

# + Starting out right:

Developmentally appropriate language and early literacy practices for dual language learners and children from families with low incomes



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# Getting to know you...

- Reflection on a 'word'
  - Please introduce yourself, tell us what you do.
  - Give me your take on the words 'early literacy'—what does it mean to you?



# Words associated with early literacy

- Oral language
- Vocabulary
- Phonological awareness
- Alphabets
- Listening comprehension





# Poverty



# School Libraries





# Bronfenbrenner, 1979





# Giving children voice: Overview

Key Areas	Our focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ How do we support all of our children</li><li>❑ Vocabulary Rich Classroom</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ Research base Children's Oral language</li><li>❑ Environmental supports</li><li>❑ Talking, playing, singing, writing, reading</li></ul>





# Oral language development

Children learn language as they interact with responsive adults and peers and experience language use in meaningful contexts.





# Dual language learners

- Rapid growth over the past several decades
- DLL: “bilingual children or second language learners who are exposed to and given opportunities to learn two language from birth or shortly thereafter”



# Research on dual language learning

- Rate of learning is dependent on their learning environments and the quality and amount of exposure to each language
- Children will benefit from developing oral language skills in rich and engaging language environments



# Quality teacher talk is teacherese





# Vocabulary Development

- Learning new words that may be outside of everyday contexts
- Often involves a level of abstraction that is beyond the here-and-now
- Often includes 'academically' related words, and literacy language



# Research on oral language and vocabulary

- Oral language proficiency is the single best predictor of kindergarten readiness
- The number of vocabulary words children know prior to kindergarten predicts children's success at the end of kindergarten, elementary school, and high school



# What We Know

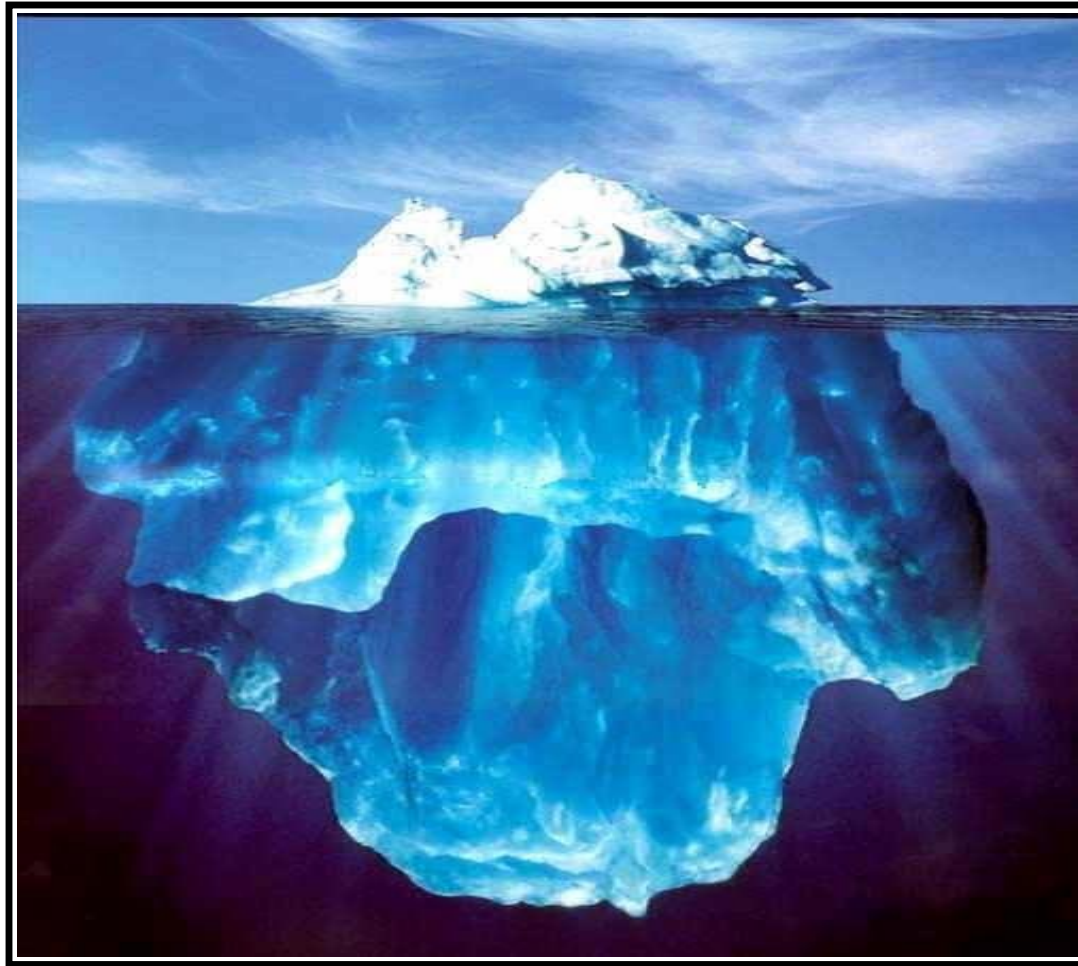
- Preschool years = highest rate of vocabulary development  
(Farkas & Baron, 2004)
- **Effective** vocabulary intervention can even the playing field  
(Marulis & Neuman, 2013)
- Quality, quantity & responsiveness of teacher/parent talk can **mediate** socioeconomic status  
(Mol & Neuman, 2012)



## Try this:

- Group 1: “Teacher, look at my picture.”  
“Oh that’s wonderful; its just beautiful.”
- Group 2: Teacher: “I see. That’s a picture of a horse. How pretty.”
- Group 3: Teacher: “Stop pushing him. Use your words.”





Tip of the iceberg



# Hart & Risley (1995)

	Words heard per hour	Words heard in a 100 hour week	Words heard in a 5,200 hour year	Words heard in 4 years
Low Income Families	616	62,000	3 million	13 million
Working Class Families	1251	125,000	6 million	26 million
Professional Families	2153	215,000	11 million	45 million



## Think About It

*It's circle time in this early childhood classroom, and the teacher is reading a favorite storybook, **Rainbow Fish and the Whale**. As she reads, she stops and points to the picture of the whale. "Look," she says to the children, "Here's a whale and its baby. A baby whale is called a calf," as she continues on to the next page. The word is never repeated.*



## Think about it....

- Boys and girls, today one of our parents is visiting today. She's a veterinarian. That means she takes care of animals. We're going to meet some of her animals, a guinea pig, a kitten, and a ferret during her visit with us.



- They need to become 'word conscious'
- Frequency of encounters
- Word learning needs to be connected to developing meaningful contexts



How do children  
learn words?



# The Five Essentials

These are the 'to-do' you can do all day.

# + The Five Essentials



- Supportive learning environment
- Songs, rhymes, and word play
- Storybook Reading
- Developmental writing
- Literacy and play



- Its not about throwing our what we've traditionally done in early education
- Its about tweaks to our programs to make them more effective

“Powering it up”





# Designing environments for rich language interactions

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# What's Wrong with this Picture?





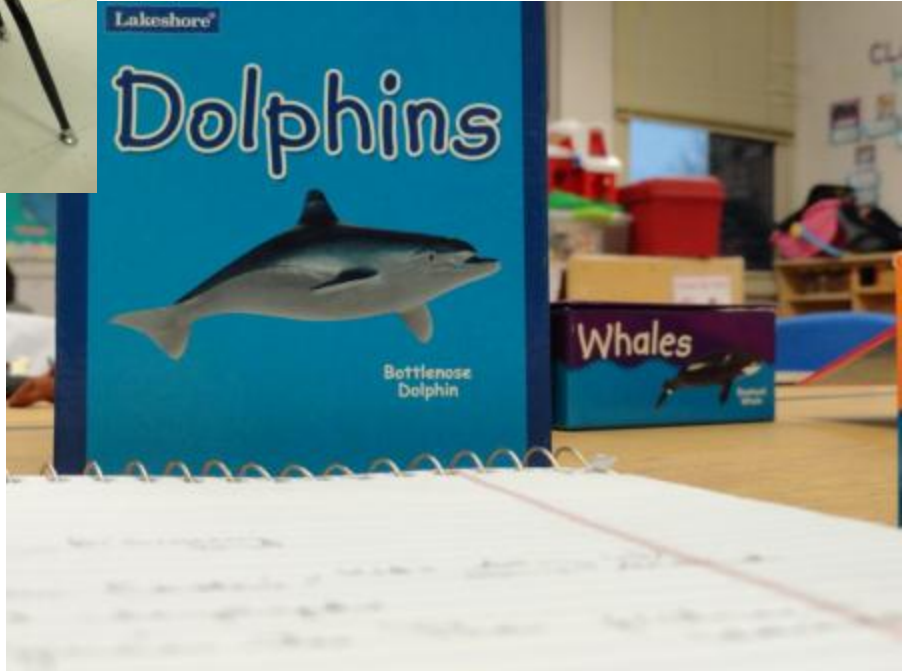
# How do we 'power it up?'

- De-clutter; every space does not need a filling
- Put alphabet and numbers in children's eye view
- Provide cozy spaces to support language interactions



Fewer but nicer books in open-faced book shelves (rotate)







**“Today Keisha and Tanya spent time reading our favorite books together”**

# Anchor Charts

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# Eye to eye instruction

















How do we “power it up” for  
DLL?



## 10 Instructional Practices for Young English Learners

 <p><b>1. Visuals</b> Incorporate images and concrete objects that correspond with text.</p>	 <p><b>2. Mnemonic Devices</b> Integrate songs into lessons to help children remember what they are learning.</p>	 <p><b>3. Check for Understanding</b> Periodically stop instruction to make sure students are grasping new vocabulary words and concepts.</p>
 <p><b>4. Think Time</b> Pause for at least 3 extra seconds between asking a question and receiving student responses.</p>	 <p><b>5. Hand Signals/Gestures</b> Allow children to respond using hand signals and gestures in addition to verbal responses.</p>	 <p><b>6. Heterogeneous Grouping</b> Create discussion groups with children of mixed language ability.</p>
 <p><b>7. Repetition</b> Repeat words frequently across content areas.</p>	 <p><b>8. Multiple Modes of Representation</b> Provide different ways for children to perceive and comprehend information.</p>	 <p><b>9. Explicit Instruction</b> Be clear and direct when explaining something new to students.</p>
 <p><b>10. Bridging Connections</b> Ensure that families have knowledge of what their children are learning so that content becomes salient in their lives.</p>		



# Shared Book Reading





# Typical approach

- During morning meeting, we read one or two storybooks a day
- We pick the book on the basis of the children's interest; the general theme; or the extension activity that you might want to do for the day
- Holiday

Medium	Rare Words per 1000
<b>Print</b>	
Newspapers	68.3
Adult books	52.7
Comic Books	53.5
Children's books	30.9
Preschool books	16.3
<b>Television</b>	
Adult TV	22.7
Children's shows	20.2
Mr. Rogers	2.0
<b>Adult speech</b>	
College Graduate	17.3
Expert testimony	28.4

'Power it up'



## **1. Visuals**

Incorporate images and concrete objects that correspond with text.



## **2. Mnemonic Devices**

Integrate songs into lessons to help children remember what they are learning.



## **9. Explicit Instruction**

Be clear and direct when explaining something new to students.





# Power it up by:

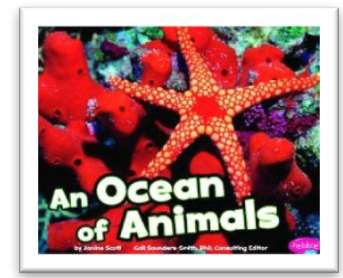
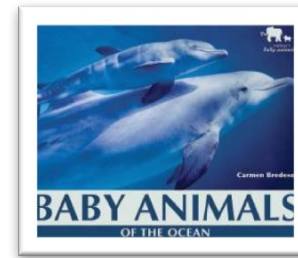
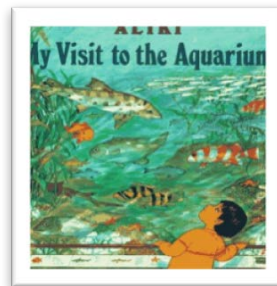
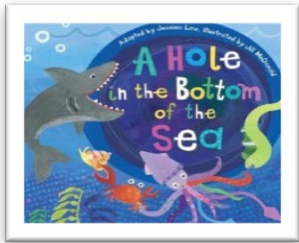
- Sequencing texts so that children have sustained amount of time with a topic (3 weeks) (Textsets)
- Repeated readings
- Multiple genre
- Topics (wild animals; insects; wild weather)...Challenging!!



# What are Text Sets?

“Collections of different genres to support our vocabulary teaching sequence.”

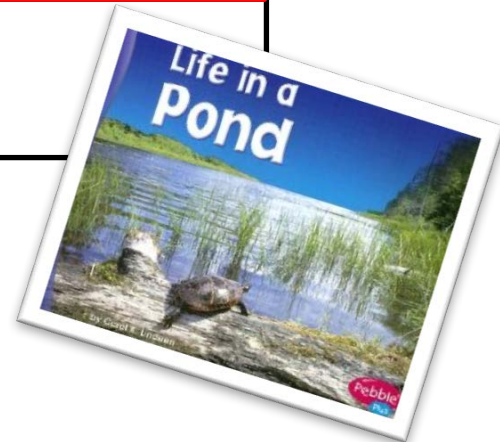
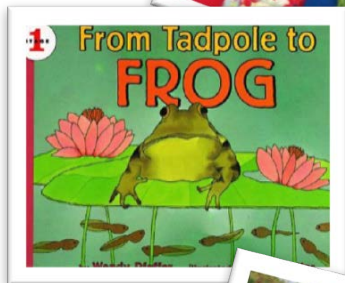
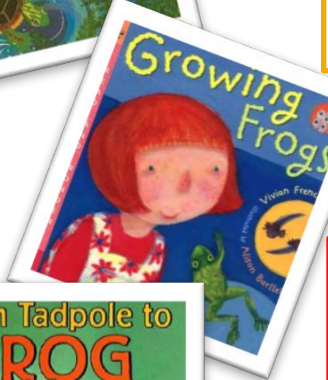
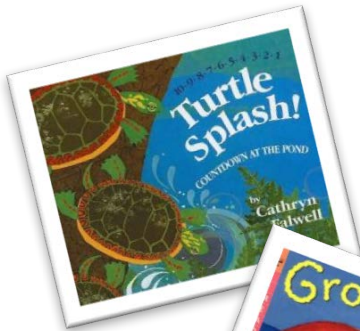
“Collections of books that focus on a concept or a topic”



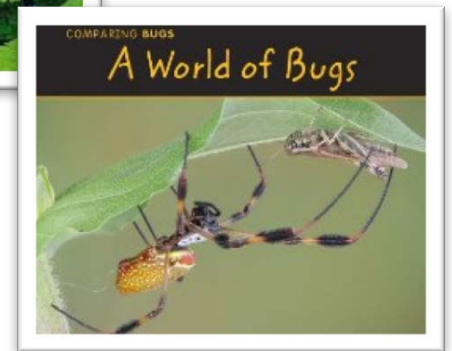
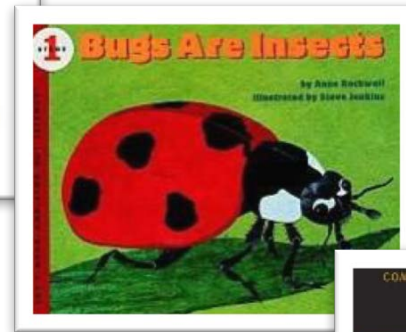
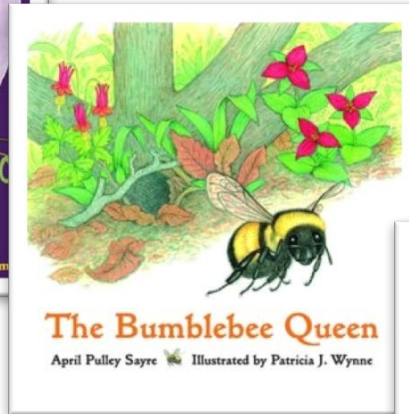
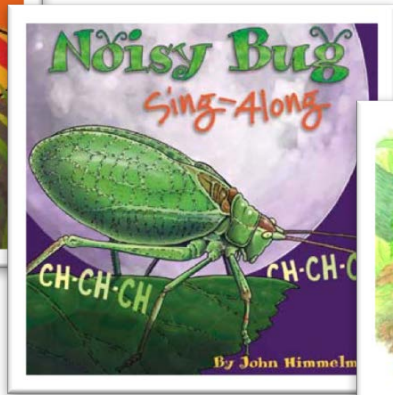
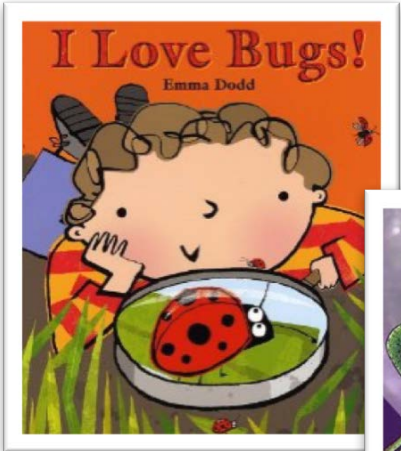


# Text Set Progression

- Start with a predictable book
- Rhyming books
- Introduce storybooks (narratives)
- Informational books



# + Text Set Example: Insect Topic





## **8. Multiple Modes of Representation**

Provide different ways for children to perceive and comprehend information.



## **5. Hand Signals/Gestures**

Allow children to respond using hand signals and gestures in addition to verbal responses.

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# Introduction



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# A little WOW





# Literacy and Play



## **6. Heterogeneous Grouping**

Create discussion groups with children of mixed language ability.

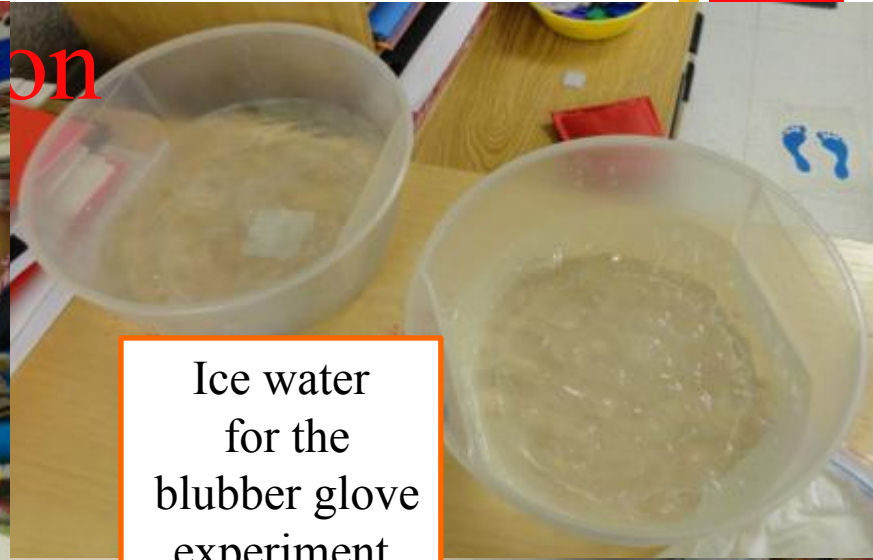
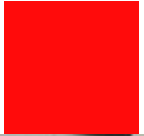


## **4. Think Time**

Pause for at least 3 extra seconds between asking a question and receiving student responses.



# Marine Mammals: Small Group



Ice water  
for the  
blubber glove  
experiment



Martha's Class –  
Learning about blubber



Jen's Class Exploring  
the Blubber Glove



# Marine Mammals: Picture Cards



Pam's Class – Pocket chart with WOW picture cards



### **3. Check for Understanding**

Periodically stop instruction to make sure students are grasping new vocabulary words and concepts.



# Marine Mammals: Picture Cards



Martha's Class – Using WOW picture cards for a small group lesson





# Marine Mammals: Discovery



Pam's Class – Sorting sea animals, exploring how marine mammals might look and feel, and learning about camouflage



### **3. Check for Understanding**

Periodically stop instruction to make sure students are grasping new vocabulary words and concepts.



# Marine Mammals: Discovery



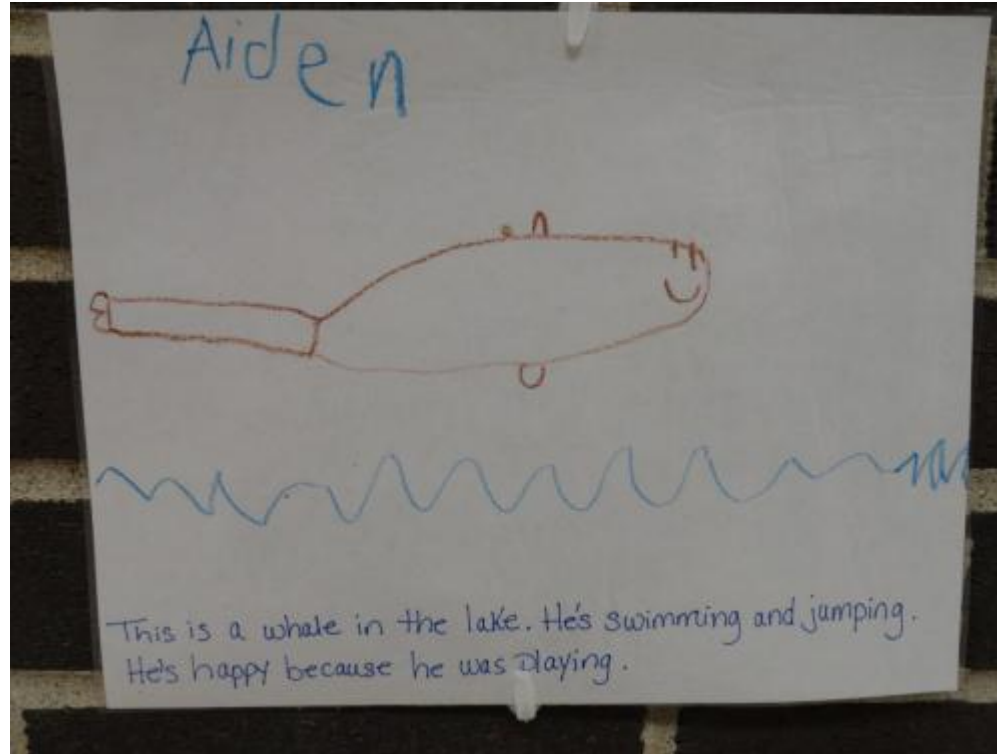
Jen's student explaining what is and isn't a marine mammal.



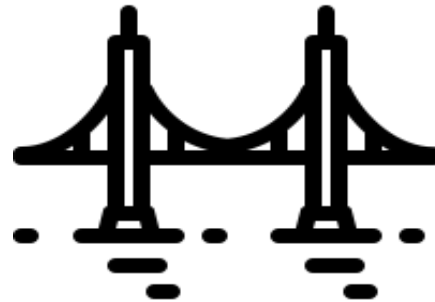
## **8. Multiple Modes of Representation**

Provide different ways for children to perceive and comprehend information.

# + Marine Mammals: Written Expression



Molly's Classroom – Depiction of a whale drawn by a student and posted in the hallway for all to enjoy



## **10. Bridging Connections**

Ensure that families have knowledge of what their children are learning so that content becomes salient in their lives.



# Parent involvement



## WOW Refrigerator Note

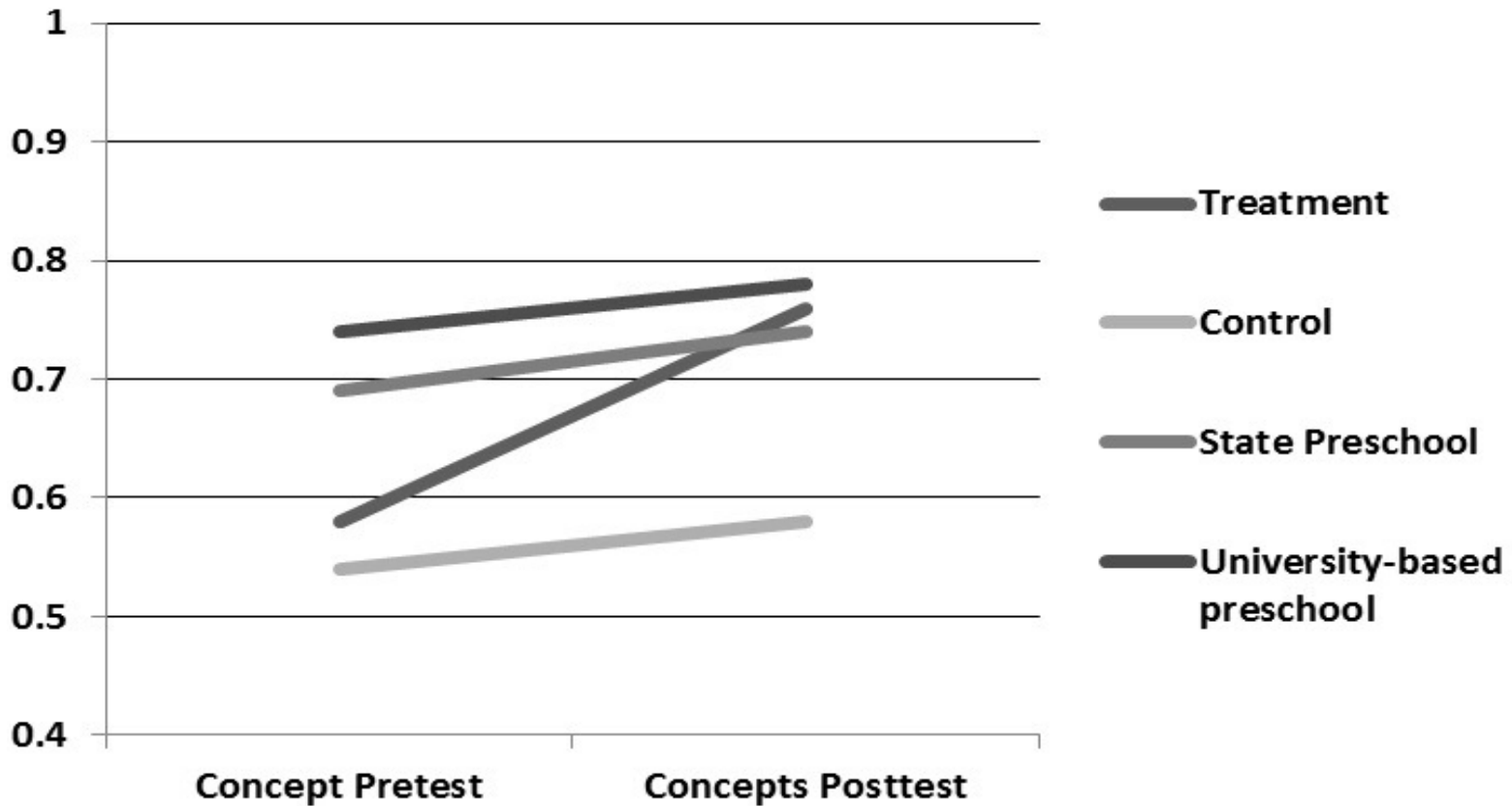
WOW! We are reading and learning about matter right now. During the next several weeks you can help your child by asking them about matter and helping them discover new things about insects.

- Read the attached page with your child. Ask them to tell you something they learned about one of the things.
- Go to the library and check out some books about matter. Read the book with your child and discuss some of the information you read about.
- The kitchen is a great science lab for learning more about matter. As you are preparing meals or work in the kitchen point out to your child how matter can start out in one state, but when it gets hot or cold it can change. For example, water can change into an ice-cube when placed in the freezer. It can change back into a liquid when heated. If water is boiled, steam is formed as a gas.
- Bake a cake or something with a batter. As you pour the batter into a container, ask your child if the batter is a solid or a liquid. Ask them to prove it by listing the properties they see. When the batter is done baking, ask your child if the batter has changed states. Ask them to describe the properties for proof of their thinking.

Thanks!



# Evidence







# Advantage of This Approach

It teaches words in meaningful clusters so it creates a “self-teaching device” that supports independent learning.



## In conclusion

- Think like a word wizard. We can dramatically improve DLL children's development when we talk, sing, and **interact** with them throughout the day.
- Quality and quantity of language matters not just in the early years, but throughout their schooling.