



As children develop an understanding of the alphabetic principle, they begin to process letters, translate them into sounds, and connect this information with a known meaning. Although it may seem as though some children acquire these understandings magically or on their own, studies suggest that they are the beneficiaries of considerable, though playful and informal, adult guidance and instruction (Durkin 1966; Anbar 1986).



PRESCHOOL AND PRE-K

REGGIO-INSPIRED EMERGENT LITERACY

Learning Experiences Through the *Zoo-phonics
Multisensory Language Arts Program*

Play-based learning to promote a love for literacy!

What children learn does not follow as an automatic result from what is taught, rather, it is in large part due to the children's own doing, as a consequence of their activities and our resources.
—Loris Malaguzzi, *The Hundred Languages of Children*



STORYBOOK
VILLAGE PRESCHOOL



EMERGENT LITERACY



The Zoo-phonics Multisensory Language Arts Program in a Reggio-inspired early childhood program.

The Hundred Languages is the belief that there are "multiple ways of seeing and multiple ways of being." The Hundred Languages of Children is a learning process, and through play, we learn all the ways children represent and convey ideas and emotions, as well as the multiple ways in which they comprehend the world.

Children usually come to the toddler program with limited speech and the preschool program with limited alphabet knowledge, which is appropriate. However, the *Zoo-phonics Multisensory Language Arts Program* will support the learning process naturally and playfully through our Zoo-phonics experiences! Most likely, the children will learn the body movements (the signals) first, the animal names second, and the sounds last. However, because they are SEEING, SAYING, HEARING, and MOVING, the articulation of speech sounds will be stimulated, and you will see quick progress!

- We promote emergent literacy by introducing the lowercase shapes and sounds of the alphabet through the animal pictures and body signals in large and small group experiences.
- We read aloud stories to the children. Through our small and large group experiences, children develop basic concepts of print, such as directionality, one-to-one correspondence of sounds to words, and relating speech to reading.
- We provide literacy-rich experiences through our environment with intentional materials to enhance children's exposure to and concepts about print.
- Our classroom stuffed animal, Bubba Bear, goes home weekly with a child to support our home-school connections and share literacy learning adventures through family engagement!
- Through play and provocations, we create meaningful class-made books with the children. The books become more child-led as we grow with the children in our mixed-age classroom.
- Mark-making is the beginning stage of mastering writing skills!

The single most important activity for building these understandings and skills essential for reading success appears to be reading aloud to children (Wells 1985; Bus, Van Ijzendoorn, & Pellegrini 1995).

Zoo-Phonics Class Book ([Link](#))

