Appendix

The Project Approach

Sylvia Chard in her book entitled "The Project Approach: Making Curriculum Come Alive" discusses the phases of project work. This sequence provides a framework for curriculum planning. Once the topic of the project has been decided upon the sequence in which it precedes is expected. Each project includes a beginning, middle and end. The teacher, with the children identifies expectations for each phase and once they have been met, the project progresses to the next phase until the final sharing and celebrating phase. Here is a brief explanation of what may occur in each phase:

Phase 1

The beginning of the project involves both teacher and children engaged in sharing what they know or have experienced about the topic, (similar to the KWL model). Children are encouraged to represent their knowledge through a number of mediums, drawing, painting, building, dramatizing etc. Opportunities are given to children to share their representations to provide a baseline understanding for their classmates. It is during this transition to phase two that children are encouraged to consider questions they may want to investigate and research. Parents are kept informed of the process so as to offer any expertise they may have with the topic.

Phase 2

Using the research questions as a guide, field work is planned and experts are contacted to visit (if possible) the classroom. Real objects and experiences are a necessary component of project work to support the hands-on, minds-on learning needed toanswer the posed questions as well as explore new questions. Once again, children choose different ways to represent their findings and reactions to what they have experienced. Documentation of this process is extremely important to inform the children, teacher and parents of the learning that has occurred through the exploration of the project and will be an extremely valuable part of phase three.

Phase 3

Opportunities are provided for children to present their findings and share the project with others. Celebrating the learning with the remainder of the school, parents and community is a valuable part of the project approach. Showcasing the documentation will support the growth and depth of the research topic. The emphasis is now given to communicating the learning through imaginative, personal ways. Capturing this projects evolution by referring back to the original questions posed, KWL or web provides the opportunity for children to recognize their growth and identify their personal learning. Recording the process through technology can be considered for further study or reflection.

Searching the internet for further elaborations will provide more detail and examples. As classroom teachers it is worth noting that the project approach does not have to be an all day everyday model. Setting aside time within the classroom each week for project learning may be all that is required. Project topics often dictate how much time is needed, as a rule, phase 2 will require the most time.

Example 1:

Ms. Hall has noticed that several of the children in her room enjoy dramatic play. They have been very involved in putting on short performances for each other which involves a lot of dance and choreography. She decides to try to incorporate this interest in performance into her lesson planning. She approaches the children during whole group time to ask for their input into her plan. She suggests that the children develop a play that will be performed for the parents within the next few months. To start this process, she engages in an approach similar to K-W-L, asking the children what they already know about the process of putting on a play. Once she gets their ideas which might include: you need a ticket, there is a stage, there are actors, you need to know your lines, etc...she engages the children over the next few weeks in the development of a play. Some of the students may write the play while others may choose to do the choreography. Even though the experience may start with only the interest of a few children, eventually all of the children will become involved in one way or another. Some children may choose to make up the program, design the set, write the play or enagae in choreographing. Throughout the entire experience, Ms. Hall will listen to the children's questions, observe their various approaches to their individual tasks and document what she hears and sees. The information gained through conversation, observation and documentation helps her to plan along the way, as she determines what else the children want to learn about the process of putting on a play. While she is doing this, she is able to incorporate many opportunities for promoting rich numeracy and literacy experiences. She may also notice that parents are getting more and more involved in the production of the play. They may comment on the ongoing documentation displayed inside and outside the classroom about this experience and are they will probably beocme interested in their children's enthusiasm for the project. A parent may volunteer to be the official photographer at the play itself and may also help to develop the accompanying documentation display. The play itself ends up being very successful and once the set is dismantled and the props are put away, Ms. Hall sits with the children to write a final story about their experience for inclusion in the school newspaper. An individual student's interest may result in a lot of excitement for learning within an entire class.

Example 2:

Mr. Coates has noticed that there hasn't been a lot of block building happening in the block area for the past few weeks. He knows that his class includes a couple of very skilled block builders and he is hoping to renew their interest. He decides to bring in a couple of pulleys, some rope, and a small wooden platform to act as a provocation in the block area. He brings the pulleys, ropes, the platform, and a few blocks to the whole group during circle time and demonstrates how the pulleys work. He tells the children that he will be leaving these materials in the block area and invites them to explore these simple machines over the next couple of days during their free play time. There is a lot of interest in the pulleys and Mr. Coates ends up bringing in a few more smaller pulleys for use with the smaller plastic blocks in the manipulative area. He observes the children's interactions with the materials, records their comments, takes a few photos and moves into the play situation when he feels he can extend their learning by posing a questions such as "What happens when you make the rope shorter?" , "How can you rig this so that you can lift even more blocks?, or "How many more do you think you can lift if you added another pulley? He brings out a few clipboards, paper and pens and invites the children to sketch what they've done with the pulleys. He writes down their comments and he begins to display what they've done. The children seem to draw some inspiration from the documentation and they try to create even more intricate machines. Mr. Coates brings in a few catalogues from a local hardware store and the children engage with the books seeing if there are any other simple machines that

they could use to move their blocks. They make a list of materials that they think they could use. The list includes hooks, wire, a ramp, and some plastic tubing. Mr. Coates and the children post the list outside the door asking parents if they have any of these materials at home. A few of the parents bring in some materials, including some other materials that weren't on the list but they thought could be useful. The simple machine making continues for a few weeks in the classroom and extends to the science area and also begins to include the toy cars as the children make various sloping ramps. All the while, Mr. Coates documents what he sees happening and encourages the children to do the same. Together they make predictions about how fast cars will go down various size ramps; they measure how far cylinder blocks roll ; they count and chart the number of blocks that can be lifted by various size pulleys and make predictions about how high the block towers will be if a pulley is used to hoist the blocks. Mr. Coates wants to move some of this activity outside once the weather cooperates and has also been talking with the physical education teacher about how to incorporate the concepts of balance and leverage into some of the children's physical activities. During the time span of this interest, Mr. Coates has noticed that some children are more involved than others in the concept of moving and motion with simple machines but he recognizes that this is natural. He takes advantage of various entry points with the children, meaning that some activities are naturally suited for involvement by all the children, e.g., predicting how high block towers will become, while other more intricate activities, e.g., the building of a complex machine by a few of the children which involved several pulleys and ramps, are more suitable for the involvement of only a few children. He does make sure to include the larger group on a fairly regular basis by asking the involved children to report back to the larger group on what they've been doing. This reporting back occurs during whole group sessions. He finds that the documentation displays are valuable aids for this reporting back time, as they help to guide the conversation of the children and help to put their comments into context.

A Developmentally Appropriate Classroom is one where children most often........

•**Lead**..rather than follow the teacher.

•**Create**...…...........rather than duplicate.

•**Move**...…...rather than wait.

•**Make the lines**...…...............rather than colour in the lines.

•**Speak**...rather than listen passively.

•**Initiate**...rather than imitate.

•**Raise questions**..rather than answer the teacher's questions.

•**Solve their own problems**..rather than the teacher's problems.

•**Make art**...rather than do crafts.

•**Emphasize the process**..rather than the product.

•**Use authentic skills**...rather than drill and practice.

•**Make books**..rather than fill in workbooks.

•**Decide**..rather than submit.

•**Choose wisely**.............................:..rather than being told.

•**Make a plan**..rather than follow the teacher's plan.

•**Try again**...…......................................rather than fail.

Adapted from *"The Butterfly Garden: Developmentally Appropriate Practice Defined"* by Sandra Crosser, Ph.D

Frequently Asked Questions About Student Profiles for Language Arts in Kindergarten

What is the expectation for these indicators?

It is an expectation that students will be working towards mastery of many of these indicators by the end of Kindergarten. These indicators will have an 'M' for *expected mastery* included on the continua. Some other indicators need to be assessed strictly for formative reasons to provide information for instruction. These indicators will have a 'C' for *just checking*.

How do I record Letter Recall?

The teacher should record the number correct from the checklist. The letters that cause difficulty should be recorded in the Comment section.

When do I check Letter Recall?

Letter recall can be assessed at any time during the school year. Once a student has shown evidence of mastery of the 52 letters, letter recall does not need to be reassessed. An assessment in June is necessary for these students who have not yet shown mastery.

How do I know if a student understands that print carries a message?

- Student can read own writing, student understands

- Student retells own writing, student understands but cannot read it (may read it differently each time)

- Student cannot remember what he/she wrote: student has not achieved this indicator

What is Concepts About Print?

The original **Concepts About Print** was developed by Marie Clay in New Zealand. It assesses student familiarity with print conventions such as concept of word, one-to-one correspondence when fingerpointing, left page before right, etc. There are several versions which can be used. **Sand, Stones, and No Shoes** are commercial books which can be purchased. Early Success and Miriam Trebearné's Kindergarten Teacher's Resource Book have other versions, The Department of Education developed a Concepts About Print Checklist in 2003. Some school districts have also developed their own Concepts About Print. Any of these versions of Concepts About Print may be used.

LANGUAGE ARTS STUDENT PROFILE
Kindergarten

STUDENT: _____   **SCHOOL NAME:** _____

SCHOOL NUMBER: _____   **SCHOOL YEAR:** _____

READING AND VIEWING			
Indicator	**Date**	**Comment**	**Assessment**
Recognizes and recalls upper case letters (M)			- Individual checklist for recognition - Individual/group worksheet for recall - Shared writing, individual writing
Recognizes and recalls lower case letters (M)			- Individual checklist for recognition - Individual/group worksheet for recall - Shared writing, individual writing
Understands concept of letter (M)			- Concepts About Print - Sound boxes
Understands concept of word (C)			- Concepts About Print - Fingerpointing, shared writing, individual writing
Understands concept of first and last letter of a word (C)			- Concepts About Print - Shared writing, individual writing - Reading record analysis
Understands directionality (C) - left to right - front and back of book - top to bottom - return sweep - beginning to end			- Concepts About Print - Picture walk of a book without reading, emphasizing these concepts
Recognizes first and last name (M)			- Observation
Recognizes some personally significant words in context (e.g., mom, dad, love, pet names, names of siblings) (C)			- Shared reading - Daily observation
Year End Reading Record (not necessary for all students)	**Instructional Level**		**Accuracy Rate**

LANGUAGE ARTS STUDENT PROFILE
Kindergarten

STUDENT: _____ SCHOOL NAME: _____

SCHOOL NUMBER: _____ SCHOOL YEAR: _____

WRITING AND REPRESENTING			
Indicator	**Date**	**Comment**	**Assessment**
Understands that print carries a message (M)			- Conference after journal or other
Understands the difference between drawing and writing (M)			- Conference
Distinguishes between numerals and letters when recording a message (M)			- Shared writing - Interactive writing - Journals, independent writing
Uses drawings, letters, and words to record meaning (C) - spaces between word-like clusters of letters - experiments with punctuation - uses letters to represent the predominant sounds in words - begins to spell some words conventionally			- May / June independent, un-edited (if students can write an independent message)
Beginning to write and represent simple informational texts (C)			- Simple diagram (e.g., Draw and label - Picture representation (e.g., Draw a picture of an animal and write a sentence about it.)
Attach May/June Writing Sample			

LANGUAGE ARTS STUDENT PROFILE
Kindergarten

STUDENT: _____ SCHOOL NAME: _____

SCHOOL NUMBER: _____ SCHOOL YEAR: _____

SPEAKING AND LISTENING			
Indicator	**Date**	**Comment**	**Assessment**
Expresses feelings and gives examples of experiences (M)			- Classroom observation - Show-and-Tell (scheduled) - Newstelling (p. 60-62 First Steps Oral Language Resource Book)
Begins to ask and respond to questions (M)			- Small group discussion (p. 29-32 FS Oral Language Resource Book) - Classroom Observation (p. 152-153 FS Oral Language Resource Book)
Expresses opinions (e.g., "I like" . . , "I don't like" ...) (M)			- Classroom Observation - Show-and-Tell
Listens to ideas and opinions of others (M)			- Classroom observation - Small group discussion (p. 29-32 FS Oral Language Resource Book)
Responds to simple directions and instructions (M)			- Classroom observation - Barrier Games (p.110 FS Oral Language Resource Book) - Teacher-dictated patterns (e.g., multi-link cubes)
Gives simple directions and instructions (C)			- Classroom observation - Barrier Games (p.110 FS Oral Language Resource Book) - Group Barrier Games (p.115-117 FS Oral Language Resource Book)
Demonstrates awareness of social conventions in group work and co-operative play (M)			- Classroom observation - Social Conventions (p. 51-52 FS Oral Language Resource Book) - Me Working with a Group (Discovery Links Social Studies)
Engages in simple oral presentations (C)			- Show-and-Tell - Newstelling (p. 60-62 FS Oral Language Resource Book) - Oral Report Assessment Master (Discovery Links Social Studies, p. 34)

ANECDOTAL NOTES