



**Module 3: Three to Five Year Olds**  
**Quantity & Quality Talk Matters**  
Oral Language & Vocabulary Development  
**Early Literacy Matters**

# Module 3: Quantity and Quality Talk Matters

## Oral Language & Vocabulary Development

### Module 3 at a Glance...

In Module 2, you considered ways positive teacher-child interactions help to foster self-expression, rich conversations, and interest in books and writing. Emphasis was placed on enriching the physical classroom environment and providing multiple opportunities for children to engage in oral interactions.

In this module, you will:

- Explore specific, developmentally appropriate activities for further developing oral language, vocabulary, and conceptual knowledge for children.
- Gain a better understanding of why children need to be actively engaged in vocabulary development from an early age.
- Use oral language activities to build phonological awareness.

# Learner Outcomes for Module 3

## Learner Outcomes:

- LO1: Learners will learn how to further children's oral language development through intentionally planned activities for increasing the use of descriptive words in conversations.
- LO2: Learners will describe developmentally appropriate activities to frequently and actively engage children in vocabulary development.
- LO3: Learners will explore the ways speaking and listening activities develop children's awareness of the sounds in their language.

# Connections to the “Read to be Ready” Campaign:

This module aligns to the current Read to be Ready Campaign’s following key beliefs:

- Early Literacy Matters:
- Teachers are critical:
- It takes a community:

Video link to “Early Literacy Matters” from Read to be Ready Website:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60J8qRjRPkE>

# Module 3 Overview

**Overview:** Module 3 will consist of three instructional presentations. These presentations will help you reflect on the importance of the quantity and quality of talk for optimal development of oral language and vocabulary for infants, toddlers, and young children.

- In **Presentation 1**, you will learn how to further children’s oral language development through intentionally planned activities for increasing the use of descriptive words in conversations.
- In **Presentation 2**, you will focus on strategies and supports for building and expanding children’s vocabulary. Emphasis is placed on beginning this work early and actively engaging children often in their vocabulary development.
- In **Presentation 3**, you will explore how teachers can increase children’s awareness of sounds in their language through playful listening and speaking activities.

Following each presentation, you will apply your learning through Practice Activities included in the Learning Guide.

# Suggested Timeline for Completing Module

Modules contain 4 short presentations that are designed to be completed during relaxed ratios or other times as set by your school or agency. Your director or program coordinator may suggest or establish a timeline for each presentation to be completed within the module. Please take a moment to confirm your site's requirements while noting the submission deadline for the final Learning Application Assignment that you will submit electronically to your literacy coach for feedback and support. All other completed activities will remain in your participation guide and available for your coaches review.


- **Section 1:** Start at beginning of module and complete Presentation 1 and Practice Activity 1.
- **Section 2:** Complete Presentation 2 and Practice Activity 2.
- **Section 3:** Complete Presentation 3 and Practice Activity 3.
- **Section 4:** Complete Learning Application Assignment for Module 3 and submit it electronically to your literacy coach for feedback and support.
- Please refer to your Learning Guide for a detailed Module 3 checklist.

# Presentation 3: Linking Sounds to Objects, Pictures, Letters, and Words

- As books are read, songs are sang, pictures are viewed, and poems are recited, teachers should look for moments to draw attention to sounds heard and connect sounds to specific letters and words. Through repeated exposure and playful exploration, children will begin to link sounds to objects, pictures, letters, and words.
- The learning of these foundational skills are rooted in oral language activities that increase children's awareness of sounds. This is known as phonological awareness.

**C c**

**C**aterpillars eat **C**andy **C**anes,  
**C**andy **C**anes,  
**C**andy **C**anes,  
**C**aterpillars eat **C**andy **C**anes  
and,  
**C**reamy **C**upcakes too!



*Tune: Mary had a Little Lamb*

# Exposure and Playful Sound Exploration

Begin thinking of ways you can naturally and frequently expose children to sound-letter-word correlations and increase opportunities for their playful exploration of sounds.

Let's take a closer look at how we can help infants, toddlers, and preschoolers to:

- Link sounds to objects
- Link sounds to pictures
- Link sounds to letters
- Link sounds to words



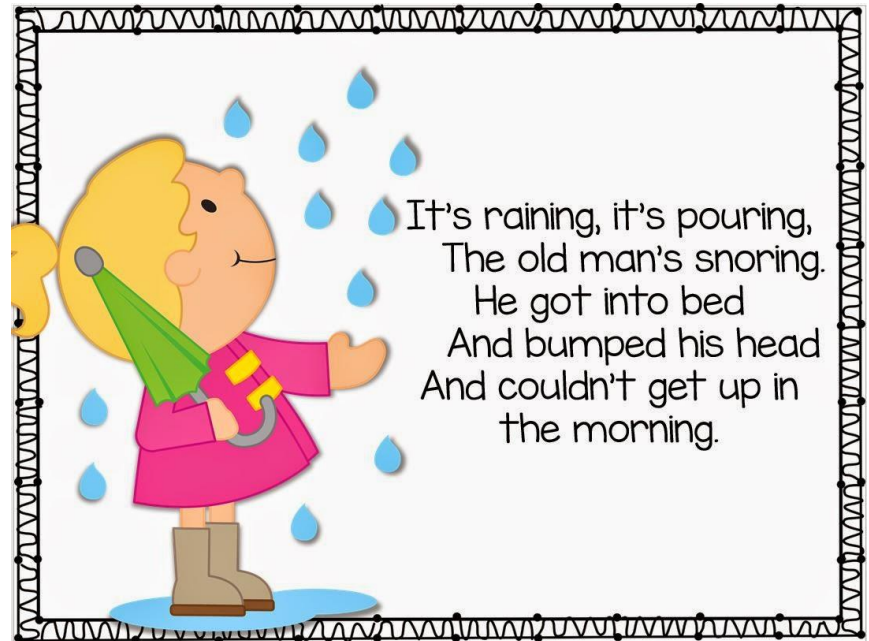
# Exploring Sounds with Objects & Pictures

- Objects and pictures can be used to expose children to sound-letter-word correlations.
- Because children are more tactile and learn through their senses, it is best to begin with actual objects that create sounds or can be used to create sounds with as children playfully explore them.
- After providing numerous opportunities for children to explore the sounds that can be made with actual objects, pictures can be used to talk about objects and to emphasize initial sounds when naming the object pictured.
- Older children enjoy matching pictures that rhyme or have the same initial sounds.

# Linking Sounds to Objects, Pictures, and Letters

## Ages 3–5

- Children should explore sounds playfully throughout their day. They need opportunities to hear how sounds differ and how sounds are heard in words we speak. During stories read, poems recited, conversations spoken, and game played, teachers can intentionally model certain sounds heard.
- More time should be spent on hearing and orally telling which sounds are heard than on learning to write a letter and recall what sound the letter makes. Not all children are physically able and ready to write letters, but all are ready to explore sounds. Writing the actual letter comes later and is a handwriting skill that needs to be developed.



# Linking Sounds to Objects, Pictures, and Letters

## Ages 3–5

- When we focus on “training the ear” to hear sounds in words, children’s awareness of sounds (phonological awareness) will increase.
- After much oral exploration of sounds, we can show children what sounds look like—the graphemes—letter representations. By the time children see the letter, they will be able to brainstorm numerous words which have that letter because their ears have been trained to hear the sound in spoken words.



# Linking Sounds to Letters

## Ages 3–5

- After much exposure and exploration of sounds, children are ready to link sounds to letters.
- Here's a simple way to help children make the connection between sounds heard and letters that represent those sounds.
  - Gather a small group of children.
  - Bring a basket of 4-6 objects or pictures of things starting with the same initial sound.
  - Keep letter card hidden from children.
  - Tell children, "I've brought some objects (pictures) that have my favorite sound."
  - Take objects out one at a time, name them and emphasizing the initial sounds.
  - Emphasize that these objects (pictures) all start with the same sound.
  - Ask children, "Would you like to see a picture of this sound? Show children the letter card. Say, "This is what .....(make sound) looks like when we write it."
  - Let's read again our story of Dori's Dinosaur and see if we hear the "d" sound and look for the letter "d."



The Letter "D" Basket

# Linking Sounds to Letters

## Three-Year-Olds

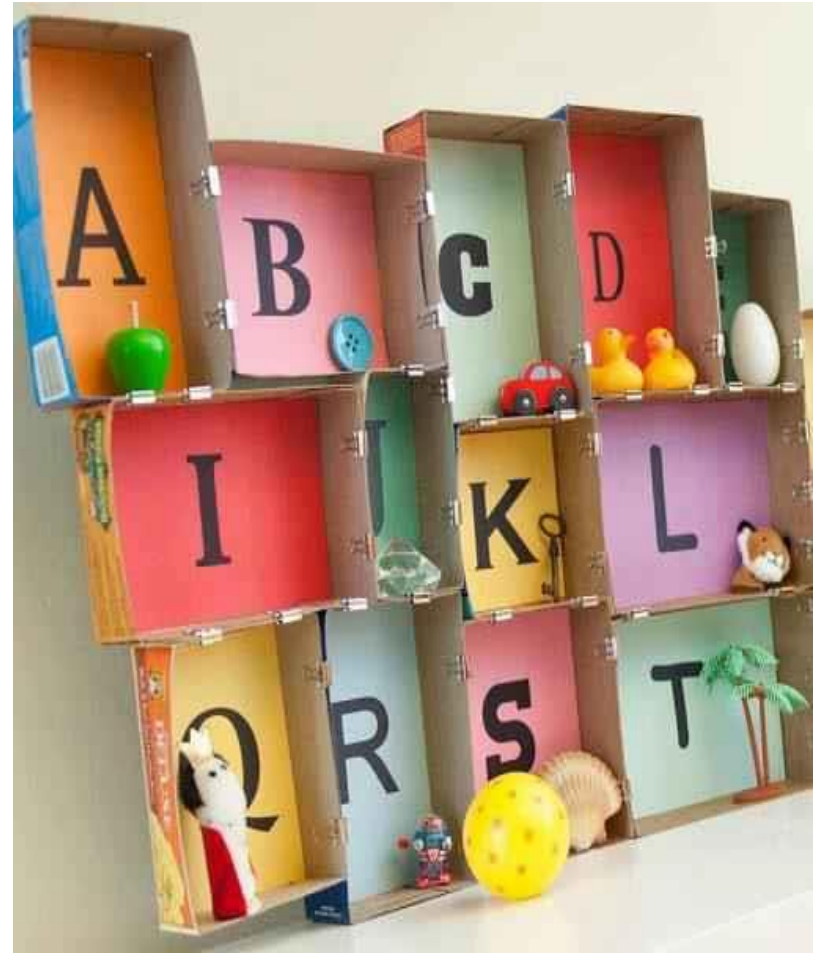
- It's important that children hear how sounds come together to make words.
- When reading stories and poems, teachers should emphasize words that have same beginning or ending sounds.
- When sound work is connected to reading, children show greater interest in learning letters associated with those sounds. You will likely hear children playfully reading books using sounds they are aware of.



# Linking Sounds to Displayed Alphabet

## Ages 4–5

- Alphabet displays should be interactive and allow children to explore letter-sound relationships.
- The displays should be hung low and show both the uppercase and lowercase letters.
- Consider creating letter displays of eight letters each and display them in different places allowing children to interact with different sets of letters. Some children are overwhelmed by seeing all 26 letters displayed.
- A basket of objects can be matched to letters displays or Velcro pictures could be matched.
- Think of ways to make your displayed alphabet more interactive.



# Exploring Sound & Letter Correspondence

## Ages 4–5

- Offer kinesthetic/tactile ways for children to explore sounds & letters by using stories, visuals, and hands-on activities; such as, using moveable alphabet pieces, letting children trace letters in the sand or shaving cream, or using a small flashlight to trace the form of the letter.
- Handwriting can begin, but should not be the precursor to learning about sound & letter correspondences.
- It's also important to expose children to many sound & letter correspondences in meaningful contexts throughout the day rather than isolating learning through a letter of the week approach.







# Practice Activity 3: “I Spy” Sound to Object Game

## Ages 3–5

### Practice Activity (continued)

- If the child names correct object, pick up the object saying “Yes, basket starts with “bbb” and hand it to the child to hold and for him to say “b” “basket.” Pass the object around until each child has had the opportunity to hold and say the beginning sound and name of the object.
- Repeat the steps for the next object. Once all objects have been used, return objects to the basket or box. Show children where the game will be placed in the classroom for them to play anytime they would like to.
- If children master beginning sounds, try playing the game with the ending sounds.



# Reflection on Practice Activity 3

## Ages 3–5

**Practice Activity 2:** Reflect on the “I Spy” Sound activity you engaged in with a small group of children and briefly respond to each of the questions below in the Learning Guide:

- How was planning ahead helpful?
- How was your language intentional?
- How did the children respond?
- Did your model help to stimulate interest in sounds and reinforce sound awareness?
- How did your interactions help to foster children’s engagement with the sound objects?
- What would you do differently next time?

# Story Bags and Oral Language Development

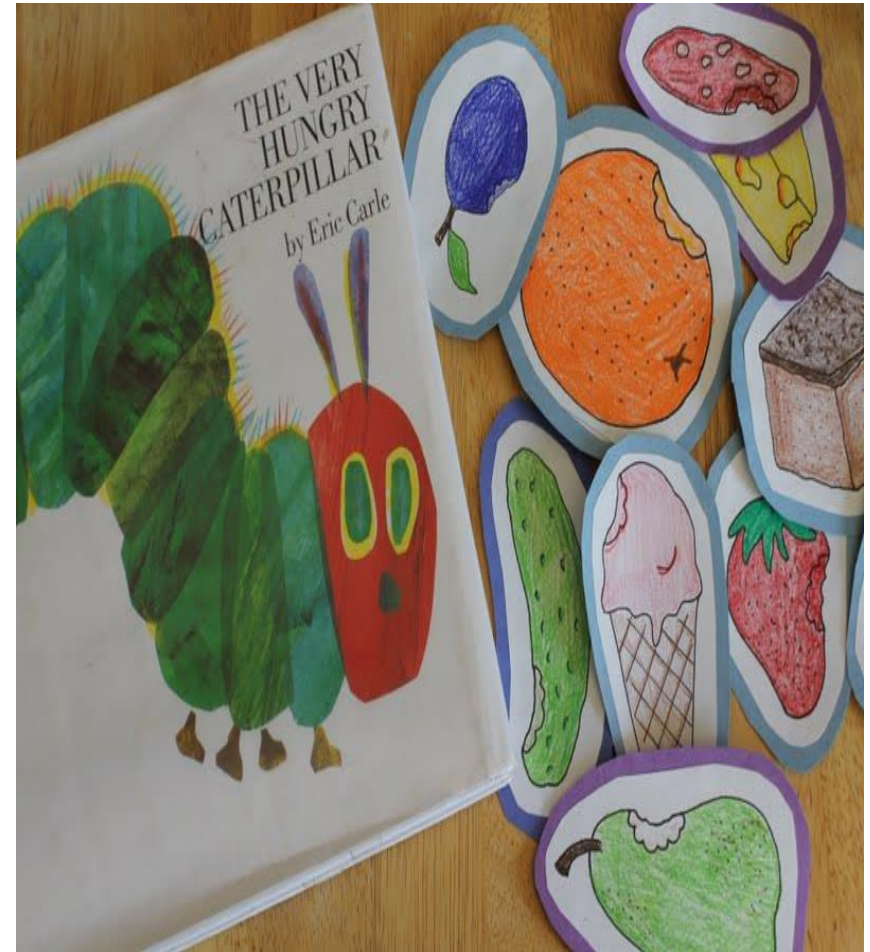
- The more children interact with text, the more opportunities there are for meaningful oral language and vocabulary development.
- Story bags allow children to interact with stories read.
- Story bags can be created using bags, pouches, or purses and should include the book and pictures and/or objects for children to interact with and retell events from the story and to explore concepts from book.



# Story Bags and Oral Language Development

For example, with *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.....

- Objects or pictures of food can be used to tell what the caterpillar ate.
- Objects or pictures of the life cycles of a butterfly: egg, cocoon, larvae, and butterfly can be used to describe the changes the caterpillar experiences in the story.
- Pictures or felt pieces of the leaf, moon, and sun can be used to describe the story setting.
- Objects and pictures can be sequenced to orally retell the story using order words.
- Some letter cut-outs of “v”, “h”, “c”, and “b” can be included and children can connect to text when saying “the very hungry caterpillar,” and “beautiful butterfly.”
- The book is available for children to reference and interact with.



# End of Section 3

Congratulations, you just completed Section 3 of Module 3.

- Check to be sure you completed Section 3 activities in the Learning Guide.
- Continue to practice linking sounds to objects, pictures, letters, and words.
- When ready, move on to the Learning Application Assignment for Section 4.