

We Are Writers: Revealing Children's Emerging Writing Identities in Early Childhood Classrooms

This presentation reports on a year-long preschool literacy project that builds an inclusive community of writers through intentional, developmentally responsive practice. The project demonstrates how young learners flourish when writing development is scaffolded through shared inquiry and collective meaning making.

Guided by the Early Years Learning Framework, the educator team implemented a long-term literacy experience called the *Special Person* book. Preschool children contributed weekly drawings and stories celebrating a classmate. To support this work, educators utilised a writing continuum that made visible the diverse ways early writing emerges. Educators supported conversations about growth, possibility, and individual learning pathways. This enabled each child to participate confidently, honouring their developmental stage while taking supported risks as writers.

The project aimed to strengthen children's writing identities by balancing individual developmental trajectories with the social construction of knowledge. Observations, artefacts, and educator reflections show sustained increases in writing resilience, metalinguistic awareness, and willingness to experiment with text.

This presentation offers early childhood educators a practical, research-informed model for cultivating inclusive literacy communities grounded in high expectations, developmental appropriateness, and shared responsibility for literacy learning.

Jo Stratton