

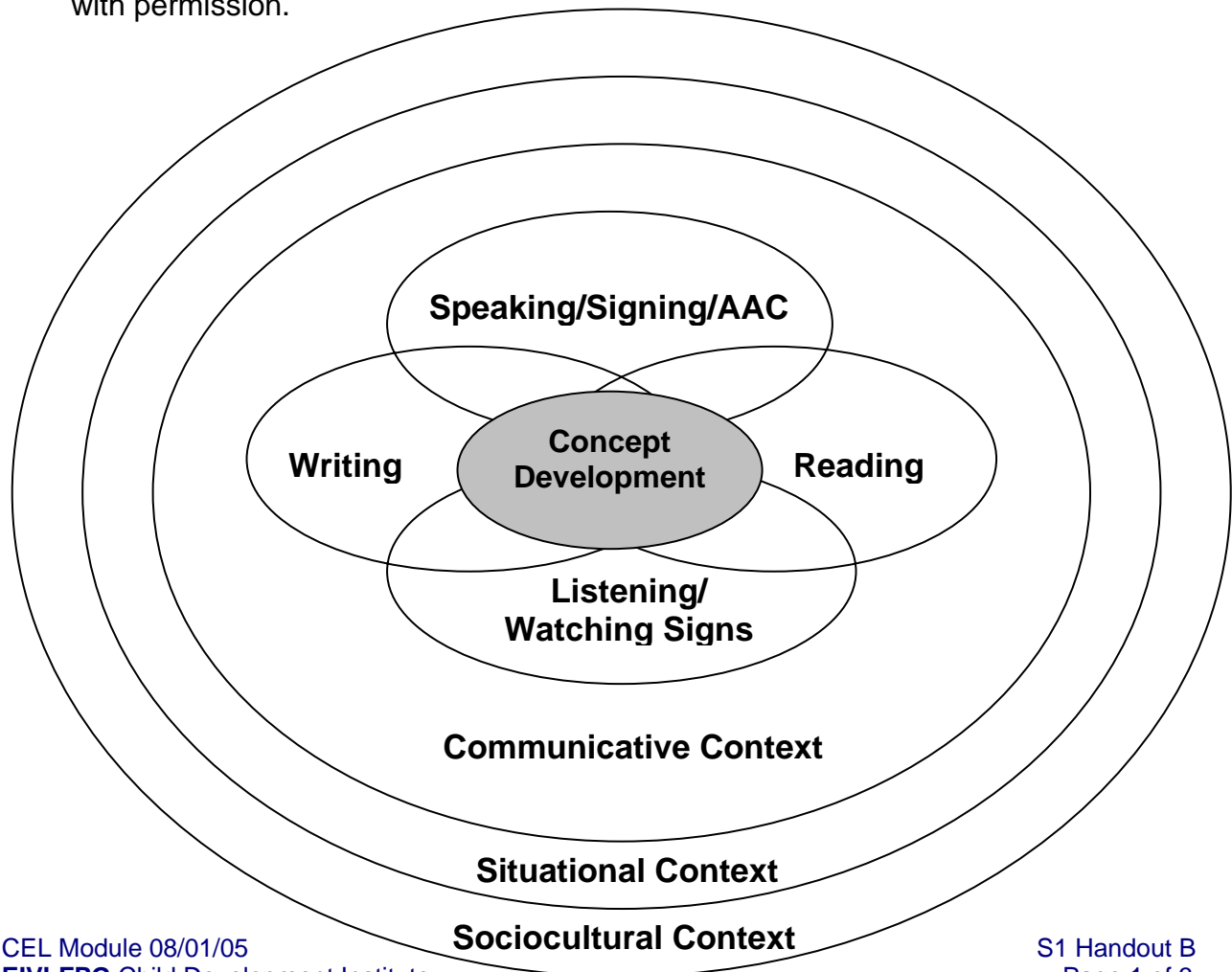
Module: **Communication and Emergent Literacy:
Early Intervention Issues**

Session 1: Overview of Communication and Literacy

Handout B: A Model of Oral and Written Language Development

EIVI Training Center. (2005). *A model of oral and written language development*.
Chapel Hill, NC: Early Intervention Training Center for Infants and Toddlers With
Visual Impairments, FPG Child Development Institute, UNC-CH.

Adapted from: Koppenhaver, D.A., Pierce, P.L., Steelman, J.D., & Yoder, D.E. (1995).
Contexts of early literacy intervention for children with developmental disabilities. In
M.E. Fey, J. Windsor, & S.F. Warren (Eds.), *Language intervention: Preschool
through the elementary years* (pp. 241-274). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes. Used
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The communicative context includes the verbal and nonverbal interactions of children and adults. It includes receptive communication such as listening, watching signs, and reading, as well as expressive communication such as speaking, signing, using assistive or adaptive communication devices, and writing. All of these communicative acts are related and develop in an interrelated manner. The nature of the communicative context and the interactions occurring within it dictate whether or not children will become familiar with the characteristics of language and the concepts that connect spoken and written language.

The situational context refers to the physical characteristics of children's living and learning environments. The situational context includes the availability of literacy and communication materials, opportunities for literacy and communication experiences, and the literacy and communication skills of adults and other children in the living and learning environments.

The sociocultural context specifically refers to the societal and cultural values, expectations, beliefs, and resources regarding communication and literacy. For example, middle-class Americans may value storybook reading with their children, while some Native Americans may value oral storytelling more.

The opportunities afforded children are influenced by their interactions with others; the physical environments in which they are living and learning; and the attitudes, expectations, and beliefs society holds for them as potential learners.

Consider the following example.

When 30-month-old Amber and her mother return from their trip to the grocery store, Amber's grandfather has arrived for a visit. Amber is feeling a little full from tasting so many good samples that were available at the store.

While her mother puts away the groceries, Amber brings her grandfather one of her braille-print books about different types of food. She sits on her grandfather's lap with the braille-print book resting on her legs. Her grandfather reads the rhyming print in a singsong voice as he skims his fingers over the braille dots. Amber periodically places her hand on her grandfather's as it moves across the page. She chimes in frequently with the repetitive line when her grandfather pauses at the end of each page.

Amber also enjoys interacting with her grandfather when he asks, "Is that your favorite food?" As always, Amber responds "No" to everything except chocolate ice cream—her true favorite.

This communicative and literacy experience can be viewed in terms of the communicative context, the situational context, and the sociocultural context. The communicative context included the use of a special reading voice, i.e., the singsong

rhythm, reading a braille-print book, and the fact that the grandfather related the book to Amber's life. The situational context included the child's independent access to braille books, the visit to the grocery store where the child had hands-on experiences with the foods mentioned in the book, and a home environment with many adults who were willing and able to support Amber and her literacy learning. The sociocultural context included the mother's expectation that Amber would go to the grocery store, the grandfather's understanding of the importance of reading and touching the braille dots, and the community resources that had helped the family acquire the books and learn how to use daily interactions to teach Amber about communication and literacy.

Reference

Koppenhaver, D.A., Pierce, P.L., Steelman, J.D., & Yoder, D.E. (1995). Contexts of early literacy intervention for children with developmental disabilities. In M.E. Fey, J. Windsor, & S.F. Warren (Eds.), *Language intervention: Preschool through the elementary years* (pp. 241-274). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.