

Pearson BTEC Level 3 Nationals Extended Diploma

January 2019

Set Task Release Date:
3 December 2018

Paper Reference **31599H**

Children's Play, Learning and Development

Unit 4: Enquiries into Current Research in Early Years Practice

Part A

You do not need any other materials.

Instructions

- **Part A** contains material for the completion of the preparatory work for the set task.
- **Part A** is given to learners four weeks before **Part B** is taken under formal supervision as scheduled by Pearson.
- **Part A** must be given to learners on the specified date so that learners can prepare as directed and monitored.
- **Part A** is specific to each series and this material must only be issued to learners who have been entered to undertake the task in that series.
- **Part B** contains unseen material and is issued to learners at the start of the specified formal supervised assessment session on the timetabled date specified by Pearson.

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Instructions to Teachers/Tutors

This set task has a preparatory period. **Part A** sets out how learners should prepare for the completion of the unseen task in **Part B** under supervised conditions.

Part A should be issued to learners **four weeks** prior to undertaking **Part B** of the assessment.

Learners should be provided with the opportunity to conduct independent research in order to select and read secondary source materials such as articles and journals. Centres may need to make facilities available to learners to support independent work. Learners are advised to spend approximately **8-10 hours** on selecting and reading their secondary sources and that spending any longer on this is unlikely to advantage them. Learners may bring their selected secondary sources into the monitored sessions, and these will be subject to monitoring by the teacher/tutor.

Learners should be monitored in **six hours** provided by the centre to compile notes on their secondary research. During this time they may only have access to:

- the internet to carry out searches and to access secondary sources in relation to their research
- outcomes of independent research such as sources that they have selected.

Learners must work independently and must not be given guidance or feedback on the completion of the preparatory work. Learners must not prepare potential responses.

Learners may take up to four A4 sides of notes into the supervised assessment. Learner notes are the outcome of independent preparation and support learners in responding to the additional information and activities presented only in **Part B**. The notes may be handwritten or typed in a 12 point size font.

Learner notes can only include:

- facts, figures and data relating to secondary sources covering the article's area of research
- the research methods used in the learner's own secondary research.

Other content is not permitted.

In addition to the four pages of notes, learners should use the monitored sessions to prepare a list of sources that they have used, to take into the supervised assessment.

Instructions for Learners

Read the set task information carefully.

In **Part B** you will be asked to carry out specific written activities using the information in this **Part A** booklet and your own research on this topic.

In your preparation for **Part B** using this **Part A** booklet you may prepare short notes to refer to when completing the set task. Your notes may be up to four A4 sides and may be handwritten or typed in a 12 point size font. Your notes can only include:

- facts, figures and data relating to secondary sources covering the article's area of research
- the research methods used in your secondary research.

Other content is not permitted.

You will complete **Part B** under supervised conditions.

You must work independently and should not share your work with other learners.

Your teacher will provide a schedule for the **six hours** of monitored preparation.

Your teacher cannot give you feedback during the preparation period.

Set Task Brief

You have to use your understanding of research methodologies and associated issues related to a piece of current research on the early years education issue, and to use your own skills in carrying out secondary research around the issue.

It is recommended that you spend approximately **8-10 hours** on your secondary research.

To prepare for the set task in **Part B** you must do the following:

1. Analyse the article.
2. Do your own independent secondary research based on the content of the article. You must use at least three secondary sources in your research.
3. You must prepare the following for your final supervised assessment:
 - a list of your secondary sources
 - notes on your secondary research – you can take no more than four A4 pages of notes into the **Part B** supervised session.

During the supervised time for **Part B** you will have access to this material.

You will have to respond to activities, based on the given article and your own secondary research.

You will have **three hours** under supervised conditions in which to complete your final assessment.

Part A Set Task Information

Extract from article: **Bold beginnings: The Reception curriculum in a sample of good and outstanding primary schools**

Ofsted 2017

Background

A good early education is the foundation for later success. For too many children, however, their Reception Year is a missed opportunity that can leave them exposed to all the painful and unnecessary consequences of falling behind their peers.

During the summer term 2017, Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) visited successful primary schools in which children, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, achieved well. This report examines the provision in their Reception Year and the extent to which it was preparing four- and five-year-olds for their years of schooling and life ahead.

Reading was at the heart of the curriculum in the most successful classes. Listening to stories, poems and rhymes fed children's imagination, enhanced their vocabulary and developed their comprehension. Systematic synthetic phonics played a critical role in teaching children the alphabetic code. Since this knowledge is also essential for spelling, good phonics teaching supported children's early writing.

Research Objectives

To evaluate what works well for all reception children, especially those who are disadvantaged, in order to improve their language and literacy.

Methodology

Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) reviewed how a sample of good and outstanding schools planned, organised and taught the curriculum in the Reception Year. They examined the extent to which the Reception curriculum prepares children for the national curriculum for Year 1 and beyond.

In the summer term 2017, HMI visited 41 primary schools across England. Ofsted had judged each school to be good or outstanding for both the early years foundation stage (EYFS) and the school's overall effectiveness at its most recent inspection. The schools were chosen because they typified the findings of longitudinal research into the importance of high-quality, early education; namely, that children who do well by the age of five have a greater chance of doing well throughout school.

HMI visited a diverse range of schools. Twenty-eight of the 41 schools were in the 40% most deprived areas of England. Nine schools were in the 40% least deprived areas.

During the visits, HMI spoke with the headteacher, the early years leader or manager, and with staff and children.

They observed children's learning across the day, including in reading, writing and mathematics. They also listened to children read. HMI evaluated a range of documentation, including children's books and/or records of achievement.

Over the summer term 2017, Ofsted sent a short questionnaire to headteachers (see Appendix 1). The questionnaire was also distributed to schools and relevant stakeholders through the Teaching Schools Council. The questionnaire asked headteachers and their Reception staff to evaluate the extent to which government guidance about the

early years influenced their approach to the curriculum for four- and five-year-olds. The questionnaire also collected information about the context of each school's Reception classes and asked staff to share their views about the typical knowledge, skills and understanding shown by children on entry and exit from Reception. Ofsted received 208 questionnaire responses from 76 different schools.

Results

Reception – a unique and important year

The Reception Year holds a unique and important position in education. It marks a significant milestone in a child's life, representing both a beginning and an end. For parents, it is the end of early education and care, at home and/or across multiple settings, and the start of school. For school headteachers and teachers, it is the crucial bridge between the EYFS and, for most schools, the start of the National Curriculum.

Reception is commonly referred to as the first year of school but, unlike other school years, it is not compulsory. In England, formal schooling does not start until the school term following a child's fifth birthday. Despite this, nearly all parents decide to send their child to Reception.

Nearly 95% of the school staff who responded to Ofsted's survey questionnaire believed that Nursery and/or Reception signalled the start of school. Headteachers clearly believe that the moment a child starts attending their school, in whatever capacity, their educational journey has begun. While Year 1 may be the official start, it is clear that the Reception Year is more commonly recognised as the beginning of a child's formal education.

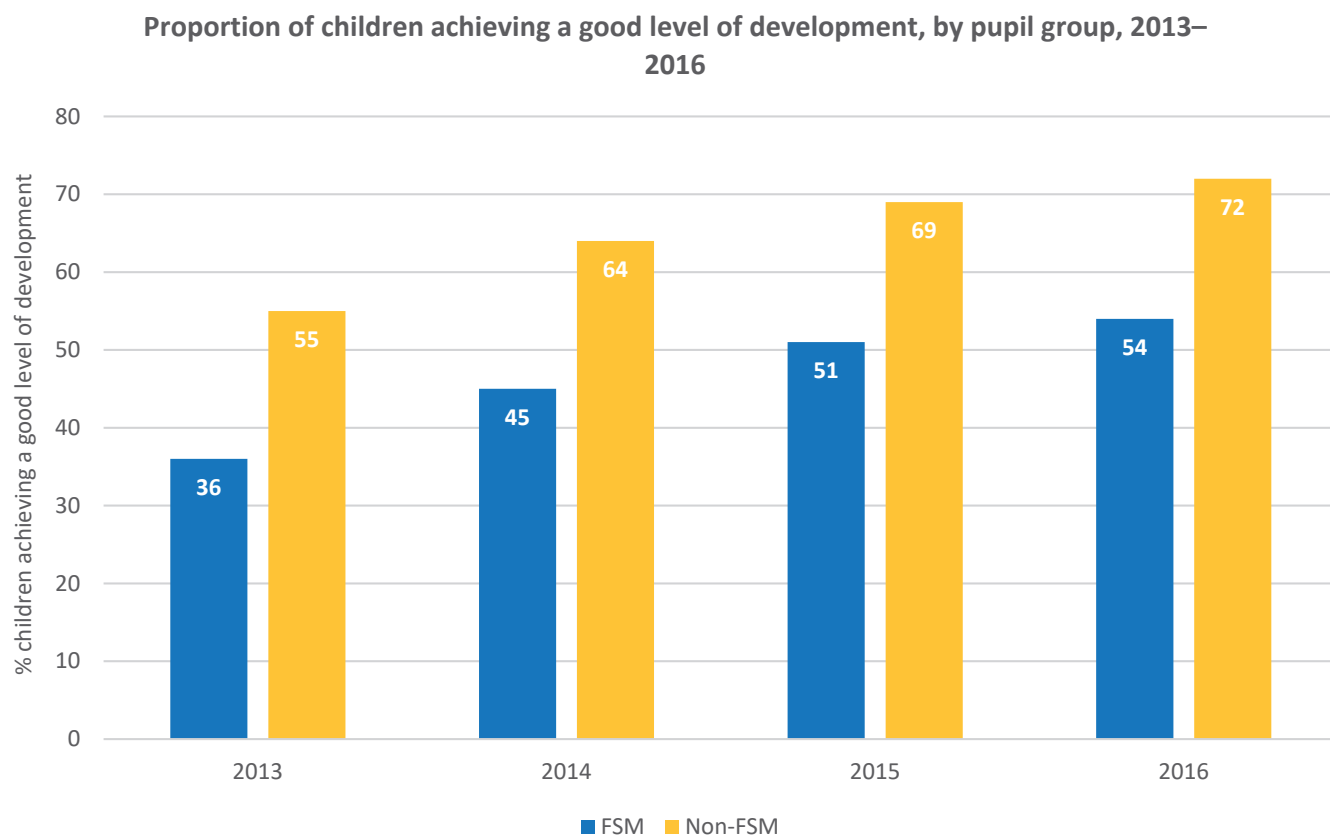
The term 'Reception' refers to headteachers and staff 'receiving' children into their school. While many children will have already had some form of pre-school provision, the Reception Year is often their first experience of full-time education. It is a time when headteachers and staff establish the rules, routines and expectations of learning that will serve children well and follow them through the rest of their formal schooling.

The research is clear: a child's early education lasts a lifetime. Done well, it can mean the difference between gaining seven Bs at GCSE compared with seven Cs. What children are taught during Reception – the curriculum – is therefore hugely important. Such rewards are by no means guaranteed.

For too many children, the Reception Year is far from successful. It is a false start and may predispose them to years of catching up rather than forging ahead. In 2016, around one third of children did not have the essential knowledge and understanding they needed to reach a good level of development

A child achieves a good level of development, as defined by the government, if she or he meets the expected level in the early learning goals in the prime areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language) and in the specific areas of literacy and mathematics by the age of five. The outcomes for disadvantaged children were far worse. Only just over half had the knowledge and understanding needed to secure a positive start to Year 1. The gap of 18 percentage points between disadvantaged children and their better-off counterparts, while narrowing, still remains unacceptably wide. (See Figure 1).

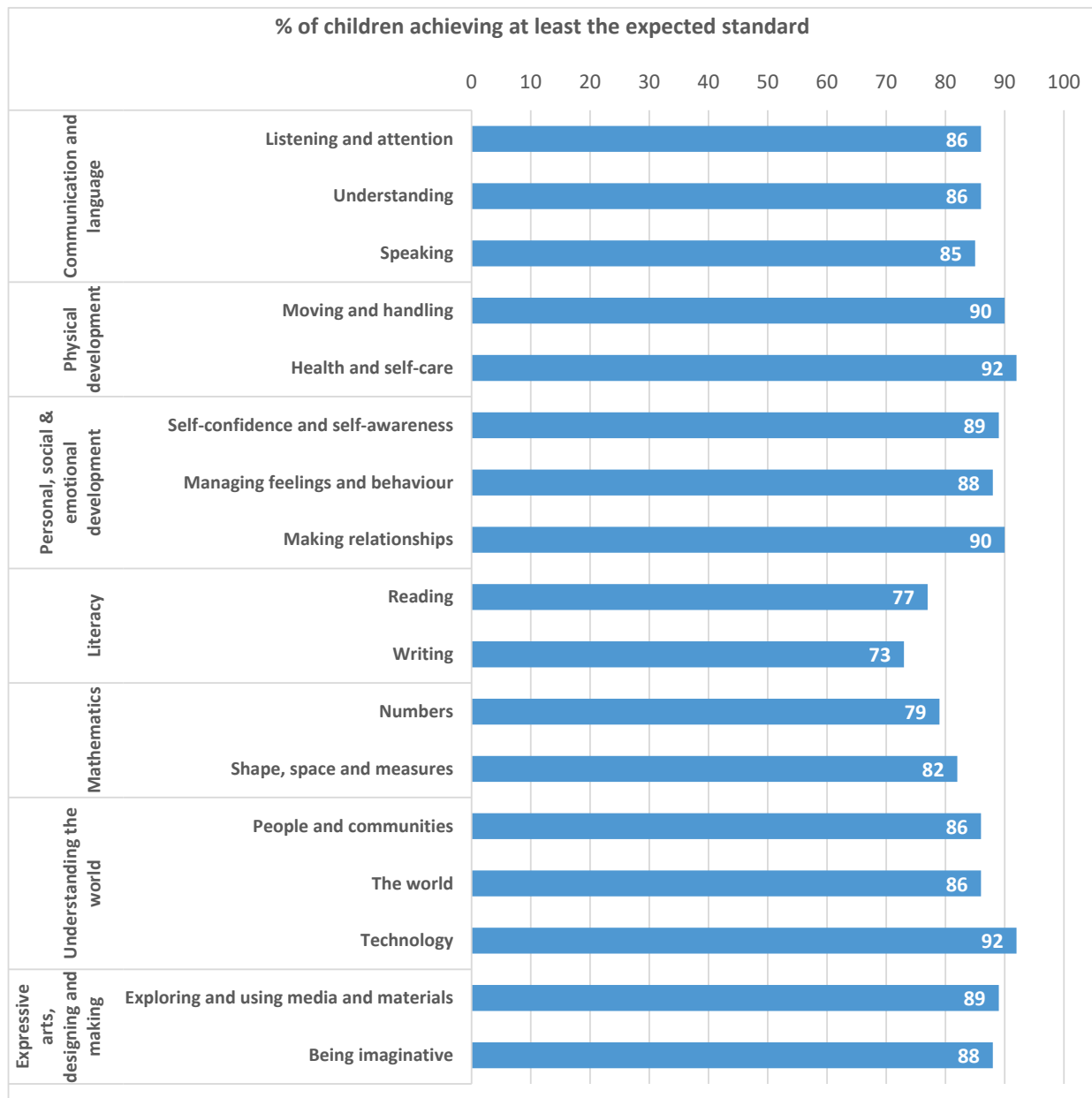
Figure 1: Proportion of children achieving a good level of development, by year and by eligibility for free school meals (FSM)



(Source: Table 3, SRF50/2016 table 1)

By the end of Reception, the ability to read, write and use numbers is fundamental. They are the building blocks for all other learning. Without firm foundations in these areas, a child's life chances can be severely restricted. The basics need to be taught – and learned – well, from the start. (See Figure 2).

Figure 2: Proportion of children achieving at least the expected level in each early learning goal 2016



(Source: Table 3, SRF50/2016)

Success in reading, writing and mathematics is built on a strong foundation in the prime areas of learning. Increasingly, children are arriving in Reception personally, socially and emotionally ready to learn – that is, able and eager to take on the increased challenges of the specific, content-led areas of the wider curriculum.

Teaching

Most headteachers in the schools visited made deliberate, informed choices about the body of knowledge their children needed in order for them to succeed. These headteachers began by making sure that their staff started teaching quickly, including the specifics of reading, writing and numbers. They did not believe in a prolonged settling-in period, even when children arrived from a number of pre-school settings rather than from the school's own nursery.

In the schools visited, inspectors observed Reception teachers using direct, interactive whole-class instruction, particularly for reading, writing and mathematics. They recognised that teaching the whole class was at times the most efficient way of imparting knowledge.

Headteachers and staff knew that most learning could not be self-discovered or left to chance through each child's own choices. Teachers appreciated that most knowledge, skills and processes needed to be taught directly, especially processes such as learning to read or write or understanding and using numbers.

All the schools visited used role play effectively to increase children's opportunities to talk. Many had more than one role-play area, one creating a familiar everyday context, such as a home corner or shop, and another extending children's imagination, such as a space ship or jungle. Inspectors observed children playing together to create imaginary situations, often based on the book they were reading in class. For example, in one school, children pretended to be one of the three Billy Goats Gruff, where a nasty troll would scold them for 'trip trip trapping' over the 'ricketty-racketty bridge'.

Interventions

Importantly, when children were not as quick to pick up knowledge and understanding as others, they were given the extra support needed to help them keep up with their peers or catch up quickly when they arrived later in the school year. Interventions were not about introducing new teaching methods to see if they would work better. Instead, the existing content was broken down into smaller steps and children were given more time to practise and embed their new learning.

Language and literacy

In the schools visited, teaching children to be literate was the cornerstone of an effective curriculum. Even in the schools where inspectors found teaching and outcomes in some areas of learning to be weaker than in others, children's progress was still at least good overall because headteachers had placed reading specifically at the heart of the Reception curriculum.

Spoken language and listening to stories, poems and rhymes

Headteachers and staff were particularly clear about the importance of sharing nursery rhymes, stories and poems in Reception classes. Many teachers timetabled sessions at least once, and often twice, in the day to introduce children to a broad range of fiction, tune their 'listening ear', increase their levels of concentration and promote enjoyment.

Nursery rhymes, in particular, were seen to help children to become sensitive to the sounds and rhymes in words and give them practice in enunciating words and sounds clearly. Schools with nursery classes and/or provision for two-year-olds concentrated on this before children turned four as a prerequisite to successful literacy learning in Reception. However, both those with and without pre-school provision ensured that children practised nursery rhymes in Reception.

Staff understood that sharing stories, alongside the teaching of phonics, formed the foundation of reading comprehension. As well as tuning in children's ears to the structures and patterns of stories, the teacher's retelling provided an opportunity to model fluency, expression and enjoyment. Importantly, reading is the context in which the typical Reception child encounters new vocabulary.

Reading

Headteachers visited knew that being able to read gave all children access to a broad and balanced curriculum. They devoted considerable time and effort, early on, to teaching reading systematically. They believed that a concentrated effort in Reception widened rather than narrowed children's opportunities: 'The gift of reading is like giving children a ticket to all that school and life have to offer,' said a headteacher.

Headteachers were passionate about the place of systematic synthetic phonics as part of a rich and varied reading programme. All the schools visited had invested in a reading scheme to support children to apply their phonic knowledge and skills, as well as develop their reading comprehension.

Nearly half the schools organised their reading books in line with the published scheme that matched the words to the sounds children had been taught.

The better managed and organised the scheme, and the more informed staff were about how it was organised, the better children's reading was. Typically, of those observed, inspectors found that children who followed a well-managed reading scheme(s), organised according to the growing complexity of the grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) within them, read more books and made more progress.

Once children could decode the text fluently, teachers focused their attention on encouraging children to think about the story.

Writing

Headteachers and staff across all the schools visited were clear about what they taught to develop Reception children's writing composition. Children were taught to:

- participate in whole-class or small-group talk as preparation for writing
- compose and write independently, when they had the necessary skills
- rehearse out loud what they were going to write
- compose a sentence orally before writing it down
- sequence sentences to form short narratives
- reread what they had written to check it made sense
- read aloud what they had written.

Strong phonics teaching was the main vehicle for developing children's spelling and handwriting (transcriptional skills). The vast majority of the schools visited used a scheme throughout the school, including to teach letter formation in Reception.

Headteachers in the schools visited agreed that children needed to be able to form all letters correctly and consistently before joined-up handwriting was considered.

Assessment and the early years foundation stage profile

Most of the teachers told inspectors that assessing 17 separate early learning goals (ELGs) was excessive and time-consuming. Reception teachers said they prioritised children's reading, writing and mathematics, as well as the characteristics of effective learning, because these areas were important in terms of children's subsequent learning and development. Although the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) handbook says:

'Observational assessment is the most reliable way of building up an accurate picture of children's development and learning. This is especially true where the attainment demonstrated is not dependent on overt adult support. Practitioners need to observe learning which children have initiated rather than only focusing on what children do when prompted.'¹

Most of the schools visited used a range of assessment methods, not just observation, to build a picture of each child's learning, development and understanding, including screening tools, standardised tests and informal teacher assessment.

¹ Standards and Testing Agency, Department for Education (2016) Early years foundation stage profile: 2017 handbook; www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-handbook.

Key Findings

The headteachers recognised that a successful Reception Year was fundamental to their school's success. They were clear that children's achievements up to the age of five can determine their life chances. They did not accept the view that some will 'catch up later'.

In the schools visited, headteachers and staff had significantly increased their expectations for how reading, writing and mathematics are taught since the implementation of the 2014 National Curriculum. Many headteachers expressed considerable concern that simply to meet the ELGs was insufficient preparation for children's learning in Year 1 and beyond. They therefore designed their Reception curriculum to give children the necessary foundations for the rest of their schooling. **These schools were clear that Reception children need more than a repeat of their pre-school experiences in Nursery or earlier.**

The headteachers prioritised language and literacy as the cornerstones of learning. They ensured that sufficient time was given to developing children's spoken language and teaching them to read and write.

Reading was at the heart of the curriculum. Children read out loud frequently from carefully selected books that closely matched their phonic knowledge. **Story time was a valued part of the daily routine.** Staff recognised it as essential in developing children's language, vocabulary and comprehension.

In schools visited where writing was of a high standard, the children were able to write simple sentences and more by the end of Reception. They were mastering the spelling of phonically regular words and common exception words. These schools paid good attention to children's posture and pencil grip when children were writing. They used pencils and exercise books, while children sat at tables, to support good, controlled letter formation.

All the schools visited planned a judicious balance of direct whole-class teaching, small-group teaching, partner work and play. They were clear about and valued the contribution to children's learning from each.

References

Beck I, Kucan L, McKeown M G (2002) *Bringing words to life: robust vocabulary instruction*, Guilford Press.

Department for Education (2014) *Early years foundation stage profile: handbook 2017*; www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-handbook.

Department for Education (2014) *Early years (under-5s) foundation stage framework (EYFS)*; www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2.

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Department for Education (2016) *SFR 2016 EYFSP 2015-2016*; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-results-2015-to-2016.

Department for Education (2014) *Students' educational and developmental outcomes at age 16, Effective Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education (EPPSE 3-16) Project*; www.gov.uk/government/publications/influences-on-students-development-at-age-16.

Education Act 2005, section 8; www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/section/8.

Standards and Testing Agency, Department for Education (2016) *Early years foundation stage profile: 2017 handbook*; www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-profile-handbook.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

1. School name (optional)
2. What is your role within school?
 - a. Headteacher
 - b. Early years leader
 - c. Reception teacher
3. How many years of experience do you have teaching reception-aged children?
 - a. None
 - b. 1-5 years
 - c. 5-10 years
 - d. 10+ years
4. Does a teacher with current or past experience of teaching Reception sit on your senior leadership team? YES/NO
5. How many adults typically work in your Reception class/es on a day-to-day basis?
 - a. One (typically, just the teacher)
 - b. Two (typically, the teacher and an additional adult)
 - c. Three (typically, the teacher and two additional adults)
 - d. Four (typically, the teacher and three additional adults)
 - e. Five or more (typically, the teacher and four or more additional adults)
6. Does your school have two-year-old provision? YES/NO
7. Does your school have a nursery class? YES/NO
8. When do you consider children to start school?
 - a. Pre-nursery/two-year-old provision (two-year-olds)
 - b. Nursery (three- and four-year-olds)
 - c. Reception (four- and five-year-olds)
 - d. Year 1 (five- and six-year-olds)
9. Do you believe that the early years foundation stage statutory framework (including the early years foundation stage profile) prepares children well for the demands of the National Curriculum in Year 1? YES/NO

Please explain your answer, highlighting any particular agreement or disagreement, using a maximum of 100 words.
10. What do you believe children should be able to do when they leave Reception?
Please list up to five answers, in order of importance.

11. Do you believe assessment of the 17 early learning goals is:
- manageable? YES/NO
 - efficient? YES/NO
 - accurate? YES/NO
 - reliable? YES/NO
12. Do you follow a particular scheme in Reception for:
- phonics? YES/NO (if yes, please name the scheme)
 - reading? YES/NO (if yes, please name the scheme)
 - writing? YES/NO (if yes, please name the scheme)
 - handwriting? YES/NO (if yes, please name the scheme)
 - mathematics? YES/NO (if yes, please name the scheme)
13. How much time (rounded to whole hours) in a typical week do you spend teaching each of the following?
- Listening, attention and understanding
 - Spoken/oral language
 - Vocabulary development
 - Reading
 - Writing
 - Mathematics
14. Do you believe there is clear and supportive guidance available to you, nationally, about:
- the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage? YES/NO
 - the Reception Year, specifically? YES/NO
 - assessment in Reception? YES/NO
 - what the 'expected' standard looks like at the end of Reception? YES/NO
 - what 'exceeding' the expected standard looks like at the end of Reception? YES/NO

Please check the examination details below before entering your candidate information

Candidate surname					Other names				
Centre Number					Learner Registration Number				
Pearson BTEC Level 3 Nationals Extended Diploma									
Window for supervised period: Monday 14 January 2019 - Wednesday 16 January 2019									
Supervised hours: 3 hours					Paper Reference 31599H				
Children's Play, Learning and Development Unit 4: Enquiries into Current Research in Early Years Practice Part B									
You do not need any other materials.								Total Marks	

Instructions

- **Part A** will need to have been used in preparation for completion of **Part B**.
- **Part B** booklet must be issued to learners as defined by Pearson and should be kept securely.
- **Part B** booklet must be issued to learners on the specified date.
- **Part B** is specific to each series and this material must only be issued to learners who have been entered to undertake the task in that series.
- **Part B** should be kept securely until the start of the supervised assessment periods.
- Use **black** ink or ball-point pen.
- Fill in the boxes at the top of this page with your name, centre number and learner registration number.
- Complete **all** activities.
- Answer the activities in the spaces provided
– *there may be more space than you need.*

Information

- The total mark for this paper is 65.
- The marks for **each** activity are shown in brackets
– *use this as a guide as to how much time to spend on each activity.*

Advice

- Read each activity carefully before you start to answer it.
- Try to answer every activity.
- Check your answers if you have time at the end.

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Instructions to Teachers/Tutors

Part B set task is undertaken under supervision in a single session of **three hours** in the timetabled session. Centres may schedule a supervised rest break during the session.

Part B set task requires learners to apply research. Learners should bring in notes as defined in **Part A**. The teacher/tutor needs to ensure that notes comply with the requirements.

Learners must complete the set task using this task and answer booklet.

The set task is a formal external assessment and must be conducted with reference to the instructions in this task booklet and the Instructions for Conducting External Assessments (ICEA) document to ensure that the supervised assessment is conducted correctly and that learners submit evidence that is their own work.

Learners must not bring anything into the supervised environment or take anything out without your approval.

Centres are responsible for putting in place appropriate checks to ensure that only permitted material is introduced into the supervised environment.

Maintaining security

- During supervised assessment sessions, the assessment areas must only be accessible to the individual learners and to named members of staff.
- Learners can only access their work under supervision.
- Any work learners produce under supervision must be kept secure.
- Only permitted materials for the set task can be brought into the supervised environment.
- During any permitted break and at the end of the session materials must be kept securely and no items removed from the supervised environment.
- Learners are not permitted to have access to the internet or other resources during the supervised assessment period.
- Learner notes related to **Part A** must be checked to ensure length and/or contents meet limitations.
- Learner notes will be retained securely by the centre after **Part B** and may be requested by Pearson if there is suspected malpractice.

After the session the teacher/tutor will confirm that all learner work had been completed independently as part of the authentication submitted to Pearson.

Outcomes for submission

This task and answer booklet should be submitted to Pearson.

Each learner must complete an authentication sheet.

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Instructions for Learners

This session is of **three hours**. Your teacher/tutor will tell you if there is a supervised break. Plan your time carefully.

Read the set task information carefully.

Complete all your work in this task book in the spaces provided.

You have prepared for the set task given in this **Part B** booklet. Use your notes prepared during **Part A** if relevant. Attempt all of **Part B**.

You will complete this set task under supervision and your work will be kept securely during any breaks taken.

You must work independently throughout the supervised assessment period and should not share your work with other learners.

Outcomes for submission

You should complete the task in this task and answer book.

You must complete a declaration that the work you submit is your own.

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(Total for Activity 1 = 15 marks)



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(Total for Activity 2 = 15 marks)



Activity 3

One of the key findings of the research was that 'The headteachers prioritised language and literacy as the cornerstones of learning.'

What are the implications of this key finding for improving language and literacy for children in the Reception Year?

In your answer you should refer to the article and your own secondary research.

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(Total for Activity 3 = 20 marks)



Activity 4

Your headteacher has asked you to investigate the effectiveness of language and literacy teaching in Reception classes.

The headteacher has produced the following research proposal:

- visit three settings
- interview classroom staff to discuss their role in teaching language and literacy
- observe and record activities that support reading and writing development
- ask parents/carers to complete a written questionnaire about home school reading
- store the data you collect away from each setting.

Drawing on your understanding of research methods, provide the headteacher with a report that critically analyses their research proposal, to include: your preparatory research into language and literacy, observations, planning and assessment.

In your report you must cover the following:

- the ways in which this research could provide valid and reliable data analysis of language and literacy teaching in your Reception settings
- potential limitations or weaknesses of the research proposed and how these could be addressed through suggesting changes or additions
- factors to be considered in setting up the research activities, which may include purpose and objectives, research skills and ethical considerations.

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Large writing area with horizontal dotted lines.



Handwriting practice area with 20 sets of horizontal dotted lines.

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Handwriting practice area with 20 horizontal dotted lines.

(Total for Activity 4 = 15 marks)

TOTAL FOR TASK = 65 MARKS



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