

Attainment's Pathways to Literacy Implementation Guide

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Pathways to Literacy Implementation Guide

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About the Authors



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Pamela Mims, PhD, is a professor at East Tennessee State University. She was previously graduate assistant for an Institute of Education Sciences

(IES) grant that focused on teaching emerging literacy skills to elementary students with significant disabilities. She was past Project Manager and Research Associate for the National Alternate Assessment Center at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte. Her area of expertise and research focus is on the use of systematic instruction with students who have multiple disabilities. Her research has contributed to the field of emerging literacy, access to the general curriculum (in language arts, math, and science), and alternate assessment for students with significant disabilities. Her background also includes teaching middle school students with multiple disabilities. Pamela has authored several manuscripts and book chapters and presented nationally on educating students with significant disabilities.



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Overview

Pathways to Literacy: A Story-Based Curriculum for Early Symbol Users is a researched, early literacy curriculum for students with developmental disabilities who do not yet consistently use words, pictures, or other symbols to communicate. This curriculum addresses the needs of students who may have multiple disabilities (e.g., physical, intellectual, and visual), including those who are nonverbal. Some students with the most severe developmental disabilities seem unresponsive during story read alouds. This curriculum provides strategies to increase awareness and engagement in a story reading while building comprehension in a very concrete and systematic fashion. Pathways to Literacy was developed to help students participate in a model for story read alouds called “story-based lessons.” Student’s progress in using this curriculum has been researched and is described in Appendix A.

The curriculum consists of five levels of instruction. Each level has a task analysis framework for teaching a story-based lesson; each level increases the expectations for the student’s response. The beginning levels focus on increasing a student’s engagement in the story by introducing a surprise element or by inserting the student’s name into the story. Later levels provide more challenging objectives, such as answering questions given three response options, or finding a picture symbol that represents a word.

Beginning levels rely heavily on object use throughout the story to make learning more concrete. Objects are gradually paired with pictures and then objects are faded in later levels, where pictures or symbols become the focus. Students must meet established mastery criteria in order to move up through the levels. A student who is successful at Level Five, the highest level, should be able to move into typical

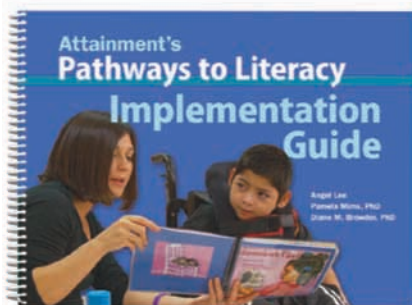
story-based lessons, such as those in Level A of the **Early Literacy Skills Builder** curriculum (ELSB; Browder, Gibbs, Ahlgrim-Delzell, Courtade, & Lee, 2007). Some students may even be able to move directly into Level One of ELSB without instruction at Level A. (For students who need just basic instruction in learning to use pictures consistently, teachers are encouraged to use Level A of ELSB, rather than Pathways to Literacy. Level A of ELSB is condensed and may provide enough instruction to get students started in responding to pictures and then able to move on to Level One of ELSB.) Pathways to Literacy is intended for those students who need more gradual instruction to begin using pictures or symbols to communicate understanding of a story.

Three popular and engaging children’s books adapted for your use are provided: **Jamaica’s Find**, **Earthdance**, and **Tar Beach**. To adapt, the books have been paginated, spiral bound, and laminated for durability; and for greater student engagement with the story, repeating storylines have been added. Each book has an accompanying manual of scripted lessons for each of the five levels of instruction. These scripted lessons embed systematic instruction and follow a task analysis; therefore, they can serve as a model for you as you learn to conduct story-based lessons with other books.

Pathways to Literacy also includes a set of 3–5 story-related objects to use within the lessons. A Big Button AAC device is provided for use in the scripted lessons. Picture cards representing the objects are also included for use in Levels Three to Five, for use with the Big Button AAC device, and for creating symbols for object responders. A Symbol Creation Kit provides the parts and pieces needed to create symbols for students with visual impairment.

What You Get

Pathways to Literacy comes with everything you need to get started.



Implementation Guide

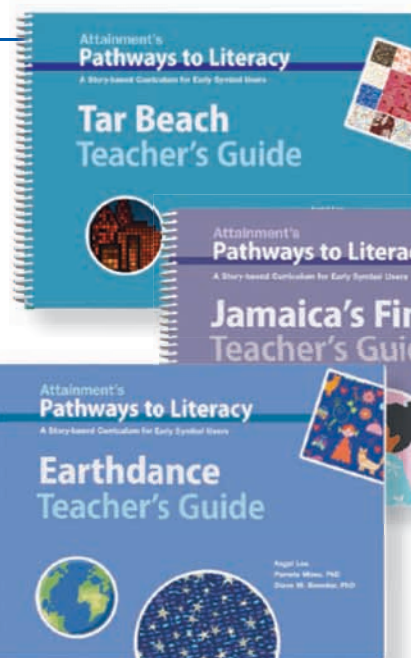
The Implementation Guide describes the Scope and Sequence and the research outcomes for this curriculum, and how to use Pathways to Literacy. It also includes a decision-making rubric to help you know where to start a student and data collection forms to monitor

the student's progress; planning templates and blank scripts for each level; and a book plan for mapping out specific adaptations for a student. These elements are provided so you can apply the instructional strategies to any story you choose.



Adapted Storybooks

Three popular and engaging children's books have been adapted for your use. Repeating storylines have been added to the text; texture has been added to the titles to provide a tactile experience; and each book has been paginated, spiral bound, and laminated for durability.



Teacher Guides with Scripted Lessons

Scripted lessons for each of five levels are provided for the three adapted children's books: **Jamaica's Find**, **Earthdance**, and **Tar Beach**.

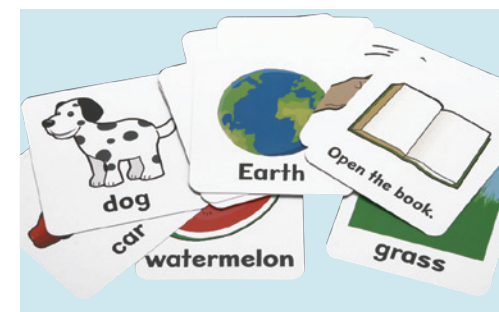
Story-Related Objects

These objects are used in the lessons to engage students, build choice making, and help students indicate comprehension.



Card Sets

Three sets of picture cards corresponding to the story-related objects are provided: one set for student responding in Levels Three to Five; one set for creating symbols for students with visual impairment (object responders); one set for use with the **Big Button**



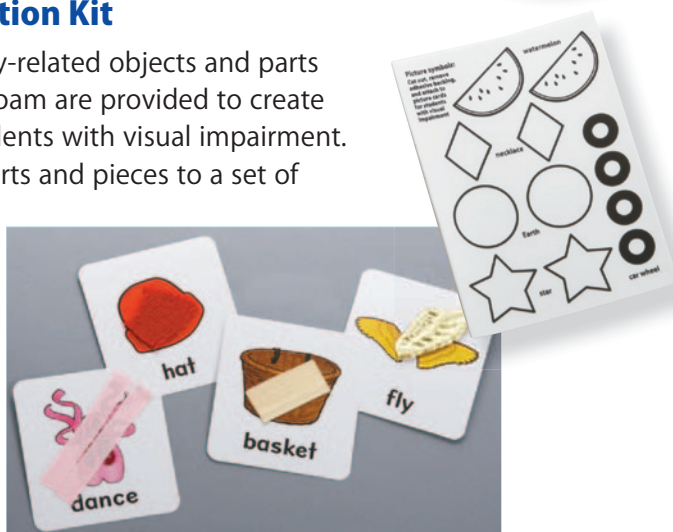
AAC device. Also, picture cards for **Turn the page** and **Open the book** are provided for students who eye gaze as their mode of responding.

Big Button

An augmentative/alternative communication (AAC) device is provided for student responding in the lessons. A set of picture cards is provided for use with the Big Button AAC device.

Symbol Creation Kit

Parts of the story-related objects and parts printed on fun foam are provided to create symbols for students with visual impairment. Adhere these parts and pieces to a set of picture cards.

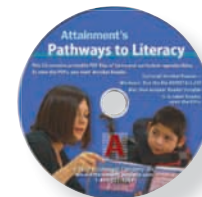


Velcro

Velcro® is provided for attaching objects or pictures to pages or to AAC devices.

PDF CD

- Reproducible forms found in the Appendix are provided as PDF files on the CD for convenient printing from your computer (PTL_Forms.pdf).
- In addition, PDF files of the picture cards are also provided (PTL_PictureCards.pdf).
- One of the files is enlarged images of the picture cards (PTL_LargePictures.pdf).
- Some students may respond better to photos of the story-related objects rather than the illustrations of the objects. A PDF file of photo cards is also included on the CD (PTL_PhotoCards.pdf).



The Pathways to Literacy Curriculum

Pathways to Literacy has five levels. Each level focuses on specific objectives that move the student from concrete levels of responding to symbolic levels. Each level is based on a task analysis that delineates the steps needed to help students achieve the objectives of the level. Planning Templates for each level are provided in Appendix B to help you plan for what you will do at each step, materials needed, how you will present the materials, and how you expect the student to respond. These Planning Templates are based on task analyses for each level.

In addition to the Planning Templates, scripts are provided for each level. The scripts reflect direct and systematic instruction and demonstrate how to progress through the story-based lesson. Each script specifically models how to provide feedback and prompting for three types of responses: 1) eye gaze; 2) touch, and 3) object response. Blank Scripts by Level can be found in Appendix C.

Blank forms for determining at which level to begin with a student (Decision Rules, Appendix D), for planning how to adapt a book (Book

Plan, Appendix E), and for collecting data and measuring the student's progress (Data Collection forms, Appendix F) are also included in Pathways to Literacy. Not all students will need to start at the first level of Pathways to Literacy. Students who already show some interest and some responding during story read alouds may be able to start midway through the curriculum. Pathways to Literacy provides a decision-making rubric—Decision Rules—to help you decide where to start students.

Students with multiple, severe disabilities often have their own idiosyncratic modes of communication. Pathways to Literacy is unique because the lessons can be individualized based on the needs of the student. Students can show what they know in a variety of ways, for example by using their eyes to gaze at an answer; by touching an option; or by choosing an object, picture, or symbol to communicate their responses.



Background and Research Foundation

Instructional read alouds have been found in research to be beneficial for students with severe disabilities. First, Blyden (1988) found that using large print, pictures, and sign language increased the active participation of students with multiple intellectual and physical disabilities. Skotko, Koppenhaver, and Erickson (2004) taught four mothers of girls with Rett Syndrome to conduct storybook reading. Some of the ways the students were encouraged to communicate about the book included attributing meaning to the girls' attempts to communicate, prompting use of a communication device to comment or answer questions, and allowing enough wait time for students to answer a question. Browder, Trela, and Jimenez (2008) demonstrated a way to teach middle school students with severe disabilities to participate in read alouds of adapted novels. Browder et al. created a

task analysis to implement the story-based lessons; they then trained teachers in the steps of the task analysis and how to prompt students for responses to the steps in the lessons. This task analysis, as well as story building steps, are described in the Early Literacy Skills Builder curriculum (Browder, Gibbs, Ahlgrim-Dezell, Courtade, & Lee, 2007) and provide the foundation for the read aloud model used in Pathways to Literacy.

Pathways to Literacy was developed for students with the most severe disabilities who may have multiple disabilities (e.g., physical, intellectual, and visual). It was derived from a series of single subject studies and some field trials of the five levels of the curriculum with students in the Charlotte, NC region. This research is described in detail in Appendix A.

Scope and Sequence

The following is the scope and sequence of the five levels in Pathways to Literacy. This scope and sequence shows the progression of skills students acquire as they move through the curriculum. The scope and sequence shown here is arranged by objective.

	Level One Engages with a Book	Level Two Chooses a Response	Level Three Uses Objects to Respond	Level Four Uses Pictures, Symbols, and/or Objects to Respond	Level Five Uses Pictures or Symbols to Respond
Objective 1 Auditorily attends to reader	Reacts to own name read within the text	Not taught	Not taught	Not taught	Not taught
Objective 2 Actively responds to a surprise element during reading	Reacts to a surprise element	Not taught	Not taught	Not taught	Not taught
Objective 3 Chooses a book	Attends to a book for at least two seconds	Chooses a book from a choice of two	Chooses a book from a choice of two	Chooses a book from a choice of two	Chooses a book from a choice of two
Objective 4 Locates a book title	Attends to the book for at least two seconds	Attends to the book for at least three seconds	Attends to the title and author's name as they are read	Touches the raised words of the book title	Touches the raised words of the book title
Objective 5 Attends to the anticipatory set	Attends to the anticipatory set for at least two seconds	Attends to the anticipatory set for at least three seconds	Attends to the anticipatory set and engages with a story-related object	Attends to the anticipatory set and engages with a story-related object, picture, or symbol	Attends to the anticipatory set and engages with a story-related picture or symbol
Objective 6 Engages with object, picture, or symbol in a "read with me" activity	Attends to the object for at least two seconds	Attends to the object for at least three seconds	Locates the object on the page	Locates the object, picture, or symbol on the page	Locates the picture or symbol on the page

	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Objective 7 Completes a repeated storyline	Completes a repeated storyline by activating an AAC device	Completes a repeated storyline by activating an AAC device	Completes a repeated storyline by activating an AAC device and by placing hands on a picture or symbol	Completes a repeated storyline by activating an AAC device and by placing hands on a picture or symbol	Completes a repeated storyline by activating an AAC device and by placing hands on a picture or symbol
Objective 8 Uses an object, picture, or symbol to indicate comprehension	Not taught	Selects an object to answer a comprehension question	Selects an object to answer a comprehension question	Selects an object, picture, or symbol to answer a comprehension question	Selects a picture or symbol to answer a comprehension question
Objective 9 Finds a picture or symbol that represents a word	Not taught	Not taught	Locates the picture or symbol on the page	Locates the picture or symbol on the page	Locates the picture or symbol on the page
Objective 10 Labels choices	Not taught	Not taught	Places own name/ photo with book choice or indicates where the name/ photo goes	Places own name/ photo with book choice or indicates where the name/ photo goes	Places own name with book choice or indicates where the name goes
Objective 11 Predicts what the story will be about	Not taught	Not taught	Selects the object that goes with the book	Selects the object, picture, or symbol that goes with the book	Selects the picture or picture symbol that goes with the book
Objective 12 Turns a page	Not taught	Not taught	Independently turns page, imitates a page turn, or requests to turn page	Independently turns page, imitates a page turn, or requests to turn page	Independently turns page, imitates a page turn, or requests to turn page

	Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Level Five
Objective 13 Selects own name/photo	Not taught	Not taught	Not taught	Selects own name/ photo to put with book choice	Selects own name to put with book choice
Objective 14 Answers a summative comprehension question at the end of a story	Not taught	Not taught	Selects an object that goes with the book	Selects a picture or picture symbol that goes with the book	Selects a picture or picture symbol that goes with the book
Objective 15 Opens a book	Attends as you open the book	Attends as you open the book	Opens the book or indicates the need for the book to be opened	Opens the book or indicates the need for the book to be opened	Opens the book or indicates the need for the book to be opened