

Story Time

Dear Parents,

Studies show that children learn more words and do better in school when family members and caregivers read, talk and sing with them every day, starting at birth. You can use a robust **Story Time** to promote language and literacy development in all these ways. And remember sharing stories doesn't just impact learning, it also strengthens bonds that will last a lifetime.



Read

- ✓ Create a bedtime routine that includes reading one or two favorite books.
- ✓ Use pictures to develop your child's vocabulary by talking about what she sees or points to.
- ✓ Read with expression using different voices for different characters.
- ✓ Read stories again and again. Repetition helps children become familiar with the way stories are organized.
- ✓ Look for books that are about things that interest your child. For example, does your child like cars, insects, or animals?
- ✓ Let your child choose their own books.
- ✓ Explore the cover of the book together. Point out the title, author, and illustrator. Can your child determine what the book is about from the cover?



Talk

Questions & Discussion during Stories

Ask questions as you read the book such as, "What do you think will happen next?" "How do you think Goldilocks is feeling now?" Connect the story with your child's experiences. Discuss if they ever felt the way the characters are feeling.

Play-by-Play

Think of yourself as a sportscaster announcing what you see your child doing. For example if he is rolling a ball you might say, "You rolled the ball to me. Now I am rolling the ball back to you!"

Self-Talk

Talk about what you are doing or thinking as you go about daily routines with your child. You might say something like, "I'm going to pick you up now. It's time to change your diaper."

Stretch Talk

Respond to your baby's sounds and gestures as if they were intentional acts of communication. If your baby says, "Buh-buh-buh," try mimicking her sounds so she begins to see language as a way to communicate with you.



Sing

- ✓ Is there a song connected with the topic of the book? For example, you can sing Old MacDonald when reading a book with a farm setting or Itsy Bitsy Spider if the book features a spider.
- ✓ Children love to set their experiences to music! Sing the words of the book with your child.
- ✓ Sing during daily routines like diapering. Sing in the car on the way to school or just sing about what you are doing.
- ✓ Sing songs with your child when you see things that remind you of a song. Sing when you are walking, shopping or cleaning.
- ✓ Act out songs like the Head, Shoulders, Knees, & Toes or This Little Piggy while you sing.
- ✓ Include music in physical play. Move while the music is playing and freeze when the music stops. Teach your child rhythm by clapping and marching in time to music.