

Did you know ...



Children who can describe things and events can have conversations about what is happening in books, and those children who can tell stories are better able to understand what they hear and, later, what they read. These are called “narrative skills.”

Here's how ...



- ✦ Read books that have words or phrases that repeat. Encourage your child to say the repeated phrase with you each time.
- ✦ Re-read books so your child can become familiar with the story, making it easier to retell the story.
- ✦ Have your child retell the story.
- ✦ Encourage your child to tell you something from her own experience related to what happened in the book.
- ✦ Use puppets or props to tell the story to help your child remember it; have your child use props to help retell the story.
- ✦ Encourage your child to talk about the pictures in the book, even if what she says is not in the story. Ask open-ended questions (ones that cannot be answered with yes or no).
- ✦ Ask your child to tell you about the pictures they draw.
- ✦ Stop before turning the page and ask your child what they think will happen next.
- ✦ Read “wordless” books.
- ✦ Instead of asking your child how school was (Typical answer: “Good”), ask specific questions that require a more detailed answer. What was the best thing that happened today? What stories did the teacher share? What happened at recess?

Read

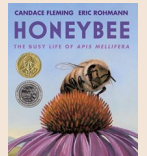


Oh, No! by Candace Fleming



Young children will have fun repeating "OH, NO!" as one animal after another falls into a deep, deep hole in this lively read-aloud. Stories such as this one that build upon a series of events are called “cumulative” tales or “chain” tales. They are great for helping children retell the story with props or puppets.

Candace Fleming is the author of *Muncha, Muncha, Muncha!* and *Tippy, Tippy, Tippy, Hide!*; the *Bulldozer* series; and award-winning nonfiction books such as *Giant Squid* and *Honeybee: The Busy Life of Apis Mellifera*; along with many more books!



Choose Books



Other fun books to build narrative skills:

- Froggy Gets Dressed* by Jonathan London
- The Napping House* by Audrey Wood
- Ohana Means Family* by Ilima Loomis
- One Day in the Eucalyptus, Eucalyptus Tree* by Daniel Bernstrom
- Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes* by Eric Litwin
- There Was An Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly* by Simms Taback
- The Three Billy Goats Gruff* by Mac Barnett
- We're Going on a Bear Hunt* by Michael Rosen

Talk



Children learn most from books when they are actively involved. Rather than just reading a story to your child, try sharing the reading:

- What do you think will happen next?
- What does this remind you of?
- What is the frog doing in this picture?
- How do you think the boy is feeling? Why?

You don't have to stop on *every* page; in fact, your child may lose interest if you do. But asking some open-ended questions along the way helps your child get ready to read.

Write



Let your child help write the weekly shopping list. Don't worry too much about spelling at this point. Ask what sounds she hears in the word, then encourage her to write the letters she hears.

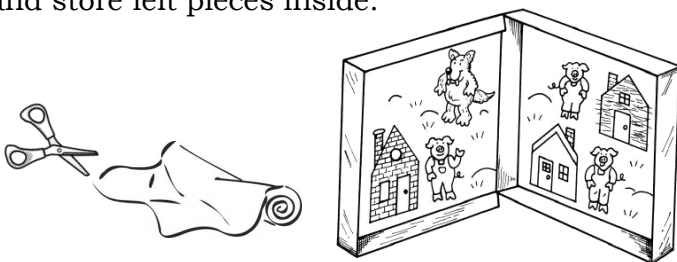
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Play



Help your child re-tell stories by using props made from felt or flannel. Here's a low-cost fun idea:

Use a pizza box or similar flat box with a lid (many pizza stores will give you an unused one if you ask). Cover the inside and/or lid with felt or flannel. Make characters or other objects from the story out of felt, or print clip art from a computer and glue a piece of felt to the back. The felt makes it easy to move them around as your child tells the story. Use the box for other stories, and store felt pieces inside.



Sing



Silly Folk Song: Little Bunny Foo Foo

Little Bunny Foo Foo's hoppin' through the forest scooping up the field mice and bopping 'em on the head. And then down comes the Good Fairy, and this is what she said: "Little Bunny Foo Foo, I don't want to see you scooping up the field mice and bopping them on the head. I'll give you three more chances and if you won't listen, I'll turn you into a goon!"

(Repeat twice, with Good Fairy giving two more chances, then one more chance)

Little Bunny Foo Foo's hoppin' through the forest scooping up the field mice and bopping 'em on the head. And then down comes the Good Fairy, and this is what she said: "Little Bunny Foo Foo, I don't like your attitude, scooping up the field mice and bopping them on the head. You have no more chances, you wouldn't listen, and now **POOF!** You're a goon!"

Hear the song at www.thelearninggroove.com/little-bunny-foo-foo

At your library ...



Your family is welcome in the library, and your librarians care very much about you and your children. They are committed to helping every child get a great start, succeed in school, and create lifelong learners.

Libraries are for everyone!