Essential Questions about Literacy Essentials

1. Do I see a literacy-rich environment?
   a. Environmental print, (e.g., logos, phone books, maps, newspapers, blueprints, signs, labels)
   b. Writing props/instruments in learning centers (e.g., note pads, cards, white/chalk boards), and are accessible to children with special needs
   c. A few books available in learning centers that are consistent with the intent of that center (e.g., cookbooks, childrens’ dictionary in pretend play; construction ABCs in block center)
   d. Books in classroom are reflective of a wide range of linguistic, cultural, and ability diversity, and are accessible to children with special needs
   e. Examples of childrens’ dictation about what they are doing, making, and thinking displayed* with art work and pictures of the children and their families (can include symbols and/or descriptions of what children are doing for children with limited speech)
   f. Examples of childrens’ scribbles and writing displayed* (e.g., sign in, waiting lists, charting)

2. How are these materials used with children, (e.g., function is modeled)?

3. How are books shared with children everyday?
   a. Read with individuals, small groups, larger groups, asking appropriate questions, explaining new vocabulary words, naming letters in words of interest
   b. Adults comment and wait, ask questions and wait, respond by adding a little more while sharing books with children

4. How are children supported to act out and re-tell stories?

5. How are rhyming words highlighted and emphasized during the day?

6. How are words segmented into syllables sometimes during the day?

7. How is oral language supportive of growing childrens’ self esteem, vocabulary, and understanding on more complex syntax?

8. How are childrens’ literacy abilities observed, recorded and documented? How is this information used to influence practice?

9. How are families supported to enhance their childrens’ oral and written language development?

*can be in class-made books

Pierce & Abraham, 2005