

Pre-K Essential 10, Bullets 1-5 Promoting Literacy at Home Sample Video

MAISA Literacy Essentials

<https://youtu.be/NsgwzP2HZLw>

Narrator: When teachers and families collaborate, this supports children's literacy development. In this classroom, the teacher draws upon and extends language and literacy interactions that families have with their children, and also helps families add to their repertoire of strategies for promoting literacy at home.

Teacher: We have different activities throughout the year that we use where we incorporate the child's family. At the beginning of the year, we do an All About Me book and we encourage families to send in pictures of them with their child and tell us just a little bit about their favorite color, their favorite shape, what they like to do as a family, and then I make a family book of that, and that's in the library all year for the kids to use. They can go back and reference that. So right now I have in my classroom, we did a family quilt. It is a project that the family did. It told us a little bit about what they did as a family over vacation when they came back in and it's the family and different things that they like to do in each section of the quilt. And then when they sent the pieces back, we put it together to form a big quilt.

We do family trees that's hung up in the classroom. You may see it in the hallways. So, we do a lot of different things like that to incorporate the child and the family. The parents are more than welcome, so we try to have that relationship always open. Each family night is built around a book. For example, we did the Very Hungry Caterpillar. So, we had different stations, one station was they did the caterpillar snack. The next station we did a caterpillar book, so we did just different alphabets throughout the book. They had to come up with a picture for A picture for B picture, for C, we had different math activities for the very hungry caterpillar where they had to count the fruit that's in the story, how many strawberries, how many oranges, that type of thing.

And we also had in our library, we actually had the story of The Very Hungry Caterpillar read. So, the parents got to see how we involved the kids asking questions, predicting what's going to happen next, and involving the math with the counting in the book. Also, we have an open door policy so families can come in anytime and interact. They're free to come in and they know that communication is always there. I do a newsletter every month and it lets them know what unit we just finished up, what unit we are getting ready to start, and I give a brief description about that. I also let them know in that out of each unit what they'll be getting, what type of literacy skills they'll be getting. I also send calendars home and it lets them know day by day what activities we do. It gives them activities and ideas on the weekends to also continue on with what we're doing in the classroom.

I send books home and my family advocate also sends books home. Each theme that we do, we send a book home with them. We have blocks and we have insects. Whatever particular unit we're working on, we send a book home to support that. They may have a particular book that we're doing, and I will ask them, can you have your child picture read to you? Ask them what do they see on the pictures? Have them picture, read and describe what's going on in the story for them. We also have monthly and weekly calendars that go home with different literacy and reading ideas that they give families to do. letter I spy, create a story with your child. We send different props home going along with whatever book or whatever theme we're talking about, just to encourage the families to continue that piece at home with the kids also.

This unit, we sent home a book called *The Litter Monster*, and it is a book that the kids find out that the litter monster goes around and he litters trash throughout and they have to come up with different ways on how to help the litter monster clean up. We also have a poem that goes along with that, and the kids came along with the different ideas of how the Litter Monster needs to clean up the classroom, how he needs to rake leaves, how he needs to take the bottles to the center to be recycled. So, we extended that off of the book as well, just to do everyday life situations. We made slime this week and we wrote the steps down on the paper for the kids to see. We really had fun with it. We sent the recipe home for the parents to do, and we also gave them the idea of doing slime letters, slime numbers, talking about what the sound starts with.

Any type of activity that they're doing with them at home, where they're doing it here and they're doing it at school, you just see a huge boost. Most parents, you'll hear positive feedback coming back when you meet with them for home visits or for conferences or if they're just stopping into the classroom. You'll hear that they use the activities, and they really like them. They enjoy them. On our home visits, we have four home visits a year. We share all the components of our program in there. We give them a book to start off with. They set a goal throughout the year, so it may be reading 10 minutes a day and maybe reading 10 minutes every other day just to get them involved in it. And we really, really encourage them to let them know that the literacy skills that they start now, the more vocabulary they pick up, the more reading that they do, the better readers they'll be when they go to kindergarten and on.

So, we start that from the very, very first home visit. A lot of parents will say, well, my child can't read, but we always say, well, we don't say we can't read. We always encourage them to picture read. Picture reading is just turning a page and it may be a caterpillar eating a leaf. We just tell them, just have your child just ask and look at the pictures and say what they think that caterpillar's doing. Caterpillar may be eating a leaf and they may say the caterpillar's climbing up the tree, but that's okay. That's their creativity and that's what we want them to do. We want them to be excited about reading. The activities that we send home, it only takes five minutes, 10 minutes. I know a lot of parents have busy schedules. I even encourage them if they have an older sibling, have the sibling sit down with them for a few minutes. Maybe grandma can sit down for a few minutes and read a story or do the letter sounds with them just a few minutes of the day. It can even be a bedtime ritual in the bathtubs or right before you get ready to go to bed or even having a discussion at dinnertime to have them eager to learn. When the parents are on board, I mean, you can just see a huge boost if they're involved here and they're doing it at home as well, and you can just see the growth throughout the year.

Narrator: Learn more at literacyessentials.org.