

Dramatic Play

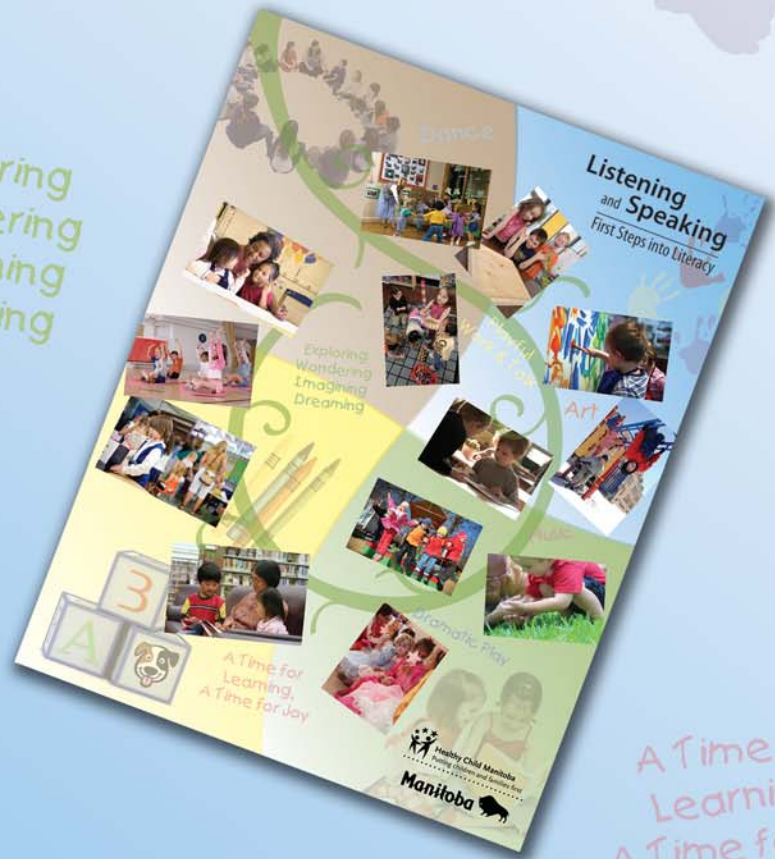
# Listening and Speaking

## First Steps into Literacy

Music

Art

Exploring  
Wondering  
Imagining  
Dreaming



A Time for Learning,  
A Time for Joy

A Support Document for  
Kindergarten Teachers and  
Speech-Language Pathologists

Playful  
Work & Talk



Healthy Child Manitoba  
Putting children and families first

Manitoba 





LISTENING AND SPEAKING:  
FIRST STEPS INTO LITERACY

A Support Document for Kindergarten  
Teachers and Speech-Language Pathologists

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### Members of the Development Team

Veronica Adams	Brandon School Division
Joanne Dumaine	Division scolaire franco-manitobaine
Carol Ferguson	Pembina Trails School Division
Carol Frisch	Prairie Spirit School Division
Leslie Goerzen	Sunrise School Division
Cori Gordon-Reid	Frontier School Division
Sharon Halldorson	Seven Oaks School Division
Brenda Margetts	Interlake School Division
Marlene McKay	Frontier School Division
Ginette Pritchard	Western School Division
Lynda Rosenstock	Manitoba Child Care Program
Sandra Samatte	Winnipeg School Division
Doreen Wood	Frontier School Division

### Members of the Pilot Team

Kim Baskerville	Park West School Division
Julie Bridgeman	Park West School Division
Nicola Cayer	Pembina Trails School Division
Beth Geisel	Turtle River School Division
Michelle Grenier	Prairie Spirit School Division
Stacey Guilford-Perrin	Western School Division
Karen Kernaghan	Seven Oaks School Division
Andrea Marginet	Prairie Spirit School Division
Cynthia McNicol	Pembina Trails School Division
Yvonne Prairie	Seven Oaks School Division
Ginette Pritchard	Western School Division

(continued)

**Members of the  
Development Team  
(continued)**

**Manitoba Education,  
Citizenship and Youth  
Staff**

School Programs Division  
and Bureau de l'éducation  
française Division

Jeannie Reid	River East Transcona School Division
Kelly Shipley-Vincent	Seven Oaks School Division
Helen Sommer	Turtle River School Division
Cathy Spack	River East Transcona School Division
Joan Bartley Project Co-leader	Development Unit Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Branch
Joanna Blais Director	Program and Student Services Branch
Lee-Ila Bothe Coordinator	Document Productions Services Educational Resources Branch
Diane Cooley Acting Director (Until March 2007)	Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Branch
Darryl Gervais Project Co-manager (From May 2007)	Development Unit Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Branch
Leslie Goerzen Project Co-leader (From Sept. 2003)	Student Services Unit Program and Student Services Branch
Claudette Laurie Consultant	Bureau de l'éducation française
Anne Longston Project Sponsor	School Programs Division
Aileen Najdich Director (From April 2007)	Development Unit Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Branch
Marjorie Poor Writer/Publications Editor	Document Productions Services Educational Resources Branch
Mark Robertson Project Co-leader (Until Sept. 2003)	Student Services Unit Program and Student Services Branch
Marilyn Taylor Project Co-manager	Student Services Unit Program and Student Services Branch
Tim Thorne-Tjomsland Manager	Student Services Unit Program and Student Services Branch

*(continued)*

**Manitoba Education,  
Citizenship and Youth  
Staff**

School Programs Division  
and Bureau de l'éducation  
française Division  
(continued)

Lindsay Walker  
Desktop Publisher

Shelley Warkentin  
Project Co-leader  
(September 2005 to  
January 2007)

Consultant  
(September 2002 to  
June 2005)

Document Productions Services  
Educational Resources Branch

Development Unit  
Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment Branch

Bureau de l'éducation française

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## PURPOSE

The purpose of *Listening and Speaking: First Steps into Literacy: A Support Document for Kindergarten Teachers and Speech-Language Pathologists* is to help Kindergarten teachers and speech-language pathologists (SLPs) enhance the **oral language**\* of all Kindergarten children within the playful **literacy** learning work and talk of the Kindergarten classroom.

This document draws together the Kindergarten teacher’s expertise in the English language arts curriculum and the speech-language pathologist’s expertise in oral language to create a common understanding in order to facilitate the oral language development of all children through **collaboration** and **classroom-based assessment** for learning (**formative assessment**).

The term “**educators**” will be used to refer to this primary audience of Kindergarten teachers and speech-language pathologists (SLPs) throughout this document, in recognition of the collaborative role both teachers and SLPs play in the **literacy-rich** Kindergarten classroom.

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\* Terms printed in bold on first use are defined in the Glossary at the end of this document.

## PHILOSOPHY OF INCLUSION

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth is committed to fostering inclusion for all people.

Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that allows every individual to feel accepted, valued, and safe. An inclusive community consciously evolves to meet the changing needs of its members. Through recognition and support, an inclusive community provides meaningful involvement and equal access to the benefits of citizenship.

In Manitoba, we embrace inclusion as a means of enhancing the well-being of every member of the community. By working together, we strengthen our capacity to provide the foundation for a richer future for all of us.

## HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This document is intended to support Kindergarten teachers and SLP in the work they already do in Kindergarten classrooms – the model proposed in *Listening and Speaking: First Steps into Literacy* is a way to help them to focus **instruction** and assessment on oral language, not a way to increase the amount of instruction or work that educators do.

*Listening and Speaking: First Steps into Literacy* is organized into the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1: The English Language Arts Learning Outcomes and the Listening and Speaking Competency Areas** – This chapter describes the English language arts general learning outcomes and how they connect and are enhanced by the five **listening and speaking competency areas** that have been identified. This chapter provides educators with the common language needed to plan for learning and to share what they learn about their students with parents and other members of the school team.
- **Chapter 2: A Model for Maximizing Listening and Speaking in the Kindergarten Classroom** – This chapter describes a model for Kindergarten classroom teachers and SLPs based on two interconnected processes: **collaboration** and **classroom-based assessment**.
- **Chapter 3: Literacy-Rich Contexts to Maximize Listening and Speaking** – This chapter provides a variety of literacy-rich **authentic learning contexts**, including both routines and instructional strategies, that focus on listening and speaking in the Kindergarten classroom.

The chapters move from a general understanding of oral language development to a particular model that allows for collaboration and classroom-based assessment, and finally to the specific learning contexts in which educators observe listening and speaking in a natural and authentic literacy-rich environment.

Each team of educators will develop in its own way and use this document accordingly. Some teams may find they already share a common understanding of the importance of oral language, but they need to learn more about working together to plan appropriate learning contexts – these teams may focus on the learning contexts provided in Chapter 3. Others may be used to working together in the classroom, but not as familiar with how learning outcomes can be assessed in terms of listening and speaking – these teams may focus more on Chapters 1 and 2.

This document includes the following additional components:

- **Blackline Masters** – This includes four blackline masters (BLMs) for use and adaptation.
- **Appendix A: Making Meaning through Oral Language: A Detailed View of the Listening and Speaking Competency Areas** – This appendix outlines the many ways children use oral language to make meaning and the diverse purposes for listening and speaking with a variety of people in a range of contexts.
- **Appendix B: Grammar Support Page** – This appendix provides information that supports the understanding of grammar in the classroom.
- **Appendix C: Phonology Support Page** – This appendix provides information that supports the understanding of phonology in the classroom.
- **Appendix D: Using *Kindergarten to Grade 4 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation to Plan for Learning and Assessment*** – This appendix focuses on determining targets for instruction and observation based on the needs of learners.
- **Appendix E: Matching Listening and Speaking Competency Areas to the Kindergarten English Language Arts Specific Learning Outcomes** – This appendix includes a chart outlining particular connections between the Kindergarten English language arts specific learning outcomes and the listening and speaking contexts that can be used to focus instruction and formative assessment.
- **Glossary** – The glossary defines terms that have been printed in **bold** throughout the document. Glossary terms are printed in bold the first time they are used.
- **Bibliography** – The bibliography provides an overview of all of the sources consulted and cited in the development of this document.



# INTRODUCTION

The Kindergarten classroom in Manitoba has a longstanding tradition of being a place for *a time for learning, a time for joy*. This philosophy of learning and teaching, based on theories of early childhood,\* is still the basis of today’s Kindergarten English language arts curriculum. Learner centredness, purposeful play, inquiry, and a natural/authentic (real-life) learning environment are planned literacy contexts for speaking and listening as children interact with their learning environment, peers, and adults to construct meaning of their world – this is indeed *a time for learning, a time for joy*.

Speaking and listening are the foundation of literacy. Literacy for emergent literacy learners, though much more complex than described here, involves two interrelated dimensions known as a set toward literacy or a “**literacy set**”:

- oral tradition (nursery rhymes, songs, chants, dance, etc.)
- book experience (gained through exposure to quality literature)

The literacy set begins to develop at birth and continues as the child interacts with parents, family, and community (Holdaway, *Foundations* 39–52, 57–59). A diversity of family and community experiences, including a variety of cultural traditions and languages, means that children arrive in Kindergarten with great differences in their literacy sets. Parents\*\* are their children’s first teachers, and educators recognize this

and build on it as they collaborate closely with the parents and the students in order to celebrate this cultural and linguistic diversity and make connections between new learning and the children’s home experiences.

“We must recognize and honor these ways of knowing as we plan instruction to meet the needs of all children.”

— Rog, *Early Literacy Instruction* 90

Some children come to Kindergarten with a rich literacy set that is evident in their listening and speaking skills.

Educators will notice that they are already meeting expectations at the outset of the Kindergarten year. However,

the Kindergarten classroom is often the place where many children will take essential first steps along their literacy learning journey. All emergent literacy learners will thrive in a supportive classroom where listening and speaking experiences are planned around opportunities for exploring language and interacting with peers, adults, and quality literature.

\* Theorists John Dewey, Maria Montessori, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky, and the Reggio Emilia approach from Italy, in Carol Garhart Mooney, 2000.

\*\* In this document, the terms “parent” and “parents” refer to parents, guardians, and caregivers. The term “parents” is used with the recognition that in some cases only one parent may be involved in a child’s education.

## The Importance of Oral Language

From birth, children engage in meaningful communication with those around them, interacting by using babbles and gestures. All children have the ability to learn language, and they begin to communicate with everyone around them, practising and rehearsing sounds and gestures and developing their personality and very sense of being. As they experience repeated situations such as mealtimes and play, they hear language associated with the situations and eventually they learn to understand and express themselves in this language (Britton; Gonzales; Fisher, 17). Young children look, listen, and talk to socialize, express needs, share ideas and feelings, and to have fun.

Learners continually use listening and speaking to explore, comprehend, and communicate ideas and feelings from early childhood into adulthood. An individual's use of listening and speaking in day-to-day living and learning is much greater than his or her use of, for example, reading and writing. Oral language is how we communicate

"Oral language is the primary foundation of literacy."

– Manitoba Education and Training, *Framework 5*.

with others in a wide range of social contexts such as playing, eating meals, shopping, et cetera. Language is all around us—in homes, in schools, in workplaces, and so on. See Appendix A: Making Meaning through Oral Language: A Detailed View of the Listening and Speaking Competency Areas for more detail.

Oral language development is key to the success of early literacy learners. Listening and speaking support the development of children's thinking and reasoning, and their reading, writing, viewing, and representing skills.

Oral and written language are intricately connected because

- spoken language is the basis for the development of reading and writing
- spoken and written language work together to develop language and literacy competence from childhood through to adulthood
- children who struggle with oral language often have difficulties with reading and writing, and children who struggle with reading and writing often have problems with oral language
- instruction in written language can develop oral language

(American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 17)

In addition, oral language is essential to collaboration and the maintenance of social relationships. If children are to be successful literacy learners in the Kindergarten classroom and beyond, they need to be capable and confident listeners and speakers.

Refocusing learning, teaching, and formative assessment in the Kindergarten classroom on oral language will better prepare learners for their future as fully literate participants in their world.

## Supporting Principles

The following concepts and processes have become supporting principles for the classroom model that is at the core of *Listening and Speaking: First Steps into Literacy* (see Chapter 2 for a description of the model):

- collaboration
- classroom-based assessment

### Collaboration

Collaboration among educators allows them to generate and share ideas and strategies and to pool resources to maximize learning experiences in the classroom. Collaboration between Kindergarten classroom teachers and speech-language pathologists, with the support of school administrators, is an important component of the model that is described in Chapter 2.

Collaboration among educators begins with parents, who, as their children's first teachers, are the school's first source of information about the children and their learning. This collaboration among educators, parents, and students will grow and change throughout the course of a child's education.

### Classroom-based Assessment

Classroom-based assessment is when educators gather information about what their students know and can do during authentic learning experiences in the classroom. This information, which is gathered over time, is used to provide descriptive feedback to students and to inform teaching. In the Kindergarten classroom, educators gain most of this information through observation of learners in literacy-rich learning/teaching contexts. Instruction can then be differentiated to meet the diverse needs of students in a class.

Effective educators believe that all students can learn. They create environments that invite students to learn, and they welcome diversity in their classrooms. Educators respond to the diverse needs of their students and ensure the success of all of their students by differentiating instruction based on their observations.

**Differentiated instruction** means offering students multiple options at each stage of the learning process. It recognizes that there are many avenues to reach student learning outcomes and that each student needs a complex and unique mix of basic instruction and practice to reach his or her potential. (Manitoba Education and Training, *Success*, 1.5)

A variety of instructional strategies (modelling, explicit instruction, guided practice, descriptive feedback, etc.) and student groupings (whole class, **interest groupings**, **co-operative groupings**, **flexible groupings**, and individual students) are used to provide individual students with the instruction, scaffolding, and practice they require to succeed in their learning.

Differentiation of instruction involves the **gradual release of responsibility**, where the responsibility for learning gradually shifts from the educators to the students. Pearson and Gallagher refer to this shift as the “gradual release of responsibility,” and they diagram how the process works in their “Model of Explicit Instruction.” Educators introduce a learning strategy with explicit instruction and modelling, followed by guided student practice with teacher feedback, and eventually leading to independent student application of the skill or strategy. In the beginning, instruction is educator led, then instruction is shared/negotiated by the educator and the student, and finally, instruction is student led.

See *Kindergarten to Grade 4 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation*, Overview–20–21, and *Success for All Learners: A Handbook on Differentiating Instruction*, 6.4.



## CHAPTER 1

### The English Language Arts Learning Outcomes and the Listening and Speaking Competency Areas



# CHAPTER 1: THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE LISTENING AND SPEAKING COMPETENCY AREAS

English language arts (ELA) in the Kindergarten classroom is largely about listening and speaking, and this chapter describes how the listening and speaking strands can be enhanced by focusing on oral language.

## English Language Arts General Learning Outcomes

The six language arts—listening, speaking, viewing, representing, reading, and writing—are integrated throughout all five English language arts general learning outcomes (GLOs); listening and speaking are two of the six language arts. (To ensure that literacy instruction is balanced, Kindergarten teachers will refer to *Kindergarten to Grade 4 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation*.)

The five ELA GLOs are as follows:

- GLO 1: Students will listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent to explore thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences.
- GLO 2: Students will listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent to comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, literary, and media **texts**.
- GLO 3: Students will listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent to manage ideas and information.
- GLO 4: Students will listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent to enhance the clarity and artistry of communication.
- GLO 5: Students will listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent to celebrate and to build community.

Key to all of these English language arts learning outcomes is the making of meaning through language. In the Early Years, much of this making of meaning is through oral language, that is, through listening and speaking. Children make meaning through play and interaction as they explore their home, their classroom, and their community, as they talk with their family, classmates, and others in the school and community, and as they share ideas, feelings, and experiences and make connections with others and the world around them.

## Listening and Speaking Competency Areas

A development team of Kindergarten teachers and speech-language pathologists worked together to look in more depth at how oral language connects to the ELA curriculum. They identified five listening and speaking competency areas that reflect current speech-language literature and early childhood literacy sources\* and that can be seen in the ELA GLOs: conversation, grammar, oral stories, phonology, and vocabulary.

These listening and speaking competency areas can be stated in detail:

- Conversation—Making meaning through conversation occurs when children engage with communication partners and exchange shared meaningful and relevant ideas and information.
- Grammar\*—Making meaning through grammar occurs when children understand and use the rule system of a language to enhance comprehension and clarity of communication.
- Oral Stories—Making meaning through oral stories occurs when children listen to, create, and share connected ideas and experiences.
- Phonology\*—Making meaning through the phonological system of language occurs when children think about and use sounds in oral language.
- Vocabulary—Making meaning through vocabulary occurs when children use and understand words to describe, explain, comprehend, and categorize.

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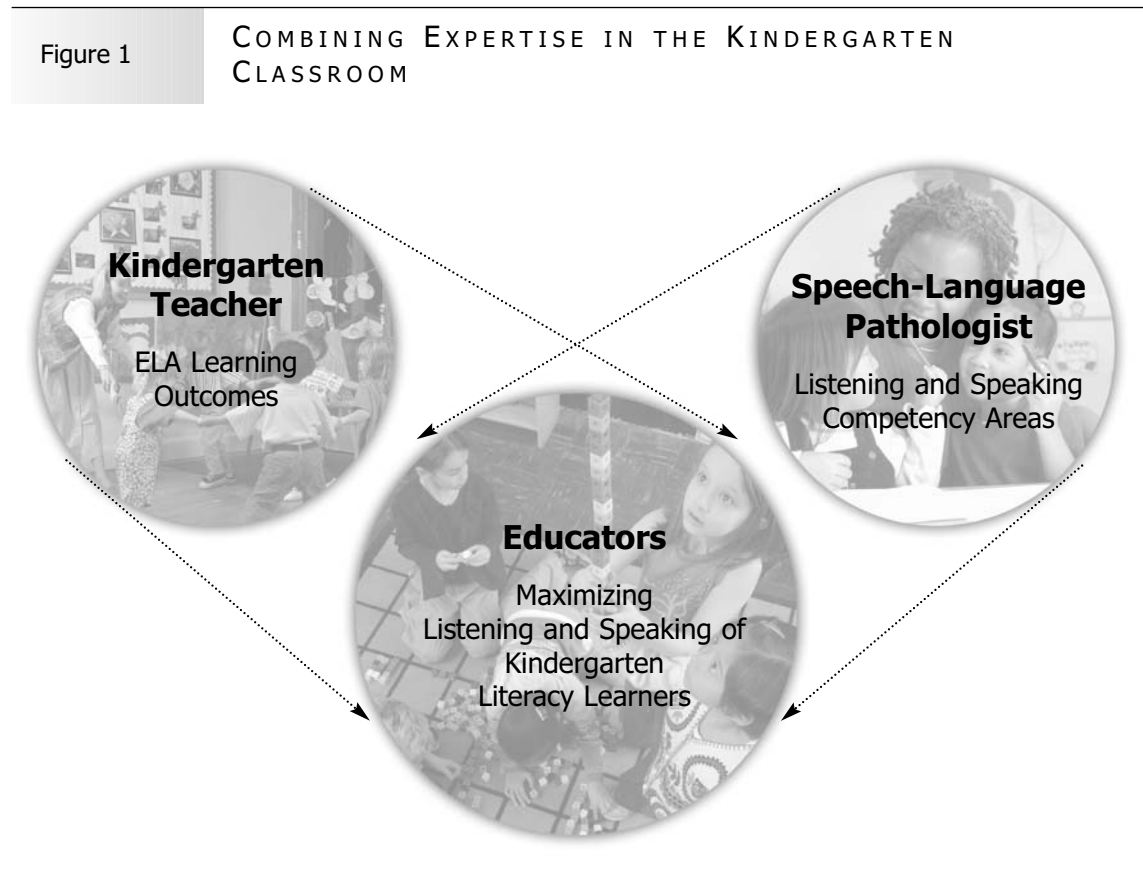
[\*Barnes; Barrs, et al; Bloom and Lahey; Education Department of Western Australia; Halliday; Holdaway; Piaget, Montessori, Vygotsky, and Dewey in Mooney]

\* See Appendix B: Grammar Support Page and Appendix C: Phonology Support Page for information to support an understanding of these concepts in the classroom.



## Combining to Maximize

In this resource, the ELA GLOs are brought together with the listening and speaking competency areas to extend and enrich the listening and speaking strands of the ELA curriculum and therefore the literacy learning in the Kindergarten classroom. The diagram below shows how the expertise of the classroom teacher and the speech-language pathologist combine to maximize the listening and speaking of Kindergarten students.



The following insert describes this enhancement in the context of the daily life of the Kindergarten literacy learner:



**GLO 1: Explore thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences.**

Kindergarten children bring their personal experiences, cultural diversity, various languages, and a literacy set (Holdaway, 1978) to their school learning community. Through planned and spontaneous oral interaction with others, these emergent learners extend their understanding about who they are as literacy learners and take ownership for their literacy learning journey.



**GLO 2: Comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, literary, and media texts.**

Emergent literacy learners experience quality literature through read alouds, shared reading, and their own choices of texts to explore, make connections, and share with others. Kindergarten children naturally respond to various texts through talk, play, and the arts.



**GLO 3: Manage ideas and information.**

Inquiry is the child's natural curiosity to explore the nature of things; in the Kindergarten classroom, this is all about listening and speaking. Hands-on, minds-on, talk-about experiences with peers and adult guidance stimulate deeper and creative thinking to solve problems and develop new understandings and questions.



**GLO 4: Enhance the clarity and artistry of communication.**

Through various modes of communication, including the arts, emergent literacy learners share with/perform for a real audience their "voice," stories, and ideas which reflect their everyday lives and the quality literature that they are experiencing.



**GLO 5: Celebrate and build community.**

Children build confidence and learn who they are within their classroom learning community through speaking and listening with others. Co-operation, respect, and diversity are celebrated frequently in the Kindergarten classroom.

Thus, when oral language becomes the focus for making meaning in a literacy-rich Kindergarten classroom, listening and speaking are an integral part of the playful meaning making that we "see and hear" throughout the daily life of the emergent literacy learner.

## Specific Learning Outcomes and Competency Descriptors

Like the ELA learning outcomes, the listening and speaking competency areas are also integral to all learning contexts and may be the focus for instruction and formative assessment. Whether educators choose to focus on ELA learning outcomes or listening and speaking competency areas, they will be uncovering the ELA curriculum and enriching the listening and speaking skills of emergent literacy learners. The term “targets” will refer to the clustering of appropriate listening and speaking competency descriptors and/or ELA specific learning outcomes. These targets, determined by the needs of learners, are the focus for planned playful learning, instruction, and formative assessment within the daily work and talk of Kindergarten students. Appendix D gives an example to show this clustering of outcomes from GLO 3 in the *Kindergarten to Grade 4 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation* to focus observation. (See Appendix D and the PowerPoint tutorial on the Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth website at <[www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/ela/](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/ela/)> for more information about determining targets.)

Determining targets (learning outcomes and/or competency areas) for instruction and **focused observation** is based on the learning needs and inquiry of children. Rather than using the targets as a checklist or a means of covering content, educators identify the appropriate targets that specific children will need to develop enduring understandings. This facilitates an inquiry approach for both educators and children—educators gain a deeper understanding of what each learner knows and can do in order to plan next steps, and children explore, question, construct, discover, and infer meaning to deepen their understanding of their world and to pose new questions. Targets change from the beginning of the year to the middle of the year to the end of the year, as the learners move toward end-of-year outcomes.

Just as the ELA general learning outcomes are broken down into specific learning outcomes for each grade level, including Kindergarten, so can the five listening and speaking competency areas be broken down into more specific, observable descriptors. The chart on the next page (Figure 2: Competency Descriptors for Listening and Speaking) outlines these descriptors—how educators see and hear listening and speaking in the Kindergarten classroom.

Because Kindergarten students develop and grow so quickly, like the growth of a flower in a single season, this document uses the terms “sprouting,” “budding,” and “blooming”: “sprouting” refers to the children who need ongoing help to meet expectations, “budding” refers to the children who need guidance to meet expectations, and “blooming” refers to the children who are meeting expectations at the end of Kindergarten. “Sprouting” and “budding” are growing toward those end-of-year expectations. Children grow and develop at different rates within and across competency areas. Any one child could demonstrate a variety of abilities; for example, a child may be sprouting as far as initiating a conversation goes, but be budding in terms of following directions.

Figure 2

## COMPETENCY DESCRIPTORS FOR LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Competency Areas	Needs ongoing help "Sprouting"	Needs guidance to meet expectations "Budding"	Meets year-end expectations "Blooming"
<b>Conversation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>initiates or responds in a one-to-one conversation for one turn with certain partners</li> <li>uses non-verbal and/or verbal language to get things, to direct others, and/or to have fun</li> <li>with <b>prompting</b>, follows one-step directions</li> <li>uses non-verbal and/or verbal language to communicate physical feelings; non-verbally communicates emotions</li> <li>non-verbally participates in group discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>initiates, maintains, and/or closes a one-to-one conversation with familiar partners</li> <li>with <b>prompting</b>, uses language to gain information, to get things, to direct others; to comment on the world, and to have fun</li> <li>with <b>prompting</b>, follows a sequence of two- to three-step directions</li> <li>with <b>prompting</b>, uses language to communicate physical and emotional feelings</li> <li>verbally participates in group discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>initiates, maintains, and closes a one-to-one conversation with a variety of partners</li> <li>uses language appropriately to gain information, to get things, to direct others; to comment on the world, and to have fun</li> <li>follows a sequence of three-or-more-step directions</li> <li>uses language to communicate physical and emotional feelings</li> <li>uses language to demonstrate an understanding of the feelings of others</li> <li>verbally participates in group discussions appropriately and spontaneously</li> </ul>
<b>Grammar*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>produces a variety of grammatically simple sentences</li> <li>with <b>prompting</b>, responds to questions and directives</li> <li>demonstrates basic word-building concepts (suffixes such as <i>-ed</i>, <i>-s</i>, <i>-ing</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>produces a variety of grammatically simple and complex sentences</li> <li>with <b>prompting</b>, consistently responds appropriately to questions and directives</li> <li>demonstrates word-building concepts (prefixes and suffixes such as <i>un-</i>, <i>re-</i>, <i>-er</i>, <i>-ed</i>, <i>-s</i>, <i>-ing</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>spontaneously produces a wide variety of grammatically simple and complex sentences</li> <li>consistently responds appropriately to questions and directives</li> <li>demonstrates a wide variety of word-building concepts</li> </ul>
<b>Oral Stories</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tells incomplete stories</li> <li>tells <b>or</b> listens to experiences of others</li> <li>describes one step in a process or sequence</li> <li>non-verbally responds to oral stories/read alouds</li> <li>with <b>prompting</b>, may demonstrate active listening to stories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>with <b>prompting</b>, tells a <b>story</b> that makes sense</li> <li>with <b>prompting</b>, tells and listens to experiences of self and others</li> <li>with <b>prompting</b>, describes a two- or three-step process in sequence</li> <li>with <b>prompting</b>, verbally responds to oral stories/read alouds</li> <li>with <b>prompting</b>, consistently demonstrates active listening to stories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tells a complete story that makes sense</li> <li>tells and listens to experiences of self and others</li> <li>describes a two- or three-step process in sequence</li> <li>verbally responds to oral stories/read alouds</li> <li>consistently demonstrates active listening to stories</li> </ul>
<b>Phonology*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates some awareness of the sounds of language (i.e., rhyming)</li> <li>articulation/sound production is developing with help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>plays with sounds of language in teacher-directed activities (i.e., rhyming, alliteration, and discrimination games)</li> <li>articulation/sound production is developmentally appropriate (<i>r</i>, <i>l</i>, <i>th</i>, <i>s</i> sounds may be developing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creatively plays with the sounds of language</li> <li>speaks intelligibly</li> </ul>
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beginning to recognize subject area/topic/theme vocabulary</li> <li>beginning to recognize words to describe concepts/ideas</li> <li>beginning to recognize <i>same</i>, <i>similar</i>, and/or <i>different</i></li> <li>beginning to recognize categories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recognizes and, with <b>prompting</b>, uses subject area/topic/theme vocabulary</li> <li>recognizes and, with <b>prompting</b>, uses words to describe concepts/ideas</li> <li>recognizes and, with <b>prompting</b>, demonstrates <i>same</i>, <i>similar</i>, and/or <i>different</i></li> <li>recognizes and, with <b>prompting</b>, names categories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recognizes and uses subject area/topic/theme vocabulary</li> <li>recognizes and uses words to describe concepts/ideas</li> <li>explains <i>same</i>, <i>similar</i>, and/or <i>different</i></li> <li>recognizes, names, and describes categories</li> </ul>

\* See Appendix B: Grammar Support Page and Appendix C: Phonology Support Page for information about these concepts.

To see the relationships among the listening and speaking competency descriptors and the 56 ELA specific learning outcomes and how they connect in the Kindergarten classroom, see

- Chapter 3: Literacy-Rich Learning Contexts to Maximize Listening and Speaking
- Appendix E: Matching Listening and Speaking Competency Areas to the Kindergarten English Language Arts Specific Learning Outcomes

While there are not direct correspondences between particular ELA specific learning outcomes and particular listening and speaking descriptors, they are interconnected. The targets for quality instruction, learning, and assessment are clustered within literacy-rich learning contexts planned to maximize listening and speaking skills, strategies, and attitudes for all Kindergarten learners, whether they may be described as “sprouting,” “budding,” or “blooming.”





## CHAPTER 2

### A Model for Maximizing Listening and Speaking in the Kindergarten Classroom





## CHAPTER 2: A MODEL FOR MAXIMIZING LISTENING AND SPEAKING IN THE KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM

Kindergarten classrooms buzz with talk, and in the model that follows, educators build on that natural oral language to enhance the listening and speaking of their learners. *Listening and Speaking: First Steps into Literacy* promotes a flexible learning/teaching situation where Kindergarten teachers and speech-language pathologists (SLPs) collaborate to

- plan rich and meaningful classroom literacy learning environments and contexts
- observe what the children know, feel, and can do in relation to listening and speaking
- reflect on their observations and instruction
- use observations and reflections to differentiate instruction

Even if this flexible collaborative situation cannot be attained, the key process of classroom-based assessment will ensure that every child has an opportunity to develop optimal competence in listening and speaking.

The model described here is based on two interconnected processes: collaboration and classroom-based assessment.

### Collaboration

Collaboration is a process that develops and deepens over time. The specific structure that the collaboration among educators takes depends on the needs and resources of particular schools, classrooms, and individuals. The model for maximizing listening and speaking in the Kindergarten classroom that follows promotes the collaboration of

Criteria for successful teaming include

- open, effective communication
- administrative support
- trust and sharing
- belief in a common goal
- understanding roles
- flexibility
- organization
- commitment
- extended thinking

(Bubnowicz and Halldorson)

Kindergarten teachers and SLPs, who work together to provide opportunities to maximize the listening and speaking, and ultimately the literacy learning, of children in the Kindergarten classroom.

Kindergarten teachers and SLPs together with the students and parents make up the main “team” – other educators such as school administrators, resource teachers, student services administrators, divisional consultants, and so on may also be part of the collaborative team. Classroom teachers and SLPs will consider their own situations and structure their particular teams themselves, based on what will work for them.

Collaboration between the classroom teacher and the SLP will vary from division to division, school to school, and classroom to classroom. Ideally, they will have opportunities to share in a classroom-based assessment process and to plan and reflect on their observations together. Meetings/discussions for the purposes of planning and reflection may be very informal as educators pass in the hallway or chat while children are entering or leaving the classroom. Discussions can also be via telephone or email – the key is to be in contact, in whatever way works.

Collaborative relationships are fluid – relationships shift depending on the students, the staffing, the time period, et cetera. People move closer to each other or may move farther apart, depending on circumstances. As a result, team members need to be flexible and they need to communicate openly and effectively.

The Kindergarten teacher is responsible for the learning and teaching in the classroom, but collaboration with the speech-language pathologist provides greater expertise for meeting the needs of all Kindergarten learners. For effective collaboration, educators need to plan how and when to work together, ideally with the support of school administrators. Planning often begins in the spring for the following school year, as soon as educators meet their future students and their parents.

The collaborative process outlined in this chapter draws on the expertise of the educators, and focuses on the listening and speaking of emergent/developing literacy learners in the context of an authentic Kindergarten learning environment. When Kindergarten teachers and SLPs share their professional knowledge and use it to differentiate instruction, Kindergarten children have greater opportunities to develop as competent listeners and speakers. In addition, the educators will gain insight from one another about the children’s competence in oral language and how best to enhance it.

## Classroom-based Assessment

Classroom-based assessment is a cyclic process within everyday instruction and learning that encompasses ongoing planning, observing, scaffolding, responding, and reflecting on learning and teaching to improve student learning.

Classroom-based assessment is formative (assessment for learning). Educators create various authentic literacy-rich contexts that will expose children’s thinking and learning in order to relate their observations to the intended learning targets – the listening and speaking competency descriptors and the ELA specific learning outcomes. (See Chapter 1: The English Language Arts Learning Outcomes and the Listening and Speaking Competency Areas.) These specific learning outcomes and competency descriptors will be referred to as “targets” in this chapter, that is, the targets for learning, teaching, and formative assessment.

Key characteristics of classroom-based assessment in the Kindergarten classroom are

- observation
- record keeping
- differentiated instruction

## Observation

Observation has always been the main method of assessing learning in the Kindergarten classroom. Educators continually and purposefully observe their children as they go about their daily routines and learning experiences – as they enter the classroom, participate in whole-class circle time, make their choices and group for learning centres/work stations, eat their snacks, engage in purposeful play, prepare to leave, and so on.

When educators observe children in a variety of learning contexts over time, they learn about the children’s strengths and any areas that need support and development. They use this knowledge to inform their planning and instruction.

Observation ranges from noticing to keeping records of observations, that is, from passing observation to focused observation.

Educators make numerous passing observations as they work with children throughout the day. In fact, observation throughout the phases of learning (activating, acquiring, applying) allows educators to flexibly and fluidly support children in their learning.

Educators are not observing all children at the same time but are selecting children to observe over a period of time and in a variety of planned whole class and small group (interest, co-operative, and flexible groupings) literacy-rich learning contexts. Depending on students’ needs, some students will be selected for observation more frequently than others.

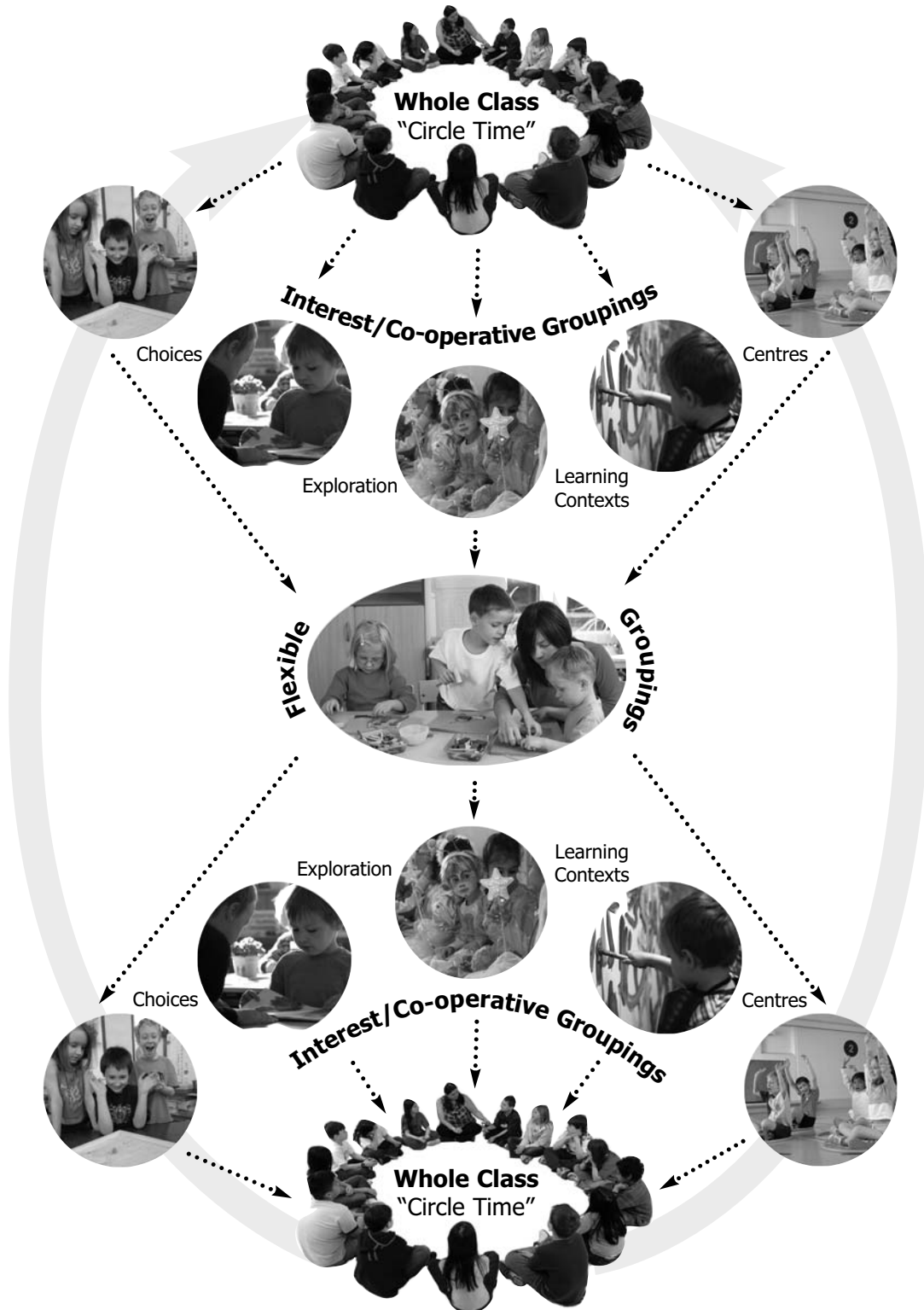
The following figure diagrams a cycle of instruction/observation and the transitions among a variety of groupings within the daily life of a Kindergarten classroom. This learning/teaching/assessment process may occur over months, over a week, over the course of a day, or even within minutes during the activity of the busy Kindergarten classroom.

“The purpose of kidwatching is to help children build their capabilities to use language to communicate and learn. Teachers achieve this by inquiring into who children are, what they know, what they can do, and how they learn. Because some knowledge is evident in children’s daily language and actions, kidwatchers are always observing with a watchful, reflective eye. Because other knowledge lies beneath the surface, kidwatchers transact with children and their families to unearth what else is there. Teachers make these efforts in order to support children as they build upon their existing literacy knowledge and practices . . .”

(Owocki and Goodman, 14)

Figure 3

AN ENVIRONMENT FOR CLASSROOM-BASED ASSESSMENT



Focused observation is purposeful and systematic. Planning for focused observation includes the following steps:

1. Review the listening and speaking competency areas and how they relate to the learning outcomes. *What do we want our students to know, be able to do, and feel about themselves as literacy learners?*
2. Identify two or three children for focused observation. *Who do we need to know more about?*
3. Select one or two targets for instruction/assessment.\* *What do we need to look for?*
4. Plan learning contexts (see Chapter 3) in which to observe the children. *Where and when will we observe?*
5. Determine how to record observations of children's learning over time. *How will we monitor learning over time?* (See below.)

## Record Keeping

In order to **monitor** children's learning over time and to plan for differentiation, educators need to maintain dated observational records of behaviours and **verbatim** speech samples. These need to be kept simple and time-efficient. Each educator will have a preferred way to manage record keeping and school divisions may have policies regarding record keeping.

The section Blackline Masters provides record-keeping templates to use and/or adapt. The templates are meant to be adapted to suit particular educators' needs, not to be followed in a prescribed way.

### Tips for Anecdotal Record Keeping

- Date observations for reference.
- Record the context/learning experience.
- Record observable behaviours/**verbatim** speech.
- Use significant abbreviations.
- Support records with student examples (e.g., video clips, images, art work) as evidence.  
(Boyd-Batstone, 233; Manitoba Education and Youth, *Independent Together*)

\* See Figure 2: Competency Descriptors for Listening and Speaking, Individual Student Profile BLM, Appendix E, and/or *Kindergarten to Grade 4 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation*.

## Differentiating Instruction

Educators plan their whole classroom around differentiating instruction – this differentiation is the life of the Kindergarten classroom.

For more information on differentiating instruction, see Manitoba Education documents *Success for All Learners and Independent Together*.

After making observations and discussing/reflecting on what their observations might mean for classroom instruction, educators use what they've learned as the basis for differentiating learning opportunities in the Kindergarten classroom. Differentiation is done by planning for a variety of groupings, instructional strategies, and resources, and tailoring them to the needs of particular children. In the

Kindergarten classroom, this could mean directing certain children to the dramatic play centre to encourage conversation and the use of body language, or grouping particular children together for chanting poetry or singing songs to work on articulating certain sounds.

In general, educators differentiate at least three curricular elements: content, process, and product. Learning opportunities may be simple or complex; tasks may be highly structured or open-ended; students might work independently or as part of a group. Students may show their learning by talking about what they have learned, by demonstrating a new skill, or by making something. The intent of differentiating instruction is to maximize each student's growth and individual success by meeting each student where he or she is and assisting in the learning process.

Differentiated instruction "means a method of instruction or assessment that alters the presentation of the curriculum for the purpose of responding to the learning diversity, interests and strengths of pupils."

— *The Public Schools Act*,  
Appropriate Educational  
Programming Regulation  
155/2005.

## Putting It All Together: A Model for Maximizing Listening and Speaking

In the model outlined here, the processes of classroom-based assessment and collaboration between Kindergarten teachers and speech-language pathologists combine to enhance the oral language development of learners.

Although the model is described here in a step-by-step fashion, the following phases may be fluid and dynamic within the various team situations:

- Starting Out
- Getting Acquainted
- Planning for a Variety of Learners
- Adjusting for/Learning about Specific Learners
- Monitoring Specific Learners
- Reflecting on a Classroom of Learners/Planning for a Variety of Learners

The model is cyclic—observation begins and ends within a whole class instructional context. As time progresses, Kindergarten children explore, inquire, and learn in smaller interest, co-operative, and flexible groupings. The *Starting Out* and *Getting Acquainted* phases depict the outset of the school year, but the other four phases recur with variations as the cycle repeats throughout the Kindergarten year.

## Starting Out

The Starting Out phase begins as soon as educators meet their students and their parents—in many cases this is in the spring term at the time of Kindergarten registration or during community wellness fairs, and in other cases it could be during classroom visits or orientations promoted by the schools. The collaboration between the Kindergarten teacher and the SLP begins, as they share information about the children and begin to develop and/or extend their common understanding of oral language in the Kindergarten classroom. They also start to think about and plan how to design a literacy-rich learning environment to maximize listening and speaking for this group of learners. They ask themselves reflective questions such as *What have we already learned that can help us plan a literacy-rich learning environment for this class?*

## Getting Acquainted

Once students arrive at the Kindergarten classroom in the fall, educators immediately begin to observe and interact with the children, gathering formative assessment information about what the learners know, feel, and can do. During the first days and weeks of school, educators get to know their students by observing the children during class routines, with their parents during drop-off and pick-up times, with other children at recess, and so on. At the very beginning of the school year, Kindergarten teachers and SLPs reflect on what they know, make/revisit their plan, and book classroom and meeting times together. They ask themselves reflective questions such as *What have we already learned that can help us plan a literacy-rich learning environment/contexts for this class? What do we see and hear in our class in terms of listening and speaking?*

## Planning for a Variety of Learners

See Chapter 3 for suggestions for Literacy-Rich Learning Contexts to Maximize Listening and Speaking and *Success for All Learners: A Handbook on Differentiating Instruction* for more information about and strategies for differentiating instruction.

Educators will focus observations on targets (specific learning outcomes and/or listening and speaking competency descriptors), selecting two to three individuals to observe in smaller groupings as the children explore, discover, and go about their work at various authentic learning experiences: a classroom routine such as watering the plants, a planned learning centre/workstation such as mathematics inquiry, and/or during a flexible grouping such as modelling story telling at the art centre. Educators ask themselves reflective questions such as *How do we meet the needs of a variety of emergent/beginning literacy learners?*

## Learning about Particular Learners

During the daily learning experiences, educators may note a small number of children who display a variety of listening and speaking needs. Educators make adjustments to learning experiences in order to re-visit these particular individuals in a small flexible grouping for further instruction and observation focused on more specific targets. They ask themselves reflective questions such as *What are particular learners' strengths, and what learning gaps are emerging?*

## Monitoring Particular Learners

Once educators have worked with particular learners in a flexible grouping, they then observe them back in their interest and/or co-operative learning groups to add to the formative assessment information they have gathered and to clarify their earlier observations. Together, the Kindergarten teacher and the SLP continue to plan their next steps for providing an appropriate learning environment – they might use a tool such as the Maximizing Listening and Speaking Action Plan BLM. They ask themselves reflective questions such as *How will we plan next steps to maximize listening and speaking skills and strategies for particular learners?*

## Reflecting on a Classroom of Learners/Planning for a Variety of Learners

Finally, educators return to the whole class for general observation and reflection. By the end of the cycle, the educators will have gathered a variety of formative assessment information to reflect on and to inform further planning to meet individual needs (that is, to differentiate learning). They ask themselves reflective questions such as *How will we plan and tailor the learning environment to differentiate learning opportunities and ensure the success of all learners?*

Notice that the “Reflecting on a Class of Learners/Planning for a Variety of Learners” phase is the culmination of the observation cycle, and it is also the outset of the next cycle. The cycle is recursive; it responds to learners’ needs and revisits targets for instruction and observation throughout the Kindergarten year.

Figure 4 charts the elements of the various phases, with arrows indicating the dynamics of the cycle.



Figure 4

A MODEL FOR MAXIMIZING LISTENING AND SPEAKING THROUGH COLLABORATION IN THE KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM

		Phase					
		Starting Out	Getting Acquainted	Planning for a Variety of Learners	Learning about Particular Learners	Monitoring Particular Learners	Reflecting on a Classroom of Learners/ Planning for a Variety of Learners
<b>Purpose</b>	Prior to fall term Gather formative information to plan/design the Kindergarten learning environment.	First days/weeks of school Gather formative information to plan/design learning and teaching contexts.	Gather formative information to differentiate instruction.	Work with particular learners to seek a deeper understanding of them to gather more formative information in different contexts at different times.	Clarify earlier observations by augmenting formative information about particular learners.	Begin/revise a class profile (see BLM). Plan/design learning and teaching contexts (see Chapter 3 and Success for All Learners) to differentiate learning. Begin/revise Student Action Plans for particular learners.	
<b>Grouping</b>	Whole class	Whole class	Interest groupings or co-operative groupings	Flexible groupings	Interest groupings or co-operative groupings	Whole class	
<b>Focus for Observation</b>	Overview of listening and speaking competency areas	One or two general listening and speaking competency areas and/or ELA GLOs	One or two general listening and speaking competency areas/ELA GLOs or descriptors/ ELA SLOs (targets)	One to three specific descriptors/ELA SLOs (targets)	One to three specific descriptors/ELA SLOs (same as previous targets or new, depending on areas of strengths and challenges)	One or two general listening and speaking competency areas and/or ELA GLOs	
<b>Sources of Information Contexts for Learning/Observing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wellness fairs</li> <li>classroom visits</li> <li>parent interviews and/or surveys</li> <li>school/divisional orientations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>open house</li> <li>staggered entry</li> <li>parent drop off/pick up</li> <li>classroom routines</li> <li>groups to introduce centres/stations</li> </ul>	Routines and learning centres/ work stations (see Chapter 3 and Success for All Learners)	Extended or adjusted versions of previous learning centres/work stations	Return to the contexts in the Planning for a Variety of Learners phase.	Literacy-Rich Contexts to Maximize Listening and Speaking (see Chapter 3 and Success for All Learners)	
<b>Collaboration and Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin to develop or extend a common understanding of listening and speaking competency areas and ELA learning outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make or revisit a plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grow as a team through team planning and reflections.</li> <li>Collaborate and share in planning, instructing, and observing the classroom groupings.</li> <li>Continue to meet to plan and reflect.</li> </ul>	Collaborative structures depend on divisional, school, classroom, and student needs.			
<b>Team Reflections</b>	What have we already learned that can help us plan a literacy-rich learning environment/context for this class? What do we see and hear in our class in terms of listening and speaking?	How do we meet the needs of a variety of emergent/beginning literacy learners?	What are particular learners' strengths, and what learning gaps are emerging?	How will we plan next steps to maximize listening and speaking skills and strategies for particular learners?	How will we plan and tailor the learning environment to differentiate learning opportunities and ensure the success of all learners?		

When educators plan and work collaboratively – focusing their observations on listening and speaking targets, reflecting upon their observations, and differentiating learning – children’s oral language skills and strategies are firmly established. Kindergarten children who have experienced an enriched oral language environment will have greater opportunities for success in all of the language arts (viewing, representing, listening, speaking, reading, and writing) throughout their schooling and as lifelong learners – listening and speaking are the foundation for literacy and learning.



## CHAPTER 3

### Literacy-Rich Learning Contexts to Maximize Listening and Speaking

- Routines
- Music
- Dramatic Play
- Language Experience
- Learning Centres/Work Stations
- Student-Created Wordless Picture Books
- Stop, Look, Listen, Think, Respond
- Read Aloud/Shared Reading
- Guided Imagery and Movement
- Personal Response
- Author/Illustrator



## CHAPTER 3: LITERACY-RICH LEARNING CONTEXTS TO MAXIMIZE LISTENING AND SPEAKING

“Early childhood educational programs of the future should increasingly provide ongoing opportunities for children to make choices, to express themselves in words and actions, and to learn to trust and respect themselves and others. All this can be accomplished through a rich and active play life.”

– Gibson and Manitoba  
Department of Education, 1

Kindergarten classrooms are busy and buzzing places, with a wide variety of learning experiences going on. Children learn through play, and the classroom environment offers them choices and opportunities to play with others using all kinds of materials (e.g., sand, water, clay, paint, etc.) and equipment (e.g., musical instruments, balls, etc.) in spaces that evoke their imagination, letting them play in fantasy worlds of castles, forests, offices, outer space, kitchens, ships, or wherever. During all of this play and learning, children look, listen, and talk, and it is essential that educators maximize listening and speaking by providing literacy-rich learning contexts for their Kindergarten learners.

As stated earlier in this resource, when educators (Kindergarten teachers and speech-language pathologists) collaborate within the Kindergarten classroom, this combined expertise will also maximize children’s listening and speaking. As educators observe and reflect on what learners know, feel, and can do, they will be able to both plan for and respond to opportunities that enhance learning for all children within the classroom.

The following learning contexts for facilitating and maximizing oral language development reflect specific characteristics of effective practices. Each one provides opportunities for

- joyful play
- recognizing and supporting cultural and linguistic diversity in the classroom
- enriching the five English language arts general learning outcomes with the integration of the listening and speaking competency areas
- clustering the ELA SLOs and the listening and speaking descriptors to uncover curriculum
- engaging in authentic classroom-based assessment that is seamless with instruction
- differentiating instruction for students with a variety of needs
- engaging all students in listening and speaking in a supportive and literacy-rich learning environment
- a variety of groupings (whole class, small groups – interest, co-operative, and flexible groupings – and occasionally individual)
- spontaneous talk
- student-initiated choices and inquiry
- developing multiple intelligences

“According to Montessori, knowing how to arrange an interesting, beautiful environment for children is as much a part of teaching as knowing how to select fine children’s books for the library.”

– Mooney, 27

- a variety of entry points for teacher-led, shared or negotiated, and student-led instruction as described in the gradual release of responsibility (see Glossary and *Kindergarten to Grade 4 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation, Overview-20-21*)
- offering explore time/think time/wait time

The following learning contexts are not a comprehensive list of all of the learning contexts in the Kindergarten section of *Kindergarten to Grade 4 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation* (suggested in column 2) that could be used to develop oral language; instead, the following learning contexts (including strategies and routines) are intended to show educators how to focus on the development of listening and speaking.

Many of these learning contexts are already familiar to educators—the difference proposed here is one of perspective, with an emphasis on developing learners’ abilities to listen and speak. The idea is not to add to what is already being done, but to focus it differently. Educators may also apply the same assumptions to focus their own favourite learning contexts and experiences on listening and speaking.

Each suggested learning context has been explained in detail from the perspective of oral language development—through the listening/speaking lens, so to speak. The following components are included:

- **Targets** for instruction and observation/assessment—The suggested targets for instruction and observation at the outset of each learning context show the connection between the listening and speaking competency descriptors and the ELA specific learning outcomes. When educators select two to three targets relevant to the

All learning centres/work stations need to begin with teacher modelling and time to discuss and set learning or behavioural criteria. Depending upon individual learning needs, some students will require more support in co-operation and engagement than others. Routines, criteria, groupings, and accessible resources are integral to classroom management.

needs of their learners, they will also be uncovering curriculum. (See Chapter 1: The English Language Arts Learning Outcomes and the Listening and Speaking Competency Areas.) Note that the specific learning outcomes listed for each learning context may have been shortened for brevity and to fit the learning context (i.e., parts of the SLO may have been omitted).

- Description of the learning context (including routines and strategies)
- Language facilitative tips
- Think about . . . suggestions for observation/assessment
- BLMs

The following literacy-rich learning contexts for maximizing listening and speaking (including routines and strategies) are suggestions for educators, not a definitive manual on implementation.

The learning contexts are formatted so that each can be pulled out for individual reference—this means there is a certain amount of repetition of common elements such as the “Think about” sections. Page numbers throughout this chapter refer to *Kindergarten to Grade 4 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation*.

## Routines

### Targets for Instruction and Observation/Assessment

Specific Learning Outcomes:	Listening and Speaking Competency Descriptors:
<p>1.1.1 Talk about personal experiences.</p> <p>1.1.2 Listen to experiences and feelings shared by others.</p> <p>1.1.5 Talk about reading and writing stories.</p> <p>3.1.2 Ask questions to satisfy personal curiosity and information needs.</p> <p>3.1.4 Choose different ways to gather information and ideas; recall directions.</p> <p>4.4.3 Demonstrate active listening and viewing skills and strategies.</p> <p>5.2.1 Participate in co-operative group activities.</p> <p>5.2.2 Demonstrate attentiveness in group activities.</p> <p>5.2.3 Recognize variations in language use at home, on the playground, and in the classroom.</p> <p>5.2.4 Find ways to be helpful to others and use group process.</p>	<p><b>Conversation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Use language appropriately to gain information, to get things, to direct others, to comment on the world, and to have fun.</li><li>Follow a sequence of three-or-more-step directions.</li></ul> <p><b>Grammar:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Consistently respond appropriately to questions and directives.</li></ul> <p><b>Phonology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Speak intelligibly.</li></ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recognize, name, and describe categories.</li></ul>

### Description of Learning Context

Daily routines provide a necessary management and learning experience for Kindergarten children which facilitates the daily life of the classroom. Routines are integral to building a respectful community of emergent and beginning literacy learners who can articulate *Who I am* and *What I can do*.

Kindergarten educators spend a great deal of their planning and teaching time during the first few weeks of the school year establishing classroom routines; they are constantly making adjustments from their ongoing observations to the learning environment to sustain many opportunities for choices and exploration. Focusing on the idea that a routine is a context or process that supports risk taking, co-operation, and personal identity within the classroom learning community, the following routines may provide rich contexts for observing authentic listening and speaking behaviours:

- Arrival Time
- Morning Meeting or Circle Time
- Taking Attendance
- Singing
- Daily Agenda
- Calendar (weather and/or number)
- Class Jobs
- Introducing new materials or work stations/centres
- Cleanup
- Reflection
- Dismissal

“As I set up my classroom before the start of school and as the children and I change the appearance of the room throughout the year, it reflects what I believe about children and how they learn. I organize the room so that children can learn the classroom routine easily and can take care of themselves and their belongings independently.”

– Fisher, 27

**Maximize opportunities to observe and/or instruct by using these language facilitative tips:**

- Expand on student ideas/**utterances**, adding comments related to what they have said and how they have said it (e.g., considering pacing, volume, tone).
- Model complete sentence structures and key vocabulary (e.g., build vocabulary about roles and responsibilities).
- Scaffold concepts/sentence structures for students.
- Have students repeat or rephrase key ideas to support understanding.

**Think About ...**

- observing two to three targets in a variety of contexts and over time
- recording focused observations (verbatim comments and/or observable behaviours) to determine prior knowledge, possible gaps, and starting points for instruction
- strategies for scaffolding, guiding, or extending learning
- providing for the gradual release of responsibility from teacher-modelled to shared and guided to student-led learning

**BLM:**

- Focused Observation Template



## Music

### Targets for Instruction and Observation/Assessment

Specific Learning Outcomes:	Listening and Speaking Competency Descriptors:
<p>1.1.4 Express preferences for favourite oral, literary, and media texts.</p> <p>2.2.1 Participate in shared listening, reading, and viewing experiences using texts from a variety of forms and genres.</p> <p>2.2.2 Share personal experiences and family traditions related to oral, literary, and media texts; talk about and represent the actions of people in texts.</p> <p>2.2.3 Share feelings evoked by oral, literary, and media texts.</p> <p>2.3.2 Develop a sense of story through listening, viewing, and retelling experiences.</p> <p>2.3.4 Appreciate the sounds and rhythms of language [such as nursery rhymes, personal songs, finger plays ...]</p> <p>3.2.4 Use auditory cues to understand ideas and information.</p> <p>3.3.2 Represent and share information and ideas; compose with a scribe.</p> <p>4.1.2 Share ideas and experiences through singing.</p> <p>4.4.3 Demonstrate active listening and viewing skills and strategies.</p> <p>5.1.3 Relate aspects of stories to personal feelings and experiences.</p>	<p><b>Conversation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Use language appropriately to gain information, to get things, to direct others, to comment on the world, and to have fun.</li><li>■ Use language to communicate physical and emotional feelings.</li><li>■ Use language to demonstrate an understanding of the feelings of others.</li><li>■ Verbally participate in group discussions appropriately and spontaneously.</li></ul> <p><b>Grammar:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Spontaneously produce a wide variety of grammatically simple and complex sentences.</li><li>■ Demonstrate a wide variety of word-building concepts.</li></ul> <p><b>Oral Stories:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Tell and listen to experiences of self and others.</li><li>■ Describe a two- to three-step process in sequence.</li><li>■ Verbally respond to oral stories/ read alouds.</li><li>■ Consistently demonstrate active listening to stories.</li></ul> <p><b>Phonology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Creatively play with the sounds of language (i.e., rhyming, alliteration).</li><li>■ Speak intelligibly.</li></ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Recognize and use subject area/topic/theme vocabulary (e.g., holidays, trees, nocturnal animals, etc.).</li><li>■ Explain <i>same</i>, <i>similar</i>, and/or <i>different</i>.</li><li>■ Recognize, name, and describe categories (e.g., sorts into colour, shape, size, and other attributes).</li></ul>

## Description of Learning Context

The benefits of music in the Kindergarten classroom are numerous. Music is at the heart of language learning – it develops listening skills and self-expression, helps children to know their bodies, and encourages sharing with others, naturally.

Daily and diverse musical experiences bring rhythm to the Kindergarten classroom. Young children are natural musicians. Their energetic bodies clap, stomp, and boogie to a beat. Singing and humming are the background music to their play.

Music permits the acquisition of a “repertoire,” but it also builds language, creativity, imagination, and sensitivity to both language and community. The skills gained in the “music-rich” Kindergarten classroom contribute greatly to the harmonious development of the children and to the achievement of the Kindergarten learning outcomes.

Some musical experiences you might plan for in a Kindergarten classroom are

- singing
- finger play
- rhymes
- nursery rhyme to songs
- rhythm
- creating own versions of songs in response to a song or story
- creating songs using words and gestures
- repetition and spontaneous singing
- singing games
- dances

When planning musical experiences, consider the following suggestions:

- Using a listening centre, provide cassettes and song books with pre-recorded songs, rhymes, and so on from the classroom repertoire.
- Expand on the development of listening skills, creativity, oral expression both spoken and sung, precision, and pleasure.
- Provide many opportunities to learn, create, and practise songs, finger plays, dances, et cetera.
- Provide opportunities for students to hear themselves sing, recite, retell, and so on.

**Maximize opportunities to observe and/or instruct by using these language facilitative tips:**

- Encourage student response using music/song, finger play, dance, drama, and/or art.
- Provide visuals to accompany learning of new songs (i.e., Rebus during singalong).

**Think About ...**

- observing two to three targets in a variety of contexts and over time
- recording focused observations (verbatim comments and/or observable behaviours) to determine prior knowledge, possible gaps, and starting points for instruction
- strategies for scaffolding, guiding, or extending learning
- providing for the gradual release of responsibility from teacher-modelled to shared and guided to student-led learning

**BLM:**

- Focused Observation Template



## Dramatic Play

### Targets for Instruction and Observation/Assessment

Specific Learning Outcomes:	Listening and Speaking Competency Descriptors:
1.1.3 Share experiences, feelings, and thoughts.	<b>Conversation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Initiate, maintain, and close a one-to-one conversation with a variety of partners.</li><li>■ Use language appropriately to gain information, to get things, to direct others, to comment on the world, and to have fun.</li><li>■ Use language to communicate physical and emotional feelings.</li><li>■ Use language to demonstrate an understanding of the feelings of others.</li></ul> <b>Grammar:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Spontaneously produce a wide variety of grammatically simple and complex sentences.</li><li>■ Demonstrate a wide variety of word-building concepts.</li></ul> <b>Oral Stories:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Tell a complete story that makes sense.</li><li>■ Tell and listen to experiences of self and others.</li></ul> <b>Phonology:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Speak intelligibly.</li></ul> <b>Vocabulary:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Recognize and use subject area/topic/theme vocabulary.</li><li>■ Recognize and use words to describe concepts/ideas.</li></ul>
1.2.4 Wonder about and question new ideas and observations.	
2.2.2 Share personal experiences and family traditions related to oral, literary, and media texts; talk about and represent the actions of people in texts.	
2.3.1 Distinguish between what is realistic and imaginary in oral, literary, and media texts.	
2.3.5 Create original texts to communicate and demonstrate understanding of forms and techniques.	
3.3.2 Represent and share information and ideas.	
3.3.4 Share learning and information-gathering experiences.	
4.1.2 Share ideas and experiences through talking, storytelling, pictures, singing, illustrations, and print.	
4.2.2 Retell and represent ideas to clarify meaning.	
4.4.2 Share information and ideas with a group.	
5.1.4 Contribute to group stories using rhymes, rhythms, symbols, pictures, and drama to create and celebrate.	
5.2.1 Participate in co-operative group activities.	

## Description of Learning Context

Dramatic play in the classroom allows children to develop oral language skills in a safe and natural context. In fact, children’s play often encompasses elements of drama (e.g., pretending and imagining). By recognizing dramatic elements in children’s play, educators plan informal drama experiences at the outset of the Kindergarten year – centres to play house, play store, play magic castle, and dress up. Later, drama may include a variety of student-led and teacher-led learning experiences. Some opportunities for dramatic experiences follow.

- **Drama Learning Centre** (page Kindergarten–72)

Set up a variety of different costumes and props (e.g., housekeeping, store, restaurant, fire station, etc.) in a drama centre to facilitate spontaneous drama and play; furnish the centre with simple storybooks and familiar fairy tales for reference/inspiration.

- **Dramatic Play** (page Kindergarten–72)

In interest groups or co-operative learning groups, act out familiar stories you have read in class.

- **Role Play** (pages Kindergarten-54 and Kindergarten–178)

Provide scenarios to act out particular feelings (e.g., happy, sad, angry) or moral virtues (e.g., empathy, kindness).

- **Puppet Plays** (page Kindergarten–134)

Have a permanent puppet theatre in the classroom furnished with a variety of puppets for spontaneous play; use for planned productions as well.

- **Original Plays**

Using a class theme (e.g., community) or following a read aloud, brainstorm ideas for a small group or class production. Cast the characters, work on props/costumes as art projects, and present to peers, families, and/or school personnel.

“In dramatic play, language becomes more vivid and spontaneous, enabling children to connect, with greater fluency and curiosity, the words and phrases they know to new ideas.”

– Paley, *Child’s Work* 73

**Maximize opportunities to observe and/or instruct by using these language facilitative tips:**

- Expand on student ideas/utterances, adding comments related to what they have said and how they have said it (e.g., considering pacing, volume, tone).
- Model complete language structures and key vocabulary (e.g., build vocabulary by discussing and identifying items in a drama centre).
- Scaffold concepts/sentence structures for students (e.g., facilitate a conversation about roles and words that could be used in play).
- Have students repeat or rephrase key ideas to support comprehension.
- Have students volunteer for roles according to their talents/preferences (e.g., a verbal, dynamic student acts as a lead in the play; an artistic student works on set design, colouring, painting, etc.).

**Think About ...**

- observing two to three targets in a variety of contexts and over time
- recording focused observations (verbatim comments and/or observable behaviours) to determine prior knowledge, possible gaps, and starting points for instruction
- strategies for scaffolding, guiding, or extending learning
- providing for the gradual release of responsibility from teacher-modelled to shared and guided to student-led learning

**BLM:**

- Focused Observation Template





## Language Experience

### Targets for Instruction and Observation/Assessment

Specific Learning Outcomes:	Listening and Speaking Competency Descriptors:
<p>2.1.1 Make connections between oral language, texts, and personal experiences.</p> <p>3.1.3 Ask and answer questions to help satisfy group curiosity and information needs.</p> <p>3.1.4 Choose different ways to gather information and ideas; recall directions.</p> <p>3.2.5 Ask questions and use prior knowledge to make sense of information.</p> <p>4.1.1 Contribute ideas to focus on a topic.</p> <p>4.1.3 Know that ideas expressed in oral language can be drawn and recorded.</p> <p>5.1.4 Contribute to group stories using rhymes, rhythms, symbols, pictures, and drama to create and celebrate.</p> <p>5.2.3 Recognize variations in language use at home, on the playground, and in the classroom.</p>	<p><b>Conversation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Use language to communicate physical and emotional feelings.</li><li>■ Verbally participate in group discussions appropriately and spontaneously.</li></ul> <p><b>Grammar:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Spontaneously produce a wide variety of grammatically simple and complex sentences.</li><li>■ Demonstrate a wide variety of word-building concepts.</li></ul> <p><b>Oral Stories:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Tell and listen to experiences of self and others.</li></ul> <p><b>Phonology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Speak intelligibly.</li></ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Recognize and use subject area/topic/theme vocabulary.</li><li>■ Recognize and use words to describe concepts/ideas.</li></ul>

#### Description of Learning Context:

Language Experience is commonly used in Early Years classrooms to demonstrate the relationship between oral language and written language, using the students' own experiences and words. The basic method involves a student or group of students sharing a "story," an experience, ideas, or thoughts to a scribe (the educator or a classroom volunteer). The scribe reads back the ideas, and then invites the student(s) to join in the reading of their experiences—young children love to "read" their own words. Opportunities for sharing and composing language experiences may include

- sharing a field trip experience
- improvising a play that can then be "scripted"
- viewing and describing a picture card collection

- describing or labelling artifacts
- identifying and labelling classroom spaces, materials, and so on
- reflecting on learning goals using a Y-chart
- playing with word and sentence patterns identified in quality literature

**Maximize opportunities to observe and/or instruct by using these language facilitative tips:**

- Provide opportunities for students to talk about and represent (draw or show) their ideas or experiences and then tell others the experience behind the representation or describe the representation to others.
- Arrange students in small groups to provide more opportunities for each to talk about experiences or ideas.
- Ask probing questions (e.g., "Who was there?", "What did that look like?", "Where did it happen?", "Why do you think this is important?").
- Repeat each child's ideas before representing/printing it, and ask the child to repeat the response if it is not clear.

**Think About ...**

- observing two to three targets in a variety of contexts and over time
- recording focused observations (verbatim comments and/or observable behaviours) to determine prior knowledge, possible gaps, and starting points for instruction
- strategies for scaffolding, guiding, or extending learning
- providing for the gradual release of responsibility from teacher-modelled to shared and guided to student-led learning

**BLM:**

- Focused Observation Template

## Learning Centres/Work Stations

Learning centres/work stations may be implemented for the purpose of exploring new ideas and concepts, providing strategic instruction, or giving time to practise and

“As a teacher I have six primary functions during choice time: (1) to set up the environment, (2) to facilitate the routine, (3) to teach, (4) to act as audience, (5) to kid watch, and (6) to enjoy the children.”

– Fisher, 70

consolidate new learning. They are authentic contexts for observation as learners are developing, practising, and performing oral language skills, strategies, and attitudes.

At learning centres/work stations, learners have a variety of opportunities to engage in meaningful dialogue and informal conversation with peers and adults. Construct **criteria** for these interactive learning experiences with your students so they know what the expectations or goals are. At the closure of “Centre Time,” take time for reflection, and talk about

meeting learning goals. For example, “Our goal for today (at the math work station) is to make a pattern to share at Reflection Time.”

Some suggestions for oral language learning centres/work stations are described below.

## Targets for Instruction and Observation/Assessment

### Specific Learning Outcomes:

### Listening and Speaking Competency Descriptors:

<p>1.1.2 Listen to experiences and feelings shared by others.</p> <p>1.2.4 Wonder about and question new ideas and observations.</p> <p>3.1.1 Discuss personal knowledge of a topic.</p> <p>3.1.2 Ask questions to satisfy personal curiosity and information needs.</p> <p>3.1.3 Ask and answer questions to help satisfy group curiosity and information needs.</p> <p>3.2.5 Ask questions and use prior knowledge to make sense of information.</p> <p>5.2.2 Demonstrate attentiveness in group activities.</p>	<p><b>Conversation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Initiate, maintain, and close a one-to-one conversation with a variety of partners.</li> <li>■ Use language appropriately to gain information, to get things, to direct others, to comment on the world, and to have fun.</li> <li>■ Use language to communicate physical and emotional feelings.</li> <li>■ Verbally participate in group discussions appropriately and spontaneously.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grammar:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Spontaneously produce a wide variety of grammatically simple and complex sentences.</li> </ul> <p><b>Oral Stories:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Describe a two- to three-step process in sequence.</li> </ul> <p><b>Phonology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Speak intelligibly.</li> </ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recognize and use subject area/topic/theme vocabulary.</li> <li>■ Recognize and use words to describe concepts/ideas.</li> <li>■ Explain <i>same, similar, and/or different</i>.</li> </ul>
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Discovery centres/stations make connections across all curricula. Examples of areas of focus may include

- *mathematics* to explore concepts such as pattern and sorting
- *literacy* to explore a variety of wordless or conceptual picture books
- *science* to discover characteristics of items such as trees or colours
- *physical education* to experiment with movement skills such as hopping
- *art* to discover a variety of media, to respond to texts and experiences, and to create
- *music* to explore a variety of sounds and patterns

### Targets for Instruction and Observation/Assessment

Specific Learning Outcomes:	Listening and Speaking Competency Descriptors:
<p>1.1.1 Talk about personal experiences.</p> <p>1.1.2 Listen to experiences and feelings shared by others.</p> <p>1.2.3 Group ideas and information to make sense.</p> <p>3.1.3 Ask and answer questions to help satisfy group curiosity and information needs.</p> <p>4.4.1 Share information and ideas about a topic of personal interest.</p> <p>4.4.2 Share information and ideas with a group.</p> <p>5.2.3 Recognize variations in language use at home, on the playground, and in the classroom.</p>	<p><b>Conversation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Initiate, maintain, and close a one-to-one conversation with a variety of partners.</li> <li>■ Use language to communicate physical and emotional feelings.</li> <li>■ Use language to demonstrate an understanding of the feelings of others.</li> <li>■ Verbally participate in group discussions appropriately and spontaneously.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grammar:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Spontaneously produce a wide variety of grammatically simple and complex sentences.</li> <li>■ Consistently respond appropriately to questions and directives.</li> </ul> <p><b>Oral Stories:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Tell and listen to experiences of self and others.</li> <li>■ Describe a two- to three-step process in sequence.</li> </ul> <p><b>Phonology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Speak intelligibly.</li> </ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recognize and use words to describe concepts/ideas.</li> </ul>

Show and Tell may be a routine at the outset of the Kindergarten year to build confidence and community. Three to four students may volunteer or sign up to share a personal artifact or experience with the class.

As students develop a sense of community, Show and Tell may also be scheduled as a Show and Tell Centre/Work Station. As with the Show and Tell routine above, children volunteer or sign up to share and be the “speakers” and “listeners.” (Other roles such as “observer” and “questioner” can also be added as the year proceeds.) Speakers may share a personal artifact or experience with the other speakers, and then with peers who choose to participate as listeners, observers, and questioners. Questioning can be modelled and practised throughout the year in various contexts.

**Variation:** Set up four to five “Show and Tell Stations” on a specific day rather than having a daily Show and Tell. As in a Gallery Walk, half of the class may share as the other half can listen, view, and question.

## Targets for Instruction and Observation/Assessment

Specific Learning Outcomes:	Listening and Speaking Competency Descriptors:
<p>1.1.1 Talk about personal experiences.</p> <p>1.1.2 Listen to experiences and feelings shared by others.</p> <p>1.2.1 Recognize connections between new experiences and prior knowledge.</p> <p>1.2.3 Group ideas and information to make sense.</p> <p>1.2.4 Wonder about and question new ideas and observations.</p> <p>3.1.3 Ask and answer questions to help satisfy group curiosity and information needs.</p> <p>3.2.5 Ask questions and use prior knowledge to make sense of information.</p> <p>5.2.3 Recognize variations in language use at home, on the playground, and in the classroom.</p>	<p><b>Conversation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Initiate, maintain, and close a one-to-one conversation with a variety of partners.</li> <li>■ Use language appropriately to gain information, to get things, to direct others, to comment on the world, and to have fun.</li> <li>■ Follow a sequence of three-or-more-step directions.</li> <li>■ Use language to demonstrate an understanding of the feelings of others.</li> <li>■ Verbally participate in group discussions appropriately and spontaneously.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grammar:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Spontaneously produce a wide variety of grammatically simple and complex sentences.</li> <li>■ Consistently respond appropriately to questions and directives.</li> </ul> <p><b>Oral Stories:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Tell and listen to experiences of self and others.</li> </ul> <p><b>Phonology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Speak intelligibly.</li> </ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recognize and use subject area/topic/theme vocabulary.</li> <li>■ Recognize and use words to describe concepts/ideas.</li> <li>■ Explain <i>same</i>, <i>similar</i>, and/or <i>different</i>.</li> <li>■ Recognize, name, and describe categories.</li> </ul>

Snack Time is often a routine; however, some educators choose to have this social time at a centre or snack station. Eating is a natural time for conversation. Plan snack time where students sit at tables or at plastic table cloths on the floor to spontaneously engage in conversation about favourite foods, tastes, likes and dislikes, colours of foods, personal experiences, and so on.

## Targets for Instruction and Observation/Assessment

Specific Learning Outcomes:	Listening and Speaking Competency Descriptors:
<p>1.1.3 Share experiences, feelings, and thoughts.</p> <p>2.2.3 Share feelings evoked by oral, literary, and media texts.</p> <p>2.3.5 Create original texts to communicate and demonstrate understanding of forms and techniques.</p> <p>3.3.4 Share learning and information-gathering experiences.</p> <p>4.1.2 Share ideas and experiences through talking, storytelling, pictures, singing, illustrations, and print.</p> <p>4.1.3 Know that ideas expressed in oral language can be drawn and recorded.</p> <p>4.2.1 Talk about own and others' creations and stories.</p> <p>5.1.1 Tell and draw stories about self and family.</p> <p>5.1.4 Contribute to group stories using rhymes, rhythms, symbols, pictures, and drama to create and celebrate.</p>	<p><b>Conversation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Initiate, maintain, and close a one-to-one conversation with a variety of partners.</li> <li>■ Use language appropriately to gain information, to get things, to direct others, to comment on the world, and to have fun.</li> <li>■ Follow a sequence of three-or-more-step directions.</li> <li>■ Use language to demonstrate an understanding of the feelings of others.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grammar:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Spontaneously produce a wide variety of grammatically simple and complex sentences.</li> </ul> <p><b>Oral Stories:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Tell a complete story that makes sense.</li> <li>■ Tell and listen to experiences of self and others.</li> <li>■ Verbally respond to oral stories/read alouds.</li> </ul> <p><b>Phonology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Speak intelligibly.</li> </ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recognize and use subject area/topic/theme vocabulary.</li> <li>■ Recognize and use words to describe concepts/ideas.</li> </ul>

Art is an integral means to expression in all young children. All children are born artists and need ongoing opportunities to express themselves through artistic forms. They are natural explorers of a variety of media and art forms. Students create paintings, drawings, murals, sculptures, and so on to express and talk about their feelings, families, responses to texts, and concepts with peers and/or adults.

Children learning English as an additional language (EAL) often use the language of art to represent and communicate with their peers and the adults in the Kindergarten classroom.

## Targets for Instruction and Observation/Assessment

Specific Learning Outcomes:	Listening and Speaking Competency Descriptors:
<p>1.1.4 Express preferences for favourite oral, literary, and media texts.</p> <p>1.1.5 Talk about reading and writing stories.</p> <p>2.1.1 Make connections between oral language, texts, and personal experiences.</p> <p>2.2.2 Share personal experiences and family traditions related to oral, literary, and media texts; talk about and represent the actions of people in texts.</p> <p>2.2.3 Share feelings evoked by oral, literary, and media texts.</p> <p>2.3.1 Distinguish between what is realistic and imaginary in oral, literary, and media texts.</p> <p>3.1.1 Discuss personal knowledge of a topic.</p> <p>3.2.4 Use illustrations, photographs, video programs, objects, and auditory cues to understand ideas and information.</p> <p>5.1.3 Relate aspects of stories to personal feelings and experiences.</p> <p>5.2.4 Find ways to be helpful to others and use group process.</p>	<p><b>Conversation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Initiate, maintain, and close a one-to-one conversation with a variety of partners.</li> <li>■ Use language appropriately to gain information, to get things, to direct others, to comment on the world, and to have fun.</li> <li>■ Use language to demonstrate an understanding of the feelings of others.</li> <li>■ Verbally participate in group discussions appropriately and spontaneously.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grammar:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Spontaneously produce a wide variety of grammatically simple and complex sentences.</li> <li>■ Consistently respond appropriately to questions and directives.</li> </ul> <p><b>Oral Stories:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Tell and listen to experiences of self and others.</li> <li>■ Verbally respond to oral stories/read alouds.</li> </ul> <p><b>Phonology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Speak intelligibly.</li> </ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recognize and use subject area/topic/theme vocabulary.</li> <li>■ Recognize and use words to describe concepts/ideas.</li> </ul>

The Kindergarten Classroom Library Centre/Reading Corner must be accessible to children at all times. Emergent literate learners need to choose from a wide variety of quality children’s literature and trade books which reflect and stimulate the interests and cultural diversity that they bring to the Kindergarten classroom. An annotated bibliography of quality literature appropriate to the Kindergarten classroom can be found online at <[www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/ela/lit\\_list/index.html#annotated](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/ela/lit_list/index.html#annotated)>.

Include big books for children to choose, share, and chime in with others. The classroom library is an ideal context for observing students choosing and talking about favourite books, characters, authors, illustrators, personal connections, literacy goals, recommendations for others, topics for inquiry, and so on.



## Targets for Instruction and Observation/Assessment

Specific Learning Outcomes:	Listening and Speaking Competency Descriptors:
<p>1.2.3 Group ideas and information to make sense.</p> <p>2.1.4 Recognize that letters represent sounds and match sounds with print.</p> <p>3.3.1 Categorize objects and pictures according to visual similarities and differences.</p> <p>4.3.2 Connect sounds with letters in words.</p> <p>5.2.4 Find ways to be helpful to others and use group process.</p>	<p><b>Conversation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Initiate, maintain, and close a one-to-one conversation with a variety of partners.</li> <li>■ Use language appropriately to gain information, to get things, to direct others, to comment on the world, and to have fun.</li> <li>■ Follow a sequence of three-or-more-step directions.</li> <li>■ Verbally participate in group discussions appropriately and spontaneously.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grammar:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Spontaneously produce a wide variety of grammatically simple and complex sentences.</li> <li>■ Consistently respond appropriately to questions and directives.</li> <li>■ Demonstrate a wide variety of word-building concepts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Phonology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Creatively play with the sounds of language.</li> <li>■ Speak intelligibly.</li> </ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recognize and use subject area/topic/theme vocabulary.</li> <li>■ Recognize and use words to describe concepts/ideas.</li> <li>■ Explain <i>same</i>, <i>similar</i>, and/or <i>different</i>.</li> <li>■ Recognize, name, and describe categories.</li> </ul>

Sorting is a natural learning experience for young learners. Model a range of sorting tasks that help children attend to the features of letters, words, and sounds. Teach concepts such as pattern, letter features, colours, number, beginning sounds, word families, rhyme, and so on using materials such as blocks, shells, different textured objects, coloured beads, buttons, objects that smell, foods, pictures, letters, and so on. Introduce new groupings of objects regularly. (A variety of sorting trays can be purchased commercially to offer different modes of sorting and classifying.)

## Targets for Instruction and Observation/Assessment

### Specific Learning Outcomes:

### Listening and Speaking Competency Descriptors:

- 1.1.5 Talk about reading and writing stories.
- 2.1.1 Make connections between oral language, texts, and personal experiences.
- 2.2.1 Participate in shared listening, reading, and viewing experiences using texts from a variety of forms and genres [such as picture books, fairy tales, rhymes, stories, photographs, illustrations, video programs . . .] and cultural traditions.
- 2.2.2 Share personal experiences and family traditions related to oral, literary, and media texts; talk about and represent the actions of people in texts.
- 2.2.3 Share feelings evoked by oral, literary, and media texts.
- 2.3.1 Distinguish between what is realistic and imaginary in oral, literary, and media texts.
- 3.2.3 Compare gathered ideas and information to personal knowledge.
- 3.2.5 Ask questions and use prior knowledge to make sense of information.
- 3.3.4 Share learning and information-gathering experiences.
- 4.4.3 Demonstrate active listening and viewing skills and strategies.
- 5.1.3 Relate aspects of stories to personal feelings and experiences.
- 5.2.2 Demonstrate attentiveness in group activities.

#### **Conversation:**

- Initiate, maintain, and close a one-to-one conversation with a variety of partners.
- Use language appropriately to gain information, to get things, to direct others, to comment on the world, and to have fun.
- Use language to communicate physical and emotional feelings.
- Use language to demonstrate an understanding of the feelings of others.
- Verbally participate in group discussions appropriately and spontaneously.

#### **Grammar:**

- Spontaneously produce a wide variety of grammatically simple and complex sentences.
- Consistently respond appropriately to questions and directives.

#### **Oral Stories:**

- Tell a complete story that makes sense.
- Describe a two- to three-step process in sequence.
- Verbally respond to oral stories/read alouds.

#### **Phonology:**

- Speak intelligibly.

#### **Vocabulary:**

- Recognize and use subject area/topic/theme vocabulary.
- Recognize and use words to describe concepts/ideas.

Book Talk is a natural literacy context for connecting young children’s home talk to the expectations of school talk and literacy learning. After much modelling of and guiding through “Book Talk” during read aloud, shared reading, and inquiry, set up a centre/station where students can choose to share and talk about favourite books, Canadian texts, different genres, characters in familiar texts, wordless picture books, personal interests, connections, new learning, wonderings, and so on.

**Variation:** Listening Centre – Provide two sets of audio tapes (realistic and imaginary genres). Students may discuss realistic and imaginary genres, characters, something they have learned, and so on.

## Vocabulary Centre/Work Station

### Targets for Instruction and Observation/Assessment

Specific Learning Outcomes:	Listening and Speaking Competency Descriptors:
<p>1.2.3 Group ideas and information to make sense.</p> <p>1.2.4 Wonder about and question new ideas and observations.</p> <p>2.3.3 Demonstrate curiosity about and experiment with letters, sounds, words, and word patterns.</p> <p>2.3.5 Create original texts [such as pictures, chants, storyboards, dramatic play ..] to communicate and demonstrate understanding of forms and techniques.</p> <p>3.2.4 Use illustrations, photographs, video programs, objects, and auditory cues to understand ideas and information.</p> <p>3.3.4 Share learning and information-gathering experiences.</p> <p>4.1.1 Contribute ideas to focus on a topic.</p>	<p><b>Conversation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Initiate, maintain, and close a one-to-one conversation with a variety of partners.</li> <li>■ Use language appropriately to gain information, to get things, to direct others, to comment on the world, and to have fun.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grammar:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Spontaneously produce a wide variety of grammatically simple and complex sentences.</li> <li>■ Demonstrate a wide variety of word-building concepts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Phonology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Creatively play with the sounds of language.</li> <li>■ Speak intelligibly.</li> </ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recognize and use subject area/topic/theme vocabulary.</li> <li>■ Recognize and use words to describe concepts/ideas.</li> </ul>

Vocabulary development is a listening and speaking competency area, and young children are fascinated with new and interesting words. Always introduce vocabulary in an authentic context or at read aloud, shared reading, and/or inquiry before introducing this learning centre/station. Provide a variety of texts such as alphabet books, non-fiction books, wordless picture books, media texts, images, videos, audio tapes, objects, and so on to facilitate and extend language development and vocabulary growth.

**Maximize opportunities to observe and/or instruct by using these language facilitative tips:**

- Model and participate at centres/workstations until learners become confident and independent. Use self-talk—describe what you are doing as you are doing it.
- Relate activity topics to the child’s own experience and discuss.
- Ask how things are done.
- Use parallel talk—describe what the child is doing as s/he is doing it.

**Think About ...**

- observing two to three targets in a variety of contexts and over time
- recording focused observations (verbatim comments and/or observable behaviours) to determine prior knowledge, possible gaps, and starting points for instruction
- strategies for scaffolding, guiding, or extending learning
- providing for the gradual release of responsibility from teacher-modelled to shared and guided to student-led learning

**BLMs:**

- Focused Observation Template
- *Independent Together: Supporting the Multilevel Learning Community*
  - BLM-1 Reflection-Metacognition
  - BLM-2 Constructing Student-Generated Criteria for Quality Work

## Student-Created Wordless Picture Books

### Targets for Instruction and Observation/Assessment

Specific Learning Outcomes:	Listening and Speaking Competency Descriptors:
<p>1.1.3 Share experiences, feelings, and thoughts; use a scribe when appropriate.</p> <p>2.1.1 Make connections between oral language, texts, and personal experiences.</p> <p>2.3.5 Create original texts to communicate and demonstrate understanding of forms and techniques.</p> <p>3.3.2 Represent and share information and ideas; compose with a scribe.</p> <p>4.1.3 Know that ideas expressed in oral language can be drawn and recorded.</p> <p>4.2.1 Talk about own and others' creations and stories.</p> <p>4.2.2 Retell and represent ideas to clarify meaning.</p> <p>4.2.5 Use drawing and labels to express ideas, feelings, and information.</p> <p>4.4.3 Demonstrate active listening and viewing skills and strategies.</p> <p>5.1.1 Tell and draw stories about self and family.</p>	<p><b>Conversation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Use language to communicate physical and emotional feelings.</li><li>■ Use language to demonstrate an understanding of the feelings of others.</li></ul> <p><b>Grammar:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Spontaneously produce a wide variety of grammatically simple and complex sentences.</li></ul> <p><b>Oral Stories:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Tell a complete story that makes sense.</li><li>■ Tell and listen to experiences of self and others.</li></ul> <p><b>Phonology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Speak intelligibly.</li></ul> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Recognize and use subject area/topic/theme vocabulary.</li><li>■ Recognize and use words and phrases to define and describe concepts/ideas.</li><li>■ Recognize, name, and describe categories.</li></ul>

#### Description of Learning Context:

The creation of Student-Created Wordless Picture Books is one way that emergent literacy learners can see their words or stories represented in a text—a visual text. In the Kindergarten classroom, children must have many opportunities to share their stories orally and to listen to others' oral stories before they begin publishing for an audience. Creating a whole class wordless picture book is an appropriate prerequisite to small group and individual publications.

In some Kindergarten classrooms, a modelled and guided whole class learning/teaching sequence may be practised throughout the entire year as a class publishes several whole-class wordless picture books. In other Kindergarten classrooms, small groups and individuals may be engaged in creating student-created wordless picture books with less teacher support or independently at literacy centres/stations.

Whatever the learning needs of the students may be, creating wordless picture books provides many rich opportunities to connect to quality literature, to experience the enthusiasm of becoming author/illustrators, and to share and celebrate the joy of being “story tellers.”

The following description of this learning context reflects what a writing process may look and sound like over a number of days in a Kindergarten classroom.

#### *Before* composing (a class wordless picture book/publication)

- Children will need to experience many wordless picture books before composing their own.
- Using modelling and guided practice as needed, “read” the wordless picture books with the teacher and with peers at read aloud, shared reading, and at literacy centres/stations.
- Using modelling and guided practice as needed, begin the talk about illustrators’ strategies to tell a story or to share information. After sharing each wordless picture book, ask *What strategies did the illustrator use to make a wordless picture book?* (This is the first step in constructing criteria for a quality student-generated wordless picture book.)
- Guide children in exploring possible purposes, audiences, and topics/themes for a student-generated wordless picture book.
- Collect and talk about digital images, pictures from magazines, calendars, and so on or have students create pieces of artwork for their wordless picture book.
- Using modelling and guided practice as needed, talk about *What might our class wordless picture book look/sound like?*

#### *During* composing

- Using modelling and guided practice as needed, determine two to three criteria (for assessment) that will be used to create a quality wordless picture book. (The criteria emerge from much talking about *What might our class wordless picture book look/sound like?* to *What will a quality wordless picture book look/sound like?*)
- With the whole class, organize images in a variety of ways and “tell” and “retell” the story with each sequence. (Later at a literacy centre/station, flexible groupings may focus on three to four images/pictures and discuss possible ways to organize them.)

- Discuss what the best order of images will be for the class publication. (Later, flexible/interest groupings may discuss and determine the best order for a small group publication.)
- Model giving descriptive feedback to the “authors” based on their criteria for a quality wordless picture book.
- Practise “reading” the wordless picture book with the teacher and with peers, and determine if the criteria for a quality wordless picture book are “met” before finally binding the publication.

For an annotated bibliography of quality literature appropriate for the Kindergarten classroom, see <[www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/ela/lit\\_list/index.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/ela/lit_list/index.html)>.

*After* composing

- Share/“read” publication(s) with peers, cross-age reading buddies, other classes, the principal, parents, and/or anyone who can be an active and responsive listener.
- Celebrate “the writing process” at Author’s Chair throughout composing, or celebrate the publication at an occasion such as a school assembly or a classroom book launch.
- A special place can be created in the classroom to display the student-generated wordless picture books so that they may be revisited/celebrated and enjoyed throughout the school year by the classroom community and its visitors.

**Think About ...**

- observing two to three targets in a variety of contexts and over time
- recording focused observations (verbatim comments and/or observable behaviours) to determine prior knowledge, possible gaps, and starting points for instruction
- strategies for scaffolding, guiding, or extending learning
- providing for the gradual release of responsibility from teacher-modelled to shared and guided to student-led learning

**BLMs:**

- Focused Observation Template
- *Independent Together: Supporting the Multilevel Learning Community*
  - BLM-2 Constructing Student-Generated Criteria for Quality Work





## Stop, Look, Listen, Think, Respond

### Targets for Instruction and Observation/Assessment

Specific Learning Outcomes:	Listening and Speaking Competency Descriptors:
4.4.3 Demonstrate active listening and viewing skills and strategies [such as showing attentive facial expression, keeping respectful silence . . .].	<b>Conversation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Initiate, maintain, and close a one-to-one conversation with a variety of partners.</li><li>■ Follow a sequence of three-or-more-step directions.</li><li>■ Use language to demonstrate an understanding of the feelings of others.</li><li>■ Verbally participate in group discussions appropriately and spontaneously.</li></ul> <b>Grammar:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Consistently respond appropriately to questions and directives.</li></ul> <b>Oral Stories:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Listen to experiences of others.</li><li>■ Verbally respond to oral stories/read alouds.</li><li>■ Consistently demonstrate active listening to stories.</li></ul> <b>Vocabulary:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Recognize and use subject area/topic/theme vocabulary.</li><li>■ Recognize and use words to describe concepts/ideas.</li></ul>
5.1.2 Listen actively to stories and demonstrate curiosity.	

### Description of Learning Context

Stop, Look, Listen, Think, Respond is a strategy to cue students to engage in active listening behaviour, reflecting the key words: *stop, look, listen, think, and respond*.

- Brainstorm what the key words for attentive listening look like/sound like.
- Together, create a chart, poster, or cue cards with symbols or icons that represent each key word as reminders/criteria for students.
- Model, guide, and apply the active listening cues explicitly in various situations—show and practise what each cue looks and sounds like (e.g., use role play, fish bowl, etc.).

- See the Attentive Listening and Viewing strategy for an example of a Looks Like/Sounds Like chart (page Kindergarten–180 of the *Kindergarten to Grade 4 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation*) and the Stop, Look, Listen, Think, and Respond strategy for an example of a cue card or chart (page Kindergarten–182 and page Kindergarten–200).

**Maximize opportunities to observe and/or instruct by using these language facilitative tips:**

- Model, share, and practise specific verbal and nonverbal behaviours in a variety of formal and informal contexts.
- Set, revise, and enhance criteria for good listening with students early on and throughout the year.
- Make reference to the criteria or steps on a chart or cue cards in other formal and informal speaking-listening contexts (e.g., Circle Time, before a group discussion, etc.).

**Think About ...**

- observing two to three targets in a variety of contexts and over time
- recording focused observations (verbatim comments and/or observable behaviours) to determine prior knowledge, possible gaps, and starting points for instruction
- strategies for scaffolding, guiding, or extending learning
- providing for the gradual release of responsibility from teacher-modelled to shared and guided to student-led learning

**BLMs:**

- Focused Observation Template
- *Independent Together: Supporting the Multilevel Learning Community*
  - BLM-1 Reflection – Metacognition
  - BLM-2 Constructing Student-Generated Criteria for Quality Work





































































































































