



Literacy Guide: Building a Literacy Foundation for Children with Combined Hearing-Vision Loss

Ohio Center for Deafblind Education
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 systems Development & Improvement Center



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Literacy Guide: Building a Literacy Foundation for Children with Combined Hearing-Vision Loss

Each person who is deaf-blind—whatever her sensory, mental, and physical abilities—deserves the opportunity to become literate in all the ways of which she is capable.

Barbara Miles, M.ED.

Literacy for Persons Who Are Deaf-Blind, January 2005,

Introduction

Literacy competence is a necessary foundation for building a child's academic success. Beginning in infancy, the development of communication, language, and literacy skills plays an important part in a child's success in school. This is true for all children, including a child with a combined vision-hearing loss also known as deafblindness.

As stated in *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* (January 2020), Ohio's Language and Literacy vision statement is:

Ohio's vision is for all learners to acquire the knowledge and skills to become proficient readers.

The Ohio Department of Education and its partners view language and literacy acquisition and achievement as foundational knowledge that supports student success. To increase learners' language and literacy achievement, the Department is urging districts and schools to use evidence-based systems and high-quality instruction, select high-quality instructional materials and employ culturally responsive practices (*Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement, 2020*).

Developing language, communication, and literacy skills for children with deafblindness presents challenges due to each child's unique vision and hearing loss. The *Literacy Guide: Building a Literacy Foundation for Children with a Vision-Hearing Loss* is intended to provide parents, families, educators, and service providers with information related to the development of literacy skills, factors to consider, and resources to support the development of a child's language, communication and literacy abilities.

Building a Literacy Foundation for Children with Deafblindness

Language development, the foundation for literacy skills, begins in infancy. Communication is the process by which a child learns to understand the environment by initiating, responding to, and interacting with others. Beginning with infancy, the development of communication and language skills that support language development includes pre-symbolic (prior to language) techniques, such as gestures, looks, sounds, rhythms, patterns, touch, location of sound

sources, “baby-talk,” singing, facial expressions, and talking. For toddlers and young children, reading books becomes an important means of introducing and practicing language. Intertwined with each of these activities is the child’s need to build relationships and interact with others, each of which fosters a child’s language and literacy development.

For a child with deafblindness, the steps in the development of language and literacy skills often necessitate incorporating communication methods and instructional strategies to support a child’s ability to communicate and the continued development of language and literacy skills. The following sections of the *Literacy Guide* provide definitions of communication, language, and literacy, as well as resources to support the development of each of these skills for a child with deafblindness.

What is Communication?

Communication is defined as a means of exchanging verbal, non-verbal, written or visual information that involves a sender, a message and a recipient(s). Communication is a set of expressed behaviors and/or combinations of expressed behaviors, which may or may not be of a standard form, that convey intent and are understood by the listener. Beginning with infancy, communication may present itself in forms such as babbling, crying, gestures, facial expressions, and behavior. As a child develops, communication evolves into words, phrases, and sentences.

Communication is the foundation necessary to develop language and literacy skills for all children, including children with vision and hearing impairments and deafblindness. A variety of methods and strategies is available to support the development of a child’s communication skills.

Resources for Communication Development

Search word: communication development

Article	Source
Building Communication Through a Conversation https://www.nationaldb.org/info-center/educational-practices/conversation/	National Center on Deaf-Blind https://www.nationaldb.org/
Communication: Know the Basics https://pathways.org/topics-of-development/communication/	Pathways to Literacy https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/
Evaluating Communications Options for Your Child	AG Bell https://www.agbell.org/

https://www.agbell.org/Families/Communication-Options	
Communicating with Your Child https://ncbegin.org/communication-options/	Beginnings https://ncbegin.org/
Emerging (Pre-symbolic) Communication https://www.nationaldb.org/info-center/educational-practices/emerging-communication/	National Center on Deaf-Blindness https://www.nationaldb.org/
OHOA Module: Building Trusted Relationships and Positive Self-Image https://www.nationaldb.org/products/modules/ohoa/building-trust/	National Center on Deaf-Blindness https://www.nationaldb.org/
What is Communication? https://www.nationaldb.org/info-center/educational-practices/what-is-communication/	National Center on Deaf-Blindness https://www.nationaldb.org/

Communication Methods to Support the Development of Language

A child's ability to communicate and develop language is critical in the development of literacy. Children with visual or hearing impairments, deafblindness, or multiple disabilities may communicate in a variety of ways. The ability to communicate for a child with a visual or hearing impairment, deafblindness, or multiple disability may require teaching the child a specific communication method that takes into consideration the child's specific hearing and vision needs. The communication method (aural, sign language, etc.) selected for a young child may change or be supplemented with additional communication methods as the child's skills develop. The following list includes a description of communication methods that may be considered when determining the communication method for an individual child.

Definitions and Resources to Support the Development of Language

Auditory - the use of sounds and voices to send to and receive information from others that relies upon hearing

Auditory-Oral/Auditory-Verbal - the use of a child's remaining hearing with amplification and the use of speechreading, natural gestures, and/or visual cues to aid the child's understanding of language without using any form of sign language

[Resources for Auditory-oral, auditory-verbal](#)

Search word: auditory-oral, auditory-verbal

Article	Source
Exploring Communication Choices: Auditory Oral https://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Comm-Options-Auditory-Oral.pdf	Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss https://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/
Listening and Spoken Language https://www.agbell.org/Families/Listening-and-Spoken-Language	AG Bell http://agbell.org/
Oral/Aural https://understandingdeafed.weebly.com/oralaural.html	Understanding Deaf Education https://understandingdeafed.weebly.com/
JTC Talks https://www.jtc.org/onsite-services/talks-programs/	John Tracy Center https://www.jtc.org/onsite-services/talks-programs/
What is Listening and Spoken Language? https://www.hearingfirst.org/lsl/what-is-lsl	Hearing First https://www.hearingfirst.org/

Augmentative and Alternative Communication/AAC - communication methods or devices used to supplement or replace oral speech or writing. Augmentative and alternative communication may be low tech, mid-tech or high-tech. Determination of an appropriate AAC device for an individual child is based upon an assistive technology evaluation of the child's skills and needs.

1. Low-tech - non-electronic devices, such as picture exchange systems, paper-based boards, core boards, object cues, picture cues, single switches with recorded messages, or multi-message speech generating devices
2. Mid-tech - electronic devices, such as a device with a button or a grid of buttons that can be used to record messages
3. High-tech - static and dynamic screen displays with symbols that may be combined to create multiple messages. In dynamic displays, touching a symbol opens another page of symbols.

Resources for augmentative and alternative communication

Search words: AAC, augmentative and alternative communication

Article	Source
Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) https://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/aac/	American Association of Speech-Language-Hearing Association https://www.asha.org/

What is AAC? https://www.assistiveware.com/learn-aac/what-is-aac	AssistiveWare https://www.assistiveware.com/
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Braille - a system of writing for the blind that uses raised dots or a combination of dots to represent letters and characters that are read by touch

Resources for Braille

Search words: Braille

Article	Source
Braille: An Overview https://familyconnect.org/education/literacy/braille/	FamilyConnect https://familyconnect.org/
Braille Defined -What is Braille? https://brailleworks.com/braille-defined/	Braille Works https://brailleworks.com/
Overview of Braille https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/overview-braille	Paths to Literacy https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/
What is Braille? https://braillebug.org/Braille.asp	American Printing House for the Blind Braille Bug https://braillebug.org/default.asp

Cued speech – the use of mouth movements of speech with hand movements near the mouth to differentiate speech sounds of spoken language

Resources for cued speech

Search word: cued speech

Article	Source
Cued Speech https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/hearingloss/parentsguide/building/cued-speech.html	Center for Disease Control and Prevention https://www.cdc.gov/
Cued Speech https://www.handsandvoices.org/comcon/articles/cuedspeech.htm	Hands & Voices https://www.handsandvoices.org/index.htm

Finger spelling - the use of standardized positions or movement of the fingers representing the alphabet and numbers to communicate by spelling a word or message letter by letter; can be used in conjunction with ASL

Resources for fingerspelling

Search word: fingerspelling, ASL

Article	Source
Finger Spelling https://signonconnect.com/topics/fingerspelling/	Sign On SignOnConnect
Finger Spelling and Numbers: An Introduction https://www.lifeprint.com/asl101/fingerspelling/fingerspelling.htm	LifePrint https://www.lifeprint.com/

Haptics - communication of information through touch

Resources for Haptics

Search words: haptics, haptics deaf-blind, haptics communication deaf-blind

Article	Source
What is Haptics in Deafblind Communities? https://www.ctdinstitute.org/library/2019-02-28/what-haptics-deafblind-communities	Center on Technology and Disability https://www.ctdinstitute.org/
103 Haptic Signals: a Reference Book http://wasli.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/103-Haptic-Signals-English.pdf	National Center on Deaf-Blindness https://www.nationaldb.org/
What is an Intervener? Role of an Intervener http://intervener.org/	Intervener http://intervener.org/

Non-Verbal Communication - nonverbal signals, such as posture, facial expressions, gestures (movement of hand or head), and body movements that are used to communicate feelings and/or intentions

Resources for nonverbal communication

Search words: body language, facial expressions, gestures

Article	Source
Tips for Communicating with Your Nonverbal Child https://www.verywellfamily.com/communicating-with-a-nonverbal-child-4177579	Very Well Mind https://www.verywellfamily.com/
Identifying Body Language Young Children https://www.universalclass.com/articles/self-help/body-language-of-the-young.htm	Universal Class www.universalclass.com

ProTactile Communication - a communication approach that emphasizes the importance of direct tactile access to people, language, and the environment

Resources for ProTactile

Search word: protactile

Article	Source
Pro-Tactile: The Deafblind Way https://www.tactilecommunications.org/Resources/ProTactile	Tactile Communications, LLC https://www.tactilecommunications.org/
What is ProTactile and What are Its Benefits https://www.tsbvi.edu/spring-2019-menu/573-tx-senseabilities/fall-2017/5651-what-is-protactile-and-what-are-its-benefits	Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired https://www.tsbvi.edu/

Sign language/American Sign Language (ASL) - non-verbal communication using hands, gestures, movements, body language, and facial expressions to communicate

Resources for sign language

Search words: sign language, ASL, American sign language

Article	Source
American Sign Language	National Institute on Deafness and Other Hearing Disorders https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/
American Sign Language https://www.nad.org/resources/american-sign-language/	National Association for the Deaf https://www.nad.org/resources/american-sign-language/

Signed Exact English – the signing of every word of a spoken sentence using English language grammar

Resources for signed English

Search word: signed English, signed exact English, SEE

Article	Source
Signing Exact English https://www.handsandvoices.org/comcon/article/s/see.htm	Hands & Voices https://www.handsandvoices.org/index.htm
What is SEE? https://www.signingexactenglish.com/?pageid=2	Signing Exact English https://www.signingexactenglish.com/?pageid=1

Tactile Signals/Touch Signals – a method of communication that uses touch by placing the hands of the child with deafblindness over the hands of the signer in order to follow what is being communicated through touch and movement.

Resources for tactile signals/touch signals

Search words: touch signals, tactile signals

Article	Source
Touch Signals https://www.helenkeller.org/sites/default/files/docs/touch_signals_pt_haptics.pdf	Helen Keller Center for Deaf-blind https://www.helenkeller.org/
OHOA Modules: Touch and Communication https://www.nationaldb.org/products/modules/ohoa/touch-learning/LA4/	National Center on Deaf-Blindness https://www.nationaldb.org/

Total Communication – simultaneous use of spoken language and sign language when communicating

Resources for total communication

Search word: total communication

Article	Source
Total Communication: Learning to Use Different Communication Methods http://www.raisingdeafkids.org/communicating/choices/tc.php	Raising Deaf Kids, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia www.raisingdeafkids.org
What is Total Communication? https://www.icommunicatetherapy.com/adult-communication-difficulties-2/adult-learning-difficulties-intellectual-disability/total-communication/	icommunicate Speech & Communication Therapy www.icommunicatetherapy.com
Using Sign Language and Voice for Total Communication https://www.verywellhealth.com/using-sign-language-and-voice-for-total-communication-1046220	VeryWellHealth www.verywellhealth.com

Supporting Communication with Intervener Services

Deafblindness limits an individual’s access to visual and auditory information, the basis of communication and learning. Deafblindness creates communication and instructional challenges for educational systems required to provide a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment to children with disabilities. Interpreting is a means of communicating spoken language whereas, intervener services is a means of supporting individuals who are deafblind in meeting the challenges of accessing information and compensates for difficulties encountered in communicating and concept development. An Intervener is defined as “...a person who works consistently one-to-one with an individual who is deaf-blind to help them gather information, develop and use communication skills, and establish relationships” (National Center on Deafblindness, 2021).

An intervener supports the child with deafblindness by providing access to:

- **Environmental information** that is usually gained through vision and hearing but is unavailable or incomplete to the child who is deafblind.
- **Communication** by facilitating the development and/or use of receptive and expressive communication skills for the child who is deafblind.
- **Social and Emotional Development** by developing and maintaining a trusting, interactive relationship that promotes social and emotional well-being for the child who is deafblind (Utah State University, SKI-HI Institute, 2012).

A trained intervener implements a scope of techniques and strategies to enhance the communication abilities of a child with deafblindness. The goals of intervener services provided by a trained Intervener are to:

- Increase and clarify information
- Facilitate access to information
- Facilitate the learning of concepts
- Provide consistency and constancy
- Facilitate both receptive and expressive communication development
- Serve as motivating and trusted partners who consistently respond to a child’s communication
- Provide opportunities for conversations and interactions with others
- Develop a bond of trust with the child that decreases anxiety
- Help the child know where he is and who is around him
- Encourage interactions with others
- Support self-determination by helping the child make choices, solve problems, and develop self-esteem

Resources for Intervener Services

Search words: intervener, intervener services

Article	Source
Deafblind Intervener Training Certificate Utah State University https://www.usu.edu/online/degrees/certificate/deafblind-intervener-training-certificate/	Utah State University https://www.usu.edu/
Intervener Services and Interveners in Educational Settings: Definition https://documents.nationaldb.org/NCDB_Intervener_Services_Definition_2019_a.pdf://	National Center on Deaf-Blindness https://www.nationaldb.org/
Intervener Certificate Program https://documents.nationaldb.org/NCDB_Intervener_Services_Definition_2019_a.pdf://	Shawnee State University https://www.usu.edu/
What is an Intervener? https://www.nationaldb.org/for-families/learning-resources/family-topics/what-is-an-intervener/	National Center on Deaf-Blindness https://www.nationaldb.org/

What is Language?

Language is a system of spoken, manual (signed), or written symbols to express statements or questions that follows a set of rules when used by an individual when interacting with others.

The acquisition of language for a child with deafblindness is affected by the degree of a child's vision and hearing loss and often requires providing the child with supportive communication methods, such as sign language, hearing aids, concrete objects, or tactile/touch signals, based upon an individual child's needs. The lack of language impacts an individual's ability to learn.

Language includes both receptive and expressive language skills. Receptive language is a child's ability to hear and express thoughts into words and sentences. Expressive language involves a child's ability to articulate sounds correctly, use words, and create phrases and sentences or for a child with deafblindness to use gestures or signs to convey oral or written messages to others. Receptive and expressive language for a child with deafblindness may be oral or may involve the use of communication methods or a combination of communication methods described in the Section 1, *Communication Methods to Support the Development of Language*.

Stages of Language Development

The development of language occurs in a series of stages. As described in *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* (January 2020), the stages of language development are:

1. Emergent language - Beginning in infancy, emergent language skills build the foundation for communication. During this stage of language development, a child uses sounds, gestures, behaviors and language, correctly or incorrectly, to express him or herself. For a child with deafblindness, emergent language may be demonstrated as movements, sounds, and touching objects that should be recognized as meaningful, concrete, and purposeful behaviors used by the child in the development of language.
2. Early language - During early childhood, a child learns to use words, phrases, and sentences, to express intent and take turns when communicating. For a child with deafblindness, it is necessary for a communication partner to understand the communication needs of the child, what is needed or wanted, and how to support the development of a child's language.
3. Conventional language - As a child develops spoken or manual language, the meaning of the language is the basis for the development of both receptive and expressive language in addition to the language that is read and written. For a child with deafblindness, the expression of conventional language may involve augmentative and alternative communication methods for both receptive and expressive language.
4. Adolescent language - During the development of adolescence language, a child uses complex sentences and figurative language in both oral, signed, or written language. The development of adolescent language may involve intentional strategies to support the child in developing complex language skills to become a proficient communicator.

Resources for Language Development

Search words: language development, receptive language, expressive language

Article	Source
Baby Talk: Teaching Your Baby Language https://childdevelopment.com.au/blog/baby-talk-teaching-baby-language/	Kid Sense https://childdevelopment.com.au/
Communication Planning Guide for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing https://deafandblindoutreach.org/Communication-Planning-Guide-for-Students-Who-Are-Deaf-or-Hard-of-Hearing	Outreach Center for Deafness and Blindness https://deafandblindoutreach.org/
Developing Concepts with Children Who Are Deaf-blind https://www.nationaldb.org/info-center/developing-concepts-factsheet/	National Center for Deaf-Blind https://www.nationaldb.org/
Early Interactions with Children Who are Deaf-Blind https://www.nationaldb.org/info-center/early-interactions-factsheet/	National Center on Deaf-Blind https://www.nationaldb.org/
Expressive Communication: How Children Send Their Messages to You https://www.nationaldb.org/info-center/expressive-communication-factsheet/	National Center on Deaf-Blindness https://www.nationaldb.org/
Expressive Language (Using Words and Language) https://childdevelopment.com.au/areas-of-concern/using-speech/expressive-language-using-words-and-language/?print=pdf	Kid Sense https://childdevelopment.com.au/
Hearing Loss in Children: American Sign Language https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/hearingloss/parentsguide/building/asl.html	Center for Disease Control and Prevention https://www.cdc.gov/
How People with Hearing Loss Learn Language https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/hearingloss/language.html	Center for Disease Control and Prevention https://www.cdc.gov/
How to Adapt Your Language When Your Child Has No Visual Information: Communication and Blindness	Family Connect https://familyconnect.org/

https://familyconnect.org/browse-by-age/infants-and-toddlers/growth-and-development-iandt/how-to-adapt-your-language-when-your-child-has-no-visual-information-communication-and-blindness/	
Language Development http://www.healthofchildren.com/L/Language-Development.html	Encyclopedia of Children's Health Infancy through Adolescence http://www.healthofchildren.com/
Language Development in Children 0-8 https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/development/language-development/language-development-0-8	Raising Children www.raisingchildren.net.au
Let's Talk About It: 5 Ways to Build Babies' Language and Communication from Birth https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/1504-let-s-talk-about-it-5-ways-to-build-babies-language-and-communication-skills-from-birth	Zero to Three https://www.zerotothree.org/
Milestones of Communication during Adolescence https://csuspeechgroup6.weebly.com/adolescents.html	Communication Development Across Childhood-Adolescents https://csuspeechgroup6.weebly.com/
Normal Language Development: Birth to 12 months https://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/search?q=language%20development	Cincinnati Children's Hospital https://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/
Normal Language Development: 12-36 months https://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/search?q=language%20development	Cincinnati Children's Hospital https://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/
OHOA Modules: Emergent Communication https://www.nationaldb.org/products/modules/ohoa/emergent-communication/	National Center for Deaf-Blind https://www.nationaldb.org/
OHOA Modules: Progressing from Non-Symbolic Communication to Complex Language https://www.nationaldb.org/products/modules/ohoa/complex-language/	National Center for Deaf-Blind https://www.nationaldb.org/

What is Receptive Language (understanding words and language) https://childdevelopment.com.au/areas-of-concern/understanding-language/receptive-language-understanding-words-and-language/	Kid Sens https://childdevelopment.com.au/
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What is Literacy?

Literacy is an individual's ability to read and write, as well as understand written material. Literacy includes skills that enable a child to communicate through reading and writing. For some children, Braille is the medium used for written communication. *Literacy development* occurs in a series of stages:

1. Emergent literacy – Beginning at birth and throughout a child's development of emergent language, the child is learning skills that are important in the development of literacy skills, such as learning a variety of sounds and words, talking, engaging in reading books, exposure to stories and books, drawing, and pre-writing activities. Emergent literacy occurs prior to a child learning how to read or write.
2. Early literacy – A child uses the skills learned during emergent literacy to transition to learning to read. Skills learned during early literacy include print motivation, print awareness, letter knowledge, vocabulary, and narrative skills.
3. Conventional literacy - Conventional literacy, which is the ability to read and write simple messages, requires skills such as knowledge of the alphabet, phonetics, sight word recognition, and the rules that govern reading and writing.
4. Adolescent literacy – Adolescent literacy builds upon the skills learned as part of conventional literacy to enable a child to read and comprehend more complex materials and create more complex written language.

Resources for literacy

Search words: early emergent literacy, early literacy, early literacy- infants, language development, literacy development-infants, conventional literacy, adolescent literacy

Article	Source
<i>Emergent Literacy</i>	
6 Early Literacy Skills https://www.readandspell.com/us/6-early-literacy-skills	Read and Spell https://www.readandspell.com/us

<p>Early Emergent Literacy http://literacy.nationaldb.org/index.php/early-emergent-literacy/</p>	<p>National Center on Deaf-Blind https://www.nationaldb.org/</p>
<p>Early Interactions with Children Who are Deaf-Blind https://www.nationaldb.org/info-center/early-interactions-factsheet/</p>	<p>National Center on Deaf-Blind https://www.nationaldb.org/</p>
<p>Early Literacy with Multiple Disabilities or Deafblindness https://www.perkinselearning.org/videos/webcast/early-literacy-students-multiple-disabilities-or-deafblindness</p>	<p>Perkins School for the Blind e-LEARNING https://www.perkinselearning.org/</p>
<p>Emergent Literacy: Early Reading and Writing Development https://www.asha.org/public/speech/emergent-literacy/</p>	<p>American Association of Speech-Hearing and Language Association https://www.asha.org/</p>
<p>Helping Your Blind or Visually Impaired Baby Learn about Reading and Writing https://familyconnect.org/browse-by-age/infants-and-toddlers/education-iandt/helping-your-blind-baby-learn-about-reading-and-writing/</p>	<p>Family Connect https://familyconnect.org/</p>
<p>Language and Literacy Development in Understanding Child Development https://www.universalclass.com/articles/psychology/child-development/language-and-literacy-development-in-understanding-child-development.htm</p>	<p>Universal Class https://www.universalclass.com/</p>

<p>Literacy for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss http://literacy.nationaldb.org/</p>	<p>National Center on Deaf-Blind https://www.nationaldb.org/</p>
<p>Literacy for Children Who are Deaf-Blind: Building a Foundation https://www.nationaldb.org/products/modules/literacy/</p>	<p>National Center on Deaf-Blind https://www.nationaldb.org/</p>
<p>Overview of Literacy for Children and Youth who are Deafblind https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/overview-literacy-children-and-youth-who-are-deafblind</p>	<p>Pathways to Literacy https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/</p>

<p>Reading Together: Tips for Parents of Children with Hearing Loss or Deafness https://www.readingrockets.org/article/reading-together-tips-parents-children-hearing-loss-or-deafness</p>	<p>Reading Rockets https://www.readingrockets.org/</p>
<p>Six Early Literacy Skills https://www.clel.org/about3</p>	<p>Colorado Libraries for Early Literacy https://www.clel.org/about3</p>
<p>Stages of Literacy Development https://primarylearning.org/teaching-tips/stages-of-literacy-development/</p>	<p>Primary Learning www.primarylearning.org</p>
<p>Stages of Literacy Development https://www.theliteracybug.com/stages-of-literacy</p>	<p>The Literacy Bug www.theliteracybug.com</p>
<p>Teaching Braille to Young Children https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/teaching-braille-young-children</p>	<p>Paths to Literacy https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/</p>
<p>The Importance of the Home Literacy Environment for Developing Literacy Skills in Young Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.906.1118&rep=rep1&type=pdf</p>	<p>Reading Rockets https://www.readingrockets.org/ National Center on Deaf-Blindness http://literacy.nationaldb.org/index.php/early-emergent-literacy/</p>
<p>What is Adolescent Literacy? https://keystoliteracy.com/blog/adolescent-literacy/</p>	<p>Keys to Literacy https://keystoliteracy.com/</p>

Teaching Literacy

The use of instructional strategies to develop literacy skills for a child with deafblindness are dependent upon the degree of vision and hearing loss for each child. Some children are able to benefit from instructional strategies that are the same strategies used for children without a vision and hearing loss. Others may benefit from classroom instruction with accommodations, such as amplification, enlarged print, and Braille.

Explicit instruction -- Although explicit instructional strategies may vary based upon a child's disability, explicit instruction uses direct, structured, sequenced steps to teach specific reading skills and concepts.

Targeted instruction – Targeted instruction is provided to a child based upon the child's abilities, assessed skill levels, and evaluation of mastery of skills post-instruction.

For some children with deafblindness and unique vision and hearing losses, explicit and targeted instruction may require the use of specialized instructional strategies designed to meet the child's instructional needs.

Resources for Teaching Literacy

Search words: explicit instruction

Article	Source
Explicit Instruction: A Teaching Strategy for Reading, Writing, and Mathematics for Students with Learning Disabilities https://www.ldatschool.ca/explicit-instruction-a-teaching-strategy-in-reading-writing-and-mathematics-for-students-with-learning-disabilities/	LD@school https://www.ldatschool.ca/ldschoo/

Teaching Literacy to Students with Deafblindness

Some children with deafblindness may acquire language and literacy skills using conventional instruction methods. Others may require instructional methods that are specific methods for developing language and literacy skills for the deafblind. An example of a specific instructional method used with children with deafblindness is the use of Core words/vocabulary to develop language and literacy skills. Terms associated with Core instruction include:

Core words/Core vocabulary consists of primarily pronouns, verbs, prepositions, and adjectives that make up 70-90% of words used in daily communication.

Core fringe vocabulary are words that are specific to an individual, events, or topics.

Tactile Core symbols are Core vocabulary/words that are represented by 3D objects.

A **Core board** is used to attach adhere individualized Core vocabulary words or tactile symbols to develop language skills for communication in addition to developing literacy skills.

Using a Core Board

When using Core vocabulary or tactile symbols on a Core board, the specific number of Core words or symbols used are individualized to the needs and abilities of the child. Initially, the Core board may have fewer Core vocabulary words or symbols, and as the child's skills increase, additional Core vocabulary words or symbols are added.

When prompting communication, the instructor models a question using the Core board. The child selects the appropriate Core word(s) or tactile symbol(s) to create a response. The Core board may also be used to develop literacy skills, such as reading a story to a child using the Core board.

Core vocabulary words selected for an individual child are placed on a card that includes a picture, and the printed word or a tactile symbol representing the Core vocabulary word is adhered to the card. The background color of the card for the Core word is based upon the part of speech of the vocabulary word. For example, all verbs are in pink, pronouns are in yellow, etc.

A Core vocabulary card includes a tactile prompt at the top of the vocabulary card. The shape at the top of a card represents the part of speech of the Core word. For example, a triangular shape at the top of a card is used for verbs or a crown shape for pronouns.

Using materials such as Velcro, the Core words or tactile symbols are categorically arranged in the order on the Core board. For example, pronouns are grouped together; verbs are grouped together, etc. The instructor models a question using the Core words or tactile symbols located on the Core board. The child uses the Core words or tactile symbols on the Core board to respond to the question.

Core boards can be placed on low-tech, mid-tech, and high-tech augmented and alternative communication devices. A child may begin with a low-tech Core board, and as the child's skills develop, advance to a mid- or high-tech device.

The following resources provide information on Core vocabulary, how to make a Core board, and how to use Core vocabulary with low-, mid-, and high-tech devices.

Resources for Core

Search words: Core, Core vocabulary, Core words, Core board, augmentative and alternative communication devices

Article	Source
Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)s https://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/aac/	American Speech-Language-Hearing Association https://www.asha.org/
Core Vocabulary http://corevocabulary.weebly.com/	Core Vocabulary http://corevocabulary.weebly.com/
Project Core http://www.project-core.com/communication-systems/	Project Core http://www.project-core.com/
Project Core Modules https://ttaconline.org/Resource/JWHaEa5BS74JQW9WRHZ-FQ/Resource-project-core-professional-development-modules-to-improve-communication-and-academic-achievement	TTACOnline https://ttaconline.org/
Say More with CORE https://lessonpix.com/articles/5/184/What+Is+Core+Vocabulary%3F	LessonPix: Custom Learning Materials https://lessonpix.com/
Teaching with Core Words: Building Blocks for Communication https://www.assistiveware.com/blog/teaching-core-words-building-blocks-communication-and-curriculum	Assistiveware https://www.assistiveware.com/
What is AAC? https://www.assistiveware.com/learn-aac/what-is-aac	Assistiveware https://www.assistiveware.com/

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