

Building Early Literacy and Language Skills



Critical First Steps

Straight Talk Live Chat®

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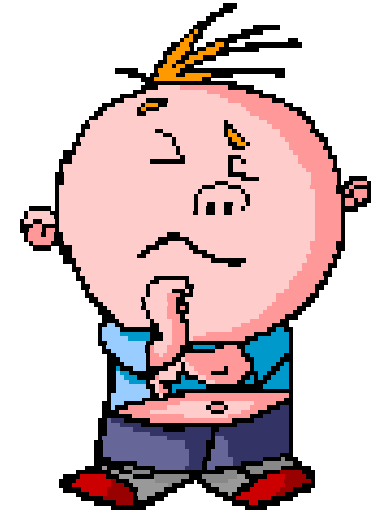
Chat Overview

1. Perception of literacy development
2. Early literacy foundations
3. Assessment issues
4. Trends in early literacy

- **Early literacy** learning is defined as taking place from birth to 6 years of age (Robyak, Masiello, Trivette, Roper and Dunst, 2007).



Perception of Literacy Development





What are your feelings about how children develop literacy?

1. In order to learn to read, a child needs to know letters names and letter sounds.
2. Becoming literate is a continuous, developmental process that begins very early in life.
3. Early reading and writing practices exhibited by children result from direct instruction and guidance.
4. To become literate, young children must have many and varied opportunities to read and write.
5. The teaching of literacy must be systematic and sequential in operation.
6. Reading and writing activities should be provided throughout the day in all areas of curriculum.
7. Reading includes the mechanical skill of turning printed symbols into sounds that are language.
8. Play is one of the ways for young children to learn about written language.



Evidence - Based Reading Research Perspective

- Focuses on a core set of knowledge and skills young children must develop to become successful readers and writers along with the strategies that can be used to teach these skills through explicit instruction. (1, 3, 5, 7)

Emergent Literacy Perspective

- Places a heavy value on the social and meaning-based aspects of literacy and creating a learning environment for children to explore and learn. (2, 4, 6, 8)



8 Principles for a **BLENDED** Approach to Early Literacy Instruction

1. Focus on the core skills that are predictive of successful reading.
2. Oral language lays the foundation.
3. Storybook reading is the cornerstone.
4. Create print-rich environments.
5. Provide many opportunities for listening, talking, reading, and writing.
6. Use developmentally appropriate forms of direct instruction.



8 Principles for a **BLENDED** Approach to Early Literacy Instruction

7. Help parents support their children's language and literacy learning.
8. Early literacy assessment and instruction should be guided by standards that define the knowledge and skills needed to become successful readers and writers.

(Vukelich & Christie, 2004)



National Early Literacy Panel Results

- Oral language, phonological processing and print knowledge are strongly predictive of how well children will learn to read and write.
 - **Systematic and sequential**
- Targeted practices are more likely to be effective than non-targeted practices.
 - **Direct instruction**
- When many unrelated skills are targeted simultaneously, the learning outcomes are not as strong as compared to interventions that focus on a one skill or a set of inter-related skills.
 - **Explicit instruction**

Dunst, Trivette, Hamby, 2007



More Academics in Preschool and Kindergarten?

- “Play-based, as opposed to “drill and practice’ curricula designed with children’s developmental needs in mind can foster academic and attention skills in ways that are engaging and fun.”

(Duncan, 2007, *Developmental Psychology*)

Early Literacy Foundations



Predicting Poor Reading

We can determine with over 90% accuracy whether or not a child in kindergarten will be in the bottom 10% of readers in 2nd grade by looking at:

- phonological awareness
- semantics (vocabulary)
- orthographic knowledge

Wagner, 2001



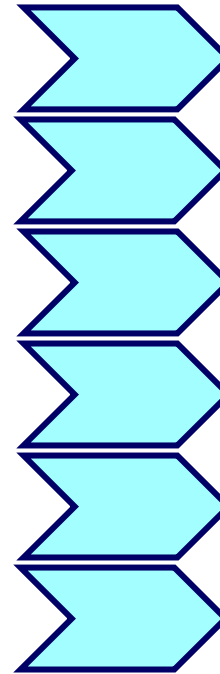
What We Need to Teach Young Children

- Oral Language
 - Speaking and listening
- Phonological Processing
 - Conscious awareness and ability to manipulate sound structures of words
- Print Knowledge
 - Concepts of print
 - Alphabet knowledge
 - Being a writer

Early Literacy

- Oral Language
- Phonological Processing
- Print Knowledge

Leads to



Early Reading

(NRP, 2000)

- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics
- Vocabulary
- Fluency
- Comprehension
- and
- Spelling
- Writing

(Moats, 2006)

Early Literacy Checklist

Name: _____ Birthdate: _____ Teacher: _____

Assessment Dates: _____, _____, _____, _____, _____

Oral Language

- ___ Uses speech that is understandable with only age appropriate errors
- ___ Understands concepts such as top/bottom, under/over, beginning/middle/end, first/last/next, before/after, one/all/, more/less, same/not same
- ___ Uses word endings such as plurals, possessives, -ed, -ing
- ___ Uses sentences with correct word order and appropriate length and includes pronouns, verbs, and question forms
- ___ Relates a story with three to five events

Phonological Awareness

Rhyme

- ___ Imitates rhythmic patterns in songs, finger plays, and rhymes
- ___ Fills in missing words to known songs, rhymes, finger plays
- ___ Identifies words that rhyme
- ___ Produces a word that rhymes with a given word
- ___ Produces a string of three words that rhyme

Blending

- ___ Blends words into syllables (cow-boy)
- ___ Blends beginning sound to rest of word (f-ish)
- ___ Blends words with three sounds (s-u-n)

Segmenting

- ___ Segments words into syllables
- ___ Identifies the number of syllables in words
- ___ Identifies words that begin with the same sound
- ___ Segments beginning sound from rest of word (s-un)
- ___ Segments sounds in words with three sounds (h-a-t)

Print Knowledge

Print Awareness

- ___ Holds book right side up and turns one page at a time
- ___ Identifies the pictures and the words on a page
- ___ Recognizes symbols and print seen in environment
- ___ Follows print using left to right sequencing
- ___ Points to words using 1:1 word correspondence
- ___ Recognizes own written name

Alphabet Knowledge

- ___ Sings the Alphabet Song
- ___ Identifies uppercase letters
- ___ Identifies lowercase letters
- ___ Identifies the sounds of the letters
- ___ Produces the sounds of the letters

Print Development

- ___ Writes using scribble-like markings
- ___ Writes using individual letter like characters or mock letters
- ___ Writes using recognizable, random letter strings
- ___ Writes using semiphonetic spellings
- ___ Writes using phonetic spellings

Adapted from © *Building Early Literacy and Language Skills* (Paulson, Noble, Jepson, & van den Pol, 2001). Sopris West

Building Early Literacy and Language Skills



A Resource and Activity Guide for Preschool and Kindergarten

Lucy Hart Paulson • Linda Attridge Noble • Stacia Jepson • Rick van den Pol



Oral Language Skills

Basic concepts and vocabulary

Speech intelligibility

Sentence structure

Narratives

The Mitten

by Jan Brett



A snowshoe rabbit came hopping by. He stopped for a moment to admire his winter coat. It was then that he saw the mitten, and he wiggled in, feet first. The mole didn't think there was room for both of them, but when he saw the rabbit's kickers he moved over.

Next a hedgehog came snuffling along. Having spent the day looking under wet leaves for things to eat, he decided to move into the mitten and warm himself. The mole and the rabbit were bumped and jostled, but not being ones to argue with someone covered with prickles, they made room.

As soon as the hedgehog disappeared into the mitten, a big owl, attracted by the commotion, swooped down. When he decided to move in also, the mole, the rabbit, and the hedgehog grumbled. But when they saw the owl's glinty talons, they quickly let him in.

The Mitten by Jan Brett



A **snowshoe** rabbit came hopping by. He stopped for a **moment** to **admire** his **winter** coat. It was then that he saw the mitten, and he **wiggled** in, feet **first**. The **mole** didn't think there was room for **both** of them, but when he saw the rabbit's **kickers** he moved over.

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In 3 paragraphs of “The Mitten”

Basic concepts and vocabulary

23 potentially unfamiliar words

Speech intelligibility

Complex word structures

Sentence structure

Longest sentence is 23 words

Narratives

2 events in each paragraph



Phonological Awareness

Rhyming

Blending

Segmenting

Manipulation



Phonological Awareness Skill

Ages at which Skills Begin to Develop

Rhyming

Say words in rhymes, finger plays, and songs 2 - 3 years

Match words that rhyme 3 - 5 years

Produce words that rhyme 5 - 6 years

Alliteration

Match words with same initial sounds 3 - 5 years

Produce words with same initial sound 6 - 7 years

Blending

Combine **syllables** to produce words 3 - 4 years

Combine **sounds** to produce words 4 - 5 years

Segmentation

Identify **syllables** in word 3 - 4 years

Identify **sounds** in words 5 - 6 years

Manipulation

change words by deleting, adding, and switching sounds 6 - 7 years and up

Hickity Pickity Bumble Bee

Sing the song using a bumble bee puppet:
Hickity Pickity Bumble Bee, please say your name for me.

Have the children tap their knees for each syllable in a child's name.

Ja - cob

Ti - ffa - ny

Scott

Sa - man - tha



*Hickity Pickity
Bumble Bee,
please say
your name for me.*

Picture Puzzles

(Paulson, et al., 2001)

Cut pictures into pieces that match the number of syllables or the number of sounds in the words. Say the name of the picture in a segmented manner and have the children guess what the picture is. They can put the pieces of the picture together in the puzzle.

For example:

rain - bow

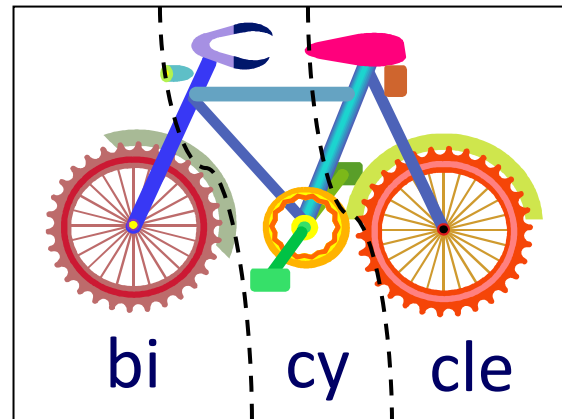
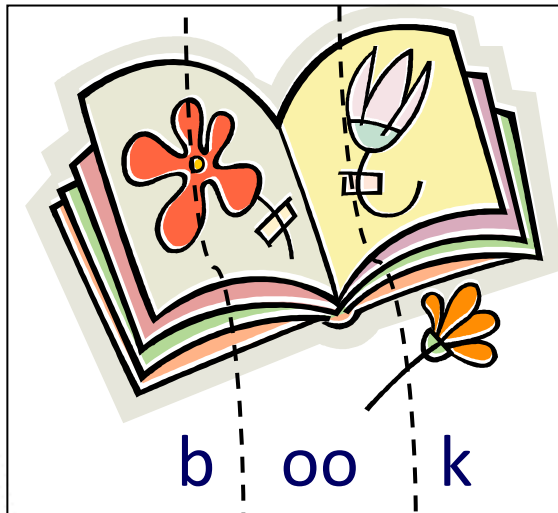
f - i - sh

di - no - saur

c - a - t

am - bu - lance

s - u - n






Phonological deficits:

- Separate good readers and poor readers
- Don't go away
- Can be identified early

Problem is at lowest level interfering with decoding, which interferes with identifying the word, which influences meaning

Sally Shaywitz 2003

- 
- The central difficulty in reading disability reflects a deficit within the phonological component of the language system, which has to do with the ability to access the underlying sound structure of words.

Shaywitz, Shaywitz, Blachman, Pugh, Fulbright, Skudlarski, Mencl, Constable, Holahan, Marchione, Fletcher, Lyon, & Gore, 2004



Print Knowledge

Concepts of print

–Book and print awareness

Alphabet knowledge leading
to the alphabetic principle

Becoming a writer



ABC “EYE Chart

Make a chart of the alphabet letters that follows the pattern of the ABC song. Use it as a song card or in the housekeeping center as an “eye” chart.

A B C D

E F G

H I J K

L M N O P

Q R S

T U V

W X

Y Z

a b c d

e f g

h i j k

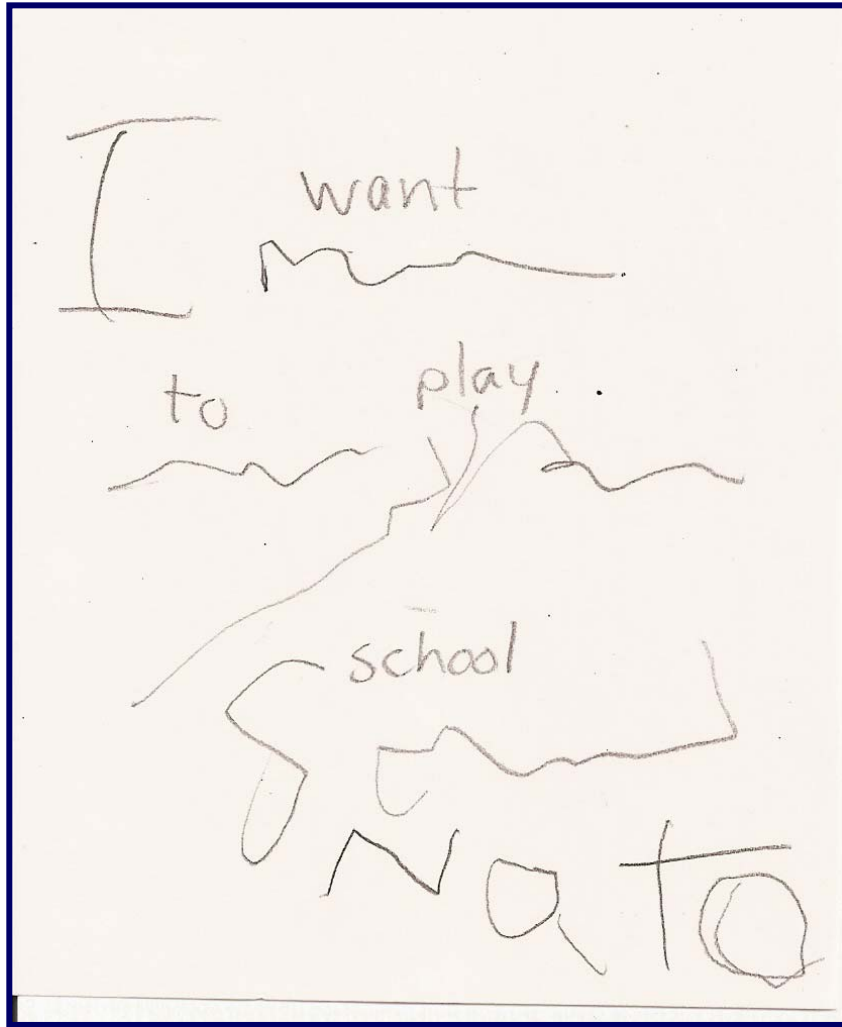
l m n o p

q r s

t u v

w x

y z



Encourage writing at the child's development al level with lots of functional opportunities to write.

Two best school-entry predictors of how well children will learn to read during the first two years of instruction



Phonemic Awareness



Letter Knowledge

National Reading Panel, 2000

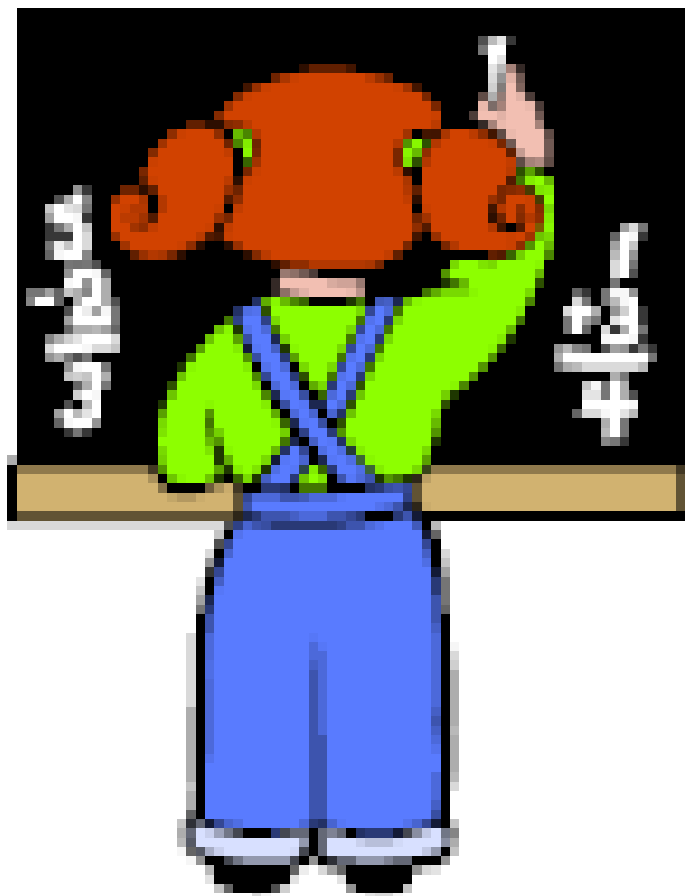


Important Experiences for Literacy Learning

- Both formal and informal interactions including:
 - Shared storybook reading
 - Interactive conversations
 - Storytelling and role-playing
 - Rhyming games and finger plays
 - Word play and games
 - Print rich materials
 - Writing opportunities
- Using Developmentally Appropriate Practice



Trends in Early Literacy



What about Early Math?

Early Academic Skills

- 2007 meta-analysis identified early math skills as an important predictor of later academic success (and discounted the importance of social and behavioral skills) (Duncan et al.).
- 2000 meta-analysis identified that school readiness depends just as much on social and emotional skills as on thinking skills.



What About Play?

- Play is vital to children's social, emotional and cognitive growth – perhaps the most important tool our children have to work through new experiences, ideas, and feelings.
- American children now spend almost twice as much time in supervised, structured settings as they did two decades ago (Hofferth and Sandburg, 2001).

What About Play?

- Children's play has become far less creative, with children mimicking what they have seen in the media, rather than coming up with it by themselves (Carlsson-Paige, 2008).
- Electronic toys often keep children learning at the surface level – telling children what to do – leading to passive learning.
- Toys such as handheld video games can easily become a substitute for social interaction.

What About Play?

- Children are absorbing media of all kinds for hours a day.
 - 8 to 18-year-olds spend an average of nearly 6½ hours per day consuming media (Roberts, Foehr, Rideout, 2005).
 - 2 to 7-year-olds average 3 hours of “screen time”
 - 68% of under the age of 2 average just over 2 hours of screen use (Kaiser survey, 2003).



Impact of “Screen Time”


- Studies have shown that TV viewing affects early brain growth and the development of social, emotional, and cognitive skills (American Academy of Pediatrics).
- There is an association between media viewing and language development in children under age 2 years (Zimmerman, Christakis, Meltzoff. 2007).

The brain is **activity-dependent**.
Neural circuits need to be consistently
activated over time to be strengthened.
Those that are rarely excited may be
dropped away.



What do we do?

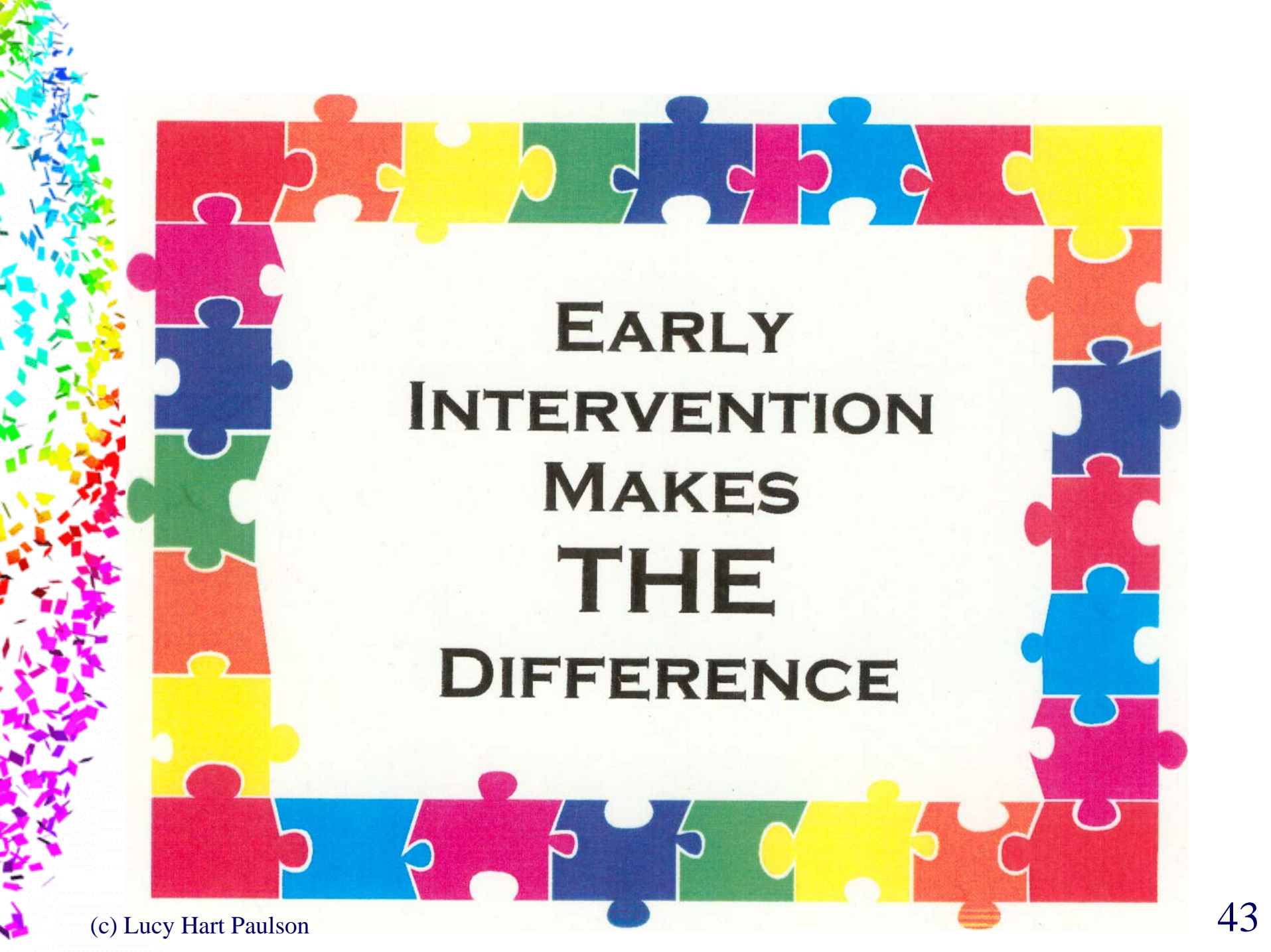




Deepen our own understanding of the processes involved in children's learning, so we can do the best job we know how.

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