



Center for Early Literacy Learning

For **CLASSROOM-BASED** early childhood educators

Additional skill-building exercises to help teachers create **LITERACY-RICH ENVIRONMENTS**

Thank you for accessing these additional exercises to support utilization of the CELL Early Literacy Learning Model. Three practice activities are provided below to help teachers create literacy-rich classroom environments to promote children's early literacy development.

The exercises offer teachers opportunities to practice, evaluate, and reflect about literacy-rich environments. The intent is to take these activities into the classroom to provide the practitioner with an authentic, hands-on experience utilizing the CELL components.

Exercise 1

Activity:

Observe children at play in two learning centers/areas—other than the library or writing centers—in your classroom. Observe children's play in these two spaces for one day. List all of the literacy-related materials and literacy learning opportunities available in these two learning centers.

Evaluate:

- What literacy-related materials did you identify within each learning center? What literacy opportunities did or could occur based on the materials available?
- Did the children appear to know "how to use" the literacy materials?
- In what ways did you help support the children's use of the materials?

Reflect:

- What materials could you add to the learning centers to increase children's opportunities to explore literacy? What materials could you rotate in and out of the learning centers to promote children's exploration of literacy? What types of literacy-related activities would you expect to see?
- How will you model the use of literacy within these learning centers?
- Consider the other learning centers in your classroom. Are they supplied with appropriate materials to promote literacy learning for children? If not, what do you need to do?

Exercise 2

Activity:

Spend a day keeping track of how you model the functional use of literacy for children. (Some examples are: reading the attendance chart and checking off names, reading the daily food menu, writing a child's name onto his/her art work)

Evaluate:

- What were some of the ways you modeled the functional use of literacy for children?
- How did you model reading? What materials/activities did you use?
- How did you model writing? What materials/activities did you use?
- How often did these events happen?
- How did the children respond? Did you notice any of the children imitating these modeled literacy behaviors? Did they ask you to repeat it over and over?

Reflect:

Use the checklist below to reflect on how you provide literacy-rich materials to children and demonstrate the use of literacy in everyday activities.

Literacy-Rich Classroom Environment Checklist

Use this checklist to identify the key features of creating a literacy-rich classroom environment to promote early literacy learning. Complete the checklist by indicating if you **did (Yes)** or **did not (No)** do the following

Did you . . .	YES	NO
1. Provide a variety of print, reading, writing materials that encourage early literacy activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Provide equipment such as a CD player, radio, or tape player for additional literacy opportunities such as listening to music or audio books?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Provide literacy materials that are interesting and inviting ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Make sure that literacy materials are easily accessible to all children when appropriate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Make sure that the literacy materials are included in the environment as a natural part of an activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Demonstrate how literacy materials are used in everyday activities ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Exercise 3

Activity:

For one morning or afternoon, observe children during outdoor play. List the materials and activities available to support children's exploration of literacy during outdoor play. List ways you modeled the use of literacy during outdoor play for children.

Evaluate:

- What materials/activities were available for children to explore reading?
- What materials/activities were available for children to explore writing?
- In what ways did you model the use of literacy for children during outdoor play?

Reflect:

- What materials could you add to the outdoor learning environment to encourage children to explore literacy?
- In what ways could you model the use of literacy for children during outdoor play?