
Even Start Family Literacy Program
Research-Based Early Childhood and Parenting Education Professional Development

U.S. Department of Education

CURRICULUM REVIEW RUBRICS AND PLANNING TOOL FOR PRESCHOOL AND PARENTING EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

In 2002, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) began offering a series of professional development opportunities for Even Start Family Literacy programs that highlighted key research-based findings for quality programming and instruction. The first training offered was **Research-Based Early Childhood and Parenting Education: *Making Meaningful Changes in Program Design***. The purpose of the training was to provide key findings concerning the language and literacy development of 3 to 5 year old children, and the implications of these findings for program design and instruction.

This tool has been developed to assist Even Start programs with their State and local-level improvement efforts in the early childhood and parenting education components. The tool relates to the issues raised by programs during the USED training referenced above, and their ability to identify and choose curricula that are based on scientific reading research. The rubrics encompass the primary language and literacy research presented during the *Making Meaningful Changes* training, and the research findings in the USED publication *Guide to Improving Parenting Education in Even Start Family Literacy Programs* (September 2000).

PURPOSE OF THE RUBRICS AND PLANNING TOOL

The rubrics can be used to review whether the preschool and parenting education curricula programs are using or considering using cover key elements that relate to young children's language and literacy development. Following each rubric is a Planning Section that can be used to isolate any gaps in research-based curricular content or instructional features, and to create action steps for improving such content and instructional approaches.

PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM REVIEW RUBRIC

In Even Start, the focus of Early Childhood Education for preschool instruction is to enhance children's cognitive, physical, social and emotional development, with an emphasis on language and literacy in the cognitive domain. The Preschool Curriculum Review Rubric focuses on five areas that research shows are key to children's later reading and comprehension skills in the primary grades. These are:

- (1) oral language and vocabulary;
- (2) phonological awareness;
- (3) alphabet knowledge;
- (4) print knowledge; and
- (5) background knowledge and comprehension.

The Preschool Curriculum Review Rubric is meant to be used by staff who are knowledgeable about young children's development of language and literacy skills, and about curriculum construction and instructional design. If staff do not possess this academic and experiential knowledge, they may not be able to identify the discrete skills the rubric references in the materials they are reviewing. *(In developing the preschool curriculum rubric, RMC Research would like to acknowledge a rubric created by Dr. Carol Vukelich for USED, which provides a basis for this version.)*

PARENTING EDUCATION CURRICULUM REVIEW RUBRIC

In Even Start, the focus of Parenting Education is to strengthen parents' support of their children's development, especially language and literacy, and success in school. The Parenting Education Curriculum Review Rubric focuses on three goals for parents specifically related to their children's language and literacy development. These are that parents become knowledgeable about and skilled in:

- (1) engaging in language-rich parent-child interactions;
- (2) providing supports for literacy in the family and the home; and
- (3) holding appropriate expectations of the child's learning and development.

The rubric also references Parent-Child Interactive Literacy Activities (ILA), since they are the medium for parents to practice what they learn in Parenting Education.

It is important to note that there are very few commercial curricula that adequately address the goals of Even Start for Parenting Education and ILA. To achieve the goals stated above, programs typically must design their own curriculum which will include commercial products and supplementary materials.

The foci of both rubrics complement each other, and programs should be mindful of the need to integrate content and instruction across components to ensure that families master the concepts and skills that lead to true learning and successful outcomes. (For an electronic file version of this document, contact your Even Start state coordinator.)

PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM REVIEW RUBRIC
(focusing on instruction for 3 to 5 year old children)

- Insert the name and publisher of the **core** and any **supplemental curriculum** the program uses in the left-hand column. (In addition to a commercial curriculum, a curriculum may be one designed by the program, school or district.)
- Place checkmarks in the appropriate boxes for each curriculum being reviewed if the **curriculum addresses the knowledge and skills** listed.

	ORAL LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY		
<i>Name & publisher of curriculum</i>	Sufficient number of root and rare words are introduced (minimum 3 per day)	Directions for explicitly teaching vocabulary in a variety of contexts and activities, especially using children’s literature	Suggestions for supporting and reinforcing children’s use of new vocabulary, including questioning techniques to stimulate conversation
1.			
2.			
3.			

	PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS						
<i>Name & publisher of curriculum</i>	Listening	Rhyming	Alliteration	Sentence Segmenting	Syllable Blending & Segmenting	Onset Rime, Blending & Segmenting	Phonemic Manipulation
1.							
2.							
3.							

	ALPHABET KNOWLEDGE				
<i>Name & publisher of curriculum</i>	Saying & Singing Letter Names	Identifying & Naming Printed Letters	Writing Letters	Connecting Letters to Pictures or Words	Connecting Letters to Individual Sounds
1.					
2.					
3.					

	PRINT KNOWLEDGE			
<i>Name & publisher of curriculum</i>	Title, Author, Illustrator or Artist	Book Orientation & Directionality (front/back, left to right, first to last)	Conventions of Print (upper and lower case, word units, sentences, punctuation)	Functions of Print (book, newspaper, menu, sign)
1.				
2.				
3.				

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE AND COMPREHENSION		
<i>Name & publisher of curriculum</i>	Curriculum references commonplace child experiences and expands upon them to develop background knowledge that surpasses children's personal experiences. List some examples from curriculum.	Curriculum uses complex themes and meaningful topics to introduce and build vocabulary and information about the world. List some examples from curriculum.
1.		
2.		
3.		

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN FEATURES				
<i>Name & publisher of curriculum</i>	Suggestions for variety of groupings related to instruction and learning (e.g., large group, small group, individual)	Guidance concerning use of explicit/direct and indirect instruction	Guidance in detecting need for and providing additional support to individual children	Suggestions for conducting informal and formal assessments of children in key areas
1.				
2.				
3.				

PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM REVIEW PLANNING SECTION

- 1 Looking across the checkmarks in the core and supplemental curricula, what gaps in knowledge, skills or overall instructional design features were identified? If a key area is completely addressed by the curriculum or combination of curricula you are using, leave the right-hand column blank. This will help you to isolate gaps and needs.

Key Area	Missing Skill or Inadequate Coverage of Content/Knowledge
ORAL LANGUAGE & VOCABULARY	
PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS	
ALPHABET KNOWLEDGE	
PRINT KNOWLEDGE	
BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE & COMPREHENSION	
INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN FEATURES	

- 2 How are you going to fill these gaps in content and instruction?
- Purchase additional curriculum that is based on scientific reading research. List possibilities and which identified gap(s) they will address.
 - Create additional material that is based on scientific reading research. How will this be accomplished? Who is qualified to develop curricular plans and materials?
- 3 What type of professional development is necessary to implement the new or enhanced curriculum? Who are possible providers of this professional development, and is it of high quality and based on scientific research and sound practice?

- 4 What resources will be used, or is it necessary to secure additional resources (for curricula, training or both)?

- 5 Will current assessments measure progress and skill attainment in the key language and literacy areas? If not, list additional types of specific assessments needed.

- 6 Create a plan and timeline to address the needs or tasks you have identified, including any necessary budget or expenditure changes.

Preschool Curriculum Review Action Plan

Need or Task	Steps to Address/Achieve	Timeline / Deadlines	Person Responsible

PARENTING EDUCATION CURRICULUM REVIEW RUBRIC

- Identify and briefly describe how **Parenting Education (PE) content and Parent-Child Interactive Literacy Activities (ILA)** address the following **knowledge and skills**. In the column “Instructional Material,” list any commercial, supplemental and self-designed / program-designed Parenting Education curricula used.

GOAL 1: PARENTS ENGAGE IN AND ENHANCE LANGUAGE INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN	Check if addressed in PE and ILA	Instructional Material <i>List commercial or program-created materials or curricula that address this</i>	Activities and Practice <i>Describe planned opportunities for parents to practice this skill</i>
Engage in frequent and increasingly complex verbal interactions with their child			
Actively participate in joint book reading (e.g., dialogic reading) with their child			
Ask their child questions that strengthen problem-solving abilities (e.g., open-ended questions)			
Engage in attentive, flexible interactions (e.g., responsive interaction) with their child			
Develop and maintain a secure attachment relationship with their child, and a predictable environment through routines			

GOAL 2: PARENTS PROVIDE SUPPORTS FOR LITERACY IN THE FAMILY AND THE HOME	Check if addressed in PE and ILA	Instructional Material <i>List commercial or program-created materials or curricula that address this</i>	Activities and Practice <i>Describe planned opportunities for parents to practice this skill</i>
Provide easy access to reading and writing materials (e.g., books, paper, coloring books, pencils/crayons)			
Model use of reading and writing in daily life for everyday purposes (e.g., newspaper, grocery lists, mail)			
Demonstrate an enthusiastic view of reading as a fun and leisure activity			
Engage in play that incorporates language and literacy practice and application of skills (e.g., rhyme and alphabet songs)			

GOAL 3: PARENTS HOLD APPROPRIATE EXPECTATIONS OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT	Check if addressed in PE and ILA	Instructional Material <i>List commercial or program-created materials or curricula that address this</i>	Activities and Practice <i>Describe planned opportunities for parents to practice this skill</i>
Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate expectations of their child's abilities based on age and developmental stage			
Are knowledgeable about their child's interests and abilities, and choose joint activities based on this and the child's cues and reactions/responses			
Understand preschool or school expectations for their child's development and mastery of skills, and their role in supporting and enhancing child's development and achievements			

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN FEATURES	Check if curriculum includes the strategy (used by staff to parent, or parent to parent)	Instruction, Activities and Practice <i>Describe how and when this strategy is introduced to parents and planned opportunities for staff/parent and parent/parent to practice during PE and ILA</i>
Demonstrating/Modeling		
Coaching		
Debriefing and Providing Feedback		

PARENTING EDUCATION CURRICULUM REVIEW PLANNING SECTION

- 1 Looking across the checkmarks and notes, what gaps in knowledge, skills or instructional design features and strategies were identified?

Goal	Missing Instructional Material or Content	Inadequate Activities and Practice
GOAL 1: PARENTS ENGAGE IN AND ENHANCE LANGUAGE INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN		
GOAL 2: PARENTS PROVIDE SUPPORTS FOR LITERACY IN THE FAMILY AND THE HOME		
GOAL 3: PARENTS HOLD APPROPRIATE EXPECTATIONS OF CHILD'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT		

- 2 How are you going to fill these gaps in content and instruction?

- Purchase additional commercial curriculum or supplemental material that is based on available research in parenting education and child development. List possibilities and which identified gap(s) they will address.
- Create additional material that is based on available research in parenting education and child development. How will this be accomplished? Who is qualified to develop curricular plans and materials?

- 3 What type of professional development is necessary to implement the new or enhanced curriculum? Who are possible providers of this professional development, and is it of high quality and based on available research and proven practices in PE and ILA?

- 4 What resources will be used, or is it necessary to secure additional resources (for curricula, training or both)?

- 5 Do you currently assess parents' knowledge, progress and skills in these key areas? If so, list instruments used. If not, list types of assessments needed.
- 6 Create a plan and timeline to address the needs or tasks you have identified, including any necessary budget or expenditure changes.

Parenting Education Curriculum Review Action Plan

Need or Task	Steps to Address/Achieve	Timeline / Deadlines	Person Responsible