

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

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

### **Study Questions and Answers for Recommended Reading B: Koppenhaver et al.**

Koppenhaver, D.A., Coleman, P.P., Kalman, S.L., & Yoder, D.E. (1991). The implications of emergent literacy research for children with developmental disabilities. *American Journal of Speech and Language Pathology, 1*, 329-335.

1. How does emergent literacy differ from reading readiness?  
**The reading readiness perspective is based on the belief that biological maturation and prerequisite skills and knowledge are required before children can learn to read or be literate. Reading readiness provides a foundation of specific skills that must be present before reading instruction can begin and does not address writing. The emergent literacy perspective takes a broader view and considers both reading and writing. Children are seen as capable of benefiting from literacy activities from birth. Literacy is seen as a continuum that includes cognitive, social, psychological, and linguistic processes.**
2. What four conclusions can be drawn about emergent literacy from research on typically developing children?
  - **The process of learning to read and write is a continuum that begins at birth and perhaps before.**
  - **Reading, writing, speaking, and listening abilities develop concurrently and interrelatedly, rather than sequentially.**
  - **The functions of literacy are as integral to literacy learning as the forms.**
  - **Children learn written language through active engagement with their world.**
3. Why are children with developmental delays exposed to fewer literacy-related experiences than children with typical development?
  - **Children's physical, sensory, communicative, or cognitive differences may decrease opportunities for self-exploration of print or may affect their ability to engage with other people or to signal communicative intentions.**
  - **Children with disabilities may have limited access to appropriate reading and writing tools or adaptive equipment appropriate for writing.**

- Limited vision may influence access to environmental print and/or reading role models.
  - Wheelchair placement may prevent exposure to literacy opportunities.
  - Literacy experiences may seem to be a low priority compared to physical or therapeutic needs.
  - Caregivers may doubt the value of devoting time to literacy experiences. Their perceptions and expectations of children with impairments may influence the quantity and quality of emergent literacy experiences provided.
4. What are five actions parents can take to integrate reading and writing into the daily routines of children with disabilities?  
**Participants' responses will vary but may include examples from the list below.**
- Opening, reading, and responding to mail with children
  - Using recipes with children to bake a favorite treat
  - Making a shopping list with children using signs and labels from foods
  - Reading labels on items around the home—i.e., cereal boxes, toothpaste, diaper wipes, or canned goods
  - Pointing out and reading road signs and billboards when driving
  - Watching educational television programs that reinforce written language activities
  - Ensuring children have opportunities to observe functional and recreational uses of print
  - Shared storybook readings
5. Name five ways early interventionists can incorporate emergent literacy activities into the time they spend with children and families.  
**Participants' responses will vary but may include examples from the list below.**
- Using thematic experiences in storybooks for activities related to art, drama, or cooking
  - Providing opportunities for children with impairments to interact with typically developing peers, especially during literacy-related activities
  - Creating and using interactive stories, using augmentative or assistive technology during storybook readings
  - Repeating readings of familiar stories
  - Increasing the variety of types of literature, providing exposure to an increased number of concepts and different types of language

- **Providing independent access to storybooks and writing and drawing instruments**
- **Talking with children about what they have written or drawn**
- **Increasing environmental print within the children's line of vision**