



Literacy Academy 2025

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Language is Everything!

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Today's Objectives:

1. Gain an understanding of what current research says regarding the importance of oral language development
2. Analyze current oral language practices/strategies and their impact on language development
3. Identify instructional strategies for building oral language in the classroom and with families

Harrison's Story

How it started...



How it's going...

Harrison today:
A Thriving Kindergartener

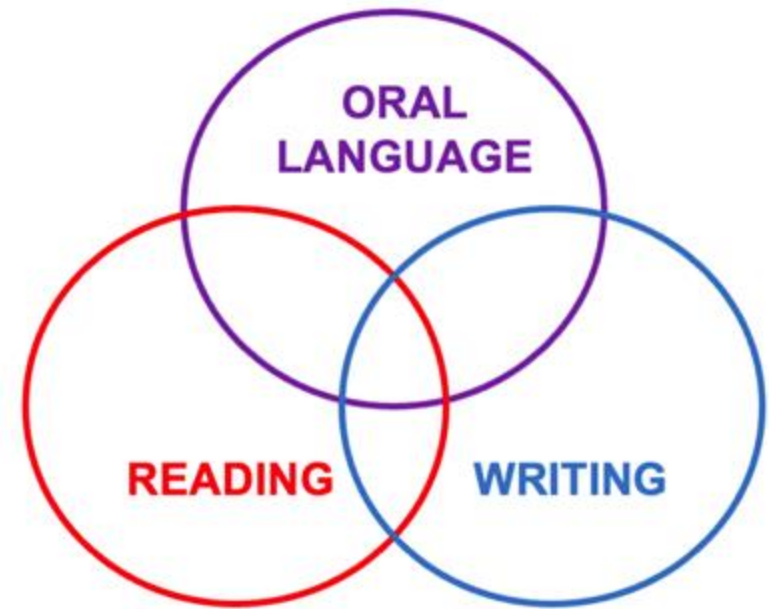
Language is Healing!



Research

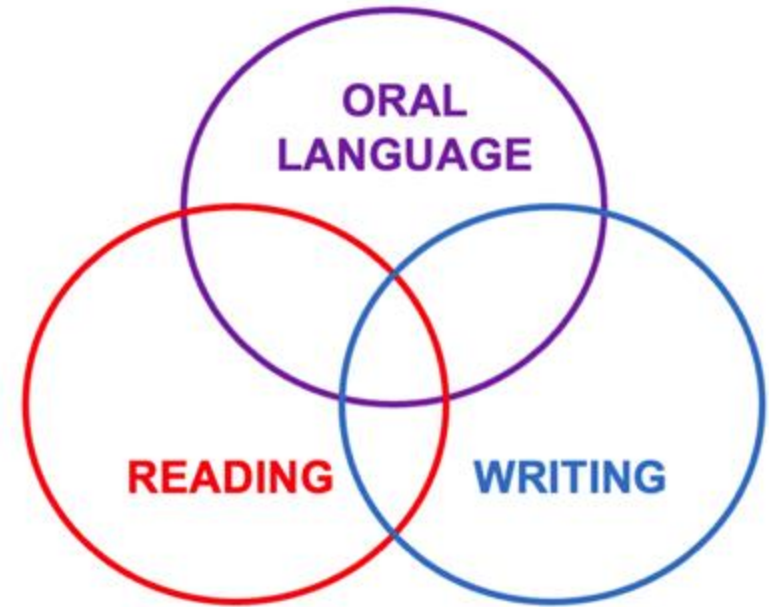
What does the research say?

From birth to age 5, children learn that language consists of sounds (the first thing that babies can produce to communicate), words and word parts, phrases and sentences, and connected talk (discourse) in conversations, stories, and explanations.



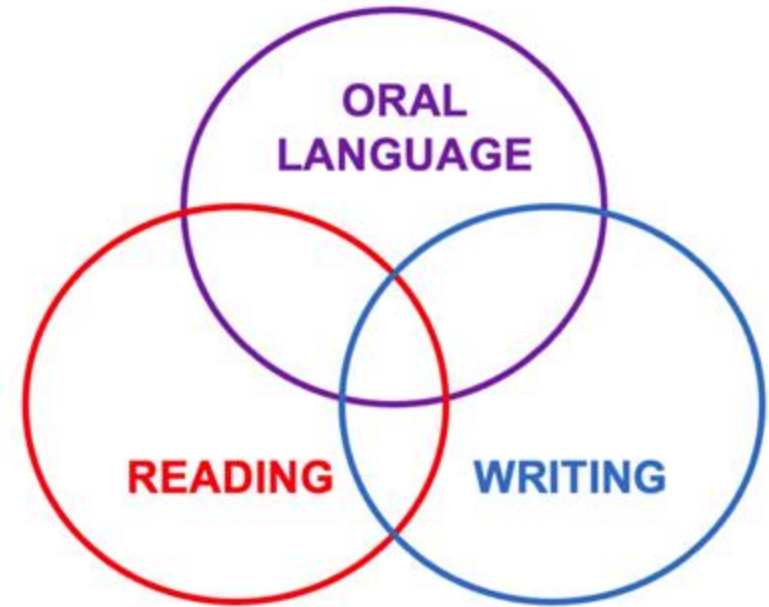
What does the research say?

Language uses symbols to represent meaning. Those symbols can be spoken words, written words, pictographs, or sign language.



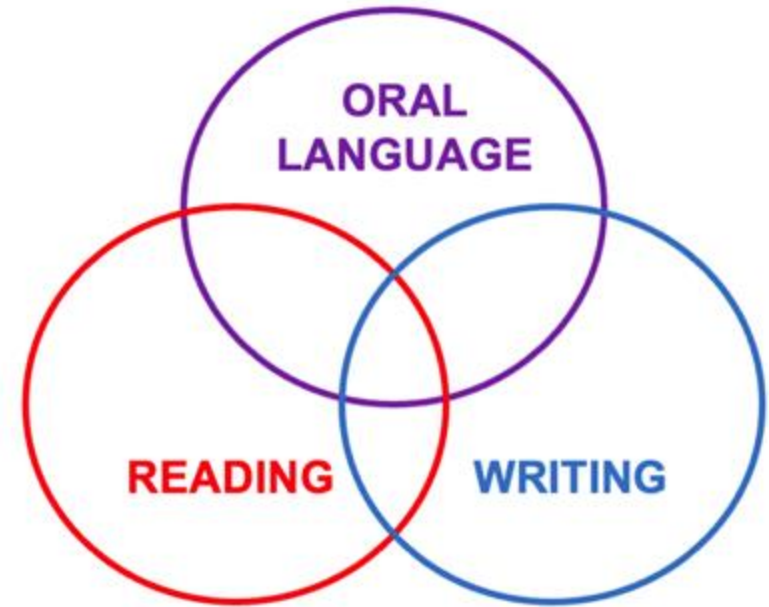
What does the research say?

Language is conceptual – it allows us to describe phenomena that are not physically present.



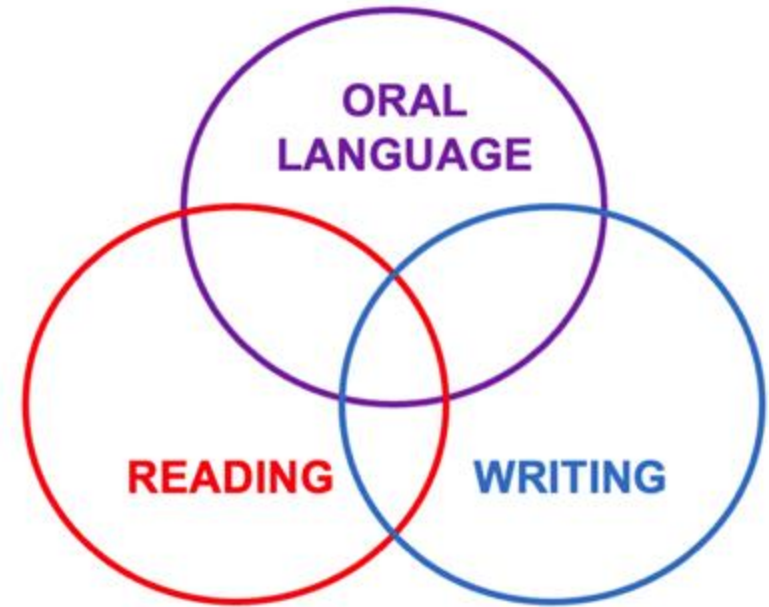
What does the research say?

Language is rule governed (e.g., regarding word order, how to form plurals, etc.) and these rules are implicit (learned and expressed in an indirect way) for native speakers of a language.



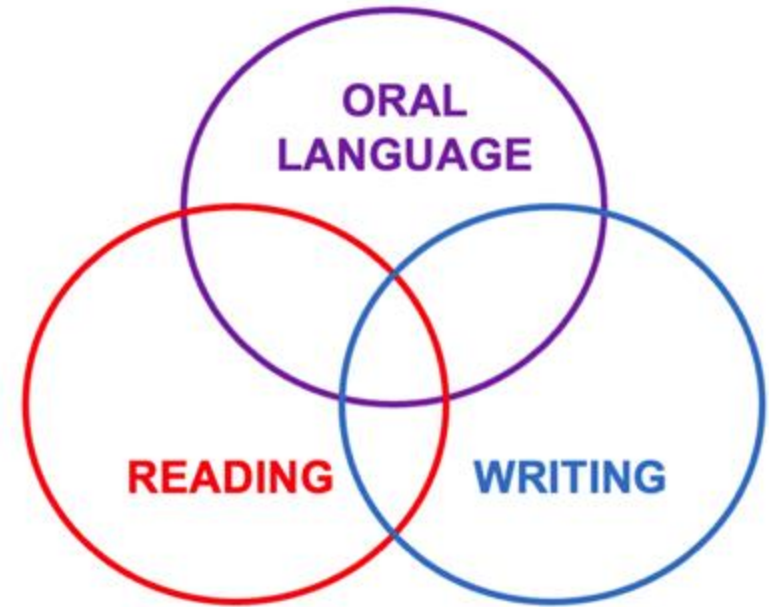
What does the research say?

Oral language is everyday talking (expressive) and listening (receptive/comprehension) skills and the mental representations that sit behind them.



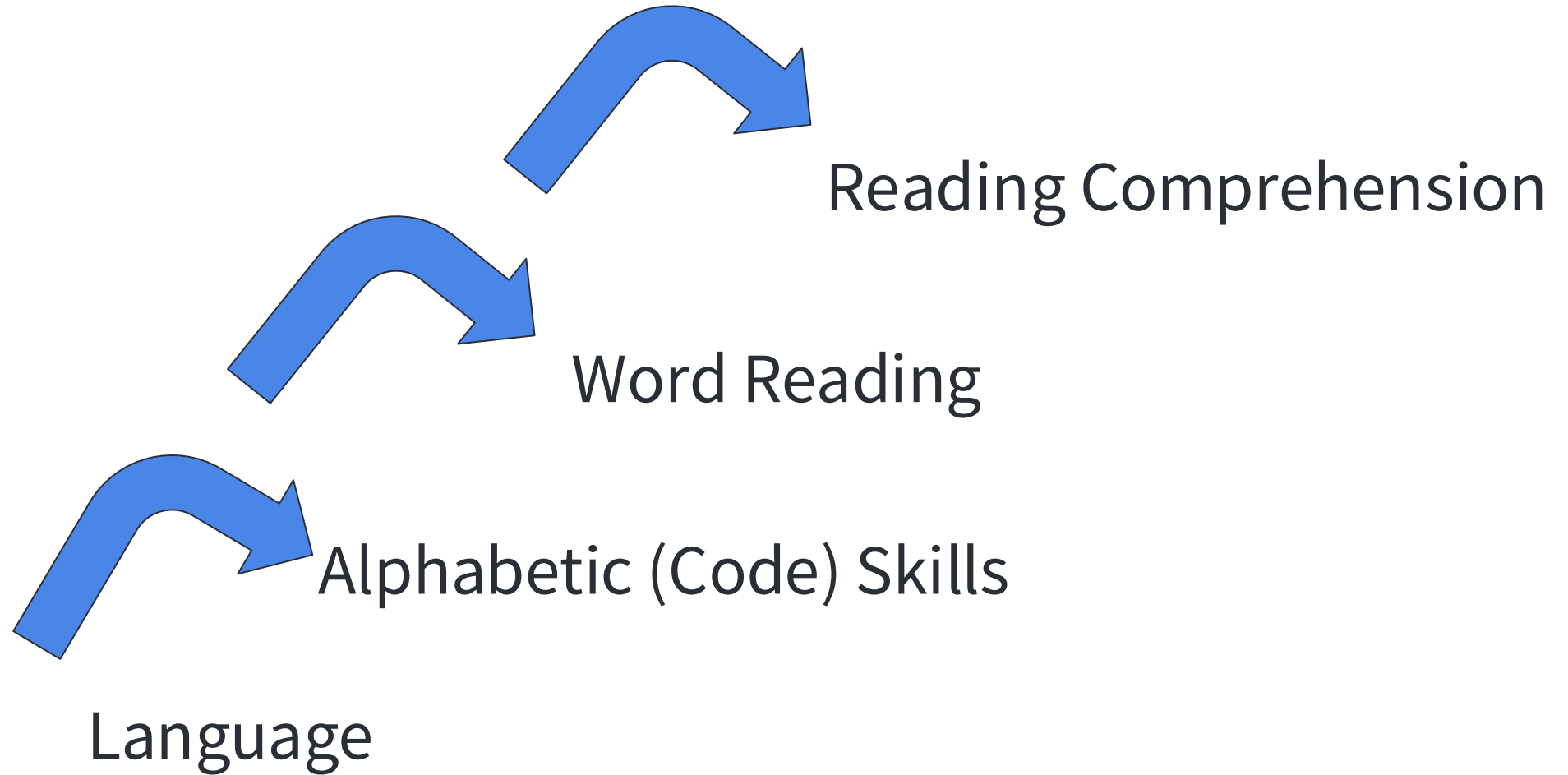
What does the research say?

Mental representations that are shared through oral and written language include thoughts, ideas, memories, opinions, beliefs, wishes, needs, and instruction.



Charles Hume - Psychologist, researcher and former professor

According to the Reading is Language (RIL) Model, there are “waves of development”; each wave builds on earlier waves.



Charles Hume



Teaching and Learning.

Language is the medium of instruction.

+



Literacy.

Builds on a foundation of oral language.

+



Numeracy.

Arithmetic is a verbal skill. Children need to understand the verbal problems they have to solve.



Social and Emotional development.

Children need to be able to communicate to make friends, to join in activities and to express their feelings.

+

+



Behaviour.

Language (inner speech) may be important for self-regulation.

Interventions which target oral language skills have potential for improving educational outcomes and psycho-social wellbeing.

Ann Kaiser - Developmental Psychologist, Vanderbilt Kennedy Center

- Expressive and receptive language skills in the first 3 years of life predict literacy skills in kindergarten and elementary school, and beyond.
- Poor language is associated with persistent social-emotional and behavioral concerns.
 - Children with marked deficits in language have higher rates of behavioral and emotional disorders in adolescence and adulthood
 - Anxiety
 - Depression
 - Inattention
 - Peer relationships

Excerpt from [Podcast episode](#): “Language Growth in Young Children With Disabilities”

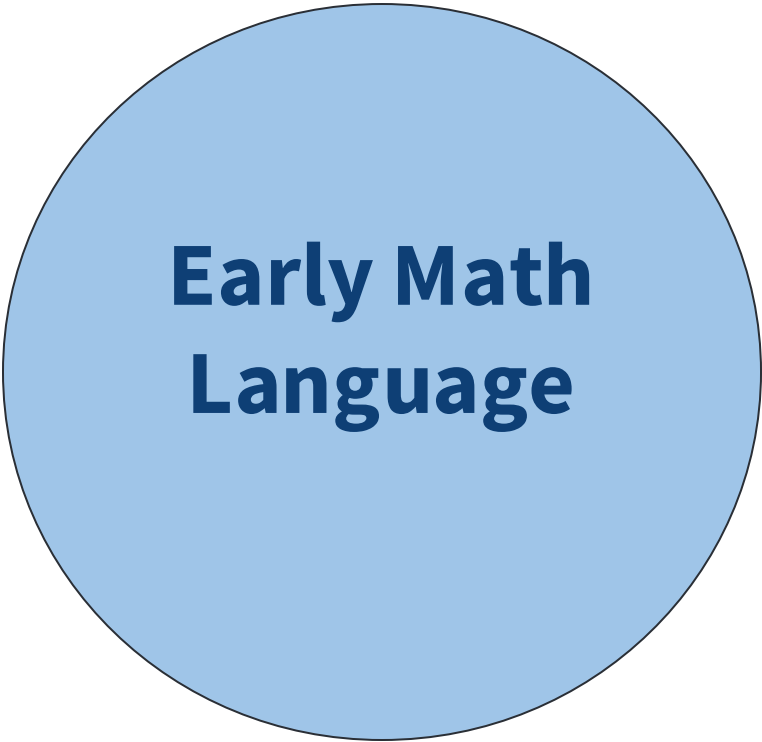
Karen Tzanetopoulos - Math expert & co-author of *How Children Learn Math: The Science of Math Learning in Research and Practice* (Routledge, 2023)

**Strongest
early
predictors of
math success**

- Phonological processing
- Language development
- Early exposure to math language

- Rapid Automatic Naming (RAN)
- Visual-Spatial skills

Karen Tzanetopoulos



Early Math Language

- Mathematical language is significantly related to numeracy skills:
 - verbal counting
 - one-to-one correspondence
 - numerical identification
 - magnitude comparison
 - ordering numerals
 - math fact retrieval

Hornburg, 2018

What does the literacy-math connection look like in Ohio?

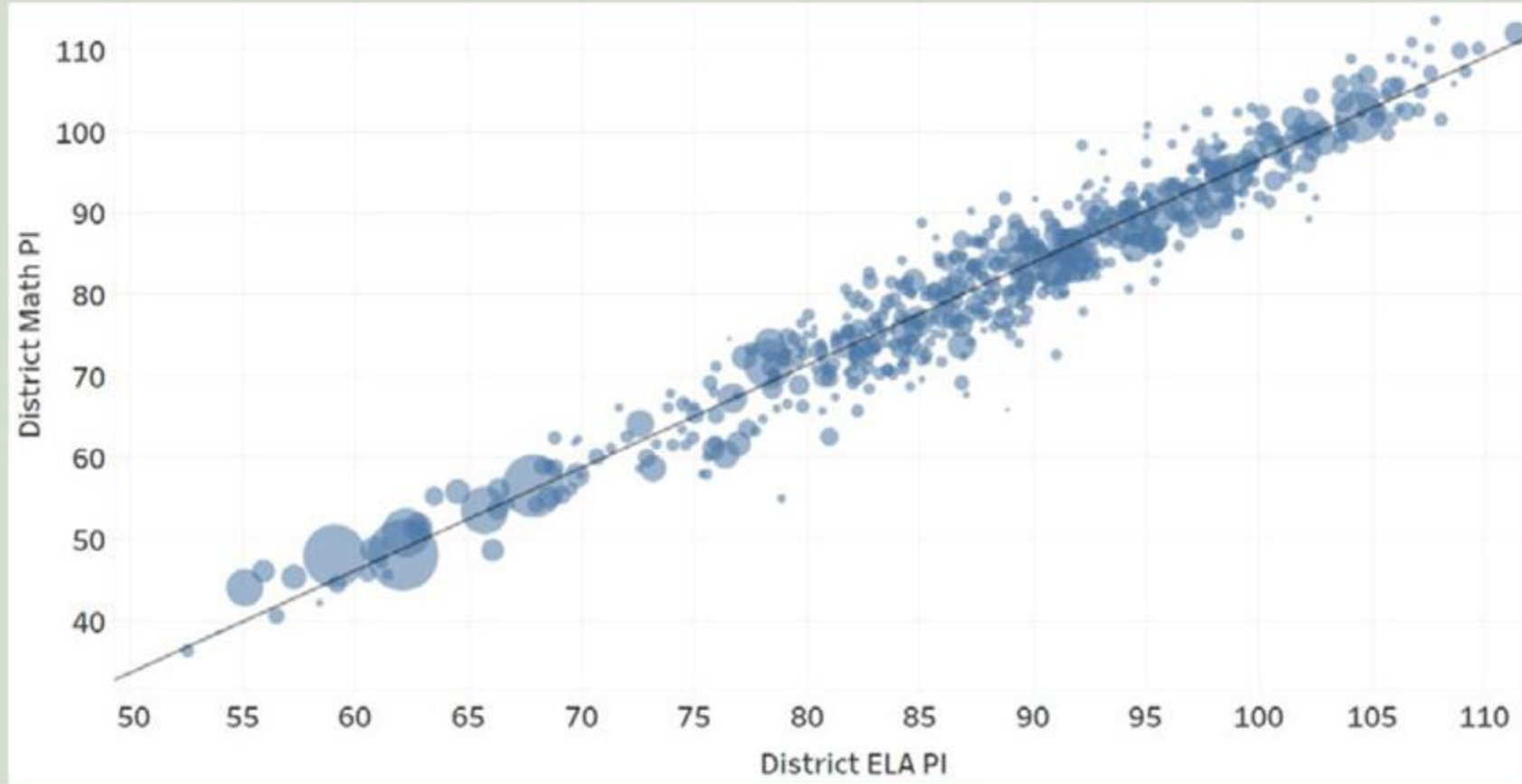


Figure 2. Correlation between districts' performance index on state ELA and math tests

Oral Language Strategies

Literacy Strategies Inventory

1. At your table, identify all instructional strategies, lessons, activities that you currently use to address literacy development in your program or classroom. Consider all parts of your day.
2. Next, put a star next to the practices that focus specifically on building oral language skills.
3. Finally, circle the strategies that engage families as part of their implementation.

“Education requires a collective effort: the teacher, the student, the parents, and the community.”

~ Robert John Meehan, Educator

Strategies to increase oral language development

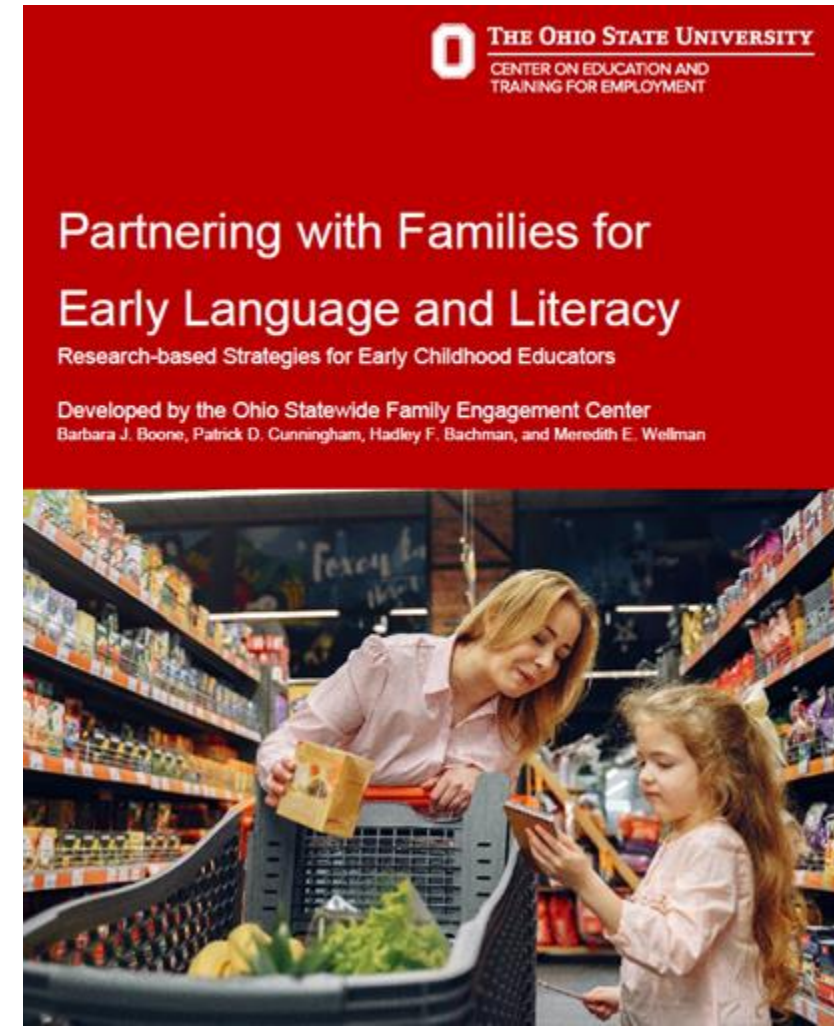
1. Class book or family photo album
2. Rhyme time bucket
3. Shared read alouds
4. Storytelling
5. Prop boxes
6. Meal times
7. Talk WITH children

Intentionality is... KEY!


Family Connections

Strategies...

1. Welcome families as partners.
2. Promote family-friendly practices.
3. Share information and tools with families.
4. Invite families to partner in progress monitoring.
5. Build accessible and equitable home-school partnerships.
6. Enhance family partnerships for children learning English.
7. Individualize partnerships for meeting reading challenges.



Family Connections



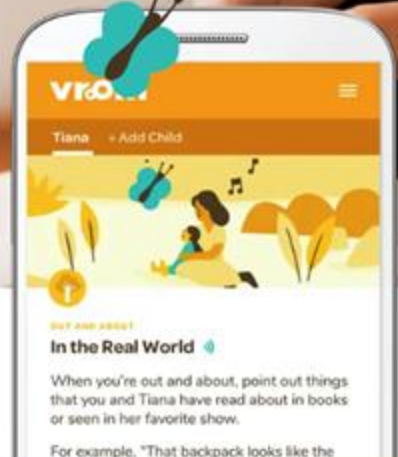

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A resource for you...



Language really is... **EVERYTHING!**



QUESTIONS?

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