

Message Time

Special Area:

Preschool

Written by:

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I. ABSTRACT

The presenter will focus on “Message Time” and how it is used in the classroom each day. She will show various messages written in her own classroom and discuss how the students were involved in the “Message Time.” “Message Time” helps children learn how to think before writing, see the spoken word written, and track print from left to right and top to bottom. During “Message Time” students see and understand that speech can be written and read.

II. OVERVIEW

A. Oral Language

1. Understand and Use Increasingly Varied and Complex Vocabulary and Syntax
 - a. Students will use words indicating time and space: there-here, in-on, in front of-behind, at the top of-at the bottom of, under, next to-in the middle of, near-far, around, to the side, in a line/row, in a circle, up-down. (Level I, p. 37)
 - b. Students will use words indicating time and space: there-here, in-on, in front of-behind, at the top of-at the bottom of, under-over, above-below, next to-in the middle of, near-far, inside-outside, around-between, at the corner of, against-toward, away, to the side, in a line/row, in a circle, up-down, high-low, left-right, front-back, face to face-back-to-back, before-after. (Level II, p. 37)
2. Understand and use the negative forms of declarative sentences, questions, and imperatives. (Level I, p. 38)
3. Combine simple sentences using "and". (Level I, p. 38)
4. Combine simple sentences using "but" and "or." (Level II, p. 38)

B. Emerging Literacy Skills in Reading and Writing

1. Develop an Awareness of Written Matter/Print in Everyday Surroundings and Its Many Uses
 - a. Identify different examples of print in the environment. (Level I, p. 54)
2. Develop an Awareness of the Structure of Print
 - a. Recognize the written form of his/her first name. (Level I, p. 56)
 - b. Recognize the initial letter of his/her first name. (Level I, p. 56)
 - c. Read the first names of other family members or classmates. (Level II, p. 56)
 - d. Develop an understanding of the relationship between spoken and written language by associating written word units on word labels and signs with spoken words. (Level II, p. 56)
 - e. Make an attempt at using invented (phonetic) spelling to communicate in writing. (Level II, p. 56)
 - f. Isolate and point to individual words as distinct units on a page of print. (Level II, p. 56)
3. Develop Phonemic Awareness
 - a. Segment a spoken sentence into separate distinct words. (Level II, p. 57)
 - b. Students will develop an understanding of the relationship between written letters and spoken sounds, identifying by name all letters in his/her first name and also identifying the sound made by at least three letters in his/her first name. (Level II, p. 56)

- C. Orientation in Time
 - 1. Understand and Use the Language of Time
 - a. Understand and use the following vocabulary to describe day-to-day occurrences: day-night, morning-afternoon-evening, today-tomorrow, before-after, first-last, now. (Level I, p. 72)
 - b. Understand and use the following vocabulary to describe day-to-day occurrences: yesterday-today-tomorrow, always-never-sometimes, immediately-in a little while-later, already, then, next, during, while, once upon a time, finally, soon.
 - 2. Establish Reference Points in Time
 - a. Understand the days of the week as a division of time. (Level II, p. 73)

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- A. Language Boosters
- B. Core Knowledge Preschool Training
- C. Starting Out Right

IV. PREREQUISITE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE FOR STUDENTS

- A. Ability to sit among other children during a group activity, remaining in his/her physical space without disrupting or interfering with others.
- B. Ability to carry out oral directions: single-step directions.
- C. Ability to follow accepted rules for group behavior, and attend and listen during activity while others speak.

V. RESOURCES

- A. Chart paper with horizontal lines
- B. Red and black markers
- C. Masking tape
- D. A pointer, or a dry easel with two different color dry easel markers

VI. LESSON

Lesson One: Message Time

- A. Daily Objectives
 - 1. Sit among other children during a group activity, remaining in his/her physical space without disrupting or interfering with others.
 - 2. Point to words that begin with the same letter as his/her name.
 - 3. Segment a spoken sentence into separate distinct words.
 - 4. Give the beginning sound of a spoken word.
- B. Grouping
 - 1. Whole group instruction
- C. Materials and Preparation
 - 1. Chart paper lined horizontally
 - 2. Red and black markers
 - 3. Masking tape
 - 4. A pointer, or a dry easel with two different color dry easel markers
- D. Language of Instruction
 - 1. Teacher:
 - a. Greeting words: hi, hello, good morning, dear
 - b. Weather words: rainy, windy, snowy, cold, wet, warm
 - c. Time words: today, yesterday, tomorrow, date, day, month, year
 - d. Other words: students, boys, girls, children, was.

- E.
2. Students: his/her first and last names, is, was, day, date, month, year, today, yesterday, tomorrow
 - Procedures/Activities¹
 1. The teacher will explain the symbols: a circle around a letter, a box around a word, year or year, and a triangle around punctuation.
 2. The teacher will make her thinking about the writing process "transparent" by making comments about the writing process while she writes. Comments may focus on the following:
 - a. Where do we start writing on a page? (top left)
 - b. In which direction do we write? (left to right)
 - c. What happens when we reach the end of a line and still have more words to write? (return sweep)
 - d. How do we separate words? (spacing)
 - e. What type of letter starts a sentence? (uppercase/capital)
 - f. What type of punctuation mark goes at the end of each sentence? (period)
 - g. With what letter does a given word start? (letter names and sounds)
 3. The teacher will:
 - a. Re-read the message while running her finger or pointer from left to right under each line of print.
 - b. Ask the children, as a group or individually, to re-read the message.
 - c. Ask the children to find and point out certain letters, words, or punctuation marks.
 4. Students will:
 - a. Search and locate a few letters, words, or sentences. (Teachers will circle with these with a red marker).
 - b. Look for print conventions (capital letters, punctuation, and spacing).
 5. Show video of students participating in "Message Time" activity.

F. Go a Little Further

 1. For students who have difficulty, the teacher will:
 - a. Ask, "Where do I begin writing?"
 - b. Ask, "Which way do I go now?"
 - c. Ask, "Do I begin with a capital or lowercase letter?"
 - d. Ask the student to come to the chart and point to a letter he/she knows.
 - e. Ask the student(s) to look at the alphabet chart if he/she has problems identifying the letter to which he/she points.
 2. For the students who excel, have them:
 - a. Find and point out certain letters, words, or punctuation marks.
 - b. Read phrases or sentences they know.
 - c. Re-read the message while running his/her finger from left to right under each line of print as he/she reads.

G. Assessment/Evaluation

 1. Oral Assessment
 - a. Students will read the message orally with the teacher's help.
 - b. Students will say out loud the letters, punctuation marks, words, phrases, and sentences the teacher highlighted with the red marker.
 - c. Students will identify the top and bottom of the paper and show where we start reading on the chart.

¹ Many of the techniques described in this unit were developed by the Children's Literacy Initiative, 2314 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 and are included in their professional development, as a part of Message Time Plus™.

VII. CULMINATING ACTIVITY

1. Teacher will display messages around the room in various centers. Students can use a pointer and read to each other.
2. Students can take the message(s) home and read it to their parents.
3. Student will copy a daily "Message Time".

VIII. HANDOUTS/STUDENTS WORKSHEETS

- A. Appendix A

IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A. *Starting Out Right*. Burns, Susan M. and Catherine E. Snow. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1990. ISBN 0-309-06410-4.
- B. *Core Knowledge Preschool Sequence, Content and Skill Guidelines for Preschool*. Charlottesville, VA: Core Knowledge Foundation, 2000. ISBN 1-890517-21-6.
- C. *Core Knowledge Preschool Training: "Language Boosters"*. Charlottesville, VA: Core Knowledge Foundation, 1997.
- D. "Getting the Most Out of Morning Message and Other Shared Writing". New York, NY: Scholastic, 1998. (p. 34)

Appendix A

Name: _____

Print Concepts

	1st Q	2nd Q	3rd Q	4th Q
Name / Define !				
Name / Define .				
Name / Define " "				
Name / Define ?				
Explain how to read				
Top to Bottom				
Left to Right				
Identifies:				
Capital Letters				
Lower Case Letters				
Date:				

Comments:

1st Quarter _____

2nd Quarter _____

3rd Quarter _____

4th Quarter _____

NT = Needs Time (-)

D = Developing (+)

A = Achieving (*)

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