

NEW

DIRECTIONS

for success

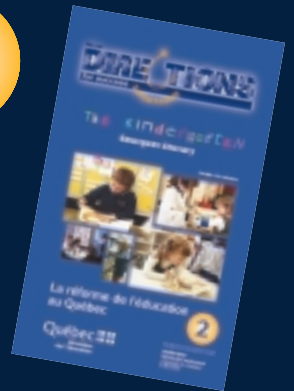
TOGETHER

The Kindergarten

Emergent Literacy

WORKSHOP GUIDE
FOR THE VIDEO

2



UQÀM SAV
Service de l'audiovisuel
Université du Québec
à Montréal

Éducation
Québec





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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

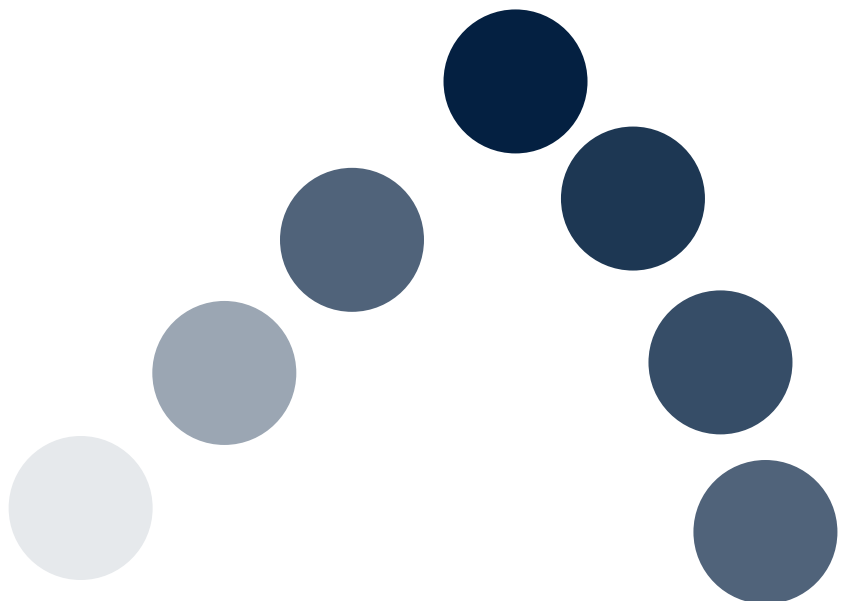
This animation guide is to be used with the accompanying video, *The Kindergarten: Emergent Literacy* and is designed to animate sessions for preschool teachers. The video is a tool to help teachers better understand the processes by which children expand their literacy horizons. It discusses the roles teachers are called upon to play in creating an environment that supports emergent literacy and shows children engaging in literacy-based activities. The guide includes support activities, as well as suggestions for creating activities within the context of the Quebec Preschool Program.

CONTEXT

Preschool Education

The program enables 4- and 5-year-olds to develop psychomotor, emotional, social, language, cognitive and methodological competencies related to self-knowledge, life in society and communication. With the support of the teacher, children take part in learning situations drawn from their world of play and their life experiences and begin to play the role of students, active and capable of thinking.

The program also allows children to begin developing certain intellectual, methodological, personal and social, and communication-related competencies that are cross-curricular, and to explore topics that are of interest to them in the broad areas of learning.





PREVIEW OF MATERIALS

Before presenting the video to participants, take some time to look at it and to read this guide.

- The video has six natural breaks plus an introduction. Determine where you might break the video into segments and what cues you will give the audience prior to the viewing of these segments. Make a note of the numbers on the VCR that correspond with the segment breaks that you will make when you show the video.

- Try to be clear about your goals in using this material: What understandings might result by taking part in these activities and viewing the video?

- As teachers we have knowledge and expertise. It is important to keep this principle at the center of your planning, since the most proven staff development begins with what teachers know and what they do in their classrooms

already. As you watch the video and look at the activities in this guide, think about how they could be connected to the knowledge and expertise your teachers already have.

- As you watch the video make a note of any sections that your audience might find unclear, provocative, interesting and so forth. These sections might suggest preparatory or follow-up activities that you could create. Make a note of these ideas and begin to select additional readings, if these are appropriate.

OPENING ACTIVITIES

Some Suggestions

Choose a focus:

Your main focus will depend on your goals for the session, the background knowledge of the participants to competency-based learning and the time available for the session. These considerations will determine the extent to which you cover the following points.

A. Competency-based learning.

The Kindergarten program embodies the shift to a competency-based program and its implications for literacy learning. Plan to review the concept of competency prior to viewing the video with a sense of your own knowledge, questions and expertise. Part of this initial activity might involve writing down the questions and comments that emerge to be used as cues for viewing the video.

The cross-curricular competencies are the heart of the new program. These competencies do not belong to any specific discipline but must be supported within each discipline. Students will call upon these competencies when placed in new learning situations drawn from the Areas of Lifelong learning.



Suggested Activities

1. Put the following definition on large chart paper or on an overhead. *Competency is a complex action based on the mobilization and use of all of ones resources.*

Have the teachers talk about this statement in small groups. What does it mean? Record the responses on the chart or overhead.

The following points might provide helpful background information for the above activity:

- Competency involves different kinds of knowledge drawn from different sources.
- Competency does not exist outside of a context.
- Demonstrating and developing competency always involves doing/action.
- Knowledge is a necessary component of competency but is not sufficient in self. You can have knowledge without being competent.
- Competency involves the integration of knowledge into new situations.
- Competency develops in a variety of contexts. It does not necessarily mean learning new material. It could consist of learning how to better use what is already known.
- The development of a competency requires that students learn to practice their growing knowledge and abilities in different situations.
- Competency requires the student to make choices, to act and to reflect on what s/he is doing.

2. Review the difference between discipline specific competencies and cross-curricular competencies with the teachers. Refer to the Cross-curricular Competencies in the curriculum documents. See if the participants can make some connections between the cross-curricular competencies and the knowledges, abilities and skills that they believe their students will need in the 21st century.

- A competency-based approach demands a critical look at certain pedagogical practices. For example, teaching centered on the memorization of skills without regard to the contexts in which these skills are needed, does not support the development of competency. Ask participants to reflect on implications for teaching that an approach by competency demands. What might it mean for the teacher? For the student? How can the cross-curricular competencies be developed in the preschool classroom?

3. Take time to review the Preschool program and other key elements of the curriculum, such as the Outcomes, End of Cycle Evaluation Criteria, Key elements of the Competency, Characteristics and Content.

- Divide up the task by having small groups take responsibility for one of the six preschool competencies and its key features. Allow time for the small groups to discuss the sense of the competency and its implications for the teaching/learning in the classroom. It is important that the teachers make connections to their own practice. What is familiar? Unfamiliar? Interesting? Groups share what they have discovered in a plenary session.

- Discussion point

“What’s the relationship between the Preschool competencies and the Cross-curricular competencies?”



B. Emergent Literacy

Provide an opportunity (Think-Pair-Share, Graffiti, Roundtable etc.) for teachers to share their knowledge and beliefs about literacy.

Suggested Activities

- Ask teachers to articulate their beliefs about literacy. What does literacy mean to you? What do you believe to be some of the key conditions needed to support literacy? (Appendix 2)
- Make connections to the teachers' understandings about competency-based learning (focus on the need for the student to be actively involved and the need for a context). What might competency mean in terms of emergent literacy? How can emergent literacy be supported in a competency-based approach? What questions does it raise? Generate a list of suggestions based on the knowledge and expertise of the audience. Use the comments and questions that arise from the discussion to cue the audience for viewing the video.



CUEING THE VIDEO

- Draw on the activities that you and the teachers have done to date in order to cue them for what to look for in the video that they are about to see.
- Briefly summarize the content of the segment of the video that the teachers are about to see. Draw their attention to especially relevant areas of the video.

Introduction: Literacy

Segment 1: Books, Books, More Print

Segment 2: Connecting to Stories

Segment 3: Messages: Great Opportunities

Segment 4: Play and Literacy

Segment 5: Writing to Communicate

Segment 6: Fun With Language

- You might ask the participants to view the video, or a segment of the video, with a particular question in mind. The following are suggestions to help provide a focus for the viewing.
- Restate the importance of pedagogical practices that support the development of literacy. Use the knowledge and understandings generated by the teachers about the implications for teaching and learning and ask the audience to look for examples of how the development of literacy is supported in the classrooms depicted in the video they are about to see.

- The principle of differentiated instruction is at the heart of the Quebec Curriculum Reform. Differentiation is a method of teaching that respects the uniqueness of each child by creating spaces of possibility within the classroom where children are able to demonstrate their abilities, learning styles, personal gifts and different intelligences and therefore contribute to the richness of the learning that is taking place. Since the overriding objective of the Reform is on success for every child, the differentiated classroom is one in which the individual student is recognized for her/his individual growth and development. In what ways do the teachers in the video create these 'spaces of possibility' for their students?
- Ask the teachers to jot down the words, expressions, images or activities that capture their attention as they view the video. As well, ask them to make note of questions or ideas, since these will be discussed immediately after viewing.

AFTER VIEWING

Some suggestions for discussion

- After viewing a video segment, begin the discussion with the teachers' questions and comments. During the discussion, guide the points raised back to the teachers' own knowledge and expertise.
- What was relevant for you?
- Was there a match between the views about literacy expressed by the teachers/consultants in the video and your own?
- What exists in your practice that supports the development of literacy?
- What is one new idea you can incorporate into your practice?
- What problems/successes have you had in differentiating instruction in your classroom? Teachers might decide to explore their expertise in differentiating instruction by sharing their experiences with their colleagues.
- Record suggestions that might become team activities. If questions are raised that require follow-up, for example going to supplementary readings or back to the curriculum, incorporate them into your planning for either immediate follow-up or subsequent activities. Issues for further discussion could include:
 - The importance of learning through play and its connection to literacy.
 - The role of the teacher in providing opportunities and experiences that invite children into natural literacy experiences.
 - Pedagogical approaches that support emergent literacy and competency-based learning (Modeled reading and writing, writing workshop...).
 - Have teams of teachers use problem solving strategies to find creative ways to go about getting the resources they need. Suggest they make a wish list and build toward it.
 - You might ask teachers to return to the preschool program and the cross-curricular competencies. What characteristics of the Key Features of the program were evident in the scenarios they viewed? Which cross-curricular competencies were being developed? Appendix 4



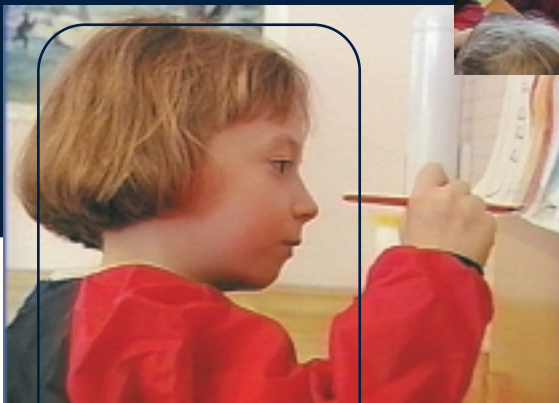
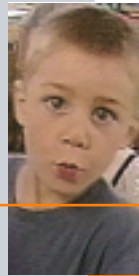


ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS:

These activities extend some of the key ideas in the video and make suggestions of how they might be developed by teachers working in cycle teams.

- Teachers might want to look at the assessment considerations that will be important for teaching/learning in a competency-based literacy program. Brainstorm questions to focus and clarify thinking. For example: What time do I have to observe and record? What system might I use to hold the artifacts the students and I collect that demonstrates growth? How can I involve my students in the assessment process?
- The development of competency and differentiated instruction lead naturally to the portfolio as a means of assessment and evaluation. There is no shortage of resources on this topic. Many preschool students keep a portfolio of their learning in everything from scrapbooks to boxes to grocery bags. This might be an area that teachers are interested in researching.
- Teachers might wish to explore the rich benefits of writing with young children. A writing workshop experience, similar to those shown in the video, has proven to be particularly valuable in teaching reading skills and in making print meaningful.
- The teachers might look at the English Language Arts program for Cycle I to see what it has to say about literacy in the Expectations, Outcomes, Key Features and Characteristics of each competency. The first paragraph of the Outcomes gives a snapshot of what is expected of the children moving into Cycle One.
- Examine the Areas of Lifelong Learning in the curriculum document. How could these be used in creating topics and themes that relate to the life and interests of the students?

APPENDIXES



Appendix I

Competency is a complex action based on the mobilization and use of all of ones resources.

What does this statement mean to you? What is a competency?

How is it developed? What types of resources are mobilized when we demonstrate a competency?

Exchange ideas and discuss your answers.



Appendix 2

What does literacy mean to you? What does it mean to be literate in the 21st Century? What are some of the key conditions needed to support literacy?

In pairs or groups of three, discuss your beliefs about literacy. What beliefs do you hold in common?



Appendix 3

Watch the video *The Kindergarten: Emergent Literacy* and jot down the words, expressions, images and activities that capture your attention. Share your impressions with a colleague.



Appendix 4

Cross-curricular competencies are developed within specific contexts. Which cross-curricular competencies are being developed within the context of the classrooms highlighted in the video? What is the context?

Cross-Curricular Competencies

Classroom Context

Intellectual

- To use information
- To solve problems
- To exercise critical judgment
- To be creative

Methodological

- To use effective work methods
- To use the ICT

Personal and Social

- To develop her/his personal identity
- To maintain harmonious interpersonal relations
- To work with others
- To demonstrate a sense of ethics

Communication Related

- To communicate appropriately



Appendix 5

Action Plan

Reflection

What I already do that supports the development of emergent literacy and competency-based learning.

One new idea that I would like to incorporate into my practice is...



