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This manual sets out to assist you in implementing this resource and making literacy come alive in your classroom.

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1. adult/teacher needed



2. complete work at desk



3. work book & pencil



4. cooperation



5. oral emphasis



6. work in pairs



7. small group



8. illustrations



9. text selected by teacher



10. complete additional activities if time permits

Introduction

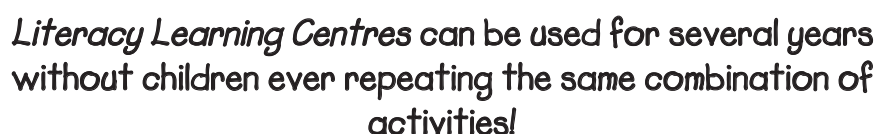
Why Use Literacy Learning Centres?

When literacy learning centres were discussed in 1998, we, like many teachers, felt overwhelmed. It meant spending hours of each weekend preparing activities and resources to be used during our literacy blocks each day. As a staff, we received professional development that explained *why* we should establish literacy learning centres and touched on *how* through the presentation of timetables that told us how much time to devote to this and how much time to devote to that. We loved the concept – but there was nothing to *really* tell us how to establish learning centres that could stand the test of time. We wanted activities that were much more beneficial than teachers photocopying five different sheets that would be rotated over the week. As we searched through resources that dealt with learning centres, we failed to find anything that we were satisfied with. There was only one solution – create it ourselves!

Initially, we were just making it for use in our own school. Discussions with teachers from other schools made us realise that everybody was in the same boat as we were. We hope you find it as useful and practical as we do and that your children receive the same benefits as ours have – both academically and socially. Don't be afraid to build on our work to ensure it caters for the needs of your children, after all, that is our wish. Many of these activities can be completed or enhanced through the integration of classroom computers. Helpful programs are *PowerPoint*, *Hypercard*, *Hyperstudio*, *ClarisWorks*, *Micro Worlds* and *Logo Writer*. There are many commercial products just waiting to be integrated.

The importance of teaching to the individual needs of each child in the classroom has never been more evident. The introduction of learning centres allows you to set activities that are appropriate to the different learning styles and developmental stages of your children and allows you to provide individual instruction to a small group of children.

The most significant obstacle facing teachers when setting up learning centres in the classroom is creating the resources required. This was our motivation for creating Literacy Alive!



Literacy Learning Centres can be used for several years without children ever repeating the same combination of activities!

How to Start the Day

This is a suggested format.

Each school will have varying obligations to fulfil before classes can start.

✓ Remember to assess and record children's progress throughout the morning.

Time	What's Happening
8:50	Assembly and administration
9:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Shared reading – this may be where you focus on a specific grammatical skill, punctuation, fluency, expression etc.✓ Start circle reading with adult helpers – or your own method of reading✓ Start 'Literacy Alive!' learning centres.✓ I.S.P.'s✓ Guided reading✓ Whole class reading, spelling or writing task.✓ This may include extension-spelling activities, dictation, modelling of different genre, free creative writing etc.
10:50	Allow time for the children to verbalise what they have learnt during the activities.
11:00	Morning recess

A Weekly Model for Literacy Learning Centres

Rotational Activities for Monday to Thursday

Group 1.

Modelling instructional writing – teacher instructed

Group 2.

Tons of Tenses – Literacy Learning Centres #27

Focus on present tense.

Group 3.

Longer Shorter – Literacy Learning Centres #17

Focus on writing brief informative sentences.

Group 4.

Wonder Words – Literacy Learning Centres #8

Focus on verbs and linking words, e.g. first, then, after.

Group 5.

Sequence Scuttle – Literacy Learning Centres #25

Focus on sequencing instructional texts.

Friday

- Revise verbs such as *cut*, *put*, *place*, etc.
- Discuss the importance of short, concise instructions used in instructional texts.
- Reinforce that instructions are written in present tense.
- Children follow simple instructional text on how to make a salad sandwich.
- Children select from list of instructional text topics such as 'How to clean your teeth.'
- Use 'circle reading' groups for children to share instructional texts.
- Whilst child reads instructional texts, other children act out instructions to provide feedback on sequence and instructions.

Assessment

- Assess knowledge of present tense, verb usage, sequencing and instructional writing through individual written task. (see Friday)

Outcomes

- Maintains simple present tense throughout.
- Uses linking words to signal time
- Omits 'you' and starts sentences with a verb, e.g. stir, add, cut
- Uses action verbs.

Lots of Letters

Focus

Identifies sounds, blends and digraphs within words – initial, medial and final.

Recognises words that contain the same visual patterns and common letter sequences.

Recognises some of the same sounds made by one letter or a group of letters.

Recognises an increasing list of sight vocabulary.

Identifies errors in text using proofreading strategies.

Comprehends sentences read.

What to do

1. Write sentences with some letters missing. For example:

_ am havi _ g a g _ eat ti _ e.

2. Place all upper and lower case letters facing up on a table.
3. Ensure there is a sentence for each child in the group.
4. Children work on their own sentence.
5. When it is complete and they have placed the missing letters into the correct positions to create a meaningful sentence, child reads the sentence to the group.
6. When each child has completed and read their sentence, rotate sentences so that each child has a turn filling in each sentence strip.



7. Children may copy the completed sentences onto paper and illustrate.



Compound Combo

Focus

Forms compound words.

Writes simple sentences.

What to do

1. Define a compound word to the children. A compound word forms when two single words join together to form a new word, e.g:

some + where = somewhere

2. Brainstorm the compound words known by the children.
3. Read through the word cards.
4. Place the word cards face up on the floor in front of the children.
5. Allow each child to choose two words that when joined together form a compound word.
6. Remove the cards from the children's sight. Say a compound word.
7. Children write the compound word, e.g:

Finger + nail = fingernail

8. Repeat several times.
9. Allow the children to select three or four compound words.
10. The children will write sentences containing the selected words.



11. Lay the word cards face down on the floor.
12. Each child has a turn in picking up two words.
13. If the words can be joined together to make a compound word, the child can keep the cards.
14. If the words cannot be joined together to make a compound word, the child returns the cards to the floor face down.

