

APPENDIX

Parents Accreditation Handbook

Developing Accredited Course for Parents

Raising Early Achievement in Literacy Project



Parents Accreditation

Accreditation Handbook

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Introduction

This handbook is for parents participating in the REAL Project Parents Accreditation Programme leading to an Open College Network certificate.

The handbook sets out the learning outcomes and the examples needed to demonstrate that each learning outcome has been achieved. It is a *guide* rather than a set of rigid rules, and has been produced to help parents who wish to submit a portfolio of learning as part of the REAL Project for work their children's literacy.

The REAL Project Parents Accreditation has five main parts – each containing four small sections. This handbook provides an example of how the portfolio of learning might be organised and what it might contain. Parents will, however, have their own examples of work with their own child and it is these that will make each portfolio different and individual.

The Portfolio of Learning

The Portfolio of Learning is a collection of writing, pictures, leaflets and perhaps video or audio tape that together shows that you have done all the things required to gain the Open College Certificate for the REAL Project course for parents.

The collection can take many different forms, such as:

- a box folder
- a ring binder
- a set of envelopes
- a cardboard box with various bags containing examples for each of the different learning outcomes.

There is no single format for the portfolio; it can take any form and be contained in any suitable way, so long as it contains work that demonstrates all the learning outcomes (listed at the back of this handbook).

The portfolio is your own, and you can decide how to organise it and what it shall contain. You will have as much help as you need to put your work together.

Learning Outcome 1

Parents' Roles in Children's Early Literacy

In this section you must describe your role in your child's literacy.

You could start by writing something about your family and your child or children: how old your child or children are and why you think helping them is important.

To fulfil *Learning Outcome 1* you then need to go on to say something under the following four headings:

a. Creating opportunities

Here you can include:

- lists of things you provide for reading and writing
- photographs of where children read and write at home
- something about the importance of children having time and space as well as materials for reading and writing.

For Level 2 you will also need to write something about *why* creating opportunities is important for children's literacy.

b. Showing recognition

Here you can include:

- lists of things you do to show your child that you think their attempts at reading and writing are important, such as: putting their writing on the wall, showing other people, telling other people of their achievements, telling the child how you like the way they read (or write).

For Level 2 you will also need to write something about *why* giving children praise and encouragement is important for them and why it is important for you to understand different steps in achievement in early literacy.

c. Interaction with children around literacy

Here you can include:

- lists of ways you share literacy together, such as: reading books together at bedtime, sharing the writing of birthday cards, talking together about books, saying rhymes together, telling stories to your child
- photographs of you and your child sharing literacy together in different ways
- something about the importance of children having time and space with an adult reading and writing.

For Level 2 you will also need to write something about *why* interaction between adults and children around literacy is important for children's literacy.

d. Being a model of a literacy user

Here you can include:

- lists of the reading and writing your children see you doing, such as: writing shopping lists, writing a birthday card, doing a crossword, doing the lottery, writing a cheque, filling in forms, reading a magazine or newspaper, reading a book, writing a letter
- examples of the reading and writing you do
- photographs of you reading and writing at home.

For Level 2 you will also need to write something about *why* it is important to make a point of letting your children see you using literacy in everyday life.

Learning Outcome 2

Creating Opportunities for Children's Early Literacy

At the start of your work for this Learning Outcome you will need to say that you have already explained the importance of creating opportunities in *Learning Outcome 1* (there is no need to repeat what you have already done, but it is important to draw attention to it again if it fits with this section).

For *Learning Outcome 2* you will need to show how you provide opportunities for your children in four different 'strands' of literacy:

- a environmental print
- b books
- c writing
- d oral language

The following lists will give you some ideas, and you will also have examples of your own.

a. Creating opportunities for environmental print

You need to show what kinds of things you would do to help your child pay attention to the print in and around your home and community. You could include things like:

- labels cut from food packets
- photos of print found in the local neighbourhood
- photo or print found in your home.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* providing for children to see and use print in the home and neighbourhood is important for your child's literacy development.

b. Creating opportunities for using books

You need to show what kinds of things you would do to help your child use books. You could include things like:

- joining and visiting the library regularly, perhaps include a copy of your child's library ticket, or a photograph of you both visiting the library
- lists of books your child has at home
- list of places locally where you can buy books
- a photograph of your child using books at home with a caption saying something about the importance of children having time and space to look at books alone and with others.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* providing books for children is important for your child's literacy development.

c. Creating opportunities for writing

You need to show what kinds of things you would do to help your child with writing. You could include things like:

- examples of writing material they have at home. This could be a list or a collage of writing materials cut from magazines or advertisements
- list of places locally where you can buy writing materials
- a photograph of your child writing at home with a caption saying something about the importance of children having time and space to have a go at writing.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* providing opportunities for writing are important for your child's literacy development.

d. Creating opportunities to talk about literacy

You need to show what kinds of things you would do to help your child learn words and letters that they need to develop their literacy. You could include things like:

- putting magnetic letters on the fridge or form letters in the bath
- lists of rhyme tapes and videos you have used at home
- examples of games to help children learn nursery rhymes and letters – this could be a list or a set of pictures cut from magazines and advertisements.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* providing opportunities for children to *talk* about literacy are important for your child's literacy development.

Learning Outcome 3

Showing Recognition of Children's Early Literacy

At the start of your work for this Learning Outcome you will need to say that you have already explained the importance of showing recognition in *Learning Outcome 1* (there is no need to repeat what you have already done, but it is important to draw attention to it again if it fits with this section).

For *Learning Outcome 3* you will need to show how you recognise your child's literacy in terms of four different 'strands':

- a environmental print
- b books
- c writing
- d oral language

The following lists will give you some ideas, and you will also have examples of your own.

a. Showing recognition of children's use of environmental print

You need to show what kinds of things you notice your child can do when it comes to looking at words and signs at home, at the shops, on the bus and so on. You can include the things you have noticed your child pay attention to, such as the letters of his or her name or the logo of the local supermarket. You could include things like:

- a REAL Project jigsaw showing your child's development in knowledge of environmental print
- a scrapbook or a page of collage showing words and signs your child recognises
- some writing about the things you have noticed your child can do or the things he or she has said about words or signs in or near your home.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* it is important for you to know and recognise the important things your child can do with print in the home and neighbourhood and how this knowledge helps your child's literacy development.

b. Showing recognition of children's use of books

You need to show what kinds of things you notice your child can do when it comes to using books. You can include the things you have noticed your child do with books, such as having favourite books, or choosing particular kinds of books. You could include things like:

- a REAL Project jigsaw showing your child's development in using books
- any leaflets you have from REAL Project meetings about books
- some writing about the things you have noticed your child can do or the things he or she has said about books.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* it is important for you to know and recognise the important things your child can do with books and how this knowledge helps your child's literacy development.

c. Showing recognition of children's early writing

You need to show what kinds of things you have noticed your child can do when it comes to the beginnings of writing. You can include the things you have noticed your child doing. You could include things like:

- a REAL Project jigsaw showing your child's development in early writing
- a few examples of the writing your child has done
- some writing about the things you have noticed your child enjoys about writing.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* it is important for you to know and recognise the things your child can do in relation to writing and how this knowledge helps your child's literacy development.

d. Showing recognition of children's use of language about literacy

You need to show what kinds of things you notice your child can do when it comes to the words, letters and sounds that they need in order to talk about literacy. You could include things like:

- a REAL Project jigsaw showing your child's development in knowledge of oral language that helps literacy
- a list of nursery rhymes he or she knows
- a scrapbook of nursery rhymes he or she has learned
- a list of the letters he or she knows
- some writing about the things you have heard your child say that shows he or she is listening carefully to stories or knows about authors or rhyming words.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* it is important for you to know and recognise your child's learning around language they use to talk about literacy and how this knowledge helps your child's literacy development.

Learning Outcome 4

Interaction with Children around Literacy

At the start of your work for this Learning Outcome you will need to say that you have already explained the importance of interaction around literacy in *Learning Outcome 1* (there is no need to repeat what you have already done, but it is important to draw attention to it again if it fits with this section).

For *Learning Outcome 4* you will need to show how you share literacy with your child or children in four different 'strands' of literacy:

- a environmental print
- b books
- c writing
- d oral language

The following lists will give you some ideas, and you will also have examples of your own.

a. Interaction with children around environmental print

You need to show what kinds of things you do with your child when it comes to looking at words and signs at home, at the shops, on the bus and so on. You could include things like:

- a few examples of you pointing out signs and logos to your child
- a scrapbook or a page of collage showing words and signs your child recognises that you share together with an explanation of how you use it with your child
- a game that you play together where you match different logos and words made from household products
- some writing about the things you make a point of doing with your child to help him or her to notice and recognise words or signs in or near your home.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* it is important for you to talk about and use print in the home and neighbourhood with your child and how this kind of interaction helps your child's literacy development.

b. Interaction with children around books

You need to show what kinds of things you do with your child when it comes to using books at home. You could include things like:

- a few examples of times when you and your child share books together
- a description of what you do when you read with your child
- a short video or audio tape of you and your child reading together.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* it is important for you to share books with your child and how this kind of interaction helps your child's literacy development.

c. Interaction with children around writing

You need to show what kinds of things you do with your child around writing. You could include things like:

- a few examples of times when you and your child write together
- a description of what you do when you help your child with writing
- a short video of you and your child together
- a few examples of the things your child has written with a note along side each about the help you gave.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* it is important for you to write with your child and how this kind of interaction helps your child's literacy development.

d. Interaction with children around language for literacy

You need to show what kinds of things you do with your child when it comes to talking about literacy. You could include things like:

- a copy of the literacy word web, showing the literacy words you and your child use together
- a few examples of times when you and your child sing nursery rhymes together
- a description of what you do when you play with magnetic letters with your child
- a rhyme diary, showing the things you have done together around rhymes during one week
- a list of the words you use when you talk about books.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* it is important for you to talk about literacy and use the names and sounds of letters with your child and how this kind of interaction helps your child's literacy development.

Learning Outcome 5

Being a Model of Literacy

At the start of your work for this Learning Outcome you will need to say that you have already explained the importance of being a model of literacy in *Learning Outcome 1* (there is no need to repeat what you have already done, but it is important to draw attention to it again if it fits with this section).

For *Learning Outcome 5* you will need to show how you make a point using literacy yourself, under the four different literacy ‘strands’:

- a environmental print
- b books
- c writing
- d oral language

The following lists will give you some ideas, and you will also have examples of your own.

a. Being a model – using environmental print

You need to show how you make a point of using print in your home and neighbourhood. You could include things like:

- a few examples of the print your children see you reading, such as instructions on food packets or bus timetables
- write down the things you say to your child when you are using literacy at home, for example: *‘I’m just reading the packet to see how much water to add’*
- keep a diary of all the print you read in one day.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* it is important for you to let your child see you using print in the home and neighbourhood and how this model of literacy helps your child’s literacy development.

b. Being a model – using books

You need to show what kinds of things you do to let your child see you using books at home. You could include things like:

- a few examples of times when your child has seen you reading a book
- if you are a library member, you could include some writing about this and how it helps your child to see you borrowing books and getting the idea that reading is something grown-ups do as well as children
- a list of the occasions when your child sees you reading a book.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* it is important for your child to see you reading and how this can help your child’s literacy development.

c. Being a model of a writer

You need to show what kinds of model of a writer you can provide for your child around writing. You could include things like:

- a few examples of times when your child sees you writing, such as writing a list, writing a card, doing a crossword, writing a letter
- write something about why you make a point of letting your child see you using writing.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* it is important for your child to see you writing and how this kind of interaction helps your child's literacy development.

d. Being a model for using language for literacy

This is quite difficult to illustrate, but you will need to show what kinds of things your child sees you doing when it comes to talking about literacy. You could include things like:

- making a point of talking about the author of a book
- writing book reviews together and talking about what you liked or did not like about one of your child's books
- suggesting making some words from letters
- making a point of singing a nursery rhyme now and then.

For Level 2 you will need to explain *why* it is important for your child to hear you talking about literacy and using the names and sounds of letters with your child and how this kind of interaction helps your child's literacy development.

Annotated bibliography of resources on family literacy and early literacy development

This selected annotated bibliography suggests some books for practitioners relating to family literacy, early language and literacy research. Some journals are also listed; these provide more detailed accounts of research studies. Useful websites are also provided; these are particularly useful for practical ideas and activities.

Brooks, G., Gorman, T., Harman, D. and Wilkin, A. (1996) *Family literacy works*. London: The Basic Skills Agency.

An evaluation of four national demonstration family literacy programmes. Programmes included literacy activities for both parents and children; some of these are described.

Clough, P. and Nutbrown, C.E. (2002) *A student's guide to methodology*. London: Sage.

This accessible book provides information and advice on choosing appropriate research methods, and also distinguishes between 'methods' and 'methodology'. The book is organised in three parts: research is methodology; the pervasive nature of research; making research public.

Dickinson, D.K. (ed.) (1994) *Bridges to literacy: children, families and schools*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

This book provides several accounts of school- and community-based early literacy programmes. Contributions are from a variety of disciplines, including education, developmental and cognitive psychology.

Hall, N., Larson, J. and Marsh, J. (eds) (2003) *Handbook of early childhood literacy*. London: Sage.

This handbook gives an overview of contemporary research into early childhood literacy, dealing with subjects related to the nature, function and use of literacy and the development, learning and teaching of literacy in early childhood.

Hannon, P. (1995) *Literacy home and school: research and practice in teaching literacy with parents*. London: Falmer Press.

This book summarises key findings of research studies ranging from pre-school literacy work with parents to parents hearing children read. It will also be of interest to those who want to know more about the theoretical rationale behind the ORIM framework.

Heath, S.B. (1983) *Ways with words: language, life and work in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

A classic study of children learning to use language at home and school in two communities in the United States. In tracing the children's language development the author shows the deep cultural differences between the two communities.

Morrow, L.M. (ed.) (1995) *Family literacy: connections in schools and communities*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

A variety of school-based and organisation-sponsored programmes and initiatives that address family literacy concerns are described in this book.

Nutbrown, C.E. (1997) *Recognising early literacy development – assessing children’s achievements*. London: Paul Chapman.

This book examines the literacy development and assessment of children before the age of five years. The final chapter provides an analysis of the Sheffield Early Literacy Development Profile; the profile is included.

Nutbrown, C. and Hannon, P. (eds) (1997) *Preparing for early literacy education with parents: a professional development manual*. Nottingham: The REAL Project/NES Arnold.

An invaluable text for practitioners working in the field of family literacy. This book is full of practical ideas and photocopiable material for use in workshops and literacy events; the material is ‘tried and tested’, having been used extensively by teachers on the REAL Project.

Taylor, D. (1983) *Family literacy: young children learning to read and write*. Exeter, NH: Heinemann.

This book provides case studies of six families, each of which had a young child who was considered to be successfully learning to read and write. The study describes ways of looking at reading and writing as activities which have consequences in, and are affected by, family life.

Taylor, D. (ed.) (1997) *Many families, many literacies: An international declaration of principles*. Portsmouth NH: Heinemann.

Forty-nine leading education experts contributed to this book. It provides guidance on developing policies and practices that build on the strengths that families bring to any learning situation: their diverse languages, literacies and complex problem-solving capabilities.

Taylor, D. and Dorsey-Gaines, C. (1988) *Growing up literate: learning from inner-city families*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

A powerfully moving and accessible book describing the familial contexts in which young black children living in poverty are growing up literate. Emphasis is on the family as educator despite extraordinary economic hardship.

Wasik, B. (ed.) (2004) *Handbook of family literacy*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

A comprehensive handbook, covering all aspects of family literacy, early literacy development, parent education and parent–child literacy interactions. Recommendations for practice are also included.

Weinberger, J. (1996) *Literacy goes to school: the parent’s role in young children’s literacy learning*. London: Paul Chapman.

This text discusses how literacy learning takes place at home, and how it differs from, and relates to, literacy at school. It suggests practical ways for teachers to assess and develop their own practice in relation to home literacy learning.

Wells, G. (1987) *The meaning makers: children learning language and using language to learn*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

This book is based on the Bristol Study, 'Language at Home and at School', which the author directed; it follows the development of a representative sample of children from their first words to the end of primary school.

Wolfendale, S. and Topping, K. (eds) (1996) *Family involvement in literacy: effective partnerships in education*. London: Cassell.

This book reviews recent developments in parental involvement in reading and provides an account of current UK and international practice. It also contains practical suggestions for setting up family literacy projects.

Journals

The Reading Teacher

The International Reading Association's flagship journal. A peer-reviewed journal of particular interest to practitioners.

Journal of Early Childhood Literacy

A peer-reviewed journal reporting research studies on the nature, function and use of literacy in early childhood.

Journal of Early Childhood Research

A peer-reviewed journal reporting international research on a range of early childhood issues.

Useful websites

Basic Skills Agency: www.basic-skills.co.uk

News, case studies and information about schemes, programmes in literacy and numeracy. There is a designated 'Early Years' page and you can sign up for a regular newsletter.

CIERA – The Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement: www.ciera.org

This US website contains a freely accessible archive of useful publications and links to other websites on early literacy.

National Literacy Trust: www.literacytrust.org.uk

This excellent website is updated daily. The 'Early Years' pages include summaries of research programmes, relevant newspaper articles, information about resources and government literacy initiatives.

Sure Start: www.surestart.gov.uk

This site provides SureStart news, information about programmes, and publications that can be downloaded free of charge.