

The following excerpts are from pages 360-362 of



The Creative Curriculum[®] *for* Preschool

Volume 2



Interest Areas



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marks. To facilitate this effort, keep a book repair kit in the Library area. A shoebox or plastic container works well for storing the supplies, which might include

- transparent tape to repair torn pages
- cloth tape to repair book spines
- gum erasers to remove pencil marks
- correction tape to cover ink and crayon marks on white spaces
- a pair of scissors

Keeping a book repair kit in the Library area, using it yourself, and encouraging children to use it convey the message that everyone in the classroom should respect and care for books.

What Children Learn in the Library Area

In chapter 3 of *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Volume 1: The Foundation*, we identified the components of each content area (literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, and technology). With your guidance, children use language and literacy skills to gain content knowledge. Here are some of the many ways that content learning is addressed in the Library area:

Literacy

Encourage children to experience **literacy as a source of enjoyment** by reading and rereading favorite stories aloud. Speak with expression and show your passion for good books.

Expand children’s **vocabulary and other language skills** by reading and talking about a variety of high-quality books. Relate the words they are learning to their own experiences. Help children expand their general knowledge by offering them books about many topics.

Promote children’s **phonological awareness** by reading stories that play with language, such as Dr. Seuss’s books and other rhyming books. As children begin to write, help them think about the sounds of words (e.g., “*Milk*. That starts the same way as your name, Mikey.”).

Increase their **knowledge of print** by sweeping your hand under the words as you read. Create opportunities for children to watch you write, and point out your top-to-bottom and left-to-right progression. Set up a message board or mailboxes to encourage children to write to each other. Teach children about **letters and words** by talking about them as they read and write.

Support children’s **comprehension** by asking open-ended questions during storybook readings. To promote their sense of story, encourage children to use props to retell familiar stories.

Enhance children’s understanding of **books and other texts** by drawing their attention to various forms of print. Include a variety of reading materials in the Library area, such as magazines, nonfiction books, storybooks, and alphabet and counting books.

Mathematics

Support children’s understanding of **number concepts** by including counting books in the Library area. Gather a collection of books in which a particular number is important, such as *The Three Little Pigs*, *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, and *The Three Wishes*, to help children understand quantity. Talk about and compare quantities in your story time discussions. For example, in Pat Hutchins’s book, *The Doorbell Rang*, 12 cookies have to be redivided differently in order to be shared equally each time more children ring the doorbell. Talk about big numbers as you read books such as *How Much Is a Million?* (David Schwartz and Stephen Kellogg).

Call children’s attention to the various **patterns** found in books. Point out visual patterns and help children discover language patterns in predictable books.

Teach children about **geometry and spatial sense** in their world by talking about the photographs of ordinary places in such books as Tana Hoban’s *Shapes, Shapes, Shapes* and *Over, Under, & Through*.

Promote understandings about **measurement** by pointing out words that describe size, such as *enormous turnip* and a *teeny-tiny woman*. Introduce time concepts by repeating words and phrases such as “a long, long time ago,” “tomorrow,” “in a little while,” or “many days later.” Books such as *The Tortoise and the Hare* help children understand speed and time.

Science

Encourage children to use informational books in the Library area to learn about plants and animals, which are the core topics of **life science**. For example, you can address all areas of science through a cooking activity after reading *Stone Soup*. Children learn about healthy foods (life science), how to boil water and use kitchen tools (physical science), and about stones (Earth and the environment).

Help children learn about **physical science** by sharing nonfiction books about how things work and fiction that mentions gadgets (e.g., *The Cat in the Hat* [Dr. Seuss]).

Support children in using what they have learned about **Earth and the environment** by having them dictate a letter urging the school to take good care of the trees near the playground.

Social Studies

Promote an understanding of **people and how they live** by reading stories from other lands and about different occupations. Share books that help children manage their emotions and that show examples of friendship. Books can help children understand

how people are alike and different. Provide opportunities for children to write thank-you notes to visiting experts, letters to each other, and greeting cards to family members.

Use books to support children's understanding of **spaces and geography**. Children learn about directionality as they hear words such as *above*, *below*, *around*, *forward*, and *backward*. Help them learn simple mapping concepts by exploring books like *Me on the Map* (Joan Sweeney) and *As the Crow Flies: A First Book of Maps* (Gail Hartman).

Show children how they can use writing to advocate for a better **environment**. Children can create signs urging others to recycle.

Enhance children's understanding of **people and the past** by sharing books about life long ago. Invite grandparents to share favorite childhood stories, songs, and rhymes and to talk about their lives as children.

The Arts

Promote children's appreciation of the **visual arts** by talking about book illustrations. Point out the name of the illustrator on the cover each time you read a book. Talk about art media and techniques, such as Leo Lionni's torn-paper pictures or Alexandra Day's watercolors of the dog Carl.

Nourish a child's interest in **music** by reading picture books based on songs such as "This Land Is Your Land" and "Down by the Bay." Encourage children to explore **drama** and **dance** by acting out familiar stories.

Technology

Help children develop an **awareness of technology** by pointing out computers, phones, faxes, and other tools in stories. Provide opportunities for children to use audio equipment and computers to listen to stories.

Encourage children to experiment with **basic operations and concepts** of technology as they use simple word processors and use computers for interactive story reading (e.g., the *Living Books* series).

These are just a few of the ways you can address content in the Library area. In the next section we show how teachers purposefully plan experiences with books and writing materials to help children acquire basic reading and writing skills.

Teaching Children to be Creative, Confident Thinkers.

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