

*Module:* **Communication and Emergent Literacy:  
Early Intervention Issues**

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**Session 1: Overview of Communication and  
Literacy**

**Activity B: Communicative Contexts in a Case Story**

**Instructor Guidelines**

The purposes of this assignment are for participants to

- identify the communicative, situational, and sociocultural contexts of communication and literacy using a case story and
- determine how visual impairments may influence these communicative contexts.

**Time needed.** 30 minutes

**Directions**

1. Ask participants to read “Case Story: Viridiana” and answer in writing the questions provided below. Participants may answer the questions individually or in small groups.
2. After participants have completed the questions, have them share their answers in small groups, as a class, or via an online discussion.

**Case Story: Viridiana**

Maria smiles as she browns the hamburger in the skillet in preparation for her family’s dinner. Juanita, Maria’s mother-in-law, is taking the rest of the dinner ingredients out of the refrigerator and the pantry. Roberto, Maria’s husband, has just arrived home from his job at the university and is playing with their four children in the living room. The three older children have abandoned their homework to climb on their father on the floor, laughing and screaming as they play. Maria and Roberto’s youngest child, Viridiana, is sitting against the couch tilting her head and watching the activity. The children’s homework is lying next to Viridiana.

Roberto crawls across the floor toward Viridiana with his 6-year-old son still clinging to his back. “Viridiana, Viridiana,” Roberto calls in a teasing voice, “I’m coming to get you.” Viridiana smiles and giggles. Roberto reaches his daughter and begins to tickle her belly. Viridiana laughs and squirms, then reaches out to her father. Roberto picks Viridiana up and tosses her into the air. “That’s my big girl. Did you have a good day today?” Leaning very close to her father’s face, Viridiana reaches out her right hand and strokes her father’s mustache. “Down you go,” he says as he plops her onto the couch.

Viridiana rolls to the edge of the couch and slides carefully to the floor. She crawls toward her brothers and sisters, who are all talking at once as they tell Roberto about their day. Viridiana's 9-year-old sister picks her up and cuddles her gently as they all move toward the kitchen for dinner.

### Participant questions

1. What is the communicative context? The situational context? The sociocultural context?

**Communicative context:**

**Roberto speaks directly to Viridiana.**

**The sister carries Viridiana into the kitchen.**

**Situational context:**

**The living room within the family's home**

**Viridiana's close proximity to her siblings' reading and writing materials.**

**Sociocultural context:**

**The older children are working on homework, so it can be assumed that education is valued.**

**The mother-in-law assists dinner, so it can be assumed that extended family is valued.**

**The father plays with all the children, so it is assumed that children are valued and parental bonding is important.**

**The older sister helps Viridiana to the kitchen for dinner, so it is assumed that the sibling's relationship and assistance to one another is valued.**

2. How do the three contexts influence the interaction?

**The large number of people within the home allows for frequent and varied opportunities for communicative events. Also, the older children working on homework in the same room as Viridiana provides opportunities for observation of literacy and communication models.**

3. Viridiana has low vision. How might this influence the communication?

**Depending upon Viridiana's distance vision, she may not see the reciprocal nature of communication among people in her environment. Additionally, she may not see subtle communicative attempts such as body language or facial expressions during communication. Viridiana may also miss the writing and reading activities involved in her environment, impeding her understanding of the connection between written and oral communication.**