



**Module 3: Toddlers**  
**Quantity & Quality Talk Matters**  
Oral Language & Vocabulary Development  
**Early Literacy Matters**

# Module 3: Quantity and Quality Talk Matters

## Oral Language & Vocabulary Development

### Module 3 at a Glance...

In Module 2, you considered ways positive teacher-child interactions help to foster self-expression, rich conversations, and interest in books and writing. Emphasis was placed on enriching the physical classroom environment and providing multiple opportunities for children to engage in oral interactions.

In this module, you will:

- Explore specific, developmentally appropriate activities for further developing oral language, vocabulary, and conceptual knowledge for children birth to five years old.
- Gain a better understanding of why children need to be actively engaged in vocabulary development from an early age.
- Use oral language activities to build phonological awareness.

# Learner Outcomes for Module 3

## Learner Outcomes:

- LO1: Learners will learn how to further children's oral language development through intentionally planned activities for increasing the use of descriptive words in conversations.
- LO2: Learners will explore developmentally appropriate activities to frequently and actively engage children in vocabulary development.
- LO3: Learners will explore the ways speaking and listening activities develop children's awareness of the sounds in their language.

# Connections to the “Read to be Ready” Campaign:

This module aligns to the current Read to be Ready campaign’s following key beliefs:

- Early literacy matters.
- Teachers are critical.
- It takes a community.

Video link to “Early Literacy Matters” from Read to be Ready website:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60J8qRjRPkE>

# Module 3 Overview

**Overview:** Module 3 will consist of three instructional presentations. These presentations will help you reflect on the importance of the quantity and quality of talk for optimal development of oral language and vocabulary for infants, toddlers, and young children.

- In **Presentation 1**, you will learn how to further children’s oral language development through intentionally planned activities for increasing the use of descriptive words in conversations.
- In **Presentation 2**, you will focus on strategies and supports for building and expanding children’s vocabulary. Emphasis is placed on beginning this work early and actively engaging children often in their vocabulary development.
- In **Presentation 3**, you will explore how teachers can increase children’s awareness of sounds in their language through playful listening and speaking activities.

Following each presentation, you will apply your learning through Practice Activities included in the Learning Guide.

# Suggested Timeline for Completing Module

Modules contain 4 short presentations that are designed to be completed during relaxed ratios or other times as set by your school or agency. Your director or program coordinator may suggest or establish a timeline for each presentation to be completed within the module. Please take a moment to confirm your site's requirements while noting the submission deadline for the final Learning Application Assignment that you will submit electronically to your literacy coach for feedback and support. All other completed activities will remain in your participation guide and available for your coaches review.

- **Section 1:** Start at the beginning of the module and complete Presentation 1 and Practice Activity 1.
- **Section 2:** Complete Presentation 2 and Practice Activity 2.
- **Section 3:** Complete Presentation 3 and Practice Activity 3.
- **Section 4:** Complete the Learning Application Assignment for Module 3 and submit it electronically to your literacy coach for feedback and support.
- Please refer to your Learning Guide for a detailed Module 3 checklist.

# Presentation 3:

## Linking Sounds to Objects, Pictures, Letters, and Words

- Teachers of infants, toddlers, and young children have the opportunity to expose, excite, and enrich children's language and early literacy experiences by linking sounds to objects, pictures, letters, and words (Dr. Mort, 2011).
- Increasing awareness of sounds and their connection to letters through listening and speaking activities will help build the solid, working knowledge of the alphabet children need for beginning to read and write (Dr. Mort, 2011).
- As books are read, songs are sung, pictures are viewed, and poems are recited, teachers should look for moments to draw attention to sounds heard and connect sounds to specific letters and words. Through repeated exposure and playful exploration, children will begin to link sounds to objects, pictures, letters, and words.
- The learning of these foundational skills are rooted in oral language activities that increase children's awareness of sounds. This is known as phonological awareness.

# Exposure and Playful Sound Exploration

Begin thinking of ways you can naturally and frequently expose children to sound-letter-word correlations and increase opportunities for their playful exploration of sounds.

Let's take a closer look at how we can help infants, toddlers, and preschoolers to:

- Link sounds to objects
- Link sounds to pictures
- Link sounds to letters
- Link sounds to words



# Exploring Sounds with Objects & Pictures

- Objects and pictures can be used to expose children to sound-letter-word correlations.
- Because children are more tactile and learn through their senses, it is best to begin with actual objects that create sounds or can be used to create sounds as children playfully explore them.
- After providing numerous opportunities for children to explore the sounds that can be made with actual objects, pictures can be used to talk about objects and to emphasize initial sounds when naming the object pictured.
- Older children enjoy matching pictures that rhyme or have the same initial sounds.

# Linking Sounds to Objects

## Infants and Toddlers

- Infants and toddlers are immersed in sounds and rely on adults and others to help them make sense of the sounds they hear.
- Infants and toddlers enjoy exploring objects that make sounds with different pitches and tones. Being able to explore sounds in this way will help train the ear to hear slight and distinct changes in sounds which is essential for them to distinguish specific sounds associated with letters.
- What types of activities would provide opportunities for infants and toddlers to safely explore objects that make different sounds?

# Linking Sounds to Objects

## Infant and Toddler Activities

Providing infants with different types of rattles and toddlers with shakers, drums, pots and pans, and xylophones which vary in sounds made provides endless opportunities for exploring sounds.

Having a “sound box or basket” with safe objects for the infant to explore provides an opportunity for adults to name the object and articulate the initial sound heard in the object’s name.

Keep in mind that infants and toddlers need opportunities to hear sounds made as well as to make sounds on their own.

With toys, infants and toddlers “learn to create noise through banging, shaking, squeezing, and winding” (Callander & Nahmad-Williams, 2010).



# Practice Activity 3: Sound Box or Basket Young and Older Toddlers

- For this practice activity, you will create a “Sound Box or Basket” with 4-5 objects that create distinct noises and can be used to create noises as children playfully explore them.
- Intentionally choose objects made out of different materials as these will create different pitches and tones.
- Think of how you will interest the child in the activity. How will you model sounds that can be heard or created?
- After interacting with the infant or toddler during sound box or basket activity, proceed to the next part of Practice Activity 3 to reflect on the learning experience.



# Reflection on Practice Activity 3

## Young and Older Toddlers

**Practice Activity 3:** Reflect on the Sound Box or Basket activity you engaged in with an infant or toddler, and briefly respond to each of the questions below in the Learning Guide:

- How was planning ahead helpful?
- How was your language intentional?
- How did the children respond?
- Did your model help to stimulate interest in sounds and reinforce sound awareness?
- How did your interactions help to foster children's engagement with the sound objects?
- What would you do differently next time?

# Story Bags and Oral Language Development

- The more children interact with text, the more opportunities there are for meaningful oral language and vocabulary development.
- Story bags allow children to interact with stories that are read to them.
- Story bags can be created using bags, pouches, or purses and should include the book and pictures and/or objects for children to interact with and retell events from the story and to explore concepts from book.



# Story Bags and Oral Language Development

- For example, with *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*...
  - Objects or pictures of food can be used to tell what the caterpillar ate.
  - Objects or pictures of the life cycles of a butterfly: egg, cocoon, larvae, and butterfly can be used to describe the changes the caterpillar experiences in the story.
  - Pictures or felt pieces of the leaf, moon, and sun can be used to describe the story setting.
  - Objects and pictures can be sequenced to orally retell the story using order words.
  - Some letter cut-outs of “v”, “h”, “c” and “b” can be included for children to connect to the text when saying “the very hungry caterpillar,” and “beautiful butterfly.”
  - The book is available for children to reference and interact with.



# End of Section 3

Congratulations, you just completed Section 3 of Module 3.

- Check to be sure you completed Section 3 activities in the Learning Guide.
- Continue to practice linking sounds to objects, pictures, and letters.
- When ready, move on to the Learning Application Assignment for Section 4.