

Nevada's Pre-Kindergarten Standards

GUIDEBOOK FOR FAMILIES



Part 1:

Language and Early Literacy

March 2005

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LANGUAGE AND EARLY LITERACY

Nevada's Pre-Kindergarten Standards

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Introduction

Nevada's Pre-kindergarten standards are a joint effort supported by the Nevada Department of Education's Office of Special Education, Elementary and Secondary Education, and School Improvement Programs, as well as the State of Nevada, Department of Human Resources, Welfare Division, Child Care Assistance Department and the Child Care and Development Fund. These agencies have been challenged by the *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative to work together to develop standards to be used by all early childhood education programs in Nevada as a guide for child outcomes for preschool.

These standards should be understood as what children may know by the end of preschool before entering kindergarten. It is important to understand that if your child does not meet the standards this does not mean they will be ineligible or unsuccessful in kindergarten or beyond. These standards are guides that can be used with all children in any early education setting such as childcare centers, family childcare homes, Head Start, preschools and school district Pre-K programs.

As a parent, you have the very important role of being your child's first teacher. In this role, you are able to work with your child's teachers in helping your children with reading and writing. Learning these skills will contribute to your child's future success in school and beyond.

One important point to remember is that all children develop differently. All children, no matter what their level, should be valued and respected. Parents as well as teachers should understand and use "developmentally appropriate practice" in their interactions with children. This term refers to understanding and respecting a child's individual development and unique characteristics and skills. In other words, as a parent and a teacher it is important to know that not all four- or five-year-olds have the same writing and reading skills. It would be perfectly normal, for example, for some children to be ready to read or write earlier or later than others in their same age group. Most parents can relate to having very different children even within their own families, and know that interactions with children may be different depending on each child's personality and skill level.

Parents who value the individual differences of their children will have the necessary beginning skills to be very successful first teachers. The following is a guidebook parents can use to learn more about Nevada’s Pre-K standards and to help with guiding children as they learn to read and write. Parents are encouraged to be as creative as possible with their children and know that no single technique will work with all children.

As a parent, you can use this handbook as one among many tools for getting your child ready for kindergarten and beyond. A few general reminders to help your children with beginning reading and writing skills include some of the following:

- Talk with your children, model reading and writing behavior, and support your children’s interest in and enjoyment of reading and writing;
- Show your children many ways of, and reasons for, writing;
- Read interesting and diverse books daily to your children;
- Talk to your children about what they read and point out letters and sounds of letters;
- Sing songs, play games, do finger plays, and read rhyming poems and stories;
- Write grocery lists, make signs, create recipes, and use new words when exploring computer games;
- Use a variety of words when talking with your children; and take community trips exploring and pointing out words and language in the environment; and
- Avoid using ABC flashcards or specifically “teaching” letters one at a time as this may interfere with your child’s natural excitement about learning letters and words.

Note to parents: Each of the following pages contains a Pre-K Language and Early Literacy standard. The numbers for each standard match the original Pre-K Content Standards document, but are put in the order of the common developmental pattern of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in preschool age children. The standards are also reworded in this manual for simplicity purposes.

Have fun reading and learning with your children!

Pre-K Standard 8.0

Your child may begin to:

- Listen more carefully to adults or other children.
- Answer questions about books.
- Listen for instructions or ideas before doing something
- Complete tasks after listening to directions or requests.
- Ask "who," "what," "why," "where," and "how" questions.
- Pay closer attention to story details.
- Repeat phrases, rhymes, or songs from books.
- Help others with following directions or completing tasks.
- Show an understanding of changes in routine or in words from books.



Tips to help your child listen to and think about what is heard:

- Listen to your child without interruptions.
- Ask your child to repeat or rephrase what you or others have said.
- Show your child how to ask and answer questions.
- Use reading with your child to learn new and interesting words.
- Ask your child open-ended or "why" questions.
- Talk about new and interesting topics often.
- Praise good listening behavior.

Family Activity:

"Simon Says" is a game the whole family can enjoy and may help children with practicing their listening skills. Each family member can take turns playing "Simon." This person then gives directions such as, "Simon Says touch your toes....Simon Says touch your knees....Simon Says turn around."

All family members must follow the directions only when the directions begin with "Simon Says." When they don't hear "Simon Says" players who still follow directions have to sit down. The person who listens best to all directions wins!



Using and understanding appropriate speaking skills. Listening and Speaking

Pre-K Standard 9.0

Your child may begin to:

- Repeat words and expand on sentences spoken by others.
- Help others understand what is being said.
- Play with words (“banana, fanna, fofanna....”).
- Show an understanding of how sentences are formed.
- Talk effectively in native language.
- Respond nonverbally when others are speaking.
- Help others with following directions or completing tasks.
- Use different voices for characters in books, poems, or songs.



Tips to help your child use and understand speaking skills:

- Be sensitive and clear when talking about the meaning of sentences.
- Answer your child’s questions.
- Support your child’s use of new words.
- Use new words and explain their meaning to your child.
- Allow your child to choose topics for discussions.
- Encourage your child’s speaking in his/her native language.
- Play sound or listening games with your child.
- Speak clearly and repeat words or phrases when needed.

Family Activity

Puppet Play is a fun activity for children. Using paper bags or different colored socks, make faces on the puppets with markers, crayons, or paint. Help your child glue on yarn, buttons, or anything else to decorate their puppet.

Encourage your child to be as creative as they wish in making their puppet, and in acting out characters. One fun activity is after reading a favorite book, encourage your child to act out the story, retell or change the story, or express thoughts and feelings of characters within the story using their puppet.



(Pre-K Standard 10.0)

Your child may begin to:

- Show an understanding of turn-taking in speaking.
- Share personal experiences that are important for conversations.
- Show an ability to carry on conversations with others.
- Express feelings, ideas, or share opinions.
- Ask and answer questions in order to learn something.
- Tell real or make-believe stories.



Tips to help your child use language for a variety of purposes:

- Engage in one-on-one conversations with your child often.
- Praise your child when they take turns speaking.
- Help your child to use language to learn about the world.
- Help your child talk about his/her culture or background.
- Ask questions to help your child learn about a topic.
- Engage in role- or pretend-play with your child.
- Encourage your child to discuss thoughts or feelings of characters.



Family Activity

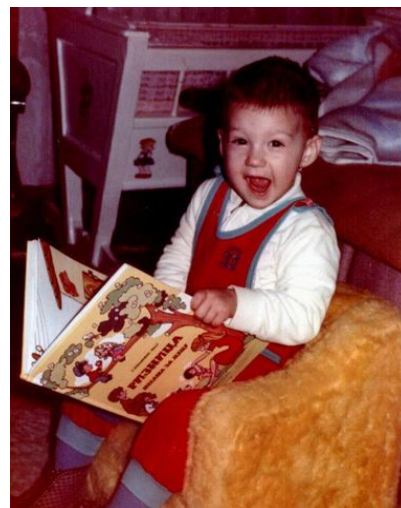
Tape-record yourself and your child reading a favorite book. Read slowly and with expression, pausing to allow your child time to look at the pictures and talk about what is being read. This is a great way for children to learn about reading and to practice listening skills.

Include in your recording “turn-the-page” signals so your child can follow along when you are not there. This is a great treat for children when you leave them with a sitter or on rainy or snowy days when they can’t play outside.

(Pre-K Standard 1.0)

Your child may begin to:

- Know common signs such as McDonalds, STOP, EXIT.
- Know some letters and words.
- Ask for help with a word they see.
- Notice when his/her name is printed.
- Know the names of most letters in his/her own name.
- Trace letters or form letters with clay, crayons, or paint.
- Hear sound differences in letters.
- Repeat sounds in words.
- Learn beginning sounds in some words.



Tips to help your child with some letters and words:

- Have a variety of books, and other written materials in your home.
- Point out your child's name and ask him/her to point out letters.
- Point out and ask your child to name familiar logos and signs.
- Have paper, crayons, markers, and paint supplies available.
- Talk about letter sounds in words.
- Play singing, rhyming, and word games to music.
- Talk about beginning sounds.
- Play "I Spy...", ask your child to "spy something that starts with M."
- Read together menus, traffic signs, cereal boxes, emails, and letters.
- Label some objects at home to help child with recognizing words.

Family Activity

Recognizing words. Point out words on cereal boxes as children say a cereal jingle or slogan ("They're gr-e-a-t!"). Write the words from the slogan one by one on a piece of paper and ask your child to point to the matching word on the box. This will help them to recognize the same letters and words in different places.

Cut out the characters and pictures that appear on the front and back of your child favorite cereal box. Staple or glue them onto ice cream sticks so they can use them as stick puppets to tell their own story.



(Pre-K Standard 2.0)

Your child may begin to:

- Understand what books are and how they are organized.
- Retell stories by looking only at the pictures.
- Understand how to “read” and treat books.
- Understand the meaning of stories.
- Pretend to “read.”
- Predict what comes next in familiar or unfamiliar stories.
- Point out familiar objects in pictures.
- Remember events and characters from a story.
- Express emotions and respond to certain pictures



Tips to help your child understand books and the process of reading:

- Show children how to handle books and turn pages.
- Show children how words are organized in books.
- Encourage your child to “read” books to you.
- Encourage your child to retell a familiar story.
- Allow your child time to tell stories through coloring or painting.
- Read frequently to your child, even repeating the same book.
- Play with books that allow children to lift flaps and find pictures.
- Make time each day to read books with your child.

Family Activity

Story time. Encourage your child to pretend-read to an audience of stuffed animals or dolls.

Siblings may even like to join these regular read-aloud sessions. After the reading, you might help your expert reader to answer questions about the story or explain its meaning to the audience.



*(Pre-K Standard 3.0)****Your child may begin to:***

- Understand the order of pictures from a story.
- Create his/her own stories.
- Repeat familiar poems or finger plays.
- Understand beginning, middle, and end of stories.
- Talk about stories adding his/her own ideas and experiences.
- Compare what is being read to his/her own life experiences.
- Repeat predictable phrases in books.
- Participate in singing simple songs.

***Tips to help your child apply early reading skills:***

- Encourage your child to retell stories through play.
- Encourage your child to relate stories to his/her own life.
- Allow your child to predict outcomes of stories.
- Read predictable books with familiar poems or songs.
- Read books about people from different cultures and backgrounds.
- Ask your child what he/she likes about certain stories or characters.
- Encourage your child to make up his/her own song, poem, or story.

Family Activity

Read a nursery rhyme to your child. Read it again, and have him/her repeat each line after you. Once your child is familiar with a rhyme, pause to let him/her finish the rhyming word at the end of a line. For example: "Jack and Jill went up the..."

Before long, your child will be able to recite most or all of the rhyme on his/her own. Share or make-up new rhymes often.



*(Pre-K Standard 4.0)****Your child may begin to:***

Understand differences between poems, stories, and other literature.

Use pictures to organize his/her own stories.

Understand the meaning of a story.

Draw pictures and describe what they mean.

Ask for help in reading a book to learn something.

Ask many "why" questions about books or experiences.

Ask more questions about pictures and characters within stories.

***Tips to help your child use reading to learn:***

Show your child examples of your own writing (e.g., lists, letters).

Talk to your child about how words provide important information.

Encourage your child to retell stories through drawing.

Show interest in your child's stories and drawings.

Ask questions about experiences or books your children have read.

Show your child how books are used to find out useful information.

Allow your child to help with following recipes or directions.

Play games with your child that involve specific steps or directions.

Visit your local library with your child.

Family Activity

Create a family history book. Collect family pictures and put them together in a homemade book. Your child can help write about a family member's experiences ("Grandpa's trip to China") or retell his/her own stories. This is a great way to learn something new about the family.

A child's own pictures and words in the book could also make it a very memorable gift for Grandpa!



Using writing* to communicate.

Writing

*All levels of writing and spelling at this age are unique to each child. Creative spelling and/or pretend writing should be expected and encouraged.

(Pre-K Standard 5.0)

Your child may begin to:

- Show hand control when writing with different utensils.
- Write about a familiar experience.
- Have a purpose for writing.
- Share with and explain to others his/her writings and pictures.
- Use writing to share ideas and information.
- Think up unique ideas for his/her own stories.
- Use other symbols or drawings to shares thoughts or feelings.



Tips to help your child begin to use writing to communicate:

- Provide daily time for your child to use different writing tools.
- Show genuine praise for your child's unique style of spelling and writing.
- Show your child how to write beginning on the left side of the page.
- Encourage your child to talk about and reread his/her writing.
- Encourage your child to share feelings in his/her writing.
- Show your child how to write for a purpose (e.g., lists, letters, recipes).
- Write down your child's words explaining his/her drawings or paintings.

Family Activity

Make a menu by talking about different food categories -- sandwiches, side dishes, drinks, desserts, and so on. Then give kids magazines with pictures of food. Help cut out food pictures that your child says look good, then have them sort the food into categories.

Write each category on a piece of paper and let your child glue on the matching pictures. Allow your child to write on the menu and have him/her make up a name for the restaurant.



(Pre-K Standard 6.0)

Your child may begin to:

- Make signs or notes to share information with others.
- Write something and ask others to read it.
- Use writing more often during play.
- Ask adults to write down dictated stories.
- Add new ideas to stories or writings.
- Explain the meaning of stories.
- Create more unique and detailed stories.
- Write for many different purposes.



Tips to help your child understand a purpose for writing:

- Encourage your child to use writing during play.
- Encourage your child to share personal experiences in his/her writing.
- Provide a lot of time for creative writing.
- Encourage your child to write his/her own stories.
- Talk about letters and words when reading and creative writing.
- Reread children's words that have been written down.
- Support children's writing by displaying artwork and written work.

Family Activity

Create a book with your child that includes important events and activities that happen at home and at school. Use a three-ring-binder or make a book by stapling paper together. Look through magazines and allow him/her to cut out and glue pictures to decorate the book.

Allow your child to draw pictures of people and events and include some family pictures. Label the pages with the child's own words or with words you've written based on what your child says.



(Pre-K Standard 7.0)

Your child may begin to:

- Recognize first letter in name.
- Use many different types of letter-like symbols.
- Ask for help in writing or tracing letters
- Experiment with different forms of writing (e.g., stamps, chalk, computers).
- Print familiar letters.
- Copy letters and words from other sources.
- Use specific and familiar letter choices when writing.



Tips to help your child understand spelling, grammar, and word usage:

- Point out letters or show words to your child, when he/she is interested.
- Encourage your child to write at his/her own level.
- Talk about letters and sounds frequently.
- Model writing daily.
- Show genuine enthusiasm for all attempts at writing.
- Help your child to practice and develop eye-hand coordination.

Family Activity

Alphabet play is a fun activity for children. Adults can place alphabet noodles or cereal in a pie pan or bowl for children to play with or sort. Young children will love sorting through the letters and picking out letters they recognize, from their own names, or words they may know.

Once children have played and sorted they can glue the letters onto a piece of paper or have fun eating their favorite letters!



Literacy Resources:

- Backes, L. (2001). "Best books for kids who (think they) hate to read." Prima Publishing.
- Crosser, S. (1998). "He has a summer birthday: The kindergarten entrance age dilemma." ERIC Digest. (Eric Document Reproduction Service No. ED423079 98). Available at: www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content5/kindergarten.entrance.html.
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- Hauser, J. F. (1993). "Growing up reading: Learning to read through creative play." Williamson Publishing.
- Hearne, B. & Stevenson, D. (2000). "Choosing books for children: A commonsense guide." University of Illinois Press
- Hill, M. W. (1995). "Home: Where reading and writing begin." Heinemann.
- Kagan, S.L. (2000). Early schooling: The national debate. New Haven CT: Yale University Press.
- Kaye, P. (1994). "Games for reading: Playful ways to help your child read." Pantheon Books.
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- Nurss, J. (1987). Readiness for kindergarten . ERIC/EECE Digest . Available at :http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content/readiness_for_k.html
- Odean, K. (1998). "Great books for boys." Ballantine Publishing Group.
- Odean, K. (1997). "Great books for girls." Ballantine Publishing Group.

Taylor, D. (1999). "Family literacy: Young children learning to read and write." Heinemann.

Taylor, D. & Strickland, D. (1991). "Family storybook reading." Heinemann.

Additional Websites:

www.doe.nv.gov/equity/prekstandards.htm (To download complete copy of Nevada's Pre-K Standards)

www.ciera.org (Center for the Improvement of Early Reading (CIERA))

www.ed.gov (Federal Even Start Family Literacy)

www.hippyusa.org (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters))

www.reading.org (International Reading Association)

www.famlit.org (National Center for Family Literacy)

www.nifl.org (National Institute for Literacy)

www.patnc.org (Parents as Teachers National Center)

www.pbs.org (PBS)

www.naeyc.org (National Association for the Education of Young Children (See Position Statement on School Readiness and Signs of Quality Programs))

www.nas.edu or www.4nationalacademies.org (National Research Council)

www.pppctr.org (Practical Parenting Partnerships)

www.rif.org (Reading is Fundamental)

www.ed.gov (U.S. Department of Education - America Reads Program)

www.ala.org/ALSCTemplate.cfm?Section=ALSC (American Library Association)

www.reading.org/choices (International Reading Association Children's Book Council Joint Committee)

www.nypl.org/branch/kids/gloria.html (New York Public Library, listing *100 Picture Books Everyone Should Know.*)

www.cbcbooks.org/ (Children's Book Council)

www.familyeducation.com (Family Education Network)

www.icdlbooks.org/ (International Children's Digital Library).

www.nea.org/parents (National Education Association)

www.ncpie.org/ (National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education)

www.npin.org (National Parent Involvement Network)

www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/ (The Children's Literature Web Guide)

www.pta.org (Parent Teacher Association)

www.teachersandfamilies.com (Teachers and Families Working Together)

www.teachersandfamilies.com/open/psreading.cfm (Listing of books to read with your child)

www.teachersfirst.com/100books.htm (A listing of good books for children)

www.teachersandfamilies.com/open/readingtips.html (Tips for reading to your preschool child)

www.teachersandfamilies.com/open/parent/index.html (Parenting tips related to reading and literacy)

www.readwritethink.org/resources/index.asp (Additional listing of resources for children)