areas for us to use various art supplies (e.g. different types of paper, old notebooks/calendars, pens, markers, paints, collages, etc.). The creativity and possibilities for exploration are endless!



READ WITH TLC ENDNOTES



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