Purposeful Literacy Play: Develop Self-Regulation, Language, and Social-Emotional Skills

From Social Emotional Learning in Kindergarten, Book 2



A gift of joyful literacy from Nellie Edge



Welcome to Our Joyful Teaching and Learning Community:

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Nellie Edge Professional Development Workshops and Online Seminars are committed to helping all children including English Language Learners (ELLs) achieve the rigor of the English Language Arts State Standards through joyful pathways to learning. Our workshops, presented by outstanding teacher-researchers, are designed to integrate current research and state-of-the-art literacy practices that are meaning-centered and in harmony with how the young child's brain learns best.

Our action-research has documented that joyful writing-to-read strategies within a comprehensive literacy framework accelerate literacy and produce unexpectedly high outcomes. Our purpose is to share "best practices" in Social Emotional Learning and literacy; to inspire reflection, collaboration, and intentional teaching. How can I do an even better job reaching every child? and How do I create a classroom community that recognizes the social nature of learning, the importance of the mentor-apprentice relationship, and the vital role of the educational arts? When teachers truly understand the writing and reading process and the power of multisensory teaching, they can more easily and effectively create responsive environments that embrace the diverse learning styles and gifts that our children bring to school. Rigorous standards are reached when children are deeply engaged in authentic literacy experiences and challenged to become ambitious readers, writers, and thinkers.

Bruno Bettleheim's research reminds us that how children perceive themselves in the act of learning to read generalizes to their whole self-concept. With this in mind, we are committed, through our professional development programs and literacy resources, to assist teachers in creating engaging and caring learning environments that will provide all children with the foundations they need to build on success. We believe learning to read and write must be a systematic, meaning-centered process. Our expectation is that every child can and will develop high levels of literacy skills while building belief systems of competence, belonging, and an "I can do it" growth mindset.

Our workshops and resources support our commitment to excellence in literacy, the honoring of _d childhood, and our belief that educators can and must positively influence the lives of children and the future of our democratic society.

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Our vision is... creating schools worthy of our children:

Purposeful Literacy Play: Develop Self-Regulation, Language, and Social-Emotional Skills

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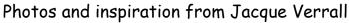
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Purposeful Literacy Play:

Develop Self-Regulation, Language, and Social-Emotional Skills









Make play and games important parts of the curriculum...Instead of getting rid of blocks and dress-up clothes, kindergarten teachers need to primarily focus on improving the quality of makebelieve play...

Excerpts from Tools of the Mind: A Vygotskian Approach to Early Childhood Education, by Elena Bodrova and Deborah Leogn, 2006.

I still remember the fun I had in kindergarten!

Favorite Integrative Themes for Dramatic and Literacy Play Centers

Traditional Dramatic Play Centers become Language and Literacy Centers that reinforce integrated thematic studies. These provide authentic opportunities for children to rehearse language presented in literature and song and use their developing reading and writing skills. We provide props and opportunities for real-life activities such as recording doctor visits, writing grocery lists, recording weather, mailing personally written messages...and always there are books and photos to read and discuss. Voracious vocabulary development is encouraged during rich dramatic play.

September:	How Does Reading and Writing Become Dramatic Play? Using Traditional Home/Kitchen Center with Family Dress Up: Ideas include clothes and food props, telephone with message pad, books to read to babies, and a clipboard for making lists	
October:	The Farm – Trip to the Pumpkin Patch; Fire Station; Costume Shop; Reenacting <i>The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything</i>	
November:	r: Creatures of the Night Cave; The Family; Grocery Store	
December:	r: Winter Celebrations; Restaurant; Pizza Hut; Gift Wrapping; A Gingerbread Cottage; Airport; Bakery; Ten-Penny Store	
January:	y: Winter Weather and Clothing; Igloo; Shoe Store	
February:	uary: The Life of President Lincoln: growing years and presidency; Post Office; Dental or Doctor's Office	
March:	Weather Station; Space Lab; Airport; Veterinarian's Office	
April:	Baby Animals and Chicks; Pizza Hut; Oviparous Animals on Display	
May:	ay: Kings and Queens and Castle Scenes ("Once Upon a Time…"); Camping; Fishing; Frogs; Pond; Puppet Theater for Animal Songs and Skits	
June:	Friends' Autograph Signing; Orphanage: Reading and Taking Care of Babies; Hat Store	



Which are your most engaging Literacy Play Centers and how do you incorporate writing?

For more delightful Dramatic Play Centers, see our Literacy Award and other favorite websites at nellieedge.com with Diane Bonica, Jacque Verrall, and Shari Sloane (kidscount1234).

We Value Social-Emotional Development, Language, and the Child's Need for Dramatic Play:

We Make Center Description Signs to Inform Parents

Literacy and Dramatic Play Center

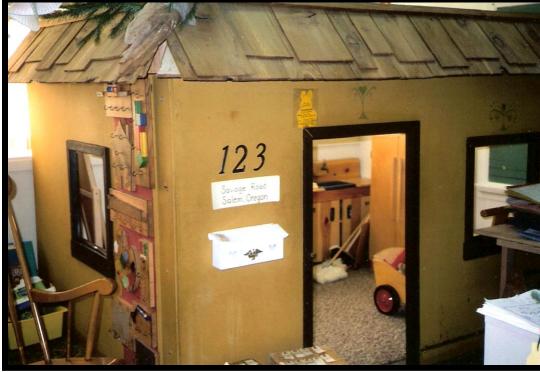
Here children are using language and literacy skills to assume and practice roles of people in their world. Children are reading and writing for real purposes as they make grocery lists, read to teddy bears, and take orders for restaurant food.

They are developing important social-emotional skills: cooperating, communicating, observing, and playfully creating with others.

Children are engaged in interpersonal problem solving, expressing feelings and learning to get into and out of various social situations.

They are building vocabulary and making connections to new thematic studies, experiencing creative dramatics and developing important communication skills.

Our literacy play center becomes a veterinarian's office, post office, space station, grocery store, cafe, costume shop, and pizza shop.



The above center description sign is used to inform parents about how children learn in our engaging literacy centers. Signs are often mounted and laminated with photos showing children in action. For more additional center signs see Parents as Partners: Family Connections That Multiply Our Teaching Effectiveness.



Barb Sagen's Kindergarten Home Literacy Play Center



Block Building: Center Description Sign Growing Future Engineers and Architects

We are:

- Counting, measuring, building, balancing
- Developing social-emotional skills: We communicate and collaborate
 Frank Lloyd
- Using small muscle skills
- Developing eye-hand coordination
- Learning to think like an engineer: Ask and imagine Plan, predict, and create Read with a purpose Record: write and draw

Frank Lloyd Wright attributes his early interest in architecture to the blocks his mother gave him.

Research shows later algebra gains for children who engaged in block play in early childhood.

• Sharing pride in our accomplishments



Writing and Reading about Our Creations



The Block Building Center can include picture books and art prints about bridges, buildings and castles.

• See *Bridges Are To Cross,* Philemon Sturges. Scholastic. 1999.



See Printables Part 2

Literacy Play Develops Writing and Self-Regulation

Excerpts from Tools of the Mind: A Vygotskian Approach to Early Childhood Education by Elena Bodrova and Deborah J. Leong

"...teachers can no longer wait until their 'little crickets' simply outgrow their hard-tomanage behaviors. **Teaching 5-year-olds to regulate their own behaviors becomes one of the major goals**, adding yet another 'R' to the list of basic skills children learn in kindergarten."

"Self-regulation is a deep, internal mechanism that enables children as well as adults to engage in mindful, intentional, and thoughtful behaviors. Self-regulation has two sides: first, it involves the ability to control one's impulses and to stop doing something...Second, self-regulation involves the capacity to do something (even if one doesn't want to do it) because it is needed, such as awaiting one's turn or raising one's hand. Self-regulated children can delay gratification and suppress their immediate impulses enough to think ahead to the possible consequences of their action or to consider alternative actions that would be more appropriate."

"In fact, research shows that children's self-regulation behaviors in the early years predict their school achievement in reading and mathematics better than their IQ scores (Blair 2002; Blair & Razza 2007)."

"...if a neural system is repeatedly exercised, it will continue to develop, as with **exercising a muscle**...there is growing evidence that self-regulation can be taught in the classroom."

"All young children benefit from practicing deliberate and purposeful behaviors."

"First, children can **follow the rules** that are established and monitored by somebody else."

"Second, children need to be able **to set rules** for each other and **monitor** how those rules are followed."

"Make play and games important parts of the curriculum...Instead of getting rid of blocks and dress-up clothes, kindergarten teachers need to primarily focus on improving the quality of make-believe play..."

"Thus, instruction in self-regulation in the early years deserves the same, if not more, attention as the instruction in academic subjects."

Use Tools of the Mind to Develop Cognitive and Social-Emotional Skills!

See more information on Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience and Dr. Adele Diamond's website.



A VV]b`YmJ Yh`7`]b]W' CdYb`: cf`6i g]bYgg`

Kindergarten teacher Cathy Jordan created the McKinley Vet Clinic, complete with animals and carriers, which she collected from second-hand stores. Children each take a role, and there are forms for the Kid Writers to read and record on using their very official clipboards.

CC SS

SS Young writers need real world reasons to write. English learners

rehearse new language patterns through play-based learning.

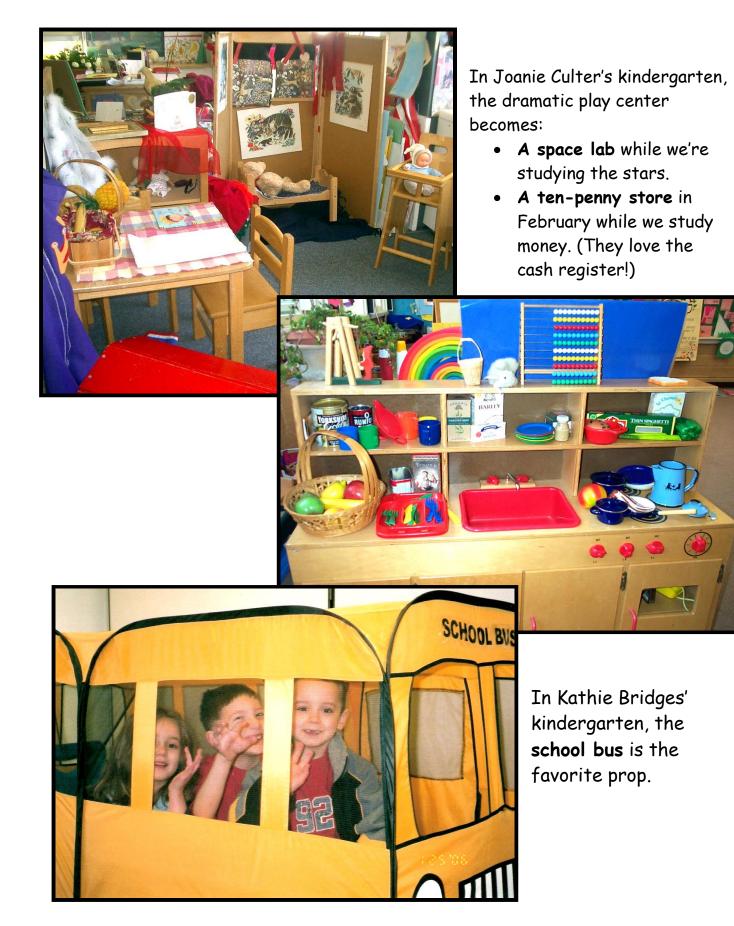
Cathy's philosophy is simple: ÎH\Y'W]`XfYb'\UjY'[ch'hc'`cjY'Wta]b['hc'gWtcc``UbX'\UjY' fYUgcbg'hc'fYUX'UbX'kf]hY'Ï'

McKinley Vet Clinic			
Owner's Name: Josh JA			
Pet's Name: CAT			
Dog 🗆			
Reason for visit:			
Checkup	yes 🛛	no 🗆	
"i Shots	yes 🗆	no 🗆	
Sick	yes 🗆	no 🗆	
— 🖻 Teeth cleaning	yes 🛛	no 🛛	
Treatment received	:		
Doctor's Name:			





The Dramatic Play Center Changes with the Curriculum: Parents Contribute Literacy Props



>UV&i Y`Verrall's Kindef[UfhYb`@]hYfUVMiD`Umi7YbhYf` 6YV&a Yg`U`GdUW`GhUh]cb.``

Parent Volunteers Created All of the Amazing Props



A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, kindergarten children traveled in space...

Space travelers translate messages from outer space.



SS L.K.1, L.K.6, SL.K.1, SL.K.6

Pilot and co-pilot work together to navigate between the stars...

Consider the powerful vocabulary development and opportunity to develop collaborative conversations that occur during rich themed dramatic play.

Block Building for Budding Architects and City Planners



If not in kindergarten, where else will young children get to collaborate and build cities, castles, and elaborate designs? Here children build the foundational understandings for algebra and

geometry. Even more important, children discover

"By ourselves we're good, but together we are better..."

~Tom Hunter



Excerpts from *With Blocks, Educators Go Back to Basics*

Tina Fineberg for The New York Times Jean Schreiber conducting a block workshop at the Ethical Culture Fieldston School in Manhattan.

By KYLE SPENCER Published: November 27, 2011

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/28/nyregion/with-building-blocks-educators-going-back-tobasics.html?pagewanted=all

While many progressive private and public schools have long sworn by blocks, more traditional institutions are now refocusing on block centers amid worries that academic pressure and technology are squeezing play out of young children's lives.

She proudly advertises their fully outfitted block labs alongside the chess program and daily science classes. The International School of Brooklyn is developing a program using blocks to reinforce foreign-language acquisition. And Avenues, the <u>for-profit school</u> scheduled to open next year in Greenwich Village, is devoting a large section of its kindergarten floor to a block center.

"If you talk about a block program with parents these days," said Libby Hixson, director of Avenues' lower school, "they just light up."

Studies dating to the 1940s indicate that blocks help children absorb basic math concepts. One published in 2001 tracked 37 preschoolers and found that those who had more sophisticated block play got better math grades and standardized test scores in high school. And a <u>2007 study by</u> <u>Dimitri Christakis</u>, director of the Center for Child Health, Behavior and Development at Seattle Children's Hospital, found that those with block experience scored significantly better on language acquisition tests.

But perhaps the hottest pitch of late, particularly to high-stress, high-strung New York City parents, is that blocks can build the 21st-century skills essential to success in corporate America.

Ms. Reitzes, who runs the youth center at the 92nd Street Y, said many educators were embracing blocks as an antidote to finemotor-skill deficits and difficulty with unstructured activity, problems that they blame on too much time in front of screens and overly academic preschools.



9b[]bYYf]b[`UbX`A U_]b[`H\]b[g`9I dUbXg`h\Y`7i ff]VI/`i a . 7\]`XfYn'g`5fh]gh]W9I dfYgg]cbg`6YVt/a Y`h\Y`A YX]i a `Zcf`Hi fb]b[`H\Y` 7fYUh]j Y`H\]b_]b[`DfcWgg`]bhc`K f]h]b[`



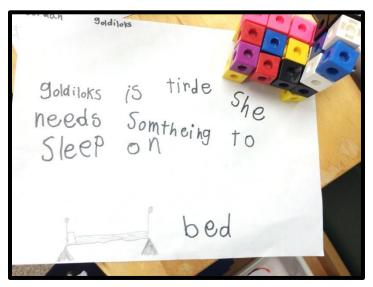
Ask, imagine, plan, create... A and then write about it so you can share your ideas.



When a project collapsed, teacher Winter Curry took this "teaching moment" to model how structures can be built using arches.

The Engineering Song by Winter Curry is sung to the tune of *A Row, Row, Row Your Boat.*

A special thank you to Winter Curry for helping us see kindergartners as engineers and to Katie Nelson's prolific writers.



Goldilocks is tired. She needs something to sleep on...bed.



These girls are engineering new structures: children's play is serious learning.

D`Ubh]b[`h\Y`gYYXg`Zcf`ZihifY`Yb[]bYYfg`



Engineering Song

(Tune: Row, Row, Row Your Boat)

Ask, imagine, plan, create As an engineer. When you do You'll surely see, Solutions are so clear.

Winter Curry



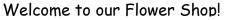
Permission granted for teachers to make multiple copies. Poetry Notebook: Sciencing Songs. ©Nellie Edge, updated 2021.

Literacy Play Centers Provide Reasons to Use Language





We've made our own menus.





Grocery Shopping: Writing for a real purpose.



Acting out the Little Red Hen: Sequencing and retelling are child's play.



The McKinley cafe serves breakfast and lunch. Place your order now!



The McKinley Vet Clinic is now open: Please bring your small pets...shots available!

Thank you, teachers, for believing in the importance of socio-dramatic play to develop language, literacy, and self-regulation.

CfXYf Mtif D]nnU Uh h\Y 7ci bhYf "



Taken from $> cnZi ~UbX F][cfcig?]bXYf[UfhYb'9|dYf]YbWg ~7Y YVfUhY h\Y = a U[]bUh]cb'UbX 7\U'Yb[Y'5 ~@YUfbYfg by Diane Bonica and Nellie Edge.$

Parent Volunteers Create Changing Literacy Play Props for the Dramatic Play Center

We Want Children to Develop the Disposition of Prolific Writers



Jacque Verrall's kindergarten parents take turns changing the literacy play props monthly in the dramatic play center. Here children are creating grocery lists from grocery advertisements and food labels. This wise teacher knows that authentic and playful literacy tasks motivate children to use their reading and writing skills.

Jacque Verrall writes, "Dramatic Play Center...in November" Topic: <u>http://teachers.net/mentors/kindergarten/topic12849/11.01.03.18.46.40.html</u>

Mine was a grocery store. The parents who organize this had every child bring a small can or boxed grocery item with the caveat that at the end, someone would take all the grocery items to the food bank (I really liked this idea). The parents brought two cash registers, fake credit cards, checks (they loved writing the checks! And I was surprised how knowledgeable they were about checks!), paper bags (small), grocery carts, etc. They have had a great time with it all.

Next week it will change to a space station. The other kindergarten teacher and I encourage our parents to trade set-ups, thereby getting double use of them.



This girl is taking her little dog to the Veterinarian Clinic.

Dancing, Singing, and

Celebrating Social Emotional Learning

with Celeste Starr



Notice how happy and engaged these kindergarten friends are.

See 2 Dance and Sing YouTube videos with Kathie Bridges at Nellie Edge.com

The Mirror Dance: With Happy Hearts We Dance & Sing

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) at its best! Music by Rosalie Karalekas, photos used with permission from families

This dance teaches students to choose a partner, follow and change leaders, adapt to different music, and mimic creative movement patterns.

This is the kindergartners' all-time favorite dance in Celeste Starr's class!



- Teach children to establish eye contact, choose a partner, and say, "Will you be my partner please?" The other child might say, "Yes, I'll be your partner" or "I already have a partner, but I'll be your partner tomorrow."
- If one child remains, children learn to say, "You can be our partner too."
- Or-teacher may choose the partners randomly using name sticks.

Email Rosalie at <u>Salemperformingarts@msn.com</u> for a digital MP3 of her music. Pay using PayPal.

10 Tips to Make Dancing Fun for Everyone

by Kathie Bridges, Celeste Starr, and Nellie Edge

- Set the parameters for behavior expectations before you even turn on the music. 1. (Make an anchor chart of essential expectations. If you can, use photos of students actually dancing.)
- Practice the moves and actions you will be teaching your students on your own 2. before presenting it to them. Choose dances YOU know and enjoy!
- Walk through some of the tricky moves before you start the music. 3.
- 4. Have the music ready to play before you begin.
- Plan what you will do if things start to get out of hand. (I typically turn off the 5. music and review expectations with the students).
- Intentionally plan and make a list of the key vocabulary and language concepts 6. that will be part of the children's movement experience.
- EVERYONE participates! At the beginning of the year, there are often a few 7. reluctant dancers, but with some encouragement they are soon actively involved. This provides rich social emotional skills for diverse learners!
- 8. Be exaggerated in your movements so students can follow the strong motions.
- If a movement goes side-to-side, make sure everyone is moving the same direction. 9. Stop and restart as needed.
- Dance with the students, especially in the beginning. Be animated! If you're having 10.

fun, they will too!

Celeste's Tips for Mirror Dancing:

- Model how to choose—and NOT choose—a partner (Will you be my partner please?)
- "Helper of the Day" student can partner with teacher to demonstrate ways children can choose which partner goes first
- With music, demonstrate how—and how NOT—to be the dance leader.



• During Mirror Dancing, demonstrate the 8 types of movement and how children will start, stop, and switch partners at each BONG in the music.

Celeste Starr's kindergarten

The Heart of Social Emotional Learning in Kindergarten: Spark Joy with Magical, Memorable Experiences

Some magical teaching moments with Oregon kindergarten teachers:

Becky Leber sprinkles the room with **soft**, **white feathers for the children to discover**... and then they receive a personal letter and gifts from Mother Goose, of course! **Imagination is nurtured**.

Connie Cazort whispers mysteriously and transforms her children into silent alligators and other animals. Sometimes they wear cleaning glasses for "**super silent cleaning workshop**" while listening to a Bach (Brandenberg?) Concerto.

Joanie Cutler weaves **classical tales** into her art-rich "child's garden." The children follow the stars, connecting mythology and astronomy to develop a **passion for the celestial world**. They begin their morning in guided, creative movement exploration with accompanying music. Imagination is nurtured through all of the educational arts.

Carla Cooper invites children to find their voices as **writers and artists**. Children create special art and personal messages for their parents, classmates, and, of course, for Teacher Carla. **Strong family connections** include a "make and take it" evening.

Janice Nelson's children act out nursery rhymes and favorite songs. They also paint with their hands... and their feet! The kindergartners experience the arts and play noncompetitive games. She cultivates a culture of friendship.

Susan Ventura has a galloping horse puppet, and the daily "class helper" gets to pet him and feed him hay. They celebrate language by memorizing beautiful poetry. Susan's love of art extends to families. She has 100 percent participation at her yearly Family Art Events.

Mitzi Shirk sings and signs with her joyful learners, and her children perform for appreciative parents. The two class zebra finches delight and amaze the children with baby birds that have been adopted by the children's families. Mitzi has "hugging bonds" with families.

Mary Christensen honors childhood with her beautiful, dramatic play center with themes and props that change from castles and kings to hospitals. Such rich scope for the imagination! Mary's room is full of natural objects such as lovely baskets and beautiful arrangements to delight and inspire all the senses.

Jill Liedke brings her **passion for weaving and gardening into the classroom**. The children each weave a personal belt. They enjoy planting and **tending a garden outside** the kindergarten door.

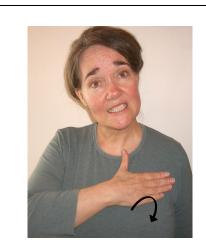
Celeste Starr teaches the children to dance in partners and copy each other's movements: Partner dancing sparks joy and strengthens bonds of friendship.



Yes (si) The "S" handshape shakes up and down. The "S" handshape represents the head nodding.



No The pointer finger and middle finger shape close on the thumb. This is similar to the fingerspelling of n-o.



Please (por favor) The open hand circles over the heart to indicate pleasure.



Thank you (gracias) The hand moves out and down. This sign is similar to the gesture of kissing ones hand and extending the hand towards someone else in order to show ones gratitude.



Walk (camina) Hold both flat hands in front with palms down; then imitate walking by moving each hand forward alternately.



Don't (no corra) The hands are crossed and then move outward forcefully as if indicating that something should stop.



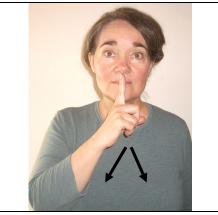
Run (correr) Point both "L" hands forward and hook the right index finger of the dominant hand around the left thumb. Wiggle the thumbs and index fingers as both hands move forward guickly.



Stop (para) The edge of one hand comes down on the palm to represent something coming to a quick stop. **And think:** Index finger touches forehead.



Toilet / Restroom (baño) The "T" handshape is shook. If that sign is offensive in your community use an "R" handshape.



Quiet (silencio) - 2-part sign Touch the lips with the right index finger and move both flat hands down and to the sides with palm facing down in a gesture telling others to be silent (quiet).



(Exact Signed English)

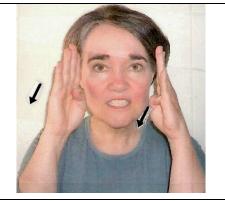
Applause (aplauso) Hands moving excitedly to the side of the forehead is the quietest sign for applause.



Stand (up) (ponte de pie) The "V" handshape represents a person. The location of the "V" handshape shows someone standing on a surface.



Careful (con cuidado) Make the sign for "KEEP" ("K" hands) and strike together two times at the wrist.



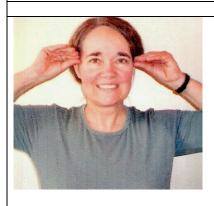
Focus (pay attention) (atención) Two "B" hands at each side of the forehead move forward together.



Sit (down) (sentarse) The upper "U" handshape represents the legs of a person while the other "U" handshape represents a chair. The motion shows a person sitting down. Sit right. Point both index fingers forward. Bring right hand down onto left thumb.



Children (niños With palms facing down, one hand "pats" the head of more than one child.



Teacher (professor) (2-part sign) The flattened "O" hands move out from the forehead to show that a person is taking what she knows and is passing it on to others.

Closed "5" hands move down the sides of the body for "person."



Work (trabajar) With the palms facing down, tap the wrist of the right "S" hand on the wrist of the left "S" hand in a hammering motion. Good: The hand moves forth from the mouth to the palm of the other hand.

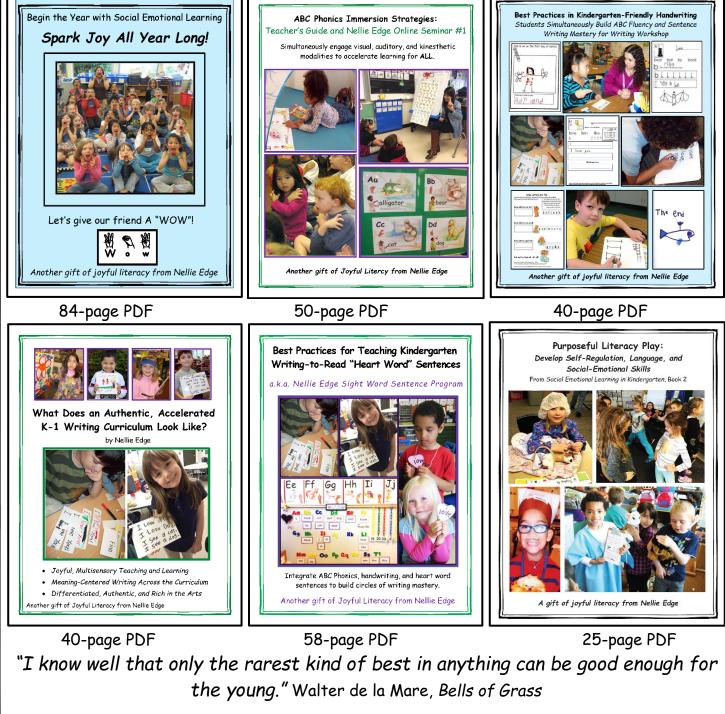


Line up (línea por favor) The "4" hands are often used to represent a line of people. The two "4" hands are pulled apart and fingers spread to show a line of people.

Chapter 3 Purposeful Literacy Play Develops Social-Emotional Learning NOTES

Download Gifts of Joyful Literacy from Nellie Edge

Authentic Teaching and Learning
 Meaning-Centered Experiences



Spark joy and accelerate literacy! Subscribe to <u>Nellie Edge blogs</u> to receive weekly photo essays of best early literacy practices and frequent FREE resources.

Yes! I want to subscribe now!

Begin the Year with Social Emotional Learning: Spark Joy All Year Long!

This FREE book is our introduction to Social Emotional Learning in Kindergarten. Download it at <u>NellieEdge.com</u>.

Weave these SEL lessons and moments into the kindergarten day and build a joyful community!



Visit Nellie Edge Kindergarten TPT for the SEL Bundle components shown below.



Joyful Teaching and Learning Supports SEL

Best Practices in Early Literacy and Social Emotional Learning

Joyful Learning • Multisensory Strategies • Authentic Curriculum (preK-2)

