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**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## **The Role of Home Literacy Environment on The Literacy Skills Enhancement Among Grade Two Learners**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study assessed the influence of the home literacy environment on the literacy skills of learners. It specifically examined the status of the home literacy environment in terms of physical environment, parent literacy habits, child literacy habits, parent-child interaction, and parental beliefs, as well as the learners' literacy performance in word recognition, sentence reading, reading fluency, and comprehension. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed. Using purposive sampling, the study involved 71 respondents, composed of 69 parent-child pairs and 2 Grade Two teachers. Data were gathered through an adapted Home Literacy Environment Questionnaire and the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA). Descriptive statistics, weighted mean, standard deviation, frequency count, percentage, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient were applied. Findings revealed that the home literacy environment was generally supportive, though variations existed across domains. Learners demonstrated developing literacy skills, and a statistically significant relationship was found between the home literacy environment and literacy performance. The study concluded that literacy development was strongly shaped by home conditions and parental engagement. It recommended the implementation of a Literacy Skills Enhancement Plan, focusing on improving word recognition, fluency, comprehension, and strengthening home-school collaboration.

**KEYWORDS**

Home Literacy Environment; Literacy Skills Enhancement; Grade Two Learners

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### **1. Introduction**

Developing literacy skills during early childhood had been considered one of the most critical foundations for lifelong learning and academic success. Literacy development in the early years not only equipped children with essential reading and writing abilities but also nurtured cognitive, emotional, and social growth (Weir, Wang, & Hesketh, 2024). Early reading competence allowed young learners to access knowledge, express ideas effectively, and participate meaningfully in both school and community contexts. As such, the mastery of literacy skills particularly word recognition, reading fluency, and comprehension was viewed as the cornerstone of academic achievement and a vital determinant of future educational outcomes (Bigozzi, Vettori, & Incognito, 2023).

In this developmental continuum, the home literacy environment (HLE) played a significant role in shaping children's literacy trajectories. The HLE encompassed the quality and frequency of literacy-related experiences provided within the home, including the availability of print materials, parental modeling of reading behaviors, engagement in storytelling, and beliefs about the value of literacy (Romero-González et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2024). A positive and stimulating home literacy environment had been consistently linked with enhanced reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary acquisition among early-grade learners (Claes

et al., 2024). Children exposed to rich literacy interactions at home tended to develop stronger phonological awareness, broader vocabulary, and more positive attitudes toward reading compared to those with limited home exposure (Zhang et al., 2024). However, despite numerous national and international initiatives, literacy remained a pressing educational concern in the Philippines. Large-scale assessments, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022, revealed that Filipino learners continued to score below the global average in reading proficiency (OECD, 2023). Local evaluations using the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) and Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) further showed that many Grade Two learners performed at the “frustration level,” indicating serious challenges in word recognition and reading comprehension (Tancioco & Ortega-Dela Cruz, 2021; Dumlao, 2024). To address these issues, the Department of Education (DepEd) launched the MATATAG Curriculum and the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program both aimed at strengthening foundational literacy instruction and remedial interventions (DepEd, 2024; DepEd, 2025).

While these efforts were commendable, the relationship between home literacy practices and learners’ reading performance had not been thoroughly examined in many local contexts. A recent Philippine study even revealed that parental perceptions of literacy support did not always translate into measurable improvements in children’s reading outcomes (Dumlao, 2024). This discrepancy suggested that while parents acknowledged the value of literacy, gaps persisted in translating awareness into consistent home-based reading practices. At Bolinawan Elementary School in Carcar City, Cebu, there had been limited documented evidence regarding how the home literacy environment influenced the reading performance of Grade Two learners. Considering that literacy outcomes were shaped by both home and school factors socioeconomic conditions, cultural beliefs, and available resources it became essential to investigate this relationship within the school’s specific community context. The absence of such localized data created a research gap that hindered the development of targeted interventions. Hence, this study was conducted to evaluate the status of the home literacy environment as perceived by parents and to determine its relationship with the literacy skills of Grade Two learners at Bolinawan Elementary School. By generating empirical evidence from this context, the research aimed to inform the formulation of a Literacy Skills Enhancement Plan that would bridge home and school efforts in promoting reading proficiency. In doing so, it contributed to the ongoing pursuit of educational excellence and the realization of UNESCO’s Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) ensuring that every child, regardless of background, had access to meaningful literacy opportunities.

## 2. Literature Review

Recent research from 2019 to 2024 continues to affirm the crucial role of the home literacy environment (HLE) in shaping children’s literacy development during the early years of schooling. Studies have shown that physical aspects of the home such as the availability of age-appropriate books, writing materials, and a quiet reading space significantly contribute to children’s word recognition and sentence reading abilities (Toub et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2022). Furthermore, parental literacy habits, such as parents modeling reading behavior and engaging in literacy tasks, have been positively linked to children’s reading fluency and vocabulary growth (Kleeck et al., 2021). These elements of the HLE help foster early engagement with language and print, which lays the foundation for formal reading instruction in the primary grades. Additionally, parent-child literacy interactions and parental beliefs about reading have been found to strongly influence children’s motivation and comprehension skills. Parents who frequently engage their children in reading-related discussions, ask open-ended questions, and provide emotional encouragement create a rich environment that supports reading comprehension and deeper processing of texts (Muijs et al., 2020; Sy, 2019). Beliefs that view reading as both an educational and recreational activity also lead to more consistent literacy practices at home. In the Philippine context, Sy (2019) highlighted how Filipino parents’ involvement in home reading activities positively affected children’s literacy outcomes in early elementary years. These findings support the development of localized literacy enhancement plans that incorporate home-based strategies as a complement to classroom instruction.

## 3. Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive–correlational research design to examine the relationship between the home literacy environment (HLE) and the literacy skills of Grade Two learners at Bolinawan Elementary School in the Division of Carcar City. The design was appropriate as it allowed the researcher to describe existing conditions and assess the extent of relationships between variables without manipulating them. The study involved two Grade Two teachers and sixty-nine (69) parents of Grade Two learners who were selected through purposive sampling. This sampling method ensured that only individuals directly involved in the children’s literacy development participated, thereby enhancing the relevance of the findings. Two research instruments were utilized: a Survey Questionnaire for Parents and the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) for learners. The parent survey was

adapted from the Home Literacy Environment Questionnaire by Buvaneswari and Padakannaya (2017) and translated into Cebuano to ensure cultural and linguistic appropriateness. It covered five key dimensions: physical environment, parent literacy habits, child literacy habits, parent-child interaction, and parental beliefs. To assess learners' literacy skills, the study used the CRLA developed by Tancioco and Ortega-Dela Cruz (2021), which measured word recognition, sentence reading, reading fluency, and comprehension through oral reading and comprehension tasks. The integration of these tools allowed for methodological triangulation, linking parental literacy practices with students' actual reading performance. This approach provided a comprehensive understanding of how home literacy conditions impact learners' reading development, supporting the formulation of a Literacy Skills Enhancement Plan tailored to the needs of the school community.

#### 4. Results

The results presented in Table 1 indicate that the status of the home literacy environment in terms of physical environment is very satisfactory, as reflected by the aggregate weighted mean = 3.64 and the aggregate standard deviation = 1.10. Among the eight indicators assessed, the highest-rated item was "My child has toys that teach colors, shapes, sizes, etc." with mean = 4.01, suggesting that most parents provide educational toys that promote early learning concepts. Other indicators that received a "Very Satisfactory" rating include the accessibility of toys and books to the child, with mean = 3.84; the presence of a designated place for books and toys at home, with mean = 3.67; the availability of toys or games requiring refined movements, with mean = 3.62; and the presence of alphabet books or educational materials, with mean = 3.61. Meanwhile, two indicators were rated as "Satisfactory": the availability of at least 10 children's books, with mean = 3.32; and the presence of three or more puzzles, with mean = 3.22.

Table 1. Status of Literacy Environment at Their Home in Terms of Physical Environment

S/N Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1 My child has toys that teach colors, shapes, sizes, etc.	4.01	0.98	Very Satisfactory
2 My child has three or more puzzles	3.22	1.15	Satisfactory
3 My child has toys or games requiring refined movements	3.62	1.02	Very Satisfactory
4 My child has at least 10 children's books	3.32	1.06	Satisfactory
5 My child has toys that help teach the names of animals, vehicles, fruits	3.57	1.19	Very Satisfactory
6 We have alphabet books/blocks/magnetic letters/flashcards/workbooks at home	3.61	1.13	Very Satisfactory
7 There is a designated place for books and toys at home	3.67	1.05	Very Satisfactory
8 The toys and books are accessible to the child	3.84	1.22	Very Satisfactory
Aggregate Weighted Mean	3.64		Very Satisfactory
Aggregate Standard Deviation		1.10	

These results indicate areas where the physical literacy environment could be further enriched. Overall, the data reflect that learners are generally exposed to home environments that are physically conducive to promoting literacy development, although increased access to a wider range of books and learning tools could enhance this further.

Table 2. Status of Literacy Environment at the Learner's Home in terms of Parents Literacy Habits

S/N Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1 My child asks for help learning the letters of the alphabet	4.29	1.00	Outstanding
2 My child asks for help while writing	4.13	0.98	Very Satisfactory
3 My child asks for books to be read to him/her	3.93	1.12	Very Satisfactory
4 My child pretends to read from books or says stories to himself/herself	2.72	1.11	Satisfactory
5 My child shows interest in reading signboards when we go out	3.99	1.10	Very Satisfactory
6 My child shows interest in identifying the product by looking at an advertisement or the product wrapper	3.87	1.11	Very Satisfactory
Aggregate Weighted Mean	3.82		Very Satisfactory
Aggregate Standard Deviation		1.07	

The results presented in Table 2 show the status of the home literacy environment in terms of parents' literacy habits, as perceived by the parent-respondents. The overall rating was satisfactory, with an aggregate weighted mean = 3.21 and an aggregate standard deviation = 1.21. This suggests that while some positive habits are present, there is still considerable room for improvement in parents modeling strong literacy behaviors at home. Among the indicators, the highest-rated item was "My child sees me writing/typing", with mean = 3.67, followed closely by "I personally enjoy reading as a habit" with mean = 3.49, and "I enjoy talking about books related to various topics with friends and family members" with mean = 3.45. All three were rated very satisfactory, indicating that some parents demonstrate regular engagement in reading and writing activities, which can positively influence children's literacy development through observation and modeling. On the other hand, several indicators were rated only satisfactory, such as "My child sees me reading for pleasure" (mean = 3.28), "My child sees me playing word games or crossword puzzles" (mean = 3.26), "I go to bookstores or the library with my child" (mean = 2.78), and "My child sees me reading books, magazines, or newspapers" (mean = 3.17). Notably, the lowest-rated item was "Our family buys and reads a daily newspaper" with mean = 2.55, which falls under the fair category. These findings suggest limited exposure to diverse reading habits at home. Enhancing parental engagement in visible literacy activities could further support the development of children's reading motivation and literacy skills.

Table 3. Status of Literacy Environment at the Learner's Home in Terms of Child's Literacy Habits

S/N Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1 My child asks for help learning the letters of the alphabet	4.29	1.00	Outstanding
2 My child asks for help while writing	4.13	0.98	Very Satisfactory
3 My child asks for books to be read to him/her	3.93	1.12	Very Satisfactory
4 My child pretends to read from books or says stories to himself/herself	2.72	1.11	Satisfactory
5 My child shows interest in reading signboards when we go out	3.99	1.10	Very Satisfactory
6 My child shows interest in identifying the product by looking at an advertisement or the product wrapper	3.87	1.11	Very Satisfactory
Aggregate Weighted Mean	3.82		Very Satisfactory
Aggregate Standard Deviation		1.07	

The results in Table 3 reveal the status of the home literacy environment in terms of child's literacy habits, as perceived by the parent-respondents. The findings show an aggregate weighted mean = 3.82 with an aggregate standard deviation = 1.07, which corresponds to a Very Satisfactory rating. This indicates that, overall, children are actively engaged in literacy-related behaviors at home, suggesting a supportive environment for early reading development. The highest-rated indicator was "My child asks for help learning the letters of the alphabet" with mean = 4.29, categorized as Outstanding. This reflects strong learner motivation and foundational literacy interest. Following this, items such as "My child asks for help while writing" (mean = 4.13), "My child shows interest in reading signboards when we go out" (mean = 3.99), "My child asks for books to be read to him/her" (mean = 3.93), and "My child shows interest in identifying the product by looking at an advertisement or the product wrapper" (mean = 3.87) were all rated Very Satisfactory. These results indicate that many children actively seek literacy interactions in everyday settings and express curiosity about print in their surroundings. However, one indicator received a lower rating: "My child pretends to read from books or says stories to himself/herself" with mean = 2.72, rated Satisfactory.

Table 4. Status of Literacy Environment at the Learner's Home in Terms of Parent-Child Interaction

S/N Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1 I teach simple verbal manners (please, sorry, thank you, etc.)	4.52	0.95	Outstanding
2 I encourage my child to talk and take time to listen	4.33	1.04	Outstanding
3 I teach nursery rhymes and songs to my child	4.23	0.94	Outstanding

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
4	I name pictures in books and talk about the pictures	3.81	0.99	Very Satisfactory
5	I read stories to my child	3.72	0.94	Very Satisfactory
6	I point out to words in magazines/newspapers	3.38	1.03	Satisfactory
7	I help my child solve jigsaw puzzles	3.52	1.04	Very Satisfactory
8	I encourage my child to act out a story	3.71	1.15	Very Satisfactory
9	I encourage my child to read product labels, street signs, and signboards	4.13	0.95	Very Satisfactory
10	When we read, I try to sound excited so my child stays interested	4.20	0.96	Very Satisfactory
11	I ask my child a lot of questions when we read	3.80	1.07	Very Satisfactory
12	I try to make the story more real to my child by relating the story to his/her life	4.16	0.99	Very Satisfactory
13	When we read, we talk about the pictures as much as we read the story	4.07	0.83	Very Satisfactory
14	When we read, I encourage my child to tell the story	3.96	0.81	Very Satisfactory
15	When we read, I ask my child to point out to different letters/numbers printed in the book	4.20	0.83	Very Satisfactory
16	I play reading-related games with my child	3.80	1.02	Very Satisfactory
17	I tell stories to my child	3.96	0.85	Very Satisfactory
18	I point out simple words when I read to him/her	4.07	0.90	Very Satisfactory
19	I speak to my child about what happened during the day	4.04	0.89	Very Satisfactory
20	My child and I make new rhymes by playing with words/sounds	3.88	0.97	Very Satisfactory
21	I change my voice to suit the characters when I read to my child	3.92	1.00	Very Satisfactory
22	I talk to my child about what he/she watches on TV or translate the stories into our native language	4.00	0.95	Very Satisfactory
23	My child does not understand English words	3.67	1.07	Very Satisfactory
	Aggregate Weighted Mean	3.95		Very Satisfactory
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		0.96	

The results in Table 4 illustrate the status of the home literacy environment in terms of parent-child interaction, as perceived by the parent-respondents. The findings yielded an aggregate weighted mean = 3.95 and an aggregate standard deviation = 0.96, which corresponds to a Very Satisfactory rating. This suggests that parents are generally engaging in literacy-rich interactions with their children, helping to foster language development, comprehension, and a love for reading. Three indicators were rated Outstanding, indicating exemplary levels of engagement. These include "I teach simple verbal manners (please, sorry, thank you, etc.)" with mean = 4.52, "I encourage my child to talk and take time to listen" with mean = 4.33, and "I teach nursery rhymes and songs to my child" with mean = 4.23. These results show that many parents are not only modeling effective communication but also incorporating culturally familiar and developmentally supportive oral literacy practices. The majority of the remaining items were rated Very Satisfactory, including practices like reading stories (mean = 3.72), pointing out simple words during reading (mean = 4.07), encouraging children to read signs and product labels (mean = 4.13), asking questions while reading (mean = 3.80), and helping children relate stories to real-life experiences (mean = 4.16). Only one item was rated Satisfactory: "I point out words in magazines/newspapers" with mean = 3.38, which may suggest that fewer families use printed media in their literacy routines.

**Table 5. Status of Literacy Environment at the Learner's Home in terms of Parental Beliefs**

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Parents can teach alphabets to their child in addition to what is taught in school	4.35	0.70	Outstanding
2	Parents can help their child to read and write words in addition to what is taught in school	4.32	0.81	Outstanding
3	Most children do well at reading words in school because their parent teaches them to read words at home	4.16	0.95	Very Satisfactory

4	Parents have the responsibility to teach reading and writing skills to their child	4.39	0.83	Outstanding
5	Most parents should supplement the literacy skills their child learns at school by teaching their child literacy skills at home	4.19	0.94	Very Satisfactory
6	Parents should select books based on their colorful illustrations high-interest content and natural language	4.19	0.77	Very Satisfactory
7	Parents should develop the child's confidence and interest in putting ideas on paper in whatever form they can (drawing writing etc.)	4.29	0.79	Outstanding
8	Parents should help in developing child's ability to divide a word into parts or syllables to read new words	4.36	0.73	Outstanding
9	I think that it is important to develop a broad interest in reading in my child	4.45	0.72	Outstanding
10	I think that it is important to develop my child's ability to hear the separate sounds in spoken words such as "f" in "fish"	4.42	0.74	Outstanding
Aggregate Weighted Mean		4.31		Outstanding
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.80	

The results in Table 5 reflect the status of the home literacy environment in terms of parental beliefs regarding their role in supporting their children's literacy development. The data show an aggregate weighted mean = 4.31 and an aggregate standard deviation = 0.80, earning an Outstanding verbal description. This indicates that parents generally hold strong, positive beliefs about their responsibility and ability to contribute to their children's literacy skills beyond what is taught in school. Several items received particularly high ratings. The highest-rated item was "I think that it is important to develop a broad interest in reading in my child" with mean = 4.45, followed closely by "I think that it is important to develop my child's ability to hear the separate sounds in spoken words such as 'f' in 'fish'" with mean = 4.42. These responses demonstrate that parents recognize the importance of phonemic awareness and fostering intrinsic motivation for reading. Other indicators rated Outstanding include the belief that parents can teach the alphabet (mean = 4.35), help children read and write beyond school instruction (mean = 4.32), and develop children's confidence in expressing themselves through writing or drawing (mean = 4.29). The remaining items were rated Very Satisfactory, such as "Most children do well at reading words in school because their parent teaches them to read words at home" with mean = 4.16, and "Parents should select books based on colorful illustrations, high-interest content, and natural language" with mean = 4.19. These findings reveal that parents value their role as active participants in literacy development and are aware of effective strategies to support their child's reading journey.

Table 6. Level of literacy skills of the Learners in terms of word recognition and sentence reading

Literacy Level	f	%
Advanced	19	27.54
Intermediate	31	44.93
Beginner	19	27.54
Total	69	100.00

Table 6 presents the level of literacy skills of Grade Two learners in terms of word recognition and sentence reading. The data reveal that the majority of learners fall under the Intermediate level, with 31 learners or 44.93% of the total respondents demonstrating moderate proficiency in recognizing words and reading sentences. This suggests that nearly half of the learners

have developed foundational literacy skills but may still require further instruction and practice to achieve higher fluency and accuracy. In addition, 19 learners or 27.54% were classified as Advanced, indicating strong decoding and reading abilities. These learners can likely read sentences with greater ease, speed, and comprehension, reflecting the positive effects of supportive literacy environments both at home and in school. Conversely, another 19 learners or 27.54% were identified as Beginners, signifying limited word recognition and sentence reading skills. These learners may struggle with basic decoding tasks and are likely in need of targeted literacy interventions to catch up with their peers. The equal percentage of learners in the Advanced and Beginner categories highlights a noticeable disparity in reading proficiency within the class. This variation underscores the importance of differentiated instruction and the need for tailored literacy support programs. The results suggest that while many learners are progressing, a significant portion still require strategic support to improve their reading skills.

Table 7. Level of literacy skills of the Learners in terms of reading fluency and comprehension

Literacy Level	f	%
Advanced	16	23.19
Intermediate	28	40.58
Beginner	25	36.23
Total	69	100.00

Table 7 shows the distribution of Grade Two learners' literacy skills in terms of reading fluency and comprehension. The data indicate that the largest group of learners, comprising 28 students or 40.58%, fall within the Intermediate level. These learners demonstrate moderate proficiency in reading smoothly and understanding texts, though they may still require guided reading practice to improve expression, pacing, and deeper comprehension. A notable portion of the learners, 25 students or 36.23%, were classified as Beginners. This group shows difficulty in reading fluently and in understanding what they read, highlighting the need for early intervention and support strategies such as repeated reading, vocabulary development, and scaffolded comprehension activities. On the other hand, 16 learners or 23.19% were assessed at the Advanced level, suggesting that they can read with fluency, accuracy, and comprehension appropriate for their grade level. These learners likely benefit from rich literacy experiences and consistent support from home and school. Overall, the results point to a varied range of reading fluency and comprehension skills among learners. With more than one-third still in the beginner stage, there is a clear need for targeted reading programs that cater to learners with lower proficiency while also sustaining and challenging those at the advanced level. The findings emphasize the importance of differentiated instruction and the role of a strong home literacy environment in developing fluency and comprehension skills.

Table 8. Test of relationship between the home literacy environment and the literacy skills of the learners

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Home Literacy Environment and Literacy Skills	0.348*	Weak Positive	0.003	Reject Ho	Significant

\*significant at  $p < 0.05$  (two-tailed)

Table 8 presents the results of the correlation analysis between the home literacy environment and the literacy skills of Grade Two learners. The findings reveal a correlation coefficient ( $r$ -value) = 0.348, indicating a weak positive relationship between the two variables. Despite the correlation being weak, the relationship is statistically significant, as shown by the  $p$ -value = 0.003, which is less than the significance level of  $p < 0.05$ . Consequently, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected, confirming that there is a significant association between the home literacy environment and learners' literacy performance. The result implies that improvements in the home literacy environment such as access to reading materials, positive literacy habits of parents, parent-child interactions, and supportive beliefs are likely to have a positive, though limited, influence on learners' literacy skills. This finding supports the idea that the home plays a meaningful role in shaping early reading development, even if other factors (such as classroom instruction and learner characteristics) also contribute significantly. The significance of the result underscores the need to strengthen home-based literacy support as part of broader interventions aimed at improving children's reading fluency, comprehension, word recognition, and sentence reading.

## 5. Discussion

The findings of the study indicate that the home literacy environment of Grade Two learners is generally supportive and conducive to literacy development. Parents reported positive practices in providing physical resources such as books, toys, and accessible reading materials at home. Children were observed to engage in literacy habits like asking for help with letters and showing interest in reading signs and labels, suggesting early reading engagement. Parent-child interactions were frequent and meaningful, including reading stories, asking questions, and making reading enjoyable through expressive storytelling. Additionally, parental beliefs toward literacy were found to be strongly aligned with educational goals, reflecting a clear understanding of their role in their child's reading development. However, the area of parental literacy habits showed room for improvement, as not all parents consistently model reading or writing behaviors for their children, which could limit the reinforcement of literacy outside the classroom. Regarding literacy outcomes, most learners were at an intermediate level in both word recognition and sentence reading, as well as reading fluency and comprehension. A significant number of learners remained at the beginner level, particularly in comprehension and fluency, indicating that more focused reading support is needed. The correlation analysis revealed a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between the home literacy environment and learners' literacy performance. This suggests that while the home environment plays an important role in shaping reading development, it is only one of several influencing factors. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening home-school collaboration and providing targeted support through a Literacy Skills Enhancement Plan that empowers parents and teachers to work together in building strong foundational literacy skills in young learners.

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