



Making the Connection between Summer and Learning: A Guide for Energy Express Mentors



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Introduction

Contents:

- Welcome letter
- History of Energy Express
- Energy Express Model
- Typical Schedule of a Mentor



Dear Mentor,

Congratulations on making the choice to serve as an Energy Express Mentor this year. Through your service, you will experience unimagined joys and satisfaction. You will also face challenges as you strive to provide key elements of reading instruction and nutrition for children. Through your effort and dedication this summer, you will change lives and communities.

This manual will serve as a guide, providing you with tools and inspiration.

Know that many individuals have put years of knowledge and work into ensuring the relevance of the materials inside. Take time to review the documents and refer back to them often. Some of the information will mean even more to you once you begin your service on site. Do not be afraid to re-read sections as you move through your term of service.

As you face challenges, remember that you are not alone. Share your thoughts and concerns with your site team. Your site supervisor and fellow AmeriCorps members will share this unique experience with you. As the summer progresses, remember to take time to reflect on your experiences. You will be making important connections with children, families, and community members.

I would like to welcome you to our team and remind you that many others have been successful in completing this mission. Thank you, on behalf of the children and communities you will change this summer. Their lives, and yours, will never be the same.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Alicia Cassels'.

Alicia Cassels

The History of Energy Express

Dr. Ruthellen Phillips and Dr. Belle Zars of the West Virginia University Extension Service designed a program to address three clearly identified needs of children: 1. The need for summer learning opportunities, 2. The need for adequate nutrition during summer months and 3. The need for safe and secure environments. For a long time we have known that children from families and communities with limited resources tend to lose ground academically over the summer break from school. These summer learning losses are cumulative and by the end of elementary school, low-income children have fallen behind their more privileged peers. Malnutrition compromises children's health, their cognitive development and their educational achievement. To address these needs, a six week summer reading and nutrition program, typically housed in school facilities, delivered by college student mentors was introduced.

Then:

1994: Pilot implemented in two counties with 13 college students mentors and 85 children

1996: First class of AmeriCorps Members

Now:

2011: 78 sites in 39 counties

2812 children reached 50% attendance with an additional 488 children served.

498 college students and community members engaged in service as AmeriCorps members

136,246 meals served to children participating in the program

23,192 meals served to other community youth

20,958 take home books distributed

3407 family and community members served as volunteers

1514 youth volunteers—44%; 1893 adult volunteers—56%

61,081 hours of volunteer time

Average of 44 volunteers per site

The Energy Express Model: The Energy Express program model is truly the sum of its parts-each component is strengthened by the others and in turn strengthens them. This model is nationally recognized.

1997: The program was featured as a model program on the U.S. Department of Education's Satellite Town Meeting on summer reading and in the National Institute on Out-of-School's Time's "how-to" manual.

1998: Energy Express was selected as the America Reads Read*Write*Now! Pilot Site for West Virginia.

1997: In recognition of local and state partnerships, Energy Express received the 1997 Council of State Governments Innovations Award and the Joint Council of Extension Professionals' Award for Excellence in Teamwork.

The Energy Express Model



Energy Express is successful due to its ability to support the child, their families and their communities. All of the elements are important, and all are interconnected. Each element is described in the following pages.

Collaboration

The community collaborative of parents, groups, and organizations helps to develop proposals, generate a required local match and fill a variety of support roles resulting in shared ownership, diversified funding, and program sustainability



State and Federal Partners include:

West Virginia University Extension Service - 4-H Youth Development
Volunteer West Virginia - The State's Commission for National and Community Service

West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts

West Virginia Department of Education - Office of Child Nutrition

Local partners vary but often include boards of education, businesses, civic organizations, community action agencies, community service groups, faith based organizations, family resource networks, 4-H organizations, libraries, parent organizations, and West Virginia Community Outreach Service clubs.

Place-based Curriculum



Mentors guide children through enriching experiences that make reading meaningful in their lives. These experiences allow children to appreciate themselves, their personal experiences, and their place in the world. The focus of Energy Express's curriculum is the child, and their connections to people and places. There are six weekly themes



Nutrition

- ✦ Breakfast and lunch is served each day
 - ✦ Family Style meals encourage social skills and helps mentors strengthen their relationships with children.
 - ✦ 58% of a child's daily nutritional requirements
 - ✦ Children are introduced to a variety of healthy foods.
 - ✦ Children make choices, assume responsibility, cooperate, and participate in group discussions.
-

Small Groups



- ❖ Eight Children
- ❖ Vertical-age groupings (3 grades represented in each group of children entering 1st through 6th grade.)
- ❖ Non Competitive Environment
- ❖ Encourages teamwork



Also, One Site Supervisor works with five to eight members. Small groups ensure that everyone can participate and have a voice in group discussions and activities.

The children who come to Energy Express have often experienced failure in school or are struggling in some aspect of their lives. Energy Express stresses an environment where all children can experience success through supportive relationships with adults and one another. And free from negative comparisons, ability grouping, competitive recreation and incentives.

Parent and Community Involvement



Family Visits

Open House

Volunteerism and Service Projects

Weekly connections with families

Human capital built in local community



Print-Rich

- Access to high quality books and reading materials.
- Opportunities for reading experiences
- Opportunities for writing experiences
- Opportunities to explore the meaning of text through creative, original book based art projects.
- Opportunities to express language and explore meaning through drama
- Books of their own to take home and keep and begin their own libraries

Service



AmeriCorps is a national service program with four goals:

- Getting things done
- Strengthening communities
- Encouraging responsibility (Member development)
- Expanding opportunity

Energy Express AmeriCorps members make a commitment to serve the needs of children living in rural and low-income communities in the summer as a Mentor or a Community Coordinator.

AmeriCorps members reflect on the impact of their service and build leadership skills by planning community service projects.

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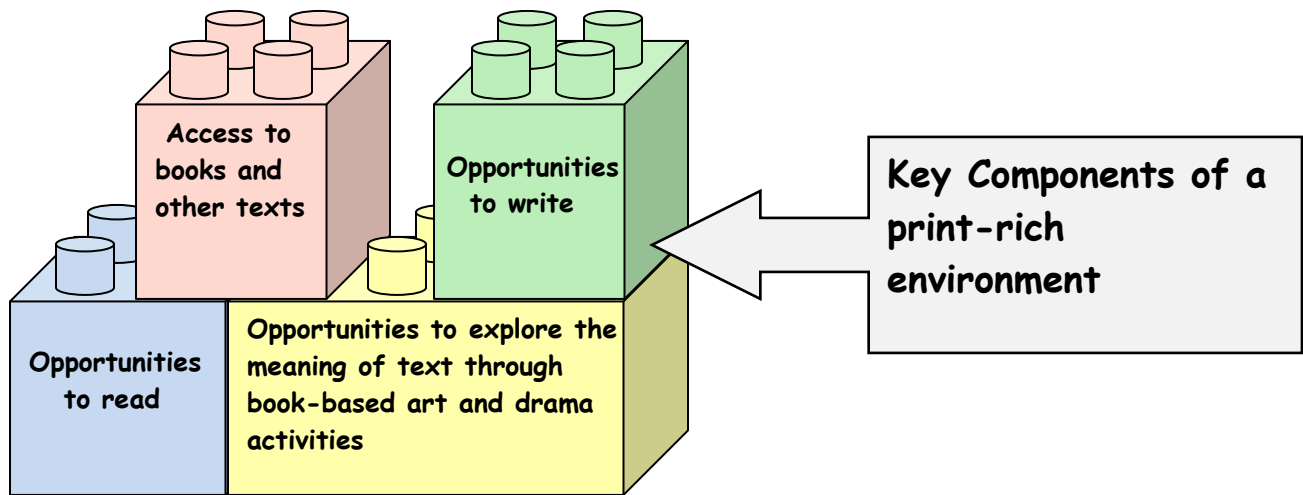


Understanding the Energy Express Curriculum

Contents:

- What is a Print-rich Environment?
- Supporting Reading
- Supporting Art
- Supporting Writing
- Supporting Drama

What is a Print-Rich Environment?



Things to remember about Energy Express and a print-rich environment:

- *Energy Express is designed to meet the needs of children who have limited reading resources and opportunities during the summer—children who lack a print-rich environment.
- *Energy Express is designed to motivate children to **WANT** to read and give opportunities for them to practice reading.
- *Text includes anything a child can read—books, lists, letters and notes, poems, stories written on murals, and labels attached to objects and artwork.
- *While you, the mentor, will provide some of the print in the room, the children play a major role in writing their own books, making their own books, and creating artwork that connects to text—their contributions to the print-rich environment.
- *Energy Express engages children in writing experiences that are meaningful and purposeful.
- *Creating a print-rich Energy Express environment is guided by the Energy Express weekly themes.

Supporting Reading

What does research say about children and reading?



- Children need to spend time practicing reading to become fluent readers.
- Many children do not have an opportunity at home or school practice reading.
- Regardless of income level, children who are read to daily and who read for pleasure daily achieve at the highest rates.

How do you, the mentor, support children's reading?

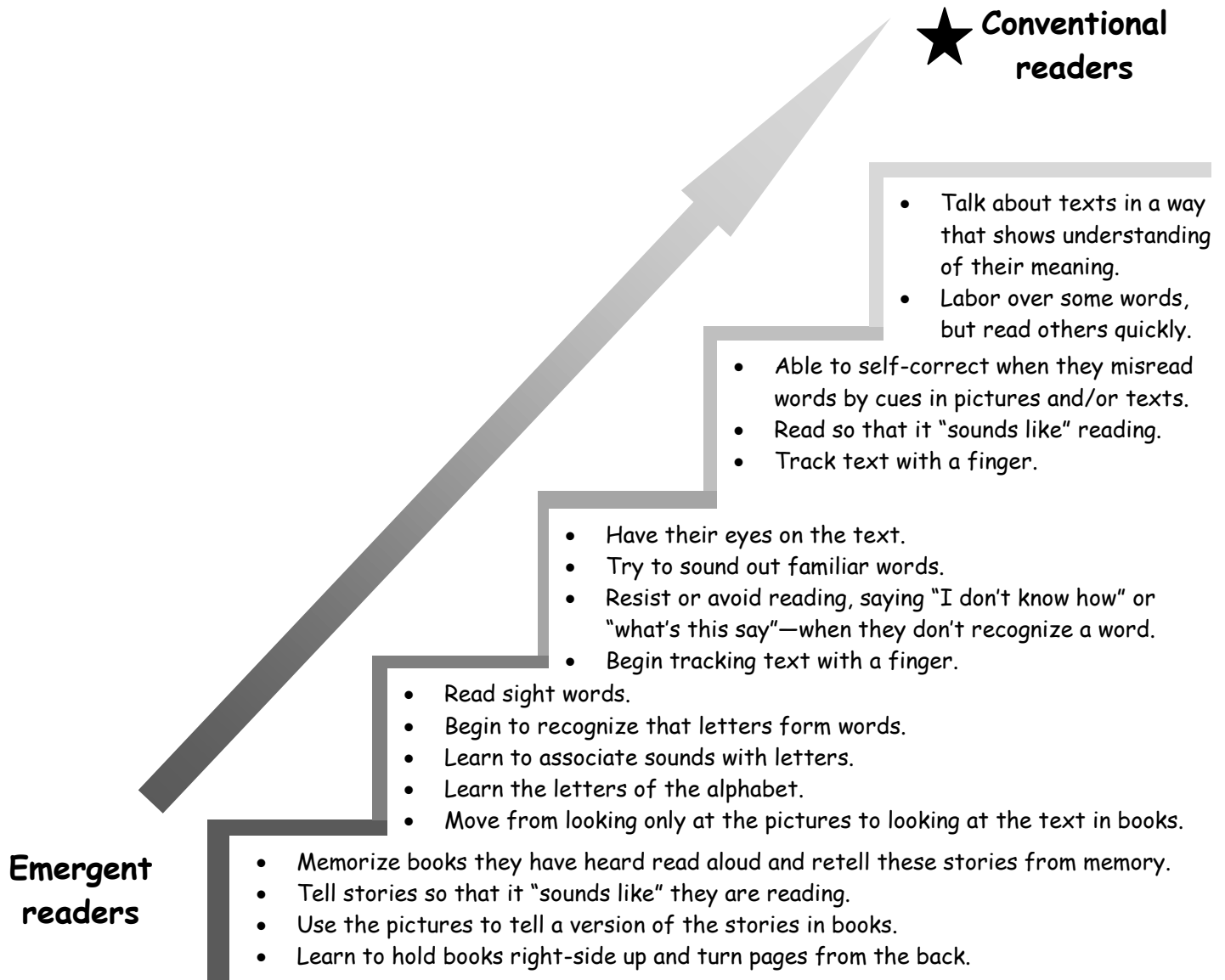
- You read to and with children daily.
- You guide the development of a print-rich environment.
- You make sure children have a variety of materials available to create their own print materials.
- You encourage children to explore the meaning of text through language experience, writing, art, and drama activities.
- You encourage children to talk about books you read together.
- You are a positive role model who builds a caring, secure and supportive relationship with each of the children in a small group.
- You recognize the interests, abilities, and needs of each child in your group.



Without strong mentorship, children do not receive the full benefit of the Energy Express model!

Recognizing Emergent and Conventional Literacy

Beginning readers are referred to as "emergent readers." Energy Express supports the reading development of emergent readers, as they build skills necessary for conventional reading.



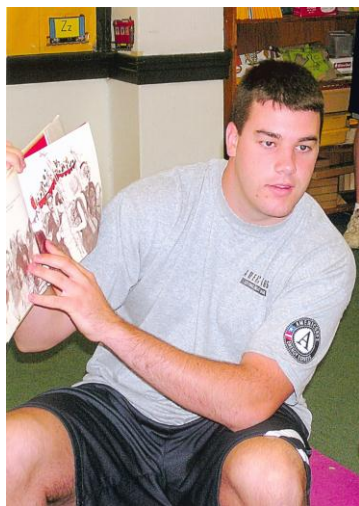
Five Essential Components of Reading

Reading Component	Reading Component Defined	How Component is Supported at Energy Express
Phonemic Awareness	Ability to hear and manipulate sounds spoken in words	Oral language opportunities (during drama, family-style meals, storytelling, book discussion), exposure to written language, practice reading in a "risk-free" environment (allowing for mistakes and experimentation), new words are introduced
Phonics	Ability to associate written and spoken letters with their sounds	Children read daily, children are read to daily, familiar books are revisited, children engage in writing opportunities, the writing of children is read aloud
Fluency	Ability to read with accuracy at an appropriate rate, with appropriate expression, and with appropriate phrasing	Children are given opportunities to practice reading (silently and aloud), children engage in shared, guided reading, children engage in repeated oral reading
Vocabulary	Ability to understand meaning of words and use them in appropriately	Reading environment is labeled, artwork and writing activities are connected, new/unfamiliar words are added are clarified during reading and added to word wall, children are given opportunities to apply words in context during written and oral communication
Comprehension	The ability to understand text	Supporting child's ability to understand vocabulary, repeated reading of familiar texts, book discussions, question answering and generation, summarization of content, building on prior experience, encouraging connections with books, encouraging predictions, using visual graphic organizers to represent book content, engaging in book-based art, writing, and drama activities

There are three types of reading that happens at Energy Express:

1. Read Aloud
2. Shared Reading
3. Solo Reading

Read Aloud: Reading to Children



*"Few children learn to love books by themselves. Someone has to lure them into the world of the written word; someone has to show them the way."—Orville Prescott, from *A Father Reads to His Children*.*

Reading aloud to children is the first step to helping them into literacy and is a basic way to continue supporting their reading. A good read-aloud can engage children and motivate them to read on their own. When you read aloud to children each day, you are fulfilling one of your most important responsibilities as a mentor—you are, as Mr. Prescott shared above, luring them into a "wonderful world" and acting in the truest sense of "mentor" by showing them the way to become part of that

world.

Read-Aloud "Dos"

- ✓ Preview books!
- ✓ Practice read aloud techniques in front of the mirror or in front of others (friends, family, site team).
- ✓ Always have a ready supply of good books—a selection may not work with your audience or take as long as planned, or you may want to schedule an impromptu session.
- ✓ Use books covering a range of reading levels.
- ✓ Make sure all children can see the pictures in a picture book easily; share the illustrations in chapter books.
- ✓ Establish eye contact with the children.
- ✓ Set the mood for read-aloud by allowing your audience time to settle down and get comfortable and then focus them by introducing the book to be read or discussing where you left off in a book you've been reading.
- ✓ Explain unusual vocabulary ahead of time to avoid interrupting the flow of the story.
- ✓ Invite the children into the book by talking about the author, illustrator, the dedication, the title, other books by the same author and/or illustrator, and so forth.
- ✓ Use a lot of expression. Try using dramatic voices for characters, make sound effects, and change your tone of voice to fit the plot.
- ✓ Some children haven't developed their "listening muscles" yet and may find it difficult to sit still and listen. Make paper, crayons, or Play Dough® available to help keep their hands busy.
- ✓ Be tolerant—the child who is sitting under the table with his or her back to you but is being quiet is still benefiting from hearing you read aloud.
- ✓ Plan repeated readings of the take-home books.

Read-Aloud "Dos" Continued:

- ✓ Also, be tolerant of interruptions from your audience. Young children often will ask questions during the reading. Welcome these "teachable moments" when their curiosity is piqued. Answer and then continue reading.
- ✓ Set aside time to discuss what you have read after each read-aloud. Help children explore their feelings about the story and how it connects to their lives.
- ✓ Find a suspenseful spot to stop if you are reading a long chapter or a long book.
- ✓ Do a graphic organizer with the read-aloud.
- ✓ Make the book available for children to read, reread or look through after your read-aloud.

Shared Reading: Reading with Children



Shared reading, or one-on-one reading, helps children move from having books read to them to reading books on their own. In addition to children in your group reading one-on-one with volunteers, you will read with each child at least once a week.

Shared reading supports children while they are developing their abilities to read. When children are encouraged to read to another person or listen to another person read to

them individually, they get the message that they are valuable and that reading is an important and worthwhile activity.

When you engage in shared reading with children, you create wonderful opportunities to get to know them as readers and strengthen your relationships with them as unique individuals. Children reluctant to read aloud to a group often feel more comfortable reading one-on-one with someone they trust. This strategy provides children with a reading model and a safe and secure opportunity to practice. It allows you to see where a child may be struggling and where he or she is improving.

General suggestions for shared reading include:

- ✓ Help a child select a book he/she will enjoy reading over and over again.
- ✓ Select something fairly simple to start that is appropriate for the child's age and ability.
- ✓ When reading with a younger child, use your finger to follow print, pointing under the words (younger children).
- ✓ Encourage the child to use his or her finger to follow the print, too—this will let you know whether the child is recognizing words.

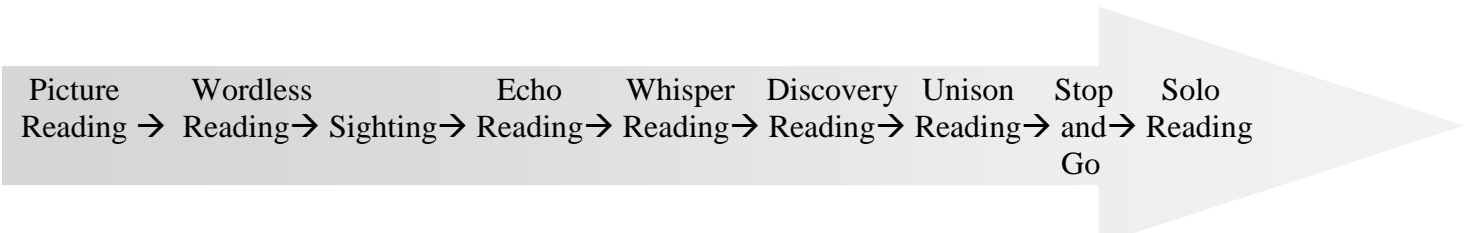
Encouraging a child to figure out a difficult or unfamiliar word by asking questions:

- ✓ Can you guess what that word might be?
- ✓ Does it make sense?
- ✓ Does it look right?
- ✓ Does it sound right?
- ✓ Can you go back to the beginning of the sentence and think about what might fit?
- ✓ Do the pictures give any clues about what the word might be?
- ✓ And, as a last resort, ask the child if he or she can "sound out" unfamiliar words.

Strategies for Shared Reading

You can use a variety of strategies to engage children in shared reading that make it comfortable and fun for them. Volunteers are also trained to use these strategies. Strategies for shared reading include:

- **Picture reading**—before reading a story or book, a read partner guides a child in interpreting the illustrations. When does the story take place; what time of day is it; what time of year? Who are some of the story's main characters, what are they like? How does the picture make you feel; how do you think the characters might be feeling?
- **"Wordless" reading**—using a picture book with no text, a reading partner asks questions and makes comments to guide a child through telling a story based on the pictures.
- **Sighting**—before reading a page or passage, have a child find the smallest word on the page and the largest, find a period, count the question marks, count the number of sentences, read the first word, read the last word on the page, find a word that begins with a particular letter, find a name, etc.
Then, read the story.
- **Echo reading**—a reading partner reads a section to a child, and the child then reads the same passage to the reading partner.
- **Whisper reading**—a reading partner reads into a child's ear while he or she reads aloud and then they change roles.
- **Discovery reading**—a reading partner guides a child through a familiar or predictable book, asking the child to fill in repeated phrases.
- **Unison reading**—a reading partner and a child read the same passage aloud at the same time.
- **Stop-and-Go**—a reading partner reads a passage to the child, until the child gives a signal that he/she is ready to take over reading; the child continues reading until he or she signals for the reading partner to take a turn reading.
- **Solo reading**—child reads to a reading partner.



Picture Reading → Wordless Reading → Sighting → Echo Reading → Whisper Reading → Discovery Reading → Unison Reading → Stop and Go → Solo Reading

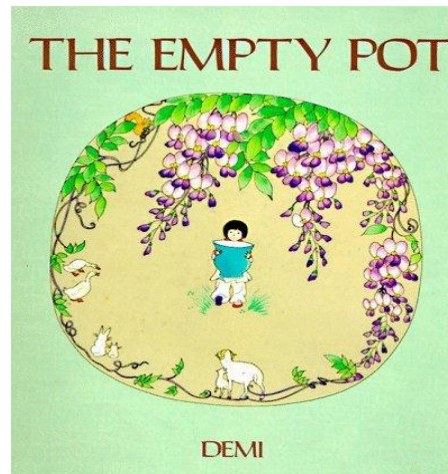
***Begin with those strategies that require you to read along with the child—providing maximum support—and gradually move to those strategies requiring the child to take the lead.**

Reading to and with Children During Shared Reading and Read Aloud:

Daily, the mentor reads one-on-one with a child through *shared reading*. Also daily, the mentor reads to the entire group of children through a *read aloud*. There are strategies that should be used when reading to and with children, to support their transition from emergent readers to conventional readers.

Pre-reading Strategies:

1. **Introduce vocabulary** from the story that might be new or unfamiliar to children.
2. **Introduce the cover**, title, author, and illustrator.
3. **Use prior knowledge** about the book:
"What does it mean to be empty?"
"Can you think of something you have had that was empty?" "What do you usually put in a pot?"
4. **Encourage predictions** about the book:
"What do you think/predict [*consider appropriate wording when talking with different age groups*] this character is that appears on the cover?" "What do you think/predict he/she will put in the pot?" "Where do you think he/she is taking the pot?" "Do you think this story is real or make-believe? Why do you think this?"
5. **Set a purpose for reading:** "Let's read to find out if our predictions are correct" or "Let's read to learn more about this character and the item he/she is holding."
6. **Introduce** the title page and first page.



During Reading Strategies:

1. **Make sure** child/children can see the pictures and print.
2. **Model left-to-right** reading, turning pages, return sweep to the left after finishing a line, and individual word identification. During shared reading, encourage the child to use his/her finger to model these skills.
3. **Encourage child/children** to use pictures to make sense of the text, apply their prior knowledge, and form new predictions about the story. "By looking at the picture, what time of year does it appear to be?" "What is that object called, have you ever seen one of those before?" "What do you think the emperor will say when Ping shows him his empty pot?"

4. **Check for comprehension:** "Can you tell me what has happened in the story so far?" "How do you think Ping feels right now?" "What do you think his dad meant when he said...?"
5. **Clarify vocabulary.** While you will preview the book and identify words that may be new and unfamiliar to children before reading it, you may have to stop occasionally to clarify vocabulary during the reading. This way, you are checking to make sure the child/children understand what is being read. "What do you suppose *emperor* means?" "When Ping was described as feeling *ashamed*, how did he feel?" "Can you think of another word that could be used to describe how Ping feels?"
6. **Encourage the child/children** to ask questions and share comments throughout the story.

After Reading Strategies (Some of these strategies can be used after reading a book aloud to children during a read aloud or reading with children during shared reading. Not all strategies should be used at the same time, as this can become too long or drawn out for the child. You want to maintain their interest, without making reading burdensome.)

1. **Check for comprehension:** "Can you tell the story to me in your own words?" "What happened when Ping planted his seed?" "Why didn't a beautiful flower grow like those that belonged to the other children?" "Why did the emperor choose Ping as his successor?"
2. **Encourage evaluation** of text: "What did you like about the story?" "What was your least favorite part of the story?" "Who was your favorite character?" "If you could change something about this story, what would it be?"
3. **Encourage children** to make connections with books:
 - a. "Which character from the story is most like you?" "Could you relate to how the character was feeling?" "Did the story remind you of a time when you had to tell the truth?" "If you were Ping, what would you have done?"
 - b. "Did Ping remind you of a character we read about in another story?" "How was this story like the story we read yesterday?"
 - c. "Why do you think it is important that people tell the truth?" "How is Ping's culture (dress, traditions, etc.) different than the American culture?"
4. **Identify new vocabulary.** While you preview the book and identify words that may be new and unfamiliar to children before reading it, and stop occasionally to clarify vocabulary during the reading, it is good to ask children at the end if they heard any new or interesting words during the story. This is a wonderful opportunity to make additions to the word wall!

Strategies for Solo Reading

Choosing to read independently is the final step in literacy. You will know you have build a foundation for a lifelong love of reading when a child who was unwilling or unable to read without support chooses a good book, finds a quiet place free of interruptions, and curls up to read. Even emergent readers need time to explore books on their own—when they “read on their own,” they sit quietly by themselves and look through books, often pretending they are reading.

Simple things you can do to support children reading on their own include:

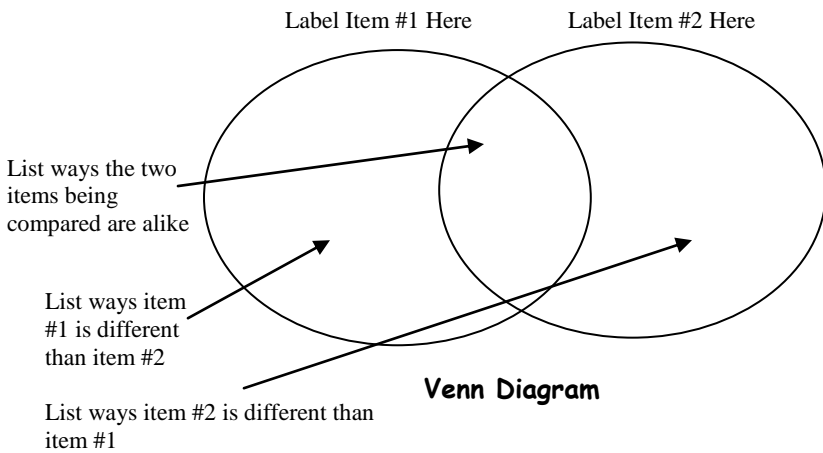
- ✓ Make sure children have access to lots and lots of good books (at least 64 books, 8 books per child).
- ✓ Encourage reading in a variety of settings—anywhere in your room, anywhere you have access to in the building, or outside. Remember that children should not be unattended at anytime, whether it is by themselves or with a volunteer. Therefore, should you opt to read in a different setting, the entire group of children, as well as the mentor, needs to be present.
- ✓ Create inviting “book nooks” to read (See *Weeks 1 and 2 of Service: Preparing the Children’s Room*).
- ✓ Encourage children to read a book as they complete an activity and are waiting to begin another.



Graphic Organizers

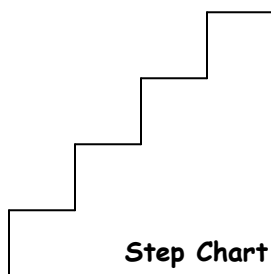
Graphic organizers help children construct meaning by visually representing information. Graphic organizers can be effectively used to support student understanding and comprehension of stories they hear during a read aloud. Research shows that most children living in poverty are visual learners. They may benefit from tools, like graphic organizers, that take auditory information and represent it visually.

1. Main, primary book that you read aloud should be accompanied by a graphic organizer.
2. Label the graphic organizer with the title and author of the story.
3. Hang the graphic organizer in the room so that the children can refer to it.
4. While you will encourage participation and responses from each child, you will take the role of writing on the graphic organizer to ensure legibility. It will be used as a visual tool to support future reading and writing.
5. You may want to begin with simple graphic organizers and gradually transition to using those that require more complex thought.



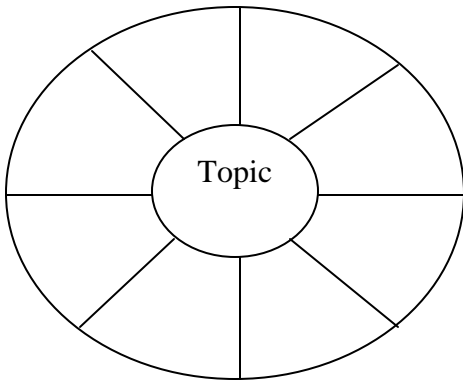
Comprehension Skill Supported: Ability to compare and contrast two parts of a story (settings, characters, plots)

Supporting Questions: How are the two stories alike? How are they different? How are the two characters alike? How are they different? How did the setting differ from where you live? How is it similar?



Comprehension Skill Supported: Ability to sequence events from a story

Supporting Questions: What happened in the story first? Next? After that?



Describing Wheel

Comprehension Skill Supported: Ability to recognize and recall traits from a story

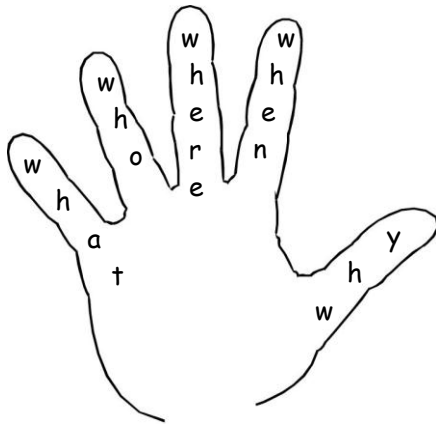
Supporting Questions: How would you describe the character or setting in the story?

Comprehension Skill Supported: Ability to make connections between text and own experiences

Supporting Questions: Recall events that happened throughout the story. How did each event make you feel?

Event	Reaction

Personal Reaction Chart



5 Ws Chart

Comprehension Skill Supported: Ability to recall information from story

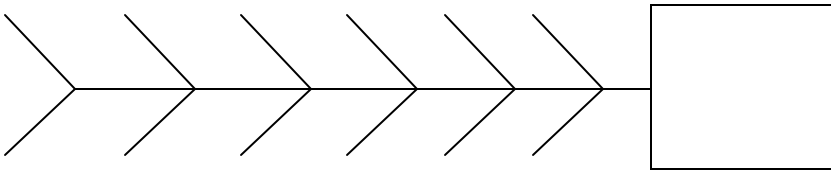
Supporting Questions: What happened? Who was there? Where did it happen? When did it happen? Why did it happen?

List events in the story that caused the result to occur



List the effect or result that was caused by the events

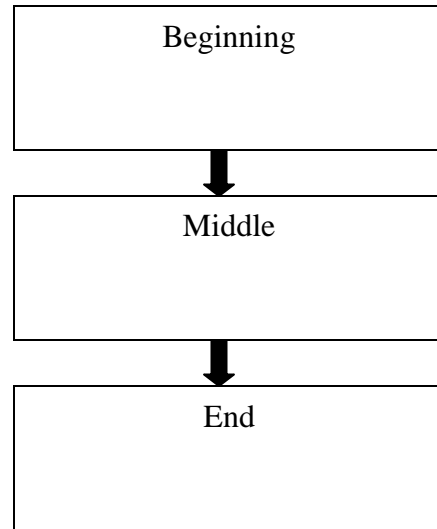




Fish Bone

Comprehension Skill Supported: Ability to understand cause and effect relationships within a story
Supporting Questions: What happened in the story? Why did it happen?

Comprehension Skill Supported: Ability to recall what happened at the beginning, middle, and end of a story
Supporting Questions: What happened at the beginning of the story? Middle? End?

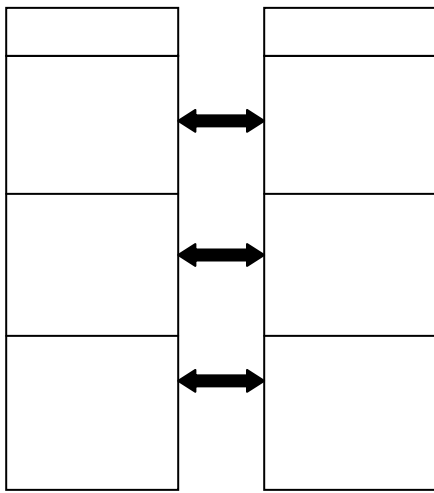


Sequencing Chart

Prediction	What Happened?

Problem **Solution**
Prediction Chart

Comprehension Skill Supported: Ability to make predictions about a story/Ability to evaluate whether or not prediction was correct
Supporting Questions: What do you predict will happen in this story? What happened?



Problem-Solution Chart

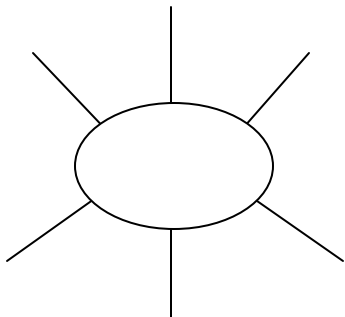
Comprehension Skill Supported: Ability to recognize problem-solution relationships throughout a story
Supporting Questions: What challenges did the characters face in the story? How did they solve each of these problems?

Comprehension Skill Supported:
 Ability to use prior knowledge, evaluate prior knowledge and expand understanding

Supporting Questions: What do you *know* about the story by looking at the cover of the book? What do you *wonder* about, or *want* to learn? What did you *learn* from the story?

K	W	L

K-W-L Chart



Story Web

Comprehension Skill Supported: Ability to recall information from a story.
Supporting Questions: Describe what you learned about the character, setting, or other parts of the story.

Comprehension Skill Supported: Ability to evaluate texts

Supporting Questions: Describe what you liked about the story. Describe what you did not like about the story.

+	-

Like/Dislike Chart

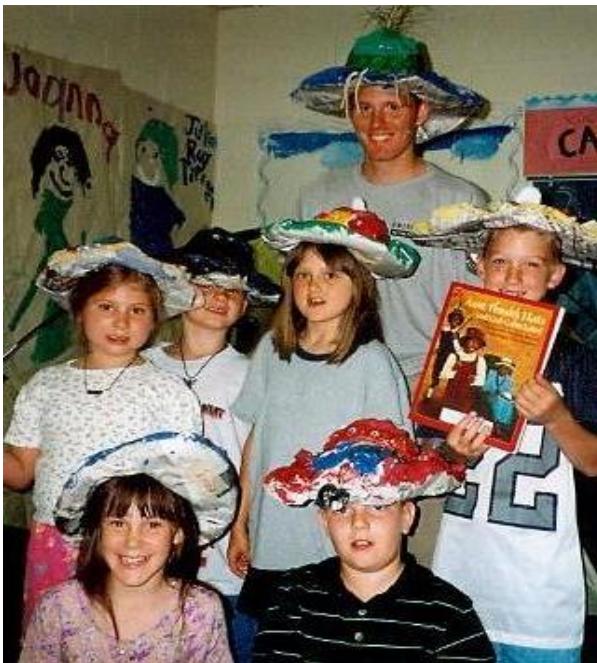
Supporting Art

Children's art connects their own experiences, self-expression, and reading. Why should children engage in art?

Energy Express uses art as a way for children to better comprehend the books they read.

Research also links the ability for children to express themselves creatively with the following necessary life skills. Creativity allows children opportunities to:

- Express their ideas and practice communication skills
- Work cooperatively with others
- Take risks and experiment
- Make decisions
- Set goals and experience accomplishment
- Build confidence and self-esteem



How can you support children's art?

- Provide children with daily art experiences
- Provide a variety of materials
- Encourage children to explore the meaning of text through art experiences
- Celebrate children's art
- Be a positive role model who encourages artistic creativity, freedom of choice, and self-confidence by building a caring, secure, and supportive relationship with each child
- Guide children during art projects, without doing the art activity yourself

Art is Not a Craft!

At Energy Express, we engage children in art; NOT CRAFTS! Art allows for creativity, while crafts can opportunities to problem-solve, make decisions, and experiment. Please use the checklist below as a guide to help you determine whether the activity you are planning is true art or mere craft.

Does your project:

- Offer a variety of materials?
- Include few guidelines and lack a list of step-by-step instructions (other than those needed for a specific art technique)?
- Allow for decisions and choices to be made by each child?
- Allow opportunity for individuality and allow children to develop their own way of doing things?
- Allow room for several solutions to the same problem?
- Allow opportunity for various results (all final projects do not look exactly the same)?

***Congratulations!!** You are planning an art activity that will support children's creativity!

Does your project:

- Require that each child use the same materials?
- Include step-by-step instructions (other than those needed for a specific art technique)?
- Provide children with few opportunities for decisions and choices?
- Limit opportunity for individuality?
- Include only one or two solutions to the same problem?
- Limit opportunity for various results (Will all final projects come out looking the same?)?

***Ooops!!** You are planning a craft activity that will limit the children's opportunity to be creative! Keep thinking...

Tips for children's art:

1. Give children opportunities to paint everyday!
2. Plastic garbage bags, old plastic tablecloths, layered newspaper, or drop cloths can be used to cover and protect surfaces.
3. When possible, create art near a water source and away from high-traffic areas.
4. Keep a small bucket of water available for children to drop paint brushes into during clean up.
5. Foam trays or egg cartons can be used as palettes for mixing paints.
6. To help children conserve paint, foam egg cartons can be used to hold small amounts of paint and can be closed with saran wrap to protect paint overnight. If accessible, put paint in a refrigerator for longer conservation.
7. Reminding children of good habits for using paint (wiping excess paint off the brush before using it, spreading even layers of paint instead of leaving it in gobs, and using the same brush with a particular color of paint) will assist with the conservation of paint.
8. Designate a box for scrap paper that can be used for future art projects.
9. A clothesline can serve as a great drying space for work in progress.
10. Encourage children to take responsibility for their art space by cleaning up and returning materials when they are finished.
11. If possible, play music in your room while children are working on art projects.

Tips for displaying children's artwork:

It is important to show children that you appreciate and respect their art. Displaying their artwork and giving them opportunities to perform for others sends that message and makes your room a place where children feel valued.

1. Display every child's artwork.
2. When possible, hang art at children's' eye level so they can see it easily.
3. Let children share in ownership and pride of their work by helping you organize and display artwork.
4. Hang art work in pleasing patterns (make sure you hang it straight, not just "any which way") and use the lines of walls, window frames, floor, etc.: as a guide.
5. Make sure art stays up—rehang artwork that is loose or has fallen—don't dishonor a child's work by letting it lie on the floor!
6. Create mobiles to showcase artwork—draw a spiral on a piece of poster board and then cut it out, punch a hole at the top of the spiral to hang it, and then punch holes along the spiral to allow children to tie their work with string or yarn. Crossing two branches or using coat hangers serve as other great mobile structures!

Standard Art Supplies

Energy Express believes that all children have the ability to be creative and that many **opportunities for making art** should be available to them. As mentioned before, we do "art"—not "crafts." In Energy Express there are no coloring books, coloring sheets, ditto sheets, paint-by-number kits, stickers, or craft projects. Research indicates that restrictive art experiences interfere with children's creative expression.

The following standard supplies are available at each Energy Express site:

- Construction paper
- Fine-tip makers
- Broad tip markers
- White glue
- Individual glue bottles
- Crayons
- Pencils
- Colored blackboard chalk
- Sidewalk chalk
- Tempera paint
- Notebook filler paper
- Rules, lined newsprint
- Newspaper end roll (End rolls are available free of charge at some newspaper offices. Depending on the location, you may need to contact them ahead of time.)
- Adult scissors
- Child Scissors—one per child
- Paint brushes—variety of sizes
- Staplers—one per AmeriCorps member
- Staples

Found Objects for Art

In addition to the standard art supplies available at your site, "found objects" can be recycled and used in a variety of ways. Found objects make Energy Express sites intriguing and fun as they allow children to express themselves in new, creative ways! Found objects cut down on costs, while making art unique and interesting! Examples of found objects include:

- foam egg cartons
- paper bags (all sizes)
- paper towel/toilet paper rolls
- large appliance boxes
- various sized boxes (cereal, shoe, cracker, etc.)
- wallpaper sample books
- magazines
- packing peanuts
- shredded paper
- newspaper
- buttons and beads
- used file folders
- wrapping paper, freezer paper, or butcher paper
- end rolls of newsprint
- cotton balls
- feathers
- sand
- string, thread, yarn
- empty thread spools
- clothesline and clothespins
- plastic containers (yogurt, butter, etc.)
- foam meat trays
- plastic rings from six-packs of soft drinks or milk jug rings
- wood scraps
- old linens
- paper plates
- paper cupcake liners
- coffee filters
- plastic grocery bags



Generic Art Activities

- Hanging and freestanding stuffed paper bag sculptures (fill a bag with crumpled newspaper)
- Puppets (large paper bag, cardboard on a stick, an old sock, paper towel rolls)
- Large appliance box creations
- Rolled or scrunched newspaper hats and sculptures
- Murals
- Masks
- Musical instruments
- Collages
- Printmaking (sponges, foam trays, and other materials can be used to make prints)
- Sand art

- Finger painting
 - 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups liquid laundry starch
 - 1 quart boiling water
 - 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups soap flakes
 - 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups talcum
 - Powered tempera paint for coloring

(Mix ingredients together. Stir until glossy. Store in sealed jars or containers. Freezer paper or other slick surfaces are good for finger painting.)

- Play Dough ®
 - 2 cups flour
 - 1 cup salt
 - 4 teaspoons cream of tartar
 - 1 tablespoon cooking oil
 - 2 cups water

(Combine ingredients. Cook over medium low heat until stiff enough to handle. Turn onto waxed paper and knead. Store in can with a tight lid or sealed plastic bag.)

- Papier-mâché
 - 1 part flour
 - 1 part water
 - Bowl
 - spoon

(Spoon flour into a bowl. Add an equal amount of water. Mix until smooth. Add more water if mixture is too stiff, or more flour if too runny. Dunk strips of paper into the past and mold over inflated balloons, bottom of a bowl, or some rounded form. Dry somewhere warm and sunny. Paint when dry.)

- Salt and flour modeling mixture
 - 2 parts table salt
 - 1 part flour
- (Mix salt and flour with enough water to form a dough-like consistency. Food coloring or a small amount of paint can be used instead of water. To form beads, roll the mixture into balls and pierce with a toothpick and allow to dry. To form a relief, use 3 parts salt instead of 2).

Supporting Writing

Writing allows children to make connections between what is important to them and the written word. When children write, they become more active readers, writers, and learners!

Like art, we want to encourage children to be creative with their writing. Workbooks, skill sheets, dittos, and writing assignments (write 10 sentences using the word "cat") are not the kinds of writing that offer meaningful opportunities for children to be creative.



Ideas for writing activities that encourage creativity:

- Letters to other children, family members, community members, and characters in a story
- Greeting cards
- Invitations
- Labels
- Lists
- Newspaper articles
- Interview questions
- Recipes
- Instructions/"how to" guide
- Songs
- New endings to stories
- Autobiographies
- Biographies of characters in a story
- Scripts for plays, commercials, and puppet shows
- Speeches
- Clues
- Riddles
- Poems
- Books
- Advertisements (posters/billboards)
- Newsletters
- Magic spells
- Menus
- Brochures
- Postcards
- Journal entry from a characters perspective
- Predictions

General tips for supporting children's writing:

1. Based on the appropriateness of the activity, have a variety of writing materials available (pens, pencils, and markers) and give children freedom to choose which materials they are comfortable using.
2. Display children's writing throughout the room.
3. Encourage children to connect their writing to the art they create by labeling or describing what they've created.
4. Accept scribbling and drawing pictures as forms of writing from children.
5. Accept spelling and handwriting without making corrections or judgments.
6. Encourage children to talk about what they write.
7. Model good writing habits. **In Energy Express, it is important not to use commercialized writing, pre-cut letters, or computer-generated print as it limits the opportunities the mentor has to model real writing for children!**
8. When modeling writing for children, stand/sit where child can see what is being written, use large, well-spaced, clear print, and talk about what you are writing.



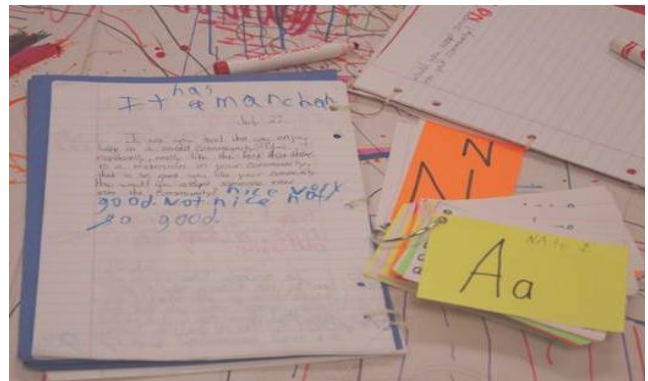
Word Walls and Word Books

Every Energy Express room will have a word wall or each child will be given a word book. Your decision of which of these writing tools to use may be based on the available space in the children's room and/or the preference of the site supervisor. A word wall is a display that organizes words alphabetically so children can use for their daily writing. Similar to a word wall, a word book organizes these words alphabetically on each page of a book.



***For tips on creating a word wall or word book, see *Weeks 1 and 2 of Service: Preparing the Children's Room*. Tips for using a word wall or word book:**

- ✓ Encourage children to refer to the word wall or word book during daily writing.
- ✓ Plan writing activities near the word wall so that it is easily visible by each child or place each word book in close proximity of each child for easy access.
- ✓ Play word wall or word book games:
 - Word Wall or Word Book "I Spy" (I spy a word that has four letters; starts with "t", rhymes with "light")
 - Word Wall or Word Book Charades (take turns acting out words from the word wall or word book while others guess which word is being acted out)
 - Word Wall or Word Book Formation (as a group, try to physically represent a word from the word wall or word book)
 - The possibilities are endless!



Strategies for Shared Writing

Similar to shared reading, shared writing helps children move from talking about their ideas to writing on their own. During shared writing, a writing partner—you, a volunteer, or another child, writes down what the child says. Steps for shared writing include:

- **Sit beside the child** so the child can easily see what is being written.
- **Sit near the word wall** so that the child can easily see words.
- **Explain how shared writing will happen**—that you will write exactly what the child tells you to write.
- **Talk with the child** about his/her ideas before putting them on paper.
- **Write down the child's exact words**, including grammar, using clear, well-spaced, easily read print.
- **Encourage the child** to watch you while you write.
- **Stop occasionally to read aloud** to the child what you have written while pointing to the words, or have the child read aloud to you while also pointing to the words; have the child "okay" the text.
- **If the child is dictating a long story**, use several pages, leaving plenty of room for illustrations. For emergent readers, write only two or three sentences on a page to avoid overwhelming them with text.
- **Compliment the child** during the process.
- **When the child finishes dictating**, read the whole sample.
- **Display or save shared writing samples** to put in a portfolio or turn into a book. If displaying a book, be sure to display it in a way that children can access it frequently to read (it is not ideal to hang on a wall that discourages child to pick it up).
- **Read children's shared writing** to the group or have the child read to family members.



Strategies for Interactive Writing

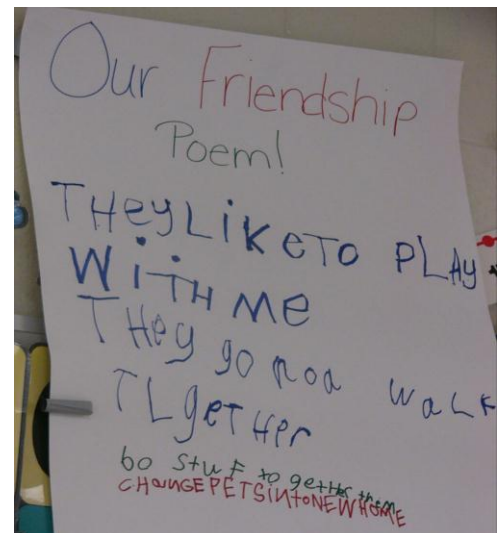
Interactive writing involves a mentor guiding children in a group writing project. Each child contributes to the writing project and the group reads the writing many times during the process, as well as once it is complete. Steps for shared writing include:

- **Tape to a wall or easel large pieces** of flip chart paper or newsprint where it is visible to all children in the group.
- **Give children a real, authentic reason** for writing.
- **Engage children in good discussion** about what will be writing, giving each child an opportunity to brainstorm ideas.
- **Give each child an opportunity to write.** You may want to give each child a different color marker so that each child knows who wrote what. If you have a frustrating task for a child, you may want to do the writing.
- **Model reading and writing strategies** while you engage children in creating the writing product.
- **Get everyone involved in some way** such as by writing a word here and there, using their hand to indicate the amount of space that should be left between words, and/or by sharing ideas.
- **Encourage children to discuss** what is being written, commenting on words they know and the concept being written.
- **Take the time to read** what is being written, rereading individual words and sentences.
- **Interactive writing** can take place over several days or sessions. Before continuing this process, read and discuss what has been written so far.
- **Remember that even though the writing sample** may not look neat or make perfect sense it belongs to everyone.



Interactive writing activities may include:

- *Lists*—children can make lists of anything and everything concerning a book they are reading or the weekly theme.
- *Graphic Organizers*—story webs, venn diagrams, and other graphic organizers help children make connections between the characters and experiences they are reading about.
- *Group Stories and Big Books*—each child contributes to a passage in the story. Children can also create illustrations.



Strategies for Dialogue Journal Writing with Older Children

Dialogue journaling is one of most powerful ways a mentor and child can connect with one another. This experience lets children know that their ideas are valued by their mentors enough to read them, respond to them, and ask questions to know more about them.

Dialogue journal writing is recommended for older children only. Dialogue journal entries are private conversations between the child and mentor. These discussions begin with a journal entry by the mentor and continues



back and forth, as the child responds to his/her mentor's questions and shares something about him/herself. Strategies for dialogue journal writing with older children include:

- **Respond as quickly and completely** as you can to dialogue entries—do not make the child wait for days for your entry, only to find a generic response (“good work”) rather than a real, meaningful personal response (“It sounds like you really enjoyed letting off fireworks. I really like the way you included a picture to show me what the fireworks looked like. It reminds me of the favorite fireworks I have ever seen that had a long, squiggly tale like a shooting star!”) Responding to dialogue journals takes time, but it time well spent!
- **Ask a question at the end** of your dialogue entry to guide the next entry and encourage children to ask questions in their own entries.
- **Instead of correcting the child's writing**, model spelling, punctuation, and grammar in your response by using words and phrases the child has used.
- **Maintain your “mentor” role** by remaining professional, yet positive. The ideas a child shares with you should remain private and confidential. If a child shares something uncomfortable, negative, or inappropriate try to redirect in your response. For example, a child that writes “My brother got suspended for beating up another kid” could be redirected with “I didn't know you had a brother! I'd like to know more about your family. Do you have any other brothers or sisters? Are they older or younger? What do you like to do together? It is important not to pry or make judgments. Perhaps the child above was sharing something he thought was a positive experience. If you come across something of concern, report this to your site supervisor in private.

Strategies for Story Writing

Young writers want to share their own stories, yet sometimes have difficulty transferring their oral stories to print. Strategies for encouraging children to write stories include:

- **Encourage emergent readers to draw pictures** of their stories and talk about them. These drawings are a form of “prewriting” and can be used to help children remember what they wanted their story to tell.
- **Encourage children to dictate** their ideas for stories they are not ready to write themselves. This might occur as they tell you about the story of their artwork.
- **Talk about what children are writing** to help them brainstorm ideas and organize their thoughts.
- **Encourage children to include characters** of a story in their writing by creating a title, writing their names as the authors, considering story elements (characters, story, and plot), and creating illustrations for their stories.

Poetry Writing

Writing poetry allows children to express themselves while engaging in critical thinking and problem solving. Strategies of poetry writing include:

- **Include lots of poetry in your print-rich environment**—make it available for children to read and read it aloud to them.
- **Create opportunities for children** to act out and illustrate poetry.
- **Make poetry a break from other** routines—have poetry readings while children are drawing or painting; read poetry with background music; read poetry in a darkened room; read poetry outdoors.
- **Encourage children to use the same** structure and rhythm of a poem to share their own ideas.
- **Encourage children to use the pattern** of a familiar song as a pattern for a poem. This could be used during interactive writing, while each child contributes a line or a verse.

Types of Poetry

	Acrostic	Alphabet	Color	Concrete
Format	The first letter of each line is aligned vertically to form a word. Each line describes the vertical word.	Each line begins with letters of the alphabet, in sequential order.	Use the five senses to describe a color.	Form words to create a shape that relates to the theme of the poem.
Example	<p>Runs fast Only child Balances a spoon on his nose Easy to get along with Really likes carrots Tries his best</p>	<p>Alexander is having a bad day Brothers are irritating Cereal has no prize Dentist finds a cavity Elevator closes on foot Feels better in the end</p>	<p>Blue looks like a midnight shadow. Blue sounds like the wind blowing through a valley. Blue smells like a fresh cut blue spruce pine. Blue tastes like warm blueberry cobbler. Blue feels like a wet splash from an ocean wave.</p>	<p>Fishing Suspense tug Patiently waiting tug Hoping the big one bites Sitting quietly tug Watching tug</p>

	Cinquain	List	Diamante	Haiku
Format	<p>Line 1: Names the subject in one word Line 2: Describes the subject in two words Line 3: Three action words ending in "ing" Line 4: Four word phrase Line 5: One-word synonym for the subject</p>	List of descriptive words describing something or someone.	Describes a character, scene, or subject with changes over time: Line 1: Names subject in one word Line 2: Describes subject in the beginning using two words Line 3: Three -ing action words related to subject in the beginning Line 4: Two words describe subject in the beginning, followed by a dash, and then two words describing subject in the end Line 5: Three -ing action words related to subject in the end Line 6: Describes subject in the end using two words Line 7: One word name for subject in the end	Japanese poem with 5 syllables in the first line, 7 syllables in the second line, 5 syllables in the third line.
Example	<p>Space Dark, Mystical Swirling, Sparkling, Shining Stars are soaring by Universe</p>	<p>My Best Friend Caring Kind Talented Reliable Fun Exciting Humorous</p>	<p>Camilla Striped Girl Fretting, Screaming, Changing Hates Limas—Likes Limas Calming, Relaxing, Smiling Normal Girl Camilla</p>	<p>I want to go home. I miss my parents badly. I'll send a postcard.</p>

Making Books

There are many different ways to turn children's writing into books; this celebrates and preserves their efforts and contributions. Books can be authored and illustrated by individual children or by groups of children. The possibilities are endless! inexpensive and readily available materials. Children can make or "publish" books that include their drawings, paintings, stories, and poems. The books can be made with inexpensive and readily available materials.

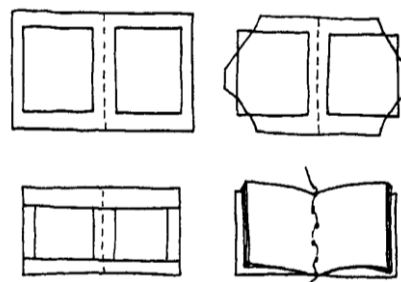
Books can be sewn, glued, folded, or be three- dimensional. They can be big or small, long or short. What follows are simple instructions for making books. Publishing books is a powerful way to celebrate children's writing.

Display these books in your room in a way that invites children to pick them up and read them often. Taping a child- made book to a wall, for example, is not ideal because it restricts children from picking it up and reading it. Children's books should be read and discussed by your group and shared with children's families.

Hard Cover Sewn Books

Sewn books with hard covers are more permanent than some of the other books children can make. Follow these simple steps to use scraps of cardboard, fabric, wallpaper, decorative paper, and a needle and sturdy thread (or yarn) to create hard cover sewn books:

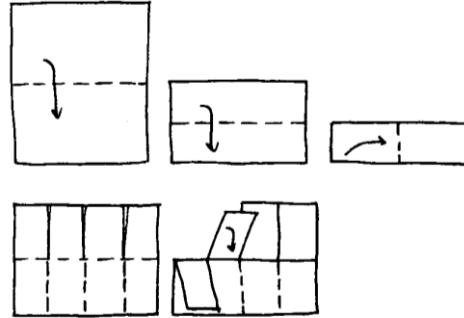
1. Cut 2 rectangular pieces of cardboard of the same size.
2. Cut a rectangular piece of fabric or decorative paper at least one inch larger on all sides than the combined dimensions of the 2 pieces of cardboard. This will be your cover material.
3. Place the cover material face down. Glue the cardboard pieces to the cover, side by side, leaving enough space between the two pieces to accommodate the pages of the book.
4. Fold the corners of the cover material over the corners of the cardboard and glue.
5. Fold the sides of the cover material over the sides of the cardboard and glue.
6. Cut paper slightly smaller than the inside of the open book cover and fold in half. These will be your pages.
7. Sew in and out through all pages along the fold. Knot on the outside of the fold. Tie off thread or yarn on the outside of the fold.
8. Place your sewn pages in the cover, gluing the first and last pages to the cover to create endpapers.



Flip-Flop Books

One sheet of 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " X 11" or 12" X 18" paper can also be used to make a flip-flop book.

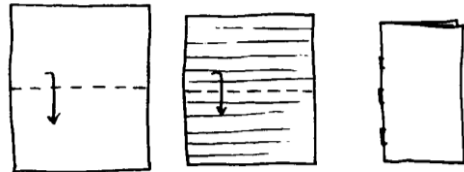
1. Fold the sheet of paper in half.
2. Fold again in the same direction.
3. Fold again in the other direction.
4. Open the paper back up and cut along the three folds on one side of the center fold.
5. Fold the cut pieces done at the center fold and crease. Cut pages will flip up.



Fold and Staple Books

Making fold and staple books is easy if you have access to a long throat stapler.

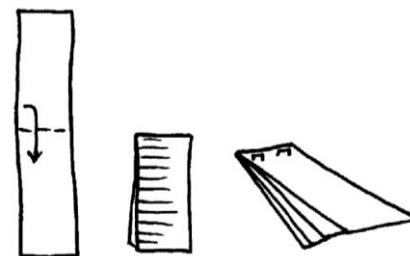
1. Fold sheets of lined or plain paper in half.
2. Fold a slightly larger sheet of construction paper in half to serve as the book cover and sandwich the folded lined paper inside the folded construction paper.
3. Keeping the sheets lined up along the corner fold, unfold all the pages and use a long-throat stapler to staple down the center fold.



Slim Jim Fold and Staple Books

Slim Jim fold and staple books can be made using a regular stapler.

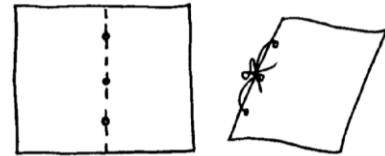
1. Cut lined or plain writing paper into 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ " X 11" strips.
2. Cut a strip of construction paper, 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ " X 24".
3. Fold the strip of construction paper over lined or plain paper to serve as the book cover.
4. Staple near the fold.



Simple Sewn Books

Children can also make simple sewn books using a variety of papers; including newsprint, construction paper, lined or plain writing paper, and any other decorative papers you may have access to. Once you have selected the papers to be used follow the steps below.

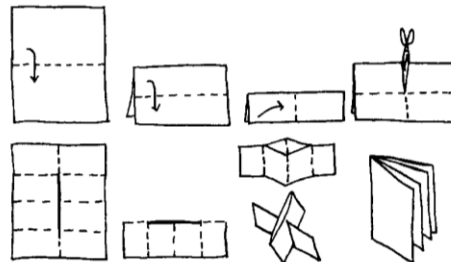
1. Place a sheet of heavier paper on the bottom of a stack of sheets of writing or drawing paper. Fold the stack in half, so that the heavier sheet of paper becomes the book cover.
2. Measure along the fold and divide the length of into four equal parts, making a dot with a pencil each interval.
3. Using a needle and sturdy thread or yarn, sew through the center dot from the outside of the book cover, leaving a 4-inch tail on the outside. Come up from the center through one of the end dots. On the outside, cross over to the other end dot and sew through it to the inside.
4. Finally, sew through the center dot again, ending on the outside. Knot the ends of the string or yarn and tie them in a bow.



One Sheet Books

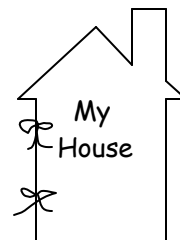
One sheet of 8 ½" X 11" or 12" X 18" paper can be used to make a book.

1. Fold a sheet of paper in half.
2. Fold again in the same direction.
3. Fold again in the other direction.
4. Open the paper back up to a half sheet and crease the center.
5. Open the paper all the way up to a full sheet.
6. Fold in half lengthwise.
7. Push the other edges together.
8. Crease center fold to form a book.



Shaped Books

Shaped books tell readers what the stories or poems inside are about before they ever open the book.



1. Help children make a pattern for the shape. The simpler the shape, the easier it will be to recognize.
2. Use the pattern to cut a set of page from lined or plain paper and a cover from construction paper.
3. Decide how you want to fasten your book (staples, brass fasteners, or thread/yarn).

Supporting Drama

Drama not only encourages children to express themselves creatively, it also helps them develop self-confidence while learning to combine speech with action. Energy Express uses drama as a way to support reading comprehension. Dramatic play helps children understand words, people, events, and literature. Through dramatic play, children explore others' experiences, try out roles and attitudes, experiment with language and build a better understanding of the stories they read.

Drama is not new to children. We all act every day. We "act" different when we are with our friends than we "act" at home or "act" at school. We all have experience playing different roles in our everyday lives.

Remember to be persistent and enthusiastic! It will take time for children to open up to expressing themselves in the way that drama allows. Continue to try new, creative drama activities that will allow children to find enjoyment in the experience. Drama occurs every day at Energy Express through the use of short, game-like activities. Drama also occurs weekly, as children are engaged in a more involved process of rehearsing and preparing for the production of a play. You may want to begin with daily, simpler drama activities before moving into the more complex process of a play as a way to get children comfortable with drama and expressing themselves.



Part I: Daily, Simple Drama Activities

Suggested examples:

Link Tag

- Have children link arms with one person and spread out around the room
- If there is an uneven number the mentor needs to play
- Choose one pair to split up and have one person be "it" and the other is being "chased"
- The person being chased can run around and then link to someone else releasing that person's original partner.
- The person released is now the one being chased. i.e. there can only be two people linked together.
- If the person who is "it" tags the person being chased before he/she can link with someone, then the roles are reversed and the "former it" is immediately being chased by the new "it"

Movie Star, Biggest Fan and Body Guard

- Stand in a circle
- Explain that everyone is a movie star
- Ask the group to secretly choose one person in the circle to be his/her biggest fan
- Next ask the group to secretly choose someone to be his/her bodyguard
- Explain that the object of the game is to keep his/her bodyguard between you and your fan. Demonstrate
- When the mentor says go, each person has to move around the room trying to keep the bodyguard in the between him/her and his/her fan

Slide Show:

- Read the book
- Choose a section of the book or if the book is small use the whole book
- One person is the presenter, everyone else is part of the slide show
- The presenter begins by reading the story.
- Throughout the story, the presenter will say "next slide please"

- The other players strike a pose as if part of a slide show. The players keep their pose while the presenter continues to read, until the presenter says, "next slide please" and so on

Form a _____: with objects from books

- Read the book
- On flip chart or large paper, make a list of objects from the book
- Divide the group into three smaller groups
- Explain the activity
- Each group has to work together as a team
- Everyone on the team has to be a part of the object
- Mentor calls out "form a _____ (an object from the list)" and the groups try to form the object using their bodies before the Mentor counts to 10

What are you doing? (with activities from books)

- Read the book
- On flip chart or large paper, make a list of activities or movements from the book
- Group form a circle or can spread out around the room
- Person 1 does an activity from the list (ex: eating)
- Person 2 asks person 1 "What are you doing"
- Person 1 answers with a different activity "flying" (example) but continues acting their original activity (eating)
- Person 2 starts the new activity (flying)
- Person 3 asks person 2 "What are you doing"
- Person 2 answers with a different activity "dancing" (example) but continues acting their original activity (flying)
- Person 2 starts the new activity (flying)
- The children should keep doing the activity until it comes back to person #1

Quick Actions

- Read the book
- On a sheet of newsprint create a list of actions from the book
- Discuss pantomime. (Actions without words or sounds)
- Have the children take a place in the space where they can see everyone else
- Mentor performs a short action mime from the list.
- Mentor asks the group to copy your mime and then quickly points to someone else.
- This player chooses an action from the list and quickly performs a mime
- The group copies it and then the player points to someone else and so on through the group

The Directing Game:

One of the jobs of a Director has is giving the actors ideas for how to say their lines and how to move on stage.

- Choose a scene from one of the books (we used *Where the Wild Things Are* Started with "And when he came....." and ended with "made him king of all wild things"
- Read the scene and discuss if needed
- Create a list of directions or ways to act out a scene.

Such as:

fast forward	Overdramatic	Doing the chicken Dance
On one foot	Under water	Very nervous
Backwards	Slow motion	Walking through jello

Laughing Hysterically

- Choose someone to play the director. The director calls out "places" Everyone goes to their place for the beginning of the scene
- The director calls out "action" and the actors act out the scene
- When finished, the director calls out "cut" then calls "places" again
- The actors quickly get into places again.
- Then the director calls out a direction from the list, i.e. "backwards". Then the director calls "action" and the actors act out the same scene with the new style and so on

Family Portraits (use during family week or create list from books)

- On a sheet of newsprint create a list of various ways to stage the portrait.

Such as:

Crazy family	Sick family	Magical family	Loving family
Fighting family	Goofy family	Circus family	Dancing family
Rock-n-roll family	Gymnastics family	Sports family	Swimming family
Movie star family	Sad family	Fire fighting family	Artist family
Aerobics family	Old family		

- Create a set to stage the family portrait. A couch, a chair. A table.
- Choose one player to be the photographer
- Everyone else gets together and poses like they're having their picture taken
- The first picture should look like a nice family portrait. Perhaps some are kneeling or sitting in front while others are on the furniture and others standing in back.
- Once they are in a nice family pose, the photographer calls out a some kind of family from the list such as "musical family" and counts to 3. The posing players have 3 seconds to change their position and pose the way a "musical family" would. By the time the photographer is done counting to 3, everyone should be frozen in a new pose.
- The photographer then calls out a new kind of family and so on.
- The photographer calls out 4 types of families and then it is someone else's turn to be the photographer. Remember you are making a picture and pictures can't move or make sounds. Try to stay in the same place for each. If you are kneeling in front, stay in front.

Charades with words/themes from the take-home books

- Read the book
- On a piece of newsprint create a list of words associated with the book that can be acted out; typically emotions or action words
- Take turns acting out the words while the others guess the word. They choose a word from the list

Charades with words from each week's theme

- On a sheet of newsprint, create a list of word that can be acted out for each weekly them
- Discuss as to how they might be able to act out those words.
- Each child takes turns acting out a word while the others guess

Examples

1. Myself (strong, smart, boy, girl)
2. Family (mom, dad, dog, baby, love)
3. Friends (play, secrets, slumber party)
4. Homeplace (yard, front door, window)
5. Community (taking care of each other, school, firefighter)
6. Making My World a Better Place (share, no fighting, planting, recycle)

Speed charades

(Variation of other charades- Using a weekly theme or words from a book)

- Using note cards, each group should write 10 words associated with the theme on note cards or pieces of paper. One word per paper.
- Mentor takes cards and shuffles them
- The mentor holds the cards while one person from each groups runs up, reads the word and then runs back to the group to act it out.
- When the group guesses the word the next person runs up to the mentor.
- Take turns acting out the words while the others guess the word.

NOTE: this is not a race. The mentor can hold up different cards for each group.

Part II: Creating a Production

In addition to daily drama activities, reading comprehension can be supported by engaging children in the process of creating a production (commercial, puppet show, play, Reader's Theatre). This process could occur over an entire week as art and writing activities support the production.

Art and writing can be used to create:

- Lists of characters, props, set/scenery, costumes
- Script
- Posters advertising the play
- Invitations
- Announcements read over a PA system
- Sandwich boards
- Articles for a paper
- Banners/billboards
- Playbill (includes cast, scenes, title, special thanks, ads, title, art, location, date, director, other credits)
- Props
- Costumes
- Set/scenery

This type of drama activity motivates older children to attend every day as they do not want to miss out on daily pieces of putting the production together.

Several things are necessary for children to engage in meaningful experiences with drama:

- Explore ways to connect the drama experience to reading and writing
- Gather all materials needed for props, costumes, puppets, or set construction
- Schedule enough time for children to plan, practice, and perform dramatic production. Some activities are appropriate to plan and

perform in one day. Others such as puppet shows, Reader's Theatre, or plays will take several days to prepare.

- Plan activities that will allow children to take the lead in producing a performance

Commercials

- Begin by talking about commercials and products people sell
- Many commercials feature slogans or jingles. I.e. "Silly rabbit, Trix are for kids" is a slogan. A jingle is a song. McDonalds, "I'm lovin' it"
- Read the book
- On a sheet of newsprint, create a list of possible objects to use as a product in the commercial. Choose one
- On sheets of newsprint- write ideas for the name of the product, brand name, slogan or jingle. Choose one.
- Create dialogue for your commercial- be sure to include the slogan, jingle etc.
- Act out commercial

Puppetry

- Read the book
- On a sheet of newsprint, create a list of characters and decide which child will make the puppet for each character
- Using found objects create the puppets
- Once puppets are made, experiment with how each puppet can move.
- Create script. Decide if someone will narrate the entire story or if the puppeteers will have some lines. Have someone narrate the story (read)
- Eventually add lines for the puppeteers to say while moving the puppets

Children often can be convinced to take their first steps as actors using puppets. When puppets play the parts, children may feel more confident. Puppets can be simple or elaborate—just keep in mind that it's not the making of the puppets that's important, it's using them.

Reader's Theatre

Reader's Theatre is another drama activity that requires a week of preparation. Reader's Theatre differs from a play as children read from a prepared script or text of a story without needing to memorize lines. Few props, costumes, or scenery are needed in Reader's Theatre. Rather, children focus on showing expression through the use of their voices and gestures. While memorization is not used in Reader's Theatre, children still need time to practice as they should experience success as they read their parts aloud in front of others.

OTHER:

Information-seeking questions to think about the setting (what would you be wearing? What time of day is it? What time of year? What is the temperature like?)

Research questions to gather additional information (what did a Viking ship look like? What did children wear on the prairie? What were their houses made of?)

Problem-solving questions help children think about the best way to represent the action (how many children will there be on the boat? How will you sneak past the lion?)

Mood-establishing questions help children think about the sensory experiences (how can you show that it is very hot and bright? Is the basket too heavy to carry? Do you hear rustling in the bushes?)



Making Connections

Contents:

- **Connecting with Children**
 - **Guidance**
 - **A Cooperative and Non-competitive Environment**
 - **Family-style Meals**
- **Connecting with Family**
- **Connecting with Community Members**

Guiding Children toward Appropriate Behavior

Guidance: Energy Express's Approach to Discipline

Previous mentors consistently describe "discipline" as one of the most challenging aspects of being a mentor. Energy Express's approach to discipline is called "Guidance." To create the right conditions for positive behavior, it is important to understand Energy Express's philosophy of guidance. Discipline is not punishment; instead it is the actions you will take to guide children toward positive behavior. Punishment is usually an attempt to make children feel uncomfortable. While punishment may stop misbehavior temporarily, it only teaches children what they should not do, not what they should do.



This section offers techniques for encouraging desired behaviors. It is most important that you, the mentor, provide guidance, be caring, respectful, patient, trustworthy, understanding, firm, and consistent. Remember that learning does not occur instantly. Persistence is key as you cannot expect immediate results in response to your guidance techniques. Instead, continue to provide guidance to the children in your group and support their learning over the course of the program.

Misbehavior will occur. When children misbehave the opportunity for learning from experience arises. Guidance approaches misbehavior as a learning opportunity as you will guide children by teaching them what they can do, explain why they should not do certain things, and help them think of appropriate alternatives to misbehavior. Guidance allows misbehavior to become a meaningful learning experience for children.

Getting Ready for the Journey...

There are several approaches you can take to guide children toward appropriate behavior while preventing much misbehavior. Many of these ideas have been discussed in other sections of this manual but not in the context of guidance. Once these ideas are in place, however, the foundation for appropriate behavior has been established. Consider guiding children toward appropriate behavior as a journey...



What will you pack to prepare for this journey? What strategies will you take to guide children towards appropriate behavior?



An umbrella... **Do You Have it**

Covered? Is everything in place before children arrive? Are you prepared for each day of the program? "Having it covered" refers to the steps that you can take to get ready for what is to come.

- ✓ Read your mentor manual
- ✓ Prepare your room
- ✓ Prepare for each day

One step towards "having it covered" is to read the mentor manual. This manual contains useful information that will get you acquainted with the program and started on the right foot. This will give you an understanding of what needs to be done and you will be better prepared for your service.

Another part of "having it covered" is to prepare the children's room. A child's room in Energy Express is quite different from that of a traditional classroom during the school year. For example, child activities may occur at round tables or even on the floor. Room arrangement can contribute to guiding children towards appropriate behavior. Tables may be strategically arranged to discourage running, for instance. Refer to *Weeks 1 and 2 of Service: Preparing the Children's Room* for guidelines on getting the room ready for children.

Being prepared for daily activities is another key role to "having it covered". When the mentor is unsure of what to do, does not have a plan for the next activity, or does not have materials ready, children become unengaged and misbehavior occurs. In Energy Express, mentors develop daily activity plans. The process of creating each activity plan helps you become better prepared. Refer to *Weeks 1 and 2 of Service: Creating Effective Activity Plans* for an example activity plan as well as guidelines for creating one.

A water bottle... **How will things flow?** Considering "how things will flow" refers to how your day will run. There are many techniques or tools used at Energy Express that will help the day flow as smoothly as possible.

- ✓ **Expectations**
- ✓ **Daily Schedule**
- ✓ **Unwritten Routines**
- ✓ **Daily Responsibilities**
- ✓ **Daily Choices**



In Energy Express, there are no pre-existing "rules" posted on the wall for children to see when they enter their room for the first time. Rather, the mentor and children create a list of expectations. This is one of the first activities you will do with children on the first day.

In general, rules in Energy Express should address:

- Respect for self
- Respect for others
- Respect for the physical environment and materials

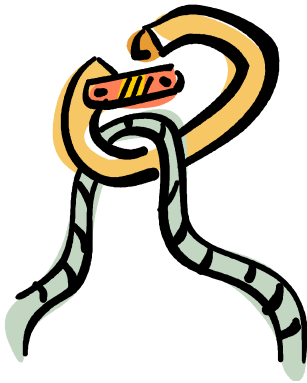
Expectations are also numbered and few in number (between 3 and 5) so that children can easily remember them even when they are unable to read them. Expectations remain positive in nature and are referred to daily. For example, rather than writing "Don't be mean to others," an expectation might read "Please respect others." Refer to *Weeks 1 and 2 of Service: Preparing the Children's Room* for more specific guidelines on creating expectations.

In addition to what is expected, you will make decisions about the flow of the day. You will develop and display a daily schedule to help your activities flow from one to the next. Refer to *Weeks 1 and 2: Preparing the Children's Room* for guidelines for preparing a daily schedule. You may create a daily schedule that does not include times. Some children can become fixated on times more than others and find it bothersome for an activity not to finish at the time stated. By listing the activities without times, children know what to expect next and the mentor is given flexibility in case one activity takes more or less time than planned.

The daily schedule displays written routines that allow the day to flow smoothly. Also impacting the flow of your day are unwritten routines—those routines that help determine how daily activities will be handled. Examples of unwritten routines include how food is passed during family-style meals, how bathroom breaks are handled, how books are selected for shared reading, and how dismissal is handled,

Another unwritten routine might include how to delegate daily responsibilities to children. Giving children daily responsibilities will allow the day to flow smoothly. When children are given a sense of importance they are more likely to demonstrate appropriate behavior and cooperate with the group. Refer to *Weeks 1 and 2 of Service: Preparing the Children's Room* for a list of suggested responsibilities children may be given. It is beneficial to give every child at least one responsibility each day.

Finally, giving reasonable choices can have a positive effect on the flow of your day. At Energy Express, multiple activities can be going on at the same time in a child's room. For example, one child might finish his painting before other children. That child may be given a choice to help another child, to read a book in the book nook, or to write in his journal. Providing choices and various activities gives the child a sense of autonomy while keeping him engaged. Again, it is when a child is unengaged that misbehavior may occur.



A carabineer... **How will you**

connect? Making connections is one of the most important parts of Guidance. "How will you connect" refers to building relationships with children, families, and community members.

Children are more likely to succeed in situations where they feel secure—about themselves, their abilities, and about their relationships with others. When you make strong connections with children, you increase their opportunities for success in Energy Express and your success as a mentor. Building relationships is a process; simply letting children know you care about them is the best first step. Someone once said, "Children don't care about how much adults know until they know how much adults care." Consider people that you really liked in the past that motivated you to cooperate. Why did you like them? Did they let you know that they liked you? If so, how did you know that they liked you? What did they do to show you they liked you? When you have a good relationship with someone you trust them, you would do just about anything they ask, and you want them to be pleased with you. This is the same for children and their mentors—If children know they are liked they are more apt to demonstrate appropriate behavior.

How do we show children at Energy Express that they are liked? By:

- Getting down on the child's level/making eye contact
- Listening to what children say/repeating it later to show you heard them
- Recalling facts about children such as their likes, experiences, pets
- Smiling!! Smile when they arrive and depart. Smile when they are talking to you.
- Talk to children during family-style meals
- Mentor in the middle
 - Mentor is encouraged to sit on the floor with children during a read aloud
 - Mentor should sit in the middle of the table during breakfast and lunch
- Call children who are absent and welcome them back/Let them know that they are missed.

Rewarding and giving recognition to children is another way you connect with children. The way you recognize children for their strengths may be different than how they are recognized during school. When AmeriCorps members are asked to reflect on their experiences with Energy Express, they usually do not list the living allowance, gray shirt, or education award as the rewards they remember. Instead, they often list intrinsic rewards such as feeling needed or making a difference. Consider the rewards you received during school. Can you recall every sticker or certificate that you received? Or, is it the praise and kind words that someone said to you that stuck with you after all of these years? These examples of intrinsic rewards are those that will mean the most to children:

- Praise
- Attention
- Proximity
- Smiles
- Positive phone calls, good news notes sent home
- Non-verbal cues (see next page for examples)



Ask children in Energy Express to call you by your first name. Avoid using formalities such as "Mr." or "Miss" as they only add an unnecessary barrier between you and the child. You will find it easier to connect with children and their families if you ask them to call you by your first name.

Fun ways to praise children:

*It becomes most meaningful when children participate in giving the praise to other children. Involve children in creating other non-verbal forms of praise and even developing their own group handshakes!

Firecracker

Have hands go up like a rocket while you make a rocket sound. Clap loudly over your head and then wiggle your fingers and make falling fireworks sound as you lower your hands.

"That's the way I like it!"

Disco dance as you sing, "That's the way uh-huh, uh-huh I like it, uh-huh, uh-huh...that's the way uh-huh, uh-huh I like it!"

WOW

Make "W" by sticking up the three middle fingers on each hand. By placing the "W's" on either side of the open mouth they make the word "WOW."

Ghost Handshake

Extend both arms and cross them over as you wave them in the air. As you wave your arms say "Oooooooooo!"

Connecting with children will come more naturally to you if you assume the best about them, as well as their families. It is easy to focus on what a child or family cannot or does not do. Focusing on the positive, rather than the negative allows you to feel more positive, more satisfied with your own efforts, and more able to interact on a positive basis.

For example, you might view a parent that doesn't volunteer as someone who is uncaring or uninterested in the child. You might feel frustrated when you interact with the parent and this frustration might even show. However, if you consider what the parent is doing, avoid making assumptions, and reflect on the situation, you will recognize that this parent is hard working and providing for her family. This parent might love to volunteer but doesn't have the time due to her work schedule. The parent would also enjoy hearing about her child's day so that she is not missing out as much while she is at work. By focusing on these strengths you can maintain a positive relationship with the parent knowing that she looks forward to your weekly good news notes and phone calls.

In addition to connecting with each child, it is important to connect with their families as well as community members. See *Introduction: Connecting with Family* and *Connecting with Community Members*.

"Bump in the Trail"

STEPS TO RESPONDING TO MISBEHAVIOR

To prepare for your journey, you have packed essential items to remind you of the proactive steps you can take to guide children towards appropriate behavior. Making sure you "have it covered", considering "how things will flow", putting effort into "making connections", and "seeing children and families in the best light" will prevent most misbehavior.

Even so, you will come across a "bump in the trail" and misbehavior will occur. As children develop, they are curious, creative, spontaneous, and are going to experiment with behavior. When misbehavior occurs it gives children an opportunity to learn from experience. If misbehavior never occurred, children would not have this learning opportunity. This section of your mentor manual includes techniques for dealing with misbehavior when it occurs.

It is important to recognize why children misbehave. Please note that the child is not trying to make your day difficult; there are other factors making more bumps in the trail:

- To experiment
- To gain attention
- To maintain a sense of control
- To seek revenge
- Feeling of inadequacy
- To test authority
- Expectations are different than home or school
- Do not understand the expectations or they are beyond their ability
- Ill, bored, hungry, and/or sleepy

Understanding why children misbehave helps you better decide how to respond to the behavior. It is important to first recognize whether or not the child is actually misbehaving before responding. Ask yourself:

- 1.) Is the child really doing something wrong or am I just tired, out of patience, having a bad day?
- 2.) Are my expectations clear? Reasonable? Appropriate for Energy Express?
- 3.) Does the child know what he/she is doing is wrong?
- 4.) Is the behavior unintentional? (spilled milk)
- 5.) Is intervention needed? Could the problem take care of itself?

If you determine that the child is misbehaving consider:

1. What do I want the child to learn from my intervention?
2. What will be the effects of my intervention?

Remember that is your role to protect the child's self-esteem and dignity. Guidance techniques in Energy Express do this. Other strategies can backfire. Physical force, threats, sarcasm, and put-downs can interfere with the healthy development of youth. These strategies may work temporarily but will not have serve as a long-term solution.

RESPONDING TO MISBEHAVIOR

REFER TO EXPECTATIONS	Refer to expectations and remind the child/children of the expectation they are not meeting.
STAY IN CONTROL	Act before the situation gets out of control...before you get angry or frustrated and before the child's behavior becomes unreasonable.
PROBLEM SOLVE	Talk with the child calmly to learn what caused a disagreement. Then discuss ways to deal with it.
PRAISE	Give more attention and praise for appropriate behavior.
FIX-UP	If something is damaged, the child needs to help in fixing it or in cleaning up. If he/she causes someone distress, he/she should help in relieving it.
BE FIRM	Be clear and firmly state what needs to be done. Speak in a tone that lets the child know that you mean what you say and expect the child to do as he/she is told.
SEPARATION/ TIME OUT	When children irritate one another have them rest away from the group. Being apart for awhile lets each child calm down.
REDIRECTION	This strategy can work when you notice that a child is not following the rules and is being uncooperative. Quickly get the child's attention and introduce another activity.

**Adapted from Tools of the Trade...4-H Afterschool Training Guide*

It is important to make good judgments about when to get the site supervisor involved. By getting the site supervisor to deal with a behavior that could have been handled if you had followed the *Steps to Responding to Misbehavior*, you are giving up your power and sending the message that the child does not need to listen to you. This will serve as a barrier between you and the child. However, do not hesitate to get the site supervisor involved if a child's behavior is risking the safety of him/herself or others!



A Cooperative and Non-competitive Environment

Energy Express maintains a cooperative and non-competitive environment. In addition to recognizing that intrinsic rewards are more meaningful than extrinsic, we do not give grades, prizes, or use sticker charts to compare one child to another. Instead, encourage children to engage in cooperative learning. Children are given opportunities to work together as a team daily as they create big art, develop dramatic performances, and engage in non-competitive recreation. These experiences allow children to feel a sense of belonging as they set and achieve common goals.

WHY NONCOMPETITIVE RECREATION?

Too often games have become rigid, judgmental, highly organized and excessively goal-oriented. Too many children are pressured into competition. There is no room for plain old fun. There are plenty of ways to create excitement and challenge without competition.

Noncompetitive games offer a positive alternative. These games are cooperative group interactive games that are played just for the fun of it. The games provide opportunities for challenge, stimulation and success while eliminating the fear of failure. They foster greater communication, trust, social interaction, acceptance and sharing. Instead of being eliminated players change roles or sides and keep playing. As partners instead of opponents we compete against the limits of our own abilities instead of against each other.

Anyone can play these games almost anywhere. In most cases, there is inexpensive or no equipment necessary. Rules need not be strictly adhered to. You can work out your own details. They can reaffirm a child's confidence in himself or herself and help them in their willingness to try new experiences. You can bring out creativity and even a boldness they never knew they had. The games can help build the attitude "WHY NOT!" EVERYBODY WINS . . . NOBODY LOSES! ... and ALL HAVE FUN!!



THE IMPORTANCE OF ACTIVE GAMES

The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports is focusing on increasing the physical activity of children rather than just promoting fitness. Elementary school aged children should accumulate a minimum of 30 minutes per day in physical activity. Your recreation time can help the children develop a positive attitude towards being physically active.

Studies have shown that physical activity is a diversion from stress and worry and decreases tension. You will also find that this release will get children in a better frame of mind to return to the books or other activities and misbehavior will decrease.

EXAMPLES OF COOPERATIVE AND NON-COMPETITIVE RECREATION ACTIVITIES

In addition to the examples provided below, each site has access to resource box. Among various resources, this box contains Kagan and Spencer's *Silly Sports and Goofy Games* and Liz and Dick Wilmes' *Parachute Play*. Both titles contain numerous examples of cooperative and non-competitive recreation activities.

Below are guidelines for engaging children in cooperative, non-competitive recreation, as well as additional examples of recreation activities that promote cooperative learning and teambuilding. Many of these activities make use of non-traditional equipment made from recycled items- socks, empty plastic bottles, grocery bags, etc. The activities are designed to engage the mind and body while encouraging teamwork, inclusion, and humor. Children discover their inventiveness by the collaborative effort involved in creating games and changing rules. Many games combine or incorporate elements from two or multiple sports.

MODIFYING GAMES

Games can be modified rules changed, made into collective score, a combination of 2 games or better yet be created by leaders and children.

Any game, even traditional sports, can be changed and new variations created by children or the mentor or by both together. In this way you can make games noncompetitive or better to meet the needs of the children - or just change for the fun of it! Some suggestions include:

1. Shrink or lengthen boundaries. Change the distance to be run. Shorten game times.
2. Change the means of locomotion. Hop, skip or gallop instead of running. Change the method of tagging.
3. Make goals larger or smaller. Change how you score. Lower nets, or don't use a net just a line.
4. Change the role of players instead of eliminating. For example, instead of sitting out in dodge ball you change teams as you are hit. Game ends with everyone on the winning team.
5. Use smaller teams creating more action.
6. Change the rules (even as you play) to make it fun.

COLLECTIVE SCORE GAMES

A team can play toward a common end instead of competing against each other. You win by playing together.

1. Volleyball/Newcombe - count the number of successful hits/catches without the ball hitting the ground. Do Blanket Ball for a variation (ball is caught and propelled by a blanket).
2. Togeth-air Ball - early version played by the Caribou Eskimos in the early 1800's. Instead of a sealskin ball use a balloon or beach ball. Like volleyball without a net - just use a line. Play "all touch" where every team member must hit the ball before it goes over to the other team - or - use two balls.
3. Collective Hoops - collective score - partners or three's - beach ball or balloons - hula hoops spread around. Bat ball back and forth going to hoop, one must pick up hoop and get ball to go through it. Replace hoop on ground, proceed to next hoop. Object is for group to score as many hoops as possible in a fixed time period.

RECYCLED GAMES

Simultaneous Sock and Pantyhose Horseshoes

The game is played thusly: Two teams of four players each stand opposite ends of the Simultaneous Sock and Pantyhose Horseshoe Field, immediately behind small, open cardboard boxes, placed o, let's say, 10 feet apart. These boxes were easily large enough to serve as a target for a Sock and Pantyhose Horseshoe, the

aforementioned horseshoe being constructed by placing four tightly-balled socks into the toe of a pantyhose leg which was cut from the pantyhose leg somewhere near the thigh area, if you excuse the expression.

One team has the Sock and Pantyhose Horseshoes made from two pairs of black pantyhose, the other from white.

And then, at a mutually agreed-upon scream, both teams throw their Sock and Pantyhose Horseshoes trying to get them to land in or near the above-indicated cardboard box. And merry mayhem ensues.

BAGGY BALL

It is called a Bubblebag because it is made of a plastic grocery bag wrapped around a chunk of bubble wrap. There is no tape being used to keep everything together. The cunning use of the bag handles stretched over the bubble-wrap-containing bag makes possible the construction of a tight and durable ball cover. Yes, the ball could be rounder. However, after several many hours of deft experimentation, it became clear that bubblewrap resists being made into a round ball. And as the bubble wrap goes, so goes the Bubblebag.

Bubblebag, is wonderfully hit-uppable. Light, yet hefty. Clearly not round. One could imagine oneself hitting the ball up in the air repeatedly, as if one were engaging in a sort of anti-dribble, bouncing up, where one would normally bounce down. This leads one towards the new, and profoundly playworthy Sport of Baggyball.

It is somewhat central to the playability of the game that the bag is larger than the Bubbleball. Two such bags and one Bubbleball make up all the equipment you need to play Baggyball. Baggyball, you see, is played very much like basketball, except for the following distinctions:

1. One dribbles up instead of down
2. The baskets are bags, and are held by players, who position themselves anywhere they want throughout the court (because it's too boring to pretend to be an immobile basket, and it makes the game a lot more fun and strategically complex if the baskets can run around). This makes the basket actually a member of your team. And a key member, at that.

3. The game can be played anywhere, on sand or grass, or even a basketball court.
4. Laugh a lot

FREEZE TAG BASKETBALL

Freeze Tag Basketball combines basketball and freeze tag. Each team has an "IT" The IT can tag people on the opposing team to freeze them, or tag people on Its own team to unfreeze them. Everybody becomes unfrozen when a point is made. The Its can make points and everything else everyone else does. The rest of the game is played just like basketball."

"But," you ask, "won't people just stay away from the Its? Why not give the Its the ball and let them make points?" "Certainly," "Its have an offensive advantage, but don't let them fool you. Its can freeze each other, and once frozen cannot unfreeze themselves. So if an IT is given the ball, other players might stay away, but the opposing IT would go for the freeze. If your team's IT is frozen, you can see how you would have an obvious disadvantage. The opposing IT could freeze your entire team, and unfreeze all of the opposing players. Bad news for you."

SHOESHoes

The game of Shoeshoes is like Horseshoes. Shoeshoes, involves a pair of human shoes whose laces have been tied together, and a chair.

As for Shoeshoes, one throws one's tied-together shoes in such a way as to get them to land on a leg, or perhaps even straddle the seat. Different points are awarded for different configurations as they occur.

SCHMERLTZ

Needed: One tube sock; a softball; a piece of rope

What in the world is a schmerltz? A schmerltz is a tube sock with a softball in the heel and tied at the top. To play with it, throw the schmerltz up in the air and try to catch it by the knot. Or have a catch with your friends. Maybe one day we'll have Schmerltz World Servies.

HOSEBALL

The true origin of the Hoseball is shrouded in mystery and buried in the coffin of time. I first learned of it when it was called a Schmerltz.

Prepare several Schmerltz-like objects made by stuffing a good-size ball of socks into a let cut from a pair of pantyhose. The Hoseball is born.

Ultimate Hoseball took a good hour to play. Not that it couldn't have taken a good half-hour, or probably good half-day. Each of the two goals (there could have been more, you know) was made out of a water bottle (half-filled with sand so that it wouldn't blow over). The game was based on Ultimate Frisbee, of course. Basically, you couldn't run with the hoseball. So you had to throw it to a team mate, who, in turn, had to throw it to another team mate, who was hopefully close enough to the appropriate goal-bottle to know it over.

DUNG GULI

Dung Guli: A Bangladeshi Child's Game, is in truth and fact, a Junkyard Sport if ever there was one.

"Ding Guli is a typical game played by rural children in Bangladesh. It's like a combination of golf and softball. Two people play the game...

Materials Needed: 18-inch long wooden stick (called the dung) Egg-size piece of wood (called the guli) or substitute taped up left over plastic Easter eggs and cardboard tubes.

Determining Batter and Pitcher:

1. Make a one-inch shallow dent in the ground and place the guli in it.
2. Player One used the dung to flick the guli out of the dent (as if playing golf).
3. Player One puts down the dung over the dent in the ground.
4. Player Two picks up the guli. Standing at the point where the guli landed on the ground, Player Two throws the guli at the dung, attempting to hit it.
5. If Player Two hits it, he or she now flicks the guli out of the dent as in steps 2 and 3, and Player one takes a turn throwing the guli at the dung. This continues until one player misses hitting the dung wit the guli. The player who misses first becomes the Batter, and the other person is the Pitcher."

THE TENNIS SHOE MINATURE GOLF CLUB

Make your own ultimate golf club out of a tennis shoe attached to a well worn broom or sturdy cardboard tube. Stuff the tennis shoe with cloth or whatever. Duct tape can help hold it all together. Now lay out your own Miniature Golf Course around the playground or gym.

SKULLY

Skully was one of the most popular street games in the New York City area. It is typically played on the street using bottlecaps on a board drawn with chalk. Anywhere from 2 to 6 (or more) players can play. The basic theme is to use your fingers to shoot your piece (a bottlecap, or other small item) through the course drawn on the street, then "kill" all the other players, leaving you the winner.

Drawing a skully board isn't just fun: it can also affect the game (depending on how big the boxes are). While a typical board is about 6' square with boxes about 8", these dimensions can vary wildly. You can vary the dimensions based on the space you have and your skill.

The basic layout is constant. The numbered boxes 1, 2, 3 and 4 are the corners, the other boxes (5-12) are doubled in pairs in the middle of the side areas. 5 and 7 are paired, while 6 and 8 are directly across. 9 and 11 are always opposite 10 and 12, while 13 is always alone in the middle, surrounded by a "dead man's zone" or "skull." Your bottle cap is frozen if landing in this zone. The cap is frozen for 2 turns or can be hit out by an opponent who is awarded 2 free turns.

OR HOW ABOUT:

- Soccer Bowling
- Marble Soccer
- Pool Noodle Javelin
- Balloon Goodminton
- 4 square Volleyball

You can just imagine the rules -----

USE THE M.O.G. (MY OWN GAME) FORM TO CREATE YOUR OWN GAME!!

Family-Style Meals

Family-style meals are a cornerstone of Energy Express. With the hustle and bustle of modern life—both at school and at home—family-style meals have almost become a thing of the past!



During a family-style meal, mentors sit at a table with their groups of children, passing bowls and platters of food and taking time to engage in meaningful conversation. The family-style meals served during Energy Express are part of a federally funded program intended to ensure that children needing school breakfast and lunch continue to receive these meals during the summer. Making sure that children receive adequate nutrition is a very basic way to support their learning. A lack of proper nutrition:

- Limits children's ability to learn, affecting their attention span and memory
- Limits children's physical growth
- Limits children's resistance to illness
- Limits children's cognitive development
- Limits children's social activity

The two daily meals served in Energy Express help children avoid summer nutritional losses, while the family-style format makes mealtime much more than a time to fill empty stomachs. children benefit from family-style meals when they:



- Learn to make choices
- Practice fine motor and coordination skills such as pouring, scooping, and serving
- Learn to regulate portion sizes according to their own feelings of hunger and fullness, taking only as much as they will eat
- Learn to share, take turns, and socialize—building self-confidence and self esteem
- Take responsibility in setting the table, preparing food, and cleaning up
- Have fun!

Family-style meals also:

- Provide opportunities for mentors to serve as role models and encourage good eating habits, table manners, and pleasant conversation
- Provide valuable time for building relationships

PREPARING FOR FAMILY-STYLE MEALS

Each Energy Express site commits to accommodating family-style meals. Every small group should have the following supplies available to serve food family style:

- ✓ Two or three 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ quart bowls
- ✓ Two smaller bowls
- ✓ A platter
- ✓ A small pitcher
- ✓ Three serving spoons
- ✓ A set of tongs

Both the menu choices and the timing of meals are predetermined at Energy Express. Children decide whether to eat, what to eat, and how much to eat. Encouraging children to make their own decisions empowers them—they feel more capable and competent. You should encourage children to try foods and help them develop a healthy and positive attitude toward food. To prepare children to participate in family-style meals:

- Discuss what happens during a family-style meal—children may not be familiar with eating at the table in this manner.
- Ask children to share their ideas about how to make mealtime enjoyable for everyone.
- Designate a table for your group.
- Have children make placemats or a centerpiece to use at their table.
- Discuss and role-play family-style concepts, such as passing, sharing, and trying new foods.
- Get to know children's special dietary needs (share with site supervisor).
- Have a "spill kit" available in the cafeteria.



PRIOR TO MEALTIME:

- Children wash their hands! Make sure all children understand the importance of washing their hands thoroughly with soap and water, both before mealtime and anytime they cough or sneeze into their hands or touch dirty or contaminated items.
- Children should help set the table. This may include putting place mats and eating utensils on the table, placing the bowls and plates of food on the table, or bringing the number of servings needed for the group to the table.

DURING MEALTIME:

- Help children learn to serve themselves. Younger ones may start with something easy to handle, such as rolls or bread. As children develop skills during the first few days of the program, increase the number and types of times they serve themselves.
- Serve yourself first—then start each time around the table.
- Model how to pass food using two hands.
- Encourage children to use serving utensils, rather than hands.
- Model the practice of taking and tasting something of everything.
- Have everyone pass the food. The Summer Food Service Program requires that every child take a small portion of each food served at the meal—make sure this happens!
- Take only as much as you will eat and encourage children to do the same. If a child takes too much food and does not leave enough for others, provide guidance.
- Remind children to take the food they touch.
- Encourage children to say “please” and “thank you”.
- Praise children for using good table manners.
- Talk! Use this time to get to know your children and help them get to know one another.
 - Family-style meal suggested conversation topics:
 - Discuss what children enjoyed about the day and what they hope to do tomorrow
 - Discuss children's plans for the evening/weekend
 - Discuss favorite books
 - Play games such as making as naming foods for every letter of the alphabet

- Keep distractions to a minimum—children eat better when things are calm.
- Sit in the middle of the table rather than at one end.
- Take turns sitting beside different children in your group each day.
- Teach the group to wait for everyone to finish before leaving the table.

AT THE END OF THE MEAL:

- Involve children in cleaning up. Children learn responsibility by doing different tasks, such as washing the table, taking bowls and serving utensils to the sink or kitchen, or emptying pitchers.
- Have a plan for who will be responsible for what task (See *Making Connections: Guidance: Responsibilities*). Rotate responsibilities. Remind children of their responsibilities before anyone gets up from the table.

Connecting with Family

Families play a critical role in their children's education—in fact, families are the primary source of their children's education during early childhood. There is strong evidence that family involvement in education has a positive impact on children's academic achievement, attitudes towards learning, and aspirations for the future.

Family involvement benefits all children—regardless of age, family income, ethnicity or gender—and all families can be encouraged to get involved. Families do not have to be well-educated or well-to-do to support their children's learning.

The caregiver of a child may include foster parents and family members other than a child's parents and legal guardians, such as a grandmother or an aunt. Family visits are one of the first connections you will make with families (*See Weeks 1 and 2 of Service: Family Visits*). It is important to maintain a positive connection throughout the entire program. Strategies for connecting with families include:

- Positive communications
- Phone calls
- Written communications
- Special events
- Volunteer opportunities
- Additional family visits throughout the program

It is your role to connect with the families of each child in your group at least once a week, using a variety of strategies.

POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Your purpose in communicating with families is to: (1) ask them to share their knowledge of their children, (2) share the successes and accomplishments of their children, (3) Invite them to support their children's Energy Express experiences.

Your communications with families should be as positive and welcoming as the environment you have created for their children. The greatest barrier to family involvement during school is a lack of positive communication between teachers and parents. Based on their own unsuccessful school experiences, families may feel

scared, vulnerable, or inadequate. Therefore, they may seem difficult, judgmental, insensitive, or have ideas and values that differ from those of mentors.

Mentors may have many of the same feelings and attitudes. The only way to remove the barrier is real, meaningful, direct communication. Qualities you should model when trying to connect with families include:

- Confidence in parents' ability to contribute
- Sincere interest in their child's well-being
- Trustworthiness
- Sensitivity
- Patience
- A non-judgmental and open attitude

PHONE CALLS

Typically, when parents or guardians are contacted by someone about their child, it is "bad news." Make at least one "good news" phone call to each child's parents or guardians each week:

- Use the initial home visit to establish the best time and place to call parents or guardians — during the day or evening, at home, or at work.
- If a family does not have a telephone, arrange for another method of contact to share good news about their child.
- Make sure children know you are going to call with good news — some children are apprehensive about contact between "school" and home, based on previous negative experiences.

In addition to sharing good news, phone calls are a good way to keep children connected. When a child unexpectedly misses a day of Energy Express, or seems to be having difficulties, call the parents or guardians and:

- Share your concern about the child's wellbeing and tell them their child was missed.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help the child get to the program.
- Ask for advice — families can assist you with their specialized knowledge of their children.
- If possible, talk with the child — invite the child to return and explain that you missed him or her.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Most families are receptive to written communications—“good news” notes, newsletters, invitations, and flyers. However, be aware that some families have limited literacy. Creative strategies to share written information to families include:

- Make sure all written communication is easily legible.
- Print, rather than write in cursive, and write large enough to be read easily.
- Keep the message simple.
- Surround text with blank space to help readers who have low-literacy ability, and include children's artwork or graphics to make the page visually interesting and give cues as to the meaning of the text.
- Help children practice reading written products before taking them home to share.

While you may want to consider having your group publishes a newsletter or contribute to a newsletter from your site, be sure to communicate weekly with families in other ways. Whether you do a group or site newsletter, make sure every child is recognized somewhere in the publication.

SPECIAL EVENTS

A special event showcasing Energy Express is a great way to welcome and inform families. Every Energy Express site plans an open house for parents and community members. In addition, sites may schedule a special visitation day or family-style meal for families. You may also schedule special events just for your group. The timing of special events varies — during the morning while the children are attending, in the evenings, early in the program as an introduction, or later in the program to share children's work and accomplishments.

Regardless of the event's timing, keep in mind that the best special events invite families to share their child's experiences and gain an understanding of their child's daily activities. Involving families in their children's reading, writing, art, community service, and family-style meal experiences during special events will give them a better idea of the program and how it benefits their children than an activity unrelated to Energy Express.

Ideas for special events include:

- A typical day program — parents follow their children through a typical day at Energy Express, including meals, and participate in activities with the children.
- Performance program — children present books or songs they have written, plays, puppet shows, videos they have taped, and so forth.
- Community service program — parents work side-by-side with their children on community service projects or attend a dedication of a site's community service project. For example, a site that renovated a community biking/hiking trail held a family bike rally to celebrate the project's completion.
- Weekly theme program — activities related to the weekly theme are planned for parents and children. For example, a site that read the book *Ira Sleeps Over* during the week of "friends" invited parents and children to come to an evening open house dressed in their pajamas to read books and eat pizza!

All special events require careful planning and coordination. Consider the circumstances of your parents when you plan special events at your site. Take into consideration:

- work schedules
- transportation needs
- child care needs

Given the lack of public transportation in rural communities and the expense of child care, you may need to offer these services so parents can attend the events you plan. It may be useful to send home a survey that asks families when the most convenient time would be for them to attend an event.

Connecting with Community Members

CONNECTING WITH FAMILY AND COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

The volunteer component of Energy Express provides valuable support for your work with children and builds support for children's learning in the community. Work with your volunteer coordinator to connect families and community members to a range of opportunities to support children. With your group volunteers can:

- Read aloud
- Serve as reading partners — reading one- on-one with individual children
- Serve as writing partners — taking dictation from individual children
- Help with art and drama activities
- Prepare materials for book-based activities
- Assist with noncompetitive recreation
- Support the children's community service project

Families and community members can also provide general site support by:

- Assisting with family-style meals
- Staffing the site office
- Helping with special events, such as your site's open house
- Participating in your site team's community service project

As you complete your activity plans each week, identify opportunities for volunteers and communicate them to your volunteer coordinator. In order to effectively schedule volunteers, the volunteer coordinator needs to be clear about the responsibilities you want volunteers to assume and the dates and times for which you need help. Volunteers come with diverse talents, experiences, and motivation for volunteering. Energy Express volunteers are:

- Older children and teens
- Parents, grandparents, siblings, and other family members
- Partners and Energy Express collaborative members

- Members of service organizations
- Members of the business community
- Members of the faith community
- Seniors
- Anyone interested in supporting children's learning!

Parents and community members with limited resources may want to contribute their time and effort during Energy Express. You should be aware that some volunteers may:

- Have less than average formal education
- Have modest expectations for achievement
- Have little experience
- Have had negative experiences in school
- Lack self-confidence
- Feel powerless
- Be unemployed or underemployed

When working with any volunteer you should:

- Be welcoming
- Treat him or her with respect
- Communicate effectively
- Be prepared — schedule sufficient time and have necessary materials available
- Keep your expectations realistic
- Get to know the person, so you can build on his/her strengths
- Recognize the volunteer's efforts

CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITIES

There are many benefits associated with providing community service. Working with a group to provide community service connects people to one another, as they work together to achieve a common goal that addresses a community need. Providing community service makes people feel good about themselves and their ability to do good things for others. As an Energy Express mentor you are making a valuable community service contribution. (*See Week 8 of Service: Making My World a Better Place Week: Engaging Children in Community Service*).



Weeks 1 and 2 of Service

Contents:

- **Family Visits**
- **Preparing the Children's Room**
- **Creating Effective Activity Plans**

Please note: The caregivers of children are referred to as "parents/guardians" throughout this section. This is meant to include all possible caregivers a child may have (grandparents, aunts/uncles, other relatives, foster parents)

Family Visits

During the week of site preparation, mentors visit the families of children with whom they will be working during the next six weeks. Mentors go with a volunteer coordinator, when possible, to encourage recruiting family volunteers. When a volunteer coordinator is not available mentors should go with another mentor. Mentors should never go on a family visit alone. Mentors are often apprehensive about conducting home visits. This is natural. Most people are anxious about forging new relationships, particularly with strangers in unfamiliar circumstances. However, previous mentors attest to the value of family visits—both for their work with children and for understanding the service they provide. The benefits of family visits outweigh any initial discomfort you may experience. Below are steps that will help you conduct a successful family visit.

Why are family visits a part of Energy Express? *Mentors gain an understanding for each child's background *Mentors are able to connect with each family and child before the program begins, as the family and child is able to build trust with the mentor and express any concerns and address any apprehensions they may be feeling

Before the Call...

1. **Determine if the family** has a phone or if you'll need to schedule the visit in another way.
2. **Review the child's application:** pay attention to any difference between the child's last name and the parent/guardian's last name, to ensure you address the parent/guardian appropriately.
3. **Coordinate your visit** schedule with other AmeriCorps members so that you will always be accompanied by another mentor or a volunteer coordinator. You may also consider who has siblings of your child so that you can schedule just one visit with the family.
4. **Seek advice** from seasoned mentors who may know a family on how best to connect with them.
5. **Role-play** with another mentor what you will say in advance.



During the Call...

1. **Say, "hello,"** then explain who you are and ask to speak with the parent/guardian named on the application.
2. **Explain that you** are calling to arrange a "family visit." Avoid using the term "home visit" as we are not coming to inspect the home, but to visit the child and his/her family. Use the child's name throughout the conversation.
3. **Explain why** we look forward to the family visits, the purpose of the visit, and assure the family that the visit is usually no longer than 15-20 minutes.
4. **If you have fears** of certain pets, ask if it would be ok for that pet to be put away during your visit.
5. **If the family** indicates during the call that they are not comfortable with a family visit in the home, ask if you could visit in the outside yard or on the porch.
6. **Finally, get directions** (always ask for landmarks) and verify date and time of visit.

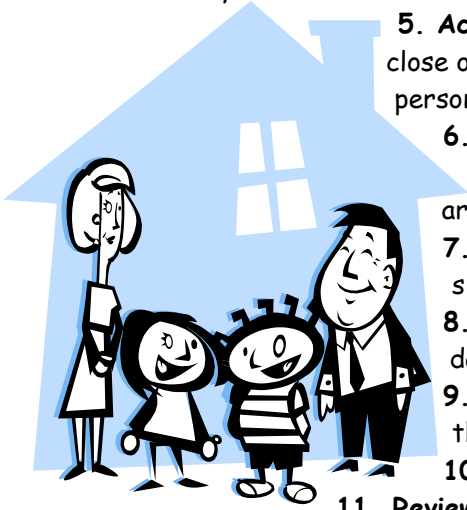
After the Call...

1. **Determine which activity** you will complete with the child(ren).
2. **Coordinate with other mentor/CC** what you will do during the visit.
3. **Organize information** to share with family during the visit (transportation information, site contact information)
4. **Have conversation starter questions** already in mind.
5. **Call before** you leave for the visit.
6. **Let site supervisor** know when and where your visit will be should he/she need to contact you.



During the Family Visit...

1. **Introduce yourself** to the family and the child - consider ice-breakers (i.e., Can you tell me about/show me your favorite toy/activity/pet)
2. **Get on the child's level**- Focus on the child and the family. Smile often, while keeping the visit fun and relaxed.
3. **Do an activity** with the child(ren) (*See Weeks 1 and 2 of Service: Family Visits*).
4. **Ask family questions** that help conversation as well as provide useful information. (i.e., Do you think Mary is excited about Energy Express? Does your child have a favorite book?)



5. **Accept the family** presented to you. Observe with whom the child feels close or from whom the child seeks approval. Attempt to engage that person(s). Look for positives within the home.

6. **Discuss transportation** plans the parents/guardians have for the child and make note of this so that you know how the child will be arriving and departing from the site each day.

7. **Invite parents/guardians and family members** to visit the site and/or help at the site.

8. **Prepare the family** and child for what will happen on a typical day at Energy Express - get them excited about the weeks ahead.

9. **Stress that it is important** for the child to attend every day so they do not miss out on the positive experiences of Energy Express.

10. **If there is incomplete paper work**, complete during the visit.

11. **Review the child's application** with the parent/guardian to make sure all information is accurate.
12. **Ask the family** if they have any questions. If you do not know the answer, assure them you will call when you return to the site and are able to get the answer. Have the number for the County Contact and Site Supervisor on hand to give to the family.

After the Family Visit...

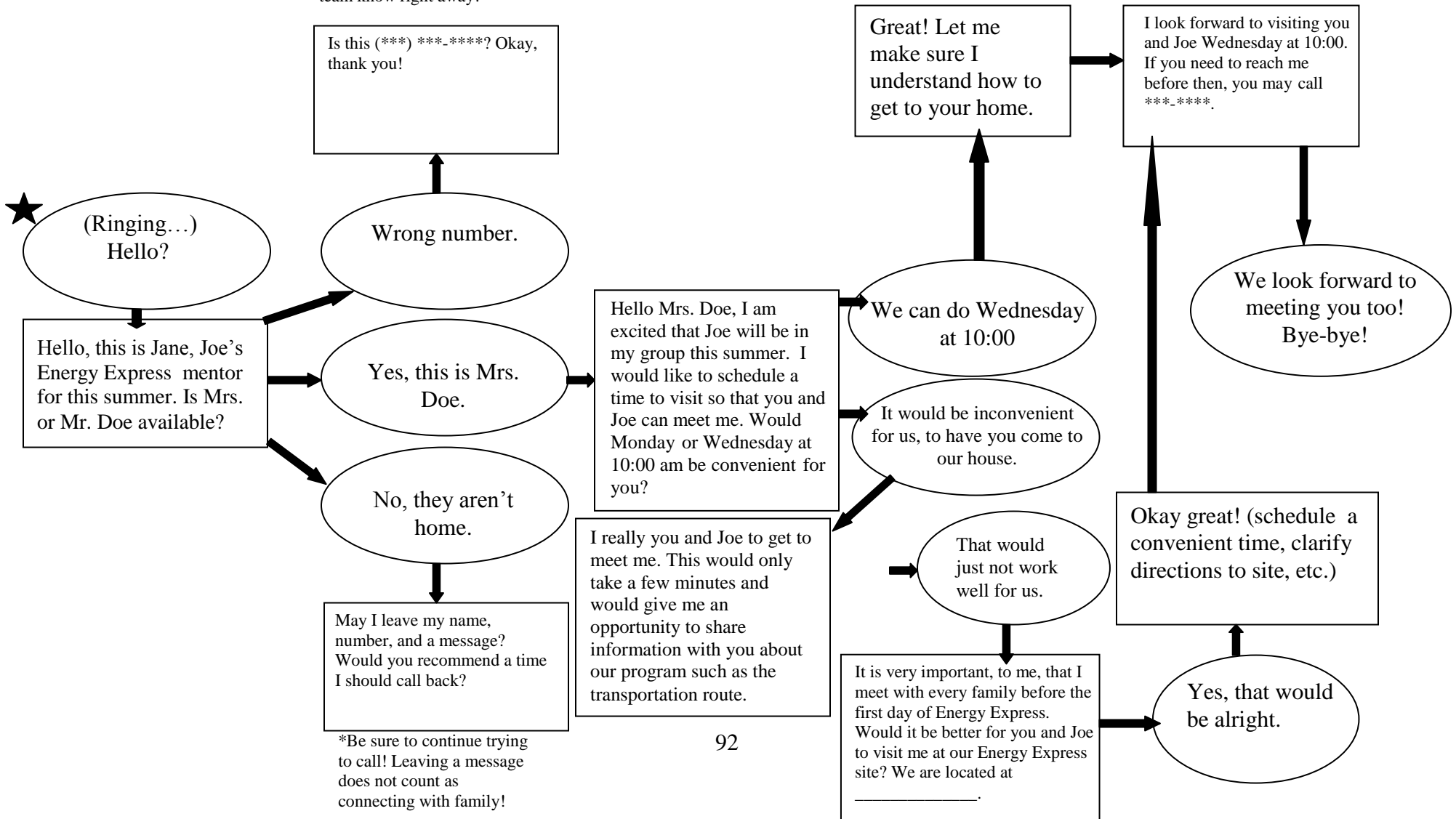
1. **Make notes of the visit** if necessary and follow up on questions you promised to answer for the family.
2. **Speak with site supervisor** if any problems arose or potential issues may need addressed (i.e., Family is in the process of a divorce).
3. **Speak respectfully** of the families you visited - remember the positives you found.
4. **Consider sending a thank you note** mentioning that you are excited about the upcoming weeks with the child.



Organizing a Family Visit: Suggested Phone Conversation

○ = Parent/ Guardian, □ = Mentor

*If you come across an invalid number or a child who has dropped out of the program, let your site supervisor and team know right away!



*Be sure to continue trying to call! Leaving a message does not count as connecting with family!

Family Visit Activity Ideas

Activities You Can Do with a Child During a Family Visit

1. **Make a name tag** for the child to wear during the program. You might include the child's bus number and "Energy Express" on this tag. (Some mentors opt to choose a certain color or shape for the name tag, so that the child can easily identify his/her group on the first day of the program.)
2. **Create something with the child's name** on it to hang on the door of his/her Energy Express room. You might take a picture of the child to hang with his/her name.
3. **Create a name acrostics poem** for each child.
4. **Begin a group book** by having each child contribute a few sentences or paragraphs to the book.
5. **Have the child draw a self-portrait** that can be displayed in his/her room at the site.
6. **Create a journal cover** (older children only) that will serve as the cover for their dialogue journal.
7. **Create a placemat** that will be used during meal time.
8. **Have the child make a list** of things he/she is looking forward to at Energy Express.
9. **Have child decorate a container** to be used as a mailbox in the room- have a welcome note in it the first day of Energy Express.
10. **Make a large poster**, cut into puzzle pieces. Ask child to write name on piece- put together on first day as a welcoming activity.
11. **Trace the child's hand**. The child can decorate and you or the child can write 5 things he/she enjoys doing.
12. **Give family an Energy Express calendar**, weekly themes, and important dates.

Activities You Can Encourage Parents/Guardians to do with their Children

1. **Ask their child** each day about the books being read.
2. **Ask their child** to share their take-home book each week.
3. **Ask their child** to share the daily experiences at Energy Express.

Preparing the Children's Room

Keep in mind that **THE POWER OF ENERGY EXPRESS'S PRINT-RICH ENVIRONMENT, FOR CHILDREN, IS THAT THEY CREATE IT!** The children will create the majority of the print and art in the room as they engage in book-based activities throughout the six weeks.

Avoid "decorating" your room with purchased materials (such as bulletin board borders or commercial posters) or pre-cut shapes. Such materials take space away from the children's art and writing.



Allow children to play an active role in creating the print and art that make their room print-rich. This will give children a feeling of ownership. While you will make the room inviting and attractive for the first day of the program, leave plenty of space for children to get involved. The space shown on the left welcomes the art and writing children will create during Friends Week.

Getting Started

Before rearranging anything in the room, draw a map of the room layout and take photographs. This will help you remember where furniture, posters, and other belongings should be placed when it is time to clean up the site.

If you move an item from the room, label it with your name and/or room number. Make a list of items you removed from the room, as well as where you placed or stored them. Check with your site supervisor, as some sites have a designated storage area for items not in use during the program.



Begin with a blank slate. Push the teacher's desk, individual student desks, the television, computers, and other items that will not be used during Energy Express out of the way and cover them up. Cover or remove with care existing chalk boards, wipe boards, posters, bulletin boards, word walls, and other items. Again, keep track of these items so they can be put back at the end of the program.

Large tables and child-sized chairs are ideal for print-rich activities. Organize the space to discourage running. Break up large open spaces with an area of children's work tables, a place for children to comfortably listen to read aloud and participate in art and writing activities. Individual desks may be pushed together if tables are not available. Cover tables with trash bags, end-roll paper, or another large covering for protection. Some materials, such as end-roll paper, allow opportunities for children to doodle and write down ideas. Chalkboards and wipe boards also need protected. Tape from children's art and writing leaves residue and damages the boards.



Art and Writing Center(s)

Designate Art and writing centers as a place children can access materials and work on projects. Art and writing centers may share the same space. Use large tables or push desks together to allow children plenty of space to create art and writing.



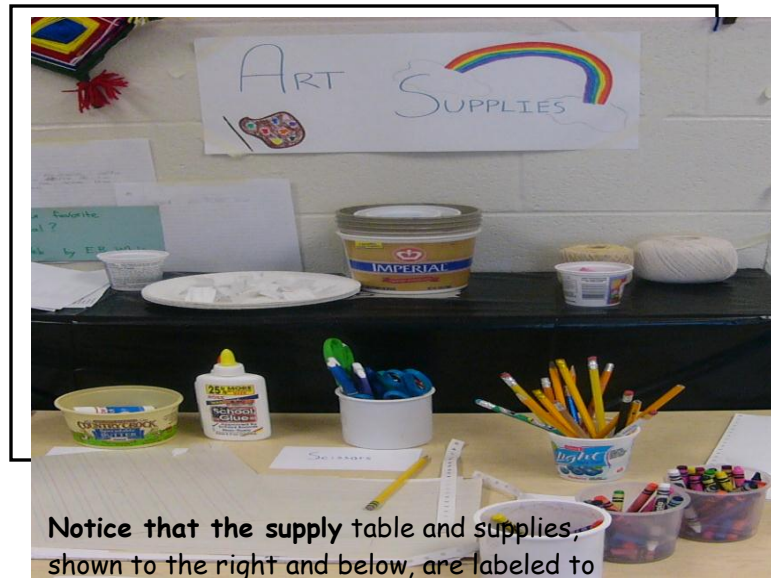
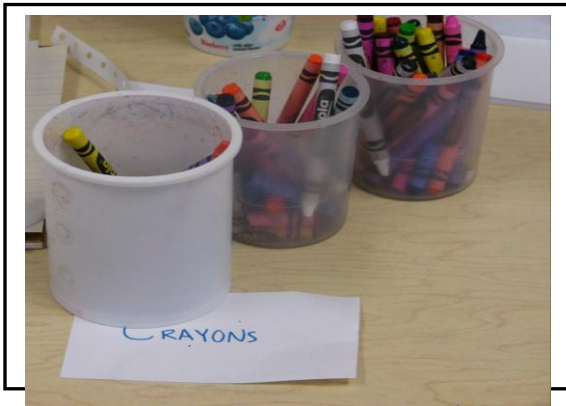
Some projects may require more space such as the floor or even outside, as shown below.



Cover the door with end-roll paper, a trash bag, or some other large covering. Create a welcoming message on the door using paint or markers. Do not use pre-cut letters or computer generated words. Paint or write the names of each child on the door. You may take pictures of children during family visits to hang on the door. You may also opt to decorate the door beforehand or leave space for the children to decorate the door during the first week. Can you imagine the wonderful creations the children will use to contribute to the space shown on the left? Either way, create a welcoming appearance, as the door will invite children into their room.

The Supply Table

The **supply table** is the place children can go for supplies used daily (scissors, markers, crayons, pens, pencils, paper, tape, and other materials). Place the supplies in a location that is easily accessible by children.



Notice that the supply table and supplies, shown to the right and below, are labeled to add to the print-richness of the room. Horizontal, basic, block-lettering should be used for this labeling. Emergent, young readers will absorb this surrounding print!

Cubbies

A **cubby** gives the child a sense of independence. Cubbies can be used for children to receive letters, take-home books, or weekly newsletters. Cubbies may already exist as part of the room structure. With permission from the site, you may use them with care. If cubbies do not already exist, use your imagination when creating them yourself! The cubbies on the right were created by hanging donated gift bags.



The cubbies on the left were created from shoe boxes. Notice that each cubby is labeled with the child's name. Each name is written horizontally, using basic, block-lettering. This is ideal because children can easily read the standard print. Dramatized, fancy lettering should be avoided.

Book Nooks



A prominent book nook is created throughout the room, to give children a comfortable, inviting place to read. Children can decorate appliance boxes to sit in while they read; fabric can be draped over a table or hung from the ceiling to create a reading tent—the possibilities are endless! The book nook on the left was created from an empty cardboard box and donated blanket.

The book nook on the right was also created using a cardboard box. Notice that the structure of this nook was created by the mentor, while the children decorated it with their art and writing. This gives the children a feeling of “ownership” for the nook and encourages them to take care of it.

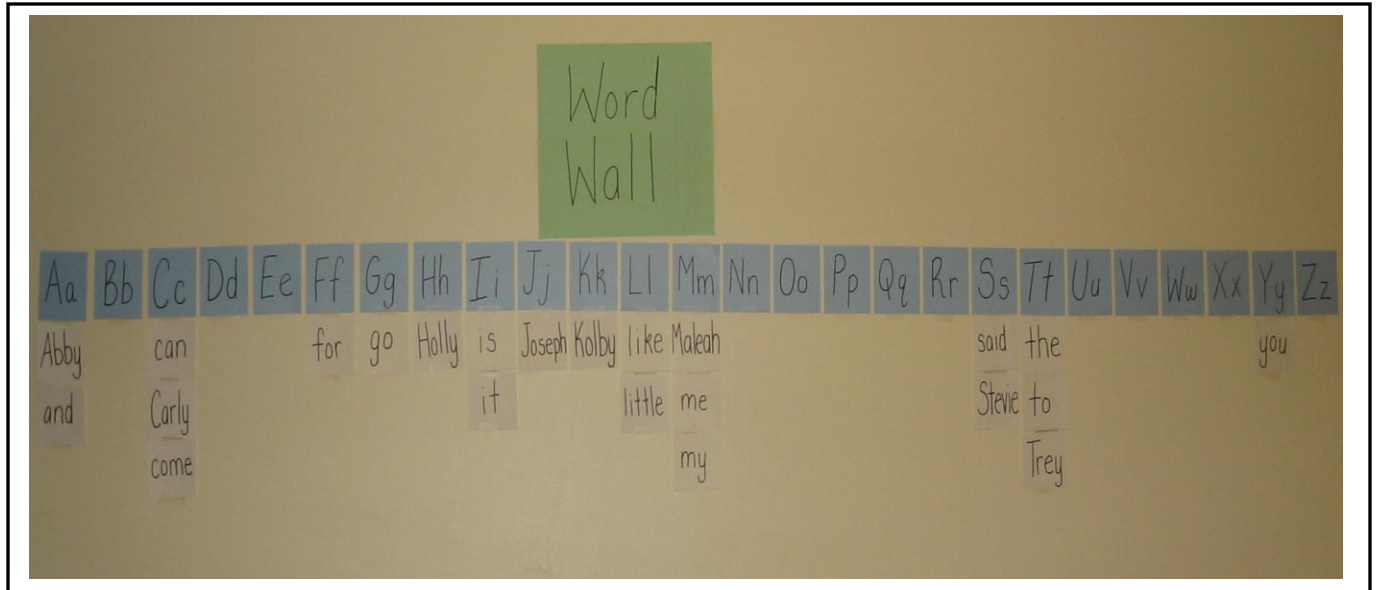


The book nook on the left was creatively made with crepe paper strips. The art and writing of the children hang throughout the strips. The base is created by donated mats or carpet remnants. The crepe paper strips are ideal, as they allow children to feel cozy while remaining visible.

Additional welcoming spaces should be created around the room to serve as comfortable spaces for children to read. Book nooks and reading areas should never be fully enclosed so that mentors can supervise all children at all times. Safety of the book nook structure should also be considered. For example, is the structure sturdy enough not to fall in on the child while he/she is reading?

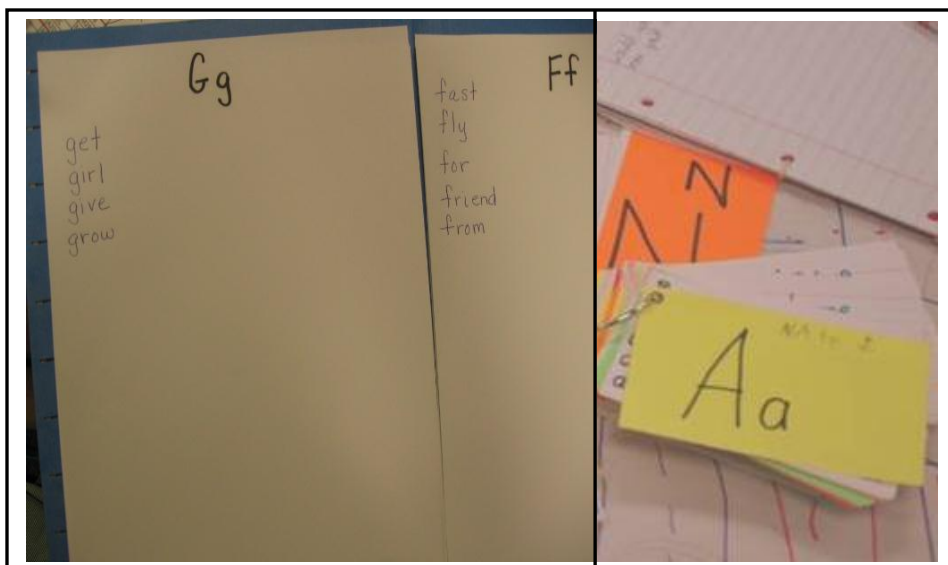


Word Wall/Word Book



To create a word wall cover a chalkboard, bulletin board, or other large area that will serve as a word wall. Word walls take up a lot of space, as they span from A to Z, left to right, and are added to daily. Place the word wall near the area where children will most often be writing so that it is easily visible. Guidelines for creating your word wall include:

- From left to right, display each letter of the alphabet (upper and lower case) across the top of the word wall
- Use white, 3 ½" X 5 ½" index cards or cut paper to display each word
- Use black, bold, basic-block lettering
- Refer to the Dolch list (See *Resources*) and place a few "starter words" from the list, as well as the names of each child under the appropriate letter. You do not need to completely fill the word wall, as the majority of the words will be generated daily during the children's reading and writing experiences.



The picture on the left shows two variations of word books. One was created by stapling several pages of loose-leaf paper together. The other was created by attaching index cards together with a shower ring. While both are options, be sure to create a word book that is expandable, as more pages or index cards may need to be added throughout the program.

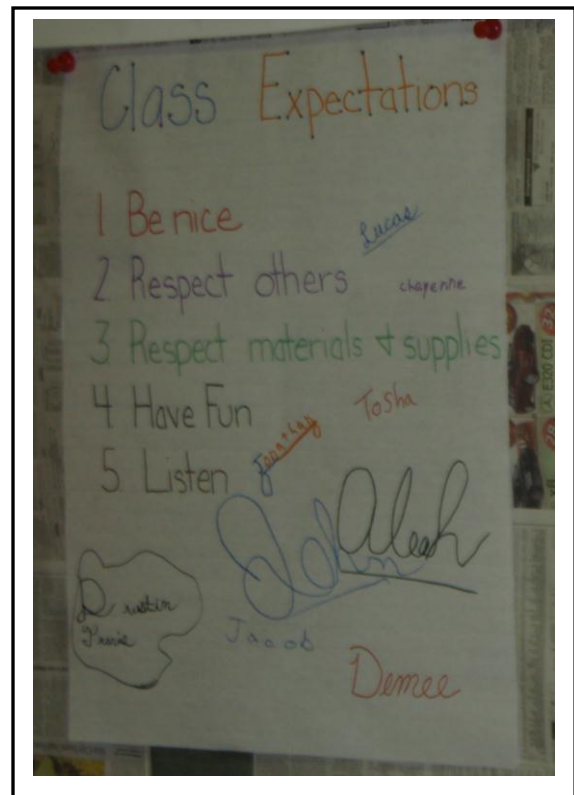
The Schedule



Display a schedule in the room that children can refer to daily. While you may want to jot down estimated times for your own planning, this schedule offers flexibility by not including specific times. A child who relies on routine may become fixated on the times and find it challenging to adapt when projects run longer or shorter than scheduled. Simply listing the activities, in sequence, allows children to gain a sense of routine. They know what order to expect without becoming concerned with the actual length of each activity. Items on the schedule may include breakfast, welcoming activity, read aloud, art activity, writing activity, drama, non-competitive recreation, one-on-one reading, additional activities, bathroom breaks, lunch, and dismissal. You may opt to include "surprise" on the schedule to designate a place for additional activities or the completion of an unfinished activity. You will want to collaborate with your site team on times that effect them such as non-competitive recreation and one-on-one reading. Refer to the schedule daily with children.

EXPECTATIONS

In Energy Express, we do not set classroom rules. Rules are frequently associated with consequences. We want to maintain an environment that is filled with praise and positive reinforcement, while encouraging children to respect others and their environment. While we do not have "rules," we do set expectations with our children. These expectations are developed when the children arrive on the first day and then referred to daily. To prepare ahead of time, write "expectations" at the top of large paper, such as chart paper. Setting expectations as a group allows for good discussion and understanding of the expectations. As your group develops expectations, remember to keep them positive and few in number. This way, children can easily remember the list even if they cannot read them. You may want everyone, including yourself, to sign the expectations, as the group did on the right. Inform your group that this is a contract, or a promise on paper, that says each of you will work hard to meet the expectations.



Responsibilities

Display responsibilities so children can contribute to the daily activities at Energy Express. Include responsibilities that every child can feel successful doing. For example, it would be discouraging to ask a child to lift something too heavy, or hang something too high! Try to assign at least one responsibility to every child each day. Consider how you will handle a responsibility should a child be absent. These responsibilities may include line leader, shutting the light on/off, door holder, sitting on your left/right during family-style meals, reading with you during one-on-one reading, carrying supplies to non-competitive recreation, and taking food to the sharing table during meal time. You may also designate a child to be the "special helper" for handling "out of the ordinary" tasks that may not be needed every day. The responsibility chart on the right was created by listing the daily responsibilities and then labeling clothespins with each child's name. Each day, the mentor can easily update the chart.



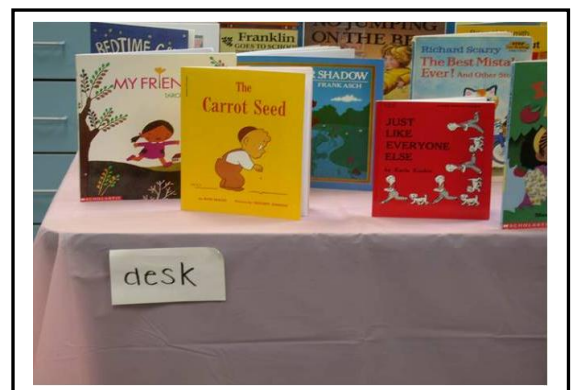
Labeling

Label items throughout the room using basic, block-lettering. These items might include the door, floor, table, chair, trash can, wall, or window. This allows children to interact with words during daily activities in their print-rich environment. While labeling is especially beneficial to younger readers, more complex and interesting words can be used throughout the room of older children. Such words might include pencil sharpener, chalkboard, and light switch.

Display children's names at least three times. Areas may include the door, the word wall, a cubby, or the book nook. Please keep in mind, we do not have "assigned seats" in Energy Express, so name displays should not be used to designate a place for a child. As a child may drop the program before the first day, display the names in a way that is easily changed.

B O O K S

Display 64 books in the room. These 64 books do not need to pertain to the theme unlike the books you select for read aloud. These books are for independent and one-on-one reading. Display books that vary in level and interest. Be sure to display books so that children can easily access them. Books should not be placed on a high shelf, where adult assistance is needed. While you should switch books out frequently, at least 64 (8 per child) books should remain in the room at all times.



Themes

The primary atmosphere of the room is created through the children's art and writing. These art and writing activities should connect to Energy Express's weekly themes: Myself, Family, Friends, Homeplace, Community, and Making My World a Better Place. These themes include the people and places are most important to the child and contribute to Energy Express's place-based curriculum. Therefore, while themes like *At the Beach*, *On the Farm*, or *Camping* may seem appealing, they detract from Energy Express themes and are not used.

Each theme should be given designated space where that week's theme-related graphic organizers, art, and writing will be hung. You may choose to label this area with a poster or another creative display. Notice that the theme poster on the right is written horizontally, using basic, block-lettering. The space around it will soon be filled with the art and writing children create during Friends Week!



As a group welcoming or additional activity, theme words are created weekly, as shown on the left. The mentor guides children through brainstorming of words that relate to the weekly theme. Notice that the words shown on the left are written horizontally, using basic-block lettering. Hang this list in close proximity to the writing center so children can easily view the words and use them in their daily writing. At the end of the week move the list to the area you have designated for children's art and writing related to that theme.

Preparing the Children's Room

Check with your site supervisor to discuss expectations of the person who occupied your space before you. These expectations may specify which items in the room you may have privilege to and which may be "off limits." Refer to Weeks 1 & 2 of Service: Preparing the Children's Room for additional guidelines.

- Before rearranging anything in the room, draw a map of the room layout, take a photograph of the room, video room (if possible), and make a list of items removed from the space.
- Push items that will not be used out of the way during Energy Express.
- Locate appropriate sized-chairs and large tables (or push desks together) to use for print-rich activities.
- Cover tables
- Organize the space to discourage running
- Designate art/writing center(s)
- Cover the door and create a welcoming entrance
- Designate a supply table
- Create a cubby for each child
- Label items throughout the room
- Create inviting places and spaces ("book nooks") to read
- Create area for word wall
- Display children's names at least three times
- Display a daily schedule
- Prepare large paper that will be used to create expectations with children on their first day
- Display responsibilities
- Label designated area for weekly theme
- Prepare paper that will be used to create a weekly word list with children during
- Display 64 or more books in the room
- Prepare activity plans for following week and gather materials to have readily available for all activities planned on the first day of the week
- CONGRATULATIONS!** Your room is prepared to welcome the art and writing of children! Let them flourish as they create a print-rich environment!

Creating Effective Activity Plans

Energy Express is a short, very intensive six-week program. Effective planning is key to a positive and productive program—for both you and the children. Several pointers will help you plan effectively:

- **Overplan.** Plan additional activities and transitions (activities/songs) to use when movement is required or downtime occurs. This lessens the amount of time that children are unengaged.
- **Over prepare.** Rehearse how you will introduce, guide, and bring closure to activities; how you will conduct discussion with your group and ask questions.
- **Organize.** Gather and prepare materials for all activities the preceding day. If additional help is required, arrange for volunteer assistance.
- **Plan Ahead.** Develop activity plans for at least one week in advance. This is important for culminating events like Open House or Community Service, as well as weekly activities.
- **Establish Routines.** Start everyday with a Welcoming Activity, then discuss the day's plan with the children. Refer to the daily schedule.
- **Be Balanced.** Balance independent and group activities.
- **Be Realistic.** Keep activities manageable.
- **Be Flexible.** Be ready to move to a backup plan when one activity doesn't go as planned.
- **Share!** Exchange ideas and brainstorm with fellow mentors each week to plan activities.

While mentors are offered opportunities to be creative and flexible in their activity planning, there are “givens” that every mentor is expected to meet. As you create your activity plans, keep in mind the following “givens”:

Daily Givens	Weekly Givens
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Children engage in welcoming activities ✓ The majority of the 3 ½ hours you spend with children, is focused on reading and weekly theme-related activities ✓ Read aloud to children daily. Follow initial read aloud with a graphic organizer (<i>See Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Reading</i>) ✓ Children engage in writing, art (children paint everyday), and drama activities ✓ 15-20 minutes of one-on-one reading with every child ✓ Refer and add to word wall/word book (<i>See Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Writing</i>) ✓ Children have time set aside each day for independent reading or book exploration ✓ 20 minutes of noncompetitive recreation ✓ The integrity of your small group is maintained. To ensure lots of individual attention for children, avoid combining groups ✓ A non-competitive environment is maintained at all times ✓ Transitions are used to guide children from one activity to the next 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A theme word list is created by the group and displayed near the writing area ✓ You will listen to each of your children read ✓ Older Groups Only: Schedule journaling so you will have time to maintain a dialogue by responding to their journal entries (<i>See Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Writing</i>) ✓ Children have weekly opportunities to engage in the development of dramatic puppet shows, Reader's Theatre, or role play that takes time for planning and rehearsal (<i>See Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Drama</i>) ✓ Weekly take home book is introduced at the beginning and read several times throughout the week ✓ Children are given access to their copies of the weekly take-home book to allow them to build familiarity with the book ✓ Weekly take home book is sent home with each child at the end of the week (If child is not present on the day the books are sent home, mentor is responsible for ensuring the book is still given to the child when he/she returns!)



Week 3 of Service: Myself Week (Week 1 with Children)

Contents:

- **Topics that support theme**
- **1st Day/Week Icebreaker Activities**
- **Myself Welcoming Activities**
- **Myself Print-rich Activities**

PLEASE NOTE:

Many of the activities are not described in as much detail as they should be on the mentor's activity plan. These ideas are intended to serve as guidelines during the activity planning process. Room has been left for the mentor to make decisions about the actual implementation of each activity (i.e. Which materials should be used? Will this be a group or individual activity? What space will be needed? How many volunteers will be needed?). Many of the welcoming activities could be expanded into additional activities. Welcoming activities are intended to be brief, 5 to 10 minute activities that gives everyone a positive start to their day!



Myself Week

Topics that support theme

- Likes/dislikes (foods, colors, etc.)
- Talents
- Experiences
- Hobbies
- Physical differences (eye color, hair color, etc.)
- Dreams/Goals
- Feelings

Welcoming Activities

- ***First day Icebreakers***
 - ***Memory Name Game*** The group forms a circle. One person begins by saying her name and one thing that describes her. For example, Ruby might say, "My name is Ruby and I like soccer." The next person recalls the previous person's name and thing that described her. After, the person introduces himself and one thing that describes him. For example, John would say, "Her name is Ruby and she likes soccer. My name is John and I like peanut butter." Then, the third person must recall both, Ruby and John's information, and then introduce himself. The game continues until the last person in the group recalls everyone's previous information and introduce him/herself.
 - ***Truths and Lies*** Following an introduction each member in the group shares two things about him/herself that are true, and one thing that is false. The group tries to figure out which things were true and which one was false. For example, Kate introduces herself by saying, "Hi, I'm Kate. I went fishing last night, I am 50 years old, and I have

been to Canada." The group then guessed that Kate is really not 50 years old.

- *Alphabet Name Game* Each group member thinks of a word that describes him/herself and also begins with the same letter as his/her name. For example, "My name is Joseph and I like jogging." (You can also combine this with the memory name game described above.)
- *That's Me* The mentor reads a descriptive statement (I like blue, I have a dog, I like to sing, I have been to Florida, etc.) to the group. If the statement describes any member of the group, that member raises his/her hand and shouts, "that's me".
- *Group Juggle* Each member of the group is instructed to make a snowball using newspaper and masking tape. After snowballs have been made the group forms a circle. One member of the group says the name of another member and tosses his/her ball to that person. That person then says the name of another member and tosses the ball he/she just caught to that member. This continues until the ball has been tossed to each person in the group. Then the group will continue tossing the ball in the same pattern (each person should toss the ball to the person to whom he/she originally tossed the ball). After a few rounds of tossing the snowball, another group member begins tossing his/her ball to the same person to whom he/she has been tossing the ball. Now there are two balls being tossed. Gradually add each ball to the group, until each member's ball is being tossed. As a closure activity, the group may discuss how each member created a snowball very unique from that of his/her other members. Discuss how differs in size, shape, and the amount of tape used to form the ball. Discuss that each of us is unique and has creative ways of doing things.
- *Yarn Web* Group members form a circle by sitting down on the floor. A ball of yarn is passed around the circle. One group member holds onto the end piece of the yarn and tells the group one thing about him/herself. The member then tapes the end to the floor in front of him/her. The ball is passed to a member across the circle, stretching out a piece of yarn from the point the end was taped. That member then holds onto the yarn and tapes it to the floor, as she shares something about herself with the group. The yarn is passed back and forth to each member and taped to the floor in front of them, until everyone has had a chance to share something about his/herself. The mentor then cuts the ball of yarn to detach it from the last piece that was taped to the floor. Then end product should be a web. You may consider adding to this web each week, by using a new color yarn to represent each weekly theme.

- **Centerpiece** Children work together to create a centerpiece (from found objects) for their breakfast/lunch table.
- **Coat of Arms** Children design a symbol or crest that represents them in some way. Children then share their creation to the group.
- **Handshake** The group creates a group handshake. Each week, the group can add steps to the handshake.
- **Timeline** Each child creates a timeline of his/her life and experiences. Each child then shares their timeline with the group (older group only).
- **Theme Word List (should be done first day of every week)** As a group, brainstorm words that support the weekly theme. List these words horizontally to model writing and to support reading. Display this list near the writing center, so children can refer to it when they write. After the week is over, hang the poster in the designated theme area.
- **Book Nook** Children work together to decorate the book nook with their own art and writing.
- **Door** Children work together to decorate the door with their own art and writing.

Examples of Myself Print-rich Activities

Book	Art Activity	Attached Writing	Writing Activity	Daily Drama Activity	Weekly Drama Activity
<i>The Mixed-Up Chameleon</i> by Eric Carle	Create a mixed-up animal by combining different animal parts.	Label animal parts that were used to create the mixed-up animal.	Describe characteristics of different animals you wish you had. "I wish I had legs like a..."	Charades: Act out animal characteristics the chameleon gains, as others guess the animal.	Children may create a play, Reader's Theatre, Story Theatre, a song, or another performance that may require daily rehearsal during the week. Weekly drama activities,
<i>A Bad Case of Stripes</i> by David Shannon	Paint a self-portrait of when you came down with a bad case of stripes.	Sentence strip: "What cured your bad case of stripes?"	Write a newspaper article, describing what Camilla Cream said when you interviewed her.	Role play the interview between the reporters and Camilla Cream.	
<i>Where the Wild Things Are</i> by Maurice Sendak	As a group, create a giant wild thing out of found objects.	Label the wild thing with words that describe it.	Create a brochure that advertises the island you sailed your boat to.	As music plays, perform your own version of the "wild rumpus".	

<i>Tacky the Penguin</i> by Helen Lester	Create stuffed paper bag tacky penguins.	Sentence strips: "My penguin is tacky because..."	Write a story about yourself.	Form a _____. (See <i>Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Drama</i>)	such as these, lend themselves to art and writing. Each day children may contribute to their performance by creating programs, posters, invitations, costumes, props, etc. (See <i>Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Drama</i>)
<i>Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon</i> by Patty Lovell	Create a treasure box, where you keep special things, like Molly Lou Melon's letters from her grandmother.	Label with things you treasure.	Write advice on why you should be yourself, just as Molly Lou Melon's grandmother gave her advice throughout the story.	Demonstrate how it looks when you are walking proudly, smiling big, singing out, and believing in yourself.	
<i>My Many Colored Days</i> by Dr. Seuss	Me-bodies: Children take turns tracing each other on large paper. Paint and cut out me-bodies.	Acrostic poem using each child's name.	Color poem: "I feel red when I..., I feel blue when I..., I feel green when I..., etc."	As the mentor reads <i>My Many Colored Days</i> , the children will express themselves to show how they feel on each day.	
<i>The Important Book</i> by Margaret Wise Brown	Cut out magazine pictures to form a collage of important things.	Describe what is important about each item in the collage.	Class book: "The important thing about me is..."	Talent show: Each child demonstrates his/her special talent.	
<i>All I See</i> by Cynthia Rylant	Go outside and paint what you see.	Describe what you see.	Create a postcard that describes what you saw when you wore magic glasses.	Write words from story onto strips of paper. Group selects 3 word strips. Group creates a skit, where only those 3 words are spoken.	



Week 4 of Service: Family Week (Week 2 with Children)

Contents:

- **Topics that support theme**
- **Family Welcoming Activities**
- **Family Print-rich Activities**

Family Week



Topics that support theme

- Family configuration (number of siblings, etc.)
- Family types (animal families, etc.)
- Family traditions
- Family stories
- Genealogy/Family Trees

Welcoming Activities

- **Yarn Web** See description of yarn web activity in *Myself Week*. Consider contributing to the web, this week, by encouraging the children to share information about their families.
- **Handshake** See description of handshake activity in *Myself Week*. Consider adding onto this activity during this week.
- **That's Me** See description of game in *Myself Week*. This game can be adapted by the mentor reading family-related descriptions such as, "I have a brother, I live with my grandparents, I am the oldest sibling, etc."
- **Rock families** Create rock families out of real rocks, by painting and labeling them.
- **Show and Tell** Children bring in photos of relatives or other items that reminds them of their families to share with the group.
- **Family Portrait** Each child draws a portrait of his/her family and shares it with the group.
- **Animal Family Sort** Explore and sort pictures of animal families. Discuss what you notice about these families.
- **Family Collage** Cut out magazines pictures that represent occupations, experiences, hobbies, and traditions of each child's family. Glue onto construction paper and label each picture with the family member.
- **Family Tree** Create family tree and label with family members' names. Share with group.
- **Theme Word List (should be done first day of every week)** As a group, brainstorm words that support the weekly theme. List these words horizontally to model writing and to support reading. Display this list near the writing center, so children can refer to it when they write. After the week is over, hang the poster in the designated theme area.

Examples of Family Print-rich Activities

Book	Art Activity	Attached Writing	Writing Activity	Daily Drama Activity	Weekly Drama Activity
<i>The Relatives Came</i> by Cynthia Rylant	Create a large relative's car out of boxes and paint it.	Make a list of things you need to remember to pack in your car.	Create an invitation inviting your relatives to visit you.	Sit around a table and pretend to be gathering for a family meal.	Children may create a play, Reader's Theatre, Story Theatre, a song, or another performance that may require daily rehearsal during the week.
<i>Aunt Flossie's Hats (and Crab Cakes Later)</i> by Elizabeth Fitzgerald Howard	Create newspaper hats.	Label the type of hat you created.	In the story, Aunt Flossie reminisced about a memory each hat represented. Describe the memory that your hat represents.	Impersonate one of your relatives, as you are sharing the memory your hat represents.	Weekly drama activities, such as these, lend themselves to art and writing. Each day children may contribute to their performance by creating programs, posters, invitations, costumes, props, etc. (See <i>Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting</i>
<i>Stellaluna</i> by Janell Cannon	Papier-mâché 'balloon bats.	Sentence strip: Describe what you would see if you were hanging upside down like a bat.	Write a book review, describing what you liked and disliked about the story.	Imitate other animals, as Stellaluna imitated birds in the story.	
<i>The Keeping Quilt</i> by Patricia Pollaco	Each child decorates a square. Then the squares are put together to form a quilt.	Sentence strip: What special fabric would your quilt square be made of? (Ex. Soccer uniform, soldier uniform, baby blanket)	Write instructions explaining how to make a quilt. Be creative! The directions do not have to be accurate.	Each group member shouts words like "cape, tent, bag, etc." while all members pretend to use an imaginary quilt in that way.	
<i>I Love You Purplest</i> by Barbara M. Joose	Create photographs of you with family. Create a scrapbook using the photos you create.	Label each photo in the scrapbook.	Write a letter to a family member explaining what you love most about them.	Freeze frame (See <i>Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Drama</i>)	

<i>Chicka Chicka Boom Boom</i> by Bill Martin Jr.	As a group, create a large coconut tree.	Label with words for each letter of the alphabet and attach to the trunk of the tree.	Create a warning poster with reasons why you should not climb the coconut tree.	Pretend to climb up a coconut tree. Add variations to situation (size of tree, what you are wearing, what you are carrying, weather conditions, etc.)	<i>Drama</i>)
<i>Sylvester & the Magic Pebble</i> by William Steig	Collect rocks. Paint each rock to be a member of a rock family.	Label each rock with a family member's name.	Write three wishes you would make if you found a magic pebble.	Puppetry (See <i>Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Drama</i>)	



Week 5 of Service: Friends Week (Week 3 with Children)

Contents:

- **Topics that support theme**
- **Friends Welcoming Activities**
- **Friends Print-rich Activities**

Friends Week



Topics that support theme

- What it means to be a "good friend"
- How to make friends
- Being a good listener
- Respect
- Best Friends
- Trust
- Solving problems together
- Friend traditions

Welcoming Activities

- **Yarn Web** See description of yarn web activity in *Myself Week*. Consider contributing to the web, this week, by encouraging the children to share information about their friends.
- **Handshake** See description of handshake activity in *Myself Week*. Consider adding onto this activity during this week.
- **That's Me** See description of game in *Myself Week*. This game can be adapted by the mentor reading friend-related descriptions such as, "My best friend has brown hair, lives on my street, etc."
- **Friend Portrait** Each child draws a portrait of his/her friend and shares it with the group.
- **Friendship Bracelets** Give each child a pipe cleaner and several beads. Have each child take turns sliding a bead onto each group member's pipe cleaner, while telling that person why they are a good friend. After each member of the group, including the mentor, has received a bead from everyone, wrap the pipe cleaner to form a bracelet and twist the ends to secure. Wear your friendship bracelets all week!
- **Friendship Chain** Each group member writes his/her name on a strip of paper. Loop paper strips through one another to form a friendship chain. Hang it up for all to see!
- **Word Map** Write the word "friend" in the middle of large paper. As a group, brainstorm words and phrases that describe a friend. Record group responses around the word.
- **Friendship Recipe** Write a recipe for friendship, including the ingredients needed for maintaining a good friendship.
- **Theme Word List (should be done first day of every week)** As a group, brainstorm words that support the weekly theme. List these words horizontally to model writing and to support reading. Display this list near

the writing center, so children can refer to it when they write. After the week is over, hang the poster in the designated theme area.

Examples of Friends Print-rich Activities

Book	Art Activity	Attached Writing	Writing Activity	Daily Drama Activity	Weekly Drama Activity
<i>Don't Need Friends</i> by Carolyn Crimi	Create a junkyard in the room. Create things from the found objects found in the junkyard.	Label what you made from your junkyard finds.	Write a thank-you note from the dog to the rat, thanking him for being a good friend.	Emotion party (See <i>Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Drama</i>)	Children may create a play, Reader's Theatre, Story Theatre, a song, or another performance that may require daily rehearsal during the week.
<i>Alexander and the Wind-up Mouse</i> by Leo Lionni	Create a picture out of tissue paper scraps, just as the illustrations are made in the story.	Make a list of inanimate objects that are in your picture.	Group book: Write magic spells	Imitate an object that wind's up. Once a friend winds you up move like the object would.	Weekly drama activities, such as these, lend themselves to art and writing. Each day children may
<i>The Extraordinary Egg</i> by Leo Lionni	Papier-mâché eggs	Create a birth certificate for what hatched from your egg.	Create a menu of your own egg dish inventions.	Carry an imaginary egg around with you during the day. Be careful where you put it because it's fragile!	contribute to their performance by creating programs, posters, invitations, costumes, props, etc. (See
<i>The Old Woman Who Named Things</i> by Cynthia Rylant	Paint a mural of your favorite things.	Make name tags for each of the things in your mural.	Write a letter to a friend in another group.	Form a _____ (See <i>Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Drama</i>)	

<i>Best Friends</i> by Steven Kellogg	Make wizard hats.	Sentence strip: Where would Golden Silverwind take you and your best friend?	Postcard: Write to a friend and tell them how much fun you are having at Energy Express!	Mirror, Mirror (See <i>Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Drama</i>)	<i>Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Drama</i>
<i>The Rag Coat</i> by Lauren Mills	Make a rag coat out of magazine scraps.	Make a tag for your coat.	Acrostic poem: friend or friendship	Pass around fabric, that could have come from the rag coat, and ask group to take turns turning the fabric into something (flag, cape, etc.)	
<i>Sign of the Beaver</i> by Elizabeth Speare	Make a teepee.	Create symbols on teepee and write the word that each symbol stands for.	Simulated journal: Write from a journal entry from one of the character's perspectives.	Do different Native American dances. Let the children create a dance for rain, sun, etc.	
<i>Charlotte's Web</i> by E.B. White	Create a brochure that advertises the county fair. Create pictures of the events and attractions that will be at the fair.	In the brochure you create, describe the events and attractions that will be at the fair.	Write a prediction of what you think will happen in the next chapter.	Puppetry (see drama section)	



Week 6 of Service: Homeplace Week (Week 4 with Children)

Contents:

- **Topics that support theme**
- **Homeplace Welcoming Activities**
- **Homeplace Print-rich Activities**

Homeplace Week



Topics that support theme

- Types of homes
- What homes are made of
- Favorite places in home
- What makes a home a home
- What homes provide us
- Who lives in our home
- Ways to take care of your home



REMINDER: Open House Next Week!

Welcoming Activities

- ★ **Open House Preparation** Write invitations to family and friends, create posters advertising the event, create event programs, and practice any skits or prepare for any event activities.
- **Yarn Web** See description of yarn web activity in *Myself Week*. Consider contributing to the web, this week, by encouraging the children to share information about home.
- **Handshake** See description of handshake activity in *Homeplace Week*. Consider adding onto this activity during this week.
- **Theme Word List (should be done first day of every week)** As a group, brainstorm words that support the weekly theme. List these words horizontally to model writing and to support reading. Display this list near the writing center, so children can refer to it when they write. After the week is over, hang the poster in the designated theme area.
- **That's Me** See description of game in *Myself Week*. This game can be adapted by the mentor reading home-related descriptions such as, "My home is made of wood. My home has stairs. My home is in the woods. My home is in town. I live in an apartment. I have my own room. "
- **Make a collage** of homes, by cutting out pictures from a magazine. Discuss the different types of homes.
- **Make a list** of different homes (include animal homes). Discuss the different types of homes listed.
- **Mold a home** out of play dough. Discuss the different types of homes created.
- **Create an acrostic poem** out of the word "homeplace".

Examples of Homeplace Print-rich Activities

Book	Art Activity	Attached Writing	Writing Activity	Daily Drama Activity	Weekly Drama Activity
<i>The Seashore Book</i> by Charlotte Zolotow	Create a mural of ocean life.	Label items in mural.	Write a letter to a friend who lives at the beach and who has never visited the mountains. Describe what it is like living in the mountains.	Act out activities on a beach, such as building a sand castle, picking up shells from the shore, fishing, swimming, looking out at the sea, etc.	Children may create a play, Reader's Theatre, Story Theatre, a song, or another performance that may require daily rehearsal during the week. Weekly drama activities, such as these, lend themselves to art and writing. Each day children may contribute to their performance by creating programs, posters, invitations, costumes, props, etc. (See <i>Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Drama</i>)
<i>Night in the Country</i> by Cynthia Rylant	Scribble over paper with various crayon colors, creating random designs. Paint over the entire paper with black paint. Once dry, scratch designs into the black paint, revealing the colors underneath.	Make a list of sounds you hear at night in the country.	Make a travel brochure of what someone might do in the country, what they might eat, what they might see, etc.	As the story is read, stop now and then so that children can make sounds they imagine they would hear in each scene.	
<i>Alexander, Who's Not, Do You Hear Me? I mean it! Going to Move!</i> By Judith Viorst	Create suitcases with the things you would take if you moved.	Label the items in your suitcase and create a tag with your name on it.	Write reasons why you do or do not want to move.	Pretend to be Alexander as you state your reasons for not wanting to move.	

<i>Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain</i> by Verna Aardema	Make instruments to simulate sounds in the story.	Label what each instrument represents.	Write a song about rain.	Do a rain dance as you sing your song and play your instrument.
<i>A House for Hermit Crab</i> by Eric Carle	Make a hermit crab and his shell.	List things you would use to decorate the inside of the hermit crab's shell.	Create a wanted ad that is requesting others to move into your hermit crab shell. Include what you are looking for in a roommate (Ex: someone to brighten up the shell, someone to help keep it clean)	Charades: Act out creatures that live in the ocean, as others try to guess what you are acting out.
<i>The Little House</i> by Virginia Lee Burton	Decorate the inside of a shoe box to create a room of a house. Have everyone attach their rooms together to create a large house.	Label the rooms of the house. (Other possibilities: welcoming signs on front door, address numbers on the outside of house, posters hanging in rooms)	Write clues about your favorite place to spend time at your home. Let other children guess where the place is by considering your clues.	As a group member shouts out a type of home, pretend to go inside of it. (apartment, house, nest, log, beehive, doghouse, cage)
<i>Come a Tide</i> by George Ella Lyon	Create a weathervane for your house.	Label your weathervane with the different types of weather it predicts.	Write a poem about your favorite kind of weather.	Pretend to give a weather forecast for the day.
<i>The Big Orange Splot</i> by Daniel Marcus Pinkwater	Invent an unusual house.	Sentence strip: What is unusual about the home?	Write a sales advertisement for your house.	Create a skit that requires the dialogue to end with "the big orange splot".

<p><i>When I was Young in the Mountains</i> by Cynthia Rylant</p>	<p>Create a mountain landscape out of dough (see dough recipes on page...).</p>	<p>Label with words that describe the mountains.</p>	<p>Group book: "I am Young in the Mountains and I..."</p>	<p>Pretend to do an activity as the landform changes. Example: Skateboard as the landform changes from flat ground, to a hill, and eventually a mountain. Variations: landforms covered in sand, jello, ice, etc.</p>
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Week 7 of Service: Community Week (Week 5 with Children)

Contents:

- **Topics that support theme**
- **Community Welcoming Activities**
- **Community Print-rich Activities**

Community Week



Topics that support theme

- What is a community
- Who lives in our community
- How does a community work together
- What can we do for our community
- What does our community do for us
- What is unique about our community

REMINDER: Open House This Week!

Welcoming Activities

- ★ ***Open House Preparation*** Write event reminders to family and friends, create posters advertising the event, create event welcome signs, create event programs, and practice any skits or prepare for any event activities.
- ***Yarn Web*** See description of yarn web activity in *Myself Week*. Consider contributing to the web this week by encouraging the children to share information about their community.
- ***Handshake*** See description of handshake activity in *Homeplace Week*. Consider adding to this activity during this week.
- ***Theme Word List (should be done first day of every week)*** As a group, brainstorm words that support the weekly theme. List these words horizontally to model writing and to support reading. Display this list near the writing center, so children can refer to it when they write. After the week is over, hang the poster in the designated theme area.
- ***That's Me*** See description of game in *Myself Week*. This game can be adapted by the mentor reading community-related descriptions such as, "My community has a library. My community has more than one school. My community has a park. My community has a Walmart."
- ***Study images of*** places in our community (from a brochure, postcards, photos) and discuss them.
- ***Make a list of people*** living in our community and discuss what each person does.
- ***Create a map*** of your community.
- ***Create signs*** that you see around your community.
- ***Have a scavenger hunt*** as group tries to identify where pictures were taken around the community.

- **Where would you go if?** Take turns asking "where would you go if...", as other members answer where they go in their community for different things.
- **Sit in a circle as a group.** One person will whisper something to someone sitting beside you. Each person continues to pass the "rumor" to the next person. The last person to listen to the rumor says it aloud. The rumor may have gotten exaggerated or distorted to simulate how rumors may get passed around from one community member to the next.

Examples of Community Print-rich Activities

Book	Art Activity	Attached Writing	Writing Activity	Daily Drama Activity	Weekly Drama Activity
<i>The Rain Came Down</i> by David Shannon	Paint a mural of what happened when the rain came down on your town.	Label things in the mural.	Group story: Write your own story about what happened in your town when the rain came down. Variation: Write what happened in your town when the sun came up.	Expressive dialogue (See <i>Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Drama</i>)	Children may create a play, Reader's Theatre, Story Theatre, a song, or another performance that may require daily rehearsal during the week.
<i>Roxaboxen</i> by Alice McLerran	Out of boxes, rocks, and sticks, create your own Roxaboxen community.	Label parts of your Roxaboxen community with signs.	Create a community newsletter describing what has been happening in your community. Each child could play a specific role by taking lead on a certain section of this newsletter (weather, sports, restaurant reviews)	Role play: pretend to be a mayor or other community member and deliver a speech to the town of Roxaboxen.	Weekly drama activities, such as these, lend themselves to art and writing. Each day children may contribute to their performance
<i>Swimmy</i> by Leo Lionni	Make stuffed paper bag	Label with words that describe how	Rewrite the ending of the story or	As a group, form different sea	

	fish.	your fish moves.	write a sequel.	creatures, as the fish did when they formed a larger fish.	by creating programs, posters, invitations, costumes, props, etc. (See <i>Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Drama</i>)
<i>Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs</i> by Judith Barrett	Make a large building from a box and create food to cover the building.	Label the types of food that covered the building. Label with describing words of how the building looks.	Create a menu with foods from the story.	Give a weather forecast for your community.	
<i>And to Think that I Saw it on Mulberry Street</i> by Dr. Seuss	Create your community using milk cartons, stuffed paper bags, or large boxes.	Label places in your community, including street signs.	Create a map of your community.	Pretend to walk around your community in different conditions (honey, snow, ice, mud, etc.)	
<i>Gloria and Officer Buckle</i> by Peggy Rathman	Make officer hats.	Write safety tips on your hat.	Write a safety tip explaining ways to stay safe in your community.	Pretend to be on television, as you perform your commercial, advertising ways to stay safe in your community.	
<i>Fredrick</i> by Leo Lionni	Paint a mural of things that would warm your community.	Label items in your mural.	Write a recipe for a community that works well together.	Imitate a member of your community.	
<i>It Takes a Village</i> by Jane Cowen-Fletcher	Create a hut from a large box. Create items you would sell in your village.	Label the items outside of your hut for sale.	Create missing posters for Yemi's little brother, Kokou.	Freeze frame (see drama section).	
<i>No Star Nights</i> by	Create parade floats using	Create signs for your parade floats.	Write a speech that you would give	March in a parade.	

Anna Egan Smucker	boxes and other found objects.	as mayor of your community.	Variation: Take turns being "the leader" as you follow the leader during the parade.
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Week 8 of Service: Making My World a Better Place Week (Week 6 with Children)

Contents:


- **Topics that support theme**
- **Making My World a Better Place
Welcoming Activities**
- **Making My World a Better Place
Print-rich Activities**
- **Engaging Children in Community Service**

Making My World a Better Place Week



Topics that support theme

- Recycling
- Litter
- Pollution
- Being kind to others/Golden Rule
- Accepting differences
- Preservation of our planet
- Community service



Engage children in
community service and
reflection this week!

A large, black-outlined starburst graphic with multiple points, containing the text 'Engage children in community service and reflection this week!' in a bold, black font.

Welcoming Activities

- ★ **Community Service** Engage children in identifying the needs of their community, implementing a project to meet those needs, and reflecting on the impact of their project. (See *Week 8 of Service: Engaging Children in Community Service*)
- **Yarn Web** See description of yarn web activity in *Myself Week*. Consider contributing to the web this week by encouraging the children to share ways to make their world a better place.
- **Handshake** See description of handshake activity in *Homeplace Week*. Consider adding to this activity during this week.
- **Theme Word Poster (should be done first day of every week)** As a group, brainstorm words that support the weekly theme. List these words horizontally to model writing and to support reading. Display this list near the writing center, so children can refer to it when they write. After the week is over, hang the poster in the designated theme area.
- **That's Me** See description of game in *Myself Week*. This game can be adapted by the mentor reading theme-related descriptions such as, "I recycle. I am kind to animals. I pick up litter. I shut the water off while brushing my teeth. I don't turn on lights during the day."
- **Identify needs in your community.** Plan your group's community service project based on such a need. The implementation and reflection of this project may also occur as a welcoming activity.
- **Make inspirational posters** that promote others working to make their world a better place.

- **Role play** different ways to make our world a better place during a game of charades.
- **Write a poem** about taking care of our planet, being kind to others.
- **Make a collage** or draw a picture of ways people can make the world a better place. Discuss as a group.

Examples of Making My World a Better Place Print-rich Activities

Book	Art Activity	Attached Writing	Writing Activity	Daily Drama Activity	Weekly Drama Activity
<i>Hey, Little Ant</i> by Phillip M. Hoose	Create a giant ant using a stuffed, black trash bag.	Write a list of words that contain the word, "ant". (Ex: can't, pants, antelope, plant, lantern, tarantula, etc.)	Describe the world through the eyes of an ant.	Mime it Down the Valley (See <i>Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Drama</i>)	Children may create a play, Reader's Theatre, Story Theatre, a song, or another performance that may require daily rehearsal during the week.
<i>The Giving Tree</i> by Shel Silverstein	Create a large tree out of found objects or paint a mural of one.	List: What do trees give us? What can we give them?	Create an acrostic poem from the word <i>tree</i> .	Act out stages of the tree, in the giving tree (full with branches to just a stump).	Weekly drama activities, such as these, lend themselves to art and writing. Each day children may contribute
<i>The Three Questions</i> by Jon Muth	Create kites.	Sentence strip: I would fly my kite to _____.	Write a poem that contains questions you have about the world.	Read your poem using expression and gestures.	Weekly drama activities, such as these, lend themselves to art and writing. Each day children may contribute
<i>The Empty Pot</i> by Demi	Create a pot and a plant.	What grew in your pot?	Write three true statements about your plant. Write three false statements about your plant.	As a group, list emotions the characters felt during the story. Act out each emotion.	Weekly drama activities, such as these, lend themselves to art and writing. Each day children may contribute
<i>The Great Kapok Tree</i> by Lynne Cherry	Create a rainforest mural and animals that live in the rainforest.	Label items in your mural.	See inside cover of story: Write a letter to The Children's Rain Forest.	Pretend to be each animal and whisper in the boy's ear a warning about saving the rain forest.	Weekly drama activities, such as these, lend themselves to art and writing. Each day children may contribute

<p><i>The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush</i> by Tomie DePaola</p>	<p>Cut and flatten a paper bag. Create a nature painting on the bag to represent the types of things Native Americans painted. The bag can represent animal skin or another material that would have been used then.</p>	<p>List the sounds you imagine hearing if your painting was a real place.</p>	<p>Group book: Create your own Native American legend about an object.</p>	<p>Pass around a "talking stick". One group member begins to tell a story and then stops part way. The next group member picks up where the last person left off and continues the story. This imitates the type of storytelling Native Americans did.</p>	<p>to their performance by creating programs, posters, invitations, costumes, props, etc. (See <i>Understanding the Curriculum: Supporting Drama</i>)</p>
<p><i>Johnny Appleseed</i> by Steven Kellogg</p>	<p>Create a statue or an award that honors Johnny Appleseed.</p>	<p>Describe Johnny Appleseed's accomplishments.</p>	<p>Invent something that uses an apple in some way. (Examples: a machine powered by an apple, a recipe that uses apples).</p>	<p>Stand in a circle. Pretend to pass around an apple. One person begins by passing it one way (under toss, rolls down arm, etc.). Each group member passes the apple in the same way. After it has made it around, another child begins a new way to pass the apple.</p>	
<p><i>Miss Rumphius</i> by Barbara Cooney</p>	<p>Finger paint lupines.</p>	<p>Label with words that describe Miss Rumphius.</p>	<p>Write a biography about Miss Rumphius' life.</p>	<p>Role play: pretend to be Miss Rumphius and describe your favorite contribution to the community.</p>	

Engaging Children in Community Service

In Energy Express, mentors engage children in their own community service project. While this project can begin earlier than "Making My World a Better Place" Week, reflection of the impact of the service and how it relates to the weekly theme should occur this week. It is important that the mentor recognizes the natural talents of children, rather than requesting that they give things they may not have to the project (money, clothing, food). It is wonderful when the children's community service project connects in some way to that of the AmeriCorps members.

Why engage children in community service?

- Children become aware of the needs in their community
- Children engage in goal setting
- Children identify their strengths and abilities
- Children recognize their role in their community

What natural talents do children bring to their community?

- Artistic ability
- Writing ability
- Performing ability (singing, dancing, acting)

What are possible community service projects children in Energy Express may engage in?

- Creating murals, sculptures, or other pieces of art to improve the appearance of their community
- Creating greeting cards for community members in need of cheering up
- Writing letters to community members
- Creating books to contribute to the public or school library
- Singing, dancing, or acting to entertain community members

How community service becomes meaningful for children?

- Children are given several ideas and given an opportunity to choose their project.
- Children are given an opportunity to brainstorm what supplies and materials are needed.
- Children discuss how the project relates to the theme "Making My World a Better Place".
- Mentors encourage children to reflect on their experiences and discuss how they feel about their service (see *Reflection Activities* on the next page).

- The project is concrete and visible. It is not too abstract the children will not see how their efforts made a difference.
- Mentors share photos of service or impact with children (photos may include children's community service project, as well as the AmeriCorps member's community service project that connects with their project)
- Mentors share thank-you notes from community members affected by the children's service
- Children write thank you notes to those who helped (the site supervisors, the cooks, community volunteers).

REFLECTION ACTIVITIES:

(for all age groups)

Web

Ask the children—What did you like about the project? What was your favorite part? How do you think the project made the world a better place? What are other ways to make the world a better place?

Plus-Minus

On butcher paper make a chart with three columns. The first column is labeled with a plus sign, the second with a minus sign and third with a heading of "Next time we would" Have the group share something for each heading.

Beach Ball Fun

Write various reflection questions on small stripes of paper. Tape the strips to a beach ball. Have the children get in a circle and start some music and begin passing the beach ball. When the music stops, the child holding the beach ball has to answer the question that is closet to their right thumb.

Before and After

Divide large pieces of butcher paper into two sides. Label one side, before and the other side, after. Have each child paint before and after pictures of the project and then write words to describe each picture.

(for younger groups)

Ice Cream

Each student will describe an ice cream flavor that reflects the project

Vanilla—fine/good

Chocolate—plain/boring

Neapolitan—too much to do

Rocky Road—problems

Lime Sherbert—sour

Each child will explain why he/she chose the flavor and how things could be improved. Write children's responses on butcher paper.

(for older groups)

Service Collage

Each child makes a collage using words cut out from magazines that represent how the project made them feel.

Hooray for the Project

The children make up a cheer that is reflective of the project. They may want to emphasize what they did, what they liked or how it made them feel.

Journal

Ask—Why was our project important? Why is it important to do something to make the community better? What did you learn from the project? What is a project that you would like to do next time? Who are people that you know that make the community better? How?



Resources

Suggested Books:

When looking for books that will help you explore the Energy Express Weekly Themes with children, keep in mind that you always should preview any book before reading it aloud to children or putting it in your room for children's book exploration and independent reading. As you preview, look for the connections to the weekly theme. Some books relate to more than one of the weekly themes and can be used during more than one week. Also remember that younger children can listen to books written at a higher reading level than they can read on their own — as long as the themes or issues being explored are not too mature. Older children who are struggling with reading often benefit from practicing with books written for younger audiences. Use your knowledge of children's reading abilities, needs, and likes and dislikes as you select books.

YOUNGER CHILDREN

Theme: Myself

Effie.....	Beverly Allison
Every Kid's Guide to Being Special	Joy Berry
Jeremy's Decision	Ardyth Brott
You're Not My Cat	Theresa Burns
Verdi	Janell Cannon
Pinduli.....	Janell Cannon
The Lonely Firefly	Eric Carle
I Like Me	Eric Carle
The Mixed-Up Chameleon	Eric Carle
The Very Hungry Caterpillar	Eric Carle
The Very Quiet Cricket	Eric Carle
ABC I Like Me!.....	Nancy Carlson
Jack Tales	Richard Chase
Louder Lili.....	Gennifer Choldenko
Runaway Mouse	Beverly Cleary
Big Al	Andrew Clements
The Art Lesson	Tomie dePaola
Eating the Alphabet	L. Ehlret
But Not Like Me	Margery Facklam
Whoever You Are	Mem Fox
I Am the Dog, I Am the Cat	Donald Hall
Only One	Marc Harshman
Chrysanthemum.....	Kevin Henkes Wemberly
Worried.....	Kevin Henkes

Bread and Jam for Frances	Russell Hoban
Amazing Grace	Mary Hoffman
I Wish I Were a Butterfly	James Howe
Happy Birthday, Sam	Pat Hutchins
The Tale of Thomas Mead	Pat Hutchins
The Blah	Jack Kent
School Mouse	Dick King-Smith
Leo the Late Bloomer	Robert Kraus
The Story of Ferdinand	Munro Leaf
My Little Island	F. Lessac
A Porcupine Named Fluffy	Helen Lester
A Color of His Own	Leo Lionni
Matthew's Big Dream	Leo Lionni
Stand Tall Molly Lou Melon.....	Patty Lovell
Here Are My Hands	Bill Martin, Jr.
Now I Will Never Leave the Dinner Table	J.R. Mantill
There's a Nightmare in My Closet	Mercer Mayer
The Girl Who Loved Caterpillars	Jean Merrill
Freckleface Strawberry.....	Julianne Moore
Regina's Big Mistake	Marissa Moss
Tikki, Tikki Tembo.....	Arlene Mosel
The Paper Bag Princess	Robert Munsch
Stephanie's Ponytail	Robert Munsch
The Kissing Hand	Audrey Penn
Babushka's Doll	Patricia Polacco
Ruby the Copycat	Peggy Rathmann
A String of Beads	Margarette S. Reid
Emma's Rug	Allen Say
Where the Wild Things Are	Maurice Sendak
The Hungry Thing & The Hungry Thing Returns.....	J. Slepian & R. Seidler
.....	David Shannon
A Bad Case of Stripes	Mitchell Sharmat
Gregory the Terrible Eater	Dr. Seuss
My Many Colored Days	Dr. Seuss
Green Eggs and Ham	Dr. Seuss
Oh, The Places You'll Go	Dr. Seuss
The Little Red Lighthouse and the Great Gray Bridge.....	Hildegard Swift
.....	Janice May Udry
What Mary Jo Shared	Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good Very Bad Day
.....	Judith Viorst
My Mama Says There Aren't Any Zombies, Ghosts, Vampires, Creatures, Demons, Monsters, Fiends, Goblins, or Things	Judith Viorst
Cherries and Cherry Pits	Vera Williams
Elbert's Bad Word	Audrey & Don Wood
Ruby's Wish.....	Shirin Yim Bridges
Fern's Purple Birthday.....	Jane Yolen
Poppleton books	Cynthia Rylant
Mr. Putter and Tabby books	Cynthia Rylant
The Old Woman Who Named Things	Cynthia Rylant
Don't Fidget a Feather	Erica Silverman
The Giving Tree	Shel Silverstein
Someone Loves You, Mr. Hatch	Eileen Spinelli
Ira Says Goodbye	Bernard Waber
Ira Sleeps Over	Bernard Waber

Theme: Homeplace

Bringing the Rain to the Kapiti Plain Verna Aardema
No Jumping on the Bed Ted Arnold
The Little House Virginia Lee Burton
All in a Day Eric Carle
A House for a Hermit Crab Eric Carle
A Day at Rainbow Lake Linda Cave
How Smudge Came Nan Gregory
Old Home Day Donald Hall
A Little Excitement Marc Harshman
A House Is a House for Me Mary Ann Hoberman
Amelia's Road Linda Jacob-Altman
The Leaving Morning Angela Johnson
My Little Island Henri Lessac
Owl at Home Arnold Lobel
Come a Tide George Ella Lyon
Apt. 3 Ezra Jack Keats
All the Places to Love Patricia MacLachlan
What You Know First Patricia MacLachlan
My House Has Stars Megan McDonald
The Big Orange Splot Daniel Marcus Pinkwater
High in the Mountains Ruth Yaffee Radin
This Is Our House Michael Rosen
Night in the Country Cynthia Rylant
The Relatives Came Cynthia Rylant
When I Was Young in the Mountains Cynthia Rylant
The House On Sunflower Street Gunter Spang
The Boy and the Ghost Robert San Souci
Alexander, Who's Not, Do You Hear Me? I Mean
it! Going to Move Judith Viorst
I Am Eyes, Ni Macho Leila Ward
Fish in the Air Kurt Wiese
The Napping House Audrey Woods

Theme: Community

My Painted House, My Friendly Chicken, & Me
..... Maya Angelou
Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs Judith Barrett
Annabel Again Janice Boland
The Little House Virginia Lee Burton
Katie and the Big Snow Virginia Lee Burton
All in a Day Eric Carle, et. al.
Walter the Baker Eric Carle
Dark Day, Light Night Jan Carr
Mr. Jordan in the Park Laura Jane Coats
I Got a Family Melrose Cooper
The Ornerly Morning Patricia Demuth
Sam Johnson and the Blue Ribbon Quilt
..... Lisa Campbell Ernst
Gabriella's Song Candace Fleming
It Takes a Village Jane Cowen-Fletcher
Night on Neighborhood Street Eloise Greenfield

Osa's Pride Ann Grifalconi
All About Alfie Shirley Hughes
How Pizza Came to Queens Dayal Kair Khalsa
The Dragonling Jackie French Koller
Pink Paper Swans Virginia Kroll
Always Room for One More Sorche Leodhas
Tacky the Penguin Helen Lester
Sitting in My Box Dee Lillgard
Swimmy Leo Lionni
Frederick Leo Lionni
The Little Painter of Sabana Grande Patricia Markun
Roxaboxen Alice McLerren
The Green Truck Garden Giveaway: A Neighborhood Story
and Almanac Jacqueline Briggs Martin
The Last Dragon Susan Nunes
Appelmando's Dream Patricia Polacco
A Year on My Street Mary Quattlebaum
Tar Beach Faith Ringgold
A Street Called Home Aminah Brenda Lynn Robinson
Nothing Ever Happens on 90th Street Roni Schotter
A Fruit and Vegetable Man Roni Schotter
And To Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street Dr. Seuss
The Lorax Dr. Seuss
Hunting the White Cow Tres Seymour
The Rain Came Down David Shannon
Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch Eileen Spinelli
I Had a Lot of Wishes James Stevenson
Farmer Duck Martin Waddell
The Rainbow People Lawrence Yep
Miz Berlin Walks Jane Yolen

Theme: Making My World a Better Place

Just a Dream Chris Van Allsburg
Salt Hands Jane Aragon
The Earth and I Frank Asch
The Way to Start a Day Byrd Baylor
Flute's Journey Lynne Cherry
Brother Eagle, Sister Sky Chief Seattle
Miss Rumphius Barbara Cooney
The Library Dragon Carmen Agra Deedy
Legend of the Bluebonnet Tomie dePaola
Legend of the Indian Paintbrush Tomie dePaola
The Ancestor Tree Obinkaram Echewa
When the Monkeys Came Back Kristine Franklin
Gowanus Dogs Jonathan Frost
The Old Ladies Who Liked Cats Carol Green
Hey, Little Ant Phillip M. Hoose
Johnny Appleseed Steven Kellogg
Island of the Skog Steven Kellogg
Swimmy Leo Lionni
And Still the Turtle Watched Sheila MacGill-Callahan
Tomas and the Library Lady Pat Mora
Farewell to Shady Glade Bill Peet

The Knats of Knotty PineBill Peet
 The Trouble With WishesSusan Beth Pfeffer
 Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky
Faith Ringgold
 Once There Was a TreeNatalie Romanova
 City Green.....DyanAnne DiSalvo-Ryan
 Just RewardsSteve Sanfield
 The Sneetches and Other StoriesDr. Seuss
 The Butter Battle BookDr. Seuss
 Ruby Mae Has Something to SayDavid Small
 Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch.....Eileen Spinelli
 The GardenerSarah Stewart
 The Wonderful Towers of WattsPatricia Zelter

OLDER CHILDREN

Theme: Myself

EmilyMichael Bedard
 Freckle JuiceJudy Blume
 More Than Anything ElseMarie Bradby
 The Important BookMargaret Wise Brown
 The Boy Who Dreamed of an AcornLeigh Casler
 The Name Jar.....Yangsook Choi
 Henry HugginsBeverly Cleary
 Ramona booksBeverly Cleary
 Quimby, Age 8Beverly Cleary
 Sees Behind TreesMichael Dorris
 Nathaniel TalkingEloise Greenfield
 Amazing GraceMary Hoffman
 Boundless GraceMary Hoffman
 Cinder EdnaEllen Jackson
 Author: A True StoryHelen Lester
 Ella EnchantedGail Levine
 Pippi Longstocking booksAstrid Lindgren
 Hey World, Here I Am!Jean Little
 In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson
Bette Bao Lord
 Be a Perfect Person in Just Three DaysStephan Manes
 I Want to BeThylias Moss
 Harvey Potter's Balloon FarmJerdine Nolan
 Island of the Blue DolphinsScott O'Dell
 The Great Gilly HopkinsKatherine Paterson
 All I SeeCynthia Rylant
 But I'll Be Back AgainCynthia Rylant
 A Bad Case of Stripes.....David Shannon
 CrashJerry Spinelli
 Maniac McGeeJerry Spinelli
 Stuart LittleE.B. White
 Only Opal: The Diary of a Young Girl
Opal Whiteley & Jane Boulton
 Crow BoyTara Yashima
 Wizard's HallJane Yolen

Theme: Family

The Adventures of King MidasLynne Reid Banks
 Airmail to the MoonTom Birdseye
 Tales of a Fourth Grade NothingJudy Blume
 Ida Early Comes Over the MountainRobert Burch
 The Family Under the BridgeNatalie Savage Carlson
 Beezus and RamonaBeverly Cleary
 Ramona booksBeverly Cleary
 The Glass Bottle TreeEvelyn Coleman
 Nekomah CreekLinda Crews
 Half MagicEdward Eager
 Fig PuddingRalph Fletcher
 Stone FoxJohn Reynolds Gardiner
 The Shrinking of TreehornFlorence Parry Heide
 In Coal CountryJudith Hendershot
 Aunt Flossie's Hats (and Crab Cakes Later).....
Elizabeth Fitzgerald Howard
 Sun and SpoonKevin Henkes
 No Promises in the WindIrene Hunt
 Nothing to FearJackie French Koller
 The Boy and the Cloth of DreamsJenny Koralek
 All About SamLois Lowry
 Ten Kids, No PetsAnn M. Martin
 The Rough Faced Girl.....Rafe Martin
 The Hundred Penny BoxSharon Bell Mathis
 Ma Dear's ApronsPatricia McKissack
 Uncle Jed's BarbershopMargaree Mitchell
 The BorrowersMary Norton
 Chicken SundayPatricia Polacco
 The Fool of the World and the Flying Ship . . . Arthur Ransome
 Appalachia: The Voices of Sleeping Birds.....Cynthia Rylant
 The Blue Hill MeadowsCynthia Rylant
 Grandfather's JourneyAllen Say
 Family ReunionMarilyn Singer
 The Talking EggsRobert San Souci
 Mufaro's Beautiful DaughtersJohn Steptoe
 Grandma Essie's Covered WagonDavid Williams
 Cracked Corn and Snow Ice Cream: A Family Almanac.....
Nancy Willard

Theme: Friends

Tuck EverlastingNatalie Babbitt
 Hawk, I'm Your BrotherByrd Baylor
 Henry HugginsBeverly Cleary
 The Mouse and the MotorcycleBeverly Cleary
 Thank You, Jackie RobinsonBarbara Cohen
 The Worry StoneMarianna Dengler
 Because of Winn Dixie.....Kate DiCamillo
 The Last of the Really Great WhangdoodlesJulie Edwards
 The Hundred DressesEleanor Estes
 The Whipping BoySid Fleischman
 PartridgeMem Fox

Wilifrid Gordon McDonald Partridge	Mem Fox
Clay Marble	Minfong Ho
The View from Saturday	I.L. Konigsburg
Amelia's Notebook	Marissa Moss
Rascal	Sterling North
Pink and Say	Patricia Polacco
The Kid in the Red Jacket	Barbara Park
Bridge to Terabithia	Katherine Peterson
Sally Arnold	Cheryl Ryan
Missing May	Cynthia Rylant
The Old Woman Who Named Things	Cynthia Rylant
All We Needed to Say	Marilyn Singer
The Faithful Friend	Robert San Souci
Sign of the Beaver	Elizabeth Speare
The Giving Tree	Shel Silverstein
Amos and Boris	William Steig
The Cay	Theodore Taylor
The Bracelet	Yoshiko Uchida
Flea Circus Summer	Cheryl Ware
Charlotte's Web	E. B. White

Theme: Homeplace

Amelia's Road	Linda Jacobs Altman
The Perfect Spot	Robert Blake
Fly Away Home	Eve Bunting
Home Place	Crescent Dragonwagon
Homesick: My Own Story	Jean Fritz
My Side of the Mountain	Jean George
Old Home Day	Donald Hall
In Coal Country	Judith Hendershot
North to Freedom	Anne Holm
The Old Woman Who Lived in a Vinegar Bottle	Margaret Read MacDonald
Sarah, Plain and Tall	Patricia MacLachlan
The Car Washing Street	Denise Lewis Patrick
A Day No Pigs Would Die	Robert Newton Peck
A Long Way from Chicago	Richard Peck
When the Whippoorwill Calls	Candice Ranson
Grandpa's Mountains	Carolyn Reeder
Home	edited by Michael Rosen
Appalachia: The Voices of Sleeping Birds.....	Cynthia Rylant
Night in the Country	Cynthia Rylant
Missing May	Cynthia Rylant
When I Was Young in the Mountains	Cynthia Rylant
The Velvet Room	Ziphia Keatley Snyder
Abel's Island	William Steig
Sweet Creek Holler	Ruth White
The Star Fisher	Laurence Yep

Theme: Community

The Search for Delicious	Natalie Babbitt
Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs.....	Judi Barret
Pickles over Pittsburg.....	Judi Barret
Growing Up in Coal Country.....	Susan Campbell Bartoletti
From Miss Ida's Porch	Sandra Belton
Smoky Night	Eve Bunting
Frindle.....	Andrew Clements
Chesnut Cove	Tim Egan
Metropolitan Cow	Tim Egan
Ladder to the Sky	Barbara Juster Esbenson
Seedfolks	Paul Fleischman
Blue Willow	Doris Gates
My Great Aunt Arizona	Gloria Houston
Morgan's Zoo	James Howe
The Animal Family	Randall Jarrell
Homer Price	Robert McCloskey
There's An Awful Lot of Weirdos in Our Neighborhood	Colin McNaughton
Bein' With You This Way	W. Nikola-Lisa
The Last Dragon	Susan Nunes
Nothing Ever Happens on 90 th Street.....	Roni Schotter
Tucker's Countryside	George Selden
Return to Bitter Creek	Doris Buchanan Smith
No Star Nights	Anna Egan Smucker
Tops and Bottoms	Janet Stevens
The Araboolies of Liberty Street	Sam Swope
Front Porch Stories at the One-Room School	Eleanora Tate
Secret of Gumbo Grove	Eleanora Tate

Theme: Making My World a Better Place

Moonstick	Eve Bunting
Brother Eagle, Sister Sky	Chief Seattle
A River Ran Wild	Lynne Cherry
The Great Kapok Tree	Lynne Cherry
Turquoise Boy: A Navajo Legend	Terri Cohlene
Come Back, Salmon: How a Group of Dedicated Kids Adopted Pigeon Creek and Brought It Back to Life.....	Molly Cone
The Empty Pot	Demi
The Legend of the Bluebonnet	Tomie dePaola
The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush	Tomie de Paola
The Hundred Dresses	Eleanor Estes
Dear Willie Rudd	Libba Moore Gray
It's Our World, Too: Stories of Young People Who Are Making a Difference	Phillip Hoose
Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt	Deborah Hopkinson
The Gamage Cup	Carol Kendall
Number the Stars	Lois Lowry
The Three Questions.....	Jon J. Muth
Henry's Freedom Box.....	Kader Nelson

Aunt Chip and the Great Triple Creek Dam Affair....
Patricia Polacco
 Prince WilliamGloria Rand
 The Rough-Faced GirlDavid Shannon
 No Star Nights.....Anna Egan Smucker
 The LibrarySarah Stewart
 Roll of ThunderMildred Taylor
 The Gift of Driscoll LipscombSara Yamaka
 Tree of DreamsLaurence Yep

Wordless Picture Books

Anno’s JourneyMitsumasa Anno
 Grey Lady and the Strawberry Snatcher
Molly Bang
 Zoom.....Istvan Banyai
 Re-zoom.....Istvan Banyai
 Clown.....Quentin Blake
 The Red String.....Margot Blair
 Tuba Lessons.....T.C. Bartlett
 The Snowman.....Raymond Briggs
 Do You Want to Be My Friend?Eric Carle
 A Circle of Friends.....Giora Carmi
 Pancakes for Breakfast.....Tomie De Paola
 I can’t Sleep.....Philippe Dupasquier
 Un-brellaScott E. Franson
 Stories by FirelightHughes
 Alphabet CityStephen Johnson
 Rainstorm.....Barbara Lehman
 The Red Book.....Barbara Lehman
 Little Star.....Antonin Louchard
 A Boy, a Dog and a Frog.....Mercer Mayer
 Ah-ChooMercer Mayer
 South.....Patrick McDonnell
 Bow-wow Bugs a Bug.....Mark Newgarden
 Where’s My Monkey.....Dietor Shubert
 Dinosaur!.....Peter Sis
 Free FallDavid Wiesner
 Flotsam.....David Wiesner
 TuesdayDavid Wiesner

Predictable Books

Today is Monday.....Eric Carle
 Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed.....
Eileen Christelow
 The Flea’s Sneeze.....Lynn Downey
 Bark, George.....Jules Feiffer
 Is Your Mama a Llama.....Deborah Guarino
 A House is a House for Me.....MaryAnn Hoberman
 The Aunts Go Marching.....Maurie Manning
 Brown Bear, Brown Bear.....Bill Martin Jr.
 Tikki, Tikki Tembo.....Arlene Mosel
 If You Give a Moose a Muffin.....Laura Joffe Numeroff
 If You Give a Mouse a Cookie.....Laura Joffe Numeroff
 If You Give a Pig a Pancake.....Laura Joffe Numeroff
 It Looked Like Spilled Milk.....Charles G. Shaw
 Down by the Bay.....Raffi
 Shake My Sillies Out.....Raffi
 There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly.....
Simms Tabeck
 “Buzz, Buzz, Buzz went Bumblebee”.....Rosemary Wells
 Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus.....Mo Williems
 The Napping House.....Audrey Wood

DOLCH WORD LIST

Sorted by frequency by grade level

Pre-primer		Primer		First		Second		Third	
the	red	he	now	of	think	would	gave	if	cut
to	where	was	no	his	let	very	us	long	kind
and	jump	that	came	had	going	your	buy	about	fall
a	away	she	ride	him	walk	its	those	got	carry
I	here	on	into	her	again	around	use	six	small
you	help	they	good	some	may	don't	fast	never	own
it	make	but	want	as	stop	right	pull	seven	show
in	yellow	at	too	then	fly	green	both	eight	hot
said	two	with	pretty	could	round	their	sit	today	far
for	play	all	four	when	give	call	which	myself	draw
up	run	there	saw	were	once	sleep	read	much	clean
look	find	out	well	them	open	five	why	keep	grow
is	three	be	ran	ask	has	wash	found	try	together
go	funny	have	brown	an	live	or	because	start	shall
we		am	eat	over	thank	before	best	ten	laugh
little		do	who	just		been	upon	bring	
down		did	new	from		off	these	drink	
can		what	must	any		cold	sing	only	
see		so	black	how		tell	wish	better	
not		get	white	know		work	many	hold	
one		like	soon	put		first		warm	
my		this	our	take		does		full	
me		will	ate	every		goes		done	
big		yes	say	old		write		light	
come		went	under	by		always		pick	
blue		are	please	after		made		hurt	

