

Full Application Toolkit
Early Reading First
Featuring *Building Language for Literacy*™

Scholastic Inc. has prepared this Grant Assistance Toolkit to assist Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and/or public or private organizations or agencies in the development of an *Early Reading First (ERF)* grant program. The Toolkit provides key information in these areas:

- ◆ Funding program information
- ◆ Alignment of ***Building Language for Literacy*** program to *ERF* grant requirements
- ◆ Grant writing support

***Building Language for Literacy*™ is the research-based reading program featured in this Toolkit.**

Building Language for Literacy (BLL) is a Pre-Kindergarten curriculum that provides a rich environment of print and nonprint experiences related to language and literacy development. It incorporates such early childhood teaching tools as literature, music, poetry, learning center activities, and puppets to engage children as active learners.

BLL is a flexible program that can become the basis for a complete early literacy curriculum or fit neatly into current curriculum. The program is built around these four foundational goals:

- ◆ Oral language
- ◆ Phonological awareness
- ◆ Letter/sound knowledge
- ◆ Print knowledge

Due to the extensive research demonstrating that oral language and vocabulary levels correlate to future reading and school success (Tabors, Snow & Dickinson, 2001), oral language is the primary focus of the ***Building Language for Literacy*** program.

Using the Toolkit

This Toolkit is designed as a resource to provide information that can be used when completing the full application for *ERF* grant funds. It only addresses application requirements that are pertinent to Scholastic products and services and does not cover all *ERF* expectations.

The Toolkit also includes grant writing tips and examples of the types of information needed when applying for a grant. Contact the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) for the official application that has all the requirements and guidelines.

Please note these symbols throughout the Toolkit to help you write your application:

 ***Highlights additional support and suggestions for writing your application.***

 ***Refers to *Building Language for Literacy* features.***

Scholastic's Commitment

Scholastic is committed to the sustainability of quality programs in order to improve teaching and learning. For more information about the products included in this Toolkit, please contact your Scholastic Regional Office.

California
800-342-5331

Northeast
800-878-8398

Southeast
800-348-3750


Southwest
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 *Because every grant program is unique, it is important to adapt the language provided in this Toolkit rather than copy it. Your proposal is more likely to be successful if you **customize** your application. Be sure to incorporate specific information about your program's needs, vision, programs, and design when you write your *Early Reading First* application.*

Funding Program Overview: *Early Reading First*

The information in this section of the Toolkit is based on the federal *Guidance for the ERF Program* (March 2003) and the *Fiscal Year 2005 Application for New Grants for the ERF Program* that is available at this website:


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

Purpose of *Early Reading First*

Title I, Part B, Subpart 2 of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)* is known as *Early Reading First*. The ultimate goal of the *ERF* is to improve the school readiness of our nation's young children, especially those from low-income families, by providing support for Early Childhood Education programs serving preschool-age children.

Specifically, *Early Reading First* grants will provide funds to:

1. Support local efforts to enhance the early language, cognitive, and early 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
2. Provide preschool-age children with cognitive learning opportunities in high-quality language and print-rich environments so that they can attain the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for optimal reading development in Kindergarten and beyond
3. Use language and literacy activities based on scientifically based reading research to support the age-appropriate development of:
 - ◆ *Oral language*—vocabulary development, expressive language, and listening comprehension
 - ◆ *Phonological awareness*—rhyming, blending, segmenting
 - ◆ *Print awareness*
 - ◆ *Alphabet knowledge*—letter recognition
4. Use screening assessments or other appropriate measures to identify preschool-age children who may be at risk for reading failure, and to determine whether those children are developing the language, cognitive, and early reading skills they need for later reading success
5. Integrate instructional materials and programs based on scientifically based reading research into existing preschool programs

 ***Building Language for Literacy*** is a research-based program that provides a curriculum designed to help children acquire school readiness skills in language and early reading in four critical curriculum framework areas: oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabetic knowledge. ***Building Language for Literacy*** is a perfect match for the *Early Reading First* Program.

Eligibility

The USDOE determines which applicants will be invited to submit full applications, considering the rank ordering of the pre-applications based on the pre-application selection criteria and the competitive priority. Those pre-applicants who have been invited to submit full applications are posted on the *Early Reading First* website at:

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

A peer review panel of experts evaluates full applications and awards points based on the selection criteria and competitive priority, if any. The USDOE selects applicants for funding based on the quality of their full application and their rank order.

Full Application Deadline: May 2, 2005

Full applications for grants under this program must be submitted electronically using the Department's e-Grants system, accessible through the e-Grants portal page at:

<http://e-grants.ed.gov>

The deadline for electronic submission of Early Reading First program Full Applications is 4:30 p.m. (Washington DC time), **May 2, 2005**

What Projects Must Do


Early Reading First provides funding and support to turn preschool programs into Centers of Excellence by improving instruction and classroom environments through scientific research-based practices in language, cognition, and early reading.

All *Early Reading First* projects must provide the following activities:

 ***For more information about these activities, as well as research-based approaches and strategies, the Early Reading First Guidance is available at:***


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


1. **Classroom Environment:** Provide preschool-age children with high-quality oral language and print-rich environments in which to acquire oral language skills, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge.

 *Each of the 12 BLL units provides at least four weeks of explicit instruction in oral language, phonological awareness, letter knowledge, and concepts of print. Skills are taught on a continuum so they are reinforced in each unit. Each unit contains a variety of engaging multi-cultural print material including fiction and non-fiction trade books and PlaceBooks™, oversized books filled with photographic explorations of the places within each theme.*


2. **Professional Development:** Provide professional development for staff that is based on scientifically based reading research knowledge of language, cognitive, and early reading development that will assist in developing the preschool-age children's:


- ◆ *Oral language*—expressive and receptive language, including vocabulary development
- ◆ *Phonological awareness*—rhyming, blending, and segmenting
- ◆ *Print awareness*
- ◆ *Alphabet knowledge*—letter recognition


 Professional development for the **Building Language for Literacy** program is integrated into the curriculum through the *Blueprint for Literacy* model lessons. In addition, each of the 12 units in the program contains four professional development workshops. Within each workshop are these areas: *Research Shows, What You Can Do, Informal Assessment, Observing Children, and Good Teaching Practices.*

 The *Scholastic Early Childhood Seminar Series* deepens teachers' knowledge of early childhood literacy development and provides them with strategies to integrate early literacy with content-area themes, link literacy and math, support the English language learner, and make effective use of interactive activities.


3. **Services and Instructional Materials:** Identify and provide activities and instructional materials that are based on scientifically based reading research for use in developing children's language, cognitive, and early reading skills.

 Daily **BLL** activities help children develop oral language, phonological awareness, letter knowledge, and print knowledge. Lessons present skills recursively so that children have multiple experiences to build a deep foundation in language development. The developmental skills are introduced and practiced along a continuum; however, the units within each phase (Phase One and Phase Two) can be done in any order.


 The **BLL** curriculum framework and objectives are based upon the National Research Council report, "Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children." This report documents scientific evidence that children's performance in all of these areas is significantly better when access to books and other literacy materials is combined with professional development and training for preschool teachers.

 **BLL** features "language-loving" characters that act as concrete models of abstract literacy concepts as well as models that inspire and motivate learning. The program's "Places" framework reflects children's home and community experiences to help children make meaningful connections. It contains built-in professional development that helps teachers integrate their own learning about children's language and literacy development with their actual curriculum planning and daily lesson implementation. **BLL's** structure makes the most of every teachable moment in the classroom day—by providing language use and enrichment ideas and activities, including morning circle time, story time, learning centers, and transition times.


4. **Screening Assessments:** Acquire, provide training in the use of, and implement screening reading assessments or other appropriate measures that are based on scientifically based reading research to determine whether preschool-age children are developing the language, cognitive, and early reading skills they need for later reading success.

 **BLL** includes an Assessment Handbook that provides both individual and group assessment instruments. The Handbook contains these components:

- Overview of early literacy assessment
- Oral language assessment
- Mid-year and end-of-year assessments
- Phonological awareness assessment
- Letter Knowledge Assessment
- Print Knowledge Assessment
- Suggested follow-up activities
- Progress report template

 The end of each unit of the program contains informal assessment techniques and suggestions. These include ideas for individual and class profiles, as well as suggestions for evaluating the literacy environment of the classroom.

5. **Integration:** Integrate the above instructional materials, activities, tools, and measures into the applicant's overall programs.

 **Building Language for Literacy** is designed to be both practical and flexible in its classroom integration. Each Unit Guide provides detailed lessons for developing oral language, reading, and writing skills; assessment strategies; second-language support suggestions; and built-in staff development.

6. **Coordinate with Reading First:** If applicants are located in a school district that receives a subgrant under the *Reading First* program, coordinate their *Early Reading First* activities with the school district's *Reading First* activities to ensure continuity for children between the Pre-Kindergarten program and Kindergarten through Grade 3 reading instruction.

7. **Report Annually:** Submit to the USDOE annual performance reports. Additionally, the annual performance report must report the project's performance against the GPRA indicators using the following two measures for evaluating the overall effectiveness of the *Early Reading First* program:

- ◆ The percentage of preschool-age children who demonstrate age-appropriate oral language skills as measured by the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III
- ◆ The average number of letters that preschool-age children are able to identify as measured by the K Upper Case Alphabet Knowledge subtask on the PALS Pre-K assessment

8. **Cooperate with any Evaluation:** Participate fully in any evaluation of the *Early Reading First* program carried out by the USDOE.

The Full Application Process

All full applications must include the following:

Part I of the Full Application

- ◆ ED 424 form
- ◆ Abstract—Applicants must submit a one-page, double-spaced Abstract, briefly describing their proposed project.

Part II of the Full Application

- ◆ Full Application Narrative—The Full Application Narrative is limited to 35 double-spaced pages. The applicant should prepare the narrative to respond to the selection criteria in the order in which they are listed:
 - A. Quality of the Project Design
 - B. Quality of Project Personnel
 - C. Adequacy of Resources
 - D. Quality of Management Plan
 - E. Quality of the Project Evaluation
 - F. Significance
 - G. Competitive Preference—Novice Applicants

Part III of the Full Application

- ◆ ED 524 Form, Budget Information—Part A only, columns for Project Years 1, 2, and 3, and Total column.
- ◆ Budget Narrative—Explanation of proposed costs in narrative form—the equivalent of no more than five pages, double-spaced, 12-point font.

Part IV of the Full Application

- ◆ Appendices
 - List of name(s) and address(es) of the existing preschool programs that the *Early Reading First* project would support, including a brief description indicated under Quality of Project Design, (Selection Criteria 1), Note, Purpose 1.
 - Curriculum vitae for key personnel—no more than five people. Include no more than three one-sided pages for each curriculum vita submitted.
 - Numbered endnote citations
 - SF 424B Form—Assurance—Non-Construction Programs
 - Demonstration of Stakeholders' Support—limited to five one-sided pages.
 - ED 80-0013 Form
 - SF LLL Form (submit if applicable)
 - Response to Notice to All Applicants (Section 427, GEPA)
- ✍ ***For a complete list of all required forms and information, please consult the Full Application Final Checklist located in Section E of the Early Reading First application package, CFDA No. 84.359B.***

Instructions for Transmitting Full Applications

Full applications for grants under the *Early Reading First* program must be submitted electronically using the Department's e-Grants system, accessible through the e-Grants portal page at: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>.

The deadline for electronic submission of *ERF* Full Applications is 4:30 p.m. (Washington DC time), May 2, 2005

Applicants must submit all documents electronically, including the Application for Federal Education Assistance (ED 424), Budget Information (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications. Electronic full applications must comply with any page-limit requirements described in Section D of the application package. Applicants may NOT e-mail an electronic copy of a pre-grant application to USDOE.

 **Please see Section D for specific instructions for electronic submission of Full Applications and hours of operation for the e-Grants web site.**

After Submitting the Application Electronically

After applicants submit the Full Application, they will receive an automatic acknowledgement that will include a PR/Award Number (an identifying number unique to their application).

Within three working days after submitting the electronic application, applicants are required to fax a signed copy of the ED 424 to the Application Control Center after following these steps:

1. Print ED 424 from e-Application.
2. The applicant's Authorizing Representative must sign this form.
3. Place the PR/Award Number in the upper right hand corner of the hard-copy signature page of the ED 424.
4. Fax the signed ED 424 to the Application Control Center at (202)-245-6272.

Tips for Electronic Submission

- ◆ USDOE strongly recommends that applicants do not wait until the deadline date to begin the Full Application process.
- ◆ Prior to submitting the electronic Full Application, USOE recommends that applicants print a copy of it for their records.
- ◆ For technical assistance, with the e-Application process, contact the e-Grants Help Desk at 1-888-336-8930.

Competitive Priority
NOVICE APPLICANT

Early Reading First Full Applications that meet the following competitive priority will receive 5 extra points. To obtain points under this Full Application competitive priority, an applicant must:

1. Qualify as a novice applicant as described below
2. Check “Yes” in response to Question 6 on the Application for Federal Assistance Form (ED Form 424) that the applicant files with its Full Application

A “novice applicant” means any applicant for a grant from USDOE that:

- A. Has never received a grant or subgrant under the *Early Reading First* program
- B. Has never been a member of a group application that received an *Early Reading First* grant award
- C. Has not had an active discretionary grant from the Federal Government in the five years before the deadline date for applications under *Early Reading First*


 ***For more information regarding the definitions for a “novice applicant,” please refer to the ERF Full Application Package, Section E.***


Building Language for Literacy Aligns to Early Reading First Criteria

Early Reading First is a federal grant program that is part of the President’s Early Childhood Initiative, “Good Start, Grow Smart.” These grants are designed to help existing Early Childhood Education programs become Centers of Educational Excellence for preschool-age children. Through improvements in the instruction and classroom environment, children will develop the critical language, literacy, and cognitive skills that will prepare them for success in Kindergarten.

Applicants for *ERF* funds must ensure that their program aligns with the following key emergent literacy skills:

- Oral Language
- Phonological Awareness
- Print Awareness
- Alphabet Knowledge

<i>Early Reading First Criteria</i>	 <i>Building Language for Literacy</i>
<p>Oral Language</p> <p>Development of expressive and receptive language including vocabulary, the contextual use of speech and syntax, and oral comprehension abilities</p>	<p>Research has found that reading aloud to children, followed by discussion, is correlated to later success with independent reading. Each <i>Building Language for Literacy</i> unit begins with “Get Ideas Going” during which children talk about the place that they are going to explore in this unit. Following the introductory discussion, the teacher and children explore the PlaceBook, which is filled with beautiful, “language-rich” illustrations and give children opportunities to use new vocabulary and build concepts around these new words.</p> <p>After building an overall understanding of the “place,” children participate in many activities to use both familiar and new vocabulary to deepen their understanding. For example, children participate in a dramatic play, create their own story situated in the “place,” name and describe objects located in the “place” and ask questions, and listen to stories, songs, and poems all revolving around the “place.”</p> <p><i>Nina the Naming Newt™</i>, one of the language-loving, original characters in the program, is a tool for building vocabulary. Along with Nina, children learn and use new words to describe the stories and participate in the oral language activities.</p>



Early Reading First Criteria	 Building Language for Literacy
<p>Phonological Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifying and making oral rhymes ▪ Identifying and working with syllables in spoken words through segmentation and blending ▪ Identifying and working with “onsets and rimes” ▪ Identifying and working with individual sounds in words 	<p>To support emerging literacy, one of the foundational goals of Building Language for Literacy is to develop phonological awareness. Throughout the program, children engage in meaningful, fun activities that help them build their awareness of the sounds of language. Daily opportunities to sing songs, hear poetry, create rhymes, and simply play with language, expose children to the sounds and patterns of language. Teachers playfully use <i>Reggie the Rhyming Rhino™</i>, a language-loving, original character in the program, to engage children in their development of phonological awareness.</p>
<p>Print Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowledge of the purposes and conventions of print 	<p>Throughout Building Language for Literacy, children are exposed to a variety of print—fiction and nonfiction trade books, poems, printed words of songs, signs, lists, recipes and so on. By participating in “read-alouds” and related activities, children develop an understanding that print carries a message and recognize that stories have sequence and flow. Children also participate in activities that help them understand how books should be handled. The Unit Guide requests teachers to write down what children are saying so that they see the connection between spoken and written words.</p> <p>Through multiple encounters with these materials, and the provided strategies modeled by teachers, children develop critical concepts of print that aid the reading process.</p> <p>Furthermore, the language-loving characters—Nina, Reggie, and Leo—use their language and literacy skills to explore print and the world around them.</p>
<p>Alphabet Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Letter recognition 	<p>One of the foundational goals of BLL requires children to develop an awareness of letter/sound correspondence. Children engage in activities that help them make letter/sound discoveries in authentic and meaningful ways, including writing and creating letters and songs.</p> <p><i>Leo the Letter-Loving Lobster™</i>, a language-loving character in the program, helps children learn the letters of the alphabet and the sounds that are associated with each letter. Leo says the first letter of every word he sees. <i>Leo’s Alphabet</i>, an alphabet frieze on seven song cards to be used by class when singing the alphabet song, reinforces the idea that letters are part of a system called the alphabet. In addition, Leo helps children make connections between letters and sounds through literature, games, and activities.</p>


Building Language for Literacy Aligns to Early Reading First Required Activities


In addition, *Early Reading First* programs must include the following components:


- Classroom Environment
- Professional Development
- Services and Instructional Materials
- Screening Assessments
- Integration

The following chart details how ***Building Language for Literacy*** fulfills the above *ERF* required activities.

<i>Early Reading First Requirement</i>	 <i>Building Language for Literacy</i>
<p>Classroom Environment</p> <p>A high-quality oral language and print-rich environment</p>	<p><i>Building Language for Literacy</i> introduces developmental skills in a systematic way. Specific goals and objectives spelled out in the <i>BLL</i> Unit Guides form the basis of all activities. Children have experiences that develop oral language, phonological awareness, letter knowledge, and print knowledge on a daily basis. Lessons present key skills multiple times to give children many opportunities to build a deep foundation in language development.</p> <p><i>BLL</i> builds on children's life experiences by focusing activities on familiar places, people, and activities in the home and community. The program encourages children to use prior knowledge to relate to new understandings, thus increasing the possibility of success for each student.</p> <p>Teachers find <i>BLL</i> to be a practical, yet flexible tool. The program is organized around a total of 60 minutes of instruction each day that can be integrated into the existing curriculum, as well as making the classroom a place for vocabulary and language development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Song and Poem Time: 15 minutes ▪ Story Time: 20 minutes ▪ Choice Time: 20 minutes ▪ Transition Time: 5 minutes <p> <i>For a complete overview of each of these four program areas, including goals and activities please see page 49.</i></p>

Early Reading First Requirement	 Building Language for Literacy
<p>Professional Development</p> <p>Professional development that is based on scientifically based reading research knowledge of language, cognitive, and early reading development</p>	<p>Professional development for the BLL program is integrated into the curriculum through the Blueprint for Literacy model lessons. Each of the 10 units in the program contains four professional development workshops. Each workshop covers these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Research Shows</u>: This section provides examples from 1) the NAEYC/IRA Joint Position Statement and/or 2) Report on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties research that supports the classroom activities. ▪ <u>What You Can Do</u>: This section presents specific tips for maximizing children’s learning potential through the activity. ▪ <u>Informal Assessment</u>: This section provides a model of classroom dialogue with annotated insights about the discussion. ▪ <u>Observing Children</u>: This section offers specific suggestions for responding to children’s understandings and literacy behaviors. ▪ <u>Good Teaching Practices</u>: This section offers practical classroom management tips. <p>Scholastic also offers these one-day seminars that can be customized to meet district needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Essentials of Early Literacy and Language Development ▪ Integrating Content Area Themes ▪ Learning Literacy through Interactive Activities ▪ Linking Literacy to Math ▪ Supporting the English Language Learner
<p>Services and Instructional Materials</p> <p>Activities and instructional materials that are based on scientifically based reading research for use in developing language, cognitive, and early reading skills</p>	<p>Program authors, Dr. Susan B. Neuman and Dr. Catherine E. Snow, contributed a wealth of experience in and knowledge of the research and best practices in teaching early reading skills. In addition, the program was developed using <i>Early Reading First</i> criteria and the NAEYC/IRA Joint Position Statement on Early Childhood Education and Early Reading.</p> <p>BLL provides a rich environment of print and nonprint experiences related to language and literacy development to engage and motivate early learners. Early childhood activities in different cross-curricular contexts, including music, drawing, and social studies, engage children as active learners through direct instruction and well-developed learning center activities.</p> <p>In addition, BLL provides detailed lesson plans for developing oral language, reading, and writing skills.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued)</i></p>

Early Reading First Requirement	 Building Language for Literacy
<p>Services and Instructional Materials, Continued</p>	<p>The program has two levels that teach the following skills:</p> <p>Phase I Focus: Oral Language Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alphabet recognition, concepts of print, consonants, short vowels, and digraphs <p>Phase II Focus: Advanced Oral Language Development and Experimental Reading and Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consonant blends, inflection endings, long vowels, variant vowels, and diphthongs <p>BLL contains the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teacher Materials: Program Overview, Unit Guides, Assessment Handbook, Parent Involvement Handbook, music book, and CDs ▪ Classroom Literature: Trade books, board books, mini-books, and PlaceBooks™ ▪ Character Kits: Puppets, plush toys, word cards, song charts, poem charts, song cards, and character punch-outs
<p>Screening Assessments</p> <p>Screening reading assessments or other appropriate measures that are based on scientifically based reading research to determine whether preschool-age children are developing the language, cognitive, and early reading skills they need for later reading success.</p>	<p>The BLL Assessment Handbook provides formal unit-by-unit assessment, as well as mid- and end-of-year measures. The formal assessments measure student mastery of skills, and informal assessments can be used to develop individual and class profiles. Both assessments inform instruction and teacher decision-making.</p> <p>The Assessment Handbook contains these components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overview of early literacy assessment ▪ Unit assessments ▪ Mid-year and end-of-year assessments ▪ Suggested follow-up activities ▪ Progress reports <p><u>Formal Assessment</u></p> <p>The formal assessment instruments measure these skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oral Language: Vocabulary, listening/responding, using language, and speaking ▪ Phonological Awareness: Sounds, letter/sounds, and word parts ▪ Letter Knowledge: Letters, letter/sounds, and writing name ▪ Print Knowledge: Responding to print and concepts of print <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued)</i></p>

Early Reading First Requirement	 Building Language for Literacy
<p>Screening Assessments, Continued</p>	<p><u>Informal Assessment</u> At the end of each unit of the program, there are informal assessment techniques and suggestions. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Suggestions for both individual and class profiles▪ Suggestions for evaluating the literacy environment of the classroom
<p>Integration</p> <p>The preschool program integrates the instructional materials, activities, tools, and measures described above into the overall early childhood education program offered.</p>	<p><i>Building Language for Literacy</i> offers an integrated program of instruction with early childhood activities that include cross-curricular experiences in literature and music. The program presents themes that are relevant to the children's life, such as Home, Store, Farm, and Supermarket. Direct instruction and well-developed learning center activities significantly engage students in the learning process.</p>

Customize Your *Early Reading First* Application


This section of the Toolkit provides basic information for those preparing to write an *ERF* grant. It is not intended to fully explain every part of the grant application, but should help you understand how to organize information within the *ERF* full application.

The *Early Reading First* Full Application

-  **Be sure to obtain the application for *Early Reading First* from the U.S. Department of Education as it contains the official instructions, schedules, and requirements.**

All USDOE forms for the *ERF* full application are available at the following web site:

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

-  **Be sure to double-space all text in the full application narrative, including titles, headings, quotations, and references. Text in endnotes, charts, tables, figures, and graphs may be single-spaced.**

Part I of the Full Application


1. ED Form 424

-  **Applicants that meet the Full Application Competitive Priority—Novice Applicant must check “Yes” in response to Question 6 on ED Form 424 in order to receive five additional points in the scoring process. Please see page 9 of the Toolkit for a definition of a Novice Applicant.**

2. Title Page (Optional for e-Applicants)
3. Table of Contents— (Optional for e-Applicants)
4. Abstract (one-page, double-spaced, not numbered, with project name at top)

The *summary* or *abstract* encapsulates all the components of the proposal and gives an overview of the proposed program; it is basically, the program “in a nutshell.” The summary/abstract includes the following information:

- ◆ The audience—Who will the program directly impact?
- ◆ The need/problem—What need will the program address?
- ◆ The educational goals—What does the program strive to ultimately accomplish?
- ◆ The objectives and effectiveness indicators—Who will do what by when?
- ◆ The evaluation plan—What are the guiding questions in the evaluation plan?

-  **Because the abstract is essentially a summary of the program, you should write it after the grant proposal is completed. It can be summarized from other parts of the proposal.**

Part II of the Full Application

Full Application Narrative (35 pages, double-spaced)

The 35-page application narrative should respond to the Full Application Selection Criteria in the order in which they are listed. Applicants should not assume that reviewers have read their pre-applications and should ensure that their full applications include all information needed by the reviewers to evaluate their proposals. Information that applicants provide in one section may be cross-referenced in another section.

QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN—0-60 points

Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1: The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

Selection Criterion 1, Factor 2: The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach for meeting statutory purposes and requirements.

Selection Criterion 1, Factor 3: The extent to which the proposed project will be coordinated with similar or related efforts, and with other appropriate community, State, and Federal resources.

Applicants are encouraged to include the following information when addressing *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1*:


- ◆ Full endnote citations supporting the research basis for the Quality of Project Design (Selection Criteria 1) narrative
- ◆ An explanation of the extent to which the body of research on which the project is based meets the definition of Scientifically Based Reading Research

 ***Please see page 50 of the Toolkit for the Building Language with Literacy Research Foundation.***


For *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 2*, the ERF statute lists the following five purposes for the *Early Reading First Program*; applicants should address these five purposes in the order indicated.

Purpose 1: To integrate such scientific reading research-based instructional materials and literacy activities (*from Purpose 2*) with existing programs of preschools, child care agencies and programs, Head Start Centers, and family literacy services.


Applicants are encouraged to include the following information when addressing *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purpose 1*:

- ◆ Specify the existing preschool program(s) that the project proposes to support and improve with *Early Reading First* funds.
- ◆  ***The Secretary recommends that, in the case of center-based programs, applicants generally include no more than five centers in order to ensure that funds are sufficiently concentrated to achieve the program goals.***

- ◆ Explain how each existing center selected for the proposal has the capacity and potential to become an *ERF* preschool Center of Educational Excellence. The Secretary believes that such centers are likely to be preschool programs that currently:
 - a. Have existing, appropriately equipped, preschool classrooms in which the *Early Reading First* program will be implemented
 - b. Have high rates of daily attendance for enrolled children
 - c. Are staffed by teachers with the qualifications necessary to implement a language and literacy focused project
 - d. Demonstrate a history of low staff turnover
 - e. Effectively attend to the developmental domains traditionally supported by preschool programs, including social, emotional, and physical; and are ready to implement an added component focused on developing young children's oral language, cognition, and early reading skills.

 ***The Secretary recommends that the applicant demonstrate the program's current capacity when describing the context of the existing program. For examples of how to indicate capacity, please refer to the ERF Full Application Package, Section E.***

- ◆ Include in the appendices the name(s) and address(es) of the preschool program(s) that the project will support.

 ***For specific information to include in each of the above criteria, please refer to Section E of the ERF Full Application package.***

Purpose 2: To demonstrate language and literacy activities based on scientifically based reading research that supports the age-appropriate development of:


- a. Recognition, leading to automatic recognition, of letters of the alphabet
- b. Knowledge of letter sounds, the blending of sounds, and the use of increasingly complex vocabulary
- c. 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
- d. Spoken language, including vocabulary and oral comprehension abilities
- e. Knowledge of the purposes and conventions of print

Applicants are encouraged to include the following information when addressing *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purpose 2*:

- ◆ Outline the proposed project's goals for improving young children's oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge.
- ◆ Outline the curriculum's defined scope and sequence and describe how it is structured, systematic, and aligned to support the development of children's oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge.
- ◆ Describe how the curriculum, combined with project procedures and other supports, will ensure that each day teachers know what they are supposed to do in order to support the development of children's oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge, and the extent to which the curriculum and other project supports will provide teachers with the materials to do it.


- ◆ Describe how instruction in new knowledge and skills is explicit and intentional and starts as teacher directed and moves towards more independent activity with the context of whole-group instruction and practice, small-group instruction and practice, and independent practice.
- ◆ Outline the content, or subject matter, that will be provided as the context for improving children's oral language and background knowledge.
- ◆ Detail the amount of time the proposed program will spend developing each child's language, cognition, and early reading skills.


 **Please see pages 32-35 of the Toolkit for examples of ways to organize your goals.**

 *Specific goals and objectives spelled out in the **BLL** Unit Guides form the basis of all activities. The program's daily activities help children systematically build oral language, phonological awareness, letter knowledge, and print knowledge. Key skills are presented multiple times to give children many experiences to build a deep foundation in language development.*

 *Each Unit follows a 60-minute routine divided into the following activities:*

- *Song and Poem Time (15 min.), which uses CDs and song and poem charts to help students expand their vocabulary, explore the sounds of language, and build concepts*
- *Story Time (20 min.), during which students listen to, read, reread, and discuss high-quality literature in a variety of genres; this can be done in large- or small-group settings.*
- *Choice Time (20 min.), which integrates small-group, hands-on learning with concepts explored during Story Time*
- *Transition Time (5 min.), which integrates language and literacy activities into classroom routines, such as setting-up and winding-down periods*


 ***BLL** builds on children's life experiences by focusing activities on familiar places, people, and activities in the home and community. The program encourages children to use prior knowledge to relate to new understandings, thus increasing the possibility of success for each student. For children who are unfamiliar with a place due to socioeconomic or demographic reasons, this program allows them to become familiar with words and concepts of which young children should be aware.*


 *For a copy of **BLL**'s Scope and Sequence, please contact your local Scholastic Representative or e-mail bll@scholastic.com.*


Purpose 3: To provide preschool-age children with cognitive learning opportunities in high-quality language and literature-rich environments, so that children can attain the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for optimal reading development in Kindergarten and beyond.


Applicants are encouraged to include the following information when addressing *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purpose 3:*

- ◆ Outline the proposed project's goals for improving the language and print richness of the environment.
- ◆ Describe the strategies and materials that the project proposes to enhance the literature and print richness of the environment.
- ◆ Describe the strategies and materials that the project proposes to implement so that the physical environment will provide support for the development of children's oral language.
- ◆ Describe the strategies and materials that the project proposes to implement so that the physical environment will provide support for the development of children's background knowledge.

 ***Building Language for Literacy*** is based on the latest research in early literacy development to provide the critical oral language and vocabulary skills that children need to build a strong foundation for reading. Although published before Early Reading First criteria were established, ***Building Language for Literacy's*** goals exactly align with the four foundational early literacy skills as identified by the legislation. Please see page 50 for a complete listing of the program's research-based goals for improving reading skills and how they are achieved.

 ***Building Language for Literacy*** contains print-rich and literature-rich materials including: 36 trade books, 6 board books, 36 mini-books (6 titles/6 copies each), and 12 PlaceBooks™, which are oversized books filled with photographic explorations of the places within each Unit theme. The program also uses picture word cards (with photographs), song charts, poem charts, and song cards. In addition, Big Place Books and Little Place Book packs are supplemental materials available to enhance the classroom environment.


 During discussions of new vocabulary and theme concepts, children develop oral language skills. Each lesson introduces up to two-dozen words, and each activity has its own suggested vocabulary list of approximately six to eight words. The first reading of the Place Book introduces words corresponding to pictures on "Nina's Word Cards" and serve as the key words that help children build concepts about what they see in that "place." The subsequent word lists are provided as suggested vocabulary for the teacher to use when guiding discussion during Song and Poem Time, Story Time (especially during book re-readings), and Choice Time.


 In the ***BLL*** program, children participate in many activities to use both familiar and new vocabulary. For example, children participate in a dramatic play, create their own story situated in the unit theme "place," name and describe objects located in the "place" and ask questions, and listen to stories, songs and poems all revolving around the "place."

Purpose 4: To support local efforts to enhance the early language, literacy, and prereading development of preschool-age children, particularly those from low-income families, through strategies and professional development that are based on scientifically based reading research.


Applicants are encouraged to include the following information when addressing *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purpose 4*:

- ◆ Outline the goals for the project's proposed professional development program.
- ◆ Describe the content and scope and sequence of the professional development to be provided.
- ◆ Explain the strategies and materials that will be implemented in the professional development that will ensure that it will be classroom focused and will enhance the implementation of the curricula, materials, and instructional strategies outlined in *Purpose 2*.
- ◆ Delineate the number of hours, the frequency, and the method of delivery of the professional development for each teacher and the extent to which the professional development will be high-quality, sustained, and intensive.
- ◆ If teacher mentoring is provided as part of the professional development plan, specify the qualifications of the teacher mentor and explain the link between the teacher mentoring and the professional development delivered in a classroom or workshop setting.

 ***Applicants may cross-reference demographic information from Purpose 1, regarding the income level of children whose early language, literacy, and prereading development will be enhanced through professional development provided to the teachers.***

 *Professional development for the **BLL** program is integrated into the curriculum through the Blueprint for Literacy model lessons. Each of the 12 units in the program contains four professional development workshops. Each workshop covers these areas:*

- *Research Shows—provides examples from 1) the NAEYC/IRA Joint Position Statement and/or 2) Report on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties research that supports the classroom activities*
- *What You Can Do—offers specific tips for maximizing children's learning potential through the activity*
- *Informal Assessment—provides a model of classroom dialogue with annotated insights about the discussion*
- *Observing Children—offers specific suggestions for responding to children's understandings and literacy behaviors*
- *Good Teaching Practices—presents practical classroom management tips*

 *Scholastic also offers five one-day seminars that can be customized to meet district needs. These are:*


- *The Essentials of Early Literacy and Language Development*
- *Integrating Content Area Themes*
- *Learning Literacy through Interactive Activities*
- *Linking Literacy to Math*
- *Supporting the English Language Learner*


Purpose 5: To use screening reading assessments to effectively identify preschool-age children who may be at risk for reading failure.


Applicants are encouraged to include the following information when addressing *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purpose 5*:

- ◆ Specify screening instruments for young children’s oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge.
- ◆ Specify progress-monitoring instruments for young children’s oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge.
- ◆ Provide validity and reliability date for specified measures, when it exists.
- ◆ Describe strategies, systems, and professional development activities that will ensure teachers gather high-quality data and will assist teachers with using information gained from screening reading and progress monitoring assessments to improve instruction for individual children.

 ***Applicants may cross reference information from Purpose 4 regarding the content of professional development.***

 ***BLL provides embedded informal and formal assessments that allow teachers to observe children on a daily basis. Assessment results help teachers identify at-risk children and differentiate instruction.***

 ***Informal assessments can be used to develop individual and class profiles. The program lists guidelines at the end of every lesson and suggestions for evaluating the literacy environment of the classroom.***

 ***The **BLL** Assessment Handbook provides formal unit-by-unit assessment, as well as mid- and end-of-year measures. Formal assessment instruments measure these skills:***

- ***Oral Language: Vocabulary, listening/responding, using language, speaking***
- ***Phonological Awareness: Sounds, letter/sounds, word parts***
- ***Letter Knowledge: Letters, letter/sounds, writing name***
- ***Print Knowledge: Responding to print, concepts of print***

For Selection Criterion 1, Factor 3, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Demonstrate how the proposed project will coordinate with the 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



Building Language for Literacy offers an integrated program of instruction with early childhood activities that include cross-curricular experiences in literature and music while learning about themes that are relevant to the children's life, such as Home, Store, Farm, and Supermarket. Through direct instruction and well-developed learning center activities, students actively participate in their learning.



BLL has been correlated to the following: Creative Curriculum, Head Start, Developmental Reading Assessment, Focus for Instruction, and the IRA/NAEYC Joint Position Statement. The IRA/NAEYC Joint Position Statement is available on Scholastic website at <http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/bll/correl.htm>.

QUALITY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL—0-8

Selection Criterion 2, Factor 1: The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.

Selection Criterion 2, Factor 2: The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Selection Criterion 2, Factor 3: The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

Applicants are expected to specify the steps the proposed project will take to ensure equitable employment practices. The response to this selection criterion will constitute the applicant's response to Section 427 of the General Education Provision's Act.

For *Selection Criterion 2, Factor 1*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Demonstrate the leadership experience of the proposed project director or principal investigator, including his/her past success with implementing large projects, bringing together different entities to work together towards a common goal, and building capacity for sustained improvement within an organization.
- ◆ Demonstrate the ability of the project director or principal investigator to serve as the instructional leader for a project grounded in scientifically based reading research and early literacy practices.

For *Selection Criterion 2, Factor 2*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Discuss the training, qualifications, and experience of other key personnel, including those who play vital roles in the quality of implementation of the proposed project. Include in this discussion such staff as teachers, mentors, and other providers of professional development, evaluators, and members of the management team.
- ◆ Discuss the extent to which *Early Reading First* funds will be used to ensure that newly hired instructional personnel will have the qualifications necessary to support the development of young children's oral language, cognitive, and early reading skills.

For *Selection Criterion 2, Factor 3*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Discuss the training, qualifications, and experience of all entities with whom the proposed project will contract, especially those providing the professional development and evaluation services, if applicable.
- ✍ ***Applicants may include up to five résumés or curriculum vitae in the appendices in support of their response to Selection Criterion 2, Factors 1, 2, and 3. Each résumé or vita may be no more than three one-sided pages.***
- ✍ ***Information about the project personnel can be presented in a chart similar to the one on page 36.***

ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES—0-8 points

Selection Criterion 3, Factor 1: The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.


Selection Criterion 3, Factor 2: The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

For *Selection Criterion 3, Factor 1*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:


- ◆ Demonstrate the support of the application by those stakeholders who would implement it, particularly teachers, paraprofessionals, and center directors. Although not required, five one-sided pages of documentation providing evidence that the individuals and entities, whose cooperation is crucial to the successful implementation of the proposed project, understand it and are willing to support it may be included in the appendices.

For *Selection Criterion 3, Factor 2*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Explain the adequacy of the proposed costs in relation to the proposed activities, the number of persons to be served, and the anticipated results and benefits.
- ◆ Explain the adequacy of the proposed costs in relation to the significance of improvements of the proposed project over the existing project.
- ◆ Explain the adequacy of the proposed costs in relation to the increases in student achievement that would likely be attained by young children who are served by the proposed project.

 *The **BLL** curriculum package contains all the materials needed for a successful program:*

- Teacher materials— *Place Unit Guides, Assessment Handbooks, Parent Involvement Handbooks (available in Spanish and English), Music Books, Staff Development integrated with the curriculum*
- Student materials—*Literature and CDs*
- Teaching tools—*Puppets, music, poetry, picture and word cards*

 ***Building Language for Literacy** can become the basis for a complete early literacy curriculum or integrate with a current one. Phase 1, which targets Pre-Kindergarten three- and four-year-old children, and Phase 2, which meets the needs of Pre-Kindergarten to Kindergarten-level four- to five-year-old children, each provide at least 24 weeks of instruction. Each Unit of a Phase provides at least four weeks of instruction. Each daily plan can be used in parts or whole, providing a total of 60 minutes of large- and small-group activities.*

QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT PLAN—0-8 points

Selection Criterion 4, Factor 1: The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

Selection Criterion 4, Factor 2: The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Selection Criterion 4, Factor 3: The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.


For *Selection Criterion 4, Factor 1*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Provide a management plan for achieving the proposed project's goals, including those proposed in *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purposes 2, 3, and 4*.
- ◆ Include benchmarks for each goal, project activities that support each benchmark, and a timeline that indicates when each of the activities will begin and target dates for completion.
- ◆ Specify objective indicators of achievement for each benchmark.
- ◆ Demonstrate that measurable progress towards achieving benchmarks and goals will occur within the first year of the proposed project's operation.
- ◆ Assign responsibility for each activity.

For *Selection Criterion 4, Factor 2*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Outline process and procedures for gathering and analyzing progress data to ensure that the proposed project is meeting the goals, including those proposed in *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purposes 2, 3, and 4*.
- ◆ Describe the process and procedures that will be used to develop and institute strategies that will result in project improvement based on progress data that are efficient, feasible, and are likely to result in continuous improvement.

For *Selection Criterion 5, Factor 3*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Specify the number of hours per week each key person will dedicate to project activities. Include the specific number of hours per week for the project director or principal investigator, project manager or coordinator, the provider(s) of the professional development, and the evaluator.
-  ***For suggestions on what to include in a Management Plan, please see pages 37-39 of the Toolkit.***

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION—0-8 points

Selection Criterion 5, Factor 1: The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.


Selection Criterion 5, Factor 2: The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.


For *Selection Criterion 5, Factor 1*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Specify the methods and instruments the proposed project will use to evaluate the achievement of each of the proposed goals, including those proposed in *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purposes 2, 3, and 4*.
- ◆ When feasible and appropriate, utilize child outcome data collected from screening reading assessments administered to all children. Describe the relationship between the progress monitoring instruments and the child outcome instruments proposed for use in the evaluation
- ◆ Provide validity and reliability data for specified evaluation measures.

For *Selection Criterion 5, Factor 2*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Explain how the measures selected, including those proposed for *Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purposes 2, 3, and 4*, provide both qualitative and quantitative data.
- ◆ Utilize measures other than or in addition to teacher self-report surveys and attendance records to evaluate professional development.

 *Teachers formally assess children mid-year and at the end of the year to see if they have met objectives in the areas of phonological awareness, letter knowledge, and print knowledge. All assessments can be used to collect summative information about how much progress each child has made. The Assessment handbook provides a Progress Report chart to track students' learning gains.*

 *In each Unit Guide, **BLL** provides informal assessment guidelines for individual children and suggestions for evaluating the literacy environment of the classroom.*


 **For a sample Project Evaluation Plan, please see pages 40-42 of the Toolkit.**


SIGNIFICANCE—0-8 points

Selection Criterion 6, Factor 1: The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

For *Selection Criterion 6, Factor 1*, applicants are encouraged to include the following information:

- ◆ Demonstrate that the proposed project is likely to result in the creation of a preschool Center of Educational Excellence that will result in the age-appropriate development of young children’s oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, alphabet knowledge, and background knowledge.
- ◆ Demonstrate that the implementation of the proposed project has the potential to suggest new best practices and effective strategies in the field of early literacy that are tied to the scientifically based reading research.


 *Independent research has shown that **BLL** significantly increases vocabulary, language, and letter and word identification skills for English- and Spanish-speaking children. The program framework builds on children’s own experience in the community, fosters multicultural awareness and understandings, and connects to home life.*

 *Literacy experts Susan B. Neuman and Catherine E. Snow with Susan E. Canizares authored **Building Language for Literacy**. All music for the program was created by Fran Avni, who is renowned for her writing talents and for her expertise in early literacy and the development of phonological awareness in children.*


Part III of the Full Application

Budget and Budget Narrative

1. ED Form 524, Section A

 **Applicants must complete Section A, columns for the first, second, and third years, and the total column. For specific instructions for completing ED Form 524, refer to the Full Application Package, Section E.**

2. Budget Narrative (5 pages, double-spaced)

 **There should be enough detail in the Budget Narrative to enable reviewers and project staff to understand how funds will be used, how much will be expended, and the relationship between expended funds and project activities and outcomes. Please see Section E of the ERF application for all the information that must be included.**

Applicants are encouraged to include the following information in the Detailed Budget Narrative:

Personnel

- Provide the title of each position
- Provide the salary for each position
- Provide the amount of time each person will devote to the project
- Explain the importance of each position to the success of the project

Fringe Benefits

- Give the fringe benefit percentages of all personnel in the project

Travel

- Explain the purpose of the travel and how it relates to the project success, and which staff will participate. Include travel to at least one *Early Reading First* conference in Year 1 of the project

Equipment

- Identify each type of equipment
- Provide the cost per equipment item
- Explain the purpose of the equipment, and how it relates to project success

Supplies

- Identify the type of supplies by general category (e.g. instructional materials, office supplies, etc.)
- Provide the purpose for purchasing the supplies

Contractual

- Provide the purpose and relation to project success
- Identify the name of the contracting party, including consultants, if available
- Provide the cost per contractor
- Provide the amount of time that the project will be working with the contractor(s)

Other Direct Costs

- Identify each type of cost in the *Other* category (e.g. communications, printing, postage, equipment rental, etc.)
- Provide the cost per item (printing = \$500, postage = \$750)
- Provide the purpose for the expenditures and relation to project success

Total Direct Costs

- The amount that is the sum of expenditures, per budget category, of lines 1-8

Indirect Costs

- Indicate the applicant's approved, unrestricted, indirect cost rate.

Training Stipends (Scholarships)

- Identify who will benefit from a scholarship/stipend
- Provide the purpose of the scholarship/stipend award
- Identify the cost per scholarship/stipend
- Explain the importance of the scholarship/stipend to the success of the project

Part IV of the Full Application


- I. List of names and addresses of existing preschool programs that the proposed *ERF* project would support, including a brief description indicated under Quality of the Project Design, Note, Purpose 1. Include the following information in your description:

- The ages and number of the children being served
- Demographic and socioeconomic information on those children
- Information on the types of special needs that any of the children may have
- The average hours the children attend the program in hours/day, days/week, and months/year
- Primary funding source(s)
- The basic instructional program
- The number of staff and their qualifications

 ***This information may be organized into chart form.***


- II. Curriculum vitae for key personnel for no more than five people
Include no more than three one-sided pages for each curriculum vita submitted.

- III. Endnote citations

 ***Do NOT include a general reference bibliography; include ONLY endnote citations for those quotations included in the 10-page narrative. Please see pages 43-48 of the Toolkit for Early Childhood research citations and endnote citations.***

- IV. SF 424 B Form—Assurance—Non Construction Programs

- V. Stakeholders' support (five one-sided pages)

 ***This documentation should demonstrate the support of the project from teachers, paraprofessionals, and center directors. It should reflect an understanding of the proposed project and their willingness to carry out and participate in the proposed project's activities.***

- VI. ED 80-0013 Form Certification Regarding Lobbying

- VII. SF LLL Form—Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Submit if applicable)

- VIII. Response to Notice to All Applicants (Section 427, GEPA)

Grant Writing Samples and Tools


Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Writing clear and precise goals, objectives, and strategies is crucial to implementing and evaluating an effective, research-based grant project.

Goals state the planned outcome that will solve the problem addressed in the needs statement. First and foremost, your goals must be aligned with the project's assessed educational needs and consistent with the goals of the *Early Reading First* grant program. Project goals should be *educational* goals and not merely the acquisition of materials.

Objectives help meet the educational goals. They clearly define the performance targets that must be measurable and related to a specific time. A series of objectives, or performance targets, should increase in expectation as they progress on a timeline, culminating in an overall performance or educational goal. The expectation is that at the end of the grant project calendar, the applicant meets the goals. Objectives should be **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant, and **T**imely (SMART).

Strategies describe the steps to be taken to achieve the desired outcomes outlined in the objectives. Strategies should flow naturally from the objectives, and present a reasonable scope or sequence of activities.


 ***The following three charts provide examples of how goals, objectives, and strategies are related and can be identified for these areas:***


- ***Language and Literacy Development***
- ***Language and Literature-Rich Environments***
- ***Professional Development***


<p><u>Language and Literacy Development:</u></p> <p><u>Goal #1</u> <i>Provide scientifically based language and literacy activities, within a structured and systemic learning environment, that support the development of oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness and alphabet knowledge for all preschool-age children, especially for those considered Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, or with disabilities</i></p>	<p><u>Selection Criterion 1, Factor 2, Purpose 2</u> <i>To demonstrate language and literacy activities based on scientifically based reading research that supports the age-appropriate development of:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Recognition, leading to automatic recognition, of letters of the alphabet</i> b. <i>Knowledge of letter sounds, the blending of sounds, and the use of increasingly complex vocabulary</i> c. <i>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</i> d. <i>Spoken language, including vocabulary and oral comprehension abilities</i> e. <i>Knowledge of the purposes and conventions of print</i>
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Objective: By June of <YEAR>, 100% of Pre-K students will demonstrate mastery of early reading skills in the areas of oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge as evidenced by benchmark testing.




<p>Strategy 1: Conduct a needs assessment survey to determine teacher knowledge level and instructional skills in the areas of oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge</p>	<p>Strategy 2: Implement <i>Building Language for Literacy</i>, a scientifically, research-based intervention curriculum with systematic instructional strategies to maximize the amount of direct intervention for every Pre-K student.</p>	<p>Strategy 3: Provide teacher directed, whole group instruction and practice, small group instruction and practice, and independent practice of the early reading skills</p>	<p>Strategy 4: Increase reading opportunities at school with parent/community volunteers and at home with parents.</p>	<p>Strategy 5: Using benchmark testing, monitor and conduct ongoing assessment to identify implementation and effectiveness of the program.</p>
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 *Each of the 12 **BLL** units provides at least four weeks of direct instruction in oral language, phonological awareness, letter knowledge, and concepts of print. There are complete lessons for all literature experiences.*


 *The Parent Involvement Handbook, available in Spanish and English, contains school-to-home and home-to-school activities that foster parents' participation in their children's literacy development.*

 *The Assessment Handbook contains unit assessments, a mid-year assessment, and an end-of-year assessment that measure whether students are mastering early reading skills by participating in the **BLL** program.*

<p><u>Language and Literature-Rich Environments:</u></p> <p><u>Goal #2</u> <i>Improve preschool-age children’s language, cognitive, and early reading skills by providing opportunities for at-risk, Limited English Proficient, and children with disabilities to participate in high-quality language and literature-rich environments that promote the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for optimal reading development in Kindergarten and beyond.</i></p>		<p><u>Selection Criterion 1, Factor 2, Purpose 3</u> <i>To provide preschool-age children with cognitive learning opportunities in high-quality language and literature-rich environments, so that children can attain the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for optimal reading development in Kindergarten and beyond</i></p>	
<p>Objective: By June of <YEAR>, 100% of Pre-K students will demonstrate measured improvement in language and literacy skills, as evidenced by benchmark testing.</p>			
<p>Strategy 1: Provide teacher-directed whole and small-group language and literacy activities that develop prereading skills</p>	<p>Strategy 2: Within each Pre-K classroom, establish Emergent Literacy Libraries, that include leveled books, magazines, charts, calendars, signs, bulletin boards, children’s writing, and alphabet letters</p>	<p>Strategy 3: Provide Pre-K students with supplementary literacy materials to read with community mentors and independently at school</p>	<p>Strategy 4: Educate and provide families with age-appropriate emergent literacy materials, including leveled texts in both English and Spanish, for increasing literature-based literacy practice at home</p>

-  *BLL provides both whole group instruction (Song and Poem Time, Story Time) and small-group independent exploration (Choice Time) that give children opportunities to develop oral language, increase their phonological awareness skills, recognize the letters of the alphabet and their sounds, and learn concepts of print.*
-  *Each unit contains a variety of engaging multicultural print material including fiction and nonfiction trade books; PlaceBooks™, which are oversized books filled with photographic explorations of the places within each theme; Read Aloud Books, Music Book, Board Books, and Mini-Books.*
-  *BLL fosters literature-based literacy practice at home through family letters, ideas, and activities for each Unit. The Parent Involvement Handbook is available in Spanish and English.*

<p>Professional Development:</p> <p>Goal #3 <i>Improve teachers' knowledge, instruction, and planning by providing professional development based on scientifically based reading research, knowledge of language, cognitive, and early reading development.</i></p>		<p><u>Selection Criterion 1, Factor 2, Purpose 4</u> To support local efforts to enhance the early language, literacy, and prereading development of preschool-age children, particularly those from low-income families, through strategies and professional development that are based on scientifically based reading research</p>
<p>Objective: By September of <YEAR>, 100% of Pre-K teachers and staff will use scientifically based instructional strategies to enhance the early language, literacy, and prereading development of preschool-age children, as evidenced by individual classroom lesson plans.</p>		
<p>Strategy 1: Based upon Needs Assessment Survey, determine specific professional development needs in Pre-K program, intervention, and Scientifically Based Reading Research for Pre-K teachers and paraprofessionals at all Early Childhood Centers</p>	<p>Strategy 2: Provide intensive, high quality, and sustained professional development for teachers on the <i>Building Language for Literacy</i> program, a scientifically, research-based intervention curriculum with systematic instructional strategies</p>	<p>Strategy 3: Support vertical alignment of literacy practices, professional development, and assessment by facilitating quarterly meetings between Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers to discuss an instructionally appropriate continuum of skills and programmatic methodologies</p>

 Professional development for the ***Building Language for Literacy*** program is integrated into the curriculum through the *Blueprint for Literacy* model lessons. In addition, each of the 12 units in the program contains four professional development workshops. Within each workshop are these areas: *Research Shows, What You Can Do, Informal Assessment, Observing Children, and Good Teaching Practices.*

Quality of Project Personnel (Sample Chart)

Selection Criterion 2, Factor 1: The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.

Selection Criterion 2, Factor 2: The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Selection Criterion 2, Factor 3: The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors

Program Personnel	Qualifications	Responsibilities	Time Commitments
Project Director or Principal Investigator: <i>List name and title</i>	<i>List degrees, certifications, and professional experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Member, Project Executive Committee ▪ Coordinate project implementation and purchasing for grant activities ▪ File all programmatic reports with funding agency ▪ Manage financial activities of grant program ▪ File all financial reports with funding agency 	<i>List amount of time staff member will devote to each responsibility or activity</i> <u>Recommended 100%</u>
Early Childhood Center Directors: <i>List names and titles</i>	<i>List degrees, certifications, and professional experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Member, Project Executive Committee ▪ Manage programmatic grant activities/strategies ▪ Coordinate professional development activities ▪ Coordinate parental involvement activities ▪ Collect student data for external evaluation 	<i>List amount of time staff member will devote to each responsibility or activity</i> <u>Recommended 100%</u>
Early Childhood Teachers: <i>List names and titles</i>	<i>List degrees, certifications, and professional experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Member, Project Executive Committee ▪ Implement <i>Building Language for Literacy</i> ▪ Communicate with parents regarding student progress ▪ Assess student progress using benchmark assessments ▪ Collect and report student data to EC Center Directors 	<i>List amount of time staff member will devote to each responsibility or activity</i> <u>Recommended 100%</u>
Consultants: <i>List names, titles, and services to be provided</i>	<i>List degrees, certifications, and professional experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide professional development for EC Teachers and Administrators ▪ Support <i>Building Language for Literacy</i>, as requested 	<i>List amount of time each consultant will devote to each responsibility or activity</i>
External Evaluator: <i>List name and title</i>	<i>List degrees, certifications, and professional experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Member, Project Executive Committee ▪ Using both project and process data, evaluate the effectiveness of the <i>Early Reading First</i> program 	<i>List amount of time staff member will devote to each responsibility or activity</i> <u>Recommended 100%</u>

Quality of Management Plan

Selection Criterion 4, Factor 1: The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

Activities are more specific than goals, objectives, and strategies. While strategies present a scope or sequence, activities explain *who will do what, when, where, and for how long*. For each goal, identify the related objective, strategy, and specific activities. For each activity, determine a timeframe, person responsible, and effectiveness indicator that will be used to evaluate the activity. The activities should address these areas:

- ◆ Methods used to integrate scientific reading research-based instructional materials and literacy activities
- ◆ Steps taken to ensure access to literature- and print-rich learning environments
- ◆ Strategies for implementing classroom focused professional development

Effectiveness indicators detail the type of information used to measure whether or not an objective is reached. These indicators should be objective and quantifiable. Effectiveness indicators can include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Number of teachers trained
- ◆ Cost per student for technology services
- ◆ Number, types, and frequency of technology staff development sessions
- ◆ Percent of parents participating
- ◆ Student achievement scores
- ◆ Drop out rates
- ◆ Percent of students in high-needs schools with increased access to technology
- ◆ Percent increase in all students' technology skills

 ***The following chart provides an example of how to show the planned activities, responsibilities of project personnel, timeline, and effectiveness indicators for a specific strategy.***

Educational Goal #1:

Provide scientifically based language and literacy activities, within a structured and systemic learning environment, that support the development of oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness and alphabet knowledge for all preschool-age children, especially for those considered Economically Disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, or with disabilities


Objective:


By June <year>, 100% of Pre-K students will demonstrate mastery of early reading skills in the areas of oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge as evidenced by benchmark testing.

Strategy 2: Implement *Building Language for Literacy* to maximize the amount of direct intervention for every Pre-K student.

Specific Activities	Positions Responsible	Timeline	Effectiveness Indicators
1. Purchase <i>Building Language for Literacy</i>	ERF Project Director	August <year>	Purchase orders
2. Apply scientific research-based instructional strategies to maximize the language and literacy development for all Pre-K students	Early Childhood Teachers	Academic <year>	Teacher lesson plans
3. Provide Pre-K students with emergent literacy books and other materials	Early Childhood Teachers	Academic <year>	Purchase orders and inventory records
4. Assess the literacy and language development of all Pre-K students using benchmark assessments	Early Childhood Teachers	Quarterly	Benchmark assessments

 **These are provided as examples or suggestions. You should develop your own activities specific to your needs.**

 *Each Unit section has its own planning chart that outlines the program components, research-based objectives, vocabulary, alphabet letters, and materials that it covers. Students engage in large-group and small-group activities, which include reading and listening to literature, singing songs, and participating in independent explorations to develop language and literacy. The variety of materials and multi-media presentation accommodates children with different learning styles and needs.*

 *Teachers assess children’s literacy and language development using unit assessments, a mid-year assessment, and an end-of-year assessment that are provided in the Assessment Handbook.*

Selection Criterion 4, Factor 2: The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

✎ In this section, applicants are encouraged to discuss the following outcomes:

- *Number of preschool-age children to be served*
- *Improvements in preschool curriculum*
- *Number of parents to be served*
- *Types of parental involvement or training activities to be conducted*
- *Number of teachers who receive professional development services*
- *Types of professional development to be delivered*
- *Total numbers of students, parents, and teachers to benefit from the project services*
- *Cost per participant for project services*

Selection Criterion 4, Factor 3: The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.


✎ Applicants can cross reference the Quality of Project Personnel chart included in the application on a previous page. In addition to referencing this chart, applicants are encouraged to discuss specific time commitments for all key personnel. Include required qualifications for these key personnel, as well.

✎ Any existing partnerships that will contribute to or be expanded by the project should be discussed in this section.

Quality of the Project Evaluation

Selection Criterion 5, Factor 1: The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Selection Criterion 5, Factor 2: The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

-  ***The evaluation plan is one of the most critical elements of your proposal. Because every grant project is unique, it is important to adapt this sample plan to reflect your specific project names, goals, objectives, and activities, rather than copy it.***

Evaluation Design

(Project Name) includes a comprehensive evaluation plan developed to determine success in meeting aggressive goals for improving the language and literacy development of all Pre-K students. Specific goals, objectives, and activities have been delineated above in the Quality of Management Plan. (District Name) and (Name of external evaluator) will conduct the final evaluation of (Project Name.) The Project Director will collect information, collect the Early Childhood Centers' data, and provide the progress reports throughout the project period to (Name of funding agency) as per the RFA requirements.

The evaluation design includes both process and product evaluation. The Project Executive Committee will gather information during the implementation process and evaluation activities to recommend modifications for improving the project. Questions to be answered in this evaluation include the following:

- ◆ *To what extent were the activities of the project implemented as planned? If not, what barriers or obstacles prevented parts or all of the activities from being executed?*
- ◆ *How effective were the activities of the project in achieving the goals of the project?*
- ◆ *What is the impact of the activities of the project on the participants?*



Product Evaluation

Product evaluation will focus on measuring final outcomes against project goals, objectives, and benchmarks. Changes that have occurred will be identified and analyzed to determine whether the program is effective for students and teachers. Like the process evaluation, the product evaluation will be collected both formatively and summatively. The product performance measures will focus on:

- ◆ *Improvement in teacher knowledge and qualifications*
- ◆ *Improvement in outcomes for children's language, cognitive, literature, and early reading skills*

The following product evaluative data will be collected:


Benchmark Tests to measure student achievement

-  ***Specify the methods and instruments the proposed project will use to evaluate the achievement of each of the proposed project goals, including those proposed in Selection Criterion 1, Factor 1, Purposes 2, 3, and 4.***
-  ***Include screening reading assessments, progress monitoring assessments, and child outcome data in your evaluation plan.***

Student Work Samples

-  ***Specify how and when these samples will be collected.***

Evaluation of Professional Development

-  ***In addition to teachers' evaluation of the professional development, applicants are encouraged to use lesson plans or administrative walk-through forms as a means to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development.***

End-of-Project Survey

-  ***An end-of-project survey distributed to all parents of Pre-K students can be used to provide opportunity for parents to evaluate the effectiveness of the program for their children.***


Process Evaluation

Process evaluation will gather information about how successfully the strategies of the project were implemented as planned, and assess their impact on the target populations. Process evaluation data is both quantitative and qualitative in nature, and it is intended to assess the outcome of the project. This data, collected formatively and summatively, will describe how students and teachers are affected by the project. The process evaluative data will focus on:

- ◆ *Improvement in classroom environment*
- ◆ *Improvement in teacher instruction and planning*

The following process evaluative data will be collected:


School/District Records

-  ***The Project Evaluator can track project objectives through quantitative data such as purchase orders, numbers of students/teachers served, and inventory records.***


Project Meetings

-  ***Specify how often the Project Executive Committee will meet and on what the meetings will focus.***

Classroom Observations

-  **Early Childhood Center Directors can visit Pre-K classrooms randomly to acquire information on how teachers have adapted the program to student needs. Evaluative information can be drawn from observations of classroom applications, in the form of administrative walk-through forms.**

Anecdotal Records

-  **To address the “So what?” question, anecdotal records from students and teachers can be collected. The following questions should be addressed:**
 - How has the project provided preschool-age children with cognitive learning opportunities in high-quality language, literature- and print-rich environments?**
 - How has the Early Childhood Program enhanced the early language, cognitive, and early reading development of preschool children?**


Final Evaluative Report

The Project Director and External Evaluator will use the data gathered in the product and process evaluation activities to prepare and present an annual Project Summary Report, to be shared with the local Board of Trustees and U.S. Department of Education. The product and process evaluative data will be analyzed in the final report to answer the following questions:

- ◆ *What improvements has the project made in how we teach our preschool-age children and prepare them for future reading and school success?*
- ◆ *To what extent, by (Date), are all preschool children ready to transition to Kindergarten?*
- ◆ *To what extent, by (Date), do all teachers have increased knowledge, skill, and instructional methodologies in early literacy development of preschool children?*
- ◆ *To what extent, by (Date), do 100% of parents of participating preschool students show increased involvement in their children’s reading success and school activities?*

 *The main focus of **BLL** assessment is to monitor each child’s progress.*

- *Children are formally assessed at the end of each unit and at the end of the year to determine their gains in oral language.*
- *Teachers formally assess children mid-year and at the end of the year to see if students have met objectives in the areas of phonological awareness, letter knowledge, and print knowledge.*

 *Teachers can use any of **BLL**’s assessments to collect summative information about how much progress each child has made. The Assessment Handbook provides a Progress Report chart to track learning gains.*

Early Childhood Research Citations & Endnote Citations

The ultimate goal of *Early Reading First* is to prevent later reading difficulties. The program is designed to prepare children to enter Kindergarten with the necessary cognitive, early language, and literacy skills for success in school.


The ultimate goal of *Early Reading First* is to prevent later reading difficulties. The program is designed to prepare children to enter Kindergarten with the necessary cognitive, early language, and literacy skills for success in school.

Applicants must use *ERF* funds to:

- ◆ Provide preschool-age children with high-quality oral language and print-rich environments in which to acquire oral language skills, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge
- ◆ Provide professional development for staff that is based on scientifically based reading research knowledge of language, cognitive, and early reading development that will assist in developing the preschool-age children's oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge
- ◆ Identify and provide activities and instructional materials that are based on scientifically based reading research for use in developing children's language, cognitive, and early reading skills
- ◆ Acquire, provide training in the use of, and implement screening reading assessments or other appropriate measures that are based on scientifically based reading research to determine whether preschool-age children are developing the language, cognitive, and early reading skills they need for later reading success
- ◆ Integrate these instructional materials, activities, tools, and measures into the applicant's overall programs

RESEARCH CITATIONS

Because *Early Reading First* requires an emphasis on instructional materials and professional development grounded in scientific research, applicants are encouraged to include research citations within the narrative sections of their pre-applications. The following quotes can be used when drafting the indicated sections of the pre-application.

 ***Make sure you ONLY include endnote citations for each of the quotations used in your narrative.***

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

The number of months that children spend in preschool has been found to be related to achievement test scores in second grade, behavior problems in third grade, and school retention in kindergarten through third grade. Children with more preschool experience had higher achievement scores and fewer behavior problems and were less likely to be required to repeat a grade (*Pianta & McCoy, 1997*).

In order to develop their language capabilities, children need a language and conversation-rich environment. Research demonstrates that the number of words and variety of conversations children hear affect the speed of their language growth (*Snow et al., 1995*).

Studies have firmly established the importance of reading aloud as one of the most important activities for reading success (*Bredekamp, Copple, & Neuman, 2000*). However, simply reading aloud to children does not by itself impact children's reading abilities; dialogue about and beyond the immediate context of the book is critical (*Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998; Dickinson & Tabors, 2001*).

Importantly, studies show that book discussions that focus beyond the immediate context of the book have a greater impact on children's literacy (*Dickinson & Tabors 2001; Snow et al., 1995*).

Overall children learn by talking with adults: during daily routines, storytelling, reading, by relating personal experience, and having complex conversations in which they offer opinions (*Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1999*).

Intentional, focused instruction should be based on clearly defined goals and embedded in daily routines (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE 2002). To achieve these goals, teachers need to provide both planned experiences and ones that emerge as an outgrowth of children's interests, offering a balance between teacher-centered and child-initiated activities (*Hohmann & Weikart, 1995*).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

"The knowledge and skills of the teacher account for the largest difference in academic achievement than any other single factor. (*Darling-Hammond et al., 1999*). The professional development of teachers has been shown to be integrally related to the overall quality of early childhood programs and thus, the overall effect of those programs in having a positive outcome for children" (*Kontos et al., 1997*).

Well-designed and effective professional development programs are job-embedded, continuous, collaborative, and research-based" (*Epstein, 1993*).

SERVICES AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Approximately 20% of children have difficulty acquiring reading skills, particularly awareness of sound-symbol relationships. These children decode text at a slower rate than average (*Lyon, 1995 and Lyon & Motats, 1997*).

The building blocks of literacy for young children, in addition to oral language development, have been identified as print awareness, alphabetic knowledge, and phonological awareness (*Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1999*).

In learning to read, children must unlock the relationships between the sounds they use to say words and the letters of the alphabet (*Juel, 1996; Chall & Popp, 1996; Torgeson, 1998*). Children's ability to discern the sounds in words and link them to alphabetic symbols is a strong predictor of reading success (*Stanovich & Seigel, 1994; Stanovich, 1993; Vellutino, Scanlon, & Sipay et al., 1996*).

SCREENING ASSESSMENTS

The primary role of assessment in early childhood education is to provide insight into the educational experiences that will be the most valuable for individual children (*Burns, 1996; Bodrova & Leong, 1996*).

Teaching and assessment need to be inseparably fused in an ongoing cycle of refinement (*Meisels & Attkins-Burnett, 2000*).

Appropriate assessment and monitoring of children's learning contributes to decision-making about practice, designing programs and planning curricula (*Wiggins, 1998*). To achieve these aims, teachers should use multiple methods of assessment over time, including observation, investigation, and interviews, as well as more formal assessments (*Shepard et al., 1998*).

The primary role of assessment in early childhood education is to provide insight into the educational experiences that will be the most valuable for individual children (*Burns, 1996; Bodrova & Leong, 1996*). Assessment should support and inform instruction (*Shepard, Kagan & Wurtz, 1998*).

Curriculum-embedded forms of assessment allow children to demonstrate their knowledge or skills through active engagement in classroom activities (*Meisels, 1996*).

For all children, it is individually, culturally, and linguistically appropriate measures of their strengths, development, progress, and needs that will provide vital information to professionals involved in promoting children's learning (*Stiggins, 2001; McAfee & Leong, 2002*).

INTEGRATION

"A recent comprehensive review of early childhood programs for children from low-income families concludes that preschool programs can produce large effects on IQ during the early childhood years and sizable persistent effects on achievement, grade retention, special education, high school graduation, and socialization" (*Barnett, 1995*).

"Research is beginning to delineate the key experiences and circumstances that will enable children to realize their potential. These include nurturing relationships with caregivers, experiences that encourage social interchange, varied opportunities for expression, appropriate physical activity, cognitive stimulation and challenge, opportunities to explore the environment, and involvement with language, print, and other forms of communication" (*Brazelton & Greenspan, 2000; Denton & West, 2002; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 2001*).

"Children use language for complex and varied purposes. Language and literacy development is not only vital to specific reading skills and overall cognitive development, but recent research reveals that it plays an important role in children's social competencies. For instance, one study has correlated children's literacy with their ability to empathize with others" (*M.Regalado et al., 2001*).

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Overview of *Building Language for Literacy* Program

Song and Poem Time

- Goals**
- ◆ To expand vocabulary, explore the sounds of language, and build concepts
 - ◆ To instill the value of songs and poems in the acquisition of literacy
- Activities**
- ◆ Opening activities build on children’s prior experiences.
 - ◆ Singing again and rereading provide new opportunities to increase language learning.
 - ◆ Informal assessment demonstrates ways to make connections between poems and song for deep learning.
 - ◆ Second-language support provides easy adaptations or lesson enhancements to ensure learning.

Story Time

- Goals**
- ◆ To build a sense of “place” through high-quality literature
 - ◆ To introduce a variety of genres and reading routines
 - ◆ To discover the importance and instructional value of rereading over time
- Activities**
- ◆ Introducing the book activities cover getting ideas going, discovering the story, and exploring beyond the book.
 - ◆ Book genres include PlaceBooks™, Read Aloud books, rhyming books, alphabet books, shared reading books, and nonfiction books.
 - ◆ Rereading activities build on children’s growing knowledge and familiarity with the book, and provide activities for early, later, and remembered readings.
 - ◆ Activities across the curriculum
 - ◆ Informal assessment
 - ◆ Second-language support

Choice Time

- Goals**
- ◆ To stimulate language and literacy learning throughout the classroom
 - ◆ To integrate hands-on learning with concepts explored in Story Time
- Activities**
- ◆ Hands-on learning centers integrate language and literacy skills into math, science, social studies, and the arts. The centers are: Dramatic Play Center, Block Center, Math Center, Science Center, Art and Writing Center, Messy Play Center, and the Reading and Listening Center.
 - ◆ Informal assessment
 - ◆ Second-language support

Transition Time

- Goals**
- ◆ To turn time-consuming setting-up and winding-down periods into language-rich opportunities
 - ◆ To integrate language and literacy into classroom routines
- Activities**
- There are several short (2–5 minute), “quick and easy” literacy-supporting activities for use during the following transitions: morning separation, choice time, snack time, quiet time, getting dressed, lining up, cleaning up, and good-bye

Building Language for Literacy Research Goals

Research proves that reading aloud to children is the most important activity for building concepts and skills for reading success. Therefore, during Story Time (20 minutes per day), high-quality literature is read, reread, and then discussed to build vocabulary and language skills.

Research says that growth in vocabulary and oral language use is related to reading success. Therefore, the **BLL** program encourages the use of specific names and descriptive words when talking with children, as well as referring to signs and labels around the room.

Research indicates that phonological awareness is related to reading success and begins to develop through traditional rhymes and word games. Therefore, the **BLL** program has a daily Song and Poem Time (15 minutes per day) where children sing songs, say chants and rhymes, and play with the sounds of language through poetry.

Research says that children acquire knowledge of letters and sounds through writing as well as through reading. Therefore, **BLL** provides drawing and writing opportunities after Story Time experiences, where children are encouraged to create their own illustrated songs and rhymes based on those introduced.

Research shows that a print-rich environment is critical for helping children incorporate literacy into play and to use literacy tools functionally. Therefore, Scholastic has provided Choice Time (20 minutes per day) literacy tools and activities that can be used in learning centers.

Building Language for Literacy Research Foundation

Building Language for Literacy is based on the educational research reported in the following three publications.

1. *Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children*. A joint position statement by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the International Reading Association (IRA). By Susan B. Neuman, Carol Copple, and Sue Bredekamp. Copyright 2000, published by NAEYC, Washington, DC.
2. *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*. National Research Council. Committee Co-Chairs Catherine E. Snow and Susan Burns. Copyright 1998, published by National Academy Press, Washington, DC.
3. *Report of the National Reading Panel, Teaching Children to Read*. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NIH Publication No. 00-4769). Copyright 2000, published by US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC.

Note: One of the authors of ***Building Language for Literacy*** is Catherine Snow, Ph.D. who co-authored the book *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*. Another author of ***Building Language for Literacy*** is Susan Neuman, Ed.D., one of the authors of the NAEYC – IRA Joint Position Statement.

About Scholastic Inc.

Scholastic is committed to providing teachers with effective materials for every stage of reading instruction to ensure that students develop the skills and strategies needed to succeed in school. Our reputation is built on an 84-year history of helping foster and support effective learning for all students. For years, we have worked with leading researchers to develop scientifically based products that produce significant results in student achievement, as well as meaningful changes in teacher effectiveness.

We look forward to partnering with you to improve reading achievement, and would like the opportunity to talk with you about how we can best support your efforts to implement **No Child Left Behind (NCLB)** over the next several years.