

## Planned Language Approach: Introductory Video

Woman No. 1: Tell me about this picture. Tell me about this picture you drew for me. What is it? The water? Are you ... You're thinking about the ocean, I know it.

Narrator: All children are language learners, and many are learning more than one language. In fact, children who are learning English as an additional language are the fastest-growing population in the country. Children acquiring two or more languages simultaneously, or learning a second language while continuing to develop their first, are known as dual language learners, or DLLs. Head Start has developed a comprehensive set of resources to help you meet the needs of your early language learners.

It's known as the Planned Language Approach, or PLA for short. These web-based resources can be used by all staff in all settings with all children. This approach is particularly helpful for children whose home language is not English. In this video, you'll learn about the five key components of the Planned Language Approach, shown here. In the Research Base section, you'll get background research on children's language and literacy development. The Home Language Support section provides materials to help staff and families promote children's development in their home language.

The Policies, Practices, and Systems section provides guidance to program leaders on evaluating and improving services to dual language learners and their families. The Strategies that Support DLLs section includes strategies you can use right away as a home visitor or child care provider. Finally, don't miss the Big Five for All section with everything you need to know about the five building blocks of early language and literacy development. That's the PLA, and it's for everyone: program leaders, staff, and families. Our user's guide includes tips for the best places to begin, depending on your role.

Let's take a closer look at what's included in each section. In Research Base, you'll find the research that supports a planned language approach. The Primed and Ready to Learn briefs share research on learning languages and growing up as a dual language learner. Home Language Support. This section includes a five-minute video that explains the importance of supporting a child's home language.

It's perfect for staff development or orienting volunteers new to your program. The Importance of Home Language Series is included here as well. This series shares the benefits of being bilingual and helps families and education staff support DLLs. These documents are available in multiple languages. Another great tool in this section is gathering and using language information that families share.

This resource prompts education staff to ask families about their children's language development and experiences. You can use these key questions to plan learning activities for the children in your program. Policies, Practices, and Systems is a great starting point for program leaders. Want to assess your current practices for supporting DLLs? Check out the Dual Language Learner Program Assessment tool in this section. This tool provides guidance on implementing a coordinated approach that informs both program management and service

delivery. Another resource in this section, *Classroom Language Models: A Leader's Implementation Manual*, can help you figure out where to begin.

Woman No. 2: ♪ Where is pointer? Here I am ♪

Narrator: *Strategies that Support DLLs* contains great resources for home visitors and care providers. Here, you'll find guidance on including home languages and cultures in early learning settings. You'll also learn how to model language for infants and toddlers. Be sure to check out *Supporting Dual Language Learners With Classroom Schedules and Transitions*, which will help you create routines that work for you and all the learners in your classroom. Finally, if you've ever been asked for, "More agua, please," you'll appreciate *Code Switching: Why It Matters and How to Respond*.

This resource describes ways adults can respond to language mixing and invite children to continue the conversation. The final section of the Planned Language Approach is the Big Five for All, which identifies and describes five key elements of early language and literacy development that emerge throughout a child's early years, alphabet knowledge and early writing, background knowledge, book knowledge and print concepts, oral language and vocabulary, and phonological awareness. The ECLKC has a web page for each of the big five skills.

Here, you'll find links to an introduction to the skill, a resource for parents and families, a webinar about the skill, and a "Joan Talks" handout, which describes the importance of the skill from a 5-year-old's point of view. You can use these handouts in parent learning communities, professional development training, coaching, or group socializations.

This section also includes screening and assessment information for each of the big five skills. Taken together, the five PLA components include all you need to develop a comprehensive, planned language approach. This is just a sample of the abundant resources in the PLA toolkit. We hope you find these materials useful as you develop a planned language approach that works for you and the families you serve.

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