# Early Childhood Newsletter

| **Focus for this issue:** | **Item Analysis of the NYS MEP**<br>**Early Childhood Academic Tool: Fall 2017 Pre-test Results** |
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M-TASC utilized the Interpretation Scores of the eleven Skill Areas (A-K) from the NYS MEP Early Childhood Academic Tool (ECA) to identify the statewide areas of strength and growth on the pre-tests administered between September 2017 and January 2018.

## Areas of Strength

M-TASC identified the Statewide Areas of Strength as those skill areas on the ECA with more than half of the METS showing it as a strength. For the four-year-olds, these skill areas are as follows:

- (B) Book Behaviors
- (D) Colors
- (G) Body Parts

## Areas of Growth

M-TASC identified the Statewide Areas of Growth as those skill areas on the ECA with more than half of the METS showing it as an area of growth. For the four-year-olds, these skill areas are as follows:

- (C) Emergent Literacy
- (F) Shapes
- (I) Emergent Writing
- (J) Prepositions

## What Can We Learn From the Statewide Areas of Strength to Guide our Instruction?

- Parents and children often use the "Body Parts" vocabulary in daily conversations when children are dressing and when children are sick or hurt.

- Parents and children often discuss colors daily when children are dressing and matching clothes. By the age of three, many children have selected a favorite color.

This seems consistent with the NYS MEP Theory of Action. One area of support in Identity Development describes, "Assisting students to make connections between the academic content and their life experience." This newsletter explores ways to integrate the instruction of the ECA's academic skill areas "Shapes" and "Emergent Writing" with a student's life experiences.
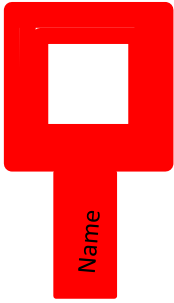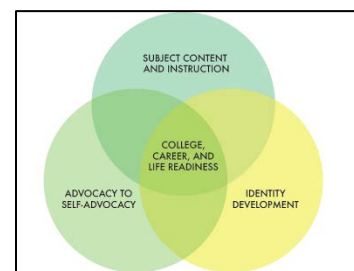


## Suggestion for Connecting Writing One's Name to the Life Experiences of a Preschooler

Once the student is attempting one or two letters in their name, it can become the student's job to write their name on the projects *they make* and keep. The student gains the sense of ownership and purpose for learning to write the rest of their name. There can be a separate time to model the correct arrangement and form of letters. Alternately, students could glue paper letter tiles to a project, to form their name.

## "I SPY" [TARGET SHAPE] GAME

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|  | **Materials*:* M-TASC template for "I Spy [Target Shape]" Game printed on cardstock, scissors, sample toys that have the target shape.<br><br>**Action for Beginners:** Students who are using scissors can cut all or part of the outside and Migrant Educator cuts the center out of the "magnifying [shape].<br>• Migrant Educator models using the "magnifying [square]" to find [square] shapes on the toys.<br>• Student holds the "magnifying [square] to go on a Treasure Hunt to find more things shaped like the [square]. *(floor tile, video box, end table, pillow, seat of kitchen chair)*<br>• Involve the parent in the game.<br><br>**Playing the "I Spy" Game:** One person picks on object and says, "I spy something [rectangular]." The other person holds the "magnifying [rectangle]" and asks questions. *"Is it the door?" "Is it the refrigerator*?" |

*M-TASC created the template, but the idea for turning geometric shapes into magnifying glasses to play the "I Spy" game, came from http://munchkinsandmoms.com/spy-shape-hunt/*

## ALTERNATIVE SHAPE WAND

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|  | Use like the "magnifying [shape]" in the "I Spy" game, but tape a solid, paper [shape] to a craft stick for the [Shape] Wand.<br><br>*(Triangle shapes might be more noticeable outside. Indoor Triangles might include a hanger; a pennant with child's name (made the week before), sliced fruit.)* |

*Using a "Shape Wand" found at https://www.pre-kpages.com/shapes-activities-preschoolers/*

## MY [TARGET SHAPE] POSTER

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| **Materials:** | Printed M-TASC template for the [target shape] or use blank paper to create with student. |
| **Action:**<br> | After the student is comfortable identifying real objects in the home that are similar to the [target shape],<br>• Student selects objects to record on the [circle] poster. *(cell phone's camera lens, "0" on calendar, door knob, cap on water bottle)*<br>• Parent/Migrant Educator assist with drawing and labeling the name of the child's word for the object on the poster. *(using the home language/English)*<br>• Read the poster three to five times, building the connection and opportunity to memorize. |

## MY [TARGET SHAPE] BOOK

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| **My Triangle Book**<br><br>△<br><br>**By** _____ | Use like "My [Target Shape] Poster," to record shapes from the student's home and outdoors.<br>• Instead of a poster, create a book with (2) ½ sheets of construction paper stapled together.<br>• Make a cover page with the title (My [Triangle] Book) and the Author's (student's) name. |

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS- SHAPES

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| Use the "Information for Parents" handout to connect parents to the academic vocabulary and activities. Migrant Educators can customize this for different lessons by checking different boxes. |

## [SHAPE] WORK MATS

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| *Integrating the shape identification as the student's job in the weekly routine of the lesson.* | |
| **Materials:** | • Pre-laminate (4) pieces of 18" x 12" construction paper.<br>• Keep one as the rectangle, and then cut the others into a square, triangle and a circle. |
| **Action:** | When it is time for a messy project (gluing, cutting), ask the student to select the [target shape] work mat for the table/work area.<br>• Depending on the student, the Migrant Educator can<br>   o Start with one [shape] work mat or start with all four;<br>   o Hold up another object that is the same shape as the [target shape], so the student can find the shape by MATCHING it;<br>   o Let the student choose the shape, saying/repeating its name. |

## Combining Emergent Writing and Drawing Shapes

## PORTABLE SAND TRAY

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| **Materials:** | Short, square plastic container, white craft sand, unlined index cards<br>• Pour just enough sand into the container to cover the bottom of the container. |
| **Action:** | Introduce the sand tray by drawing in the sand with one finger and gently shaking the container to erase.<br>• Let the student explore.<br>• Write the target design on an index card, for the student to copy, including<br>   o Pre-writing designs, such as ∿ \| — ◉ ⋀⋁<br>   o Target letter(s) from student's name<br>   o Target Shape(s) |
| **Variation:** | Place a piece of colored paper under the sand tray, for the student to discover. |