



## Focus: Thrive by Five

*This feature will focus on learning and reading development for different age groups, beginning with birth to five from January to June, 2012, and eventually going through age 19. When complete, the feature will provide research summaries, materials for parents and library leaders, best practices for library staff for providing research-based literacy programs, and additional resources for more information.*

Reading proficiently by the end of third grade is crucial for a child's educational development. A student who can't read on grade level by that time is four times less likely to graduate by age 19 than a child who does read proficiently. Add poverty to the mix, and a student is 13 times less likely to graduate on time. In addition, about half of youth with criminal records or with a history of substance abuse have reading problems.

When children reach kindergarten already behind in literacy skills, the gap is difficult to make up in the first years of school. Vocabulary development at age three predicts reading achievement by third grade. Children who enter kindergarten with poor literacy skills tend to be poor readers in first grade and even into high school. Research also shows that preschoolers whose parents read, tell stories, or sing songs to them develop larger vocabularies, become better readers, and perform better in school. This makes empowering 0–5 year olds with early literacy skills crucial for their lifelong well being.

### Early Literacy Development

In the 0–5 age group, literacy development can be divided into three categories: preliteracy, emergent literacy, and early literacy.

Preliteracy development occurs between birth and 12–15 months and includes social skills, nonverbal communication, early vocalizations (babbling and first words), understanding speech and language (including recognizing all sounds in their native language), recognizing and understanding pictures, and handling and playing with books. It's essential that parents and other adults engage in fun activities with children starting at birth that will encourage preliteracy development, including frequent talking, parent/child lap games, singing, music and movement activities, word play, reading aloud, playing, touching, cuddling, and making marks in thick liquids and with a crayon.

Emergent literacy development occurs between 12–15 to about 30 months and provides toddlers with skills that are the foundation for learning to read and write. During this period, toddlers speak their

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### Welcome to the first issue of YS News!

This newsletter will feature articles on learning development, summer reading updates, timely tidbits like grant opportunities and interesting resources, children's and teen literature news, and an exchange of what's going on in CO libraries.

Would you like to see a topic covered in the newsletter? Want to share info about your programs? Or perhaps contribute an article? Let me know!

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### Inside this issue:

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## Summer Reading 2012: News & Ideas

### About the 2012 Illustrators:

#### Children's Illustrator: Brian Lies

Lies (pronounced "Lees"), from Princeton, NJ, has created editorial page illustrations for many publications. He illustrated his first children's book in 1989 and has since illustrated 24 others, including *Hamlet and the*

*Magnificent Sandcastle* (2001), *Bats at the Library* (2008), and *Bats at the Ballgame* (2010). He and his wife live in Duxbury, MA. Check out his [website](#) and an [interview](#) with him.

#### Teen Illustrator: Christian Fuenfhausen

Fuenfhausen is a graphic designer in New York. He has designed book covers for Penguin Young Readers and Milkweed Editions. He is mostly self-taught and acclaimed in his field.



The 2012 SRP theme focuses on the night.

See his [book covers](#) and read [an interview](#) for more.

To highlight the illustrators:

➤ Feature books they've illustrated in a display

➤ Hold drawing workshops using their work as examples

More News and Ideas:

➤ Texas has just joined the Collaborative Summer Library Program! That means that all 50 states now offer the same summer reading program, making it a truly national effort.

➤ Check out the [Design Your Own Constellation](#) project from Colorado State Parks; it's perfect for the 2012 night time theme.

## Book Nook

### Colorado Blue Spruce Award

The Colorado Blue Spruce Young Adult Book Award recognizes the most popular books among middle and high school students in Colorado. Teens nominate their favorite titles and select the winner – adults do not vote. All the materials needed to participate in the Blue Spruce Award can be found [on this website](#) and may be freely printed and distributed. Entries must be received by 11:59pm on January 13, 2012, so encourage your teens to vote today!



### Colorado Teen Literature Conference, March 31

Save the date! Join 24th [Colorado Teen Literature Conference](#) at the Tivoli, Auraria Campus, Downtown Denver. The Colorado Teen Literature Conference is a yearly event to promote and celebrate teen literature. The conference offers diverse sessions thanks to the willingness of knowledgeable librarians, teachers, authors, and teens who share their expertise for the event. This year's keynote speakers will be Colorado authors Maggie Stiefvater and Todd Mitchell.



## Timely Tidbits

### New Resources on the State Library Website

The Youth Services section of the State Library's website has been updated and expanded! [Check it out](#), and note the new content:

- [Funding Sources for Youth Services](#)
- [Providing Services for Homeschooling Families](#)
- [Professional Development for YS Library Staff](#)
- [Public Performance Rights for Films](#)
- [Teen Advisory Groups](#)
- [National Listservs for YS Library Staff](#)
- [Ideas for El Día de los Niños](#)

### Libraries Supporting Homeschoolers Wiki

With homeschooling becoming more popular, libraries have more of an opportunity to connect with this segment of their communities. To help libraries interested in serving this population, the Homeschool Committee of the Pikes Peak Library District has begun the [Libraries Supporting Homeschoolers wiki](#). The purpose of this wiki is to provide collaborative work space for public library staff to share information and ideas about programming and services for homeschooling families in Colorado.

### Colorado Poetry Out Loud

For the 7th year, Poetry Out Loud, the national poetry recitation competition, is available to Colorado high school students. Poetry Out Loud encourages students to learn about great poetry through performance and recitation.

Colorado Poetry Out Loud follows a pyramid structure, with classroom activities, poet visits, and contests running through March, with the Colorado State Finals scheduled for Tuesday, March 20, 2012 and National Finals in

Washington, D.C. for May 14 and 15.

[Click Here for Additional Information](#)

*For more information, Contact:*

*Kelleen Zubick– CO Poetry Out Loud Coordinator*

*Email: [Kelleen@zubick.us](mailto:Kelleen@zubick.us)*

### CLiC Spring Workshops 2012: Save the Dates!

The Colorado Library Consortium (CLiC) will hold its spring workshops in Grand Junction, February 27–28, and Pueblo, April 19–20. Sessions from the State Library will include teen advisory groups and a summer reading program exchange. Hope to see you there!

### Get Ready for Read Across America Day

Read Across America Day, sponsored by the National Education Association (NEA), will be celebrated March 2, 2012. The campaign's theme is being green and will showcase *The Lorax* in book form as well as the new movie, which opens the same day. These websites have lots of ideas and resources for celebrating the day:

- [NEA's Read Across America](#) from NEA
- [Read Across America](#) from Reading Rockets

### Programming Librarian

Stay connected with programming resources with [Programming Librarian](#), an online resource center from ALA's Public Programs Office, for a variety of resources and articles related to presenting cultural programs for all types and sizes of libraries. Check out the website, follow the [blog](#), or [subscribe](#) to the monthly e-newsletter. Current and recent features include outcomes based planning and evaluation, copyright tips for storytimes, and planning for Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month (May) and Gay and Lesbian Pride Month (June).

## Timely Tidbits continued...

### RAFT

[RAFT—Resource Area for Teaching](#)—is a wonderful resource for all types of educators. Located in Denver, RAFT supports educators by providing them a collaborative space, creative teaching ideas supporting Colorado's new education standards, a large, well-equipped workspace, and opportunities for professional development. It also offers huge discounts on a huge assortment of abundant, unique items available at 80–90% off retail prices every day! Can't make it to Denver to visit in person? Check out RAFT's many [Idea Sheets](#) online to find easy-to-use, hands-on experience guides linked to core curriculum topics and early literacy.

*Don't forget—the deadline for submitting a 2012 Summer Reading Mini-Grant is **January 31!** [Click here](#) for the application and submit soon!*

### Artifact Kits from History Colorado

Packed with artifacts, photos, background info, hands-on activities, and more, History Colorado's [Artifact Kits](#) bring the museum to your library. Reserve one or all of the 8 kits and watch the excitement of discovery on your students' faces. Topics include cliff dwellers, mountain men, mining, and more! You can borrow trunks for 2 weeks for \$30, plus the cost of return shipping (or, if you pick up and drop off in person in Denver, the cost is \$10). Available statewide, year round!

### ALSC's Great Websites for Kids has New Look

Great Websites for Kids (GWS), <http://gws.ala.org/>, the Association for Library Service to Children's (ALSC) website directory, has been redesigned. The updated site has a fresh, colorful, kid-friendly look and interactive social media enhancements.

## Upcoming Grant Opportunities

### [Books for Children](#)

Deadline: January 23, 2012

The Libri Foundation is a nationwide non-profit organization that donates new, quality, hardcover children's books to small, rural public libraries through its Books for Children program.

### [The Big Read](#)

Deadline: February 1, 2012

This program of the National Endowment for the Arts brings together partners to encourage reading for pleasure and enlightenment.

### [Ezra Jack Keats Minigrant Program](#)

Deadline: March 15, 2012

Public school libraries and public libraries that host programs encouraging literacy and creativity in children can apply for an Ezra Jack Keats Minigrant of \$500. Programs focusing on the work of Ezra Jack Keats are welcome, but not required.

### [Dollar General Literacy Grants](#)

Applications available January

A variety of literacy grants are available, including summer reading, family literacy, and youth literacy.

### [Verizon Foundation](#)

Applications accepted Jan. through Oct. 16

The Verizon Foundation has a long history of supporting quality educational resources and literacy programs and supports technology-based approaches to literacy and education.

### [Talk Story: Sharing Stories, Sharing Culture](#)

Deadline: February 1, 2012

This literacy program reaches out to Asian Pacific American and American Indian/Alaska Native children and their families. The program celebrates and explores the stories of these cultures through books, oral traditions, and art to provide an interactive, enriching experience.

## *Thrive at Five* from p. 1

first words, increase their vocabularies, begin to understand that symbols and printed words have meaning, make marks and scribble, and improve their nonverbal communication skills like pointing and using other gestures. Again, it's crucial for parents and adults working with children of this age to provide fun, interesting, interactive experiences that will further these emergent literacy skills, such as talking frequently, reading aloud, fingerplays, puppet shows, rhyming games, drawing, storytelling, singing, and dialogic reading (having a conversation with the toddler about a book by asking her questions about it and involving her in the experience).

Early literacy, when children begin to master the fundamentals of reading, writing, and other literacy-related skills, typically occurs between 30 months and five years. Children in this age range have rapidly increasing language comprehension, speech, and vocabularies; recognize and understand written numbers and letters; and print a few letters and numbers. Good activities for this age group that help early literacy development include dialogic reading, singing, talking, drawing and coloring, printing letters and numbers, rhyming games, storytelling, alphabet and number toys and games, and listening games like Simon Says and I Spy.

### **Early Literacy Dimensions**

Research shows that there are fundamental skills that young children need to master to be ready to read by kindergarten. The second edition of Every

*Investing in early childhood education offers the best rates of economic and social returns – for children and for society. 85% of brain development occurs before age five; however, 95% of public investment in education traditionally occurs after age five.*

*--Early Childhood Development Coalition*

Child Ready to Read (ECRR) presents a framework of five critical dimensions of early literacy:

**Language**, including oral language and vocabulary, is the critical foundation for all other skills needed for successful reading. Verbal abilities are consistently the best predictors of later reading achievement.

**Print conventions** include noticing print everywhere and knowing how to follow words on a page and handle a book. Understanding that books have words and pictures to tell stories and that reading (in English) starts at the top of the page and goes left to right are examples of print conventions.

**Letter knowledge** includes learning that letters are different from each other, and that specific sounds go with specific letters. An example of letter knowledge is a child's ability to tell the name of the letter B and what sound it makes.

**Phonological awareness** is the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words, and includes the ability to hear and create rhymes and put word chunks together to make a word. Being able to hear the individual sounds in words helps children sound out words when they begin to read.

**Background knowledge** is also necessary for children to become skilled readers. A rich knowledge of concepts, higher-order thinking skills, narrative skills, and verbal reasoning abilities will allow children to understand what they read.

These skills can be divided into two categories:

**Constrained skills** include letter knowledge, phonological awareness, and concepts of print; these skills are important to early

reading development, but there is a finite amount for children to learn about these skills. Thus, these skills do predict early literacy but not later achievement.

**Unconstrained skills**—vocabulary, comprehension, and background knowledge—continue to grow over the course of a lifetime. Proficiency in these skills predicts both early literacy and long term reading achievement.

### Literacy Learning

Key to literacy development in children 0–5 are informal, daily experiences in literacy-rich environments in homes and communities. The second edition of ECRR focuses on the best ways for parents/caregivers to help their children develop the six early literacy skills daily through:

**Talking** with children is one of the most important—and simplest—activities. It develops listening skills, vocabulary, speech, background information, and much more. It's important to use regular words rather than baby talk—blanket instead of “blankie”—and use new and even big, complex words, even with the youngest children.

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#### Researchers found that:

- when mothers frequently speak to their infants, their children learned almost 300 more words by age 2 than did children whose mothers rarely spoke to them.
- low-income children hear on average 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers before the age of 4, leading to a language deficit and low literacy.
- children from low-income families enter kindergarten with a listening vocabulary of 3,000 words, while children of middle-income families enter school with a listening vocabulary of 20,000 words.

**Singing** develops listening skills, builds vocabulary, and slows down language, which helps children hear the different sounds in words. It's also fun, engaging, and interactive.

**Reading** aloud to children develops their vocabulary and a love of reading, and motivates them to want to learn to read. Children who are read to frequently are nearly twice as likely as other children to show three or more skills associated with emergent literacy.

**Writing** activities help young children become aware that printed letters stand for spoken words. Even before children are able to hold a crayon, they can have fun with pre-writing activities like running their fingers through finger paint or pudding, and pushing fingers into play dough. Once children can grip, they can begin making marks on paper with a crayon or with a stick through dirt, then scribbling and drawing, which will improve their fine motor skills needed to write. The next activities include tracing letters and numbers, and eventually writing letters and words on their own.

**Playing** develops narrative skills as children make up stories; improves oral language skills; helps children think symbolically as they realize one thing can represent something else (a stick can stand in for a sword or light saber); allows children to develop their own interests, which can lead them to seek books on those subjects; and helps with nonverbal communication skills as children express themselves through play.

*Next month in this series: more research and creating a literacy-rich environment.*

## 0–5 Concise Developmental Timeline

### One Month

- Holds head up briefly when supported
- Briefly watches & follows objects with eyes
- Prefers human faces over other shapes
- Color vision limited; prefers black-&-white or high-contrast patterns
- Some "noise in throat" sounds

### Two Months

- Holds head erect, bobbing, when supported in sitting position
- Tracks slowly moving objects
- Turns head toward sounds
- Vocalizes with coos & gurgling noises
- Gets fussy if activity doesn't change
- Focuses on objects 8–15 inches away
- Begins grouping language sounds into categories such as vowels & consonants

### Four Months

- Rolls from side to side
- Takes object held near hand
- Laughs aloud
- Begins to babble
- Imitates sounds heard, facial expressions & some movements
- Likes to play with people & might cry when playing stops

### Six Months

- Transfers objects from hand to hand & from hand to mouth
- Strings vowels together when babbling & begins to say consonant sounds
- Takes turns with parent making sounds
- Responds to own name
- Begins to sit without support
- Likes to play with others, especially parents
- Develops full-color vision & mature distance vision
- Understands that hidden objects still exist

### Nine Months

- May be afraid of strangers
- Copies sounds and gestures
- Sits without support; crawls & stands with support
- Plays with 2 objects at the same time
- Says "mama" & "dada"
- Likes to take breaks with books & stories

### Twelve Months (1 Year)

- May say 2 or 3 words
- Responds to simple spoken requests
- May be shy or nervous with strangers
- Hands you a book when he wants to hear a story
- Explores objects in different ways, like shaking, banging, & throwing
- Looks at the right picture when it's named
- May stand & take a few steps
- Has favorite people & objects
- Makes sounds with changes in tone
- Uses simple gestures

### Eighteen Months

- Likes being read to
- Makes marks with crayon
- Says 5–10 single words
- May have temper tantrums
- Explores alone but with parent close by
- Points to show someone what he wants
- Plays simple pretend, like feeding a doll
- Says & shakes head "no"
- Points to a body part
- Walks alone & may climb steps & run
- Rapid increase in vocabulary

Children are made readers  
on the laps of their parents.

--Emilie Buchwald

**2 Years**

- Asks for items by name
- Uses 2 or 3 words together, such as "more juice"
- Gets excited when with other children
- Plays mainly beside other children, but begins to include other children
- Knows names of familiar people & body parts
- Points to & names pictures in a book
- Begins to sort shapes & colors
- Completes sentences & rhymes in familiar books
- Plays simple make-believe games
- Makes or copies straight lines and circles

**3 Years**

- Feeds & dresses self
- Verbalizes toilet needs
- Takes turns in games
- Understands the idea of "mine" & "his" or "hers"
- Shows a wide range of emotions
- Knows own age, sex, last name
- Can name most familiar things
- Understands words like "in," "on," "under"
- Talks well enough for strangers to understand most of the time
- Carries on a conversation using 2 to 3 sentences
- Can work toys with buttons & moving parts
- Turns pages one at a time
- Climbs and runs well

**4 Years**

- Enjoys doing new things
- Points to 8 basic colors
- Is more creative with make-believe play
- Would rather play with other children than alone
- Cooperates with other children
- Often can't tell what's real & what's make-believe
- Talks about likes and interests
- Knows some basic rules of grammar, such as correctly using "he" & "she"
- Sings a few songs & recites a few short poems & nursery rhymes from memory
- Tells stories
- Uses scissors
- Starts to copy capital letters
- Plays board or card games
- Tells you what she thinks is going to happen next in a book

**5 Years**

- Likes to sing, dance, & act
- Prints a few capital letters & numbers
- Answers verbally to "Hi" & "How are you?"
- Recognizes own printed name
- Shows concern & sympathy for others
- Can tell what's real and make-believe
- Speaks clearly
- Tells a simple story using full sentences
- Uses future tense
- Counts 10 or more items
- Copies geometric shapes
- Is sometimes demanding, other times cooperative
- Can draw a person with at least 6 body parts

## What Young Children Like in Books

### 0–6 months

- Simple, large pictures of people or familiar objects
- Cloth and soft vinyl books that can go in the bath or get washed
- Stiff cardboard or fold out books that can be propped up in the crib
- High-contrast illustrations

### 6–12 months

- Board books with photos of other babies
- Brightly colored board books to touch and taste
- Books with photos of familiar objects
- Books with sturdy pages that can be propped up or spread out
- Plastic/vinyl books for bath time
- Washable cloth books to cuddle & mouth
- Touch & feel books
- Small plastic photo albums of family & friends

### 1–2 years

- Sturdy board books that they can carry
- Books with photos of children doing familiar things like sleeping or playing
- Goodnight books for bed time
- Books about saying hello and good-bye
- Books with only a few words on each page
- Books with simple rhymes or predictable text
- Animal books of all sizes and shapes

### 2–3 years

- Wordless picture books
- Books about saying hello & good-bye
- Lift the flap books
- Books with bold, colorful pictures
- Stories about familiar items & routines
- Books that tell simple stories
- Simple rhyming books that they can memorize



- Bed time books
- Books about counting, the alphabet, shapes, or sizes
- Stories about animals, vehicles, playtime, food
- Stories featuring their favorite TV characters

### 4–5 years

- Books that tell stories
- Books that make them laugh
- Pop-up books
- Books with simple text and repetition that they can memorize
- Stories about kids their own age
- Books about going to school and making friends
- Books that have playful language, rhymes, and funny-sounding words
- Alphabet, counting & vocabulary books
- Books about the real world – trucks, dinosaurs, insects
- Stories about animals
- Stories with predictable outcomes