

# Exploring Literacy Based Interest Areas in Creative Curriculum

March 2024  
Coaching Corner PD

Presenters: Heather Boddie and LaKendra Reed



# Let's Agree on Some Norms

- **Focus:** We have a lot to learn, so we all commit to focusing and being as present as possible. This work cannot wait.
- **Humble:** We commit to being learners, even if the content isn't completely new for us.
- **Support:** Your learning is always supported, so we encourage you to ask questions and ask for help.





# Objectives

**As a result of this session, participants will...**

- **Understand** the importance of literacy-based interest areas and its long-term impact on children's academic success and overall development
- **Explore** ways to utilize interest areas in the Creative Curriculum to enhance students' literacy skills
- **Acquire** practical ideas and approaches for integrating literacy-focused activities within interest areas



# Agenda

Question of the Day (Ice Breaker)

Introduction to Literacy-Based Interest Areas

The Role of the Teacher, Teachers's Assistant, and Floater

Literacy Area Expectations

Activities and Ideas for Literacy-Based Centers

Key Ideas and Closure





# Question of the Day



Which literacy-based interest area does your students enjoy most? Why do you think they enjoy that area?

Type your answers in the chat box.



## Unlocking Potential: The Power of Interest Areas

# Introduction

## What are interest areas?

- Designated centers within the classroom each with a specific focus that encourage children to participate in the focus of that area
- Encourage exploration and hands-on learning
- Cater to various learning styles and interests

# Promoting Literacy Through Interest Areas

- Creative Curriculum's literacy areas immerse children in language-rich settings, sparking curiosity and interaction.
- These areas offer diverse activities fostering various literacy skills (alphabet knowledge, rhyming, blending, segmenting, reading, writing, etc.).
- Children actively engage with literacy manipulatives and games, enhancing their understanding through hands-on experiences.



# Literacy Based Interest Areas



- **Foundational Literacy Area:**
  - Provides hands-on opportunities for children to develop early literacy skills
  - Encourages exploration of language, letters, sounds, and words in a fun and engaging way
- **Writing Area:**
  - Promotes fine motor skills development through writing and drawing activities
  - Builds confidence and self-expression through creative writing opportunities
- **Library/Listening Area:**
  - Fosters a love for books and literacy
  - Supports language development and imagination
- **Technology:**
  - Utilize tablets or computers loaded with interactive books and literacy games that allow children to listen to stories and engage in interactive activities related to literacy



# Benefiting the Whole Child

## **Benefits of literacy-based interest areas for students**

- Promote hands-on learning
- Encourage active exploration and the development of critical literacy skills
- Cater to diverse learning needs
- Foster creativity and imagination
- Support social, emotional, and literacy development
- Preparation for future reading success



# Building Blocks for Learning

## Components of Effective Interest Areas

- **Classroom Design/Layout:** Interest areas should be clearly defined and easily accessible to students.
- **Materials/Manipulatives:** Provide a variety of open-ended materials in each interest area to encourage children to explore and experiment in different ways. Rotate materials periodically to keep children engaged and interested in the activities within the interest areas.
- **Adult Facilitation:** Teachers play a crucial role in facilitating children's learning experiences within interest areas by observing, guiding, encouraging, and supporting their exploration.



# Key Ideas: The Power of Interest Centers

- Interest areas are different areas of the classroom that are designed to encourage children to explore and engage in various types of learning experiences.
- The key components of interest areas include classroom design/layout, materials, and adult facilitation. These components work together to create engaging and meaningful learning experiences for young children.



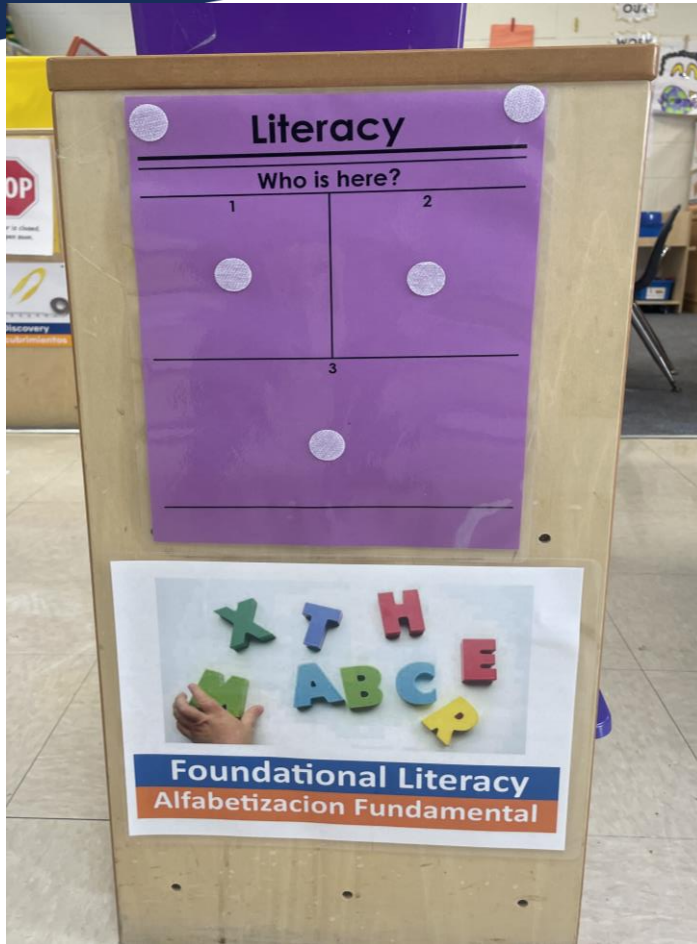
# Guiding the Journey: The Role of the Teacher, TA, and Floater

Teachers	Teacher's Assistants (TA)	Floaters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan and implements activities that align with children's interests and needs</li><li>• Observe/asses Brigance and/or Report Card skills</li><li>• Facilitates learning experiences</li><li>• Ask open-ended questions and engages students in meaningful conversations</li><li>• Provide guidance and support to children</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Help set up and clean interest areas</li><li>• Assist with observing and assessing Brigance and/or report card skills</li><li>• Provide additional support to individual children or small groups</li><li>• Ask open-ended questions and engages students in meaningful conversations</li><li>• Help maintain order and a safe and engaging environment for students</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides additional supervision and support to students</li><li>• Assist with setting up and cleaning up interest areas</li><li>• Offer extra adult-child interaction and support</li><li>• Assist with observing and assessing Brigance and/or report card skills</li><li>• Asks open-ended questions and engages students in meaningful conversations</li></ul>

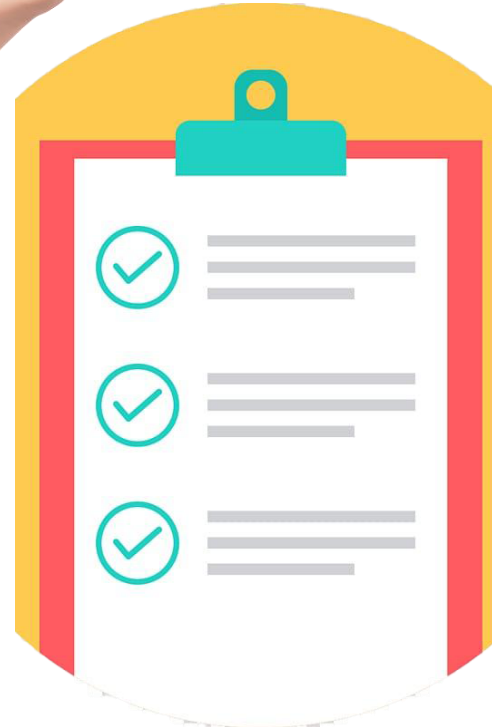




# Managing the Journey



## The logo for Memphis Shelby County Schools is a circular emblem. The words "MEMPHIS" and "SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOLS" are written in a blue, serif font, curving along the top and sides of the circle respectively. In the center of the emblem is a stylized torch with a yellow flame, resting on an open book. The book's pages are depicted with red and blue horizontal stripes. A yellow five-pointed star is positioned at the bottom center of the book. The entire logo is set against a background of red and blue diagonal stripes.



PRE-K STUDENT ACADEMIC ANECDOTAL RECORD 2022-2023			
Student _____		Teacher _____ TA _____ Location _____	
<i>Directions: Teacher and TA will note observations about the needs of the whole child in the 10 key areas shown below. Observer should initial under the date.</i>			
Date	Approaches to Learning	Date	Approaches to Learning
	Emergent Reading                <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto;">IEP Goal (IA)</div>		Emergent Writing                <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto;">IEP Goal (IA)</div>
	Oral Development                <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto;">IEP Goal (IA)</div>		Mathematics                <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto;">IEP Goal (IA)</div>
	Physical Development                <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto;">IEP Goal (IA)</div>		Science/Health                <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto;">IEP Goal (IA)</div>
	Social Studies                <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto;">IEP Goal (IA)</div>		Social-Emotional Development                <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto;">IEP Goal (IA)</div>
	Technology/Media                <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto;">IEP Goal (IA)</div>		Fine Arts                <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto;">IEP Goal (IA)</div>

## D-9: Word Recognition

(Literacy Interest Area)



# Building Bridges with Brigance

- Incorporating Brigance skills into interest areas helps teachers assess children's development holistically
- Aligning activities with Brigance skills aids in tracking progress in various domains
- Connecting interest areas to Brigance skills ensures meaningful learning experiences



**What Brigance skills could be assessed during literacy-based interest areas?**



# Key Ideas: Creating Spaces that Inspire

- Document authentic student work as students participate in interest areas
- Use a center management system for student accountability
- Understand the role of the Teacher, TA, and Floater
- Incorporate Brigrance skills and assess as appropriate





# Interest Area Challenges

- Limited Resources
- Differentiating Instruction
- Classroom Management
- Assessment and Documentation
- Balancing Free Play and Targeted Activities



# Navigating Interest Area Challenges: Strategies for Success

## Challenge 1: Limited Resources

### **Solution:**

- Seek support from Instructional Advisor and Foundational Literacy Coach
- Utilize teacher-made or recycled materials for interest area activities



# Navigating Interest Area Challenges: Strategies for Success

## Challenge 2: Differentiated Instruction

### **Solution:**

- Provide a variety of activities within each interest area to cater to different learning styles
- Offer flexible materials that can be adapted for various skill levels
- Rotate activities to maintain interest and challenge children appropriately



# Navigating Interest Area Challenges: Strategies for Success

## Challenge 3: Classroom Management

### **Solution:**

- Establish clear expectations
- Implement a center management system to manage the number of children in each center at a given time
- Collaborate with teaching assistants to support supervision



# Navigating Interest Area Challenges: Strategies for Success

## Challenge 4: Assessment and Documentation

### **Solution:**

- Develop quick observation tools to assess students' engagement and progress in learning centers
- Use a display system to document and showcase students' work



# Navigating Interest Area Challenges: Strategies for Success

## Challenge 5: Balancing Free Play and Guided Activities

### **Solution:**

- Designated, specific times for structured and unstructured activities
- Ensure that structured activities align with progression of standards



# Key Ideas: Navigating Interest Area Challenges

- **Limited Resources:** seek support from Instructional Advisors and Coaches; utilize teacher-made materials for activities
- **Differentiated Instruction:** provide a variety of activities that cater to diverse learning styles
- **Classroom Management:** establish clear expectations, implement a center management system, and utilize TAs for supervision
- **Assessment and Documentation:** utilize quick documentation tools
- **Balancing Free Play and Guided Activities:** adhere to the designated times for each



# Literacy Small Group Interest Area Expectations

- Teachers may choose specific literacy activities for student groups who are not involved in a small group lesson.
- Teachers may also give students the autonomy to choose literacy activities from their preferred literacy-based area.
- Both approaches are acceptable.

Literacy-based areas only.



All areas open.



All areas open.



8:00-8:20	<b>ARRIVAL (SONGS/FINGERPLAYS/NURSERY RHYMES) / SECOND STEPS CURRICULUM]</b> Teacher/TA greet students/sing, play music/write/ nursery rhymes; health check; assist students; 2nd Step Lesson when applicable	20
8:20-8:40	<b>BREAKFAST/RESTROOM</b> Teacher/TA assists with serving students; promote independence; engage in conversations with students to develop social skills	20
8:40-9:00	<b>MORNING MEETING (FOUNDATIONAL LITERACY FOCUS)</b> Teacher: greets students with written morning message; Provide explicit foundational literacy instruction using the TN Foundational Literacy Supplemental Curriculum/Best for All TA: Participates in activities with students; collect anecdotal notes to document students' progress and/or needs	20
9:00-9:05	<b>MIGHTY MINUTES/TRANSITION: MUSIC/MOVEMENT</b> Teacher/TA engage students in physical movement, Brigrance GM skills, and/or interactive song before/during transition	5
9:05-9:25	<b>LARGE GROUP LITERACY</b> Teacher/TA engages students in curriculum unit of study meaning-based literacy activities	20
9:25-10:05	<b>LITERACY SMALL GROUP/FREE CHOICE LITERACY CENTERS</b> Teacher/TA conducts small group literacy lessons (Teacher/TA: 2 groups for 15 minutes/day); Students engage in planned literacy activities (2-3 activities per center: reading; writing; foundational literacy; technology; After small group, Teacher works with students one-on-one (two 10-minute individual lessons as needed) and TA facilitates centers (engage in meaningful conversations with students to develop learning concepts)	40
10:05-10:10	<b>MIGHTY MINUTES/TRANSITION: MUSIC/MOVEMENT</b> Teacher/TA engage students in physical movement, Brigrance GM skills, and/or interactive song before/during transition	5
10:10-11:10	<b>FREE CHOICE LEARNING CENTERS</b> Teacher/TA provides well-planned, organized center opportunities for students' engagement; facilitate centers and asks students higher-order thinking questions to promote concept development; observe/asses Brigrance/Report Card skills, document & collect anecdotal notes/student work sample artifacts	60
11:10-12:00	<b>LUNCH/RESTROOM/TOOTHBRUSHING</b> Teacher/TA sit with students during lunch; engage in conversation/assist with restroom/hygiene needs	50
12:00-12:15	<b>READ ALOUD</b> Teacher will read aloud a story about the unit of study and engage students in discussions.	15
12:15-12:20	<b>MIGHTY MINUTES/TRANSITION: MUSIC/MOVEMENT</b> Teacher/TA engage students in physical movement, Brigrance GM skills, and/or interactive song before/during transition	5
12:20-12:50	<b>NAP</b> Teacher/TA lay out cots; administrative work; remain in classroom with students	30
12:50-1:05	<b>INDOOR GROSS MOTOR</b> Teacher and TA will engage students in indoor Brigrance gross motor activities	15
1:05-1:20	<b>RESTROOM/SNACK</b> Teacher/TA assists students with restroom to teach and enforce good health practices and hygiene; Teacher/TA engage students in physical movement, Brigrance GM skills, and/or interactive song before/during transition	15
1:20-2:05	<b>MATH WHOLE GROUP/SMALL GROUP/FREE CHOICE CENTERS</b> Teacher introduces math concept in whole group and engages students in two 15-minute small group lesson; TA facilitates free choice learning centers (Includes 5 minutes to clean up and transition)	45
2:05-2:10	<b>MIGHTY MINUTES/TRANSITION: MUSIC/MOVEMENT</b> Teacher/TA engage students in physical movement, Brigrance GM skills, and/or interactive song before/during transition	5
2:10-2:40	<b>OUTDOOR GROSS MOTOR PLAY</b> Teacher/TA engage with students during play to model/teach/observe/asses Brigrance gross motor/social skills; provide water breaks as needed	30
2:40-2:45	<b>MIGHTY MINUTES/TRANSITION</b> Teacher and TA will lead students back into the classroom	5
2:45-3:00	<b>LARGE GROUP ROUNDUP-CLOSING/PREPARE for DISMISSAL</b> Teacher/TA review the learning for the day; allow students to summarize something they learned during the day; recite nursery rhyme and/or sing song	15
3:00-3:15	<b>TEACHER PLANNING</b>	15

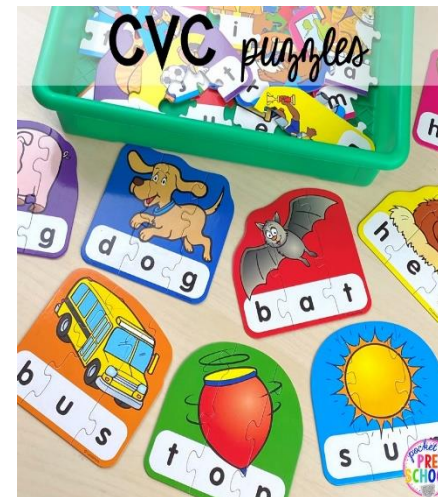


# Literacy Interest Area Objectives for the Exercise Study

Second Step Safety Curriculum: Completed for the year		March 25-29, 2024					Weekly Assessments: Report Cards Distributed March 27 <sup>th</sup>	
Creative Curriculum Study	Morning Message (Phonemic Awareness)	Mighty Minutes (Card Numbers)	Phonological Awareness (Letter Bundles)	Sight Words	Stories/ Nursery Rhymes	Vocabulary	Color/ Shape/ Number	Discussion and Shared Writing
Exercise Study	<u>INFSCS</u> Unit 6, Week 2, Days 1-5 (page 48) <u>SFAM</u> Volume 2, Week 22, Days 1-5 (page 156)	<b>Monday:</b> 252 <b>Tuesday:</b> 265 <b>Wednesday:</b> 287 <b>Thursday:</b> 295 <b>Friday:</b> No School	<b>Letter Bundle 4</b>  <b>Short Vowel:</b> Uu  <b>Consonants:</b> Tt, Vv, Ww, Xx, Yy	other about	<b>Stories:</b> Max friendship book Soccer Counts!  <b>Nursery Rhyme:</b> "Star Light, Star Bright"	<b>Investigation #2:</b> Indoors, outdoors, triathlon, locations, dancing, treadmill  <b>Investigation #3:</b> Equipment, challenging, hand weights, scale, balance, balance beam, yoga, mat, helmet, injured	green, red cylinder 2	Refer to Teaching Guide
Literacy Small Group Instruction I can blend 3 sounds. (refer to Cloud lesson plan)					Math Small Group Instruction I can compose and decompose numbers up to 5 and beyond. (refer to Cloud lesson plan)			
Interest Area Objectives								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ <b>Art:</b> I can create a life-size body outline of myself and use the outline to identify muscles I use to exercise.</li><li>✓ <b>Blocks:</b> I can stack and build using various blocks.</li><li>✓ <b>Discovery:</b> I can match pictures of exercise equipment to pictures of people performing the same exercise outdoors.</li><li>✓ <b>Dramatic Play:</b> I can pretend to cook using healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables.</li><li>✓ <b>Foundational Literacy:</b> I can build and read CVC words.</li><li>✓ <b>Library:</b> I can explore and retell stories about the body and exercise.</li></ul>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ <b>Listening:</b> I can listen to stories about the body and exercise.</li><li>✓ <b>Music and Movement:</b> I can follow color clues to stop, slow down, or freeze as I dance. (Use Mighty Minute 280, Stoplight Dance)</li><li>✓ <b>Sand and Water:</b> I can mold using sand.</li><li>✓ <b>Technology:</b> I can explore photos of the human body.</li><li>✓ <b>Toys and Games:</b> I can use various manipulatives to compose and decompose numbers.</li><li>✓ <b>Writing:</b> I can write my own words to build sentences.</li></ul>			

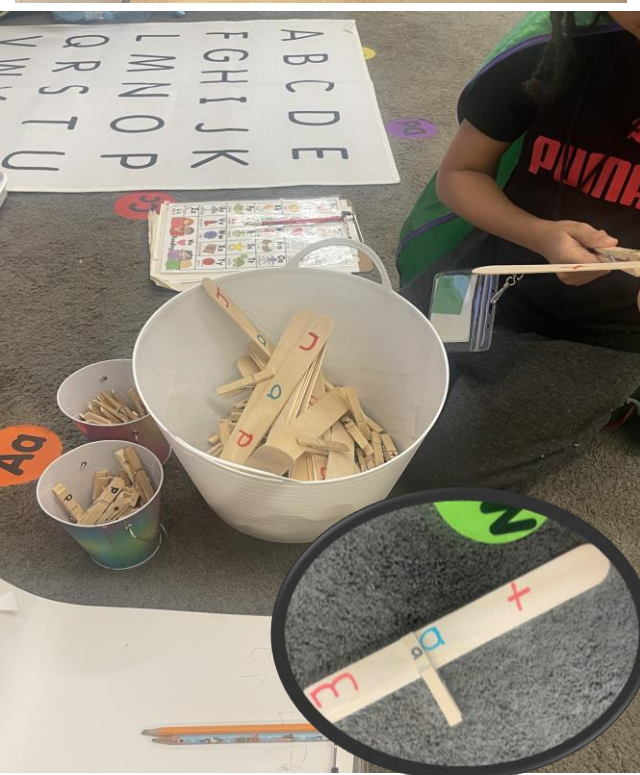


# Foundational Literacy Interest Area



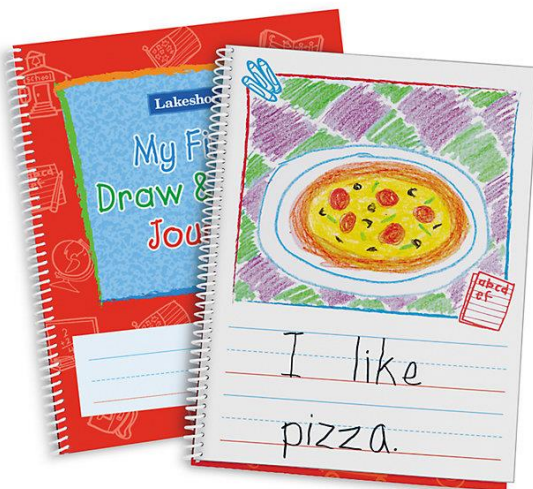
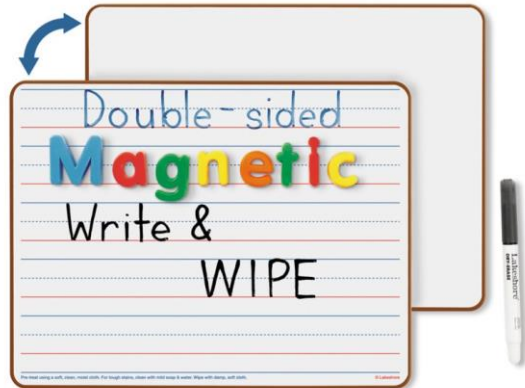
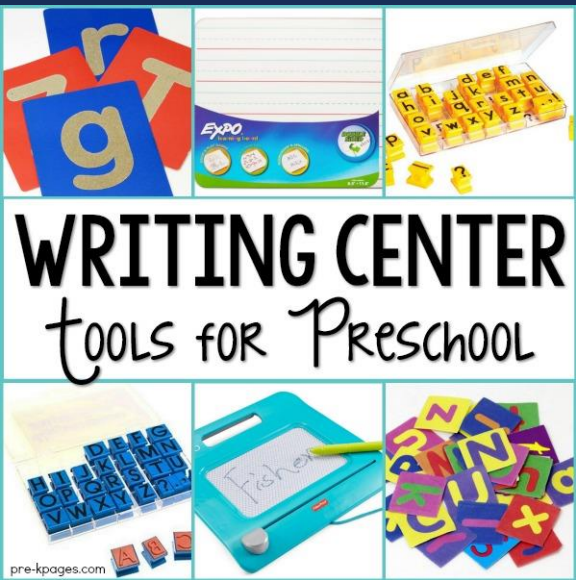


# Foundational Literacy Interest Area



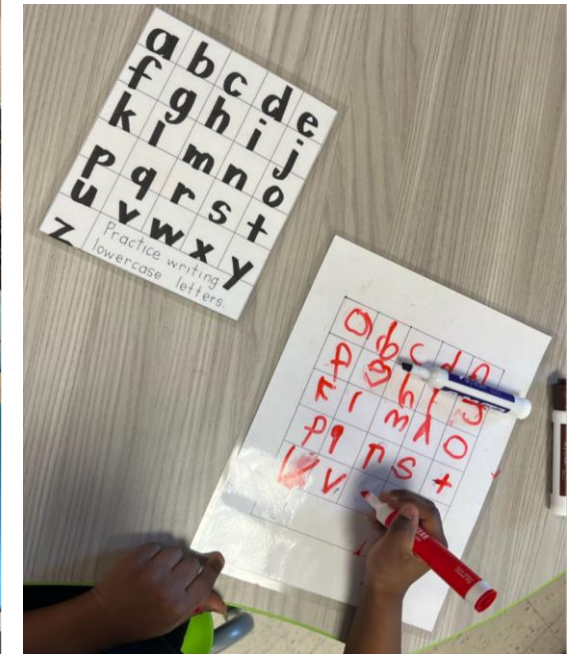
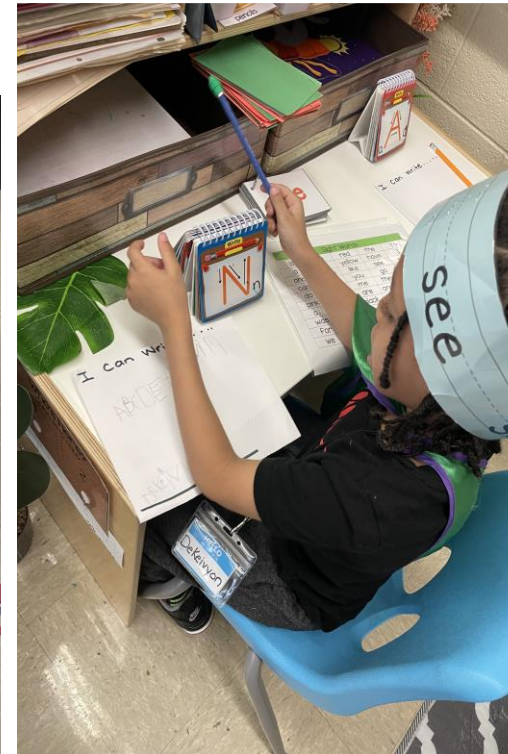
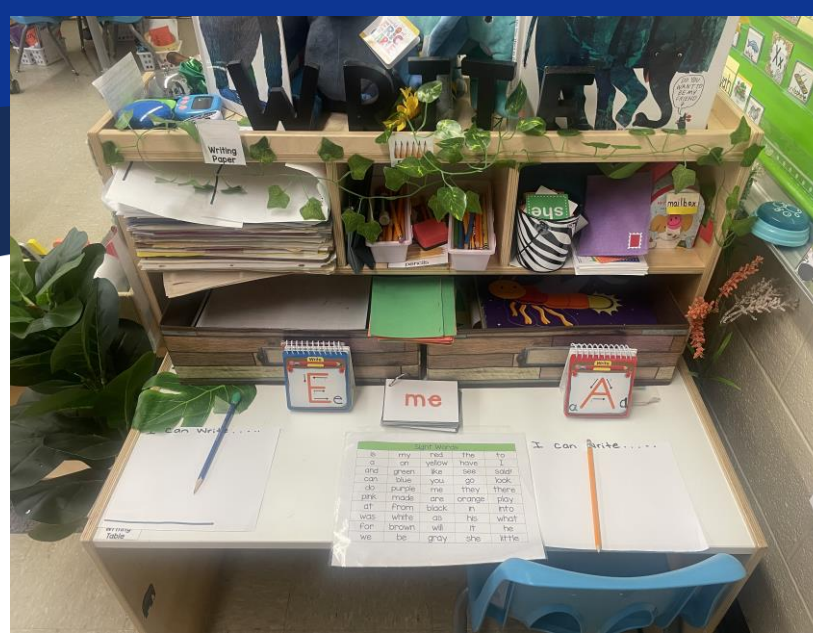


# Writing Interest Area





# Writing Interest Area



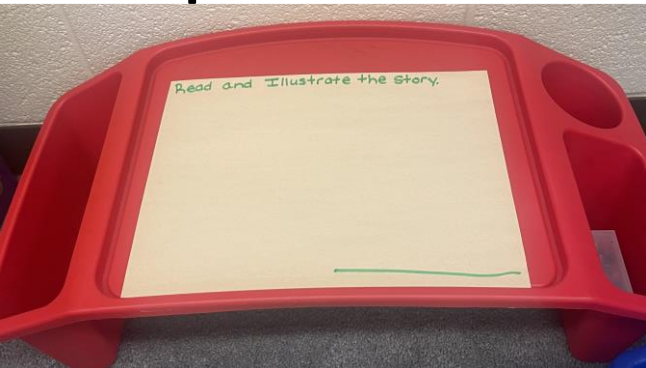


# Library and Listening Interest Areas



# epic!

GetEpic.com



## Materials

- Selection of stuffed animals
- Box or basket for storage

## Setup Suggestions

- Place stuffed critters into a basket or box for easy access.
- Model to students how to read quietly with a buddy.

## Library Skills

- Independent reading practice

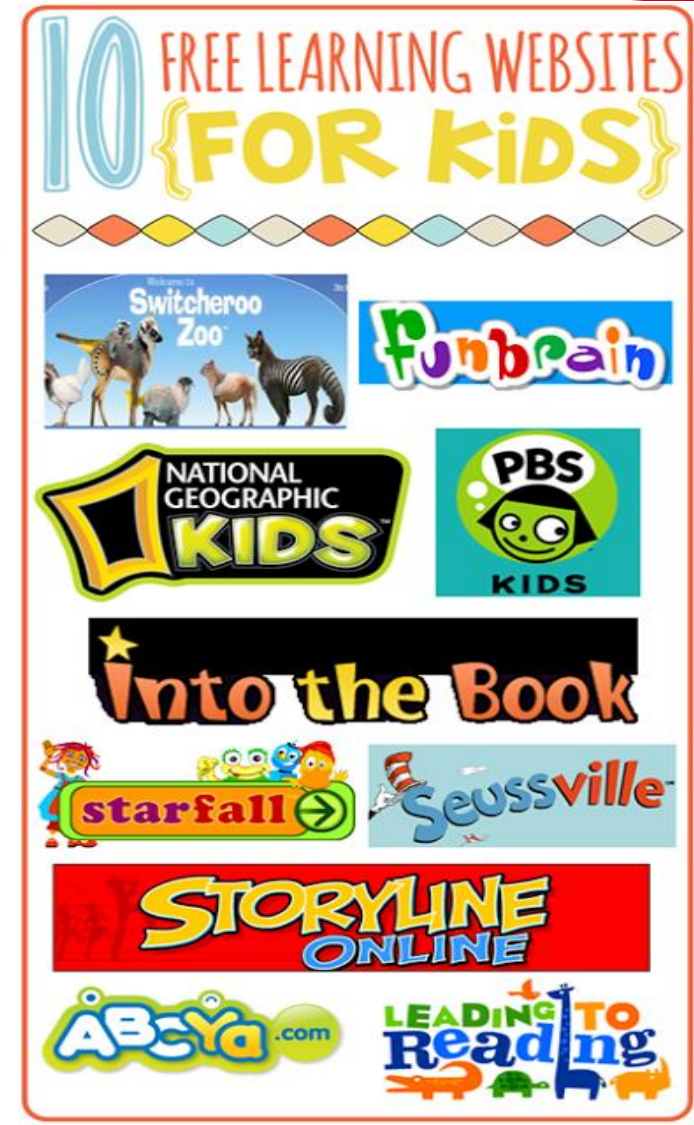
Brigance:

D-1: Experience with Books and Text





# Technology Interest Area





# Exploring the Vision: Interest Areas Video (Free Choice)





# Exploring the Vision: Interest Areas Video (Teacher Directed)



# Key Ideas: Interest Areas

- Be intentional when planning literacy activities.
- Model how to use interest area games and materials.
- Provide clear directions with visuals.
- Set behavioral goals and expectations.
- Keep areas to four or fewer students.
- Get creative with the activities.
- Ensure materials are labeled and organized.
- Provide time for student clean up.





Based on your learning from today's session regarding literacy-based interest areas, what is one thing you will **start** doing, and one thing you will **stop** doing?

**Type your answers in the chat box.**



# Upcoming PD Opportunities



"Toolbox Tuesdays-Providing Challenge and Interest to  
Advanced Students"

Tuesday, April 9th, 4:15-5:45pm  
Shady Grove Early Learning Center

"The Coaching Corner-Making Stories and Read-Alouds  
Come to Life!"

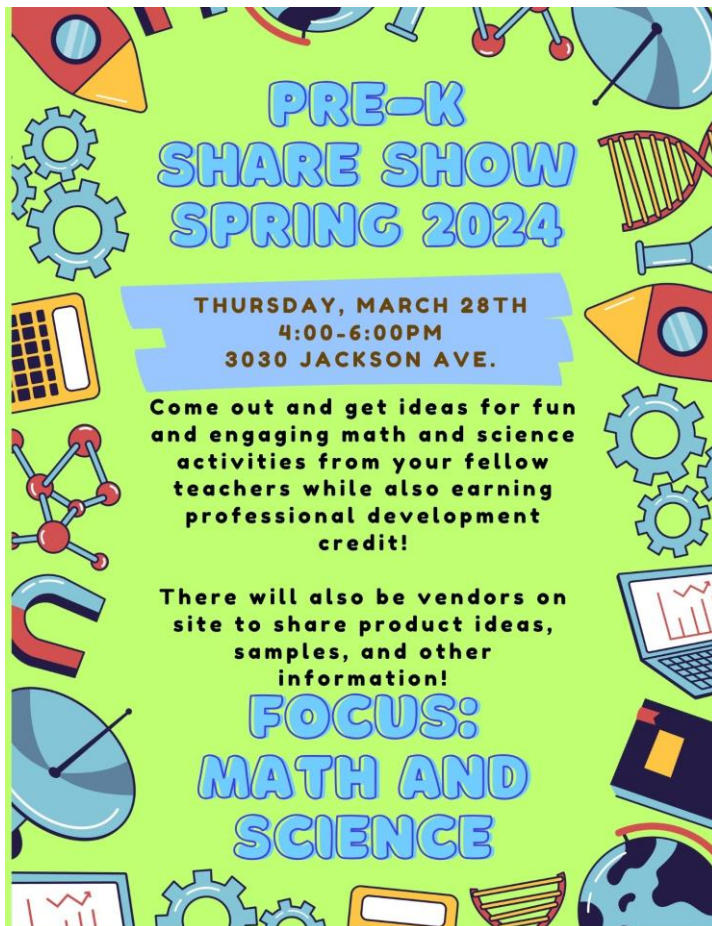
Monday, April 22nd, 4-5:30pm  
Virtual

# Spring 2024 Pre-K Share Show



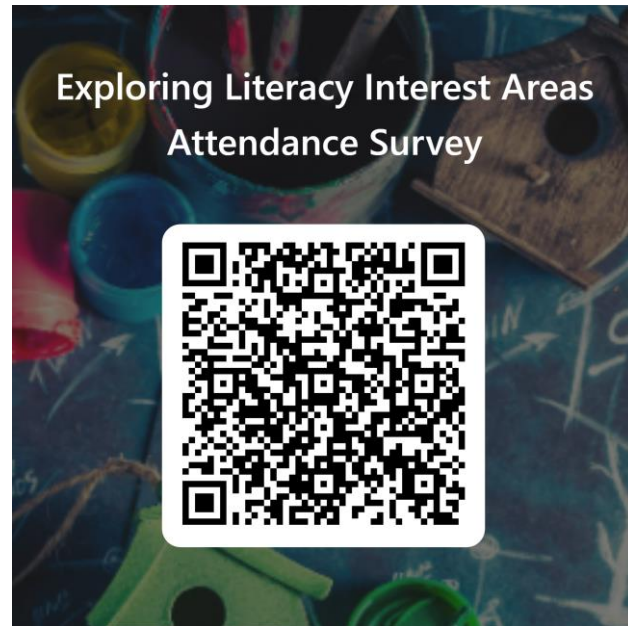
This Thursday, March 28th  
4-6pm  
3030 Jackson Ave.

Math & Science Demonstrations  
Vendors  
Giveaways  
And more!



# Attendance Procedures

## Attendance Survey:



[bit.ly/mar25att](https://bit.ly/mar25att)

## Feedback:



[bit.ly/mar25surv](https://bit.ly/mar25surv)

