





Scholastic Early Childhood Program Aligns to Early Reading First


The goal of the *Early Reading First (ERF)* program is to support local efforts to enhance the early language, literacy, and pre-reading development of preschool-age children, particularly those from low-income families, through strategies and professional development that are based on scientifically based reading research. The program supports the development of early childhood centers of excellence that focus on all areas of development, especially on the early language, cognitive, and pre-reading skills that prepare children for continued school success and serve primarily children from low-income families.


The following chart shows how the *Scholastic Early Childhood Program (SECP)* can support an *Early Reading First* program. The criteria are drawn from the *Early Reading First* application posted at:


<http://www.ed.gov/programs/earlyreading/applicant.html>


Early Reading First Requirement	 Scholastic Early Childhood Program
1. Provide instructional materials that are based on scientifically based reading research on early language acquisition, pre-reading activities, and the development of the spoken vocabulary words.	<p>The <i>Scholastic Early Childhood Program (SECP)</i> provides a curriculum designed to help children acquire school-readiness skills in four critical framework areas of language and early reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oral Language ▪ Phonological Awareness ▪ Letter and Sound Knowledge ▪ Print Awareness <p>The language and early literacy curriculum of SECP is based upon the 1998 National Research Council report, <i>Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children</i>. This report presents scientific evidence that children's performance in all of these areas is significantly stronger when access to books and other literacy materials is combined with professional development and training for preschool teachers.</p> <p>The instructional design of SECP is based on a model of socio-cultural theory that promotes the importance of educators and caregivers providing young children with informed instruction, support, and meaningful activities.</p> <p>The central goal of the program is to help guarantee that young children develop the critical skills, knowledge, and life habits to become successful learners, especially in the areas of language and literacy development. Early reading research on oral language development shows that the quality and amount of adult to child discourse is critical to a young child's language development. SECP directly introduces cognitively challenging conversational opportunities through its Circle Time, Story Time, Learning Centers, and Transition Time activities centered on thematic investigations.</p>


<p>Early Reading First Requirement</p>	<p> Scholastic Early Childhood Program</p>
<p>2. Address the diverse needs of preschool-aged children in the community, including such children with limited-English proficiency, disabilities, or other special needs.</p>	<p>The <i>Scholastic Early Childhood Program</i> (SECP) provides teachers with specific strategies to reach and teach students with all ability levels, and its multimedia approach accommodates students with different learning styles. The <i>Welcome to PreKindergarten</i> Guide contains suggestions for modifying the program for children with visual, hearing, physical, cognitive, and social/emotional challenges. The Guide also specifically identifies ways to modify for multi-age classes with three- and four-year-olds, classes with only three-year-olds, and classes with four-year-old repeaters. <i>My Guide</i> provides teachers with information on setting up and maintaining an Inclusive classroom.</p> <p><u>English-Language Learners</u></p> <p>SECP was developed with an eye for Spanish authenticity, both in terms of the program components and content of the Teacher's Guide. The program incorporates traditional Spanish works and was meticulously translated using appropriate language for young children while conforming to the cadence and rhythm of the Spanish language. SECP provides true equity to Spanish-speaking children and teachers with all components available in both languages, ensuring full equity and access to learning and teaching. The side-by-side English and Spanish instruction in the Teacher's Guide is a major program strength.</p> <p>Letters can be taught as they are found in the program literature or in sequential order by using <i>Teaching Letters and Sounds/ Como enseñar las letras y los sonidos</i>. The <i>Songs and Fingerplays/Canciones y juegos con las manos</i> bilingual flipbook and CDs, in English and Spanish was developed to support the ten program themes. Songs and fingerplays are woven into daily group instruction in Circle Time, where children are actively involved in verbal expression. Spanish language acquisition is as important as English language acquisition; each song is a traditional Spanish-language song. Spanish-language fingerplays are authentic or carefully translated. All translation maintains the integrity of the fingerplay while using correct Spanish language appropriate for young children.</p>


<p>Early Reading First Requirement</p>	<p> Scholastic Early Childhood Program</p>
<p>3. Provide professional development based on scientifically based reading research knowledge or early language and reading development that will assist in developing the preschool-aged children's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognition, leading to automatic recognition of letters of the alphabet, knowledge of letters, sounds, blending of letter sounds, and increasingly complex vocabulary ▪ Understanding that written language is composed of phonemes and letters each representing one or more speech sounds that in combination make up syllables, words, and sentences ▪ Spoken language, including vocabulary and oral comprehension abilities ▪ Knowledge of purposes and conventions of print 	<p>The <i>Scholastic Early Childhood Program</i> (SECP) supports teachers with in-depth background and practices in all areas of child development and learning. The program provides professional development Teacher Workshops and a library of academic readings that are embedded into the curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u><i>Scholastic Early Childhood Program Implementation Training</i></u>—This half or full-day training explores in-depth all the components of SECP and how to implement the program as a year-long curriculum. Participants will examine the research base behind the curriculum framework, explore the program components and theme lessons, share ideas for setting up and managing the classroom, examine the formal and informal assessment tools, and review resources for communicating with families. ▪ <u><i>My Guide for Ongoing Assessment and Professional Development</i></u> provides an in-depth background on all areas of child development and learning. The most respected names in Early Childhood education and research are included in these handbooks. These resources will help teachers better understand and observe children's behavior from a developmental perspective, develop strong communication with families, and develop assessment strategies that inform curriculum. Topics included are Observation and Assessment, Child Development, Language Acquisition, Early Literacy, Technology, Cross-Curriculum Content Areas, and Embracing Diversity and the Inclusive Classroom. ▪ <u><i>Teacher Workshops</i></u> is a series of twelve cooperative workshop sessions designed to facilitate discussions among teaching teams. Each workshop consists of a four-step plan centered on a research-based article written by a noted expert such as Dr. Susan Neuman, Dr. Stanley Greenspan, Lillian Katz, or Doug Clements. The Teacher Workshops are designed to support teachers' academic knowledge and instructional practices. The Workshops are: Phonological Awareness, Print Knowledge, Literacy and Play, Building Language Through Song, Language and Cultural Heritage, Nonfiction Books, Geometry and Young Children, The Math in Music, Discovery Science, Fostering Responsibility< The Project Approach, and Children with Special Needs. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Continued)</i></p>


<p>Early Reading First Requirement</p>	<p> Scholastic Early Childhood Program</p>
<p>Provide professional development based on scientifically based reading research knowledge or early language and reading development Continued</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Optional Scholastic Early Literacy Seminars</u> engage Early Childhood Educators in the essentials necessary for running language and literacy-rich classrooms. Workshop presenters are early literacy experts with years of classroom and professional development experience. These eight half-day seminars can be customized to meet district needs: Managing Your Classroom and Small Group Instruction; Developing Oral Language; Building Letter Knowledge and Phonological Awareness; Supporting English-Language Learners; Building Content-Area Knowledge; Connecting School and Home; Developing Print Awareness and Writing; and Teaching Each Child.
<p>4. Enhance the school readiness of preschool-aged children in high-quality oral language and literature-rich environments in which to acquire language and pre-reading skills.</p>	<p>The <i>Scholastic Early Childhood Program</i> (SECP) is a comprehensive, yearlong curriculum for Pre-Kindergarten that provides the most eager learners with a strong foundation in early literacy, language, math, and science skills while encouraging personal and social development.</p> <p>SECP gives early learners exposure to critical skills and experiences they need to form the foundation for their formal education. The program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides a full-year curriculum covering all the early learning domains ▪ Balances child-initiated explorations with teacher-directed instruction ▪ Contains ongoing assessments available in print and CD-ROM ▪ Integrates professional development via the “12 Teacher Workshop” series ▪ Features English language support strategies in every lesson ▪ Offers a rich parent-involvement system <p>The SECP curriculum actively involves children and allows them to learn through play, hands-on exploration, singing, acting, and participating in other engaging activities. Real-world themes attract children’s attention and make learning relevant to their lives. Books, manipulatives, picture cards, audiocassettes, posters, and CDs provide children with a wide variety of materials that motivate them.</p> <p>The SECP curriculum model is designed to support children’s development of knowledge, skills, and processes that will help them make sense of themselves and the world around them. The program establishes an age-appropriate schedule for young children, balancing quiet time and active times, whole and small-group activities, indoor and outdoor play, as well as, teacher-directed instruction and child-centered exploration.</p>

<p>Early Reading First Requirement</p>	<p> Scholastic Early Childhood Program</p>
<p>5. Provide language and literacy activities based on scientifically-based reading research that supports the age-appropriate development of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognition, leading to automatic recognition, of letters of the alphabet ▪ Knowledge of letter sounds, the blending of sounds, and the use of increasingly complex vocabulary ▪ An understanding that written language is composed of phonemes and letters each representing one or more speech sounds that in combination make up syllables, words, and sentences ▪ Spoken language, including vocabulary and oral comprehension abilities ▪ Knowledge of purpose and conventions of print 	<p>The systematic, developmentally appropriate SECP language and early literacy curriculum is integrated with mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, and physical, personal, and social development. Students are provided with the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for optimal reading in Kindergarten and beyond. The SECP instruction is in both English and Spanish.</p> <p><u>Phonological Awareness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ During direct instruction, teachers model phonological awareness and use picture cards to help students rhyme, blend, segment, and manipulate sounds. ▪ Children reread books, sing songs and rhymes, listen to poems, and work with the sounds and patterns of language. ▪ Students match pictures to initial sounds through hands-on activities. <p><u>Oral Language</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students sing songs, recite poetry, and play games to increase vocabulary, listening skills, and use of language. ▪ Children participate in conversations, class discussions, and dramatic play. ▪ Students listen to them book audiocassette recordings and recount stories. <p><u>Print Awareness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Children are exposed to a variety of print, including fiction and nonfiction books, poems, and song charts, posters, signs, and word lists. ▪ Students learn the conventions of books through daily modeled readings, and they develop concepts of words, sentences, and punctuation by following along and tracking print. <p><u>Alphabet Knowledge</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teachers explicitly teach students the letters of the alphabet in a planned sequence. ▪ Students practice writing letters through activities connected to books. ▪ Children learn letter-sound correspondence, and they attend to letter sounds by sorting and playing games with picture cards.

<p>Early Reading First Requirement</p>	<p> Scholastic Early Childhood Program</p>
<p>6. Use screening reading assessments to effectively identify preschool-aged children who may be at risk for reading failure.</p>	<p>Assessments in the <i>Scholastic Early Childhood Program</i> (SECP) are administered on a regular basis and embedded in the program. They are designed to determine children’s progress and abilities within each domain so that teachers can modify instruction as needed. Teachers use these assessments to differentiate instruction and meet individual student needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Informal Assessment</u>—SECP provides guidance in assessing daily work, portfolio review, and learning over time. Examples include how to use and develop observational records and individual profiles, anecdotal records, oral language checklists, and meaningful portfolios that document progress. <i>My Guide</i> provides tips for using Developmental Red Flags to identify potential learning problems and information for communicating informal assessment results with parents. ▪ <u>Formal Assessment</u>—SECP includes formal assessments for Book and Print Awareness, Phonological Awareness, Letter Knowledge Assessment, and Writing Assessment. ▪ <u>Checklists for Monitoring the PreKindergarten Curriculum Goals</u>—SECP provides checklists for monitoring Language and Early Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Personal and Social Development, Art, Music, Fine and Gross Motor skills, and Technology. These checklists help teachers to summarize assessment information periodically, and can be used to help plan instructional activities. ▪ <u>Theme Checklists</u>—track each child’s progress every two themes based on objectives targeted for those themes.
<p>7. Integrate the instructional materials and literacy activities with existing preschool programs and family literacy services.</p>	<p>The SECP is organized around routines based upon best practices in Early Childhood Education. <i>Welcome to Pre-K</i> supports teachers in setting-up and managing their classroom, as well as creating a literacy-rich environment. Furthermore, the theme Teacher’s Guides provide lessons in English and Spanish, as well as intensive support for ESL students.</p> <p>Each theme includes many lessons and activities that encourage oral discussion and interaction with print materials. In addition to the collection of fiction and non-fiction literature (Little and Big Books), there are science and letter posters, math cards, and word cards that help provide a literacy-rich environment for the child.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Continued)</i></p>

<p>Early Reading First Requirement</p>	<p> Scholastic Early Childhood Program</p>
<p>Integrate the instructional materials and literacy activities with existing preschool programs and family literacy services. Continued</p>	<p>Each daily lesson is structured in the following manner and can be tailored for half-day or full-day preschool programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Circle Time</u>: Teacher-directed, explicit instruction in oral language, phonological awareness, mathematics, and additional vocabulary and concept building across the content areas ▪ <u>Story Time</u>: Teacher-directed, explicit instruction in language and early literacy skills especially in oral language, phonological awareness, letter and sound knowledge, print awareness, and writing ▪ <u>Learning Centers and Teacher’s Table</u>: Child-directed explorations across the curriculum that focus on the targeted skills and concepts for the week, as well as provide extra practice and reinforcement in previously taught skills and concepts ▪ <u>Transitions</u>: Teacher-led opportunities that use oral language and thinking skills to develop additional literacy area concepts <p>Each theme is supported with instruction for preparing the classroom, launching the activities, and wrapping up the topic.</p>
<p>8. Coordinate with activities at the kindergarten through Grade 3 level, and assist children, particularly children experiencing difficulty with spoken language, pre-reading, and early reading skills to make the transition from preschool to Kindergarten.</p>	<p>The <i>Scholastic Early Childhood Program</i> (SECP) prepares PreKindergarten children to enter kindergarten with the language, early literacy, mathematics, social/emotional, and cognitive skills necessary for learning and early reading success. The program addresses all nine areas of the PreKindergarten Curriculum Guidelines; Language and Early Literacy, Math, Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts, Health and Safety, Personal and Social Development,</p> <p>Each day in the SECP program begins with lessons that develop children’s oral language including vocabulary, contextual use of speech and syntax, and oral comprehension abilities. Lessons for developing children’s expressive and receptive language are provided in English and Spanish. All lessons support English-Language Learners through proven strategies and instructional methods. Children develop oral language skills and competencies through songs, poetry, multiple-session read aloud lessons, pictures of new vocabulary words, speaking and listening activities, and shared reading.</p> <p>SECP provides language and early literacy lessons that support age-appropriate development in oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabetic knowledge. It immerses children in a high-quality language and literacy-rich environment with nonfiction and fiction books, posters, audiocassettes, songs, and charts, among other materials and resources.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Continued)</i></p>

<p>Early Reading First Requirement</p>	<p> Scholastic Early Childhood Program</p>
<p>Coordinate with activities at the kindergarten through Grade 3 level, and assist children, particularly children experiencing difficulty with spoken language, pre-reading, and early reading skills to make the transition from preschool to Kindergarten. Continued</p>	<p>Language and vocabulary are developed in the context of the theme and associated literature. Teacher-directed instruction is provided daily in phonological awareness; as well as, instruction in letter sounds, letter forms, and letter/sound associations.</p> <p>In addition, the program includes a rich focus on content area vocabulary. During the small group work, teachers offer direct instruction in content/theme-related vocabulary. The vocabulary words selected for each them correspond to the topic and, importantly, to the most common science, math, and social studies content included in PreKindergarten standards.</p> <p>SECP develops multiple opportunities to help children develop rhyming, blending, and segmenting skills through speaking, chanting, and singing activities. SECP features multiple exposures to all letters throughout the program, and provides activities for writing explorations. Letters and sounds are taught in the context of the reading and then extended and reinforced in multiple ways. Teachers have the flexibility to use an alternative sequence provided in the <i>Teaching Letters and Sounds</i> Teacher’s Guide.</p> <p>Sequenced math instruction appears every day either during Circle Time or Story Time and follows a carefully sequenced continuum that develops problem solving strategies, and higher order thinking skills. Math lessons connect to literature and provide hands-on exploration and practice. Math Concept Cards provide additional focused instruction and introduce math concepts and vocabulary. Direct explicit instruction is provided on each card. Additional math explorations take place in Teacher Tables and Math Centers.</p> <p>Program math instruction reflects a carefully sequenced continuum that aligns to NCTM standards and covers five basic areas: Numbers and Operations, Patterns and Order, Geometry and Spatial Sense, Measurement, and Classification and Data Collection. Math guidelines are addressed at point of use, in the weekly learning centers overview, and on the Math Concept Cards.</p>

<p>Early Reading First Requirement</p>	<p> Scholastic Early Childhood Program</p>										
<p>9. Coordinate with the Local Education Agency (LEA) to prepare students with the foundational language, cognitive, and early reading skills to ensure a successful transition into the LEA’s Reading First program or Elementary Reading program based on scientific research.</p>	<p>The <i>Scholastic Early Childhood Program</i> (SECP) situates teaching and learning in relevant real-world contexts that build on children’s understanding of the world in which they live. It engages children’s interests through its organization of ten themes that connect to children’s life experiences. Subthemes within each theme encourage children to deepen their experience. Exploration of themes and other carefully selected topics that access children’s curiosity are developed through the program’s Learning Centers such as “ABC and Writing” and “Dramatic Play,” which are structured to guide children’s independent inquiries while offering choice. To facilitate this process, the program includes manipulatives, songs and charts, and other interactive resources that encourage active engagement.</p> <p>Organized around themes that are relevant to children’s life experiences, SECP enables children to connect their in-school and outside-school experiences, which deepens comprehension and understanding. Each carefully chosen theme starts with what is familiar to children and connects to the world around them. The themes broaden as children understand more about the world around them. All of the following themes are designed to be flexible and can easily integrate with other themes and materials in the Early Childhood classroom.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Real World Themes in SECP</u></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>1. Friends and School</td> <td>6. Working and Playing Together</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Home and Family</td> <td>7. Make It, Build It</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Inside and Outside Me</td> <td>8. Let’s Explore</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. Staying Well, Staying Safe</td> <td>9. Animals and Where They Live</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5. Our Community</td> <td>10. Everything Changes</td> </tr> </table> <p>Each theme includes an organized support package that contains a Theme Teacher’s Guide, Theme Books in English and Spanish, Theme Book Audiocassettes, and Theme Book Read Aloud Books. Instruction in the Teacher’s Guide is centered on Learning Centers for child explorations as well as Circle Time and Story Time for teacher-directed instruction.</p> <p>In the Teacher’s Guide, the Components Checklist details the language, math, and science resources for that theme, including theme literature and support literature. The weekly plan for Circle Time and Story Time shows the daily Oral Language activity, Phonological Awareness and Math activities, daily literature, content-area focus and ESL support.</p>	1. Friends and School	6. Working and Playing Together	2. Home and Family	7. Make It, Build It	3. Inside and Outside Me	8. Let’s Explore	4. Staying Well, Staying Safe	9. Animals and Where They Live	5. Our Community	10. Everything Changes
1. Friends and School	6. Working and Playing Together										
2. Home and Family	7. Make It, Build It										
3. Inside and Outside Me	8. Let’s Explore										
4. Staying Well, Staying Safe	9. Animals and Where They Live										
5. Our Community	10. Everything Changes										