

Full Application Toolkit
Early Reading First
Featuring *Scholastic ReadingLine*™

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 **Scholastic ReadingLine** to *ERF* grant requirements
- ◆ Grant writing support

Scholastic ReadingLine is the research-based reading program featured in this Toolkit.

Scholastic ReadingLine fosters an early love of reading in Pre-Kindergarten students while they build foundational literacy skills. The program provides teachers with flexible, step-by-step lesson plans; engaging instructional materials; assessment tools; and research-based support. Two kits offer preschool students targeted skills instruction:

- ◆ *Sound and Letter Kit*, which focuses on building phonological awareness skills and alphabet recognition
- ◆ *Vocabulary Kit*, which focuses on building sight words and oral language skills

The Teaching Guide offers a complete, instructional plan for every book. Teachers choose one of two “tracks” depending on their schedule and the children’s needs:

- ◆ *Local Track*, a five-day plan, offers full skills instruction in the targeted learning areas.
- ◆ *Express Track*, using Days 2 and 3 within the five-day lesson plan, focuses on reading the book and doing a few follow-up activities. Teachers can supplement this track with activities from the other days as appropriate.

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 Scholastic ReadingLine 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
800-221-5312

West/Midwest
800-225-4625



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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

 **Scholastic ReadingLine** supports early literacy by offering precise and comprehensive *Teaching Guides* with two methods for teaching each lesson, sequential lesson plans that focus on mastering the key skills and concepts necessary to create a successful foundation for literacy, and the materials needed to support all learning styles. **Scholastic ReadingLine Kits** provide activities for use in Circle Time, Small-Group Instruction, and Intervention with below level and English Language Learners.

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 **Scholastic ReadingLine** Kit comes with a complete set of the materials needed for teaching and reinforcing skills. The following components are included:

- *Sound and Letter Kit: 26 alphabet book titles with a comprehensive teaching plan that will help young children develop phonological awareness and alphabet recognition skills*
- *Vocabulary Kit: 21 patterned book titles and a comprehensive teaching plan that build sight words and oral language skills*
- *Each book is connected to five days of activities and skill building exercises.*
- *Additional resources include picture and word cards, Alphabet Posters, Letter Cards, Activity Books, Audio CDs, and Take-Home Books.*


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


 *Scholastic offers four Early Childhood seminars to broaden teachers' knowledge in the following areas:*

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


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.

 *Scholastic ReadingLine Kits include focused, research-based skills instruction based on a systematic scope and sequence. This supplemental program can be used for full skills mastery. Two paths of instruction ensure that teachers can use it flexibly with a core-reading textbook, or become the cornerstone of a balanced literacy program.*


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.

 *The Assessment Handbook contains diagnostic placement tests that record children's levels on a variety of skills and tasks, including concepts about print and book handling, oral language development, letter recognition, and phonological awareness. The assessments, which are aligned to common criteria from state standards and learning outcomes, are:*

- *Reading, which includes concepts about print/book handling, story retelling, environmental print, oral language/picture comprehension*
- *Writing, which includes name writing and picture drawing*
- *Alphabet Knowledge, which includes alphabet recognition and letter names*
- *Phonological Awareness, which includes initial/final sounds, blending/segmenting, and splitting syllables/rhyming*

 *Each Scholastic ReadingLine Kit provides on-going assessment to follow children's progress. Following each Little Book, a quick assessment focuses on the key skill areas. Each of the Kits has three End-of-Unit Assessments for a more comprehensive look at each child's learning.*

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

 **Scholastic ReadingLine Kits** provide valuable instruction and activities to be used during Circle Time in a Pre-Kindergarten classroom. The Kits are supplemental resources that help Pre-K students develop foundational literacy skills. Each lesson contains a cross-curricular or art activity that relates to the book's content.

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.***


Scholastic ReadingLine 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

Early Reading First Criteria	 Scholastic ReadingLine Kits
<p>Oral Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of expressive and receptive language including vocabulary, the contextual use of speech and syntax, and oral comprehension abilities 	<p>The Scholastic ReadingLine Vocabulary Kit contains 175 Oral Language Cards that feature colorful photographs of real-life objects, places, people, and animals. They are used to develop vocabulary, real-world background knowledge, and other oral language skills.</p> <p>In addition to picture cards, children develop their vocabulary and contexts through word webs, games, hands-on activities, and discussions.</p> <p>Lessons for each book present story-related vocabulary prior to reading the Little Books. During the program, children also learn the top 25 sight words. Children have repeated exposure to the targeted vocabulary, and they independently complete exercises in the 64-page Vocabulary Activity Book.</p>
<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>Scholastic ReadingLine phonological awareness instruction includes sound awareness, oral segmentation, oral blending, oddity tasks (phoneme identity and categorization), and phonemic manipulation (phoneme deletion, addition, substitution). Teachers model skills and provide exemplars.</p> <p>Each lesson begins with a rhyme or song. In the <i>Sound and Letter Kit</i>, teachers use Phonological Awareness Picture Cards to help children focus on the targeted sound. Children learn phonological awareness skills in small groups.</p> <p>Sound-letter relationships are taught together. Teachers use Letter Cards, which contain upper and lower case letters, in pocket charts and other activities.</p>


Early Reading First Criteria	 Scholastic ReadingLine Kits
<p>Print Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowledge of the purposes and conventions of print 	<p>With the Scholastic ReadingLine program, children are exposed to a variety of print everyday. Each weekly lesson in the <i>Kits' Teaching Guides</i> revolves around a book, showing children that books convey important, fun information and carry a message. In addition, activities in each workbook have teachers and children use print in a variety of forms and for many different purposes.</p> <p>Children work with letters, words, punctuation, directionality, and other print conventions. Instructional materials include books, posters, letter cards, and activity books.</p> <p>Through multiple encounters with the provided materials, and the recommended teacher modeling strategies, children develop critical concepts of print that aid the reading and writing process.</p>
<p>Alphabet Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Letter recognition 	<p>In the <i>Sound and Letter Kit</i>, there are 26 books—one for each letter of the alphabet. Repetitive text and clever illustrations highlight critical sound-letter relationships and letter recognition. The <i>Kit</i> also provides letter cards, posters, and activities.</p> <p>Teaching letters is not done in isolation; children learn letter and alphabetic principles using many visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile experiences. Examples of this in the Scholastic ReadingLine Kits are the ABC posters, listening centers (CD-ROMs); literacy manipulatives (ABC cards) that allow for hands-on learning; and an activity book which is appropriate for teacher-led or child-initiated exploration.</p> <p>In the Scholastic ReadingLine Sound and Letter Kit's activity book, there are three pages of activities where children practice saying and writing letters while learning the connection between the two, as well as looking at pictures that begin with the same letter.</p>


Scholastic ReadingLine 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 **Scholastic ReadingLine** fulfills the above *ERF* required activities.

Early Reading First Requirement	 Scholastic ReadingLine Kits
<p>Classroom Environment</p> <p>A high-quality oral language and print-rich environment</p>	<p>Both of the Scholastic ReadingLine Kits contribute to creating print-rich and high-quality oral language environment.</p> <p><u>Sound and Letter Kit:</u> Builds phonemic awareness skills and alphabet recognition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teaching Guides include tips on encouraging discussion and conversation in the classroom. ▪ 104 Little Books (26 titles, 4 copies each) ▪ Audio CD (covering each title in kit) ▪ 4 Activity Books (1 book, 4 copies) ▪ Phonological Awareness Picture Cards ▪ Letter Cards ▪ ABC Posters (2) – Posted at child’s eye level <p><u>Vocabulary Kit:</u> Builds sight words and oral language skills. Contains 21 patterned books using the top 25 sight words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teaching Guides include tips on encouraging discussion and conversation in the classroom. ▪ 84 Little Books (21 titles, 4 copies each) ▪ Audio CD (covering each title in kit) ▪ 4 Activity Books (1 book, 4 copies) ▪ Oral Language Picture Cards ▪ Sight Word Cards ▪ Classroom Posters (2) posted at child’s eye level
<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>The Scholastic Early Childhood Seminar Series consists of four one-day seminars, offered individually, 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 ▪ Supporting the English Language Learner <p>An in-service day, conducted by a Scholastic Reading Specialist, is offered free of charge for grantees using the Scholastic ReadingLine Kits as part of their curriculum.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued)</i></p>

Early Reading First Requirement	 Scholastic ReadingLine Kits
<p>Professional Development— <i>Continued</i></p>	<p>Scholastic ReadingLine offers research-based professional papers that support the <i>Sound and Letter Kit</i> and the <i>Vocabulary Kit</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “Why It Is Important to Teach Phonemic Awareness and Alphabet Recognition” by Cathy Collins Block, Professor of Education, Texas Christian University ▪ “10 Research-Tested Ways to Build Children’s Vocabulary,” based on work by Nell K. Duke, Associate Professor of Teacher Education, Learning, Technology, and Culture at Michigan State University, and Director of the Early Literacy Project; and Annie M. Moses, a doctoral student in Learning, Technology, and Culture at Michigan State University, and participant in the Early Literacy Project <p>In addition, each <i>Teaching Guide</i> includes a Scope & Sequence, Overview of the Lesson Plan Structure, ELL Support, and “Focus Skills” for each book.</p>
<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>Scholastic ReadingLine phonological awareness lessons include: sound awareness, oral segmentation, oral blending, oddity task (phoneme identity and categorization), and phonemic manipulation (phoneme deletion, addition, substitution). Teachers say and model each skill, using scripted text in the <i>Teaching Guide</i>’s lesson plan.</p> <p>Sound-letter relationships are taught together in Scholastic ReadingLine. After sounds are introduced, children learn about the spelling that represents the sound. In the <i>Sound and Letter Kit</i>, teachers use Phonological Awareness Picture Cards to help children focus on the targeted sound.</p> <p>Lessons for each Little Book present story-related vocabulary prior to reading. During the program, children also learn the top 25 sight words. Children have repeated exposure to the targeted vocabulary, and they independently complete exercises in the 64-page Vocabulary Activity Book.</p> <p>Fluency instruction and practice are built into every Scholastic ReadingLine lesson. The practice activities include choral reading, echo reading, reader’s theater, and partner reading. The fluency lessons begin with teacher modeling and are accompanied by instruction focusing on how punctuation, character, and other text features inform expression. Students listen to the weekly story on the audio CD as they read along.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(continued)</i></p>

Early Reading First Requirement	 Scholastic ReadingLine Kits
<p>Services and Instructional Materials—<i>Continued</i></p>	<p>Scholastic ReadingLine comprehension focuses on understanding the text and concepts in the book. Prior to reading the book children build background, as well as preview and predict. As the group reads together, the teacher asks targeted questions to organize and expand students’ knowledge base. Children discuss the book and use comprehension-building strategies such as graphic organizers, categorization, and listening/thinking games.</p> <p>Children participate in hands-on activities related to the weekly book or letter that was taught. They also create word lists, their own pages to add to the book, and draw pictures related to the book.</p> <p> For information on the research base for Scholastic ReadingLine, please see page 48.</p>
<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 diagnostic assessments in the Assessment Handbook drive instruction by determining each child’s instructional needs, diagnosing each child’s strengths and weaknesses, and providing a starting point from which to measure a child’s literacy growth. The assessments are aligned to common criteria from state standards and learning outcomes.</p> <p>The main assessment categories are Reading, which includes a) concepts about print/book handling b) story retelling c) environmental print d) oral language/picture comprehension; Writing, which includes name writing/picture drawing; Alphabet Knowledge which includes a) alphabet recognition b) letter names; and, Phonological Awareness which includes a) initial/final sounds b) blending/segmenting c) splitting syllables/rhyming.</p> <p>Each Scholastic ReadingLine Kit provides ongoing assessment to follow children’s progress. Following each Little Book, a quick assessment focuses on the key skill areas. Also each of the programs has three End-of-Unit Assessments for a more comprehensive look at each child’s learning.</p>
<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>Scholastic ReadingLine is flexible enough for teachers to weave into their existing Pre-Kindergarten program. There are two options for using the lessons: “Express Track” for those who want to focus on reading the book, and “Local Track” for those who want complete skills instruction.</p> <p>The instructional program is arranged so that teachers can choose which skills to focus on in each lesson to balance Scholastic ReadingLine with other programs. In addition, each week’s lesson includes a cross-curricular or arts activity that is related to the Little Book.</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 7 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 48 of the Toolkit for Scholastic ReadingLine’s 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 31-34 of the Toolkit for examples of ways to organize your goals.***

 *The Sound and Letter Kit’s goal is to build preschool-age children’s phonological awareness and alphabet recognition skills, and the goal of the Vocabulary Kit is to help children build oral language skills and sight word recognition. Both research-based programs teach children within a print-rich environment with a variety of activities.*

 *The Teaching Guides provide skills instruction, strategies for English Language Learners, suggestions for activities, and scripts for teachers to use during whole-group and small-group instruction. The Kits come with Little Books, activity books for independent practice, decorative posters, picture and letter cards, audio CDs for independent reading, and Take-Home Books.*


 *The Sound and Letter Kit and the Vocabulary Kit Teaching Guides provide complete instruction in two “tracks”:*


- *Local Track, a five-day plan, offers full skills instruction in the targeted learning areas.*
- *Express Track, using Days 2 and 3 within the five-day lesson plan, focuses on reading the book and doing a few follow-up activities. Teachers supplement this track with activities from the other days as they see fit.*

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.

 *With the **Scholastic ReadingLine** program, children are exposed to a variety of print everyday, including trade books, posters, letter and word cards, activity books, and Take-Home Books.*

 *Children have many opportunities to develop oral language through rhymes, songs, discussions, hands-on activities, listening experiences, interactive reading, and writing. In addition, the Teaching Guides include strategies for English Language Learners.*


 *Every lesson in the **Scholastic ReadingLine** program contains a section that helps children build their background knowledge prior to reading the book.*


 *Each **Scholastic ReadingLine** Kit includes “the best little books on earth” according to Phyllis Hunter, a renowned reading expert and program author. Playful text, stunning photographs, and beautiful illustrations foster an early love of reading while targeting specific literacy skills.*

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.***

 ***Scholastic ReadingLine offers research-based professional papers that support the Sound and Letter Kit and the Vocabulary Kit:***

- *Why It Is Important to Teach Phonemic Awareness and Alphabet Recognition by Cathy Collins Block, Professor of Education, Texas Christian University*
- *10 Research-Tested Ways to Build Children's Vocabulary, based on work by Nell K. Duke, Associate Professor of Teacher Education, Learning, Technology, and Culture at Michigan State University, and Director of the Early Literacy Project; and Annie M. Moses, a doctoral student in Learning, Technology, and Culture at Michigan State University, and participant in the Early Literacy Project*

 ***Each Teaching Guide includes a Scope & Sequence, Overview of the Lesson Plan Structure, ELL Support, and "Focus Skills" for each book, and strategies for skills instruction.***


 ***The Scholastic Early Childhood Seminar Series consists of four one-day seminars, each of which can be customized to meet district's needs.***


- *The Essentials of Early Literacy and Language Development*
- *Integrating Content Area Themes*
- *Learning Literacy through Interactive Activities*
- *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.

 *The diagnostic assessments in the Assessment Handbook are designed to drive instruction by determining each child’s instructional needs, diagnosing each child’s strengths and weaknesses, and providing a starting point from which to measure a child’s literacy growth.*


 *Each **Scholastic ReadingLine** Kit contains effective progress monitoring tools. Following each Little Book, a quick assessment focuses on the key skill areas. There are also three End-of-Unit Assessments for a more comprehensive look at each child’s learning.*

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

 **Scholastic ReadingLine Kits** offer complete instruction and reading practice in foundational skills that are key to a successful reading experience. Children build oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and alphabet knowledge through a variety of instructional strategies and activities. These include:

- Warm-up activity for each lesson
- Reading and sight word routines
- Teacher modeling
- Student hands-on activities
- Cross-curricular and art activities
- Writing
- Connected printed books for each lesson
- Activity book
- Picture, letter, and word-building cards
- Audio CDs of targeted books
- Posters

 Although focusing on those skills identified by *Early Reading First* as providing a successful foundation for literacy development, **ReadingLine Kits** instruction also includes those identified by *Reading First* research. Children learn:

- Phonemic awareness skills, such as oral blending and oral segmentation
- Letter-sound correspondence
- Fluency through choral reading, teacher modeling, and other means
- Sight word recognition
- Content-area vocabulary

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 35.***

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.

 **Scholastic ReadingLine Kits come with a complete set of the materials needed for teaching and reinforcing essential early literacy skills:**

Sound and Letter Kit—Builds phonemic awareness skills and alphabet recognition.

- Teaching Guides
- 104 Little Books (26 titles, 4 copies each)
- Audio CD (covering each title in kit)
- 4 Activity Books (1 book, 4 copies)
- Phonological Awareness Picture Cards
- Letter Cards
- ABC Posters (2)

Vocabulary Kit—Builds sight words and oral language skills. Contains 21 patterned books using the top 25 sight words.

- Teaching Guides
- 84 Little Books (21 titles, 4 copies each)
- Audio CD (covering each title in kit)
- 4 Activity Books (1 book, 4 copies)
- Oral Language Picture Cards
- Sight Word Cards
- Classroom Posters (2)

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 36-38 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.

 *Six Literacy Progress Tests, provided in the Assessment Handbook, help teachers monitor children's progress and literacy development. The tests assess word recognition and comprehension skills, phonological awareness skills, and writing/dictation skills. The End-of-Year Test also assesses these skills and provides summative information about each child's progress during the year.*


 ***For a sample Project Evaluation Plan, please see pages 39-41 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.

 ***Scholastic ReadingLine Kits offer complete instruction and reading practice to help students develop the essential skills identified in Early Reading First. The Sound and Letter Kit focuses on building phonological awareness skills and alphabet recognition. The Vocabulary Kit focuses on building sight words and oral language skills.***


 ***A team of reading experts translated scientifically based research and proven instructional strategies into the **Scholastic ReadingLine** program. These include:***

- *Cathy Collins Block, Professor of Education at Texas Christian University; past director of seven nationally funded research projects concerning comprehension development; author*
- *Phyllis Hunter, Houston Independent School District, TX; former teacher and curriculum director; member, National Family Literacy Advisory Board, NIFL*
- *Francie Alexander, Senior Vice President, Scholastic Education, and Chief Academic Officer of Scholastic Inc.; teaching and curriculum expertise*
- *Nell Duke, Assistant Professor of Teacher Education, Learning, Technology, and Culture at Michigan State University and Director of the Early Literacy Project*
- *Wiley Blevins, Scholastic; author of numerous books on reading instruction*
- *John Shefelbine, Professor at California State University, Sacramento; specialist in early reading, phonics, and comprehension strategies for struggling readers.*


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 42-48 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 **Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely (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***


 ***Please see pages 10-14 of the Toolkit for more information on how **Scholastic ReadingLine** can help meet the goals and objectives of a grant project as required by Selection Criterion 1.***


<p>Language and Literacy Development:</p> <p>Goal #1 <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>Selection Criterion 1, Factor 2, Purpose 2 <i>To demonstrate language and literacy activities based on scientifically based reading research that supports the age-appropriate development of:</i></p> <ul 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> 		
<p>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>				
<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>Scholastic ReadingLine</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>

 *The Scholastic ReadingLine Sound and Letter Kit builds phonemic awareness skills and alphabet recognition, and the Vocabulary Kit builds sight words and oral language skills. The Teaching Guide offers a complete instructional plan for every book in the Kits.*


 *Six Literacy Progress Tests help teachers monitor literacy development. The tests assess word recognition and comprehension skills, phonological awareness skills, and writing/dictation skills. The End-of-Year Test also assesses these skills and provides summative information about each child’s progress during the year.*

<p>Language and Literature-Rich Environments:</p>		<p>Selection Criterion 1, Factor 2, Purpose 3</p>	
<p>Goal #2 <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><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>

 *The **Scholastic ReadingLine** Sound and Letter Kit contains 26 Little Books that include a title for every letter of the alphabet. High-interest text and colorful illustrations target the specific sound and letter skill. The Vocabulary Kit contains 21 Little Books that use patterned text made up of the top 25 sight words. The books feature beautiful illustrations and text in multiple genres. In addition to high-quality literature, **Scholastic ReadingLine** Kits contain alphabet posters, letter cards, and sight word cards.*

 ***Scholastic ReadingLine** encourages family involvement in their child’s literacy efforts. The Family Letter, available in Spanish and English, informs families of what the children learn in the program and offers ideas for activities to support reading at home. In every lesson, there is a Home/School Connection. In the Vocabulary Kit, black-line masters of the Little Books enable students to take a copy of the book home to share with family members.*

<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>Selection Criterion 1, Factor 2, 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</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 Scholastic ReadingLine, 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>

 *Scholastic offers four customizable seminars designed to broaden teacher's knowledge about children's early literacy development. The seminars provide teachers with research-based strategies to integrate literacy and language development with content-area themes, link literacy with mathematics, incorporate interactive activities into the curriculum, and support students who are acquiring English.*

 *Scholastic ReadingLine offers research-based professional papers that support the Sound and Letter Kit and the Vocabulary Kit:*

- *Why It Is Important to Teach Phonemic Awareness and Alphabet Recognition by Cathy Collins Block, Professor of Education, Texas Christian University*
- *10 Research-Tested Ways to Build Children's Vocabulary, based on work by Nell K. Duke, Associate Professor of Teacher Education, Learning, Technology, and Culture at Michigan State University, and Director of the Early Literacy Project; and Annie M. Moses, a doctoral student in Learning, Technology, and Culture at Michigan State University, and participant in the Early Literacy Project*

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>Scholastic ReadingLine</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>Scholastic ReadingLine</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:

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 the **Scholastic ReadingLine Program** to maximize the amount of direct intervention for every Pre-K student.

Specific Activities	Positions Responsible	Timeline	Effectiveness Indicators
1. Purchase Scholastic ReadingLine Sound and Letter Kit and Vocabulary Kit .	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 <YEAR>	Teacher lesson plans
3. Provide Pre-K students with emergent literacy books and other materials	Early Childhood Teachers	Academic Year <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.**

 **Scholastic ReadingLine Kits** are research-based and provide instructional strategies to help preschool-age children develop language and literacy skills. The flexible program offers two methods to deliver instruction:

- **Local Track**, a five-day plan, offers full skills instruction in the targeted learning areas.
- **Express Track**, using Days 2 and 3 within the five-day lesson plan, focuses on reading the book and doing a few follow-up activities. Teachers can supplement this track with activities from the other days as they see fit.

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?*
-  **Six Literacy Progress Tests, provided in the *Scholastic ReadingLine* Assessment Handbook, help teachers monitor children’s progress and literacy development. The tests assess word recognition and comprehension skills, phonological awareness skills, and writing/dictation skills. The End-of-Year Test also assesses these skills and provides summative information about each child’s progress during the year. The Assessment Handbook provides ideas on collecting information for portfolios.**

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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Scholastic ReadingLine Kits Research Foundation

Scholastic ReadingLine Kits are based directly on the scientific research of these Early Childhood experts:

- ◆ Francie Alexander—**Scholastic ReadingLine** Author and Academic Advisor; Senior Vice President, Scholastic Education, and Chief Academic Officer of Scholastic Inc.
- ◆ Wiley Blevins—**Scholastic ReadingLine** Author and Academic Advisor; Author of Scholastic ReadingLine Professional Paper, “Phonics and the Beginning Reader” Director of Primary Publishing, Scholastic Education
- ◆ Cathy Collins Block—**Scholastic ReadingLine** Author and Academic Advisor; Author of Scholastic ReadingLine Professional Paper, “Why It Is Important to Teach Phonemic Awareness and Alphabet Recognition;” Professor, Texas Christian University
- ◆ Nell Duke—**Scholastic ReadingLine** Author and Academic Advisor; Co-author of “Reading & Writing Informational Text in the Primary Grades: Research Based Practices;” Assistant Professor, Michigan State University
- ◆ Phyllis Hunter—**Scholastic ReadingLine** Author and Academic Advisor; Member, 2003 National Family Literacy Advisory Board NIFL and former Educator of the Year, National Alliance of Black School Educators
- ◆ John Shefelbine—**Scholastic ReadingLine** Author and Academic Advisor; Professor at California State University, Sacramento specializing in early reading, phonics, and comprehension strategies for struggling readers

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.