**Examining Preschool Teachers' Beliefs About Writing and the Supports
They Provide Children**

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Abstract

This study examines the beliefs and practices, specific to writing, of six preschool teachers using observations, interviews, photographs, and surveys. Gerde, Bingham, and Pendergast's (2015) WRITE protocol was used during observations, allowing researchers to focus on each classroom's writing environment and teachers' use of environmental print, modeling, scaffolding, and independent writing. Findings reveal that although the preschool teachers expressed strong beliefs about the importance of writing in their classrooms, their implementation of practices to support young writers varied. Implications for supporting the writing instruction of young children are discussed as well as the potential use of the WRITE protocol with pre-service and in-service teachers.

Keywords: writing, preschool, pedagogy, teacher beliefs, teacher practices

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A significant amount of early literacy instruction focuses primarily on learning to read. As a result, writing instruction may be neglected (Cahill, 2009; Coker et al., 2016). This is problematic because if teachers do not intentionally engage children in early reading and writing strategies these skills will not develop (Copp, Cabell & Tortorelli, 2016; Copple & Bredekamp, 2009; Hall, 2017). Furthermore, researchers have found that children's early writing skills, specifically how they connect oral and written language, are significant predictors of later literacy achievement (Hall, Simpson, Guo & Wang, 2015; Lonigan & Shanahan, 2009). Thus, all children should be given opportunities to engage in developmentally appropriate writing experiences (Watanabe & Hall-Kenyon, 2011).

Writing in Early Childhood Classrooms

Best practices for promoting young children's writing have evolved and will continue to evolve over time. Today, one of the most popular practices is the use of a writing center or writing workshop where children can come together collectively to create co-texts (Kissel & Miller, 2015). Even though young students may not be creating full words or sentences, they are able to convey the meaning of their scribbles, connecting both oral and written communication (Roskos, Christie, & Richgels, 2003). Thus, children's writing development can be impacted by the physical classroom or environment. Research suggests that classrooms should include a variety of environmental print, writing routines, and writing materials to encourage children to use writing during their daily activities and routines (Bingham, Quinn, & Gerde, 2017; Gerde, Bingham, & Wasik, 2012). Teachers also play a role in children's writing development by encouraging children to practice their writing skills and by modeling writing (Quinn, Gerde, & Bingham, 2016). In addition, scaffolding and motivational support from teachers contribute to students' writing development (Kissel & Miller, 2015).

Teacher Writing Beliefs and Actions

As noted above, teachers' practices are instrumental in supporting young children's writing development, but research suggests, so are their beliefs about writing (Foote, Smith, & Ellis, 2004). For the purposes of this study, we define beliefs as the, "knowledge or ideas accepted by an individual as true or as probable" (Evans, Fox, Cremaso & McKinnon, 2004, p. 131). Although some research focusses on a wide scope of beliefs about teaching and preschool, less has traditionally been known about preschool teachers' beliefs specific to content areas (Lee & Ginsburg, 2007).

Two common characteristics that relate to early educators' beliefs and practices are teachers' educational background and their teaching experience (Lynch, 2009). There are mixed findings on the role of educational background in relation to early childhood teacher beliefs and practices, and child outcomes. When teaching experience has been examined in relation to preschool teachers' beliefs, more experience seems to relate positively to different aspects of preschool teachers' literacy beliefs.

What influences teachers' beliefs about writing? Many candidates enter teacher preparation programs with writing anxieties which may translate into a lack of confidence in their teaching of writing (Street & Stang, 2009). Cremin and Oliver (2016) systematically reviewed research from 1990 to 2015 on teachers as writers and found that teachers' beliefs about themselves as writers affected their attitudes. In some instances, this impacted their practice, and included avoidance of writing instruction.

One thing that may influence teachers' beliefs is their knowledge about writing. For example, there may be gaps in teachers' understanding of the role of writing within literacy development and this may impact what they believe and how they implement or incorporate age-appropriate writing instructional practices in early childhood classrooms (Applebee & Langer, 2006; Cress & Holm, 2017; Korth et al., 2017). Others argue that teachers possess

the knowledge about effective instructional strategies to support young writers, like morning message, but these practices have developed into routines in which children are passive observers as teachers write and read the messages aloud (Casbergue, 2017). In some classrooms, teachers express a belief about the importance of writing and provide materials and tools for early writing experiences, however they rarely model or scaffold early writing (Gerde, Bingham, & Pendergast, 2015). This is problematic because according to Tolchinsky (2003), becoming a skilled writer requires focused instruction.

The need to consider the beliefs and actions of preschool teachers specific to writing is critical, given the limited research on this topic (Hall & Grisham-Brown, 2011; Hindman & Wasik, 2008). Thus, the purpose of the current study was to investigate the beliefs and practices, specific to writing, of six preschool teachers through observations, photos, interviews and surveys. The study was guided by the following research questions: 1) What writing supports and teacher/child interactions are observed in six school-based preschool classrooms? and 2) How do preschool teachers' beliefs about writing align with their classroom practice?

Methods

The study took place in an early learning center located in a small city in the southeastern United States. The students and families that make up the learning center's population come from a variety of race, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, representing the diversity of the city as a refugee resettlement location. A few of the languages spoken in the homes of the students enrolled at the learning center include Spanish, Arabic, Kurdish, Russian, and Korean.

The learning center housed nine classrooms, each with their own teacher and assistant. Many of the teachers co-planned instruction agreeing on weekly themes, center activities, and the daily message to share with students. One classroom accommodated

children with disabilities. Each of the nine teachers were asked to participate in this study. Six teachers agreed. Pseudonyms are used throughout this article to protect participants. Anastasia had 4 years of teaching experience, Amy and Lori 5 years, Kelly 6 years, Adele 7 years and Lydia completed the group with the most teaching experience, 9 years. Each classroom teacher had a bachelor's and a master's degree in early childhood education.

Data Sources

Over a five-month period, the research team which consisted of two early literacy professors and an undergraduate elementary education researcher, collected the following data: semi-structured interviews, observation field notes, photographs, and a final survey. The study began in August as we interviewed each teacher. The interview questions focused on their classroom's demographics, teaching philosophy, curriculum, philosophy of writing, and student work related to writing. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed for coding purposes.

Each classroom observation lasted between 45 minutes to an hour. Differences in the observation lengths across classrooms was primarily due to variability in each individual classroom schedule and routines. Observation field notes were framed around Gerde et al.'s (2015) Writing Resources and Interactions in Teaching Environments (WRITE) observation protocol. This tool was specifically designed for early childhood classrooms and consists of five sections: Writing Environment, Environmental Print, Teacher Models Writing, Teacher Scaffolds Children's Writing, and Independent Child Writing. Use of this observational tool allows those observing to take a more refined look at how educators are utilizing the five areas to boost and guide writing instruction (Bingham et al., 2017). Other studies, such as that by Gerde, Skibbe, Wright, and Douglas (2019), have used this tool to document writing in early childhood classrooms.

We chose to focus our observations during center and message time since that is when the teachers reported most of the student writing and/or writing instruction occurred. Center time was an hour-long session during which students chose where they wanted to play and explore in the classroom. Some of the centers included dramatic play, a writing center, and a kitchen. Message time included a shared message written by the teacher either on a whiteboard or Promethean Board. During message time, which often followed center time, teachers would write a sentence on the board, usually related to the weekly theme. They then called on students to come up to the board and circle specific letters, count the number of words, etc. During observations we took photographs to support our field notes and further document the five areas of the WRITE protocol.

At the conclusion of the study, we emailed each teacher a follow-up survey asking them about their beliefs about writing, and more specifically to share their beliefs related to the five sections of the WRITE protocol (Writing Environment, Environmental Print, Modeling, Scaffolding, and Independent Writing). The questions were designed to triangulate data between our observation notes, interview data, and the teachers' beliefs. Intentionally, we did not share the WRITE protocol with the teachers at the beginning of the study because we wanted to understand how writing was already occurring in their classrooms.

Data Analysis

To answer the first research question, regarding the writing supports and teacher/child interactions, we merged observation protocols from four of the twenty observations for each teacher. We selected to focus on four days for each teacher based on the days where we observed the most writing. These observations were joined into one table, organized by each teacher, and the WRITE protocol components. Next, teacher behavior and interactions with students specific to writing were coded for frequency. The data was then organized into a

second chart which included representative data examples for each teacher for as many items as applicable on the protocol.

The remaining data sources including interview transcripts and surveys were analyzed qualitatively using constant comparison analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Since the purpose of the study was to better understand teacher beliefs and practices, the research team first individually coded two of the six interviews using these a priori codes. We then met to discuss discrepancies. Next, the research team compared the interview and survey data to the WRITE protocol observations for each teacher in order to note similarities or differences between teacher beliefs and actions in the classroom.

Findings

Given the limited research on writing instruction in early childhood classrooms (Hall & Grisham-Brown, 2011; Hindman & Wasik, 2008), the goal of this study was to understand what writing supports were used, the teacher/child interactions, and how these preschool teachers' beliefs about writing aligned with their classroom practice. The findings are organized by the overall frequency observed of the various components on the WRITE protocol. It is important to note that each of the five components of the protocol had a different number of aspects to observe. See Table 1 for this information as well as frequency counts for each area of the tool across the six teachers.

Environmental Print

Compared to the other components of the WRITE protocol, the most examples consistently seen among all of the teachers was in the area of Environmental Print, which was observed 78 times. Environmental print includes the text that children see, create, and interact within their surroundings (Neumann, Hood, Ford, & Neumann, 2012). During our observations, we specifically looked for displayed individual children's or group writing,

signed art, labels, alphabet, posters, charts, calendars, word walls, teacher-child created books, and teachers and/or children referencing environmental print for writing.

Adele described her belief about environmental print in her classroom as being an essential component because:

> Most of our children speak other languages and posting labeled items around the classroom allows the children to explore letters. There should also be an alphabet, word wall at a level that a child can access and explore. Children begin to recognize their peers' names first and it's important to have this for students to explore.

In Adele's classroom we observed students writing their names on their work. We also noticed, she had the alphabet and a word wall displayed for students to reference. The word wall included students' names along with their picture.

Another teacher, Anastasia, also believed in the power of environmental print. She indicated that:

> Being that the students are preschoolers and cannot read yet, recognizing letters and pictures in their environmental is very important. By having a variety of books with pictures, labels at each center in the room, and the alphabet and children's names posted allows them to practice recognizing these letters and "reading" what is around them.

Her classroom was set up to align with this belief. For example, we often saw students reading teacher-created books together in the reading center and students referencing the center signs.

Kelly utilized environmental print in her classroom by displaying student work low enough so the children could periodically change out what was showcased. She shared that at first, she would call attention to their names but soon students would begin to notice not only their names but also the names of their classmates.

These teachers' classrooms were excellent examples of intentionally filling learning environments with environmental print. Preschool students need these supports so that they are more motivated to eventually write on their own. As children observe, read, discuss, and copy the signs and symbols in their world, they become aware that literacy is part of everyone's daily activities. They come to realize that reading and writing fulfill various purposes and functions in their lives. Consciously capitalizing on children's familiarity with environmental print as an aid for early writing is one way to promote their progress on the road to becoming independent authors.

Writing Environment

The highest quality early literacy environments are filled with opportunities for children to engage with print (Casbergue, 2017). However, despite extensive literature that recommends and describes literacy rich environments, according to Clark and Kagler (2005), many early childhood programs still do not provide this type of environment for students. However, the data from the six teachers in this study clearly showed that each believed in the importance of the writing environment. Writing Environment was the *second* most observed component of the WRITE protocol, examples were seen 66 times. The components of this section included: a place for students to sign in, journal time, electronic writing tools, a variety of paper, a writing center, and writing materials in other areas of the classroom.

Anastasia stated, "'I think a lot of [children] become very creative and empowered when they see themselves writing." She believed in a writing environment that promotes confidence in writing. The writing environment she created in her classroom aligned with her beliefs, because students were provided with different tools and ways to engage with writing including markers, chalk, and different types of paper. Additionally, Anastasia provided students with alternative modes to engage in writing including using play dough to model letters and an etch-a-sketch. By providing students with these different modes of interactive

writing and allowing them the choice of which modes they used, Anastasia promoted creativity and independence.

Amy shared, "Writing should take place in various places in the classroom, providing various purposes for the children in their play. There should be opportunities for the children to explore materials on their own, and have instruction on how to appropriately use the items." During observations, it was noted that different writing materials were provided in various centers putting opportunities for independent writing in the children's hands.

Kelly pragmatically stated, "Students should understand the importance of writing and why they will need to know how to write in their future." One example we saw repeatedly in Kelly's classroom was how she encouraged students to use laminated name cards. Each child's name was printed on a card and a photo of them was glued next to it. This action aligns with Kelly's belief in the importance of writing, specifically that it is necessary to be able to read and write friends' names.

In her interview, Adele shared, "Preschool children should be exposed to writing every day. Different types of writing tools should be in centers for students to freely explore. Teachers should also do shared writing activities to expose children to directional writing, capitalization, and punctuation marks." The components of the writing environment, a place for students to sign in, journal time, a writing center, and writing materials, are about either providing a space or writing or allowing time for writing. The alignment between teachers' beliefs about the importance of the writing environment and how they structured their classroom mostly aligned.

Teacher Modeling Writing

According to the WRITE protocol, Teacher Modeling included some of the following: teacher writing letters/words/symbols, teacher drawing attention to writing as she writes, teacher writing children's words, and engages children with interactive writing. One of the

ways the teachers in this study were seen modeling writing was through interactive writing. Hall (2016) states that this is a powerful strategy to use in early childhood settings because it incorporates a variety of literacy skills and teachers can select appropriate content based on the needs and interests of their students. Teacher Modeling writing was the third most observed component of the WRITE protocol, seen 33 times.

Adele's beliefs and actions aligned specifically to teacher modeling writing. In her interview, she stated, "It is important that teachers model correct writing early to our preschoolers. They may not be able to write yet but modeling is so important in younger children. They take in what the teacher does." Like other teachers in her building, Adele's beliefs were seen in action during our observations. For instance, when she conducted the morning message with her students, she enacted her beliefs about the significance of shared writing and exposing students to directional writing, capitalization and punctuation.

When talking about teacher modeling writing, several teachers like Anastasia mentioned the program Handwriting Without Tears (Olsen, 2003) which is a developmentally and multisensory based handwriting curriculum created by an occupational therapist. Some of the teachers had access to the materials from this program, but only a few had attended the training. Anastasia shared, "... so we talk about lines and curves. We usually do three or four letters each week, so we practice, like grip and all that." During message time, Anastasia was often seen playing a song and video about a specific letter of the alphabet on the Promethean board. She would then write a message that contained many words starting with that letter, drawing the children's attention to the letters as she wrote them.

In her interview, Amy stated, "I think teacher modeling writing is the first step to children learning to write. Through doing this, the children can learn simple concepts like directionality, how to make spaces in between words, how to form letters, etc." Amy's implementation of modeling aligns closely with her beliefs about modeling writing for young

students. Amy was observed modeling during message time when she asked specifics about spacing between words, directionality, what we do when we get to the end of a line. Additionally, Amy was observed verbally describing shapes/movements as she made each letter.

Lori, the special education teacher, discussed writing in her interview by stating, "It is one-on-one. Entirely one-on-one, and a lot of times you have a reinforcer. If you know the student likes M&Ms, you get M&Ms, and if they do it right, they get M&Ms." During observations, Lori and her teaching assistants worked on specific skills with each student, such as drawing a circle or a straight line. Lori would set up an incline board with a large piece of paper on it. First, she would model the mark and then the student attempted the task. If the student was successful, then they would get a reinforcer such as food or time on an iPad.

Kelly was adamant when talking about the importance of teacher modeling. She said, "This needs to happen often! Go into great detail about how you are forming the letters and later on have children copy your model." During message time, Kelly, like the other teachers, was seen modeling writing as she states in her quote, but what was not observed was how Kelly or other teachers were having children copy the model.

Lydia stressed the power of modeling but also how children should see teachers make and correct errors in their writing. She said, "I believe the children should see us write as much as possible and make mistakes and learn how to fix them." During message time, Lydia was observed writing on the board, but we did not see her specifically make mistakes, draw the children's attention to it, and then fix it.

Teacher modeling was mainly observed during message time. How much each teacher drew student's attention to writing, varied, but all teachers planned and allowed time each day for this activity. This shows that they clearly saw this as time well spent.

Independent Child Writing

The second least observed section on the WRITE protocol was independent child writing, observed 20 times. Gerde et al. (2015) included child using writing in play or activity, child writes at a writing center, child writes letters, words, symbols in this section. Although we did not observe as many instances of independent child writing, the teachers clearly articulated their opinions on this topic.

Adele believed, "Students learn best through hands-on exploration." She specifically highlighted the writing center in her classroom which, "allows children to explore on their level with appropriate guidance." Anastasia also valued hands-on learning and this was most clearly seen in both Adele and Anastasia's classrooms when children chose to write at the writing center. For example, the students in Anastasia's class enjoyed the 'roll n write' game. This fostered independent writing by allowing students to be in control of their writing as they rolled a letter die, wrote the letter, and then engaged in conversation with their peers about words that begin with that letter.

Lori said, "Because of motor delays, letters are hard to form, so we have stamps. And that's what we work on. Getting them to recognize their name and then stamping it out." Although we did not see Lori using stamps during any of the observations, which occurred in the fall and winter, we did see her work with the children on letter identification with letter cards. Using the stamps might be something that occurred later in the year, after the children were able to recognize their names.

Amy shared, "Independent writing is good for children because it is a great time for them to practice what they are learning, build on what they know, and that can then be geared towards the child's interest." Similar to an example mentioned earlier in Kelly's classroom, Amy also used laminated name cards and students were often seen getting the cards and

taking them to various centers so they could independently write other students' names on work they created for each other.

Despite these examples, we did not observe many examples of independent writing, and what we did see, mainly occurred at the writing center. Although the paper and writing utensils at the writing center were available for children to take to other centers to incorporate into their play, this was not something we saw teachers encourage or children choose to do.

Teacher Scaffolding Writing

An important part of the writing process for young learners is scaffolding. Teachers can scaffold students' writing in a variety of ways, but often the process includes directing, prompting, and reminding. Quinn et al. (2016) recommends that children in preschool classrooms need a range of support from low to high levels. This type of individualized and scaffold writing instruction is key to supporting writing development. This section of the WRITE protocol, which included teacher reminding a child to write their name on work, teacher writes a letter/word for a child to copy, and teacher creates letters to trace to prompt writing were observed the *least* frequently, seen 17 times.

Adele stated in her survey response that it is "important to teach to each child's individual level." Adele believed that using centers in the classroom allowed teachers to scaffold and meet children's individual needs. One example of this, seen during an observation, was how she created dotted letter shapes for students to trace at the writing center.

Amy believed that teacher scaffolding was, "paramount to [children's] success in writing,' and that teachers must 'start where the child is [in order] for them to succeed." On many occasions, Amy was observed scaffolding her students' writing by using hand-over-hand assistance. Each day the class had time set aside for message time which in Amy's classroom, always included a sentence with alliteration based on the letters they were

focusing on that week. For example, one message read, *I made a pepperoni and pepper pizza for the surprise party,* which contained many letter p's. Amy then invited students to the board to find the p's in the message. A child would come up, circle a p, and then turn around and say, "'I found P!" to all of their peers. After all the letters were found, Amy invited a few students up to practice writing the letter p. One child had trouble making "the hump on top," so Amy placed her hand on top of the child's and helped her finish writing the letter. Afterwards, Amy allowed the child to try again on her own. There were also many instances when Amy verbally described a letter shape while encouraging students to write the letter in the air with their pointer fingers as she wrote on the board. For example, when describing W, she exclaimed, "slide down, slide up, slide down, slide up," as she wrote the letter 'W' on the board for students. These instances and others helped us conclude that her actions aligned with her belief about scaffolding children's writing.

Being that Lori is in charge of a special need's classroom, child writing looks very different when compared to other classrooms. However, Lori's practices mirrored her beliefs about scaffolding which was seen as she assisted her students in making marks by using hand-over-hand assistance when writing. When asked about her beliefs about scaffolding, Kelly referenced Handwriting Without Tears. Her experience with this program may influence her particular attention to the order children should be taught to form letters. She stated, "[We use] Handwriting Without Tears to get the basic straight and curved lines down." Unfortunately, there were no observations that connected directly to her stated beliefs about scaffolding children's writing. Teacher scaffolding was observed the least and when it was, it mainly occurred in the form of teachers encouraging students to write their names on their papers or as part of message time.

The findings we just shared highlight overviews of the observations, surveys, and interviews we conducted across the six teachers. Table 1 showcases the specific frequency count of each teacher across each of the five components of the observation tool.

Table 1

Frequency Counts Per Teacher

	Writing Environment 11 categories	**Environmental Print** 10 categories	**Teacher Models Writing** 6 categories	**Teacher Scaffolds Writing** 9 categories	**Independent Child Writing** 3 categories
Anastasia	18	18	10	6	8
Amy	10	16	8	1	5
Lori	6	4	0	3	0
Kelly	13	16	5	3	3
Adele	7	11	5	2	3
Lydia	12	13	5	2	1
Totals	66	78	33	17	20

It is essential to note that measuring one's beliefs is difficult to do. In addition, Gill and Hoffman (2009) note that particular behaviors do not directly imply particular beliefs. Furthermore, we recognize that we only observed the teachers over the course of a semester and during times we were not observing, they might have included practices in their classroom that more closely aligned with the beliefs they shared. Although these points are important to keep in mind, the findings from this study provide further evidence that preschool teachers' beliefs do not always align with the practices they implement in their

classrooms (Korth et al., 2017). Next, we explore some potential underlying tensions for this disconnect and offer some viable solutions.

Discussion

In this study, across the six classrooms, a variety of writing materials were provided and teachers engaged in modeling using these materials, but there was a clack of scaffolding and perhaps as a result, a lack of independent child writing. Interestingly, across the six teachers, one teacher did not stand out as having a closer alignment between her beliefs and practices than others. Furthermore, none of the teachers mentioned in the interviews or surveys any specific challenges, such as time or lack of knowledge, that interfered with them implementing their beliefs specific to writing instruction.

In this study, message time carried the weight of writing instruction and we wonder if there are ways for teachers to embed writing instruction in other parts of the day. We believe that embedding a strong component of writing into each of the learning centers is one solution. For example, at the grocery store center having a tablet of paper and pencil available for students to create a grocery list or a sales receipt and making sure teachers model these options when opening the center would add a component of writing for students to see the purpose of writing.

The amount of consistency between classrooms and overlap of classroom observations may be due to co-planning. We wonder then if the co-planning, although a time saver, is perhaps interfering with teachers being able to enact their individual beliefs about writing instruction. Besides some mention of Handwriting without Tears, the teachers shared in their interviews that they had not had any professional development specific to writing and it was not a focus in their teacher education programs. By not recognizing any of the challenges that prevented the teachers from embedding more writing instruction into their classrooms, perhaps may be attributed to a lack of knowledge of the possibilities.

Although our findings are not meant to be generalizable beyond the teachers we spent time with, awareness of their practices and beliefs can be informative to anyone who works with children and wants to understand what is and/or what is not occurring with writing in early childhood classrooms. This is especially important since teacher beliefs act as a filter through which they interpret new information (Borg, 2003).

Implications and Conclusions

Like Gerde et al. (2015), we think our observations of and conversations with the six teachers is the first step in further supporting writing in their preschool classrooms. Because of the detailed categories of the WRITE protocol, this tool could be used by teachers to self-reflect about their writing beliefs and then having colleagues or administrators note what is actually observed in practice would be a constructive way for teachers to improve their practice. It is clear that the teachers in this study, and many other preschool teachers (Korth et al., 2017), would benefit from additional professional development specific to writing instruction. This is necessary so that teachers can understand the opportunities they have and the importance they must place on guiding early writing instruction.

The WRITE protocol has been used in other studies such as Gerde et al. (2019) to document writing in early childhood classrooms. This was our first time using this tool and some of our observations of the six teachers did not fit neatly into the five categories of the WRITE protocol. Specifically, technology. The only place technology is mentioned is in the Writing Environment section where electronic writing tools can be noted. However, upon further analysis, there were additional areas within the protocol where technology could fit, such as in the Teacher Modeling writing section. For example, if a teacher were to use an interactive white board, like we observed in some classrooms. Or it could be notes in the Independent Child Writing section if a child used a writing application on an iPad. We do not believe technology should be a category of its own on the WRITE protocol because it should

enhance the learning that is already occurring, not be a sole focus. Future studies could expand the tool to incorporate technology into each section and examine teachers' beliefs about the role of technology and young children's writing.

The importance of a strong alignment between teacher beliefs and practices has been addressed in the literature for years, however although preschool teachers are aware of writing development they still struggle to implement appropriate instructional practices. We believe that through thoughtful teacher education practices and strategic professional development we can address teachers' beliefs and practices specific to supporting young writers so that we can shift the focus of early literacy instruction to focus beyond learning to read.

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