

Print Concepts Activity

LEVEL 1

What are Print Concepts?

Print represents speech, and it is organized in a specific way. Children who understand this connection between print and speech, and who are able to recognize the general structure of print, are said to have print concept awareness. Typically, this awareness develops before children learn to read. Specific print concepts include an understanding that print has meaning; that words are separated by spaces in print; that books have parts such as a cover and a title; and that, in English, text is read from left to right and top to bottom.

Why focus on Print Concepts?

Knowledge of print concepts is typically developed during the preschool years. As children learn to distinguish print from pictures, they begin to establish insight into the function and structure of print. Solidifying early print awareness and print-specific knowledge is critical at a young age, as both are key foundational reading skills and are related to later reading success (Scarborough, 1998; Piasta, Justice, McGinty, & Kaderavek, 2012; National Early Literacy Panel, 2008). In fact, understanding of print concepts is one predictor of reading ability in the later elementary grades (Scarborough, 1998).

How does Lexia® Core5® Reading address Print Concepts?

Level 1 of Lexia Core5 Reading contains the Print Concepts activity. Given that shared book reading is one strategy for reinforcing the development of print concepts (Swanson et al., 2011), students working through the Print Concepts activity deepen their print awareness through stories and informational texts that are presented in book form. The modeling of print-specific terms and concepts begins with an overview of the book cover: the title, author, and illustrator are each highlighted and narrated. Then, students follow along as the short, engaging texts are read aloud to them. Word-by-word highlighting emphasizes not only that words are separated by spaces in print, but also that words on a page go from left to right and top to bottom. In addition to reinforcing important print concepts, this highlighting of the text as it is read aloud is also associated with increased attention to print (Skibbe, Thompson, & Plavnick, 2018). After listening to the texts, students answer several questions that evaluate their understanding of these early print concepts. Additional questions focus on students' comprehension of key details.

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Works Cited

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