Rich Routines

Supporting Literacy in the Early Years

Our classrooms are full of routines, which students quickly learn to help navigate the classroom. The creation and implementation of routines bring a sense of predictability and comfort to our classrooms. Routines help with organization and classroom management, and they help make transitions smooth. It is essential to establish a community of learners who take ownership of their own learning. These routines can be used in whole group, small group and ‘extra dose’ groupings. A routine is an activity or event that occurs on a regular basis over a period of time.

Rich Literacy Routines (RLR) will provide opportunities:

- to include regular practice of oral language (as well as other literacy concepts involved in reading and writing)
- to build a community of learners
- for teachers to notice, nurture and nudge the learning while listening and being responsive to the learners
- to focus on the competencies

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<th>Curricular Competencies</th>
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<td><strong>Using oral, written, visual, and digital texts, students are expected individually and collaboratively to be able to:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Comprehend and connect (reading, listening, viewing)</strong></td>
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<td>- Use sources of information and prior knowledge to make meaning</td>
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<td>- Use developmentally appropriate reading, listening, and viewing strategies to make meaning</td>
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<td>- Explore foundational concepts of print, oral, and visual texts</td>
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<td>- Engage actively as listeners, viewers, and readers, as appropriate, to develop understanding of self, identity, and community</td>
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<td>- Recognize the importance of story in personal, family, and community identity</td>
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<td>- Use personal experience and knowledge to connect to stories and other texts to make meaning</td>
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<td>- Recognize the structure of story</td>
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<td><strong>Create and communicate (writing, speaking, representing)</strong></td>
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<td>- Exchange ideas and perspectives to build shared understanding</td>
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<td>- Use language to identify, create, and share ideas, feelings, opinions, and preferences</td>
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<td>- Create stories and other texts to deepen awareness of self, family, and community</td>
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<td>- Plan and create stories and other texts for different purposes and audiences</td>
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<td>- Explore oral storytelling processes</td>
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These Rich Routines serve as ‘warm ups’- quick 5, 10 or maybe 15 minutes experiences to develop the oral language foundational concepts that are crucial for success in reading and writing. Children need these kinds of daily experiences and everyday interactions to develop a firm foundation.

They don’t need to relate to the literacy focus for that day, but they do need to be repeated over and over.

Although, we often think of routines as being used for organization, routines can also be used to enhance instruction. The following routines are structured activities that, when used consistently, can help students gain proficiency with a range of concepts and strategies. In this resource, we will present five easily implemented routines:

1. Wonder of Words
2. Same? Different?
3. Let’s Talk About It
4. Mind-full Reading
5. Saving the Talk

Each of these routines may be used effectively with any of the oral language concepts: (refer to the essential “Oral Language Concepts” 4 page brochures).

Note: For instructional purpose, the four components comprise overlapping areas of skill development, are all oral in nature and are intended to be taught simultaneously.

- rhyme
- syllabication
- alphabetic principle
- segmenting and blending

All students are individuals who learn in different ways and move along the developmental continuum at their own rate and rich routines provide entry points for all learners.

These routines can be easily and quickly implemented, but explicitly teaching the procedures and building a community of learners are essential. Every student needs to feel they have access to the routines and can contribute ideas without hesitation. Multiple exposure to the essential oral language concepts will provide the foundation for literacy success.

The intent of the routines is to focus on a specific concept through a predictable practice for 5 – 15 minutes. This resource will provide ideas and suggestions to infuse routines into your daily schedules.
**Wonder of Words**
– involves playing with sounds and words in entertaining and engaging ways

**Probing Questions:**
What do you notice?
What do you wonder?
What connections do you see?

- **Name Game** – use students’ names - ask the probing questions. Provide clues about a name and have students figure out who it is. See ‘Name Unit’ handout.
- **Today’s Word** – present selected word/s and provide opportunity for students to make connections and share what they notice (e.g. show the name ‘Aman’ - may get responses like …”2 syllables”, “4 letters”, “starts with A” “I see the word man hiding “or show “duck, truck, puck” (with pictures), and you may get “same “uck” sound, one syllable, they rhyme, etc.
- **Message Board** – a message (pictures included) that students are provided time to explore and discuss. Different from a ‘Morning Message’ because students are provided time to think about the message and make sense for themselves.
- **What Does It Mean?** – review a word in the context of reading (e.g. Remember how someone ‘tiptoed’ in the story). Ask: “What does it mean to tiptoe?”
- Brainstorm words that could replace a word (e.g. instead of ‘said’ you can use ‘yelled.’)
- **Shared Reading and Key Links** Shared books are ideal for this. Ideas can be found at: [http://keylinks.com.au/shared_reading.asp](http://keylinks.com.au/shared_reading.asp)
- **Silly Sounds** – involves playing with words and sounds to incorporate phoneme manipulation. Playful rhyme with children’s names or songs such as “Down by the Bay”, allow students to manipulative sounds to make silly connections (e.g. If you ever see a ‘goat riding a boat’, down by the bay.)
- See ‘Phonemic Awareness in the Early Primary Classroom’ handout for songs, chants and ideas for playing with words and sounds.
- **Picture It** – show the students a photograph and have them identify sounds, words or syllables they notice. 
  An excellent resource is the Wintergreen-‘Building Language Photo Library’ which is in every school.
Same? Different?
– involves presenting students with two or more pictures, letter/sounds, or words and having them think of ways they are alike and different.
An excellent resource is the Wintergreen-‘Building Language Photo Library’ which is in every school.

Probing Questions:
What do you notice?
How are they the same?
How are they different?

Note: Be open to all student responses. There may be more than one possible answer. Listen and be responsive to the students’ explanations, to make connections to how each student learns.

- **Compare Them** – present two or more pictures, letter/sounds or words and ask students to identify how they are alike and different and explain their reasoning.

- **Guess My Rule** – provide a collection of pictures, letters/sounds or words and ask them to think about and share how these words are connected. There may be multiple ways the students identify (e.g. jog, jump, jive... “I think you chose words that tell ways to move.” Or “The words all begin with j.”) After modelling have the students “make the rule” for each other

- **Sort them** – provide a collection of small objects, picture or word cards for student to sort (e.g. names, environmental print, initial sounds, final sounds, syllables, or rhymes.)

- **Which One Doesn’t Belong?** – students’ are presented with four pictures, letters, or words in a 4 box format. The object is to determine which one of the four doesn’t belong to the set. These four parts need to be carefully chosen to enable all students to have access to the problem. Some responses may include: “I think its S because it is curved. Or I think it is S because X Y Z go in order.”

Find examples for numeracy and literacy here: [http://wodb.ca/shapes.html](http://wodb.ca/shapes.html)
Let’s Talk About It
–engages students in conversations that involve explanations, personal narrative, and pretend play where students create and re-create events, analyze experiences, share opinions and ideas, and ask questions.

Probing Questions:
What do you notice?
What do you wonder?
What questions might you ask?
How might you explain your thinking?

• **Would You Rather?** – uses an open-ended prompt with picture cards or objects to generate conversation. Choose topics or items that you know your students can relate to or that collaboratively you have built background knowledge around. “Would you rather... (e.g. “Would you rather eat blackberries or strawberries?”) Have students “think, pair and share” [http://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/think-pair-share](http://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/think-pair-share) and then explain their choice or ask questions of their partner to find out more about their decision. See [http://bit.ly/2fRmcvy](http://bit.ly/2fRmcvy) for ‘Would You Rather’ prompts for children c/o [www.themeaduredmom.com](http://www.themeaduredmom.com).

• **Question and Answers** – involves asking and answering questions. It might involve an object hidden in a bag and students ask questions to get clues about what is hidden. It could involve a hidden pictures, word, or character from a story.

• **List and Label** – involves brainstorming words to fit into a category such as “things that have buttons” or “containers that hold things”. It might involve showing the students 3 objects and have students identify how they are related (e.g. flashlight, a picture of the sun, and a light bulb... “things that make light.”)

• **What’s Your Story?** – choose a character, setting and problem from familiar stories and have students tell a story with objects or picture cards (e.g. Papa Bear, a castle and a lost slipper).
### Mind Full Reading

- **Involves** using pocket charts, songs, chants, and Big Books to connect oral language to text.

#### Things to Think About

1. Select rich text connected to students’ interests
2. Reading needs to be interactive in nature
3. Model reading with fluency, expression and animation
4. It’s important to read familiar text multiple times

### Changing Voices
- **Add a level of novelty to rereading familiar text and build fluency and expression.**

### Show What You Know
- **Invite students to point out elements of print and pictures that they recognize.**
- Provide interesting materials to point to words (e.g. pointers with objects). Students may re-enact parts of the story, or characters responses.
- Ideas can be found at: [http://bit.ly/2xYRASA](http://bit.ly/2xYRASA)

### I Spy
- **I spy with my eye...**
- a word that starts the same as David
- a word that rhymes with ‘ bug’
- a word that has 3 syllables
- a word that describes the duck

### Rebuild It
- **Work with students to recreate the text in a meaningful way.**
- The text might be mixed up and students asked to ‘fix it’. Another idea is to change the text and add student names to rebuild it a different way (e.g. ‘Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see?’ changes to ‘Aman, Aman, What do you see?’)

### Questions I Have
- **About the text** – engage the student in conversations that prompts questions about the text.
- I wonder...
- What does this remind you of?
- I think...I guess...I predict...

### Saving the Talk

- **Involves making the connection of the sounds students hear to the written symbols.**

#### Probing Questions:
- What do you notice?
- What do you wonder?

### Seeing Talk
- **Recording students’ names, objects or ideas in written form.**
- Ask: What do you notice? What do you wonder?

### To You
- **Record students’ thoughts in a letter, note, card or message to someone who has visited the room or helped in the classroom.**
- Learn more about Interactive writing, or “sharing the pen” here: [http://www.stanswartz.com/IAW%20excerpt.pdf](http://www.stanswartz.com/IAW%20excerpt.pdf)

### What’s the Details?
- **Ask students to think about and share the details from a picture, story, or object and record their thoughts in written form.**
- Reread the information through playful voices and expression.

### Writing Around the Picture
- **Choose a large photograph or picture and label or record students thinking around it.**
- *Resource:* “What’s Next for this Beginning Writer” by Janine Reid, Betty Schultze & Ulla Petersen