

Focus: Elementary Reads, part 1

This feature will focus on learning and reading development for different age groups, beginning with birth to five and eventually going through age 19.

This first article in the Elementary Reads series—research on learning and reading development for children ages 6–9 and how libraries can best serve them and their parents—will examine why this period is so critical to learning development.

Learning to Read ⇒ Reading to Learn

While the brain of an average 6 year old is 95% of its size in adulthood, that brain must undergo significant changes yet in childhood and adolescence. These changes shape social, moral and physical maturation, as well as intellectual and cognitive development. During this time the brain must make the enormous leap from learning to read—generally considered to occur optimally by the end of 3rd grade—to reading to learn. This is a significant and necessary step, and made all the more challenging for those children that have not achieved early literacy skills.

During this critical period between 6 and 9, brain development builds upon the huge development from ages 0–5, which is greatest in vision, hearing and language hearing and speech production, and shifts to higher cognitive functions.

There is very large growth of specific brain structures, especially the frontal lobes located in the front of the brain just under the skull. These lobes guide planning, reasoning, social judgment, and ethical decision making, among other functions.

Synapse strengthening and pruning also occurs during this period.

Synapses are tiny gaps between neurons, and neurons send messages to one another by releasing chemicals called neurotransmitters, which cross synapses. Babies are born with far more synapses than they need; those that aren't stimulated get weeded, and the associated neurons become free to connect with another synapses when needed. About 40% of synapses are pruned during childhood and adolescence.

Another aspect of childhood brain development is plasticity. The cerebral cortex is the largest brain structure and contains the greatest number of neurons and synapses. Because it is the last brain structure to stop growing, it is sensitive to environmental influences much longer than any other part of the brain. During early childhood,

Welcome to the 7th issue of YS News!

This newsletter will feature articles on learning development, summer reading updates, timely tidbits, 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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SRP: News & Ideas

New Approaches to Tackle Summer Slide

The Boulder Valley School District has an interesting new approach to curbing summer slide; read about it in this article. A national article in *USA Today* outlines several innovative programs designed to help diminish summer slide across the country.

Astronomy Newsletter

To carry on with your 2012 summer reading program, this month's online <u>Lunar and Planetary Institute's newsletter</u> for educators contains some great info, upcoming free webinars, and fun, educational activities.

National Conference on Summer Learning

The only national conference devoted entirely to summer learning programs, the theme of this year's program is Expanding the Pool: Reaching More Kids Effectively. Whether you're a new program manager looking for instructional techniques and themes to attract more young people to your summer learning program, or a seasoned executive director eager to strengthen partnerships with your local school district and summer learning systems within your community, you'll walk away from this conference with ideas and information to achieve your goals. This year's conference is in Pittsburgh, October 23–24.

2013 Fall Workshops

Yes, it's almost time to think about next summer's summer reading program already! I'll announce the schedule for the fall workshops soon. They'll be held again in late October-early November starting after the CAL conference. Stay tuned for more!

Book Nook

2012 Colorado Book Award Winners

Colorado Humanities & Center for the Book are proud to announce the winners of the 2012 Colorado Book Awards, including these winners in categories for children and teens:

- Young Adult Literature:
 Lucy Dakota: Adventures of a Modern Explorer
 Book 1 Rocky Mountain Beginnings by Carol
 Sue Shride
- Juvenile Literature: City of Orphans by Avi
- Children's Literature:
 Light Up the Night by Jean Reidy

READKIDDOREAD.com

Author James Patterson started this website to help parents and educators connect their children with the books that will turn them into lifelong readers. It includes book reviews, divided into reviews for parents and for educators, of books for four age groups in a number of categories, along with other features.

Schneider Family Book Award

This newer addition to ALA's Media Youth Awards honors an author or illustrator for a book that embodies an artistic expression of the disability experience for child and adolescent audiences. Each year, three awards are presented for the best Teen, Middle School and Children's Book at the ALA Conference. Check out this year's winners.

When it comes to telling children stories, they don't need simple language. They need beautiful language.

-Philip Pullman

Timely Tidbits

Find a Speaker: Authors and Illustrators

The Rocky Mountain Chapter of The Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) maintains an online directory of authors and illustrators of children's and teen books that offer presentations at schools and libraries in CO and WY. Some of the presenters also offer workshops to children and teens on writing and illustrating.

Grade-Level Reading Communities Network

Mayors from across the country helped launched the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading Communities Network this month, announcing a national movement of local leaders, nonprofits and foundations putting a stake in the ground on third-grade reading. "There is nothing more important than preparing our students for the global economy," Denver Mayor Michael Hancock said. "I am proud of the plans we have for improving early literacy in Denver." Learn more about the initiative here.

Resources to Manage Your Money

The CO Virtual Library has posted tools for learning about financial matters, spending plans and debt management at Manage Your Money. These tools include excellent info and life skills for teens as they get jobs and enter adulthood.

Tech Training for Libraries

The busy CO Virtual Library has also just <u>added</u> <u>tools</u> to help library staff learn tech skills, and teach tech skills to patrons.

More Tech Training Opportunities

Become a Google Apps Ninja with this <u>free online</u> <u>training</u>. There are 5 essential ninja apps categories you must master to become a true Apps Master Ninja. Explore the challenge!

Preschool Digital Storytimes

Check out "Once Upon an App: The Process of Creating Digital Storytimes for Preschoolers," an article in the latest issue of *Colorado Libraries* by Kate Lucey and Melissa Della Penna at Douglas County Libraries. They ingeniously adapted the iPad and various apps to create a digital storytime that has turned out to be even more popular with families than traditional storytimes. The parents also appreciate learning about appropriate apps they can use with their children.

Library Services in Wildfire-Affected Areas

This page lists the excellent expanded services that libraries offered in areas affected by the recent CO wildfires.

Harry Potter's Sweets & Treats

This collection of unique candy recipes based on the mischievous sweets in the Harry Potter series. From Chocolate Frogs to Puking Pastilles, you're sure to find recipes to delight wizards and muggles alike!

Save the Date!

The CLEL Annual Membership Meeting will be held on Friday, September 7 at the Douglas County Fairgrounds, Kirk Hall, Castle Rock, 8:30 to 4:00 (it's **free!**). More details soon. Hope to see you there!

Lead the Change Workshop in Denver

Sponsored by *Library Journal*, <u>Lead the Change workshops</u> bring together library leaders and staff at every level for a motivating and informative day designed to energize, inspire and enlighten. Scheduled at libraries across the country—including Denver this year—each session gives attendees the opportunity to learn

how today's top libraries are leading change and transforming their communities. It is designed for all library staff and stakeholders. The Denver session will be held August 23 with a fee of \$80.

News from YALSA

• National Guidelines for Teen Spaces
Since 2011 a taskforce worked on developing these guidelines for physical and virtual teen spaces in public libraries. This is a tool for evaluating a public library's overall level of success in providing physical and virtual space dedicated to teens. Potential users of these guidelines include library administrators, library trustees, teen services librarians, community members and jobseekers hoping to assess a library's commitment to teen services. Access them at www.ala.org/yalsa/guidelines.

• Teens' Top Ten

The <u>online vote</u> for teens to choose their favorite books from among the Teens' Top Ten nominees will be open from Aug. 15 through Sept. 15! Access a free toolkit about how to use the TTT in your library as well as the 25 nominees here. The winners will be announced during Teen Read WeekTM.



What's the Next in YA Literature?
 Find out at YALSA's YA Literature
 Symposium, Nov. 2 - 4, 2012 in St. Louis!
 Access a preliminary program and registration information at
 www.ala.org/yalitsymposium.

Handouts from ALA Conference

If you didn't get to the ALA Conference last month, you can still catch the handouts from many of the sessions <u>here online</u>.

Storytelling Festival

Storytelling: Unleash your Super Power!, hosted by the Douglas County Libraries' Literacy Department, will feature storytelling, workshops and concerts from local and regional performers on September 21 and 22. All events are FREE. Featured storytellers include Joe Hayes, Priscilla Howe and Pam Faro. Workshops will be offered for children, teachers, storytellers and childcare providers.

Trends in YA Book Covers

Some recent blog posts show enlightening trends in YA book covers. One discusses the overwhelming trend of portraying white females on the covers; the other, a more lighthearted but still thought-provoking post, addresses how people are pictured on YA covers.

The Science of Learning

In this latest STAR (School Technology Action Report), "The Science of Learning: How Current Brain Research Can Improve Education," the editors of eSchool Media highlight cutting-edge research from leading neuroscience experts on how various activities affect the brain, and how these activities can help students improve their comprehension and memory (article access requires free website registration).

Evaluating After-School Programs

For out-of-school time decision-makers, a new set of <u>data tip sheets</u> from The Wallace Foundation shows the ways that data can assist in everything from determining where out-of-school time programs are needed, to how to make them better.

Children's Book Feast

This unique event will promote literacy, books, reading, and art for children on September 7th and 8th in Steamboat Springs. This event is

aimed toward children from Kindergarten through High School, with a focus on local and regional artists. Several authors, storytellers, and illustrators will present at the event. To purchase tickets or register for workshops <u>click here</u>, or contact the children's desk at Bud Werner Library (970–879–0240 x 313).

Intergenerational Dessert and Discussion

A library in Vermont is offering a <u>YA book</u> <u>discussion group</u> for teens and adults that also features potluck dessert fun.

CO Libraries in the Press

Early Literacy Fair in Broomfield

This month the Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library in Broomfield held an <u>early literacy fair</u> to set the stage for children up to age 5 to begin exploring reading and communication skills. The free drop-in fair gives parents and children the opportunity to share books and activities with parents and guardians to learn those skills

Boulder Public Library Expansion

The Boulder Public Library is planning to remodel and upgrade its Main Library, including its children's and teen areas. The library's teen advisory group is helping to plan its expanded Teen Space.

Digital Projects in Loveland

In Loveland Public Library's <u>iCreate Lab</u>, patrons have up to four hours to digitize their dreams, do some work or put a spin on what libraries traditionally offer for free.

Programming in Gilpin County

<u>This article</u> in Programming Librarian showcases the Gilpin County Public Library's

strong programming lineup, and discusses ways that a rural library can bring high-quality programming to their small communities.

Upcoming Grant Opportunities

LEGO Children's Fund

Deadline: Quarterly. Next: Oct. 15, 2012

The LEGO Group is committed to helping children develop their creativity and learning skills through constructive play and extends this commitment to local and national organizations that support innovative projects and programming to cultivate and celebrate a child's exploration of personal creativity and creative problem-solving in children ages birth – 14.

Muslim Journeys, a Bridging Cultures Bookshelf

Deadline: Sept. 25, 2012

The ALA Public Programs Office and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is sponsoring this new opportunity. Public and academic libraries may apply to receive this outstanding collection of materials to facilitate public programs and vibrant community discussions.

Grant Funding Leads

This monthly online newsletter, produced by PITSCO Education and LEGO Education, offers additional funding opportunities for a wide range of programs.

Grants for Nonprofits: Libraries

Michigan State University Libraries offers this compilation of web pages and books of potential interest to nonprofit organizations seeking funding opportunities related to libraries.

ALA Compilation of Grants

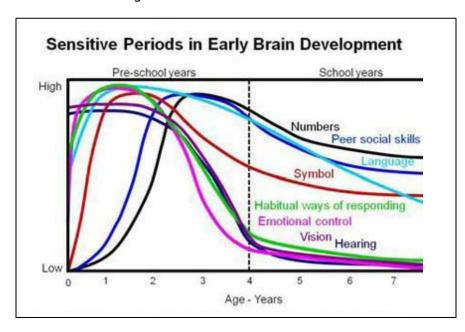
ALA also offers an <u>extensive list</u> of grants of interest to libraries of all types.

Elementary Reads cont.

the cerebral cortex is considered highly plastic—it has many areas that are not yet committed to specific functions, which means that it has a high capacity for learning. And if a part of the cortex is damaged, other parts can take over the tasks it would have handled. During the period between ages 6 and 9, the parts of the cortex do begin to specialize and thus the cortex begins to lose some of its plasticity.

An inner-brain structure called the hippocampus, which plays a vital role in memory and spatial orientation that help us find our way, also develops quickly during this period and establishes connections with other areas of the cerebral cortex. These changes lead to dramatic gains in memory and spatial understanding.

Is this brain development pre-programmed? While brain development does have a general path, the environment and experiences of children aged 6-9 play a significant role in learning and social development. Education, for one, can play a vital role in the process of molding the brain to reinforce those synaptic pathways that are used regularly. Repetition creates synaptic connections that will last as long-term memories. Synaptic pruning ensures that established connections become efficient, without the clutter of unwanted synapses. These are crucial years for learning; for example, music skills are best learned up to the age of nine years. While the cortex is programmed from the start for hemispheric specialization, experience greatly influences the rate and success of its advancing organization.



Graph developed by Council for Early Childhood Development (ref.: Nash, 1997; Early Years Study, 1999; Shonkoff, 2000)

A lack of education during this time period often results in learning deficiencies that last a lifetime. Chronic physical or emotional trauma—such as hunger, abuse, civil unrest, homelessness, etc—during these years can also lead to neural networks that don't perform optimally in childhood and adulthood, as these circuits adapt to the adversity that people experienced as children.

Thus parents, extended family, schools, communities, and yes, public libraries play a crucial role in brain development for 6-9 year olds, and all

of them must work together to provide positive, enriching experiences for children around them.

6-9 Concise Learning Milestones Timeline

6 Years

- Reads aloud slowly and deliberately (about 30 words per minute)
- · Begins to read silently
- · Can count the number of syllables in a word
- Can blend or segment the letter sounds of most one syllable words
- Can read simple books smoothly, but generally read word-by-word
- · Can sound out or decode unfamiliar words
- Uses pictures and context to figure out unfamiliar words
- Uses some common punctuation and capitalization in writing
- Can detect and self-correct a mistake while reading aloud
- Comprehends a story through drawings
- Connects meaning to words and sentences
- Learns more new information and new words from listening and talking than from reading on own
- Enjoys listening to long stories and chapter hooks
- Is learning how to be a good listener in the classroom
- Tends to include many details in stories, and not yet be able to summarize a story
- Can do simple revision of own writing
- Uses a combination of "invented" and correct spelling
- Writes for different purposes
- Uses simple literary elements in own writing, like attributing dialogue to a character
- Suddenly is more independent
- Cooperates with a group of peers

7 Years

- Reads more automatically and fluently
- Reads about 60 words per minute
- Reads both fiction and non-fiction
- · Has improved comprehension
- Re-reads sentences when meaning is not clear
- Recalls facts and details from reading
- Poses possible answers to "how", "why" and "what if" questions
- Writes sentences using generally correct punctuation and capitalization
- Picks out nouns and action words in sentences
- Uses phonetic strategies when reading and writing, sounding out words that are unfamiliar
- Breaks unfamiliar words down into smaller parts to figure out the meaning
- · Paraphrases information read
- Explains the problem, solution, or main idea in fiction and nonfiction
- Writes about own ideas
- Revises writing to make it clearer
- Writes different types of sentences, such as declarative, interrogative and exclamatory
- Takes on responsibilities at home and school, such as feeding pets and erasing the whiteboard
- Understands that behavior has consequences
- Thinks for himself and expresses opinions
- Takes risks

8 Years

- Reads about 90 words per minute
- Reads aloud with fluency and comprehension
- Has a good repertoire of "word attack" skills and strategies to sound out unknown words
- Can summarize major points from fiction and non-fiction

- Can infer word meanings from roots, prefixes and suffixes
- · Reads many kinds of children's books
- Uses information from the story and personal knowledge to learn new words and understand stories
- Looks up unfamiliar words in a dictionary and determines which meaning suits the context of the story
- Uses several strategies to comprehend nonfiction, fiction, and poetry
- Recognizes the difference between fact and opinion
- Makes predictions and later confirms them by looking for clues and foreshadowing in a story
- Compares own experiences to those of the characters in a book
- Compares and contrasts the characters from two different stories
- Understands a character's motivation and where her feelings stem from
- Recognizes plot, setting, characterization, and dialogue in literature
- Explains the problem and solution in the plot of a story
- Recognizes general themes in stories and relate them to personal experiences
- Writes stories, letters, and short reports using mostly proper spelling and punctuation
- Writes in cursive with connected letters
- Focuses on fairness
- Asks complex questions about life and issues in the news
- Begins to set goals

9 Years

Can comprehend multiple features in a problem, even while solving it

- Understands that not everyone sees the world as he sees it
- Should be able to reverse thinking
- Wants to know the reasons for things
- Often overestimates own ability and generalizes instances of failure
- Has fewer and more reasonable fears
- Has basic reading skills in hand and should focus on using them with greater ease
- Understands the meaning of synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms
- Identifies the meaning of most compound words
- Uses punctuation cues to add meaning to the text
- Can use graphic organizers to aid comprehension
- Makes reasonable predictions about what they are reading
- Identifies traits of characters in passages they are reading
- Knows a large number of words by sight (don't have to sound them out)
- Can summarize a story
- Can use past experiences to identify with characters
- Compares and contrasts reading content and own experiences
- Understands cause-and-effect relationships
- Can use writing to inform and persuade others
- Identifies nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in a sentence
- Uses adjectives to describe things and enhance writing
- Uses conjunctions
- Uses common spelling rules
- Identifies sentence types
- Writes compound sentences



