The B.E.L.L. Program
Building Early Language and Literacy

For literacy to emerge, children need to be exposed to a language rich environment. This environment needs to provide opportunities for the children to directly participate in literacy activities which are risk free and stimulating. Children's experiences with speaking, listening, reading and writing in the preschool years lay the groundwork for reading success in elementary school.

The B.E.L.L. program, used in all Miami-Dade County Public Schools Pre-K Special Education classrooms, uses children's literature to build concepts/vocabulary and promotes awareness of story sequencing and characters.

In Shared Reading time (an adult shares a Big Book story with the whole class), children enjoy material they cannot yet read for themselves. Once they hear the story, they often remember much of it. Through repeated readings, the children will be able to "read" the book by themselves. This story sharing process provides an opportunity to share, learn new vocabulary, and learn about books (front and back of the book, author, illustrator, spine, etc.) in a supportive atmosphere.

Phonological Awareness time provides an understanding of the sounds of language including words, rhyme, blending, segmenting, syllables and initial consonant sounds. Phonological awareness activities enable children to acquire phonetic reading skills because it helps them recognize the number, identity and order of the sounds in words.