

The Role of the School-Based SLP in Literacy

According to the 2002 Statement of the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association (ASHA) entitled "Knowledge and Skills Needed by Speech-Language Pathologists With Respect to Reading and Writing in Children and Adolescents", SLPs have multiple roles and responsibilities in the area of literacy:

1. **Prevention.** This role addresses the goal to prevent reading and writing language problems by fostering language acquisition and emergent literacy.
2. **Identification.** This role addresses the goal of identifying children and adolescents with (or at risk for) reading and writing problems so that they may receive appropriate attention.
3. **Assessment.** This role addresses the goal of assessing reading and writing abilities, and relating them to spoken communication, academic achievement, and other areas.
4. **Intervention.** This role addresses the goal to provide effective intervention for problems involving reading and writing and documenting the outcomes.
5. **Other roles.** Other roles include providing assistance to general education teachers, families, and students; advocating for effective literacy practices; and advancing the knowledge base.

SLPs have a specialized knowledge base that enables them to be instrumental in carrying out the above roles in the area of language and literacy. This knowledge base includes these categories:

1. **The nature of literacy**, including spoken-written language relationships, and reading and writing as acts of communication and tools of learning.
2. **Normal development of reading and writing** in the context of the general education curriculum.
3. **Disorders of language and literacy** and their relationships to each other and to other communication disorders.
4. **Clinical tools and methods** for targeting reciprocal spoken and written language growth.
5. **Collaboration, leadership, and research principles** for working with others, serving as advocates, and advancing knowledge about evidence-based practices.

To read the complete ASHA document, an ASHA member can consult Volume III of the Online Desk Reference at <http://www.asha.org/members/deskref-journals/deskref/default>.