

Literacy Content Block for English-Medium Classrooms

Transitional Kindergarten



California Department of Education



Literacy Content Block for Transitional Kindergarten: English-Medium Classrooms

The following Literacy Content Block for English-medium classrooms in transitional kindergarten (TK) is provided to guide literacy instruction based on local context and children's identified assets and assessed needs. The block reflects an intentional approach to literacy that promotes carefully sequenced initial instruction, appropriate practice and reinforcement, intervention as necessary, and meaningful application across subjects. The Language and Literacy Development domain of the California (CA) Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations (PTKLF) outlines the learning expectations in literacy for children in TK classrooms. The content of the block is drawn from the PTKLF and the English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework for CA Public Schools and is organized into four areas: Language, Foundational Literacy Skills, Integrated Reading and Writing, and Comprehensive English Language Development (ELD).

Included in the Literacy Content Block are recommended time allocations totaling 60–90 minutes of instruction, depending on the length of the instructional day, during which literacy is the central focus of attention. Texts and topics from other TK curricula (e.g., science, history–social science) can be purposefully incorporated into literacy instruction to teach and apply the PTKLF across all curricular domains. Oral and written language development underpins all areas of the Literacy Content Block and is addressed in each. All instruction should include integrated ELD when children who are multilingual learners* are involved in learning activities. Illustrative strategies are indicated with the initialism iELD. See the section Comprehensive ELD for definitions of integrated and designated ELD (dELD).

The following **Basic Principles of Instruction** apply to all areas of the Literacy Content Block. Effective instruction in each area is characterized by these principles.

- Intentionally and sequentially plan and provide learning experiences (including explicit instruction and guided and play-based activities) that address specific objectives and are developmentally appropriate.
- Establish caring relationships and everyday routines and interactions to create a safe, joyful environment for learning.
- Incorporate multimodal strategies and plan for children's active engagement.
- Provide instruction in whole-group, small-group, and one-to-one settings and ensure opportunities for individual and paired practice, exploration, and meaningful interaction with the content.

* In TK, children identified as English learner students are referred to as “multilingual learners.”

- Support and strengthen speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills for all learners across all content areas.
- Recognize, value, and build from children’s strengths, interests, cultures, languages, backgrounds, and ways of expressing knowledge and skills (e.g., language, gesturing, drawing, role playing).
- Motivate children by providing appropriately challenging and culturally and linguistically authentic and relevant materials and activities. Provide choice and plentiful access to print materials and books representing diverse genres, authors, topics, and languages, and ensure that children see themselves as successful learners.
- Monitor progress and provide timely feedback, instruction, and intervention as needed.
- Provide comprehensive ELD instruction—iELD and dELD—for multilingual learners that builds on their language and cultural assets and responds to the linguistic demands of language, literacy, and content instruction.
- Provide supports, accommodations, modifications, and/or supplementary aids and services required by a child’s individualized education plan (IEP) or Section 504 plan and collaborate with families and, as appropriate, education specialists.

Literacy Area 1: Language

Language—heard, spoken, signed, read, and written—is the primary means by which humans communicate, and it is the cornerstone of literacy and learning. It is with and through language that children learn, think, and receive and express ideas, information, perspectives, and questions. Attention to language development occurs in all content areas, both formally and informally. Language is enriched when children have daily opportunities to interact with adults and one another and with texts as speakers, listeners, readers, and writers; when all children are comfortable contributing to conversations and feel heard and respected; and when all languages are valued and recognized as assets. Formal instruction includes, but is not limited to, teaching the meaning of words and word parts (e.g., affixes, root words), how phrases and sentences are organized to convey meaning, and oral and written conventions that contribute to meaning (e.g., grammar, punctuation, capitalization). Children learn that language is purposeful and changes according to context, audience, and task.[†]

[†] This definition, and others throughout the Literacy Content Block, is the same for all grade levels. The evidence-based practices that follow illustrate the grade-appropriate instruction that supports learners’ progress in the area.



Recommended Duration: Language development is integrated within instruction in all areas of literacy and language and other subjects daily.

Accordingly, a specific time allocation is not recommended; however, time for focused language instruction, such as vocabulary, should be incorporated within foundational literacy skills and integrated reading and writing based on children's needs and the nature of the texts and lesson activities. Each of the practices that follow is appropriate for iELD; see the section Comprehensive ELD for more information.



Evidence-Based Practices

- Engage children in daily collaborative conversations in which they share opinions, experiences, and information; respond to texts; and listen to and ask questions of others.
- Expand children's exposure to language by narrating what children are doing (e.g., "I see you are sweeping the kitchen area with the big broom and dustpan." "Juan is stacking the blocks with the biggest on the bottom.").
- Encourage children to expand their oral language by using open-ended prompts (e.g., "Please tell me more." "What else did you do at recess?" "What makes you think the character feels that way?") and to participate in multi-turn (i.e., back-and-forth) conversations.
- Engage children in listening to a wide range of texts that introduce new words and concepts across content areas and literary genres. Share the same books multiple times and make them available for exploration.
- Read aloud daily from texts that enrich and expand children's language, including those that expose children to complex sentence structures, and pause to highlight and support children's understanding by thinking aloud about each part of the sentence.
- Model and promote the use of rich and increasingly specific vocabulary and a variety of sentence structures in context by providing activities that encourage children to apply new words and language in collaborative and individual tasks (e.g., songs, chants, pictures, sentences, retelling and reenacting stories).
- Use a direct and explicit vocabulary routine (e.g., introduce the word, supply a child-friendly explanation, share examples and non-examples and prompt children to do the same) to teach specific words, especially those that are used in reading selections or are important for a topic under study. Provide multiple opportunities for children to use those words in meaningful contexts and varied groupings.

- Increase exposure to and understanding of new words and grammatical structures through rich and varied language experiences and supports (e.g., read-alouds, learning experiences, discussions, images).
- Model the use of different word parts (e.g., tenses, such as -ed, -s) and sentence forms to express relatively complex thoughts and ideas.
- Draw children’s attention to how language functions in different contexts (e.g., how speaking to family and friends is different from speaking with teachers).
- Emphasize crosslinguistic transfer by drawing connections to cognates (i.e., words that are similar across languages, such as “problem” in English and “problema” in Spanish) and other features of the child’s home language to support learning of English.
- Draw attention to grammatical differences between the primary language(s) of children and English (e.g., word order differences, such as “red car” and “coche rojo”; neutral and gendered nouns and adjectives, such as “black cat” and “gato negro” or “gata negra”).
- Model and encourage children’s use of different grammatical structures and practice using them in discussions with supports (e.g., sentence frames, such as “I think the character is _____ because _____” and “In my opinion, _____”).
- Highlight in texts the conventions of General American English grammar and usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling of simple words during reading and writing instruction.
- Highlight dialectical variations children may be familiar with and draw connections to General American English grammar.
- Include a range of learning supports (e.g., pictures, realia, graphic organizers).

Literacy Area 2: Foundational Literacy Skills

Foundational literacy skills instruction is necessary to develop children’s understanding and working knowledge of print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency—the “Foundational Skills” of reading as presented in the California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts/Literacy. Because printing and spelling are intimately tied to these skills, evidence-based practices regarding their instruction are included in this area, broadened to “Foundational Literacy Skills.” For TK, the PTKLF define the knowledge, concepts, and skills most children learn as they become ready to transition from early education programs to kindergarten. While the content of

the Foundational Literacy Skills in the PTKLF has clear links to the content of the kindergarten standards, the PTKLF are organized somewhat differently and include phonological awareness, alphabetics and print, and concepts about print. However, to maintain continuity, this section of the block for transitional kindergarten has been deliberately arranged to mirror the organization of the blocks for kindergarten through grade three.

The purpose of foundational literacy skills instruction is to ensure children can identify printed words (decode) in meaningful connected text and translate oral language into written language (encode). The ultimate goal is for children to develop automaticity—recognizing words nearly effortlessly so that cognitive resources can be devoted to meaning making. The achievement of the foundational literacy skills is crucial, warranting high-priority instruction in the early school years and thereafter as needed.



Recommended Duration: 30–45 minutes of daily instructional time across all foundational literacy skills below based on children’s needs.

Print Concepts

Print concepts are the organization and basic features of print. Instruction ensures that children learn how print works. Ideally, nearly all basic print concepts and letter formation skills are acquired by the end of kindergarten and are addressed in subsequent grades as needed or as called for with the introduction of a new language. Basic concepts about print include the identification of a book’s front and back covers and title page, directionality of print, use of spacing, recognition of uppercase and lowercase letters, connection between spoken and written language, and function of capitalization and punctuation. Children also learn how to print letters so they can use them as writers. They develop fluent printing, and cursive in grades three and above, through practice and multiple opportunities to write.



Evidence-Based Practices

- Establish a print-rich environment (e.g., one with charts, labels, children’s dictated text, a writing center, alphabet cards and puzzles, alphabet books, a library center with a variety of books).
- Ensure children recognize the meaning and purpose of print. Say, for example, “This sign says paint smocks, which tells us the smocks are kept in this closet” and “Hubert, this is your cubby. Here is your name.” Include printed materials throughout the classroom, such as in the dramatic play, blocks, and science areas.

- Read texts aloud and emphasize organization and basic features of print by modeling and talking about how a book is handled and pointing to text. Use big books and invite children to point to the title, point to where print starts on a page as the book is being read, and turn pages. Make the books available for free exploration.
- Model basic features of print by writing daily with children (e.g., taking dictation, recording ideas and information on charts).
- Teach children to recognize and name most uppercase and about half of the lowercase letters of the alphabet. Ensure that children find and identify letters in multiple contexts (e.g., on their name cards and lunch bags, around the classroom, in books). Reinforce letter knowledge with games, puzzles, and alphabet books.[‡]
- Ensure children develop the fine motor skills required for grasping a pencil. Incorporate activities such as working with playdough, lacing beads, and using tongs or tweezers to pick up objects.[‡]
- Teach printing (i.e., letter formation) as children learn letters and provide ample opportunities for children to write letters in a variety of ways (e.g., on whiteboards, in journals) and settings (e.g., in a writing center, on the playground) to build ease with printing.[‡]
- Develop children's recognition of distinguishing features of a sentence (e.g., first-word capitalization, ending punctuation) during read-alouds and dictation.
- Explicitly identify differences and similarities between the writing systems (e.g., direction of print, symbols, punctuation) of English and the languages of multilingual learners. iELD

Phonological/Phonemic Awareness

Phonological awareness is the ability to consciously attend to and manipulate the sound units (e.g., syllables, onsets, rimes, phonemes) in spoken words. Phonemic awareness, the most advanced level of phonological awareness, is the ability to focus on and manipulate the individual sounds (i.e., phonemes) in spoken words; its achievement should be a high priority as it is significantly related to reading acquisition and success.

[‡] This practice is addressed in the PTKLF in the Alphabetics and Print strand.



Evidence-Based Practices

- Engage children in wordplay activities that prompt attention to initial sounds in words, such as sorting picture cards into groups based on initial sound (e.g., ball, bat, and baby are in one group and kite, kitten, and kangaroo are in another) and finding objects in the room that start with a target sound (e.g., “What do you see in our room that starts with the sound /m/?”).
- Teach children to blend syllables in spoken words drawing on children’s names and other familiar words. Include physical responses, such as moving hands together.
- Introduce segmenting spoken words into syllables and support children’s attempts. For example, after working on blending syllables, say a word and think aloud about how the word can be broken into parts (e.g., Say “Banana! I can break the word ‘banana’ into three parts: ba-na-na! Try it with me”).
- Teach children to blend individual sounds (i.e., phonemes) into familiar spoken words. Reinforce the learning by playing guessing games, such as “I spy with my little eye the /s/-/ü/-/n/. What do I see?”
- Introduce segmenting simple one-syllable spoken words and support children’s attempts (e.g., “What sounds do we hear in cat? /c/-/ă/-/t/”).
- Articulate sounds clearly and avoid adding /uh/ to the end of a sound (e.g., crisply pronounce the sound /b/ and avoid /buh/) when teaching phonemes.
- Support children in identifying and producing rhyming words. Talk about what makes a rhyme. Play rhyming games and share poetry, songs, and books that have rhyming words as a prominent feature. Encourage children to anticipate a rhyme (e.g., “One, two, buckle my ____”). Accept made-up words, such as “buckle my foo,” but, especially with multilingual children, comment that it is not a real word in English.
- Engage children in authentic and playful opportunities to notice sounds in words using poetry, songs, and rhymes, and play games that engage children in blending, segmenting, and contrasting sounds.
- Use multimodal strategies and activities (e.g. manipulatives, hand gestures, mouth movements with mirrors) to engage children in identifying and changing individual sounds within spoken words, blending sounds, contrasting sounds, and rhyming.
- Emphasize crosslinguistic transfer between languages, explicitly noting sounds that exist in both English and a child’s primary language and those that are unique to each language (e.g., the sound /s/ exists in both spoken English and Spanish whereas /sh/ is heard in spoken English but not in Spanish; /p/ is an English sound that does not exist in Arabic). Incorporate additional articulation practice for sounds that are not used in both languages. iELD

Phonics and Word Recognition

Phonics and word recognition include knowledge of sound–symbol correspondences, knowledge of word parts (syllables and morphemes), and recognition of irregularly spelled words. Learners use this knowledge to identify printed words (i.e., decode). They also use this knowledge to transfer spoken language into print (i.e., encode), which includes representing speech sounds with symbols and learning to spell.



Evidence-Based Practices

- Intentionally plan and explicitly deliver instruction that builds children’s foundational skills sequentially and purposefully.
- Teach the sounds associated with several letters explicitly following a scope and sequence.
- Draw children’s attention to learned sound–symbol correspondences in a variety of places, such as read-alouds, labels, and dictated descriptions of artwork.
- Review and reinforce letter knowledge and printing as children learn sound–symbol correspondences.
- Incorporate phonemic awareness as children learn sound–symbol correspondences (e.g., children are given two familiar spelling cards, “s” and “t,” and are asked to point to the letter that spells the sound they hear at the beginning of “toad”). Use picture cards to support memory.
- Check children’s understanding of words that are anticipated to be new and scaffold as needed. Demonstrate word meanings by using visuals, demonstrating actions, using the words in multiple sentences and contexts, and making connections to the home language or dialect. iELD
- Use multimodal instruction (e.g., whiteboards, key words, sound–spelling cards, embedded mnemonics, visuals, magnetic letters).
- Introduce common or familiar words (e.g., children’s names, classroom labels) and provide opportunities for children to notice them in the environment or in books.
- Explicitly identify transferable sound–symbol correspondences between English and the languages of multilingual learners (e.g., the letter “n” represents the sound /n/ in both Spanish and English) and explicitly note the nontransferable sound–symbol patterns (e.g., the letter “j” represents the /h/ sound in Spanish and the /j/ sound in English). iELD

Reading Fluency

Fluency is seemingly effortless reading. Words and phrases are accessed quickly. Fluency consists of word recognition accuracy, appropriate rate, and prosody (i.e., expression, which includes rhythm, phrasing, and intonation) and reflects freedom from word-identification difficulties that might hinder comprehension in silent reading or the expression of ideas in oral reading. Writing fluency is addressed in the sections Print Concepts and Writing.



Evidence-Based Practices

- Increase children's automaticity with identifying and printing letters by teaching explicitly; talking about letters in the environment, especially those important to children (e.g., their names); making alphabet games, puzzles, letter cards, or tiles available for regular use; and encouraging printing letters using a variety of media (e.g., pencils, chalk, playdough, water, pipe cleaners).
- Use linguistically and culturally relevant and authentic texts connected to children's experiences.
- Model reading with appropriate expression and pacing, emphasizing meaning making and thinking aloud. Check that children understand the meaning of the words and phrases and provide explanations as needed. iELD
- Include opportunities for children to chime in as they listen to read-alouds and to engage in echo and choral “reading” of posted nursery rhymes, poems, and familiar books focusing on pacing and expression.

Literacy Area 3: Integrated Reading and Writing

Reading and writing practices are complementary and, when taught in conjunction, support and strengthen one another. Children's comprehension of text is improved when they discuss and write about what they read. Likewise, children's writing is improved when they read (or listen to) and discuss an author's language or organizational choices in high-quality texts. Children also benefit when teachers model the writing process and teach spelling and sentence construction skills. Integrating reading and writing provides important opportunities to build knowledge, enhance language, and develop effective communication in language and literacy instruction and across the curriculum.



Recommended Duration: 30–45 minutes of daily instructional time, based on children's assessed needs, including dedicated time devoted to writing. Opportunities to write are intentionally integrated into all content areas.

Reading: Engaging with Text

Engaging with text meaningfully opens worlds for learners. By understanding, analyzing, and responding to texts (orally and in writing)—with the help of appropriate scaffolding—children enhance their ability to make meaning, build knowledge in all content areas, and develop receptive and expressive language. In addition, foundational literacy skills are reinforced. Children experience increasingly complex text by listening to read-alouds and reading with the teacher and independently. Reading a variety of texts provides models of creative expression and author’s craft, allows children to pursue interests, and builds an appreciation of diverse perspectives and cultures.



Evidence-Based Practices

- Integrate reading, writing (drawing or dictating), and discussion to enhance comprehension of text and build knowledge and language.
- Engage children in interactive read-alouds, in which children respond to a book at various points. Interacting with read-alouds by responding to questions, discussing a plot or interesting information, talking about the author’s vocabulary choices, and examining illustrations can support comprehension and build language and knowledge. iELD
- Plan for and read books several times over the course of a few days and focus children’s attention on different aspects each time. For example, a first read might focus on literal understanding, a second read might focus on vocabulary use or character development, and a third read might prompt children to think more deeply about a text by considering an author’s purpose or making connections with their own experiences.
- Model thinking aloud about a text, both the meaning (e.g., “Ah, now I understand why a salamander changes colors! It’s a way of protecting itself from predators”) and the craft (e.g., “I like the words the author used to describe how the character is feeling.”). iELD
- Prompt children to retell, reenact, discuss, write or draw, dictate, and engage in dramatic play in response to books. Make shared books available in literacy centers and provide time for hands-on engagement independently or with peers.
- Share books that reflect children’s interests and identities as well as the curricula (both literacy and other content areas).
- Read aloud and discuss a wide variety of increasingly complex texts across content areas. Include texts that build knowledge and language.

- Share a range of text types (e.g., storybooks, poems, fantasy, informational text) and support children in noticing the language and organization of the text.
- Identify and teach vocabulary and language structures critical to children’s understanding of texts they listen to by providing friendly definitions, rich examples, and visuals, props, or actions as applicable. iELD
- Use questions and prompts to develop children’s understanding of details in a story, including knowledge of characters and events. Support children to make predictions about what might come next.
- Use questions and prompts to develop children’s understanding of informational text. Support children to connect to previous knowledge, make inferences, and generate questions.
- Incorporate routines and procedures that increase thinking and talking about a text (e.g., turn and talk, think-pair-share) and encourage back-and-forth conversations.
- Pause and discuss parts of sentences or texts to increase comprehension by helping children understand how words, phrases, and sentences contribute to meaning. iELD
- Teach, model, and provide time for children to draw, dictate, or write in response to texts to promote comprehension. Provide differentiated language supports for multilingual learners. Children at emerging levels of English may begin by using scaffolded sentences or frames to generate oral language responses or draw and label in response to text. iELD
- Engage children in project-based or thematic units (e.g., science, history–social science, topics of choice) that spark children’s interest and integrate literacy and content instruction to build world knowledge and promote collaboration and inquiry.

Writing

The ability to write is an essential and empowering literacy skill, and instruction begins in the first years of schooling and extends through every grade level. Writing strengthens children’s understanding of the foundational literacy skills and enhances their understanding of texts and learning experiences. Moreover, the ability to write enables children to express themselves for purposes of communicating with others and for their own satisfaction. Writing takes many forms; it may be formal or informal, brief or lengthy, and dictated or composed independently or collaboratively. Writing is taught and practiced daily and is integrated in all content areas.



Evidence-Based Practices

- Integrate reading, writing (drawing or dictating), and discussion to enhance comprehension of text and build knowledge and language.
- Provide daily opportunities for dictated and independent writing and drawing to communicate ideas and convey meaning.
- Have children discuss and write about (through drawing, dictation, and scaffolded or independent writing) read-alouds, topics they study, and personal experiences and interests.
- Develop children's fluency in printing taught letters and their own names by using a variety of materials and surfaces, for example, writing with fingers in foam or sand, writing with sidewalk chalk on the ground, or using cotton swabs to write in paint. Provide pencil grips to support proper grip, improve control, and ease hand fatigue for those who need it.
- Provide frames (e.g., First ____, Then ____, Finally ____) and explanations (e.g., sequencing words) to support generation of oral language. iELD
- Have children share their writing with an audience (e.g., peers, families, other adults), telling about their work and witnessing the impact of their work on others.
- Engage children in project-based or thematic units, as described in the section Reading: Engaging with Text.

Literacy Area 4: Comprehensive ELD

Comprehensive ELD includes both integrated and designated ELD and constitutes part of core instruction for children who are identified as multilingual or English learner students. Comprehensive ELD is integrated into language, literacy, and all other content instruction and builds on children's cultural and linguistic assets. Through comprehensive ELD, multilingual children learn to use English purposefully, interact in meaningful ways, and understand how English works. The CA ELD Standards and the ELD subdomain of the PTKLF describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities that multilingual children need to access, engage with, and achieve in grade-level academic content. The strategies below support the implementation of both sets of expectations in ELD.

Integrated ELD

Integrated ELD is provided throughout the school day in all content areas to ensure that multilingual children are able to understand and use English to access instruction. Integrated ELD means that teachers address specific ELD learning foundations while they address literacy or other content learning foundations.

Through iELD, children strengthen their abilities to use academic English as they simultaneously learn content. Truly integrated into daily instruction, iELD involves careful planning, intentional scaffolding, and close observation of multilingual children during lessons.



Recommended Duration and Frequency: Integrated in all lessons across the curriculum on a daily basis.



Evidence-Based Practices

- Examine planned texts and tasks to identify language that may be unfamiliar or challenging to children and identify opportunities to highlight and discuss vocabulary and language features both before (e.g., front-loading) and during lessons. Consider the background knowledge needed to understand the texts and tasks. Observe how children use the new language and adjust whole-group instruction or work with small groups to provide adequate and appropriate support.
- Analyze the language features and structure of a text (e.g., fable; poem; picture book about the sun, moon, and stars; map of the community) and plan instruction to deepen children's awareness, comprehension, and use of targeted vocabulary or language structures through teacher modeling, interactive read-alouds, guided discussions, and collaborative writing. For example, teach how an author uses prepositional phrases (e.g., in the house) to describe the setting in a fable.
- Help children use target vocabulary and language structures by providing planned and just-in-time scaffolds (e.g., child-friendly explanations or definitions, pictures, sketches, realia, sentence starters, or frames).
- Promote the use of vocabulary and phrases in context by encouraging children to apply new language in speaking and writing activities (e.g., singing songs, reciting chants and poems, describing pictures, retelling stories, sharing information, forming sentences) individually and with others.
- Scaffold and guide children's engagement in peer conversations about texts or topics in which they ask and answer questions; build on one another's ideas; make personal observations; offer alternate endings or opinions; or act out, reconstruct, or retell a text.
- Highlight crosslinguistic connections to build language and print awareness (e.g., noticing placement of adjectives after a noun in Arabic and before a noun in English, tracking print right to left in Farsi and left to right in English).
- Call attention to how a text children are listening to is organized (e.g., by story sequence or informational topic and details) and model how to organize writing accordingly using graphic organizers and visuals.

- Provide flexibility in pacing to attend to children's processing time in English and to build vocabulary and background knowledge that native speakers of English likely already possess and that are essential to comprehension and production.

Designated ELD

Designated ELD is a protected time during the regular school day in addition to the literacy block. In dELD, teachers focus on specific ELD learning foundations in ways that directly connect to and support content learning, including learning that happens during the literacy block. The purpose is to help multilingual children develop the critical English language skills, knowledge, and abilities needed for content learning in English, including literacy. Instruction in dELD should combine and build on the evidence-based practices identified for iELD, while providing opportunities to engage children with language more deeply, with more support and scaffolding, and in more detail based on their level of English language proficiency.



Recommended Duration and Frequency: Provided daily in addition to the literacy block; the amount of time is based on children's needs and local context.



Evidence-Based Practices

- Group multilingual children for dELD, to the degree practicable, according to their level of English language proficiency and offer focused instruction designed to strengthen and expand existing language skills through collaborative and individualized activities followed by guided and independent practice. Ensure that dELD instruction also incorporates the strategies identified in iELD.
- Analyze the language demands of texts and tasks and plan to incorporate specific vocabulary and language structures that will be encountered in literacy activities and other content areas. Assess prior knowledge and prepare to activate, focus on, or build background information, key vocabulary, and language structures.
- Call children's attention to specific language that expands and enriches ideas, such as nouns that add details. Encourage its use through definition, illustration, rephrasing, and prompts (e.g., "Today we're going to talk about a word that may be new to you, 'length.' Say it with me, 'length.' Length means how long something is from one end to the other. For example, the length of my shoe [holding it up and measuring] is longer than the length of this shoe [holding it up and measuring]. The length of this paper [holding it up and measuring] is longer than the length of this one.").

- Incorporate activities that help children discover and understand how English works (e.g., word sorts, teaching word parts and word families). For example, share how the letter “s” is used at the end of many English nouns to create a plural form.
- Use dELD time to front-load or revisit the content and language demands children will or have experienced in content lessons. For example, introduce or review essential vocabulary, use visuals and graphic organizers, and provide children support for collaborative discussion about new content.
- Help children understand complex sentences by modeling how to unpack them into shorter sentences or phrases. An example drawn from a read-aloud about health is the sentence, “We keep our bodies healthy by exercising regularly, eating nutritious food, and getting a good night’s sleep.” The sentence can be broken into shorter sentences and displayed on sentence strips (e.g., “We keep our bodies healthy by exercising regularly”; “We keep our bodies healthy by eating nutritious food”). The children discuss the shorter sentences, and the teacher also notes any words that may need explanation (e.g., regularly, nutritious).
- Model and engage children in guided practice connecting ideas in shared language activities. Focus on commonly used phrases as well as connecting words or phrases (e.g., because, after, then, a long time ago, suddenly) to link ideas, events, or reasons.
- Model and engage children in guided practice on expanding and enriching ideas in shared language activities by adding different types and tenses of verbs (e.g., walk or prance, does or did), adding new adjectives to nouns (e.g., large or enormous, good or terrific), and adding details with prepositional phrases (e.g., after the party, under the table).