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**Early Writing Development: Exploring
Beliefs, Assumptions, and Roles of the
SLP**

Presented By:
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Moderated By:
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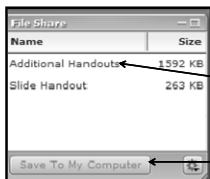


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Early Writing Development: Exploring Beliefs, Assumptions, and Roles of the SLP



- Lara Wakefield, PhD, CCC-SLP
- Wakefield Consultation Services
- For SpeechPathology.com
- Course # 4050

Companion Course on SpeechPath.com:
Collaboration Toolkit
Course # 2799

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Welcome Purpose (1)



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Introduction Activate Prior Knowledge (2)



SLP for 16 years
Research interests:
- Collaborations
- Early Literacy
- Assessing Applications for smartphones
Focus on Qualitative Methods

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My Assistants Process (3)



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Overview

- Key terms
- Discuss 2 general assumptions
- Review 2 predominant theories that shape our beliefs
- Explore SLP's role in early writing

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Key Terms

- Early Writing Development
- Oral Language Supremacy Assumption
- Deficit Model Assumption
- Piagetian theory (developmentalists)
- Vygotskian theory (emergent)
- Roles

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Let's Explore! Dynamic (4)

- Think about the terms, assumptions, and beliefs and how they relate to your practice
- Please take notes and be prepared to make your comments and questions about these issues at the end of the presentation

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Early Writing Development Multi-dimensional (5)



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Early Writing Development



- Occurs between birth-7 years of age
- Symbolic interaction through various visual or graphic media (writing, pictures, texting, e-mailing, drawing)
- May not necessarily be directly taught; but is modeled
- Important: Observations and Modeling
(Morrow, 1990) Q1

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Early Writing Development

- Does not mean children who write “early” or who may be considered advanced
- Means the first years of writing development and the naturalistic process
- Does not refer/suggest the idea of formal instruction of writing to young children

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Early Writing Development

- Writing has its foundation in language, but its unique purpose and form set it apart (Goodman, 1986).
- Oral communication relies on immediate feedback (verbal and non-verbal), writing is highly decontextualized (Sulzby, 1985; 1986)

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Assumptions:
Are the paper and pencil real?



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We assume what children think/know about writing.

- Writing is...
 - Hard Work
 - What your teacher tells you to do
 - When you are punished
 - Part of a story
 - Everyday
 - Stuck in my head
- Writing is not..
 - Fun
 - For everybody
 - Pictures
 - Ever Finished
 - My favorite thing
 - Easy
 - Fast

(Wakefield, 2004)

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Assumptions



- Assume is when you make an a__ out of you and me.
- The Speech-Language *Proctologist* Story

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Assumptions

- Make a connection between 2 variables without examining all the possible facts
 - Taking for granted
 - Evolves from egocentrism that your view of the truth is THE ONLY view
 - Predictions
- (Ruiz, 1997, *The Four Agreements*)

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Assumptions



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Oral Language Supremacy Assumption



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- Oral language must be mastered first, prior to other literacy skills (Harste, Woodward, & Burke, 1985)
 - Order:
 - Oral Language
 - Reading
 - Writing
- Q2

Oral Language Supremacy



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- SLPs inherently biased towards oral language being a foundation
- What IF we thought about the reciprocal nature of oral language, reading, and writing instead?
 - Example: a 2 yr old that texts: ddhmj
 - "Daddy home to play with James?"

Oral Language Supremacy



- Case of H.
- Agenesis of Corpus Callosum
- Inconsistent verbal responses orally; expressive language difficult to assess
- Fine motor challenges/visual processing concerns
- Picture communicator (symbolic)
- Drawing/sequencing pictures increased her verbal output

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Oral Language Supremacy



- The case of C., Kindergartner
- Drew a tornado everyday
No speaking
Sound effects; flying in room
112 pages of tornado
Last day of school:
"The desrukshen was devsting. After 112 days of the deadly tornado, the town was dmolshd."

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Oral language supremacy: SLP-centric
"But that's what WE do!"

It has to be the MOST important! Right?



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Related Assumption: Reading Before Writing
"But they have to read before they write."



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Reading before Writing?
The effects of this assumption

- Does it seem like we have an overabundance of attention on reading and none on writing?
- Early Literacy should INCLUDE writing too, but it rarely does in discussions of early literacy.
- Compare the amount of grant funds available for reading to writing: What do you notice?
- Is writing the "forgotten" literacy skill?
- Research on early writing is sparse (Purcell-Gates, 2000 and Hedley, 1995).

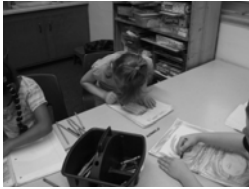
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Oral Language Supremacy

- New perspective: Oral language could be viewed as an artifact of writing.
- Written language influences oral language
- Reciprocal relationship
(Purcell-Gates, 2000)

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Deficit Model Assumption



- Approach writing development by describing only deficits
 - Viewing students through a lens of what they “can’t” do
 - Case of H.:
 - Illegible, only draws pictures, does not label, scribbles,
- Q3

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Deficit Model Assumption

- Problem of the Deficit Model brought to light via the Regular Education Initiative, (Will, 1986)
- Further discussed by many researchers
- Idea of prevention, early identification, and training regular educators and special educators to work together
- The roots of Response to Intervention

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Deficit Model Assumption



- Forced to think this way because of many states’ eligibility criteria guidelines that use the deficit model for qualification.
- What IF we were more qualitatively descriptive of what they CAN do? Could we still build from there?

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But#3: But I have to know what they
“can’t” do in order to help.



- Letter reversals
- She uses all caps
- She does not know left/right
- She lacks sound/symbol skills
- What CAN she do?

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Assumptions

- “I work hard NOT to make assumptions about other people’s jobs, and I appreciate when they do the same for me.” -Laura Stevens, CCC-SLP

I like to use this format with early writing:

“I work hard to avoid making assumptions about children’s early writing experiences. I let the data inform me over time to reveal the big picture of the child’s abilities.” -Lara Wakefield, CCC-SLP

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Beliefs: Taking lemons



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Beliefs



- Derived from:
assumptions
theories
experiences
what we are taught
what predominates

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Beliefs

- What I believe shapes who I am
- What I believe affects how I interact
- What I believe needs to be based in some type of experience

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Beliefs

- In practice, Beliefs come from Theories
- Theories need to be research-based
- Theories need to be reviewed
- Theories can be dynamic
- One theory may not be the "be all end all"
- You may need to have selective eclecticism

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Piagetian: Developmentalists



- Steps/ Hopscotch
- Stage development
- Score sheets/rubrics
- Product is determined to exist along a continuum from “low” to “high”

Q4

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Piagetian (Developmentalist)



- 4 point rubric scale
 - 4 = Proficient
 - 3 = Mastering
 - 2 = Demonstrating
 - 1 = Beginning
- Quantifying
Attempt to baseline and track progress
Attempt to remove biases
Still Subjective though* Cite

Q7

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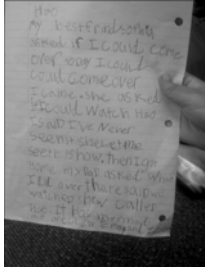
Developmentalists: History of Head Start



- Writing Stages
- I Random Scribbles
- II Separated Scribbles
- III Left to Right Scribbles
- IV Mock Letters
- V First Letters
- VI Transition Stage
- VII Strings of Letters
- VIII Copying Print
- IX. Conventional Writing

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Problems with Developmentalist Thinking



- Confusing experience with achievement
- Focus on performance instead of progress
- Analyzing out of context (Harste, Woodward, and Burke, 1985).

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Vygotskian: Emergent



- Provides a qualitative description of what the child is doing in the CONTEXT of writing
 - Cues, setting, social interactions, the language that surrounds the symbolic communication
- Q5

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Vygotskian: Emergent



- Writing is SOCIAL
- Audience
- Purpose is to communicate an idea to another or for self
- Document to show later to someone

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Emergent: Dyson Research

- *Multiple Worlds of Child Writers: Friends Learning to Write, 1989*
- Qualitative, Longitudinal Research
First graders, four case studies
Text must become embedded in a variety of worlds or concentric levels
Reciprocal nature of oral and written expression

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Emergent Dyson Research



- Outer: Drama, Multimedia, Display
- Middle: Visual, Dynamic, Static
- Inner: Hesitating, Reasoning, Collaborator, and Commentary

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Emergent Theory (Vygotskian): High Scope Curriculum: Title I



- Plan, Do, Review
- Talk, Write, Talk
- Model, Interact, Discuss
- Q6

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But#5: But I don't know what I believe, I just do stuff



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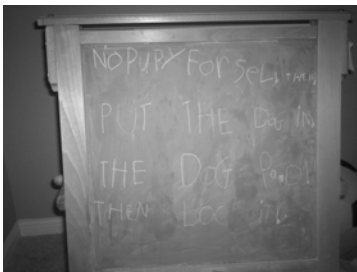
- So what is your belief or theory?
- Examine your beliefs, assumptions to develop your philosophy in early writing development.
- It should be purposeful even if it appears that you are a shirtless, pirate, dalmation, princess.
- Selective Eclecticism

Conflict of Philosophies



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Roles: Jobs, Duties



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Roles

- SLP is a Bridge to focus on 5 essentials of writing
- Role is Purposeful (not the default role)
- Derived from ASHA's position paper
- Jointly defined with collaborators Q8

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5 Essentials derived from ASHA's Position paper



- SLP is a bridge between student and teacher
1. Activating Prior Knowledge
 2. Purposeful
 3. A Process
 4. Dynamic
 5. Multidimensional
- Q9

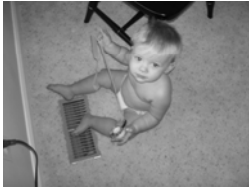
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5 Roles:ASHA Position Paper

- Consult: *Roles and Responsibilities of Speech-Language Pathologists with Respect to Reading and Writing in Children and Adolescents, 2001*
- <http://www.asha.org/docs/html/GL2001-00062.html#top>
- Informal and formal assessments
- Intervention: spelling, syntactic skills, organization strategies, morphology skills, and conventions
- Experience with writing materials

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Jointly Defined: Purposeful



- Role should be purposefully developed
- Not the default role
- Developed jointly with collaborators or team members

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“But I just do what the teacher tells me/
I’m not there for writing time.”



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Summary:
Understand assumptions and theories in order to describe decisions about intervention



- Oral Language Supremacy Assumption
- Deficit Model Assumption
- Piagetian Theory
- Vygotskian Theory
- Roles

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Questions



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Thank you for your time



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