

Make the Connection Quick Tips for Student Success

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Information Resources in the Early Years

Young children need and desire information about their world. Stories are not enough! As children move from early childhood to elementary education, their lessons will focus more and more on using informational texts. For these reasons, educators now agree that nonfiction should have a prominent place in the early years.

Read It — Dialogically

Stories and nonfiction are shared differently in the early years when the goal is inquiry. **Dialogic reading** invites the child to tell a story and interpret an informational text by viewing images and answering the prompts of the teacher or librarian.

These exchanges are called **PEER sequences**, where the reader first **Prompts**, then **Evaluates** the responses, **Expands** on the responses, and then **Repeats** the new understanding. Even a simple comment such as, "I see many interesting animals in the boy's room," can elicit comments from the children who are listening to a dialogic reading.

This approach helps children make connections, while the librarian evaluates their understanding. Used well, dialogic readings increase children's enjoyment of the story or information

Helpful Resources



The *Colors* series engages young children in an exploration of color. Each book provides accessible nonfiction for this age group.



Animals are a perennial favorite for hands-on learning. Use informational books such as:

- *Animal Opposites*

book.

Advantages of the Project Approach

The **project approach** to learning is designed with the distinctive characteristics of early childhood in mind. Hands-on, relevant, and motivating, it allows young children to enjoy their first experience of finding answers to questions. Try the project approach and watch your young students become excited about learning.

Choose a topic of high interest to the children, help them to explore and ask questions, and then decide on a good product that will demonstrate their new knowledge.

Project-Based Inquiry Units for Young Children, from Linworth Publishing, shows you how to do these projects plus many more.

Article courtesy of Library Media Connection magazine. Written by Colleen MacDonell, a library coordinator who writes from years of experience as a teacher and librarian working with young children. Her previous book for Linworth Publishing was *Essential Documents for School Libraries*.

series

- ***Dogs*** series
- ***Under the Sea*** series
- ***Looking at Animal Parts*** series



Recycling is a good topic for raising environmental awareness. Try the new series ***Caring for the Earth*** to help students understand our impact on the planet.



Multimedia books to boost literacy skills!

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