

# Storytime Manual for East Albemarle (NC) Regional Library System

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And where would we be without our Jbrary librarians? Lindsay and Dana have helped so many of us feel more comfortable trying out new things and build on old favorites.

Thank you to the readers who offered feedback and improved the *Manual* for all. These are generous colleagues and friends whom I have learned from over the years.

To one and all, I am grateful and hope that this *Storytime Manual* serves all who use it well.

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I am an early childhood literacy consultant. I have been a children's librarian since 1976, graduating from The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. I worked in Anne Arundel County and Montgomery County, MD Public Libraries. In 2001, I moved to Washington State and in 2003 became a consultant to the American Library Association for the Every Child Ready to Read® initiative. That began my career as a consultant, presenting workshops for library staff on early literacy in storytimes and workshops for adults. I also offer online courses through Library Juice Academy and have co-authored six books on storytimes and early literacy. Feel free to use my website [www.earlylit.net](http://www.earlylit.net) for more information and resources.

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# 1. Getting Started—Read Me First!

Welcome to the Storytime Manual for the Eastern Albemarle (NC) Regional Library System. My name is Saroj Ghoting. I am an Early Childhood Literacy Consultant after having spent 25 years as a children’s librarian in public libraries. I am happy to be your partner as we go through the Manual. You will also be able to share ideas with your colleagues.

The road to becoming a storytime provider is a journey. Along the way you will help introduce children and their parents and caregivers to the joys of reading and the pleasure of doing activities that build language, laying the foundation for children to learn how to read. You will also develop relationships with them and with community groups and organizations in your area.

This work can feel overwhelming. Hold onto the fact that each person, from the storytime provider to the participants, other staff, and partners, all bring something to enrich the storytime experience. This is true not only for storytimes but for programs and library services now and in the future.

Remember also that we are each individuals with our own temperaments, strengths and limitations, experiences, and knowledge bases. As you observe storytimes and develop your own, imitation of someone else can be a good first step, but feel free to “make it your own” as well. You will adapt the way you share storytime items as you internalize the process making this endeavor easier over time.

Be aware also that something that worked so well in one storytime may not go over so well in another storytime. Each group is different and responds differently to books and activities.

Even when you are working with a very experienced storytime provider, be sure to bring up your own ideas. Everyone was a beginner at one time. Storytime providers, even very experienced ones, enjoy the exchange of ideas and to improve and keep storytimes fresh. New storytime providers can offer new, fresh perspectives.

## About the Manual Kit

This *Storytime Manual* has been designed to be used in tandem with the resources listed below. These items plus the items listed below make up the *Storytime Manual Kit*.

Books:

1. *Storytimes for Everyone! Developing Young Children’s Language and Literacy* by Saroj Ghoting and Pamela Martin-Diaz. ALA. 2013
2. *STEP into Storytime: Using StoryTime Effective Practice to Strengthen the Development of Newborns to Five-Year-Olds* by Saroj Ghoting and Kathy Klatt. ALA, 2014.
3. *Supercharged Storytimes: An Early Literacy Planning and Assessment Guide* by Kathleen Campana, J. Elizabeth Mills, and Saroj Ghoting. ALA. 2016  
Please note that in this book, the term VPT or VIEWS2 Planning Tool is used. It is similar to the one we use, the Early Literacy Planning Tool or ELPT, which is based on the Every Child Ready to Read early literacy construct.
4. *Baby Rhyming Time* by Linda Ernst. Neal-Schuman, 2008.
5. *Mother Goose on the Loose Updated* by Betsy Diamant-Cohen. ALA. 2019.

## 1. Getting Started—Read Me First

Websites: Please create accounts for these now so that you can use their resources easily as you go through the *Manual*.

WebJunction Supercharged Storytimes Self-Paced course <https://tinyurl.com/webjuncst>

This self-paced course was developed to help storytime providers be more intentional in supporting children’s early literacy development.

You will need to create an account using your email and a password of your choice. Access is free. In the *Manual*, there are links to videos and resources in the Webjunction course. You can click on the URL given. You will be prompted to login.

New York Public Library Raising the Bar Training <https://tinyurl.com/nyplraisingbar>

This training was developed to provide professional development for library staff on effective practices for early literacy planning and delivery. We will work mostly with Module B which is on storytimes. You are welcome to explore the other modules as well.

You will need to create an account using your email and a password of your choice. This resource is free to all.

The *Manual* is divided into three sections. Part I is “Doing It,” the more practical aspects. Part II focuses on the “Why.” Part II are the Appendices. Part II—“The Why” helps you understand the importance of what we do in storytimes, how to strengthen your storytimes and the value you bring to those in your community. Our goal of helping all children enter school ready to learn and ready to read is a worthy one that serves as an inspiration for what we do in storytimes. You may prefer to read this part first to use it as a foundation for your storytimes. Feel free to read the *Manual* in whatever order best suits your needs and way of thinking.

You will see contributions from EARLS storytime providers. In their own storytime samples, they share their thoughts on planning and delivering their storytimes.

There are resources and links to videos to help you gain a better understanding of this topic. The references in the body of the *Manual* are ones you should look at those as you are reading the *Manual*. The boxes with “More Places to Look” are additional resources.

It is helpful if you have a mentor or mentors, library staff who can respond to your questions. Sharing ideas, a back-and-forth, helps all of us grow.

Whether you are new to storytimes or have done them for years, I hope you will find valuable information and ideas that provide new ways to learn and grow.

**If you are new to storytimes and have to do a storytime RIGHT AWAY, please go directly to the “Good ‘n Quick Storytime” Chapter 6 on page 27. Then you can come back to work through the *Manual*.**

**PART I**  
**THE HOW:**  
**DOING IT**

## 2. Let's Begin with YOU

Before you begin to plan storytime, let's discuss how to build a strong foundation for understanding how you as a storytime provider may think about and plan your storytime.

### If Delivering a Storytime Is New to You

In order to know what skills and experiences you can tap into for an engaging storytime, you have to know what a storytime is, what it looks like, what you might be aiming for. Observing an experienced storytime provider would be a good first step. It is even better to observe a couple of different people because we all have different personalities, styles and approaches. There are many ways to have a “good storytime.”

If you are not able to attend a colleague's storytime, or if you would like to see some additional storytimes, here are some you can watch. Keep in mind that there is always room to improve our storytimes, and many ways to engage the children and their attending adults. However, these videos can give you the flavor of storytime.

This is an excerpt from a Baby Storytime at New York Public Library in the Raising the Bar training:

<https://tinyurl.com/nyplrbbaby>

And here is a storytime from the Los Angeles Public Library, Episode 9

<https://tinyurl.com/laplst9>

### Building on Your Strengths

What are some of the things you saw in the storytime that you can relate to? What are some of the things you already know how to do that you can apply to your own storytime? One of the important things we do is share information on early literacy with parents and caregivers so they can nurture early literacy skills in their children. We will be getting into this in more depth in the Early Literacy and Intentionality chapter of this *Manual*.

For now, are you comfortable

- Welcoming people
- Sharing books
- Saying rhymes and/or doing movement songs
- Encouraging children and adults to join in the fun
- Using a talent or skill—using puppets, musical instruments, or other activities

One of the wonderful things about storytimes is that we can use our best skills while making them age-appropriate for the children we are programming for. For example, someone may be very comfortable using puppets. Another person is not comfortable with puppets, but plays the ukulele and loves singing. The goal is to share books and language activities in enjoyable ways. Seeing what engages the children can often be the catalyst for trying new things or doing things in new ways. It is helpful to build from your strengths and move forward from there.

What personality traits, experiences, and skills do you have that you might be able to use in storytime? Jot them down on a piece of paper.

#### More Places to Look

Los Angeles Public Library Episode 1 target babies and toddlers

There is a brief introduction and the storytime starts 0:43 <https://tinyurl.com/laplst1>

Los Angeles Public Library Episode 16 targets family, more preschoolers

<https://tinyurl.com/laplst16>



## 2. Let's Begin with YOU

### If You Already Have Some Experience with Storytimes

It is helpful to reflect from time to time on what your strengths are as you develop new storytimes or as your groups change, even if you have been doing storytimes for years. Learning new stories and fingerplays, using old favorites in new ways, and intentionally recalling “the why” of storytimes, the value we bring, can breathe new life into what can begin to feel stale.

### Growth Mindset

Having a “growth mindset,” as opposed to a “fixed mindset” can stand us all in good stead as we try new things, whether we are doing our first storytime or have been doing them for years. We are always learning and growing.

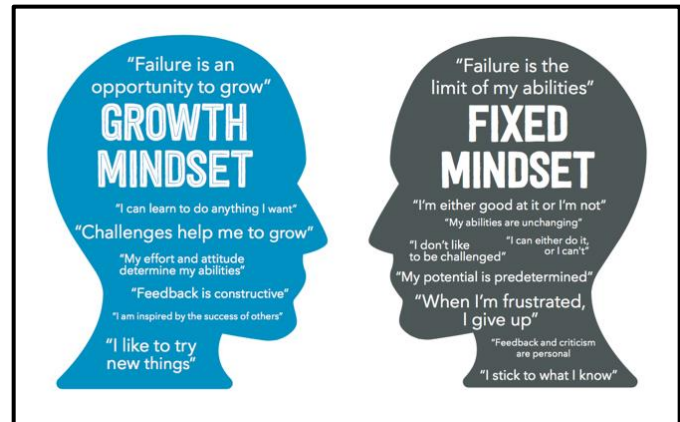
The term “growth mindset” was coined by Carol Dweck in the 1990s to describe the underlying beliefs people have about learning and intelligence. People who have a growth mindset learn and recognize that the brain has plasticity, that it can change and make new connections, and that we can help our brains grow by the strategies we use. They are able to accomplish more and have more perseverance than people who have a fixed mindset. Those with a fixed mindset believe that whatever intelligence or brain you are given cannot be changed and that talent is more predictive of success than the effort made. No one is all one or all the other.

There are many resources online about growth and fixed mindsets.

Starting out doing storytimes can feel overwhelming. Having a growth mindset—seeing yourself as someone who can grow, learn new things, and continually learn from what works and what doesn’t—and seeing yourself as a problem-solver and explorer will serve you well as you become a storytime provider.

In addition, modeling a growth mindset, or acknowledging a fixed mindset, can help storytime participants (adults and children) learn as well.

Here is a brief self-assessment you can take to get an idea of your own mindset:  
<http://blog.mindsetworks.com/what-s-my-mindset>



### More Places to Look

Growth Mindset—  
Growth Mindset for Parents  
<https://www.mindsetkit.org/growth-mindset-parents>

Examples of handouts on Growth Mindset  
<https://tinyurl.com/growthmindsetex>

## 2. Let's Begin with YOU

### Looking at Your Community Through an Equity Lens

To better understand all the people in our communities, it is important for each of us to take stock of our own societal and personal assumptions. Applying an “equity lens” to storytime programming is one opportunity to encourage meaningful connections to all. In doing so, we will be able to provide more relevant services in respectful ways. This is one area where a growth mindset will serve us well as we reflect on equity, inclusion, and diversity in ourselves and while we interact with groups in our community.

As public library staff, we try to reach all groups in our service area. We may need to adjust what we do and how we do it to reach those who do not use the library or who may not feel comfortable there. We look for ways to help all children enter school ready to learn. We are an institution of lifelong learning. It is important to recognize the values we have and the assumptions we make that may or may not be held by groups in our community. Simply promoting storytimes in our community may not necessarily bring people to them. Families need to feel valued and welcomed into the library space. Applying an “equity lens” to storytime programming is one way we may connect meaningfully to all in our community. We must think not of “gaps” but of strengths. We must question our assumptions in order to help everyone learn from strengths. And, in so doing, we will become a stronger community. One of the values we have as an institution is lifelong learning. We model that value when we evaluate our assumptions. Our underlying assumptions need to be acknowledged.

In reaching different groups in our community, we must get to know the people and places of that group. What is important within different groups? What perspectives and strengths are valued in each group? in the community as a whole? How can our libraries broaden our perspectives so that programs and services meet the needs of all groups? How can we transition from “library-directed” to “community-created” programming and services?

We can see such an initiative as a journey. We all enter that journey from different points and different levels of awareness, about our own selves, our culture and assumptions, about those of different backgrounds, and about ways that our society treats people of different groups.

Using an “equity lens” as we provide storytimes and other library services is only one aspect of this *Manual*. It introduces key concepts and provides tools to build a framework in your library practice. It is NOT a comprehensive guide where you will find answers to all your questions. Think of it as a “start here” moment, a road map. The impetus is to help you get to know the groups in your community, and to do so in a context that may lead you down new paths and ways of thinking. Who knows where that may lead?!

#### More Places to Look

TED Talk by Chimamanda Adichie The Danger of a Single Story <https://tinyurl.com/ttsinglestory>

Same, Same Different from University of Michigan Multicultural Center <https://tinyurl.com/misamediff>

How to Identify Your Own Bias and Overcome It in 10 Steps <https://tinyurl.com/idenimpbias>

Understanding Biases and Their Impact on Perceptions <https://tinyurl.com/forbesbiasperc>

Implicit Bias Project READY <https://tinyurl.com/readyimplbias>

*White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack* by Peggy McIntosh <https://tinyurl.com/whprivbcpk>

WebJunction Access and Equity courses (free) <https://tinyurl.com/wjeqcourses>

Project READY: Reimagining Equity & Access for Diverse Youth University of North Carolina <http://ready.web.unc.edu/getting-started-curriculum-guide/>

Racial Equity Panel Addresses Bias in Library Work <https://tinyurl.com/amlibequity>

Do Libraries Discriminate? <https://tinyurl.com/libdiscriminate>

Implicit Bias: What It Means and how It Affects Behavior <https://tinyurl.com/implbiasbeh>

## 2. Let's Begin with YOU

There are a number of resources to explore our own assumptions and to take a closer look at how becoming more aware of stereotypes, the effects of our societal power structure, and our own well-meaning approaches play roles in how we interact with people and provide library services.

Please see the Appendix on Equity Chapter 16 for further information and resources. Different resources will be more pertinent depending on where you are in this journey.

### **Self-confidence**

When we start something new, or when we are put in new situations, it is natural to feel unsure. Start from “wherever you are” and build from there. Remember there is no “perfect storytime,” and there is no one way to do storytimes. Here are some tips to build your self-confidence in delivering storytimes from Lindsey Krabbenhoft of Jbrary:

1. Find songs you are comfortable singing
2. Use the same hello and goodbye song each time
3. Choose age-appropriate materials (we will go more deeply into this topic in the Manual)
4. Ask a co-worker to observe you (and vice versa)
5. Build relationships with the families
6. Use online resources
7. Try new things

For more detail and links to book suggestions and videos of songs, see <https://jbrary.com/building-storytime-confidence/>

Of course, as you do more and more storytimes, your confidence will grow!

### **Imposter Syndrome**

Whether experienced or not, some storytime providers feel insecure as they are delivering storytimes. As you gain more experience, you will become more confident. You will be able to build on what you learn through observing and assessing what happens in your storytimes and by building relationships with the families who attend.

There is something called the Imposter Syndrome. It is a psychological pattern in which one doubts one's accomplishments, intelligence, or skills, and has a persistent internalized fear of being exposed as a “fraud.” If this is the way you think, feel free to look at this presentation by Erin Collier-Plummer of Seminole County (FL) Public Library, presented at the Public Library Association Conference in 2020. <https://tinyurl.com/impossynplummer>

The worksheet “I Feel Like a Fraud: Managing Imposter Syndrome in the Workplace” on page 12 may also be useful.

### **Time Management**

Planning storytimes can feel overwhelming. Storytimes are not the only duty you have! How can you manage your time to plan and deliver these programs?

First of all, acknowledge it **will** take longer to plan storytimes when you first start out. Every picture book you read, every song you learn, every storytime blog with ideas, every bit of information you glean about early literacy, every storytime-related videoclip you watch (whether or not you actually use them) are the base of knowledge upon which you build your storytimes. It is just as important to know what you don't like or what doesn't work as to know what you do like and what does work. This flyer may help you as you think about managing your storytime preparation, and your duties in general. <https://tinyurl.com/earlstimemgmt>

Some library systems offer guidelines on how long it takes to plan, deliver and assess storytimes.

## 2. Let's Begin with YOU

### **If you are not a parent . . .**

There is sometimes a bias when the storytime provider is not a parent. What you say may be discounted. You may encounter a “you just can’t understand” attitude from parents.

What can you do about this?

We all encounter many situations where we have no first-hand experience. We can still have conversations and seek to understand. We can acknowledge we have not been a parent, but do have experience sharing books with children and interacting with them. And, of course, we are willing to learn and to look for any information, resources, or services that may be helpful to the families we serve. If you notice that some questions and comments seem to cluster around certain topics (often behavior management topics), take some time looking at books in the parenting section or websites that offer suggestions and personal experiences from parents. In addition, as you speak with parents about their interactions with their children, you may glean ideas. You can say to a parent, “I’m not a parent myself, but I recall what another parent said she did with her children . . .”

You have experience with children throughout the day. You can share what you know about good books, nursery rhymes, how to research relevant resources, and what the library can offer children and their families. Pay attention to good parenting skills when you see them, and refer to those when appropriate.

As you develop relationships with the families, this may become less of an issue. When we share information about ourselves, as appropriate, share some struggles, show that we are always learning, we offer opportunities for common understanding.

### **Work with a mentor**

It is helpful to identify at least one person with whom you can share ideas with as you develop storytimes. Take your time getting to know people and deciding who would be a good mentor for you. No matter whom you choose, remember that you also have a lot to contribute. You and your mentor can learn from each other. To see how best to make this happen, let your branch manager know you are interested in observing storytimes and having a mentor.

The Association for Library Services to Children has a mentorship program that you can apply for. Applications are available and due each September. Mentee applicants do not need to be ALSC or ALA members. The only requirement is that mentees have some connection to children’s library service and must either be 18 years old or have permission from a parent/guardian. Mentees may be students, early career professionals, individuals returning to the profession, or those who would like to refine their skills, make connections, and learn more about children’s librarianship as a career.

<http://www.ala.org/alsc/publications-resources/mentoring>

***Remember: No storytime is perfect, just do it!  
Share your love of books and reading!***

## I Feel Like a Fraud: Managing Imposter Syndrome in the Workplace

Erin Collier-Plummer, Youth Services Librarian, Seminole County Public Library

### What is "Imposter Syndrome"?

Imposter syndrome "refers to people who have a persistent belief in their lack of intelligence, skills, or competence (Young, 2011, p. 16)," despite past proof of their ability.<sup>1</sup>

Have you ever experienced any of the following (or similar) thoughts at any point in your academic and/or professional life?

1. I was in the right place at the right time. \_\_\_\_\_
2. I got lucky. \_\_\_\_\_
3. I don't know how in the world I pulled that off. \_\_\_\_\_
4. It was probably just because someone liked me/was being nice/felt sorry for me. \_\_\_\_\_
5. I just have to work harder than everyone else. \_\_\_\_\_

What other things does your imposter syndrome say to you?

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### Three Skills/Talents

List three skills or talents you possess.

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### Don't Miss Out on What Could Be

Imposter syndrome can threaten to rob us of our dreams by blinding us to what is possible. Think of something you've either already done (or want to do) and list three opportunities or gifts you may have lost (or may miss out on) if you didn't (or don't) pursue it.

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"Seek out that particular mental attribute which makes you feel most deeply and vitally alive, along with which comes the inner voice which says, 'This is the real me,' and when you have found that attitude, follow it."

--William James

<sup>1</sup> Young, V. (2011). *The secret thoughts of successful women*. Crown Business.

### 3. Storytime Goals

Now that you have an understanding of yourself and the basic purposes of storytime, let's look at the goals of storytime programs. Knowing the goals and purpose of storytime will help you create a well-planned storytime program that is responsive to and engaging for the participants.

It is helpful to put storytimes "in context." They are one valuable service that public libraries provide both to the general public and to groups in our community, such as Head Start, child care classes, and Pre-K classes.

#### What are storytimes?

As also noted in the Good 'n Quick Storytime chapter, storytimes are library programs designed for children ages newborn to five-year-olds and their parents or caregivers. We engage participants with books and other language activities such as songs, movement activities, music, fingerplays and rhymes, flannel board, puppets, props, process crafts and play activities. They usually last about 30 minutes depending on the age of the children and what elements are included.

#### What are the goals of storytime?

Our storytime goals combine the mission and objectives of the public library and the desires and perspectives of the communities we serve. The goals are

- first and foremost, to share with children and parents or caregivers the joy of sharing books and reading, language and literature in all its forms
- to encourage a lifelong love of reading and library use
- to create positive interactions with books and other activities for adults and children to experience together
- to encourage parents and caregivers to come to the library
- to make visits to the library engaging, and the library a fun place to be
- to expose children to information and ideas they may not otherwise be aware of
- to support and increase the early literacy skills of children
- to demonstrate and articulate early literacy skills for parents and caregivers and to encourage them to continue these activities at home
- to support group interactions and develop children's social skills
- to provide a safe space for children to engage in play, building imagination and social skills
- to provide a venue for parents and caregivers to support each other
- to build relationships with families so that they feel connected to the library, including library staff, library materials, and the library as a warm and welcoming space
- to promote library collections and resources
- to share library and community resources

Public libraries have traditionally offered early literacy programming for young children in the form of storytimes. Through the use of a wide range of high-quality picture books, songs, poetry, fingerplays, puppets and crafts, public libraries have been making literacy fun! They have created inviting spaces for children to enjoy literacy-rich, hands-on experiences in an interactive and caring environment. Many public libraries have also provided tips for parents and caregivers on how to select and use age-appropriate materials for their children. By capturing a child's interest and imagination early, librarians believe that they help children discover that libraries and literacy can be an enjoyable and valued part of their lives. Librarians believe that young children who become regular library users will benefit from the meaningful early literacy experiences available through storytimes and that this will allow children to develop the early literacy, communication and social skills needed to be ready to learn by the time they enter school.

*Library Preschool Storytimes: Developing Early Literacy Skills in Children* by Judy MacLean 2008.  
<https://tinyurl.com/psstliteracy>



### 3. Storytime Goals

#### How is storytime in a public library different from storytime in a school setting (like pre-K classroom)?

There are several differences between a storytime in a public library and one in an education setting, such as a pre-k class. Looking at these similarities and differences can help you understand and fulfill the role the public library plays in informal education.

	Public Library	School or Child Care Setting
<b>Approach</b>	<p>Informal education Our choice of books and other items “start from joy.” By that I mean that whether or not we have a theme, the first consideration as to what we include in our storytimes is #1) Do we enjoy the book/item. Then come the questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Do we think the children will?</li> <li>3. Is it appropriate for the age-level we are targeting?</li> <li>4. Does it work well with a group?</li> </ol> <p>In the public library, if we plan around a topic or theme, we should first make sure that all the items meet the criteria mentioned (#1 - #4). If not, then we should broaden or change the topic or theme. It is also okay not to have a theme. There is more on storytime themes on page 127.</p>	<p>Formal education The first consideration is often content. They may be doing an instructional unit on health or community helpers or a particular season, with a particular goal of teaching concepts or ideas.</p>
<b>Participants</b>	<p>We don’t know who might show up at any particular storytime. We target a certain age range, such as babies or toddlers/twos, or preschoolers. However, because siblings are also welcome, there are often children of all ages in attendance. Parents/caregivers attend. This gives us the responsibility and the opportunity to educate parents and caregivers about early literacy so that they can nurture these skills at home.</p>	<p>The same children attend daily. Classes are divided by ages, often with separate classes for two-year-olds, three-year-olds, and four-year-olds. Parents are not usually present.</p>
<b>Frequency</b>	<p>Children attend weekly or monthly depending on the frequency of programs offered. Having a repeated opening and closing song or any routines such as a host puppet, can help children who don’t attend often still remember elements of storytime to help them feel more comfortable.</p>	<p>Children attend daily or several times a week.</p>

#### More Places to Look

Library Storytime: It’s a Lot More Than Just the Story

<https://tinyurl.com/stmorestory>

Storytime: A Classic Library Service Boosts Literacy and More, Studies Show by Linda Jacobson *School Library Journal* July 3, 2017.

<https://tinyurl.com/storytimelit>

### 3. Storytime Goals

#### **What about other programs for young children and their families that are fun but don't include books?**

There are quite a few programs in public libraries that are fun programs for young children and their families. These may include yoga programs, music/singing programs, baby dances, playdates, and play together programs. These can be great programs and often bring in families who do not come to storytime. However, these are not storytime programs; their goals are different. If you want to offer this kind of program, I suggest they be offered in addition to, not instead of, storytime programs.

**Stories and books** are the centerpiece of storytimes. We start first with good books, and work from there. Access to books and interacting with books is at the heart of the library's mission. We ask parents and caregivers to be present and to engage with children around literacy, which is a unique offering. Talking, singing, writing, and playing are early literacy practices that we include in storytimes in addition to reading, with reading at the center, the catalyst.



## 4. I Was Wondering . . .

### **What is the difference in these terms: storytime, storyhour, storytelling?**

Storytimes in public libraries are interactive opportunities for children and their caring adults to enjoy stories, books, rhymes, songs and other language activities. Storytimes encourage building early literacy skills and a love of books and reading to help children become successful readers.

#### **More Places to Look**

*Baby Rhyming Time*

Chapter 4: Baby Rhyming Time FAQs

Storyhour is the term that was previously used, the main difference being that storytimes nowadays do not usually last one hour.

Storytelling is an oral tradition where a person recounts events or a story without a book. The storyteller shares stories in ways that are engaging and elicit the imagination of the listeners.

### **What are the meanings of the terms for different ages? What’s the difference between a toddler and a two-year-old?**

The designations for clusters of ages of children vary, not only in the library world, but in the world of early childhood development as well. In this *Manual*, infants/babies are about newborn to one-year-old. Toddlers are those who are trying to walk or just “toddling,” so about 13 to 24 months old, two-year-olds are 24 – 36 months old, and preschoolers are three to five years old. The term “preschool” is a holdover from when a child’s first school experience was kindergarten at five years of age.

In terms of storytimes, age-ranges can be set in different ways. For example, a library may set a baby storytime targeting ages newborn to 18 months, and toddler storytimes from 18 – 36 months. Nowadays siblings are often welcomed, so the ages of the storytimes are blurred. It is still useful to have the age designations because those are the age levels you will plan for and concentrate on. So, for example, if you have a preschool storytime, you will have more books with more involved plots, and more involved activities. In a baby storytime, we have more rhymes and songs and only one or two simple books. We also direct our instructions to the adults who do movement activities with the children. In all storytimes we look for ways to engage whomever is attending that storytime, regardless of their ages. It is important to plan for the targeted age levels, knowing the developmental abilities, and then to be flexible when who see who has come to a particular storytime.

### **How long are storytimes?**

In general, storytimes are about 30 minutes long, but this can vary from storytime to storytime based on the engagement of the participants, their ages, the guidelines of the library system, and the expectations of the families in your community.

In general, the younger the child, the shorter the storytime. Some storytimes targeting infants may last only 20 – 25 minutes. Some storytime providers end with a craft or activity that goes over the 30 minutes of storytime content. They may end the storytime informally as people finish up the activity. Others close with a storytime song and then move on to the craft or activity. There are lots of configurations. Talking with staff about what is expected and using your own judgement about what the children can handle are the best ways to decide.

#### 4. I Was Wondering . . .

##### **Why are there different names for storytimes?**

You may notice that storytimes are sometimes called just that—storytimes! So, we might have Storytime for Babies, Storytime for Toddlers and Two, Preschool Storytime. You may see other titles like Lapsit, Babygarten, Wonderful Ones, Terrific Twos, Walkers and Wigglers, Tiny Tots, Family Storytime. I like to stay away from something like “Storytime for Littles” and “Storytime for Bigs.” These are relative terms. You may consider a two-year-old to be part of Littles, but two-year-olds feel quite big. Using names that do not designate an age, like Walkers and Wigglers, instead of Terrific Twos, allows children who are at a different developmental level than their age to participate easily. It is true that we allow all children to participate but when we plan, we focus on the designated age or developmental level.

Most of the creative names you see are for the storytime programs for younger children. As public libraries started offering storytime programs for younger and younger children, we realized that, to be age-appropriate, we had to include more rhymes and songs. Many parents think of storytime as “sitting and listening to stories” and this is something they feel their children may not be able to do. So, the names more correctly reflect what is happening in the programs.

## 5. Behavior Management

Managing the behaviors of both the children and the adults to make a joyful and engaging group experience is one issue that often arises in storytime. There are many aspects to consider: the ages of the children, the amount and kinds of experience children have had in group settings and with books, the expectations of the parents and caregivers, the expectations of the storytime provider, and the storytime environment, to name a few.

You will notice that I use the term “behavior management” instead of “discipline.” Discipline often has the connotation of punishment for unacceptable behavior. In our informal, welcoming atmosphere, and where we are not the primary caregiver, it is not our place to discipline, but rather to set expectations and to make sure rules for the common good are respected. This may, at times, mean talking with the child or the parent or caregiver.

This article from the National Association from the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) talks about cultural differences in children’s behaviors in the early childhood education setting. It is helpful to us in the library setting as well.

Valuing Diversity: Developing a Deeper Understanding of All Young Children’s Behavior

<https://tinyurl.com/naeycvaldiv>

Educators Must Mind Tone Policing in *School Library Journal* <https://tinyurl.com/tonev>

### **Expectations:**

#### Customarily:

In general, storytimes are much less formal than a classroom setting. We expect a certain amount of “chaos,” walking around, even some talking between children and their adults. Many children, especially young children, need to move to learn. Many storytime providers are fine with children responding to questions by calling out responses, not necessarily raising their hands. We are flexible and follow the “group will.” If almost all of the group has lost interest in a book, we are fine with setting aside to finish later or come back to it after another activity such as a song or stretch.

#### **More Places to Look**

Storytime Expectations/Guidelines

Burbank (CA) Public Library

<https://burbanklibrary.org/preschool-storytime-guidelines>

Oshkosh (WI) Public Library

<https://www.oshkoshpubliclibrary.org/kidsandteens/storytimeguidelines>

#### Yours:

What are YOUR expectations? Each storytime provider has his/her own personality. Sometimes even our mood or outlook can change from storytime to storytime, though we do try to be as consistent as possible. Letting the group know your expectations is helpful. I recommend letting them know at each storytime. There may be new people, and a reminder is a good thing!

Sometimes, even a family who comes to every storytime with a child who is SO well-behaved ends up one day where the child is acting out. If you have already said something like, “We expect some degree of chaos in our storytimes, but if your child is being disruptive to others, please feel free to step out (or take your child aside) and come back when your child has settled,” then the adult will not feel so embarrassed to step out with the child.

#### Storytime Expectations/Guidelines for Parents and Caregivers:

Once you know what your expectations are, you can convey them to the adults in a variety of ways: verbally as part of your introduction to storytime, a handout you developed to offer at storytime or whenever you speak with families about storytime programs, a poster on the wall, and/or on your website or Facebook page where you publicize storytimes. I find that it is good to have a written item, like the handout or poster to refer to, but the written expectations may not be sufficient. They can reinforce what you say and be a support to you.

## 5. Behavior Management

Here is advice from a storytime provider to parents, on the Kitsap (WA) Regional Library website:  
<http://www-dev.krl.org/blog/secrets-storytime-success>

Here is an example: <https://tinyurl.com/guidelinesst>

### Tips for a Successful Storytime

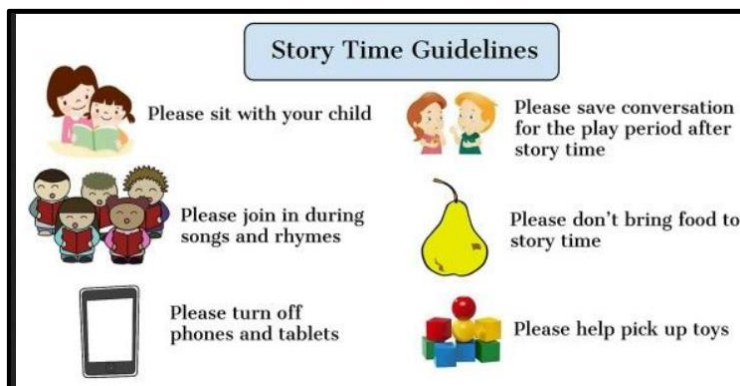
1. **Sit, sing, & listen to stories together.** The more you participate in storytime, the more children will participate, enjoy, and learn from storytime.
2. **Please be timely.** Storytimes are short and every minute is full of fun and learning opportunities. At some locations, we may not be able to accommodate late comers or have size limits.
3. **Don't be afraid to leave.** Some days children aren't in the right mood for storytime. If a child is having a bad day or becomes disruptive, please feel free to take a break and try again.
4. **Please enjoy your food, toys, and cell phones after storytime.**

Here is a handout of Storytime Guidelines from Demarest (NJ) Public Library

<https://tinyurl.com/demarestnjguide>

One storytime provider on pinterest offered this:

<https://tinyurl.com/pinstguide>



### More Places to Look

*Baby Rhyming Time* Chapter 4

*Mother Goose on the Loose Updated* Chapter 9

Storytime Underground: Managing Storytime Children and Caregivers

<https://tinyurl.com/stundergr>

Colorado Libraries for Early Literacy (CLEL) Group Management

<https://www.clel.org/group-management>

CLEL Group Management Advice

<https://tinyurl.com/clelgrmgmt>

It is worth taking some time to customize your expectations for your groups. For example, if some parent and /caregivers are more apt to sit in the back and chat with one another, you can emphasize that this is a special time with their children. Sometimes parents and caregivers are worried about their children acting up or not paying attention, so you can reassure them that this is to be expected and that they can step out/aside and rejoin the group when they are ready.

### Tips for Behavior Management

#### The Environment:

Your room or space set-up can make a difference in how easy or difficult it is for you to keep the children's attention. Of course, we want the setting to be a warm, welcoming, inviting one. However, having too many books or toys out may be distracting. One storytime provider who did storytime in the picture book area hung sheets over the picture book shelving. The parents who arrived early each week helped her. At the end of each storytime was the big unveiling of the picture books, children helping to pull down the sheets, and then choosing books to check out to take home.

## 5. Behavior Management

Having adults sit with their children makes it easier for them to interact with their children and help their children focus, by pointing to what the storytime provider is showing. Do you have the room set up in such a way that encourages this kind of arrangement? Do you tell the adults they are expected to sit with their children?

### Keeping the Attention of the Participants:

Keeping both children and adults involved in what you are doing in storytime is a key strategy to reducing the need for direct “behavior management.” Let’s look at some of these strategies.

### *Providing Structure and Routines*

Many families come to storytimes regularly. Newcomers will usually follow the lead of the regulars. Providing some structure and routines makes it easier for children to know what to expect and to be able to join in. Both children and adults need repetition to learn. By having the same opening song and closing song for storytimes for each age-level, you offer familiarity that gets their attention. You might also have a certain signal for each time you read a book. One storytime provider uses a rabbit puppet that pops out of a hat, sold by Folkmanis <https://www.folkmanis.com>. Her “book bunny” introduces each book. You may use a quieting rhyme that the children come to know. Another storytime provider rings a triangle before each book.

Routines are helpful to children, and also to adults. A storytime provider in Virginia sings this song just before the children’s opening rhyme. It is to the tune of “Yankee Doodle Dandy.”

Please turn down your cell phones now,

So they will not distract us.

Please join along and sing the songs,

It always helps to practice.

Storytime can help us read.

Storytime is what we need.

Storytime is lots of fun!

Storytime's for everyone.

Here is another song from Salt Lake City, Utah <https://tinyurl.com/earlylitstrwp>

Sing, talk, read, write, play

Sing, talk, read, write, play

Sing, talk, read, write, play

Growing readers day by day.

Here is an example of an opening song that gets them from standing to sitting:

You can substitute any item like a dinosaur or puppy, whatever might suit your theme, if you have one.

Teddy bear, teddy bear turn around

Teddy bear, teddy bear touch the ground

Teddy bear, teddy bear touch the sky

Teddy bear, teddy bear wink one eye

Teddy bear, teddy bear touch your nose

Teddy bear, teddy bear touch your toes

Teddy bear, teddy bear touch your knees

Teddy bear, teddy bear sit down please!

## 5. Behavior Management

For her preschool storytime, Amber Jarvis of Moyock Public Library has poster in front of the room with a hand and all five fingers have a task like the image to the right. She holds up the number five with my hands before reading a story and goes over a few, but not all five, steps each time. She asks the children, "Are your eyes looking at me? Are you listening? (I place my hands on my ear). Are your hands in your lap? Are you sitting down?" Once they are, she begins reading the book. Some children prefer to give a show of hands once they've done all steps. This especially helps children with special needs who need more clear, visual and auditory instructions. After the first month she needs only to ask who can give a high five and the children know what it is and immediately settle in for the story.



For toddler storytime, Amber sings this song: "My Hands"

My hands above my head I place,  
On my shoulder, on my face.  
And then behind me they will hide.  
And I can reach them way up high.  
I can count 1-2-3,  
And see how quiet I can be.

### More Places to Look

Here is a similar version of "My Hands" so you can hear the tune.

<https://tinyurl.com/myhandsong>

Some storytime providers use yoga poses to help children gain a better sense of their bodies and some use yoga breathing exercises to help children become aware of ways to calm down.

Rachel Bryant at Camden County Public Library starts some storytimes with a yoga exercise routine. After introducing some simple yoga poses, she got the idea to ask the children what kinds of poses they would like to do, which led to some pretty silly requests. One was the banana pose. There are several poses that children can try. For a transition to a calmer feeling, she ends with the "butterfly" position (sitting with feet together, slowly moving legs like "wings") and then talking about how butterflies are quiet even when they are flapping their wings.

It might be good to do three to five yoga poses which are repeated each week. Yoga poses can also be used as transition movements for a stretch between storytime activities.



### More Places to Look

Yoga in storytime:

Mindful Storytimes: Fostering Calm and Focus

<https://tinyurl.com/mindfulst>

"Mindfulness" Yoga Storytime

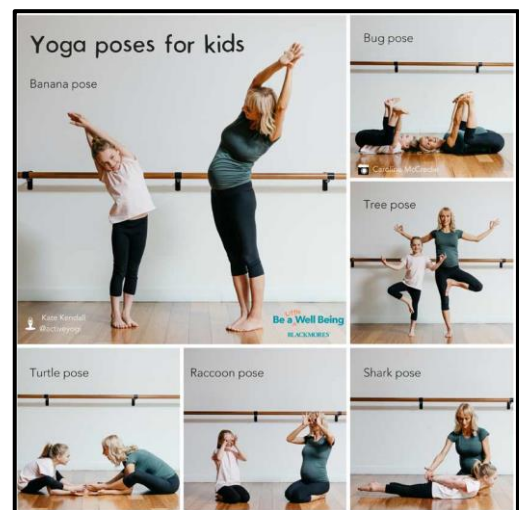
<https://tinyurl.com/mindfulnessst>

Katie Scherrer video, taking breaths

<https://tinyurl.com/ksbreaths>

Stretch Your Storytime! Supporting Early Learning with Yoga and Movement webinar, sign in (free) to get to course page

<https://tinyurl.com/wjstretchst>





## 5. Behavior Management

### Transitions

When we are losing the children's attention, your first impulse may be to speed things up, to try something new/different, to keep their attention. However, children need more time, not less time, to process what you are saying and doing. You may want to:

- Lower your voice
- Slow things down. Wait 5 seconds between sentences to allow young children to absorb what you are saying.
- Sing a song or put on music
- Telling children what will be happening next is a big help in helping them shift their attention. For example, "Next we are going to sing a nursery rhyme. I will show you some actions for each sentence and then we will do it together," or "After we sing this song, we will sit down and I will read you our next book." Did you notice, I said, "We will sit down," not just "We will read a book together"? This is a cue for them. It breaks down what they will need to do into steps.

Some storytime providers make a "visual schedule," removing each card as that activity is finished. This can be helpful. Others find it harder to be responsive to the group when the planned schedule is visible. Of course, you can feel free to switch the cards around or skip an item during the storytime. This technique is also helpful with children on the autism spectrum.

Songs that provide transitions can be helpful as children go from a large movement activity to sitting on the floor for the next book or activity.

Here are a few examples:

"Stop and Drop"

Running, running, running, running  
Hop, hop, hop; Hop, hop, hop  
Tiptoe, tiptoe; tiptoe, tiptoe  
Then I stop. (hold up hand)  
And I drop. (sit down)

"Our Gallant Ship"

Three times around went our gallant ship (turn around)  
Three times around went she (turn around in the other direction)  
Three times around went our gallant ship (turn around in first direction)  
And she sank to the bottom of the sea. (sit down cross-legged)

"Criss Cross Applesauce"

Criss-cross applesauce (make X in the air, or adults can do on children's backs)  
Give a little clap.  
Criss-cross applesauce  
Put them in your lap.  
Criss-cross applesauce  
Quiet as can be. (pointer finger to lips)  
Criss-cross applesauce  
Eyes on me. (two fingers from eyes to storytime provider)



### More Places to Look

Transition Songs

From Jbrary: <https://jbrary.com/transitions/>

## 5. Behavior Management

We often think of needing to calm children down when we think of behavior management. But sometimes you may find you have children who are hesitant to join in or move around much. They may be a bit shy or tentative. This *Zoom, Zoom, Zoom* song is one that might encourage both children and adults to become more active: <https://tinyurl.com/songzoom>

If children would really just rather observe, that is perfectly fine. Sometimes parents come back and tell us that the child is singing the song or telling a story at home.

### *Interactions*

When giving instructions, whether for movements to a song or fingerplay or asking a child or children to do something, you may need to break the instructions down into smaller parts or do them slowly first before “at tempo” for the song or rhyme. For example, for the rhyme *Two Little Blackbirds*:

*Our next rhyme is Two Little Blackbirds. The first line says, Two little blackbirds sitting on a hill, and we are to hold up two pointing fingers. Most preschoolers will hold up two pointer fingers. For toddlers, you may have to ask, Let me see you hold up one pointer finger. Pause and encourage them. Great! Now let me see you hold up the pointer finger of your other hand. Pause and encourage them. Great! Now you have your two little blackbirds. The next line is One named Jack, and one named Jill. Wiggle one pointer finger. Demonstrate and pause. Now wiggle the other pointer finger. Demonstrate and pause.*

*Great! Next comes Fly away, Jack. Fly away, Jill. Make one hand go behind your back. Now the other one. Great! And last comes, Come back, Jack. Come back, Jill. Bring one finger to the front so we can see it. Demonstrate and pause. Now the other finger to the front. Demonstrate and pause. Great! Now you did the whole rhyme. Let's try it again a little faster.*

Think All together, not “Do you want to . . .”

Intuitively, we may ask, *Are you ready for our next book? Or Would you like to sing a song?* You may be putting yourself in a difficult situation, here. What if they say “No?” Are you REALLY giving them a choice? Young children are quite literal. It would be more realistic to say something like, *Let's read our next book, or Next, we have a song about . . .*

Sometimes it is hard for children to focus on you if you are way at the front of the room. You may try an activity where they are interacting with their parent or caregiver. This could be a read together time, having the child tell the adult about the story you just read, or doing a movement song together. For example, the child on the adult's lap doing “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.”

Use positive corrections—what is the behavior you want to see, not saying what you don't want to see. “Please walk” is more helpful than “Don't run.”

Bend down to a child's eye-level when speaking with them individually.

Ignore negative behaviors if they are not actually disrupting the storytime or hurting another child. For example, a child may be wandering around the room, but you have the attention of most of the children.

If you are able to give children nametags, you can get to know their names more easily, and calling them by their name during the storytime may help them focus. Occasionally you may be able to say something like, *Billy, what do you see on this page?* to help a child's attention back to the book. If not, don't dwell on the one child, but sometimes it is a way to re-engage a child. If you give nametags to children, it is good to give nametags to adults as well (they can write their own) so that they realize they are part of the storytime as well.



## 5. Behavior Management

### Use of Cell Phones

We can do so many different things with cell phones these days. In addition to calls and texts, they allow us to find information, to check directions to get somewhere, to hear the tune of a song or the lilt of a nursery rhyme, to take photos, to play games, and more. Some of these uses may even be “legitimate” during storytimes while others get in the way of being “in the moment” with the children.

We all know of cell phones being used by the adults to catch up on messages, even to talk to friends during storytime. We want the adults to be as present as possible and participate with their children. Research has found that when adults join in with the activities in storytime, they are more likely to continue them at home as well. Children take their cues from their adults, so when adults are engaged with the storytime happenings, it is more likely that their children will be as well. We ask the adults to turn off their cell phones and to be present with their children during this special time. One storytime provider told me he brings in his own cell phone and turns it off in front of the group.

Some parents and caregivers like to document what their children are doing during storytime. They may take photos of their children enthralled with a book, joining in with a song or fingerplay, or making an art activity. Some families who do not know English well were recording the storytime so that they could replay it at home. We must be understanding of the REASONS why someone may be using a cell phone. One storytime provider told me she found the videoing very distracting. She told her storytime group that there were to be no photos or videos during the storytime, but if they wanted a rhyme or story repeated, she would do so after the storytime. She also started giving a handout to the parents with links to videos of the books and songs in the storytime. In addition, we must be aware that there are safety issues, such as restraining orders or violent relationships, that could potentially harm children if their photos were online or shareable. This needs to be respected by all. It is another reason why photo taking needs to be carefully monitored, without singling out particular families.

### Attitudes of Parents and Caregivers

We find a wide range of attitudes and approaches to parenting among the adults in our storytimes. It is just as important to articulate to the adults your expectations as it is to the children. Some parents see this as their “downtime,” when they can relax while their children are having fun in a safe environment. Some parents sit with their children and are supportive, helping them focus on the book or activity being presented.

For those who see storytime as their “downtime,” we can state our expectations, encourage their participation, and talk with them before or after storytime to get to know them and build a rapport with them. We can also look at ways to include in our storytime interactive strategies that have both children and adults participating together. [See page X](#)

One of our goals in storytimes is to help children build language, explore, use their thoughts and imagination, and to interact with others, including the storytime provider! Sometimes parents can be supportive in a pushy or controlling way. For example, they may make their children sit quietly when we would encourage them to be more active and even call out responses. Sometimes parents will tell children what to say, not waiting for the child to figure out things themselves. Many of us do crafts or activities in storytimes. Many parents and caregivers are quite directive, wanting the item to be “perfect,” see how she did hers? In these cases, it can be helpful, again, to articulate your expectations and to explain the WHY behind what you are doing.

## 5. Behavior Management

For example:

- This is a storytime, not a classroom, so we don't expect children to sit quietly the whole time.
- It is fine if Jonathan doesn't raise his hand before speaking here. He can join in with the other children.
- I have purposely chosen an activity where children can express their own ideas and develop their creativity. The item doesn't have to look a certain way.

There will be many situations that may arise that need your attention. It is not possible to cover each individual situation. Keep in mind that you are looking out for the good of the whole group. It is helpful to speak with others, either your colleagues in your branch or the library system, or using virtual avenues. See Resources in More Storytimes Chapter 8. Developing relationships with the children and their families over time makes it easier to plan engaging storytimes and to interact with both the children and the adults.

## 5. Behavior Management

**Looking over the above section on Behavior Management, think about the following:**

1. What techniques do you already use to support a positive environment for children around books, reading and language activities? What other practices have you learned about that could be applied to behavior management?
2. What do you understand about culture and values and its impact on children's behavior? How can you further understand these influences on behavior? What assumptions have you made about a particular behavior? Why? What was different? Was this based on your own assumptions of how a child should behave?
3. What challenges do you feel you have? What are your opportunities for growth?
4. What techniques, those already mentioned or not, might you like to try? Whom might you talk with for more ideas?
5. How can you work to create community in your storytime where parents, caregivers and children are all engaged in the activities?
6. Looking back on your storytime, what might you do differently? How will you capture this information so that you will remember for future storytimes?
7. How might you enlist the help of parents and caregivers? If you do not know the parents and caregivers well, what are some ways you can build relationships in order to learn more about your storytime participants?

## 6. Good ‘n Quick Storytime

Storytime is next week and I haven't done one before!  
Don't worry, let's figure it out.

We will focus now on developing one storytime you will use in the coming week. You will have time to brainstorm ideas, select items, set up your space, and most importantly, practice! You will choose items you like. Your goal is to help all the participants feel welcome while they, and you, have some fun together.

### **New Program for You and/or For Them**

The children may be used to another storytime provider who has an established program. That's ok. If your predecessor left some storytime plans, you can, of course, look through them and follow that structure. However, if they did things you are not ready for or aren't your style, feel free to start your own routines. For example, children may be used to a puppet welcoming them, but you may not feel comfortable with puppets. You might have a stuffed animal you could bring who sits near you. Or do neither!

Your predecessor may have started storytime with a certain opening song. If you can learn that song, it is probably best to start out with because it will feel comforting to the children to have something familiar. The same is true of the closing song.

### **Who's Coming?**

Usually storytimes target a particular age group. We welcome siblings, so you can get quite an age range for a single storytime. The age levels may vary, including baby/toddlers, toddlers/twos, and preschoolers (ages 3 – 5) or a combination of all of the above.

For our Good ‘n Quick storytime, we will have one storytime that is designed for all age levels from newborn to five-year-olds as well as their parents and caregivers. But don't worry—I will explain how you can be responsive to different age levels depending on who comes to your particular storytime.

### **First Things First**

So, you've just been hired and one of your first tasks is to deliver a storytime. What is storytime? Storytimes are library programs designed for children ages newborn to five-year-old and their parents and caregivers. We engage participants with books, and other activities such as songs, movement activities, music, fingerplays and rhymes. Sometimes we add a flannel board, puppets, props, crafts and play activities. They usually last about 30 minutes. For younger children, they may be a bit shorter. Some storytime providers have playtime and this may take the program over 30 minutes.

### **What Does a Storytime Look Like?**

Have you attended an experienced colleague's storytime yet? If you can arrange it, it is helpful to observe a storytime in person. You can ask questions and they can explain why they chose to do something or why they chose certain books, even what went well and what they might change for another time.

## 6. Good ‘n Quick Storytime

You may also have a look at these:

Neither of these storytimes includes all the elements we talk about in the Storytime Structure, but they give you a sense of storytime.

Los Angeles Public Library Episode 1 targets babies and toddlers <https://tinyurl.com/laplst1>  
There is a brief introduction and the storytime starts 0:43

Los Angeles Public Library Episode 16 targets family, more preschoolers  
<https://tinyurl.com/laplst16>

### Start With What You Know or Remember

It can be helpful to start with things that are familiar to you.

Take some time to look at your library’s picture book collection and to reflect. Then jot down some notes about what you might like to use in a storytime.

- Do you have any favorite books for young children?
- Do you know any rhymes or songs that young children may like? Think back to your own childhood or to other experiences. I found it helpful to look at some children’s song and rhyme books and that helped bring to mind some I had forgotten.
- Do you have any talents, do any crafts, or have any hobbies that you can share with young children or that could be adapted for a young age?
- Do you have a positive attitude? I will do my best trying things out and see how to grow from there? YES!!!!

In all honesty, a positive attitude, an appreciation for books, and a love of connecting children and their families to them are the cornerstones of storytime.

In addition to feeling comfortable with some of the books, rhymes, and activities, you will need to consider if they are appropriate for the ages of the children attending the storytime. Sometimes we remember books from our childhood, but we may have been older at the time. Also, some books work well being read one-on-one, but not so well in a group.

If you would like an introduction now, try the blog “New to Storytime: How to Read Books to a Group” <https://tinyurl.com/jbraryreadgroup>

In the storytime plan below, you will see some suggestions of ways to use a few books. You will also see some suggestions for alternate titles. As you read through books you are considering, think about what you feel most comfortable with, and then start practicing how you might read the book.

### Storytime Planning Tips

- OK not to memorize everything
- OK to change the order of what you had planned
- OK to leave something out or add something in on the spur of the moment
- OK to stop in the middle of a book, put it away, and do an action song or other activity
- OK to sing out of tune

## 6. Good 'n Quick Storytime

### Notes to Remember

- Help yourself out. Use Post-its, 3 x 5 or 6 x 8 cards or half-sheet of paper and attach it to the back of a book. You can use them to write cues for the book introduction or an early literacy tip, or anything you feel you might forget.
- Write the words to rhymes or songs on a flipchart or project onto a screen for all to see.
- If that is not possible, write out the words to songs on cards or on paper which can also be used as a handout.
- Write out your storytime plan to follow along, using sheets of paper or cards.
- Anything else that helps YOU!

Know yourself: What helps you calm down and enjoy the occasion, in this case, storytime! Having a good time together is the main goal.

### Set Up

The location of the storytime will affect the set up. In some libraries there is a separate storytime room. In others, storytime is delivered in the children's area.

Think how you can make the space inviting and welcoming with as few distractions for young children as possible.

You might want to have a table and chair up front. The table can be used to display books and any other materials you will be using in your storytime. Some storytime providers prefer to have a crate or container for materials so that children are not tempted to take them from the table.

I like to sit on a chair so that I can also easily stand. Some storytime providers prefer sitting on the floor with the participants. This can work well when groups are smaller. Just remember to make sure everyone can see and feels included.

It is best if the area is arranged so that parents and caregivers sit with their children. This way they are more likely to participate. Have a few chairs available for those who are not able to sit on the floor.

### Good 'n Quick Storytime Plan

In order to make one storytime that can be responsive to any age group, this storytime is designed for mixed ages, from newborn to age five and their parents/caregivers. You will see later in the *Manual* that we plan more specifically for age-levels (babies/toddlers, toddlers/twos, and preschoolers) in order to respond to children's developmental stages.

We never know who will show up at our storytimes, so we must be flexible and adjust how we talk about or present a book, song, or activity, and the way we present it. I will give some suggestions within the storytime plan below.

## 6. Good ‘n Quick Storytime

**Theme: Fun with Favorites** *Italics = what you may say*

Storytime Element Explanation	Suggestions
<p><b>Arriving and Settling In</b> To help families feel welcome, greet the children and the adults as they arrive. When talking with children, kneel to be on their eyelevel. Optional: music in background, books available for browsing for those who arrive early.</p>	
<p><b>Introduce Yourself</b> Welcome the group. Introduce yourself. Set your expectations.</p>	<p><i>Hello, my name is _____. I am so glad to see you here at storytime. [You may say something about yourself, and that you are happy to be at X Library.] We are all here to have fun together. Please participate and to do the rhymes and songs with your children. I expect a fair amount of chaos during storytime, but if your child becomes disruptive, please take him or her out and join us again when your child has settled down. Please turn off your cell phones so you can all participate with your children.</i></p>
<p><b>Opening Song or Rhyme</b> Consider songs that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use the child’s name</li> <li>• have movement of body parts</li> <li>• “hello songs”</li> <li>• songs that help to settle down</li> </ul> <p>Your opening song would be repeated at each storytime.</p> <p>We also have a closing song at the end of storytime. It is not necessary, but I find it easier to have the opening song and the closing song have the same tune and similar lyrics. These are fairly short songs signaling the beginning and end of storytime.</p>	<p>Examples of opening songs with links to videos: <b>We Clap and Sing Hello</b>—last half shows goodbye version <a href="https://tinyurl.com/songclap">https://tinyurl.com/songclap</a> <b>Hello Friends</b>—last half shows goodbye versions: Jbrary: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/jbraryhellofriends">https://tinyurl.com/jbraryhellofriends</a> <b>Wake Up Feet</b> <a href="https://tinyurl.com/songwakeupfeet">https://tinyurl.com/songwakeupfeet</a> and Los Angeles PL Storytimes Episode 9 Start at 8:37 <a href="https://tinyurl.com/laplst9">https://tinyurl.com/laplst9</a> <b>Come Along and Sing with Me</b> Last line could be It’s time for storytime. <a href="https://tinyurl.com/songcome">https://tinyurl.com/songcome</a> <b>Hello and How Are You?</b> Los Angeles PL Storytimes Episode 15 Start at 2:52 <a href="https://tinyurl.com/laplst15">https://tinyurl.com/laplst15</a></p>
<p><b>Set the stage</b> Describe what you will be doing in storytime.</p>	<p><i>There are so many wonderful books! I am going to share some of my favorites with you today. They all have some rhyme, a good rhythm, and something you can join in on to make them fun to share together.</i></p>
<p><b>Early Literacy Tip—Explain</b></p>	<p><i>Adults, when we share books in fun ways with our children, we are helping to motivate them to want to read when they are ready to learn to do so.</i></p>
<p><b>Book</b> <b>Introduce the book and read/share it</b> Usually the longest book is best for the beginning of storytime. It may include puppet, flannel board, or visual aid.</p> <p>Give an introduction to the book to encourage participation.</p>	<p><i>Beep, Beep, Go to Sleep</i> by Todd Tarpley <a href="https://tinyurl.com/beepsleep">https://tinyurl.com/beepsleep</a> <b>Book Introduction:</b> <i>Our first book is about some robots at bedtime. The robots keep making a lot of noise, saying ‘Beep! beep!’ Let me hear you say ‘beep, beep’ like a robot.” (A few may try.) Oh, very good! Then, you can say “beep, beep” in a loud computer-type voice and ask them to imitate you, adults too. Do it a few times till they are comfortable, always encouraging them. Before starting the story, You are so good at that, that you can help me read this book. When we come to the words, beep beep, you can say them all together. Then, while pointing to the text in the title say, Beep, Beep, Go to Sleep is written by Todd Tarpley and illustrated by John Rocco.</i></p> <p>As you are reading the book, you can pause on the pages that have Beep Beep, point to the text and beckon with your hand to cue the participants to join in with saying “beep, beep” all together.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p>

## 6. Good ‘n Quick Storytime

Storytime Element Explanation	Suggestions
<p><b>Book</b> Introduce the book and read/share it continued</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <p><i>Peek-a-Moo</i> by Marie Cimarusti, if most of the children are infants/toddlers <a href="https://tinyurl.com/peekamoo">https://tinyurl.com/peekamoo</a> Before you lower the flap each time, you can ask, <i>What animal is this? What sound does it make?</i> Then pull down the flap and ask the children to chime in with you; repeat to allow them to join in.</p> <p><i>Our first book is about different farm animals and the sounds they make. It is a flap book, so it feels like peek-a-boo, hiding and then seeing.</i> Play peek-a-boo with them, hiding your own face and then lifting your hand saying peek-a-boo. Encourage adults do peek-a-boo with their own children. Then continue, <i>What animal is on the cover?</i> (pause for responses) <i>Right! A cow. This book, Peek-a-Moo, run finger under the text of the title, is written by Marie Torres Cimarusti and illustrated by Stephanie Peterson.</i></p> <p>As you are reading the book, continue the same pattern for each animal: <i>What animal is this?</i> (pause for responses) <i>Yes! A cow,</i> and <i>What sound does it make?</i> (pause for responses). <i>Yes, moooo moooo. Let's say that together.</i></p>
<p><b>Stretch based on a book</b> To let children get the wiggles out It also helps children relate to the book through movement</p>	<p>For <i>Beep, Beep, Go to Sleep</i>, have adults and children stand up and move like robots. <i>Now we are going to move like robots. How do they move? Yes, that's right, with jerky movements. What sounds do you think they make?</i> Children also enjoy is giving their adults directions for how to move.</p> <p>For <i>Peek-a-Moo</i>, you can act out the movements of some of the animals one by one: walk or eat grass like a cow, fly like an owl, waddle like a duck, scamper like a mouse. After each animal: <i>Let me see you walk like a cow,</i> as they imitate you.</p>
<p><b>Transition Song</b> After children have been active, a transition song to the next book may help them settle down</p>	<p>“If You’re Ready for a Story” from Jbrary <a href="https://tinyurl.com/readystory">https://tinyurl.com/readystory</a> Parents with babies can bounce their babies to the rhythm. I change “If you’re ready for a story,” to “We are ready for a story, so . . .” This is so they don’t think we are asking a question.</p>
<p><b>Book</b> Introduce the book and read/share it</p>	<p><i>Bee-Bim Bop</i> by Linda Sue Park <i>Wonderful! Our next book is called Bee-bim Bop. Bee-bim bop is a rice dish from Korea which is a country across the ocean from us. It has rice and also eggs and vegetables. There is even a recipe for it at the back of the book. Show recipe. I found out from this book that bee-bim means “mixed-up” and ‘bop’ means rice in the Korean language. So, together, it means ‘mixed-up rice.’</i> <i>I would like you to say the words ‘bee-bim bop’ with me. Bee-bim bop!</i> Practice until they feel comfortable. Then add a clap for each word and practice. <i>Now, when bee-bim bop is repeated in this story, I would like you to say the words and clap them. Here we go! Oh! Look at the title. It’s Bee-Bim Bop. You can say it right away—Bee bim bop and they clap as well. Great job! This book is written by Linda Sue Park and illustrated by Ho Baek Lee.</i> For those of you with babies, bounce them to the rhythm of bee-bim bop.</p> <p>Read the story and pause for them to say bee bim bop, as you beckon with your hand to cue them to join in.</p>
<p><b>Early Literacy Tip—Example</b> Use the book you just read to introduce an early literacy tip.</p>	<p><i>Adults, you noticed that I had the children join in with the repeated phrase, ‘bee-bim bop.’ When we find ways to have the children join it, they are more engaged and have more fun. When we make books enjoyable for children, they will be more interested in reading.</i></p>
<p><b>Action Song</b></p>	<p>“Shake Your Sillies Out” from King County Library System (WA) <a href="https://tinyurl.com/songsillies">https://tinyurl.com/songsillies</a> Adults with babies can bounce them to the rhythm; everyone else stands and does actions to the song, following your actions.</p>
<p><b>Transition Song</b> After children have been active, a transition song to the next book may help them settle down</p>	<p>“If You’re Ready for a Story” from Jbrary <a href="https://tinyurl.com/readystory">https://tinyurl.com/readystory</a> Repetition helps them know what is coming next.</p>



## 6. Good ‘n Quick Storytime

Storytime Element Explanation	Suggestions
<p><b>Factual Book</b> Factual books offer a great opportunity to build on children’s interests. During your planning time, as you read the book, choose a couple of pages with good pictures and/or interesting facts that you would like to point out. Practice what you will say.</p>	<p><i>A Chicken’s Life</i> by Nancy Dickman or other factual book about chickens <i>One of the ingredients in Bee-Bim Bop</i> was eggs. Do you know where eggs come from? <i>The eggs we eat are laid by chickens!</i> Let’s see what we can learn about them. [Read the couple of pages you chose to point out.]</p>
<p><b>Guided Activity: Shaker Eggs</b> <b>Introduce the activity</b></p>	<p>A couple of shaker songs from Jbrary: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/jbraryshakers">https://tinyurl.com/jbraryshakers</a> “Can You Shake Along with Me?” <a href="https://tinyurl.com/jbraryshakealong">https://tinyurl.com/jbraryshakealong</a> <i>Our last activity before playtime is music with shaker eggs. These are plastic but they are also in the shape of an egg. I brought these shaker eggs to share with you all. You can each use a shaker, children and adults, too. Everyone joins in! Then, when we are done with the songs, I will collect them back. You will be putting them in this basket. Get them comfortable with the shakers by having them practice. Shake the shakers slowly. Now shake them fast. Let me see you shake them high. Now let me see you shake them low.</i> Then proceed to the song(s) of your choice. Here are a couple of songs from Jbrary for passing out and collecting shakers or other items. <a href="https://tinyurl.com/jbrarymanagingprops">https://tinyurl.com/jbrarymanagingprops</a></p>
<p><b>Closing Song</b> Repeated each storytime for the targeted age group</p>	<p><b>We Clap and Sing Hello</b>—last half shows goodbye version <a href="https://tinyurl.com/songclap">https://tinyurl.com/songclap</a> <b>Hello Friends</b>—last half shows goodbye version Jbrary: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/jbraryhellofriends">https://tinyurl.com/jbraryhellofriends</a></p>
<p><b>Early Literacy Tip—Empower</b> Include an early literacy tip that gives the adults examples of what they can do at home.</p>	<p><i>There are many ways you can make books engaging and fun for your child at home. Try using different voices, let them choose the book to read, ask them what’s happening in the pictures, let them make sounds of animals in the story, and join in with a repeated phrase. Making reading a fun experience now will motivate them to learn to read later.</i></p>
<p><b>Closing to Adults</b> Let adults know of any programs going on at the library, any services you want to highlight, any community events they should know about.</p>	
<p><b>Playtime (optional)</b> If your predecessor had playtime at the end of storytime, it is probably a good thing to continue it. It is a great time for you to get to know the children and their families informally and start building relationships</p>	

**Other books to consider** that have repetition, rhyme, and rhythm:

All ages:

- *Love You Head to Toe* by Ashley Barron
- *Old MacDonald Had a Truck* by Steve Goetz

For younger children:

- *Babies on the Bus* by Karen Katz
- *Barnyard Dance* or *Moo, Baa, La La La* by Sandra Boynton
- *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* by Bill Martin, Jr.
- *From Head to Toe* by Eric Carle
- *I Love Animals* by Flora McDonnell
- *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?* by Bill Martin, Jr.

## 6. Good 'n Quick Storytime

For preschoolers:

- *Caps for Sale* by Esphyr Slobodkina
- *The Cow Loves Cookies* by Karma Wilson
- *Napping House* by Audrey Wood
- *Pete the Cat—I Love My White Shoes* or *And His Four Groovy Buttons* by James Dean
- *William's Winter Nap* by Linda Ashman

## 6. Good 'n Quick Storytime

### Storytime Worksheet

Storytime Element Explanation	Notes
<b>Arriving and Settling In</b> Music, books, other set up?	
<b>Introduce Yourself</b> Welcome the group. Introduce yourself. Set your expectations.	
<b>Opening Song or Rhyme</b>	
<b>Set the stage</b> Describe what you will be doing in storytime.	
<b>Early Literacy Tip—Explain</b>	
<b>Book</b> <b>Introduce the book and read/share it</b> Usually the longest of those selected is best for the beginning of storytime. It may include puppet, flannel board, or visual aid.  Give an introduction to the book to encourage participation.	
<b>Stretch based on a book</b> To let children get the wiggles out It also helps children relate to the book through movement	
<b>Transition Song</b> After children have been active, a transition song to the next book may help them settle down	
<b>Book</b> Introduce the book and read/share it	
<b>Early Literacy Tip—Example</b> Use the book you just read to introduce an early literacy tip.	
<b>Action Song</b> For a stretch	

## 7. Good 'n Quick Storytime

Storytime Element Explanation	Notes
<b>Transition Song</b> To settle down	
<b>Factual Book</b> A few pages ok	
<b>Guided Activity</b> <b>Introduce the activity</b> Shaker eggs example	
<b>Closing Song</b> Repeated each storytime for the targeted age group	
<b>Early Literacy Tip—Empower</b> Include an early literacy tip that gives the adults examples of what they can do at home.	
<b>Closing to Adults</b> Information for adults	
<b>Playtime (optional)</b>	
<p><b>Preparation:</b> Room Set Up:</p> <p>Nametags/Sign-in Sheet (if any)</p> <p>Aids: Notes to help you remember (see Storytime Preparation Tips)</p> <p><b>After Storytime: Thoughts? Things to remember for next time?</b></p>	

## 7. Storytime Structure

A storytime “structure” or “template” can be helpful in planning storytime, making planning your storytimes more efficient. However, they can undermine an engaging storytime if you force yourself to follow the template without being flexible. It is a guide. See how your storytime plan flows and don’t be wedded to a structure.

As a result of the COVID19 pandemic, we are grappling with how storytimes may have to be adjusted. Some library systems are increasing virtual storytimes. Some are looking at how to implement distancing guidelines in in-person storytimes. As you go through this *Manual*, you may find you need to make adjustments to spaces or activities. Keep an open mind as to what might work in your own community while adhering to health and government guidelines. Some adaptations may include cleaning toys after each storytime session or giving each child one or two toys to play with individually; having carpet squares or placemats to have family groups sit far apart, having hand sanitizer available for patron use, limiting room capacity, changing activities so children are not touching the same item, like a bubble wand—having individual bubble bottles and wands.

Storytime templates vary according to the intended age of the children in the storytime, be it babies, toddlers/twos, or preschoolers. A baby storytime has more rhymes and songs and fewer books than a preschool storytime, an example of how we base the content on the developmental stages of the children. Because we allow siblings into any of these storytimes, we often end up with quite a mix of ages. We are flexible. We will address mixed-age groups and scaffolding, adjusting what we do for different ages in Chapter 12.

One thing you may note for all ages is the importance of repetition. Children need repetition to learn. However, it is important to find a balance between repetition and something new. One part of the brain, the limbic system which relates to emotions, prefers repetition and predictability. However, the cerebral cortex, the thinking part of the brain, craves novelty and change. So, we need a balance between familiarity and new. Adding a twist by saying a familiar rhyme and then putting new words to it or adding puppets can bring both familiarity and novelty to the children.

Now we will look at some templates. Then you will see some sample storytimes from your EARLS colleagues! This structure is offered as a guide, and is not required. Feel free to adapt this structure to fit your personality and the group’s needs.

### **Babies (newborn to 18 months)**

Storytimes for babies/toddlers consist largely of rhymes, songs, and movement activities, with a couple of books. It is helpful to have a doll or stuffed animal to demonstrate rhymes and motions to songs or activities. This is the age-level where adults are *least* likely to realize the importance of what they do to support early literacy development; they do not realize how much the infant brain assimilates about language. Because we are already speaking with the adults as we do activities, it is easy to add information on child development and early literacy.

#### **More Places to Look**

*Baby Rhyming Time* pages 57 – 59

For more structured guidance and more ideas for baby/toddler storytimes see *Mother Goose on the Loose Updated* Chapter 6 Planning Your Program

#### **More Places to Look**

Library Storytimes During COVID-19—A Different Kind of Connection

<https://tinyurl.com/wjccovid1>

Library Storytimes During COVID-19—Connecting with Families

<https://tinyurl.com/wjccovid2>

## 7. Storytime Structure

You can add to these storytime elements, change the order, or adapt them according to what flows well for you and according to the responses from the participants.

Based on Youth Services Manual Multnomah County (OR) Public Library

1. Arriving and Settling In
2. Storytime Introduction (Welcome, Early Literacy Tip--Explain)
3. Opening Song or Rhyme (same each time)
4. Set the Stage: Today we'll be talking about . . .
5. Rhymes/Songs: Three or four rhymes and/or songs
6. Big Book—adults read with you, or join in with repeated phrase.
7. Rhymes/Songs: Three or four rhymes and/or songs, different from those in #5.
8. Book—may be read together time where you pass out books for adults to share with their children.
9. Activity with Music (bubbles, scarves, instruments, etc.) Optional
10. Closing Song (same each time)
11. Early Literacy Tip—Empower
12. Closing to Adults
13. Playtime with toys or activity

Within Items #3 - #9, you would have an Example Early Literacy Tip.

You may already be talking with parents and caregivers about information on child development as part of your storytimes (such as talking about “object permanence” following a peek-a-boo activity). That information may not be directly related to early literacy, but does support child development. It also helps the adults understand their children. Keep sharing that information! The early literacy information that you explain to the adults is not meant to take the place of other important information for the adults, but rather to add to it.

Let's look now at each of these storytime elements in a little more depth. In Chapter 11 on Storytime Elements, you will see resources for specific songs, books and other items. This section offers a general overview.

Flexibility is key based on children's reactions and moods. It is good to have some options for more bouncy rhymes and ones that are more quiet or cuddly. We expect a fair amount of chaos and movement in our storytimes. However, if children are obviously not interested, you may need to stop in the middle of a book and move on to a movement song. And that's just fine; you are being responsive to the group!

Below are descriptions of each element. You can see specific examples in the storytime examples that follow the general description.

### 1. Arriving and Settling In

It is important to have your participants feel welcome. Greet the children and the adults as they arrive, being conscious of individual customs and moods. You may have music in the background. Depending on where your storytime is held, they may see you as you are setting up. That is fine, just be sure to acknowledge people as they arrive. Some adults may enjoy helping you set up, so plan for what you may be able to have them do. One thing that can make a difference is to kneel on the floor when greeting the children so you are at their eye level. They feel acknowledged and “seen.”

## 7. Storytime Structure

### 2. **Storytime Introduction** (Welcome, Early Literacy Tip)

Introduce yourself and welcome everyone. Set out the guidelines such as turning cell phones off, participating with your children—everyone joins in, if child is being disruptive, feel free to leave and come back.

Early literacy tip—what aspect of early literacy you are going to point out in storytime to help support children’s pre-reading skills/early literacy development.

### 3. **Opening Song or Rhyme** (same each time)

“Hello songs” are those that help to settle everyone down and signal the beginning of the program. Consider songs that use the child’s name or that encourage the movement of body parts. Repeat the same opening song at every storytime for this age level. Choose a song you think adults will like doing with their babies. One with a familiar tune and some repetition of phrase and movement makes it easy to join in.

### 4. **Set the Stage:** Today . . . (Optional)

If you would like to share something about today’s storytime to help the participants think about throughout the storytime. For example, *Today, one of our books and a couple of our songs are about farm animals. That is because the county fair is coming next week.*

### 5. **Rhymes/Songs:** Three or four rhymes/song, each one done two or three times.

For each rhyme, the first time, you are demonstrating it slowly, the second time participants (children and adults) join in; the third time, all together again, but they get more comfortable. If you feel the participation is robust enough with the second time, you need not do it the third time, unless they just want to! Clap in between each rhyme. For example:

- “Itsy Bitsy Spider” (two or three times and all clap for each other)
- “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” (two or three times and all clap for each other)
- “Hickory Dickory Dock” (two or three times and all clap for each other)

Two or three of these rhymes should be repeated for the next storytime for this age level. You may find using puppets, a large visual on a flannel board, or a large graphic helps to keep the attention of both children and adults. Based on the group, you will mix bounces and action rhymes/songs with quieter ones.

This means you will need to be prepared with some rhymes/songs of different types and gauge the group to see which ones they may be most responsive to. It’s trial and error so don’t worry. Some storytime providers like to use a Song Cube. You roll the cube, it lands on a song, and that’s the one you sing. The anticipation is fun and allows for repetition of songs they know from storytime to storytime.

#### Song cube idea

<https://tinyurl.com/mdsongcube>

She uses pictures one each side, but you can also have the words to the songs.



### 6. **Big Book**—adults read with you, or join in with repeated phrase

You may have access to big books, whose pages are about 36” wide when opened up. The big books with repetition or not too much text on a page are a good match for this age group. Adults can join you in reading the book. Their children love to hear the sound of their familiar adult’s voice. Adults pick up the lilt and rhythm of the book from you. Be sure to introduce the book so they know what to expect—what is the book about, that they join in, perhaps practicing a repeated phrase together, that it is fun to read together, and that their children love hearing their adult’s voice.

## 7. Storytime Structure

- 7. Rhymes/Songs:** Three or four rhymes and/or songs, each one done two or three times. These rhymes would be different from those in #5. See explanation in #5. For different rhyme/song examples:

- “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” (two or three times and all clap for each other)
- “Two Little Blackbirds” (two or three times and all clap for each other)
- “Baby Hokey Pokey” (two or three times and all clap for each other)

Two or three of these rhymes should be repeated for the next storytime for this age level.

- 8. Book**—may be a read together time where you pass out books for adults to share with their children.

You can share another book with the whole group, or you may use this opportunity for a “read together” time. Some libraries have access to storytime sets of board books, multiple copies of the same board book. (List of board book sets: <https://tinyurl.com/earlsboarbkssets> )

This is a great opportunity to model sharing a board book and highlighting different ways you might read or talk about the pictures. I like to ask the adults to try a particular early literacy activity, a different one at different storytimes. One example would be, *Point to a picture and label it. Wait for your child to babble back. Then tell your child something you know about the item you pointed to. So, let’s say you pointed to an apple, you would say the word apple. Wait to see if the child tries to say the word. Then add something about apples. What kind of apples do you like” Or Did you know that the applesauce you eat is made from apples? Describe how applesauce is made. By adding this extra talk, babies are learning new information and new words which will later help them understand what they read.*

- 9. Activity with Manipulatives** (bubbles, scarves, instruments, etc.)

It is fun to be able to include some kind of activity with “manipulatives”—something the children hold in their hands and play with. The same activity can be done every week for several weeks, or you can change it from week to week. Lots of fun with adults and children together.

- 10. Closing Song** (same each time)

This song will be repeated at every storytime for this age level. Choose a song you think adults will like doing with their babies. One with a familiar tune and some repetition of phrase and movement makes it easy to join in. If it can include saying goodbye, it makes for a nice transition to leaving. It is not necessary, but I find it easier to have the opening song and the closing song have the same tune and similar lyrics.

- 11. Early Literacy Tip—Empower**

Share how adults can continue to support children’s early literacy at home, throughout the day. You may offer a handout.

- 12. Closing to Adults**

Let them know you are glad they came, come again, any other information on library services, programs. Invite them to check out books. You may have a display to make it easier for them to choose.



## 7. Storytime Structure

### 13. Playtime with toys or activity

Free playtime. You may bring out additional toys, such as blocks, puppets, and balls. This is a good time to interact informally with families, to encourage group play, and to build relationships through your conversations. Playtime also offers us great opportunities to share ways that parents and caregivers can support early literacy through play.

On the following pages, you will see some sample baby storytime plans from your colleagues. You can see they don't stick to this template, using it only as a guide.

*Italics* indicates what the storytime provider is saying.

**Babygarten** (birth – 18 months)  
Amber Jarvis, Moyock Public Library

**Storytime Introduction**

*Hello, my name is Ms. Amber. I am so glad to see you here today at Babygarten. I encourage you all to participate and to do the rhymes and songs with your children. You know your children best, so if they are not in the mood, don't force them, but do encourage them. Sometimes when they see you joining in, they will, too. I expect a fair amount of chaos during Babygarten, but if your child becomes disruptive, please take him or her out and join us again when your child has settled down. I would appreciate it if you would turn off your cell phones so you can all participate with your children.*

*Now is the time when you can share something unique about your baby.*

**Opening Song**

“Peek-a-Boo” (to the tune of Frere Jacques)

*Peek-a-boo, peek-a-boo. Adults cover and uncover own eyes  
I see you. I see you. Point to baby  
I see your button nose. Touch baby's nose  
I see your tiny toes. Point to baby's toes/feet  
I see you. Peek-a-boo. Point to baby; cover and uncover own eyes*

**Early Literacy Tip—Explain**

*As you sing, talk, read, write, and play with your children every day, you can support your children's prereading (early literacy) skills even at this early age, in enjoyable ways. Help your child become comfortable with books starting now by letting them handle books. Knowing how to handle a book before starting school allows them to concentrate on learning how to read. This is one aspect of the skill called print awareness.*

**Rhymes**

“Patty Cake”

*Patty cake, patty cake Clap hands for next three lines  
Baker's Man.  
Bake me a cake  
As fast as you can.  
Roll it and pat it Roll hands around together  
And mark it with a B. Draw letter on tummy  
And put it in the oven Clap hands and for next line also  
For baby and me!*

“Wheels on the Bus”

*The wheels on the bus go round and round Roll hands around each other  
Round and round  
Round and round  
The wheels on the bus go round and round  
All through the town*

## 7. Storytime Structure

Babygarten by Amber Jarvis continued

Repeat with any of these verses: doors—go open and shut (hold up hands and twist to open and shut), horn—goes beep, beep, beep (push palm in front of you like honking horn), windows—go up and down (raise and lower arms), wipers—go swish, swish, swish (arms bent at elbows going back and forth), driver—says move on back (point thumb over shoulder) babies—go wah, wah, wha (rub eyes with fist), and mamas—say shh, shh, shh (pointer finger in front of lips), can end with wheels go round and round.

### **Book** (board book storytime set)

Pass out one copy per family so they can share the book together while I demonstrate up front.

*Where's Spot?* by Eric Hill

### **Sign Language**

- More
- Hurt

### **Songs**

“Choo-Choo Train”

*Choo choo choo choo  
Choo choo choo choo  
Up the railroad track  
Choo choo choo choo  
Choo choo choo choo*

*Then we come right back.  
First we go to \_\_\_\_\_'s house  
And then we go to \_\_\_\_\_'s house  
Then we go to \_\_\_\_\_'s house  
And then we come right back*

Repeat first verse

“Baby Hokey Pokey” Here is one version <https://tinyurl.com/babyhokpok>

*Arms up, arms down, arms up  
And wave them all around  
Then tickle, tickle, wiggle, giggle  
Everyone knows  
That's how baby's hokey pokey goes.  
Legs up, legs down, legs up  
And kick them all around  
Then tickle, tickle, wiggle, giggle  
Everyone knows  
That's how baby's hokey pokey goes!*

### **Activity (Early Literacy)**

*Today I have train cars for you to play with. I've also got wooden stop signs, railroad crossings, construction signs to show you ways to support print awareness as children play. Even for your babies, you can point out signs, logos, or text anywhere around you.*

**Early Literacy Tip—Example**

*As you read books with your babies and toddlers, encourage them to explore the book with you. Your babies may bat at or hit the pages. They are trying to turn the pages. Encouraging your baby to turn the pages also helps him or her develop print awareness, or how to handle a book. Knowing how books work makes them more comfortable with books and easier for them to learn to read.*

**Book**

Have books about trains on display. Parents will read individually to their children. *Let your toddlers choose what book he/she would like to read. For your babies, you might show two to them up close. Whichever one they focus on the longest is the one they are most interested in.*

**Playtime**

Play music as the babies enjoy socialization by sharing toys together.

**Early Literacy Tip—Empower**

*As you talk about pictures in books with your children at home, it is helpful to take the time to show them the real item, if possible, as you point to the picture. This is a key part of print awareness—the picture is not the real item; it represents the real item. Later they will learn this with the text of words as well. I have a display of books you and your children might enjoy together.*

**Playtime/Activity**

Handout out a Ziplock bag filled with green paint. Babies can feel the squishy bag and move the paint around with their hands and fingers. *Adults, we have Ziplock bags sealed up with green paint. You can see how by pressing on the bag, the squishy paint moves around. Let your children use their fingers and hands to move the paint around. They love to learn through touch. To emphasize print awareness for them, you can write the word GREEN or VERDE in English or Spanish on the Ziplock bag. Point to the word and say it for them. So, you have added print awareness to play by writing and pointing out the word as you say it!*

*For your older children, I have a booklet of blank pages. Your children can make their own book by drawing trains or whatever they would like, and tell you about it. If they are ok with your writing in their book, you can write what they say. If what they draw looks like scribbles, that's just fine! This is a beginning step of writing and helps them understand that print has meaning . . . what an easy way to include print awareness!*

## 7. Storytime Structure

### **Baby Storytime** (ages birth-2 years old) by Rachel Bryant, Camden County Public Library

#### **Preparation**

Song cube referred to in this storytime—words to songs for green and purple rhymes.

<https://tinyurl.com/rbsongcube>

These are the words to the songs that can be made into a handout noted below.

#### **Storytime Introduction**

*Good morning, everyone! Welcome to storytime! How are we doing today? My name is Ms. Rachel. I am so glad you are all here. Here are the lyrics for our songs today, so you will be able to follow along. Your children take their lead from you, so please all join in!*

Give handout of words to songs from the song cubes.

#### **Opening Song**

“Hello Song” sung to the tune of “Here We Go ‘Round the Mulberry Bush”

*This is the way we wave hello, wave hello, wave hello*

*This is the way we wave hello*

*Hello, hello, hello*

*This is the way we clap hello, clap hello, clap hello*

*This is the way we clap hello*

*Hello, hello, hello*

*This is the way we stomp hello, stomp hello, stomp hello*

*This is the way we stomp hello*

*Hello, hello, hello*

#### **Set the Stage/First book**

*Our first book today is one of my favorites! We are going to take a walk through the garden and look for a beautiful butterfly. I wonder what other, colorful friends we will find!*

#### **Book**

*Butterfly, Butterfly* by Petr Horacek

#### **Early Literacy Tip—Example**

*Grown-ups, notice how when I am reading, I make sure to label different parts of the illustrations. Babies are more attracted to the illustrations than the words. We can use the illustrations as conversation starters and expose babies to new words. This helps build their vocabulary which will later help them understand what they will read.*

#### **Rhymes/Songs**

Song Cube, Green Block: Go around the circle and let each child roll the cube to choose our next song. Do all six songs and repeats for as long as you have children’s attention.

#### **Transition**

*Our next story has lots of interesting textures to touch and talk about, so let’s have the older children come closer so we can explore this book together.*

## 7. Storytime Structure

Baby Storytime by Rachel Bryant continued

### **Book**

Book with textures

*That's Not My Dinosaur!* by Fiona Watt

### **Transition/Early Literacy Tip**

*Since babies explore the world through touch as much as through sight and sound, it's important to give them opportunities to explore different textures. Board books like this are a great way for them to learn about the world. By using the words for different textures as they feel them, you are building their vocabulary which will later help them understand what they read.*

### **Rhymes/Songs**

Song Cube, Purple Block: Go around the circle and let each child roll the cube to choose our next song. Do all six songs and repeats for as long as you have children's attention.

### **Closing Song**

"Ring Around the Rosie" Everyone stands and walks in a circle as we sing.

*Ring around the rosie,*

*Pocket full of posies,*

*Ashes, ashes*

*We all fall down!*

### **Playtime**

Free Play with Baby Toys

Encourage parents to use new words and repeat them as their children explore and play with toys.

### **Early Literacy Tip—Empower**

*You have many opportunities at home, while dressing your children, while bathing them, while cooking, to use new words with them and build their vocabulary. They learn words best as they do things with you. The more words they understand the easier it will be for them to later understand what they read. And it's fun doing it while you are playing together.*

## 7. Storytime Structure

Now let's look at the storytime structure for toddlers and two-year-olds.

### Toddlers/Twos (18 – 36 months)

Storytimes for toddlers and twos include books, flannel boards, puppets, fingerplays, songs, and music/movement activities. At this age-level, in addition to sharing the joy of books, reading and language, it is especially important to help adults see ways they can elicit expressive language from their children, and to play with sounds and words. Receptive language or receptive vocabulary is what the child can understand. Expressive language or expressive vocabulary is what the child can say or speak.

You can add to these storytime elements, change the order, or adapt them according to what flows well for you and according to the responses from the participants.

Based on Youth Services Manual Multnomah County (OR) Public Library

- 1. Arriving and Settling In** (See explanation in Baby Storytime template)
- 2. Storytime Introduction** (Welcome, Early Literacy Tip-Explain)  
(See explanation in Baby Storytime template)
- 3. Opening Song or Rhyme** (same each time)  
Children this age are moving their own bodies. Consider songs that use the child's name, that have movement of body parts, "hello songs," songs that help them settle down
- 4. Set the Stage:** Today we'll be talking about . . . (See explanation in Baby Storytime template)
- 5. Book or Big Book** (usually the longest of those selected, may include puppet, flannel board, visual aid)
- 6. Stretch based on Book in #5**, a movement activity that extends the book.  
For example, if you shared the book *Head to Toe* by Eric Carle in #5, you could have participants do the motions as you go through the animals mentioned, such as pound chests like a gorilla, stretch necks like a giraffe.
- 7. Action Stretch Options:**
  - Rhyme or song involving standing up and moving.
  - Large movement activity

Repeat until children and adults are comfortable. The action rhyme/song may be a repeat from a storytime done in the previous storytime for this age level. It is good to have some repetition from storytime to storytime not only to help children and adults learn the rhyme and to help them feel comfortable.

### 8. Factual/Non-Fiction Book

Factual books offer a great opportunity to build on children's interests, to build vocabulary, and to help them learn about the world. Some factual books are long and some have a lot of text on a page along with great photos or illustrations. During your planning time, as you read the book, it is important to decide how you will share the book. Depending on its length and format you may choose to read all or most of it, or you may choose a couple of pages you would like to point out and then decide what you will say. Pairing a factual book with a storybook is a good way to make a connection.

Also, plan how you might connect your factual book to what you are doing in storytime so that you have a transition. For example, *I love to share my favorite books with you in*

## 7. Storytime Structure

*storytime. This is a true book that is a favorite of mine. OR I love to share our new books with you in storytime. This is a true book that the library just bought.*

OR if you read *Head to Toe* in #5, then you might show a factual book on different parts of the human body.

**9. Stretch based on Book in #8**, a movement activity that extends the book

**10. Action Stretch Options:**

- Rhyme or song involving standing up and moving. Repeat until children and adults are comfortable. The action rhyme/song may be a repeat from the previous storytime for this age level
- Large movement activity

**11. Shorter Book or Alternative Format** (flannel board, flipcard, puppet, big book, etc.)

**12. Guided Activity Time** (such as parachute, scarves, musical instruments)

**13. Closing Song** (same each time) (See explanation in Baby Storytime template)

**14. Closing to Adults** (See explanation in Baby Storytime template)

**15. Early Literacy Tip—Empower** (See explanation in Baby Storytime template)

**16. Free Playtime/Process Art and Activities (optional)**

Some storytime providers offer materials and instructions for making a specific craft or product. Parents often find this quite satisfying. However, it is not necessarily age-appropriate. Young children learn by exploring materials and that the process of doing so engages their minds and their physical development at their own levels of abilities. We can help parents understand how to support children's learning through play. See also Storytime Elements in Chapter 11, [page X](#).

Within Items #3 - #12, you would have an Example Early Literacy Tip.

You may already be talking with parents and caregivers about information on child development as part of your storytimes (such as talking about children having short attention spans or needed to move to learn). That information may not be directly related to early literacy, but does support child development. It also helps the adults understand their children. Keep that information in! The early literacy information that you explain to the adults is not meant to take the place of other important information for the adults, but rather to add to it.

On the following pages, you will see some sample toddler/twos storytime plans from your colleagues. You can see they don't stick to this template, using it only as a guide.

*Italics* indicates what the storytime provider is saying.



## Toddlers and Twos Storytime: Airplanes

Rachel Bryant, Camden County Public Library

### Storytime Introduction

*Good morning everyone! Welcome to Toddler Storytime. I hope everyone is doing GREAT today! My name is Ms. Rachel. Let's get started with one of our favorite songs, "Open, Shut Them."*

### Opening Songs

"Open, Shut Them"

*Open, shut them* Open and shut hands

*Open, shut them*

*Give a little clap, clap, clap!* Clap three times

*Open, shut them*

*Open, shut them*

*Put them in your lap, lap, lap!* Pat your lap three times

*Creep them, creep them* Walk fingers up your arm

*Slowly creep them*

*Right up to your chin, chin, chin!* Tap chin three times

*Open up your little mouth* Open mouth exaggeratedly

*But do not let them in!* Wave finger in front of mouth in "no" motion

"Zoom, Zoom, Zoom"

*Zoom, zoom, zoom* Sway side to side with hands together over your head

*We're going to the moon!* Reach high

*Zoom, zoom, zoom*

*We're going to the moon!*

*If you'd like to take a trip*

*Climb aboard my rocket ship* Exaggerated "come aboard" motion

*Zoom, zoom, zoom*

*We're going to the moon!*

*Are you ready for the countdown?*

*5...4...3...2...1...Blast off!* Countdown on fingers, then throw your arms in the air for the blast off

### Set the Stage

*Today we are going to talk about airplanes! Has anyone ever ridden in an airplane? Seen a crop duster flying over the fields? How about an air show? Our first story is all about different kinds of planes. Let's see if any look familiar!*

## 7. Storytime Structure

Toddlers and Twos Storytime by Rachel Bryant continued

### Early Literacy Tip—Explain

*Adults, this story is going to help us build vocabulary! While your little one may be familiar with the concept of an airplane, we will work on giving them the words to describe planes. This will help them when they begin reading. It is easier for them to sound out a word when they have heard the word before.*

### Book/Factual

*A Plane Goes Ka-Zoom!* by Jonathan London

*Have you seen any of these kinds of planes before? Add some factual information about airplanes. Share a few pages in a book with photographs of airplanes.*

### Stretch/Activity Based on Book

“Five Little Planes” Flannel Board using 5 airplane figures

*Five little airplanes in the sky, flying through the clouds way up high. One little airplane, too tired to soar, landed on the ground and then there were four.*

*Four little airplanes in the sky, flying through the clouds way up high. One little airplane flew too close to a tree. He got scared and then there were three.*

*Three little airplanes in the sky, flying through the clouds way up high. One little airplane went to Timbuktu. He got lost and then there were two.*

*Two little airplanes in the sky, flying through the clouds way up high. One little airplane tied to fly to the sun. He got too hot and then there was one.*

*One little airplane in the sky, flying through the clouds way up high. He got so lonely since no one was around. And he joined his friends who were down on the ground.*

### Rhyme

“Two Little Blackbirds”

*Two little blackbirds sitting on a hill* Hold up index finger on each hand

*One named Jack, one named Jill* Bend each finger

*Fly away Jack* Move your right hand behind your back

*Fly away Jill* Move your left hand behind your back

*Come back Jack* Bring your right hand back around, with finger up

*Come back Jill* Bring your left hand back around, with finger up

*Two little blackbirds sitting in the snow* Hold up index finger on each hand

*One named fast, one named slow* Bend each finger

*Fly away fast* Move your right hand behind your back, quickly

*Fly away slow* Move your left hand behind your back, slowly

*Come back fast* Bring your right hand back around, quickly, with finger up

*Come back slow* Bring your left hand back around, slowly, with finger up

*Two little blackbirds sitting on a cloud* Hold up index finger on each hand

*One named quiet, one named LOUD* Bend each finger

*Fly away quiet* Move your right hand behind your back, whisper

*Fly away LOUD* Move your left hand behind your back, speak loudly

*Come back quiet* Bring your right hand back around, whisper, with finger up

*Come back LOUD* Bring your left hand back around, speak loudly, with finger up

## 7. Storytime Structure

Toddlers and Twos Storytime by Rachel Bryant continued

### Book

*Little Plane Learns to Write* by Stephen Savage

### Early Literacy Tip--Example

*Let's practice doing our own arcs, dives, and loopity-loops! Parents, when your child is learning new words, it can be helpful to use movements to demonstrate their meanings. This helps the word really stick in their minds, and helps them understand the meaning of the word.*

### Action Rhyme Based on Book

"I'm an Airplane" to the tune of "Are You Sleeping?"

Arms to side like an airplane, actions following words in song

*I'm an airplane Repeat*

*Flying high Repeat*

*I can tilt this way Repeat*

*In the sky Repeat*

*I'm an airplane Repeat*

*Flying high Repeat*

*I can tilt that way Repeat*

*In the sky Repeat*

*I'm an airplane Repeat*

*Flying high Repeat*

*I can make a landing Repeat*

*From the sky Repeat*

### Guided Activity

Parachute

Here are some possible songs to go with the parachute:

"Shake It Fast/Shake It Slow"

Color Game: "If you're holding a RED part of the parachute, go ahead and shake it!" Repeat with other colors on the parachute.

"Noble Duke of York"

"POP! Goes the Weasel"

"Ring Around the Rosie"

### Action Song

Have some crepe paper streamers of different colors. Hand out two per child and two per adult.

They can try making loops and arcs like the airplane.

Sing this song to "Here We Go Looby Loo" Here is the tune: <https://tinyurl.com/herell>

*Here we go looby low*

*Here we go looby high*

*Here we go looby low*

*All on a Saturday night.*

*You swing your streamer in*

*You swing your streamer out*

*You wave the streamer in the air*

*And turn yourself about.*

Repeat till children are comfortable with the movements.

Feel free to add verses with loops, dives, and arcs.

## 7. Storytime Structure

Toddlers and Twos Storytime by Rachel Bryant continued

### Activity Time

Put out some paper and crepe paper streamers in different colors. Have adults and their children make something that can fly or swish through the air. This can be as simple as a child choosing a colored crepe paper streamer, one per hand. They might choose to twist streamers together. Everyone can experiment with the movement paper and streamers. They can fold the paper different ways, throwing paper high and watching it float down. You can have glue or tape if they want to try paper and streamers combined. Let them experiment, see how different items fly or loop.

### Early Literacy Tip--Empower

*Adults, the best way to develop your child's vocabulary is to use unfamiliar words! Reading aloud is the easiest way to expose your little one to rich vocabulary. Don't hesitate to use words that you may think are difficult for them to understand, as long as you can provide an explanation when they ask. Having a rich vocabulary will help them later understand what they will read.*

### Stickers

I hand out stickers on their way out the door.

## Toddlers and Twos Storytime: Polar Bears and Penguins

Amber Jarvis, Moyock Public Library

This storytime may run longer than half an hour, so feel free to pick and choose items.

### Storytime Introduction

*Hello, my name is Ms. Amber. I am so glad to see you here today at our toddler storytime. I encourage you all to participate and to do the rhymes and songs with your children. You know your children best, so if they are not in the mood, don't force them, but do encourage them. Sometimes when they see you joining in, they will, too. I expect a fair amount of chaos during storytime, but if your child becomes disruptive, please take him or her out and join us again when your child has settled down. I would appreciate it if you would turn off your cell phones so you can all participate with your children.*

### Opening songs

“If You’re Happy” for tune <https://tinyurl.com/songhappyknow>

*If you're happy and you know it shout hello,*

*Hello!*

*If you're happy and you know it shout hello,*

*Hello!*

*If you're happy and you know it,*

*Then your face will surely show it. Move two pointer fingers to show upcurved smile*

*If you're happy and you know it should hello,*

*Hello!*

“Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes” for tune <https://tinyurl.com/songheadshoulders>

Point to each body part, start very slowly and increase tempo according to children’s abilities.

*Head, shoulders, knees and toes,*

*Knees and toes, knees and toes,*

*Head, shoulders, knees and toes,*

*Eyes, ears, mouth, and nose.*

*Head, shoulders, knees and toes,*

*Knees and toes.*

### Early Literacy Tip—Explain

*Print awareness includes knowing how to handle a book and noticing print all around us. It is one of the skills researchers say is important to know before children learn to read. As you talk, sing, read, play, and write with your children throughout the day, you can find ways to help your children become aware of print. I'll point out some of the ways you can do this in storytime today.*

### Set the Stage—Theme/Letter Talk

*Today we are going to talk about penguins and polar bears. Do penguins like the cold or the hot weather? What about polar bears? Penguins starts with a /p/ sound. Polar bear also starts with a /p/ sound. Can you hear the sound of the letter p when I say penguin or polar bear? Let's say it together with a loud /p/ sound. **P**enguin **P**olar bear.*

## 7. Storytime Structure

Toddlers and Twos Storytime by Amber Jarvis continued

**Book** (board book storytime set)

Pass out one copy to each family.

*Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?* by Bill Martin, Jr.

### Flannel Board Rhyme

Cut out 6 penguins from felt or clipart. One is smaller than the others—the baby who calls the doctor. Use white felt for snow. You may have a bed if you wish.

“Five Little Penguins” to rhythm of “Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed” for tune see

<https://tinyurl.com/song5monkeys>

*Five little penguins jumping in the snow  
One fell off and bumped his toe  
Baby called the doctor and the doctor said,  
“No more penguins jumping in the snow.”*

Repeat for 4, 3, 2, 1

*One little penguin jumping in the snow  
One fell off and bumped his toe  
Baby called the doctor and the doctor said,  
“Put those penguins right to bed.”*

Count together as you put each penguin on the bed.

**Nursery Rhymes/Fingerplays** repeated each week for continuity and familiarity

“Little Miss Muffet”

*Little Miss Muffet, sat on a tuffet,  
Eating her curds and whey, Pretend to be eating  
Along came a spider, Cup one hand in downward direction, wiggle fingers like a spider  
Who sat down beside her, Place “spider” next to you  
And frightened Miss Muffet away! Place hands over mouth and act frightened*

“Hickory Dickory Dock” <https://tinyurl.com/kcplhumpty>

*Hickory dickory dock, Swing one arm by side  
The mouse ran up the clock, Wiggle fingers from other hand up your arm  
The clock struck one, Using arm that swings, hold one finger up  
The mouse ran down, Fingers wiggle down arm  
Hickory dickory dock. Swing arm by side*

“Itsy Bitsy Spider”

*The itsy bitsy spider Curve fingers of both hands  
Climbed up the water spout Twist wrists and move from low to high  
Down the came the rain, Wiggle fingers down  
And washed the spider out, Move both hands to the side dramatically  
Out came the sun, Create a circle with your arms above your head  
And dried up all the rain, Wiggle fingers down  
And the itsy bitsy spider went up the spout again. Twist wrists and move from low to high*



## 7. Storytime Structure

Toddlers and Twos Storytime by Amber Jarvis continued

### Early Literacy Tip—Example

*When you are reading with your child, you can run your finger under the words for the title or a repeated phrase as you say it. This helps children understand that you are reading the text, not the pictures.*

### Factual Book

Run your finger under the text in the title.

Options for factual books: These books have photographs. Choose a couple of photos to talk about.

*Penguins and Polar Bears* by Sandra Crow

*Polar Bears* by Julie Murray

*Baby Polar Bears* by Bobbie Kalman

*Baby Penguin's First Waddles* by Benjamin Richmond

### Early Literacy Tip—Empower

*When you read with your children, from time to time hold the book upside down or backward. See if children notice that it is upside down. If not, point it out. Children need to know how to hold a book, which part is the cover, which part is the back of the book. This is one fun way to find out if they know this; it is part of being ready to read.*

### Playtime

Science experiment: Ask children *How do you think polar bears stay warm when they are swimming around in arctic water? What do we do to stay warm? We wear clothes. Do polar bears wear clothes?*

Have a bowl of water with ice in it. Use shortening in a double layer Ziploc bag. Have the children tell you or their adult the difference between touching the water with your bare hands and having, “blubber.” Share some interesting facts about polar bears.

Have toys such as puzzles, shape sorting cube out for children to play with. Explain how these activities can support early literacy.

### Closing Song

“Good bye Song” to the tune of “If You’re Happy and You Know It”

*It's the end of storytime, so give a sigh*

*It's the end of storytime, so give a sigh*

*It's the end of storytime,*

*So it's time to wave good-bye.*

*It's the end of storytime,*

*So wave good-bye.*

### Toddlers and Twos Storytime—Snow

Cheryl Carollo, Currituck County

Cheryl chooses one theme for each week for both her toddler and preschool storytimes. She bases her them on books she likes. I have included both her storytimes for the theme of snow for toddlers and preschoolers. You can compare the two in order to get an idea of how she has adapted books and activities to the targeted age level. Some songs and activities are the same. Playtime will be in addition to the 30 minutes storytime.

#### Arriving and Settling In

Play background music as they enter. Turn off music to start storytime.

Attention Getter – shake the jingle bells

#### Singing: Opening Songs

Project words to songs on screen.

Hello Song – “Welcome Song for Kids” by The Kiboomers

<https://tinyurl.com/kibwelcome> (for you to hear the words/tune)

#### Transition Song

Encourage children to sit, settle and prepare to listen to the book reading  
“Hands”

*Hands go up and hands go down!*

*I can turn myself around.*

*I can tap on my shoe!*

*I can listen, so can you!*

*I can sit, I'll show you how!*

*Storytime is starting now!*

#### Set the Stage and Book

*Mouse's First Snow* by Lauren Thompson

*So, who can guess what today's book is about? Who can guess what our theme is for today? That's right! SNOW! Today we are reading a book about snow! I hold the book up and run my finger along the title and the author's name. Today's book is called Mouse's First Snow by Laruen Thompson.*

*You can help me read this book. Mouse says “I can do that, too.” As you say this phrase point to yourself. Have the children imitate what you do, saying the sentence and pointing to themselves. Some children will do only the motion. Every time I point to you as I read this book, you can say “I can do that, too” right along with Mouse. Here we go!*

#### Early Literacy Tip--Example

*Adults, you may have noticed that this book had some words that rhyme like whoosh and swoosh, tumble and rumble, roly and poly! Rhyming books are great to develop phonological awareness. Rhyming breaks words down into smaller parts. This means that children are able to hear the smaller sounds in words, which is a skill that will help children to be able to sound out words, later when they learn to read.*



## 7. Storytime Structure

Toddlers and Twos Storytime by Cheryl Carollo continued

### Talking: Activity

Lay a big white tablecloth, sheet, or blanket on the floor and pretend it is snow. Talk about snow and let the children tell what they know about snow, or what they like to do in the snow. Some children may not be able to express what they are thinking. They can imitate you throwing a snowball.

### Finger Play

“Snowflakes, Snowflakes Falling Down” sung to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”  
Project words on screen. Demonstrate the rhyme once slowly. Then do it again all together, slowly. Repeat till most of the children n feel comfortable with the motions.

*Snowflakes, snowflakes, falling down* Wiggle fingers in the air  
*Falling, falling to the ground.* Wiggle fingers from the air to the ground  
*Can you catch them on your nose?* Wiggle fingers to touch nose  
*Will they fall and touch your toes?* Wiggle fingers to touch toes  
*Snowflakes, snowflakes, falling down* Wiggle fingers in the air  
*Falling, falling to the ground.* Wiggle fingers from the air to the ground

### Flannel Board Rhyme

Project words on screen.

Flannel board pieces: cut out three white circles from felt for a snowman. Cut out a separate carrot for the nose. Cut out a rabbit. If you prefer, print out clip art for these items onto cardstock paper, cut out the pieces, laminate them or protect them with contact paper, and back them with sandpaper or Velcro.

Do the rhyme, putting up the pieces as the words indicate. Then remove the pieces and repeat so they can join in with you. Younger children may not be able to say the whole rhyme. Just before the word “nose,” pause and point to your nose and let them join in with the word.

“Snowman”

*I built a little snowman.  
He had a carrot nose.  
Along came a bunny,  
And what do you suppose?  
That hungry little bunny,  
Looking for his lunch,  
ATE the snowman’s nose,  
NIBBLE, NIBBLE, CRUNCH!*

*The words crunch and lunch rhyme! They sound alike at the end of the word.*

### Early Literacy Tip--Example

*By doing rhymes with your child, you are supporting phonological awareness. It's fun for you and your child and it will help them when it comes time for them to sound out words when they learn to read!*

## 7. Storytime Structure

Toddlers and Twos Storytime by Cheryl Carollo continued

### Action Song

“Where Is Bear?” by the Kiboomers to the tune of “Are You Sleeping?”

*Our next song is about a bear in winter. Many bears sleep through the winter. This is called hibernation. In this song it says, Where is bear? Where is bear? We will put our hand to our forehead like we are looking for a bear. Let’s try that together. Very good! Then it says, Here I am. Here I am. So, point to yourself and stand up. Pretend to be the bear. Very good! Then it says How are you this winter? We will hold our hands out to the side. The next line is Very tired, I thank you. We can all yawn together. And lastly comes Go to sleep. Go to sleep. We can pretend to sleep. Lay cheek on hands. You can say the first rendition of each sentence, and then let the participants repeat what you say.*

*Where is bear? Where is bear?*

*Here I am! Here I am!*

*How are you this winter?*

*I am very tired.*

*Go to sleep. Go to sleep.*

Once you have done all the motions together, you can give the adults a specific role to play to get them more involved. You can have the children be the bear and the adults be the ones asking questions. The adults look around for their bear. The children say Here I am. The adults say How are you this winter? The children yawn and say I am very tired. The adults say Go to sleep as the children pretend to sleep.

### Factual Book

*Best in Snow* by April Sayre <https://tinyurl.com/bestsnow> In this video the book is shared by a naturalist who adds some information about the animals and relates some of the photographs to the children’s experience. You need not read the whole book; choose a few pages you especially enjoy or that you think the children can most relate to.

### Early Literacy Tip--Empower

*You can read rhyming books at home with your children, or sing songs with any rhyming words. You and your children can create more verses. Don't be afraid to make up your own, silly words just to make them rhyme! It's a great way to learn!*

### Playtime—Stations

Play classical music softly in background. Some studies show it calms, and improves focus and concentration.

#### Snowball Play

Pretend that cotton balls are snow. Have 2 plastic containers or baskets with cotton balls in one. Children have fun moving the cotton balls from one container to the other, pour them out, pull the cotton balls apart.

#### Bucket Toss

Make ahead “snowballs” of rolled up white socks. Have the children toss snowballs into a bucket or a bowl. Use masking tape on the floor to mark off a line a few feet away, but younger children will probably walk right up to the bucket and make a throwing motion.

## 7. Storytime Structure

Toddlers and Twos Storytime by Cheryl Carollo continued

Snow Parachute Play – Put the snowballs (cotton balls, balled up socks or fake snowballs) in the middle of the parachute. Experiment with tossing them while moving the parachute up and down.

### Closing Song

Encourage children to work as a team to help each other clean up.

“Clean Up Song” by The Singing Walrus <https://tinyurl.com/songcleanup> so you can hear the tune.

The song is long. You may decide to just repeat the chorus until things are cleaned up.

Chorus

*Every time it's time to go*

*There is one thing you should know*

*It's time to clean up!*

*Time to tidy up!*

Books on display for checkout as they leave:

- *Snowy, Blowy Winter* by Bob Raczka
- *Best in Snow* by April Pulley Sayre
- *Sneezy the Snowman* by Maureen Wright
- *The Little Snow Plow* by Lora Koehler
- *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Keats

## 7. Storytime Structure

**Preschoolers (3 – 5 year-olds)** About 30 minutes; playtime may be in addition  
Preschoolers storytimes reflect the fact that preschoolers are much more capable than when they were younger. Storytimes for them contain not only more books, but more in-depth talk and questions as well. Since their attention spans are longer, we can use longer and more complex stories, although not as complex as they can take in one-on-one.

Based on Youth Services Manual Multnomah County (OR) Public Library

1. **Arriving and Settling In** (See explanation in Baby Storytime template)
2. **Storytime Introduction** (Welcome, Early Literacy Tip--Explain) (See explanation in Baby Storytime template)
3. **Opening Song or Rhyme** (same each time)  
Children this age are moving their own bodies and can do finger movements as well. Consider songs that use the child's name, that have movement of body parts, "hello songs," songs that help to settle down
4. **Set the Stage:** Today we'll be talking about . . . (See explanation in Baby Storytime template)
5. **Book** (usually the longest of those selected)
6. **Stretch based on Book in #5**, a movement activity that extends the book (See explanation in Toddler/Twos Storytime template)
7. **Action Stretch Options:**
  - Rhyme or song involving standing up and moving.
  - Large movement activity (may include shakers or other instruments)Repeat until children and adults are comfortable. The action rhyme/song may be a repeat from a storytime done in the previous storytime for this age level. It is good to have some repetition from storytime to storytime not only to help children and adults learn the rhyme and to help them feel comfortable.
8. **Factual/Non-Fiction Book** (See explanation in Toddler/Twos Storytime template)
9. **Fingerplay or Action Rhyme**
10. **Book or Alternative Format** (flannel board, flipcards, puppet, big book, etc.)
11. **Children Retell Story with flannel board and/or stretch** based on Book in #10, a movement activity that extends the book
12. **Guided Activity Time** such as parachute, scarves, process art, experiment  
It is not sufficient to just DO an activity. Explain to the adults and model for them ways to make the activity more language-rich.
13. **Closing Song** (same each time) (See explanation in Baby Storytime template)
14. **Closing to Adults** (See explanation in Baby Storytime template)
15. **Early Literacy Tip—Empower** (See explanation in Baby Storytime template)
16. **Playtime with toys Process Art and Activities** (optional)  
Free time is one of the best times for you to build relationships with the children and adults, to get feedback on your storytime, to listen to their stories about their children, and learn about their interests. Depending on your goals, this playtime may be open-ended, child led play, with adults following their children's lead, or you may focus the use of toys in ways

## 7. Storytime Structure

that specifically support early literacy. This may change from storytime to storytime. Either way, playtime is a great opportunity to share with adults ways they can support early literacy through play.

Process arts and crafts or activities are preferred. Some storytime providers offer materials and instructions for making a specific craft or product. Parents often find this quite satisfying. However, it is not necessarily age-appropriate. Young children learn by exploring materials and that the process of doing so engages their minds and their physical development at their own levels of abilities. We can help parents understand how to support children's learning through play. See Storytime Elements page 125.

Within Items #3 - #12, you would have an Example Early Literacy Tip.

You may already be talking with parents and caregivers about information on child development as part of your storytimes. That information may not be directly related to early literacy, but does support child development. It also helps the adults understand their children. Keep that information in! The early literacy information that you explain to the adults is not meant to take the place of other important information for the adults, but rather to add to it.

On the following pages, you will see some sample preschool storytime plans from your colleagues. You can see they don't stick to this template, using it only as a guide.

*Italics* indicates what the storytime provider is saying.

## 7. Storytime Structure

### Preschool Storytime—Snow Cheryl Carollo, Currituck County

This preschool storytime plan has the same snow theme as the one for in the Toddler and Twos section. However, it is more challenging: there are three books instead of two, children engage in talk at a higher level, they add their own rhyming words to support phonological awareness, and their abilities with activities are at a higher level of coordination and understanding. Playtime is in addition to the 30 minute storytime.

#### Arriving and Settling In

Play background music as they enter. Turn off music to start the storytime.

Attention Getter – shake the jingle bells

Nametags – Ellison die snowflake shapes, hole punch, yarn – have the blank nametags set out and ready for them to write their name and wear.

Writing—Sign-In Sheet: Have children try to write their names; their adult can help. They can scribble, draw or try to write their name. You may like to keep the sheets from each storytime session, so parents can compare from the first storytime to the last storytime.

#### Singing—Opening Songs

Project words to songs on screen.

Hello Song – “Welcome Song for Kids” by The Kiboomers

<https://tinyurl.com/kibwelcome> (for you to hear the words/tune)

Phonics Song – “Animal Alphabet Move and Groove” by Jack Hartmann

To hear the words and tune for yourself, start it at about 42 seconds in where he starts the alphabet.

<https://tinyurl.com/songalphmove>

#### Transition Song

Encourages children to sit, settle and prepare to listen to the book reading  
“Hands”

*Hands go up, hands go down!*

*I can turn myself around!*

*I can stand up on one shoe,*

*I can listen, so can you!*

*I can sit, I'll show you how.*

*Storytime is starting now!*

#### Set the Stage and Book

*Sneezy the Snowman* by Maureen Wright

*So, who can guess what today's book is about? Who can guess what our theme is for today? That's right! SNOW! Today we are reading a book about snow! Hold the book up running my finger along the title and the author's name. Today's book is called Sneezy the Snowman by Maureen Wright.*

*You can help me read this book. The snowman says “Make me brand new!” Have the children repeat the sentence till they feel comfortable saying it. Every time I point to you as I read this book, you can say “Make me brand new!” right along with snowman. Here we go!*

## 7. Storytime Structure

Cheryl Carollo Preschool Storytime continued

Read the book. *Great job. Thank you for helping me read this book.*

*This book has several rhyming words, words that sound the same at the end of the word, like not, hot and lot. They all have the /ot/ sounds at the end. What is another word that rhymes with hot?*

Cot, dot, got, not, pot, rot are some examples. They may think of nonsense words as well, like zot!

### Early Literacy Tip--Example

*Adults, rhyming makes a book fun to listen to. Here we go! Rhyming is an important part of the skill called phonological awareness. Being able to break down words into smaller sounds and identify similar sounds in different words is a skill will help them when they sound out words to learn to read.*

### Talking: Activity Stretch

Lay a big white tablecloth, sheet, or blanket on the floor and pretend it is snow. Talk about snow and let the children tell what they know about snow, or what they like to do in the snow. Let them act out what they like to do such as throwing a snowball or making angels in the snow.

### Finger Play

“Snowflakes, Snowflakes Falling Down” sung to the tune of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”

Project words on screen. Demonstrate the rhyme once slowly. Then do it again all together. Repeat until most of the children feel comfortable with the motions. Do it more quickly if you think they would like the challenge.

*Snowflakes, snowflakes, falling down* Wiggle fingers in the air

*Falling, falling to the ground.* Wiggle fingers from the air to the ground

*Can you catch them on your nose?* Wiggle fingers to touch nose

*Will they fall and touch your toes?* Wiggle fingers to touch toes

*Snowflakes, snowflakes, falling down* Wiggle fingers in the air

*Falling, falling to the ground.* Wiggle fingers from the air to the ground

### Book

*The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats <https://tinyurl.com/bksnowyday> OR

*The Mitten* by Jan Brett <https://tinyurl.com/bkmitten>

*Snowy Day* is a simpler, shorter book than *The Mitten*.

### Flannel Board Rhyme

Project words on screen.

Flannel board pieces: cut out three white circles from felt for a snowman. Cut out a separate carrot for the nose. Cut out a rabbit. If you prefer, print out clip art for these items onto cardstock paper, cut out the pieces, laminate them or protect them with contact paper, and back them with sandpaper or Velcro.

Do the rhyme, putting up the pieces as the words indicate. Then remove the pieces and repeat so they can join in with you.

## 7. Storytime Structure

Cheryl Carollo Preschool Storytime continued

“Snowman”

*I built a little snowman.  
He had a carrot nose.  
Along came a bunny,  
And what do you suppose?  
That hungry little bunny,  
Looking for his lunch,  
ATE the snowman’s nose,  
NIBBLE, NIBBLE, CRUNCH!*

*The words crunch and lunch rhyme! They sound alike at the end of the word. What are some other words that rhyme with lunch? They can think of ones like bunch, hunch, and nonsense words like tunch, gunch, funch. Great! Lots of nonsense words!*

### Early Literacy Tip--Example

*Rhyming is one of the things that children learn that lets them hear that words are made of smaller parts. By doing rhymes together and playing rhyming games, you are supporting phonological awareness. It's fun for you and your children and it will help them when it comes time for them to sound out words when they learn to read!*

### Action Song

“Winter Hokey Pokey” by Kiboomers tune to “Hokey Pokey” <https://tinyurl.com/jbraryhp>

Have participants pretend to get dressed for winter: put on mittens, boots, a winter hat, and a snowsuit. You can pretend to zip up the snowsuit. Then have everyone get in a circle, as best they can.

*You put your right mitten in  
You put your right mitten out  
You put your right mitten in  
And shake it all about  
You do the winter pokey and turn yourself about. Turn around  
That’s what it’s all about. Three claps*

Repeat with left mitten, right boot, left boot, snow hat (head), snowsuit (whole self jumps in)

### Factual Book

*Best in Snow* by April Sayre <https://tinyurl.com/bestsnow> In this video, the book is shared by a naturalist who adds some information about the animals and relates some of the photographs to the children’s experience. You need not read the whole book; choose a few pages you especially enjoy or that you think the children can most relate to. Preschoolers will share more information than toddlers and you can add information on the animals in winter to what the children share. OR *Animals in Winter* by Martha Rustad

### Early Literacy Tip--Empower

*Today I pointed out ways we can have fun with rhyming. You can read rhyming books at home with your children, or sing songs with any rhyming words. Work with your child to create more verses. Don't be afraid to make up your own, silly words just to make them rhyme! It's a great way to learn!*



## 7. Storytime Structure

Cheryl Carollo Preschool Storytime continued

**Playtime** Choose any of these:

Play kids classical music softly in background Some studies show it calms and improves focus and concentration.

**Bucket Toss**

Make ahead “snowballs” of rolled up white socks. Have the children toss snowballs into a bucket or bowl. Use masking tape on the floor to mark off a line a few feet away, but younger children will probably walk right up to the bucket and make a throwing motion.

**Snow Parachute Play** – Put the snowballs (cotton balls, balled up socks, or fake snowballs) in the middle of the parachute. Experiment with tossing them while moving the parachute up and down.

**Draw and Tell**—Have crayons and blank paper for children to draw what they think about when they think of snow or winter. Ask them to tell you and their parent/caregiver about what they drew. Follow the child’s lead and wait several seconds for them to respond to you. Ask open-ended questions or comments, like “Tell me about what you drew,” or “What’s going on here?”

### **Closing Song**

Encourage children to work as a team to help each other clean up.

“Clean Up Song” by The Singing Walrus <https://tinyurl.com/songcleanup> (for you to hear the tune)

You may just repeat the chorus until things are cleaned up.

Chorus

*Every time it's time to go*

*There is one thing you should know*

*It's time to clean up!*

*Time to tidy up!*

## Preschool Storytime--Bears

Taneshia L. Jernigan, Pasquotank County Library

### Storytime Introduction

*Good Morning, Welcome to Storytime at the Pasquotank County Library. My name is Ms. Taneshia. We are going to have so much fun today, a special welcome to all my “new friends” who are visiting us today and Super Good Morning to all of my “Super Supportive Weekly Friends.”*

### Opening Songs

I open my Storytime with a song just to adjust the mood and so that the children know that storytime is a fun thing.

“Let’s Get Started” by Mr. Al on CD *Mr. Al a Carte* <https://tinyurl.com/algetstarted> for tune I start by clapping my hands to the beat of the song. Then follow the directives in the song.

*Reach high* Arm extended overhead wiggling fingers—Spirit fingers

*Reach low* Bend down and touch toes

*Twist* Twisting movement with hips

We repeat what he says as loudly as we can to liven the group up.

“Wheels on the Bus”

This song keeps up the momentum of the “Let’s Get Started” arm movements in a rolling motion. Imitate how rolling bus wheels would look, up and down arms over head then down to your toes.

*The wheels on the bus go round and round* Roll arms as described above

*Round and round, round and round*

*The wheels on the bus go round and round*

*All 'round the town.*

*The driver on the bus says*

*Move on back* Thumb of fist from front to back, head turning side to side

*Move on back; move on back*

*The driver on the bus says Move on back*

*All 'round the town.*

*The money on the bus goes cling, cling, cling* Move fingers like dropping coins into a change machine

*Cling, cling, cling, cling, cling, cling*

*The money on the bus goes cling, cling, cling*

*All 'round the town.*

*The baby on the bus goes whaa whaa whaa* Make fists and twist in front of eyes

*Whaa whaa whaa, whaa whaa whaa*

*The baby on the bus goes whaa whaa whaa*

*All 'round the town.*

*The parents on the bus go shh, shh, shh* Pointer finger in front of lips

*Shh, shh, shh, shh, shh, shh*

*The parents on the bus go shh, shh, shh*

*All 'round the town.*

## 7. Storytime Structure

Taneshia Jernigan Preschool Storytime continued

### Set the Stage

*Today I am going to read to you two stories about bears. What kind of sound does a bear make? What do you know about bears?*

Wait for the responses to the questions. You may be surprised at how much the children know!

### Books

*Mad, Mad Bear* by Kimberly Gee

*Grizzly Bears* by Caroline Greenland or *Bears* by Emma Helbrough

Introduce both books so that participants can see what is coming next. Ask questions about books by just looking at the covers.

*What is on the cover? What color is the bear? What do you think the books will be about?*

*Mad, Mad Bear* by Kimberly Gee

*This book is about an angry bear. What do you do when you're angry? What makes you angry?*

Throughout the book ask questions, making sure that the participants join in. The amount and depth of questions are based on the particular book. Some books are more suited for this type of questioning than others. I emphasize at least one of the early literacy concepts.

*Why would the bear feel like this? Do you ever feel the way bear does?*

### Early Literacy Tip—Example

*Adults, relating what is happening in the book to the children's own feelings helps them understand the story and the characters. Asking open-ended questions is one of the techniques of dialogic reading, having a conversation around the book! This way of sharing a book helps to keep them engaged and increases their understanding.*

### Stretch

While everyone is still seated wiggle our hands and toes.

### Factual Book

*Grizzly Bears* by Caroline Greenland OR *Bears* by Emma Helbrough

While fictional storybooks are a natural in storytimes, it is important to introduce nonfiction titles and factual information. Factual books build on children's curiosity and they often relate to real-life animals. Compare and contrast both books. Nonfiction titles are often long. Focus on the key points and facts for your particular age group. You don't need to read the whole book.

### Book Follow-Up

Ask questions about both books: what they thought about each book. Include the parents and caregivers in the discussion as well.

## 7. Storytime Structure

Taneshia Jernigan Preschool Storytime continued

### Action Song

“Sleepy Bear Song” sung to the tune of “Are You Sleeping?” You can do this as a call and response song, where you say a line and then the participants repeat what you say. This is the tune though the words are different: <https://tinyurl.com/jbrarysleeping>

*Bears are sleeping.* Bring hands to side of face in sleeping motion

*Bears are sleeping.*

*In their lairs,*

*In their lairs*

*Soon it will be springtime.*

*Soon it will be springtime.*

*Wake up, Bear!* Stretch and pretend to wake up

*Wake up, Bear!*

Repeat

**Book** Optional, if the group is able to sit for another book

*Bear Snores On* by Karma Wilson

Practice the repeated phrase “But the bear snores on,” with a snoring sound, and have the children repeat it each time it is repeated in the book.

### Guided Activity: Ball time

Play song “Roly Poly” on CD *Ball Activity Fun* by Jill and Michael Gallina

Bring all storytime participants to the center of the room have them hold hands and make a circle.

Then they sit where they were standing. I bring out an oversized exercise ball. The song tells them to roll the ball and that is exactly what they do, we do this twice to ensure everyone gets a turn. This activity helps them take turns.

### Activity Time

Bear puppets. Give each adult and each child a half-sheet of blank paper. Slightly thicker paper, cardstock weight works well. Have each participant draw a bear. They may think about a real bear or they may draw one showing a feeling, whatever they like. Give each participant a craft stick to tape to the back of the drawing to make it into a puppet. Have the children and adults talk together about what they drew. They can have their bears have conversations together.

### Early Literacy Tip--Empower

*Don't be afraid of nonfiction titles. Focus on the key points that your children may be interested in. The more children know about the world the easier it will be for them to understand what they will read.*

*Remember, no book has to be read word-for-word, verbatim. Feel free to ad-lib, use hand gestures, and different tones of voice to reflect the mood of the stories. For example, for the angry bear, use a gruff angry voice. By making storytime fun, children will learn that reading can be fun.*

**Preschool Storytime—Frogs**  
Amber Jarvis, Moyock Public Library

Playtime will be in addition to the 30 minutes storytime.

**Storytime Introduction**

*Hello, my name is Ms. Amber. I am so glad to see you here today at our preschool storytime. I encourage you all to participate and to do the rhymes and songs with your children. You know your children best, so if they are not in the mood, don't force them, but do encourage them. Sometimes when they see you joining in, they will, too. I expect a fair amount of chaos during storytime, but if your child becomes disruptive, please take him or her out and join us again when your child has settled down. I would appreciate it if you would turn off your cell phones so you can all participate with your children.*

**Opening songs**

“If You’re Happy”

*If you're happy and you know it shout hello,  
Hello!*

*If you're happy and you know it shout hello,  
Hello!*

*If you're happy and you know it,  
Then your face will surely show it. (Move two pointer fingers to show upcurved smile)*

*If you're happy and you know it should hello,  
Hello!*

“Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes”

Point to each body part, starting very slowly and increasing tempo according to children’s abilities.

*Head, shoulders, knees, and toes,*

*Knees and toes, knees, and toes,*

*Head, shoulders, knees, and toes,*

*Eyes, ears, mouth, and nose.*

*Head, shoulders, knees, and toes,*

*Knees and toes.*

**Early Literacy Tip—Explain**

*Children are curious about their world. There is so much to know! You help them learn when you share with them what you know and when you help them find new information by reading books that include information about a scientific concept, like how plants grow or how a tadpole becomes a frog. All their knowledge will help them understand what they read when they later learn to read in school.*

## 7. Storytime Structure

Amber Jarvis Preschool Storytime continued

### Set the Stage

*Today we are talking about the letter “F.” What sound does the F represent? The words fun and future, force, furious, and fruit all start with the letter F. Do any of you have a name that starts with the letter F? The word “frog” also starts with an F, and we are going to have stories and books about frogs today.*

Note: If you ask them what words start with F, they may say phone or photo. It is better to tell them the words because they don’t know how to spell many words yet. They would likely know how to spell their own names though.

### Book

*Jump, Frog, Jump* by Robert Kalan

*Our first book is about a frog. It’s called Jump, Frog, Jump and it is written by Robert Kalan.*

- a. For the repeated phrase, “Jump, frog, jump,” have kids shout, “jump” and parents shout, “frog.”
- b. Ask questions like, “What do you think will happen next?”

### Early Literacy Tip—Example

*When you ask questions like, “What do you think will happen?” you help them learn how to make predictions, which is an important part of scientific investigation. By listening to what they say, you can build their background knowledge by adding more information or ideas as you talk together. All of this information will help them understand what they read.*

### Action Song

“Bop Until You Drop” by Kids in Action

*Come on everybody,  
Move and stop,  
We’re gonna play a game called bop until you drop!  
Bounce, come on and bounce, [Bounce up and down]  
Bounce with every ounce,  
Bounce, come on and bounce,  
Jumping and jiving, moving and grooving,*

*Chorus: Bop until you drop, All the kids will drop low to the ground at this point  
SSSSHHHHHHHHHHH Place finger on mouth to ssshhh  
Time to stand up.... Slowly stand up and wiggle fingers*

*Float, now float, Move hands slowly up and down  
Like a feather in the wind,  
Float,  
Go high, then low,  
Go with the flow,*

Repeat chorus

## 7. Storytime Structure

Amber Jarvis Preschool Storytime continued

*Jiggle, come on and jiggle, (Jiggle and wiggle here)*

*Jiggle, you start to wiggle, wiggle, wiggle,*

*Jiggle until you giggle,*

*Bumping and a bopping*

*Moving and a grooving*

*Bop until you drop*

*SSSSSHHHHHHHHHHH*

*Time to stand up...*

*Slow motion, move in slow motion,*

*Under the ocean,*

*Move in slow motion*

*Just like outer space,*

*A slow and steady pace,*

Repeat chorus

*Spin, come on and spin!*

*Yeah, come on everybody spin!*

*Go round and round,*

*Spin!*

*Spin round and round and round and round,*

Repeat chorus

*...and that's the end.*

### Book

*Wide-Mouthed Frog: A Pop-Up Book* by Keith Faulkner

Practice making a wide mouth and a small mouth like a frog. Have the children join in at the appropriate times.

### Action song

“Five Green and Speckled Frogs” <https://tinyurl.com/songspecfrogs> for tune

Hold up five fingers and count down to none.

*Five green and speckled frogs, sitting on a hollow log*

*Eating some most delicious bugs—yum-yum*

*One fell into the pool, where it was nice and cool*

*Now there are four green, speckled frogs—glub, glub.*

### Factual Book

*A Frog's Life Cycle* by Mary Dunn

### Early Literacy Tip—Empower

*Young children can learn how to think mathematically. It occurs to many of us to say counting words—such as one, two, three—when we are walking up the stairs or handing something out. This is one kind of sequencing. You can talk with your children about sequencing when you share the order you will run errands or while you are cooking, things you do throughout the day. These thinking skills help them understand the world and make it easier to later understand what they will read.*

## 7. Storytime Structure

Amber Jarvis Preschool Storytime continued

### Activity Time

Make your own Life Cycle Sequencing Cards

Handout four (or more if they want them) blank cards (6" x 8" are a good size) to each child and to each adult. Have them make their own sequencing cards. They can decide what they want to sequence. It might be the life cycle of a frog; it might be the animals in Jump, Frog, Jump so that they can retell the story, or they may take any sequence in their day such as their bedtime routine. Have them draw a picture on each card. After they have drawn each picture, encourage the children to tell their parent or caregiver about what they drew. Then have the adult and child mix up the cards and put them in order. They are sequencing!

### Closing Song

“Good bye Song” to the tune of “If You’re Happy and You Know It”

*It's the end of storytime, so give a sigh*

*It's the end of storytime, so give a sigh*

*It's the end of storytime,*

*So it's time to wave good-bye.*

*It's the end of storytime,*

*So wave good-bye.*



# F is for Frog

## At Home:

Young children can learn how to think mathematically. It occurs to many of us to say counting words—such as one, two, three—when we are walking up the stairs or handing something out. This is a start, but children are also able to understand more complex concepts like sequencing, putting things in order. Today they used the idea of sequencing when they counted down the frogs from 5 to none, and when they predicted what would happen next in the story of *Jump, Frog, Jump*. When we talked about the sequence from egg to tadpole to froglet to frog, they learned about a sequence related to the life sciences. You can talk with your children about the order you will run errands or while you are cooking, throughout the day. These thinking skills help them understand the world, making it easier to later understand what they read.

## If you like what we read today....

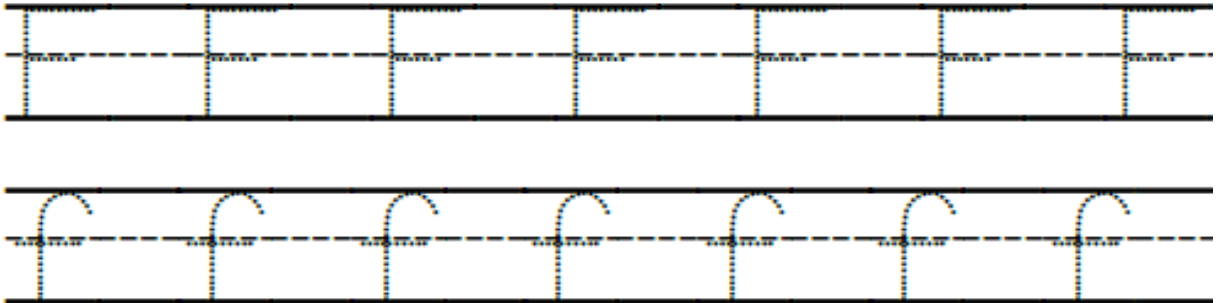
*Jump, Frog, Jump!* by Robert Kalan

*A Frog's Life Cycle* by Mary Dunn

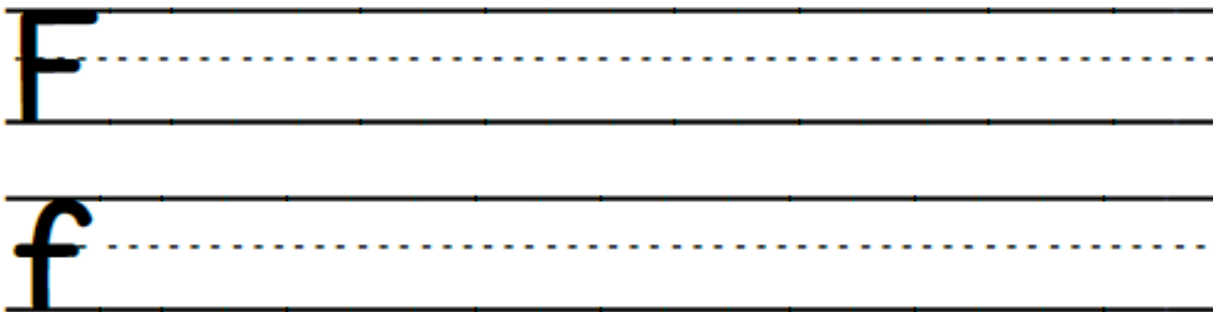
## Try...

*Froggy Gets Dressed* by Jack London

## I can trace the letter Ff.



## I can write the letter Ff.



## 8. More Storytimes

You have seen several storytime examples.

Let's look now at some sample storytimes for each age level.

In Chapter 11 on Storytime Elements we will go over each storytime element—books, rhymes, songs, fingerplays, flannel boards, puppets, and more. It will help you understand the thinking that went into the planning of these storytimes, both the choices of materials and the ways they share them.

To get more ideas for your storytimes, look through the chapters in these books that accompany the *Manual*.

### **Baby Storytimes:**

*Baby Rhyming Time*: Chapter 10 includes Programs for Newborn to 12 Months

### **Toddler Storytimes**

*Baby Rhyming Time*: Chapter 10 includes Programs for 12 to 24 Months

### **Baby and Toddler Storytimes**

*Mother Goose on the Loose Updated*: Part III

*Storytimes for Everyone*: Chapter 7 Sample Storytimes for Infants and Toddlers

### **Toddlers and Two's Storytimes**

*Storytimes for Everyone*: Chapter 8 Sample Storytimes for Two- and Three-Year-Olds

### **Preschool Storytimes**

*Storytimes for Everyone*: Chapter 8 Sample Storytimes for Two- and Three-Year-Olds

*Storytimes for Everyone*: Chapter 9 Sample Storytimes for Preschoolers

### **Mixed-Age Storytimes (newborn to age five)**

*STEP into Storytimes*: Chapter 10 Traditional Mixed Age Storytimes

*STEP into Storytimes*: Chapter 11 Sequential Mixed Age Storytimes

#### **More Places to Look**

Los Angeles Public Library Episode 8 for Toddlers

<https://tinyurl.com/laplst8>

New York Public Library Raising the Bar Storytime for Toddlers

<https://tinyurl.com/nypltoddlerst>

## 8. More Storytimes

### Online Storytime Resources

If you have a week where you're in a pinch, pressed for time, or just experiencing a creative block, it's a good idea to talk with your colleagues and to look into one of the many blogs with storytime ideas. As you prepare, you will make these books and activities your own, giving them your personal touch. Sometimes you may not have someone to bounce ideas off of. This is a great way to spark your creativity. We can benefit from the many ideas that our colleagues share.

**Storytime Share** [www.earlylit.net/read-storytime-share/](http://www.earlylit.net/read-storytime-share/)

Offers ideas regarding storytime books, songs, etc. and each one includes an early literacy tip, articulating early literacy connections to adults.

**Storytime Katie** <https://storytimekatie.com/>

Storytime blog by a children's librarian who documents all her storytimes with many themes—books, stories, flannel boards, puppets, crafts, and activities. Assesses how the storytime went, what she would do differently. Provides templates and ideas on how to use props and activities.

**Flannel Friday** <http://flannelfridaystorytime.blogspot.com/>

Many different flannel boards all sorted by themes.

**Jbrary** <https://jbrary.com>

Blog of two storytiming librarians in Canada, Lindsey Krabbenhoft and Dana Horrocks. A dynamic collection of YouTube songs, books, fingerplays, and more. Especially inspiring because of the energy and playfulness; they make everything seem doable!

**Pinterest boards** on Storytimes,

Especially those that incorporate crafts, book suggestions based on specific themes.

**Mels' Desk** <http://melissa.depperfamily.net/blog/>

Melissa Depper of Mel's Desk shares ideas and her perspectives on storytimes, storytime activities, early literacy, parent engagement, and staff training.

**Storytime Resources** <http://www.earlylit.net/storytime-resources/>

List of some storytime resources including some videos of fingerplays and words to fingerplays.

**Colorado Libraries for Early Literacy** [www.clel.org/storytime-skill-builders](http://www.clel.org/storytime-skill-builders)

Storytime Skill Builders offers videos and handouts with tips on topics such as dialogic reading, adult participation, bilingual storytimes, group management.

**Storytime Underground** [www.facebook.com/groups/storytimeunderground/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/storytimeunderground/) and <https://tinyurl.com/stundergr>

Different perspectives and ideas for practical situations in storytimes.

**Never Shushed** <https://nevershushed.com/>

Claudia Hanes, Youth Services Librarian at Homer (AK) Public Library, offers toddler and preschool storytime plans and ideas as well as blogs on media mentorship and STEAM topics.

**DLTK Kids** [www.dltk-kids.com](http://www.dltk-kids.com)

Rhymes, art activities, pre-made flannel/magnet boards, and fingerplays.

## 8. More Storytimes

**Beyond the Book** <http://btbstorytimes.blogspot.com/>

Steven, a children's librarian's blog that starts with the book and offers ideas for ways to share the book, using puppets props and more.

**Abby the Librarian blog** <http://www.abbythelibrarian.com/>

Provides storytime outlines for toddlers to school-age, discussing the successful and not so successful pieces her storytimes.

**Artful Parent** <http://artfulparent.com>

Kids engaging in art play reinforces a storytime goal of interacting with children in ways that support early literacy.

**PART II**

**THE WHY:**

**DIGGING DEEPER**

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

Now that you have had a chance to get a sense of storytimes and look at some examples, we can go into more depth on the topic of early literacy. Early literacy and pre-reading skills have been mentioned in Part I. Here you will understand early literacy as an entity which will give you a stronger foundation so that you can better support early literacy in your storytimes. Storytimes are one way to help children enter school with the skills they need to be ready to learn to read. We support these skills in enjoyable ways. We also share early literacy information with the parents and caregivers so that they can continue to support their children's early literacy skills in playful ways at home.

We strengthen our storytimes when we are able to understand connections between the activities we are doing and helping children later learn to read, developing their early literacy skills. We are also able to share these connections with parents and caregivers in our storytimes and in the community. Reaching parents and caregivers with early literacy information is one of our storytime goals.

In a study done in Washington State, the VIEWS2 study, it was found that when storytime providers are interactive with children, are intentional around early literacy, and assess storytimes, then children show increased early literacy behaviors.

Wait a minute!

### **First of all, what IS early literacy?**

Early literacy is what children know about reading and writing before they can actually read or write. It encompasses language, both verbal and non-verbal, conversation, stories, oral and written, books, and print.

For example, children know how to turn the pages in a book before they can read. They know the names of the letters before they can read. They know the meanings of many words long before they can read those words. All of these (and more, as you will see) are part of early literacy.

### **Why the parents/caregivers?**

So, you can see why we would want to support early literacy and later reading in our storytimes.

But why do we need to make sure to pass on this information to the adults?

We, in the library, have the children for a very short amount of time. They spend most of their time with their parents and caregivers. So, if they come to storytime and are exposed to books and fun language activities and then go home to an environment that is not language-rich, they are at a disadvantage when it comes time to learn to read. By sharing the importance of these activities with the adults, and having them participate, we help them continue these activities with their children at home.

The information we have here on early literacy is based on the American Library Association's initiative called Every Child Ready to Read®, (ECRR) developed by two of their divisions—Public Library Association and Association for Library Service to Children. *The Every Child Ready to Read® Manual* has Powerpoint presentations and talking points for presenting workshops on early

### **More Places to Look**

For further information on the VIEWS2 study, <https://views2.weebly.com/>

Supercharged Storytimes Self-Paced Course includes Presentation on VIEWS2 <https://tinyurl.com/wjscstint>

*Mother Goose on the Loose Updated*  
Chapter 1: Early Literacy, School Readiness, and Mother Goose on the Loose

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

literacy in your community. The early literacy structure used in these trainings is what we are applying to our storytimes. The *ECRR Manual* is available at Currituck and Pasquotank Libraries. In order to understand early literacy, we look at the five practices which are talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing. These are activities that we do in storytimes and that parents and caregivers do with their children every day.

We also look at the early literacy skills or components that help us support early literacy through the practices. These components are phonological awareness, print awareness, letter knowledge, vocabulary, and background knowledge.

Please read *Storytimes for Everyone* which is part of your Storytime Manual Kit

- Chapter 1 Early Literacy Research
- Chapter 2 Early Literacy and Your Storytimes

Oral language is the basis of all later literacy. It includes listening skills, speaking skills, and communication skills.

From this grows the early literacy components which are

- Phonological awareness: the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words
- Print awareness/concepts: knowing print has meaning, how to handle a book, direction of print
- Letter knowledge: knowing that the same letter can look different, that letters have names and represent sounds
- Vocabulary: recognizing words, knowing the meanings of words—objects, actions, descriptors, concepts, feelings, and ideas.
- Background knowledge: what the child knows about the world before entering school. Because this is such a large area, we divide it into three parts: conceptual thinking, content knowledge, and book and story knowledge.

Read “Early Literacy and You” which gives you an overview of early literacy. It begins on page 80.

You may also download Early Literacy and You <https://tinyurl.com/earlylityou>

For a summary of strategies or activities you can do to support early literacy in your storytimes, please see Summary of Early Literacy Components <https://tinyurl.com/sumelc>

### **Importance of print motivation: enjoyment around books and reading**

The overriding aspect of early literacy that pervades all that we do is print motivation, a child’s interest in and enjoyment of books and reading. Throughout a child’s development, we can demonstrate and articulate activities that both we and parents and caregivers can do to support an enjoyment of books and reading. For all ages, parents can let the child choose the book they want to read to them.

Babies are likely to chew on books. We say, “Ohhh, that book looks so delicious. Let’s open it up and read it.” When a baby bats at a book or hits a book, we praise the baby for trying to turn the pages. We use the “parentese” voice, that high pitched voice with elongated vowels that helps babies nine months and younger pay more attention to what we say. We use board books with photos of babies and faces, books with flaps that make the book feel like a peek-a-boo game.

What does parentese sound like? <https://tinyurl.com/bbcparentese>

### **More Places to Look**

WebJunction Supercharged Storytimes Self-Paced Course on Oral language

<https://tinyurl.com/wjscstorallang>

WebJunction Presentation: Encouraging Early Literacy <https://tinyurl.com/wjence1>

ALSC blog on 30 million word gap:

<https://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/2015/11/is-the-30-million-word-gap-a-stat-we-should-be-using/>

## **9. Early Literacy and Intentionality**

Toddlers and Twos have short attention spans but also have individual interests. They like to look at photos of babies and faces, pictures that include things that are in their environment and experience, pictures that are clear and easy to distinguish. They like the rhythm and rhyme of language. Reading even part of a book is fine, no need to push to finish it all in one sitting. You may skip pages or not read all of the text on a page. You can keep reading even as a child may be wandering around. They often need to move to listen.

Preschoolers are showing more independence and can understand longer, more complex stories. They still like books with rhyme and rhythm, ones where they can participate. They also enjoy learning more about the world around them so using factual books is a big draw. Because preschoolers are able to express themselves and have gathered a good bit of knowledge about the world, a good way to engage them is to encourage them to tell you their thoughts about the story or topic and to ask questions that may concern them.



## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### Early Literacy and You An Overview of Early Literacy

#### What is early literacy?

**Early literacy** is what children know about communication, language, verbal and non-verbal, reading and writing before they can actually read and write. It encompasses all of a child's experiences with conversation, stories, oral and written, books, and print.

Early literacy is NOT the teaching of reading. It is laying a strong foundation so that when children are taught to read, they are ready.

#### Why does early literacy matter?

Over one-third of our children enter school without the skills ready to learn to read. Children who enter school without the skills ready to learn to read find learning to read harder and start at a disadvantage. There are many things parents, educators, library staff, and others who work with children can do to support our children's readiness to read.

#### The Reading Process

Before we look at early literacy it helps to understand what goes into reading, when children become readers in school.

**Learning to read** includes three major skill areas: decoding, comprehension, and fluency.

To be good readers by grade three, children are expected to be able to decode, comprehend, and read with fluency.

- Decoding is being able to recognize the words from the text. Children recognize some words by sight. Other words they sound out to figure out what the words are.
- Comprehension is understanding what the words mean. Children may be able to sound out words but cannot necessarily understand the meaning of the words. They must understand the meaning of individual words as well as the whole idea.
- Fluency is the ability to read text accurately, quickly, and with expression. It builds on both decoding and comprehension.

#### Getting Ready for Reading—Early Literacy Overview

Researchers have noted early literacy skills that support both these aspects of reading. If children come to school with a solid background in these skills, it will be easier for them to learn to read. Researchers choose to divide the aspects of early literacy in different ways, sometimes using different terms. The basic information is the same.

The early literacy components:

- Oral language—listening, speaking, communication skills
- Phonological Awareness—the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words
- Print Awareness/Conventions of Print—the knowledge that print has meaning, environmental print, how to handle a book, direction of text, title/author/illustrator.
- Letter Knowledge—knowing that the same letter can look different, that letters have names and represent sounds
- Vocabulary—knowing the meanings of words
- Background Knowledge—prior knowledge, what a child knows when entering school

The image of the tree reflects aspects of early literacy, the reading process, and the adult's role in developing early literacy in children.



## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

**Oral language** is the foundation for all later language. It is the roots of the tree.

Oral language includes speaking, listening, and communication skills. The root of language also includes non-verbal language which includes body language, facial expressions, and gestures. All of these are ways that we communicate with each other. Even infants are learning to communicate through all of these techniques.

Children learn to read our facial expressions. By four months they recognize the difference between a smile and a frown. Young children watch our gestures, as we point to things or use hand motions and other movements to help explain what we say. As they get older, they learn to follow directions, to ask and respond to questions, and to tell stories and tell us what they know.

Because oral language suffuses all of the rest of the areas of early literacy, it is not a separate early literacy component. It is the base for the early literacy components which are explained below.

**Early Literacy Components** are the skill areas that researchers have noted will help children to read.

### **Phonological Awareness:**

Phonological awareness is the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words. It includes hearing environmental sounds (doorbell, car honking, animal sounds), hearing, recognizing, and making rhymes, and hearing, recognizing and making beginning sounds, along with hearing syllables in words. Helping children hear sounds and the smaller sounds in words will later help them to sound out words when they learn to read.

### **Print Awareness/Concepts:**

Print awareness is understanding that print has meaning, that the printed word represents the words we speak. Children may start out by recognizing signs or logos they see, like the McDonald's arches. They learn how to handle a book—which is the front, the back, upside down, and the direction that we read the print, from left to right and top to bottom in English. Preschoolers will also learn to identify the author, title, and illustrator and what the author and illustrators of books do.

### **Letter Knowledge**

Letter knowledge is knowing that the same letter can look different, that letters have names and represent sounds. Two beginning concepts lead to letter knowledge, concepts that children learn before they are able to identify letters. One is the ability to recognize and identify shapes. Researchers have found that children identify letters by their shapes. Children also need to be able to notice what is alike and different. An **n** and an **h** are similar and also different from the height of the line. That difference makes a difference in the letter. Other differences don't matter, like the color of the letter does not change the name or the sound of the letter. A child's own name is important to him or her. Using the letters in the child's name or the letters in words that the child is interested in (dinosaurs) is one good way to introduce letters to young children.

### **Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is knowing the meanings of words. Some children enter school knowing 5,000 words. Some children enter school knowing 20,000 words. The children who enter school knowing more words will find it easier to recognize words correctly as they try to sound them out AND they will understand more words which will help them understand what they are reading. Children learn words best as you talk, play, and read with them, not by drilling them on lists of words. Even if your baby or toddler does not understand all the words you say, still use those words. Exposure to the words is the first step to learning what they mean—words for things, for concepts (colors, shapes, sizes, etc.), feelings, and ideas. Preschool children benefit from your explanations of what words mean and how two words may mean something similar but not exactly the same. Books often use words we do not find in conversations. Use both story and factual books.

### **Background Knowledge**

Background knowledge is what children know when they enter school. It is the sum of their experiences, what they know about the world and how things work. There are four areas of background knowledge:

- Conceptual Thinking—thinking skills, processes like cause and effect, predicting what might happen as well as knowledge of shapes, colors, etc.
- Content Knowledge—what a child knows on different topics; factual books offer information
- Book/Story Knowledge—books are enjoyable; how stories work (have a beginning, a middle and an end), ability to tell and retell events and stories (narrative skills), different purposes of books—story, poetry, factual

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### The Five Practices

YOU are the **sun**. YOU make a difference in children's early literacy development.

Every Child Ready to Read has identified five practices or activities that can help children enter school ready to learn to read. As you sing, talk, read, write, and play with young children, you have the opportunity to support their pre-reading skills in little ways that add up to make a difference by the time children enter school.

**Sing:** Singing slows down language. It helps children hear the smaller sounds in words. There is also a different note for each syllable so they hear words broken down into parts, supporting phonological awareness. This helps children later sound out words. Some songs have interesting words that we would not hear in normal conversation with young children, so they are also building vocabulary.

**Talk:** Children start to learn language by hearing people talk. This is oral language! When you talk with your baby, your baby is hearing the sounds of the languages you speak, learning what words mean as you point to and label things. Babies will start to babble and their babble uses the sounds they have heard. As children get older they follow directions, repeat your words, respond to what you say with words, phrases, and then whole sentences. Listening to children while they speak is as important as talking to them. Young children need more time than adults do to figure out what to say and how to say it. Having your children talk, tell and retell stories, and tell you what they know all help them to later understand what they read. When you add new words and information to conversations with your children, you are developing their vocabulary and background knowledge. When you talk with them about signs and logos, you are developing their print awareness. When you talk with them about shapes and observe what is alike and different, or point out letters, you are developing their letter knowledge.

**Read:** Shared reading is the single most important activity that you can do help children get ready to read, even from birth! Remember to keep the interaction around the book a positive one. When children have positive experiences around books and reading they are more likely to stick with learning to read when they get to school, even if it is difficult. Books have different words than the words of conversation so children learn more words when you read books to them. Some board books for babies actually do not have many words, so you would add some to those on the page. In this way, you are developing your children's vocabulary.

Reading books helps develop children's background knowledge. When you read storybooks, they learn the structure of story so that when they are asked to write a story in school they know what to do. When you read factual books with young children you respond to their curiosity and help them learn about the world.

When pointing to the words in the title or a repeated phrase you support print awareness. You can point out letters in any book or share alphabet books to support letter knowledge.

Many books for young children include the sounds of animals and have rhymes, both of which support phonological awareness.

**Write:** Reading and writing go together. Both are ways to represent the spoken word. Writing goes through stages from light markings to letter like forms to drawing letters to forming them.

Writing helps children understand that print has meaning. When children scribble and then say what it means, they are understanding that what they have written or drawn means something. The beginning of writing for very young children is learning how to use their hands and fingers so that later they will hold crayons and pencils.

**Play:** Play, in addition to being fun, helps children to think symbolically. One item represents another—a block might represent a telephone. This kind of symbolic thinking is the same kind of thinking that is used for reading. Pictures and letters represent real things.

Dramatic play, when children act out stories, helps them build background knowledge—how stories work.

So . . . HOW you sing, talk, read, write, and play with children makes a difference in supporting their early literacy skills.

Learning to read! The **fruit** of your interactions with children is that they will find it easier to learn to read with your support of the early literacy components.

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### Early Literacy and Later Reading

Remember two of the aspects of formal reading?

Decoding—recognizing words and sounding them out, and comprehension—understanding what you read

Researchers have found that phonological awareness, print awareness, and letter knowledge most directly support decoding. A strong vocabulary also helps children be able to recognize words as they try to sound them out.

Vocabulary and background knowledge most directly support comprehension, understanding what they are reading.

From kindergarten through grade 2 reading instruction mostly focuses on decoding, learning to read.

After grade 3, reading instruction mostly focuses on comprehension, reading to learn.

Children need ALL the early literacy components starting from birth to be good readers.

### Early Literacy Begins with You

Using the five practices to support early literacy skills in enjoyable ways is the best way to help children enter school ready to learn to read.

### Resources

Association for Library Service to Children and Public Library Association. *Every Child Ready to Read @ your library*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Chicago: American Library Association, 2011.

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## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### Summary of Early Literacy Components

For a more readable copy of the Summary of Early Literacy Components

<https://tinyurl.com/sumelc>

Summary of Early Literacy Components	
<p><i>Early Literacy is what children know about communication, language, verbal and non-verbal, reading and writing before they can actually read and write.</i></p>	
Early Literacy Component Explanation	Ways to Support the Early Literacy Component
<p><b>Phonological Awareness</b> Ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words Helps children as they decode words when they are learning to read.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Say and encourage children to hear and say animal sounds, environmental sounds (doorbell, etc.)</li> <li>Point out beginning sounds—books/songs with alliteration—so children hear beginning sounds.</li> <li>Say nursery rhymes and use rhyming books and rhyming games to support rhyming.</li> <li>Sequence: Hearing rhyme, recognizing rhyme, producing rhymes.</li> <li>Children fill in the rhyming word.</li> <li>Break words apart and putting word syllables together. Mon-key, ti-ger</li> <li>Clap syllables of words.</li> <li>Play "I Spy" games: I spy something red that rhymes with block—sock. Let's see how many things we can find in this picture that start with /d/.</li> <li>Share songbooks and singing: singing slows down language.</li> <li>Be silly with word sounds—change beginning sounds of words.</li> <li>Share poetry and poetry books.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Print Awareness/Concepts</b> Print has meaning Knowing how to handle a book In English we read from left to right and top to bottom of page Print is all around us Helps children feel comfortable with books so that when they learn to read, they can concentrate on reading itself.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Run finger under title and/or repeated phrase as you say them.</li> <li>Write out rhymes/songs on flipcharts.</li> <li>Talk about environmental print—print all around us, on signs, containers, logos.</li> <li>Share books with writing as part of the story (ex. Bunny Cakes).</li> <li>Share books with signs in the pictures (ex. Little Red Hen Makes a Pizza).</li> <li>Share books with varying print orientations (ex. My Friend Rabbit).</li> <li>Use nametags for children and adults; allow participants to write own names.</li> <li>Let child turn the pages of the book.</li> <li>Play around with the orientation of the book. Start with it upside down. Tell your child you are turning it around so you can read it.</li> <li>Encourage scribbling. Your child can "write" the words to the story on another piece of paper.</li> <li>Encourage drawing. Your child can draw a picture of what is happening in the book.</li> <li>Name the author and illustrator and explain what they do.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Letter Knowledge</b> Knowing that letters are different from each other Knowing that the same letter can look different Letters have names and represent sounds Helps children as they decode words when they are learning to read.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point out shapes in book pictures and all around.</li> <li>Let children feel different shapes.</li> <li>Notice how things are visually alike and different</li> <li>Give opportunities to have children match (for ex., matching games on flannel board).</li> <li>Have large foam letters; allow children to play with them.</li> <li>Have children make letter with body.</li> <li>Have children make letter with fingers.</li> <li>Use manual alphabet for some words in theme or book.</li> <li>Use an alphabet book even if you don't go through all the letters.</li> <li>Talk about the first letter in your theme, what does the letter look like?</li> <li>Talk about a letter in title of a book.</li> <li>Use nametags for adults and children.</li> <li>Give children opportunity to write after storytime or encourage it as an at-home activity.</li> <li>Use variations of the B-I-N-G-O song, perhaps with your theme.</li> <li>Sing alphabet song.</li> <li>Use nametags for both children and adults; allow participants to write their own names.</li> <li>Trace a letter from the title with your finger and let your child do it, too.</li> <li>Show your child the first letter in his/her name. Look for that letter in the book.</li> <li>Choose two letters. How do they look alike, how do they look different? What shapes do you see?</li> <li>Encourage scribbling, drawing, and writing.</li> </ul>

Early Literacy Component Explanation	Ways to Support the Early Literacy Component
<p><b>Vocabulary</b> Vocabulary is recognizing words and knowing the meanings of words: objects, feelings, concepts, actions, and ideas Helps children both decode words and to understand what they will read</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use words your child may not be familiar with when you talk.</li> <li>Talk about meanings of new words—objects, actions, feelings, spatial relationships, concepts, ideas</li> <li>When sharing books with infants, add words to words on the page.</li> <li>Books have words not found in conversation. Explain words, don't replace them.</li> <li>Talk about the different meanings of a word: wave, cap</li> <li>Add synonyms to add new words for familiar words.</li> <li>Read factual books. They have different vocabulary from storybooks.</li> <li>Use words in context, as part of experience.</li> <li>Use words for things that happened in the past and will happen in the future.</li> <li>Use words for feelings, actions, concepts and ideas whether or not the words are specifically used in the book.</li> <li>Add words for description.</li> <li>For preschoolers, explain differences in words with similar meanings.</li> <li>Use specific words rather than "it", "this", "that", "here", "there".</li> </ul>
<p><b>Background Knowledge—Conceptual Thinking</b> Background knowledge is prior knowledge, things child has learned about the world Helps children understand what they will read. *Conceptual thinking is thinking skills, abstract thinking, not just about development of specific concepts (seasons, shapes, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage children to talk by asking open-ended questions.</li> <li>Encourage children to use their imaginations, to hypothesize, to guess what might happen.</li> <li>Encourage children to solve problems, to think about possibilities.</li> <li>Let your child "hear you thinking".</li> <li>Describe objects and toys baby is exploring.</li> <li>Explore and talk about cause and effect.</li> <li>Play sorting, matching games.</li> <li>Encourage children to explore and experiment. Talk about the experiences.</li> <li>Talk about and encourage children to talk about events in the past and in the future.</li> <li>Talk about ideas, about things that cannot be seen. (fairness, privacy, consequences)</li> <li>Share books about concepts. (opposites, spatial relationships, size, comparisons)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Background Knowledge—Content Knowledge</b> Prior knowledge Factual information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share factual books to build content knowledge.</li> <li>Share what you know about various topics with your children.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Background Knowledge—Book and Story Knowledge</b> including <b>Print Motivation</b>—enjoyment around books and reading <b>Story Structure</b>—how stories "work"</p>	<p><b>Print Motivation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledge infants mouth books, model enjoyable book sharing</li> <li>Make reading books and book sharing an enjoyable experience so that children associate books and reading with pleasure</li> <li>Reading not used as punishment</li> </ul> <p><b>Story Structure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share storybooks so that children understand the structure of story, its sequence, motifs.</li> <li>Tell stories so that children learn how stories "work". Stories have a beginning, a middle, and an end.</li> <li>Encourage children to say a repeated phrase and to retell stories.</li> <li>Use props to retell stories; act out stories.</li> <li>Notice patterns of repeated phrase or other motifs (3 of a character, etc.)</li> <li>Have children draw a picture from a book or story and tell you about it or make up a story.</li> </ul>

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### Activities to Help You Understand

After reading Chapters 1 and 2 in *Storytimes for Everyone* and looking over the information above, try this:

- Choose a book you like that you use or might use in a storytime.
- Use the worksheet on the next page “Intentionality: Early Literacy Practices and Components Working Together--Reading” to help you internalize what you have learned about early literacy.
  - Column 1 notes the early literacy component with a description.
  - Column 2 gives a few examples (you may think of others) that supports the component.
  - Column 3 gives you space to describe one way you could support the early literacy component using your book.
- You need not stick to the book too literally. You may think of ways that you can talk around the book or build on the book to support the early literacy component.
- Also, you need not make it hard on yourself. For example, for print awareness, running your finger under the text in the title is one activity that supports print awareness! YAY! Done!
- Of course, if you like to think of more, that’s fine.

The Intentionality Worksheet for Reading is on the following pages. You may also download it <https://tinyurl.com/intenreading>

When you are done, go to page 88 to respond to some follow up questions.

9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

**Intentionality**  
**Early Literacy Practices and Components Working Together**

**Practice: Reading**

<b>Early Literacy Component</b>	<b>Examples (You can add more)</b>	<b>Your Book: Title/Author</b>
<p><b>Phonological Awareness</b>  <i>Ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words</i></p> <p>Environmental sounds, singing, clapping syllables, rhyming, beginning sounds</p>	<p>Animal sounds/environmental sounds in books            Books with onomatopoeia            Pointing out rhymes in rhyming books            Books with alliteration and point out beginning sounds            Nursery rhyme books            Use songbooks or sing all or part of a book</p>	
<p><b>Print Awareness/ Concepts</b>  <i>Knowing that print has meaning</i></p> <p>Environmental print; how to handle a book; direction of print; author/title</p>	<p>Run finger under words in title            Run finger under words in repeated phrase            Hold book upside down as you start to read            Point out the title—the title of our next book is . . .            Point out names of author/illustrator and what they do            Call attention to the print in a picture or to a word with an interesting font</p>	
<p><b>Letter Knowledge</b>  <i>Same letter can look different; letters have names and represent sounds</i></p> <p>Shapes, visual similarities and differences, visual matching, letter names, letter recognition</p>	<p>Talk about shapes in book illustration            Read a shape book            Compare how illustrations of two objects or characters look similar or different            Point out a letter and look for more            Point out upper and lower case of a letter            Read alphabet book, preferably one with a good story            Share alphabet book, not necessarily the whole book</p>	

Continued next page

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

Early Literacy Component	Examples (You can add more)	Your Book: Title/Author
<p><b>Vocabulary</b> <i>Recognizing words and knowing the meanings of words including names of objects, feelings, concepts, actions, and ideas</i></p> <p>Hearing new words Learning the meanings of new words</p>	<p>Add interesting words to a simple book Read books with unfamiliar words Read books with familiar words and add an unfamiliar word, a synonym Share factual book Discuss how two words with similar meaning are alike and different Use books with words for feelings or put feeling words to characters' expressions</p>	
<p><b>Background Knowledge—Conceptual Thinking</b> <i>Prior knowledge</i></p> <p>Abstract thinking-- sequencing, predicting, problem-solving, etc. Includes but is broader than specific concepts such as shapes, colors.</p>	<p>Share concept books or talk about concepts in books Share cumulative books/stories Relate what is happening in the book to their own experiences Ask, What do you think will happen next?</p>	
<p><b>Background Knowledge—Content Knowledge</b> <i>Prior knowledge</i> Factual information</p>	<p>Share factual books—in whole or in part When reading stories, add factual information to theme or topic Pair a factual book with a storybook</p>	
<p><b>Background Knowledge—Book and Story Knowledge</b> <i>Prior knowledge</i> Print motivation—enjoyment around books and reading Story structure—how stories “work”</p>	<p><u>Print Motivation</u> Choose books you enjoy and tell them why Use books with flaps, etc. to keep infants and toddlers engaged Make book interactive for engagement Have children say a repeated word, phrase Have children retell the story—can use the book, props, flannel board, puppets</p> <p><u>Story Structure</u> Have children say a repeated word, phrase Have children retell the story—can use the book, props, flannel board, puppets Share cumulative books/stories Point out what happened first, next, then, last</p>	



## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### Follow Up Questions: Early Literacy Components

So, what did you notice as you went through this activity with the worksheet?

#### **Some thoughts:**

You may find that some books lend themselves more easily to one component than another.

Or, sometimes just the way our minds work, some components come more easily than others.

This is a brainstorming exercise. You do not have to find something to relate to early literacy for every component for every book. I just wanted you to see how versatile books are, that it is how WE USE the book that makes it pertinent to a particular early literacy component. There are so many possibilities!

As you use this worksheet when you are planning your storytimes, you may be able to think of several options for supporting the different early literacy components, but supporting even one is fine! You can highlight just one early literacy component for your early literacy tip to parents and caregivers and support it a couple of times in a storytime. It can be with a book or any storytime item.

Some storytime providers like to use the worksheet in storytime planning to get an overview of the options they have for each book/item. For example, you might choose to highlight print awareness throughout the storytime, by following the words with their finger in one book and discussing the title page in another. It's the same early literacy component, but different ways of supporting it, and neither requires you to look too hard for your early literacy component!

Feel free to discuss early literacy information and this activity with your mentor.

If you wonder how effectively you are incorporating early literacy in your storytime, just remember that the most important part of storytime is for the children to be engaged with you and with the books. We are developing a love for reading and laying a foundation for later reading, not teaching children to read. One aspect of early literacy is print motivation, the enjoyment of books and reading. Children who enjoy books are more likely to stick with learning to read when they are formally being taught to read. So, as long as you are smiling and the kids are smiling, you have supported print motivation! You can always keep building early literacy over time.

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### Talking, Singing, Writing, and Playing

So far, we have been talking about being intentional around books. But you can be intentional around any of the early literacy practices—not only reading, but also talking, singing, writing, and playing.

It is the WAY we talk, sing, read, write, and play with children that makes a difference in their language development. You will see that talking pervades all of these practices.

Please watch the WebJunction module on Encouraging Early Literacy

Go to <https://tinyurl.com/wjencel> Then, click on course module under Course Content.

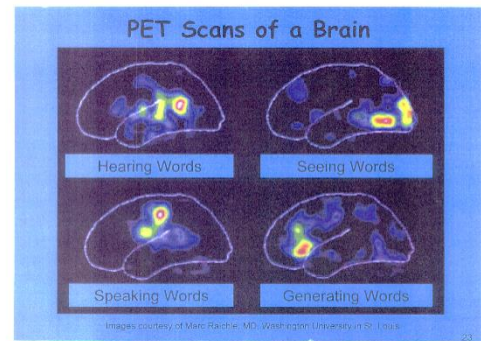
### Talking

Talking is oral language—listening skills, speaking skills, and communication skills. We want to talk with young children in ways that not only allow them to hear language but also to encourage their own talking. Why? Because when children listen to what we say, they use two parts of their brain (hearing words and seeing words—picturing what we are talking about). When children respond to what we say, they use four parts of their brain (in addition, generating words—figuring out in their minds what they want to say and speaking the words). Verbally responding to our questions or telling us about an event or something they know helps develop their comprehension.

The way we talk with children affects early literacy development in so many ways!

For babies, nine months and younger, talking with them in parentese makes a difference. Research has found that they listen to you longer and have a larger vocabulary than children who have not been spoken to in parentese. Parentese is that high-pitched voice, we draw out the vowel sounds, speak quite clearly, and repeat what we say. It is not baby talk. We use our regular words, but a higher pitch and tone.

We can talk about what we see in books and what we see around us in ways that support early literacy. For example, for babies, we can label items—milk, blanket, apple. In addition, we can add more description, information, even a little story or memory we have to add more words to what we say. Adding new or less familiar words to what children are saying will expand their vocabularies. Pointing out sign logos and talking about letters in signs will develop print awareness and letter knowledge. Pointing out sounds all around them helps children focus on sounds. Saying nursery rhymes and pointing out the words that rhyme will develop phonological awareness, helping them hear the smaller sounds in words.



### More Places to Look

For further information on brain development  
Saroj Ghoting Powerpoint with notes

<https://tinyurl.com/brainslides>

Head Start: Early Experiences Build the Brain

<https://tinyurl.com/hsbuildbrain>

Simple Interactions Tool

<https://www.simpleinteractions.org/the-si-tool.html>

Harvard University Center on the Developing  
Child (each one includes a video)

Brain Architecture

<https://tinyurl.com/devchildbrainarch>

Serve and Return video

<https://tinyurl.com/devchildservereturn>

Five Steps for Brain-Building Serve and Return

<https://tinyurl.com/devchildservesteps>

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### Singing

Singing is a fun way to learn about language. Singing slows down language. Songs have a distinct note for each syllable. This makes it easier for children to hear the smaller sounds in words, which they will later need to sound out words. Singing supports phonological awareness. It need not be a children's song, any song works!

In songs, we sometimes hear words we might not hear in conversations with young children. Even simple rhymes add new words. Think about Mary Had a Little Lamb.

Mary had a little lamb, little lamb, little lamb.  
Mary had a little lamb  
Whose fleece was white as snow.

So, a lamb is a baby sheep. What is fleece?

Talking about this information builds vocabulary and background knowledge, so that they are learning more about the world around them. These early literacy component help build comprehension when children learn to read.

We also have songs like the alphabet song and BINGO that support letter knowledge.

And when we have the words to songs up for storytime participants to see, or when we share a songbook, we support print awareness as we run our finger under some of the words.

### Writing

Reading and writing go together. Just as there are pre-reading skills, there are also pre-writing skills. Developing physical coordination and eye-hand coordination are the beginnings of writing. Scribbling is writing. Many parents say, "He can't write; he just scribbles." We want them to understand that scribbling is the beginning of writing! Children can draw pictures, which we may or may not recognize. Their scribble to look like words or letters. It is a developmental process.



When we do action rhymes or fingerplays, we are helping children develop coordination they will need to write. We can have drawing activities in the storytime or as suggestions to do at home. Children may write their own nametags or sign-in on a sign-in list, or add their names to their drawings. Writing most directly supports print awareness. Because many children enjoy drawing and writing, writing can support print motivation.

### Playing

Playing is one of the best ways to develop language. We use play to encourage imagination. When children use a block to be a truck, this is representational or symbolic play. This kind of abstract thinking is the same kind of thinking that is needed for language. In books, the picture of the apple, or the word "apple" is not the real apple, they represent the real apple. In the same way, with play, one item is representing another.

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

There are different ways to play—structured play and unstructured play. In structured play, there are adult guidelines. This would be the play that occurs when we play with bubbles, scarves, or a parachute. Unstructured play may take place before or after storytime, where the child takes the lead. Adults may still join in, but we follow the child’s lead.

Objects and toys may encourage different types of play: functional, constructive, and dramatic play. In functional play, children are exploring an object, manipulating it, sorting, figuring out how it works.

In constructive play, they are building, with blocks, playdough, art materials

In dramatic play, they may be acting out a story or situation, roleplaying, pretending to be a character.

And the ways we talk with children as they play can help build language. We might add print to play by having them make a sign for the restaurant or at their grocery store. We can play rhyming games that support phonological awareness. When they play with blocks, we can talk about the shapes. Because children identify letters by their shapes, this is one way to support later letter knowledge. The concept of visual similarities and differences also supports letter knowledge because some letters look very similar. Any visual matching games or talking about how one block looks different from another, these also support letter knowledge. Puzzle pieces have to be turned around to make them fit. The orientation of a letter makes a difference. An N turned on its side is a Z. Adding new words to children’s play and new information as they play different roles and use their imaginations builds vocabulary and background knowledge. When they act out stories, they are learning how stories work, that they have a beginning, a middle, and an end.

All kinds of play can contribute to early literacy depending on how we interact with children as they play.

### **All Together**

So, you can see that all these practices, or activities—talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing—all overlap and work together. It is the adults interacting with the children that makes a difference in children’s language development.

On the following pages, you will see charts to help you think about ways to support early literacy with each of the practices.

Downloadable document of Intentionality: Early Literacy Practices and Components Working Together <https://tinyurl.com/intenpraccomp>

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### Intentionality

#### Early Literacy Practices and Components Working Together

##### Practice: Talking

Talking is the foundation for all literacy, for listening, for speaking, and for communicating.

Early Literacy Component	Examples (You can add more)
<p><b>Phonological Awareness</b> <i>Ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words</i></p> <p>Environmental sounds, singing, clapping syllables, rhyming, beginning sounds</p>	<p>Model speaking in “parentese” (babies) Talk about sounds in the environment, animal sounds, sounds all around Talk about and point out rhyming words, allow children to say the second word of a rhyming pair Clap out an interesting word—volcano! Say nursery rhymes, do fingerplays that rhyme, talking about the words that rhyme Point out words that start with the same sounds or that rhyme Clap syllables in children’s names or in a word they are learning</p>
<p><b>Print Awareness/ Concepts</b> <i>Knowing that print has meaning</i></p> <p>Environmental print; how to handle a book; direction of print; author/title</p>	<p>Point out signs or logos in the library or storytime area Point out labels on items Use text in flannel board story Point to pictures and label them Write what is being said, either by you or by the children, such as making a list or recording opinions Use pictures, graphics, or text to represent what will happen in storytime</p>
<p><b>Letter Knowledge</b> <i>Same letter can look different; letters have names and represent sounds</i></p> <p>Shapes, alike and different, visual matching, letters</p>	<p>Talk about shapes Talk about how two things look similar and different Talk about alike and different (visually) in flannel board matching game Point out a letter and look for more Talk about upper and lower case of a letter Use nametags or craft activities as an opportunity to talk about shapes and letters Talk about letters and shapes in child’s name</p>
<p><b>Vocabulary</b> <i>Recognizing words and knowing the meanings of words including names of objects, feelings, descriptions, concepts, and ideas</i></p> <p>Learning the meanings of new words</p>	<p>Model talking in “parentese” (babies) General conversation with child or children before and after storytime, building on what they say by adding less familiar words Talk about the different meanings of a word Add new words, explaining the meaning or using synonyms, as introducing storytime theme Talk about differences in meanings of words with similar meanings Talk about feelings, getting more specific as possible Talk about ideas, listening to their and adding more thoughts Use words themselves, not pronouns, even if repetitious (not “it”—say the item)</p>
<p><b>Background Knowledge</b> <i>Prior knowledge—Includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• content knowledge (factual)</li> <li>• book/story knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ enjoyment—print motivation</li> <li>▫ story structure</li> <li>▫ narrative skills (retelling)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• conceptual thinking: abstract thinking—sequencing, predicting, problem-solving, etc. It includes but is more than specific concepts such as shapes, colors.</li> </ul>	<p>Before, during, or after storytime, have children tell you about an event that happened to them. Encourage children to tell you the order in which they are doing or have done something Offer factual information you know about a topic or a situation to help children understand the world—perhaps as part of storytime introduction Encourage children to tell you what they know on a topic, and share what you know Tell a story without a book Have children retell a story Allow time for discussion, for children to relate their own experiences</p> <p>See also Practice: Playing</p>

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### Intentionality

#### Early Literacy Practices and Components Working Together

##### Practice: Singing

Singing slows down language so children can hear the smaller sounds in words. Some words found in songs are not commonly used in conversation.

Early Literacy Component	Examples (You can add more)
<p><b>Phonological Awareness</b> <i>Ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words</i></p> <p>Environmental sounds, singing, clapping syllables, rhyming, beginning sounds</p>	<p>Sing songs Clap in rhythm or clap syllables Bounce, tap, clap to rhythm Move shakers/instruments to syllables in songs</p>
<p><b>Print Awareness/ Concepts</b> <i>Knowing that print has meaning</i></p> <p>Environmental print; how to handle a book; direction of print; author/title</p>	<p>Flipchart/project words to songs, pointing out some words Sing “Oh no my book is upside down” to tune of “London Bridge is Falling Down” Use songbooks; point to words in chorus.</p>
<p><b>Letter Knowledge</b> <i>Same letter can look different; letters have names and represent sounds</i></p> <p>Shapes, alike and different, visual matching, letters</p>	<p>Alphabet song and variations BINGO and variations Sing songs about shapes</p>
<p><b>Vocabulary</b> <i>Recognizing words and knowing the meanings of words including names of objects, feelings, descriptions, concepts, and ideas</i></p> <p>Learning the meanings of new words</p>	<p>Songs with interesting/unfamiliar words Songs about feelings Songs that include concepts: colors, opposites, size</p>
<p><b>Background Knowledge</b> <i>Prior knowledge—Includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• content knowledge (factual)</li> <li>• book/story knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ enjoyment—print motivation</li> <li>▫ story structure</li> <li>▫ narrative skills (retelling)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• conceptual thinking: abstract thinking-- sequencing, predicting, problem-solving, etc. It includes but is more than specific concepts such as shapes, colors.</li> </ul>	<p>Knowing rhymes and songs of your own culture and others' cultures Songs to help learn facts Enjoyment around songbooks Songs about enjoying books (The more we read together . . . ) Songs with concepts Songs with refrains (patterns) Songs about spatial relationships, size, opposites, shapes Story songs with sequence, cumulative</p>

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### Intentionality

#### Early Literacy Practices and Components Working Together

**Practice: Writing**—*Can be during or after storytime or suggestions to tell parents when they are playing with their children.*

Reading and writing are both representations of spoken language. Writing develops from developing muscle coordination to scribbling to writing letters.

Early Literacy Component	Examples (You can add more)
<p><b>Phonological Awareness</b> <i>Ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words</i> Environmental sounds, singing, clapping syllables, rhyming, beginning sounds</p>	<p>Have children draw a picture of animal, what sound does it make? Write child's name—point out sound of first letter Point out writing when it occurs in books—a character writing such as in <i>Bunny Cakes</i> by Rosemary Wells</p>
<p><b>Print Awareness/ Concepts</b> <i>Knowing that print has meaning</i> Environmental print; how to handle a book; direction of print; author/title</p>	<p>Have children draw pictures and say what is happening Have children scribble/write lists, story, cards, make own books</p>
<p><b>Letter Knowledge</b> <i>Same letter can look different; letters have names and represent sounds</i> Shapes, alike and different, visual matching, letters</p>	<p>Have children scribble/draw shapes Have children “write” their names Songs/activities where children draw shapes or letters in the air</p>
<p><b>Vocabulary</b> <i>Recognizing words and knowing the meanings of words including names of objects, feelings, descriptions, concepts and ideas</i> Learning the meanings of new words</p>	<p>Add new words when children tell you about their drawings</p>
<p><b>Background Knowledge</b> <i>Prior knowledge—Includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• content knowledge (factual)</li> <li>• book/story knowledge               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ enjoyment—print motivation</li> <li>▫ story structure</li> <li>▫ narrative skills (retelling)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• conceptual thinking: abstract thinking-- sequencing, predicting, problem-solving, etc. It includes but is more than specific concepts such as shapes, colors.</li> </ul>	<p>Do fingerplays and action songs that use gross motor and fine motor skills Have children write/draw about a story or experience Use charts, graphs to classify objects Encourage writing/recording as an activity</p>

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### Intentionality Early Literacy Practices and Components Working Together

**Practice: Playing**—*Can be during or after storytime or suggestions to tell parents when they are playing with their children.*

Playing supports language when children pretend one object represents another, the same abstract thinking needed for understanding that the picture of an object or the printed word for it represents the real object.

Early Literacy Component	Examples (You can add more)
<p><b>Phonological Awareness</b> <i>Ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words</i> Environmental sounds, singing, clapping syllables, rhyming, beginning sounds</p>	<p>Play games using sounds: I Spy, guess rhyming word or play with beginning sounds, use non-sense words Games with animal sounds</p>
<p><b>Print Awareness/ Concepts</b> <i>Knowing that print has meaning</i> Environmental print; how to handle a book; direction of print; author/title</p>	<p>Playtime or craft time—add print to instructions Add print to play itself (sign for a store, etc.)</p>
<p><b>Letter Knowledge</b> <i>Same letter can look different; letters have names and represent sounds</i> Shapes, alike and different, visual matching, letters</p>	<p>Block play, shapes, colors, size Sort and categorize items Play matching games, sorting games—what is alike and different Include foam, magnet or block letters Play with puzzles for piece orientation</p>
<p><b>Vocabulary</b> <i>Recognizing words and knowing the meanings of words including names of objects, feelings, descriptions, concepts and ideas</i> Learning the meanings of new words</p>	<p>Describe what baby is doing and objects, how they feel, look Use words themselves, not pronouns, even if repetitious (not “it”—say the item) Add less familiar words to children’s play Use descriptive words for texture, to describe both objects and actions (he is walking briskly)</p>
<p><b>Background Knowledge</b> <i>Prior knowledge—Includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• content knowledge (factual)</li> <li>• book/story knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ enjoyment—print motivation</li> <li>▫ story structure</li> <li>▫ narrative skills (retelling)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• conceptual thinking: abstract thinking-- sequencing, predicting, problem-solving, etc. It includes but is more than specific concepts such as shapes, colors.</li> </ul>	<p>As children explore objects, describe them and their uses Compare and contrast objects Puzzles for problem-solving Role-playing games Act out stories together Provide toys/props to act out story or extend story in imaginative play For activity or craft, put processes in sequence Allow time for children to figure things out, and to talk about what they are doing during play</p>



## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### Intentionality

#### Early Literacy Practices and Components Working Together

##### Practice: Reading

Shared book reading (interactive reading) is the single most important activity to help children get ready to read.

Early Literacy Component	Examples (You can add more)
<p><b>Phonological Awareness</b> <i>Ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words</i> Environmental sounds, singing, clapping syllables, rhyming, beginning sounds</p>	<p>Animal sounds/environmental sounds in books Books with onomatopoeia Pointing out rhymes in rhyming books Books with alliteration and point out beginning sounds Nursery rhyme books Use songbooks or sing all or part of a book</p>
<p><b>Print Awareness/ Concepts</b> <i>Knowing that print has meaning</i> Environmental print; how to handle a book; direction of print; author/title</p>	<p>Run finger under words in title Run finger under words in repeated phrase Hold book upside down as you start to read Point out the title—the title of our next book is . . . Point out names of author/illustrator and what they do Call attention to the print in a picture or to a word with an interesting font Point out text of signs, sign logos</p>
<p><b>Letter Knowledge</b> <i>Same letter can look different; letters have names and represent sounds</i> Shapes, alike and different, visual matching, letters</p>	<p>Talk about shapes in book illustration Read a shape book Compare how illustrations of two objects or characters look similar or different Point out a letter and look for more Point out upper and lower case of a letter Read alphabet book, preferably one with a good story Share alphabet book, not necessarily the whole book</p>
<p><b>Vocabulary</b> <i>Recognizing words and knowing the meanings of words including names of objects, feelings, descriptions, concepts and ideas</i> Learning the meanings of new words</p>	<p>Add interesting words to a simple book Read books with unfamiliar words; don't replace unfamiliar words, explain them Read books with familiar words and add an unfamiliar word, a synonym Share factual book Discuss how two words with similar meaning are alike and different Use books with words for feelings or put feeling words to characters' expressions; use less common words for feelings</p>
<p><b>Background Knowledge</b> <i>Prior knowledge—Includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• content knowledge (factual)</li> <li>• book/story knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ enjoyment—print motivation</li> <li>▫ story structure</li> <li>▫ narrative skills (retelling)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• conceptual thinking: abstract thinking-- sequencing, predicting, problem-solving, etc. It includes but is more than specific concepts such as shapes, colors.</li> </ul>	<p>Share concept books or talk about concepts in books Share cumulative books Share factual books—in whole or in part Choose books you enjoy and tell them why Make book interactive for engagement Have children say a repeated word, phrase Have children retell the story—can use book, props, flannel board, puppets Relate what is happening in the book to their own experiences Ask, “What do you think will happen next?”</p>

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### Early Literacy Planning Tool

#### What is it?

The Early Literacy Planning Tool is an aid to help us make connections between the early literacy components and the activities we do in storytimes. It lists the strategies a storytime provider might use to achieve the early literacy goals, separated by age level, and the behavior children might demonstrate in response to these strategies.

It is based on a study from the University of Washington, funded by the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMNLS), to find out if what we do in storytimes affects children's early literacy behaviors.

The study found that when storytime providers are trained on early literacy using the Planning Tool, that their own early literacy behaviors increased, and in turn, so did the early literacy behaviors of the children. When we are intentional about including early literacy behaviors in our storytimes with an interactive approach, we see corresponding behaviors in the children who attend. This is how we know we are making a difference in their early literacy learning.

The Early Literacy Planning Tool (see the next page) both summarizes and expands on what you have already learned about early literacy.

This useful tool may look overwhelming at first. Keep in mind that you can take it one step at a time. Each intentional strategy you try through the Early Literacy Planning Tool will build your confidence at the same time you are building children's literacy skills.

#### More Places to Look

WebJunction Supercharged Storytimes Self-Paced Course—Early Literacy Planning Tool presentation: <https://tinyurl.com/wjelpt>

WebJunction Supercharged Storytimes Self-Paced Course on Oral language <https://tinyurl.com/wjorallang>

WebJunction Presentations for each of the Early Literacy Components:

Phonological Awareness: <https://tinyurl.com/wjphonaw>

Print Awareness: <https://tinyurl.com/wjpraw>

Letter Knowledge: <https://tinyurl.com/wjlkgn>

Vocabulary: <https://tinyurl.com/wjvoc>

Background Knowledge—Conceptual Thinking And Content Knowledge <https://tinyurl.com/wjbkctcont>

Background Knowledge—Book and Story Knowledge: <https://tinyurl.com/wjbkstk>

Every Literacy Planning Tool based on Every Child Ready to Read®  
**Phonological Awareness:** Ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words  
**Goal:** Children demonstrate phonological awareness, the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words.  
**Range of needs**

Storytime Provider/Educator/Adult	Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expects children to listen to stories by hearing rhymes, songs, and reading books.</li> <li>Introduces use of "soundboxes" (like rolling up letters in a sock) to illustrate sounds in words.</li> <li>Uses exaggerated expressions.</li> <li>Includes rhymes and songs with rhyming words and syllables, and incorporates programs that include rhymes, songs, and finger games.</li> <li>Uses no-nonsense, such as clapping, stamping, or songs to include rhymes of language.</li> <li>Encourages children to imitate sounds and noises in their environment (including animal sounds).</li> <li>Encourages children to imitate sounds when reading (especially through other children's books), asks them to imitate when the story is being read.</li> <li>Teaches to children how to listen to the environment, appreciate content and context, provide children time to hear the sounds of letter sounds.</li> <li>Uses rhymes in songs, clapping, and gestures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows enjoyment of sounds and rhymes of language.</li> <li>Recognizes environmental sounds.</li> <li>Locates or imitates environmental sounds.</li> <li>Imitates vocalizations and sounds.</li> <li>Locates familiar words when needed.</li> <li>Recalls letters of familiar rhymes with assistance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>18 to 36 months:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repeats books, songs, rhymes, and rhymes with emphasis and connects programs to their children's lives (e.g., "No shoes, no shoes, no shoes on my feet!").</li> <li>Encourages children to join in rhyming words or repeated phrases in books, songs, and rhymes.</li> <li>Encourages children to join in rhyming words or repeated phrases in books, songs, and rhymes.</li> <li>Encourages children to imitate sounds when reading (especially through other children's books).</li> <li>Uses rhymes in songs, clapping, and gestures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows pleasure in rhymes and repetition of familiar words, rhymes, and songs.</li> <li>Repeats simple words/phrases.</li> <li>Attempts to imitate sounds.</li> <li>Attempts to imitate sounds when reading.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3 to 60 months:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduces children to rhyming words and rhymes through rhyming words and rhymes in books, songs, and rhymes.</li> <li>Encourages children to join in rhyming words or repeated phrases in books, songs, and rhymes.</li> <li>Encourages children to imitate sounds when reading (especially through other children's books).</li> <li>Uses rhymes in songs, clapping, and gestures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies simple words/phrases.</li> <li>Attempts to imitate sounds when reading.</li> <li>Attempts to imitate sounds when reading.</li> </ul>

**All ages:**

- Includes the activities and structures that promote literacy (language and literacy) development (songs and clapping).

# 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

## The Early Literacy Planning Tool

These screenshots are to help you get a sense of the Early Literacy Planning Tool.

For the full Tool <https://tinyurl.com/elptool>

**Early Literacy Planning Tool based on Every Child Ready to Read2®**

The following are EXAMPLES. This tool is a GUIDE, not a comprehensive listing.

**Phonological Awareness** Ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words.

**Goal:** Children demonstrate phonological awareness, the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words.

Storytime Provider/Educator/Adult	Children
<p><b>18 to 24 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Points out environmental sounds (animal sounds, bell, etc.)</li> <li>Expects children to locate or identify sounds by hearing (songs, songs, and reading books)</li> <li>Books of <b>textures</b> while talking with babies to about 9 months old (paper, cloth, cardboard, wood, glass, smooth, rough)</li> <li>Uses materials such as balloons, allowing to bring to imitate rhythmic sounds</li> <li>Repeats rhymes and songs within storytime and in conversational progress, emphasizing rhythmic words that children become familiar with and the rhythm of language</li> <li>Encourages children to imitate sounds and noises in their environment (including animal sounds)</li> <li>Encourages children to imitate sounds while reading books and singing songs</li> <li>When children babble, takes time to respond with words and sounds</li> <li>Reacts to children from books with developmentally appropriate content and pictures, providing children time to meet the sounds of familiar words</li> <li>Uses rhythm in rhymes, greetings, and directions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Show enjoyment of sounds and rhythms of language (especially environmental sounds)</li> <li>Attempt to vocalize or imitate environmental sounds (blow, clap, rhythmic of language in songs and books)</li> <li>Imitate vocalizations and sounds</li> <li>Vocalize familiar words when heard</li> <li>Recalls said word of familiar rhymes, with assistance</li> </ul>
<p><b>24 to 30 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repeats rhymes and songs within storytime and in conversational progress, emphasizing rhythmic words that children become familiar with and the rhythm of language</li> <li>Encourages child to play with rhyming words by using words like <i>cat, dog, fish, whale, shark, whale, whale</i></li> <li>Encourages children to play with rhyming words in books, songs, and rhymes</li> <li>Emphasizes beginning sounds in words when bookkeeping presents from opportunities</li> <li>Emphasizes and encourages awareness of the beginning sounds, identifying the beginning sound of a word</li> <li>Uses rhyming words (e.g., <i>cat, dog</i>), providing children time to respond when children can say the word of familiar rhyming words</li> <li>Invites children to act out a variety of gestures or sounds of words (e.g., clapping hands, tapping, clapping, hand stamp, tapping, stamp, stamp, stamp)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enjoy patterns of rhythm and opposition of familiar words, sounds, rhymes and songs</li> <li>Recalls phrases from familiar rhymes</li> <li>Participates in simple word games</li> <li>Imitates beginning sounds and rhyming words</li> <li>Completes a familiar rhyme or fragment by providing said word</li> <li>Imitates tempo and speed of sound, clapping, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>30 to 36 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Builds on having child to locate and identify the word games, introducing rhyming words that come up with new rhymes, including not same words</li> <li>Encourages children to play the sound word of a rhyming pair using books, songs, rhyming and other games</li> <li>Repeats rhymes and songs within storytime and in conversational progress, emphasizing rhythmic words that children become familiar with and the rhythm of language</li> <li>Encourages children to play with rhyming words in books, songs, and rhymes</li> <li>Emphasizes beginning sounds in words when bookkeeping presents from opportunities</li> <li>Emphasizes and encourages awareness of the beginning sounds, identifying the beginning sound of a word</li> <li>Uses rhyming words (e.g., <i>cat, dog</i>), providing children time to respond when children can say the word of familiar rhyming words</li> <li>Invites children to act out a variety of gestures or sounds of words (e.g., clapping hands, tapping, clapping, hand stamp, tapping, stamp, stamp, stamp)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify initial sounds of words, with assistance</li> <li>Find objects in a picture with the same beginning sound</li> <li>Differentiate between similar-sounding words</li> </ul>

**All ages**

- Models the activities and articulates their importance for language and literacy development to parents and caregivers

**Early Literacy Planning Tool based on Every Child Ready to Read2®**

**Print Awareness and Concepts** Knowing that print has meaning, how print "works"

**Goal:** Children draw meaning from pictures, print, and text. Children demonstrate awareness of print concepts: how to handle books, direction of print, concept of word, concepts of print (punctuation, table of contents, etc.). Children use writing implements to communicate through written representations, symbols.

Storytime Provider/Educator/Adult	Children
<p><b>18 to 24 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Labels objects in books, using descriptive words</li> <li>Shows child how to hold and turn pages</li> <li>Points to objects in books and encourages children to look at them</li> <li>Provides opportunities for children to point to pictures, characters, or objects in books</li> <li>Discusses what is on each page, acknowledging that letters will show on books and that they are on the pages in between</li> <li>Encourages children to explore books (e.g., what is on the pages) as part of hands-on activity</li> <li>Discusses what is on each page or what is on the page of children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin to recognize and understand symbolisms</li> <li>Enjoy books (e.g., flipping, turning through pages)</li> <li>Play attention to pictures, words in books</li> <li>Point to familiar pictures, characters, and objects in books</li> <li>Experiment with turning pages, looking at books to turn to find a page</li> <li>Sorts books spontaneously</li> </ul>
<p><b>24 to 30 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Labels objects in books, using descriptive words</li> <li>Shows child how to hold and turn pages</li> <li>Points to objects in books and encourages children to look at them</li> <li>Provides opportunities for children to point to pictures, characters, or objects in books</li> <li>Discusses what is on each page, acknowledging that letters will show on books and that they are on the pages in between</li> <li>Encourages children to explore books (e.g., what is on the pages) as part of hands-on activity</li> <li>Discusses what is on each page or what is on the page of children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recalls pictures with real objects, events, stories</li> <li>Shows ability to handle books, turn book right-side up, turn page</li> <li>Recognize that print represents spoken words</li> <li>Recognize when book opens shut</li> <li>Uses symbols or pictures to represent what is said</li> <li>Recognize when to open and close a book</li> </ul>
<p><b>30 to 36 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talks about different kinds of text, such as signs, books, characters, names</li> <li>Discusses print in everyday life</li> <li>Provides opportunities for children to point to pictures, characters, or objects in books</li> <li>Discusses what is on each page, acknowledging that letters will show on books and that they are on the pages in between</li> <li>Encourages children to explore books (e.g., what is on the pages) as part of hands-on activity</li> <li>Discusses what is on each page or what is on the page of children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Show awareness of different functions of some print such as signs, letters, newspapers, lists, messages</li> <li>Recognize some signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)</li> <li>Use symbols with activities during play to show print</li> <li>Recognize some signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)</li> <li>Use symbols with activities during play to show print</li> <li>Recognize some signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)</li> </ul>

**All ages**

- Models the activities and articulates their importance for language and literacy development to parents and caregivers

**Early Literacy Planning Tool based on Every Child Ready to Read2®**

**Letter Knowledge/Exploring Letters**

**Goal:** Children know same letter can look different, that letters have names. Children demonstrate awareness of alphabetic principle: that letters represent sounds of spoken language. Children demonstrate awareness of letters and symbols. Children use writing tools to communicate through written representations, symbols, letters.

Storytime Provider/Educator/Adult	Children
<p><b>18 to 24 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offers opportunities for children to play with letters, books, and other toys with a variety of shapes, colors, and textures</li> <li>Uses books with bold illustrations and dark contrast, pointing out bold shapes in book illustrations. Books may be specifically on shapes or text</li> <li>Offers opportunities for children to match shapes, e.g., hammer blocks, shape puzzles, games</li> <li>Encourages children to match shapes using songs and using movement activities that focus on shapes</li> <li>Shows children objects, saying names of objects and describing how they are alike and different</li> <li>Includes action rhymes and action songs to develop small and gross motor muscles</li> <li>Includes action rhymes and action songs to develop small and gross motor muscles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognize geometric shapes using blocks, eyes, and more</li> <li>Recognize some shapes</li> <li>Play with shape toys, though they may not match correctly</li> <li>Engage in additional playing or tracking board with lines throughout rhymes and differences in characteristics of shapes</li> <li>Imitates small and gross motor movements</li> </ul>
<p><b>24 to 30 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talks about shapes, describing the shapes</li> <li>Encourages children to match shapes using songs and using movement activities that focus on shapes</li> <li>Provides opportunities for children to match shapes, e.g., hammer blocks, shape puzzles, games</li> <li>Encourages children to match shapes using songs and using movement activities that focus on shapes</li> <li>Shows children objects, saying names of objects and describing how they are alike and different</li> <li>Includes action rhymes and action songs to develop small and gross motor muscles</li> <li>Includes action rhymes and action songs to develop small and gross motor muscles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify objects by their shape</li> <li>Show interest in patterns, ability to comprehend</li> <li>Engage in additional playing or tracking board with lines throughout rhymes and differences in characteristics of shapes</li> <li>Imitates small and gross motor movements</li> </ul>
<p><b>30 to 36 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talks about shapes, describing the shapes</li> <li>Encourages children to match shapes using songs and using movement activities that focus on shapes</li> <li>Provides opportunities for children to match shapes, e.g., hammer blocks, shape puzzles, games</li> <li>Encourages children to match shapes using songs and using movement activities that focus on shapes</li> <li>Shows children objects, saying names of objects and describing how they are alike and different</li> <li>Includes action rhymes and action songs to develop small and gross motor muscles</li> <li>Includes action rhymes and action songs to develop small and gross motor muscles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify objects by their shape</li> <li>Show interest in patterns, ability to comprehend</li> <li>Engage in additional playing or tracking board with lines throughout rhymes and differences in characteristics of shapes</li> <li>Imitates small and gross motor movements</li> </ul>

**All ages**

- Models the activities and articulates their importance for language and literacy development to parents and caregivers

**Early Literacy Planning Tool based on Every Child Ready to Read2®**

**Vocabulary** Recognizing words and knowing the meanings of words including objects, actions, descriptors, feelings, concepts, ideas

**Goal:** Children recognize words, show understanding through listening, receptive language. Children know the meanings of words: objects, actions, descriptors, feelings, concepts, and ideas. Children demonstrate the meaning of language by speaking, expressive language.

Storytime Provider/Educator/Adult	Children
<p><b>18 to 24 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Models use of "names" while talking with babies to about 9 months old (paper, cloth, cardboard, wood, glass, smooth, rough)</li> <li>Uses a variety of words and many types of language including conversation, songs, rhymes, stories, songs, sharing factual information</li> <li>Encourages children to listen with names of things in pictures in books or names of items being used</li> <li>Uses names for action words while encouraging children to imitate motions</li> <li>Uses gestures and/or sign language in combination with words when communicating</li> <li>Repeats words within storytime and over storytime to help children become familiar with the words</li> <li>Invites children to label familiar objects in books in the environment</li> <li>Asks new words, <b>repeating children's communication</b></li> <li>Offers opportunities for children to produce and repeat of new words</li> <li>Repeats children with the opportunity to label aspects of people, places and things</li> <li>Allows time for children to respond with labels or simple understandings</li> <li>Handles what child sees, hears, smells, touch, using a variety of words and descriptors</li> <li>Shows books that introduce new words, labels</li> <li>Asks new words in books with letter or no text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond to tone of voice</li> <li>Respond to sounds in environment</li> <li>Recognize familiar objects by looking to speaker</li> <li>Points to objects when named</li> <li>Combine words and gestures (e.g., seeing when saying goodbye)</li> <li>Respond to familiar gestures/signs</li> <li>Use effort to be understood (e.g., "mama," "dada," "no")</li> <li>Recognize objects being referred to</li> <li>Use short fragments (e.g., "no go" or "there name")</li> <li>Focus on familiar, familiar adults and peers and pointing</li> </ul>
<p><b>24 to 30 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Makes opportunities for children to follow one or two step directions when gathering, transferring from one object to another, during songs/chores/activities, while reading books</li> <li>Uses a variety of words (objects, actions, descriptors, feelings, concepts, ideas) through conversations, books, songs, rhymes, movement activities, craft time, storytime</li> <li>Introduces unfamiliar objects and provides direction to repeat action from caregiver</li> <li>Introduces new unfamiliar words, building on what children have said, may be unfamiliar</li> <li>Explains meanings of words during conversations or while reading books</li> <li>Shows familiar books to introduce new words (may not be words, not same books)</li> <li>Gives children an opportunity to repeat an unfamiliar word</li> <li>Provides children with the opportunity to use words of objects to convey meaning</li> <li>Invites children to use adjectives to describe objects or things described in stories, adding new words to those the children can use</li> <li>Identifies a range of ideas in books, including new words for less familiar concepts</li> <li>Uses words to identify, being, using, near to children's experiences</li> <li>Points to objects and prompts children to point to objects in environment and/or within the pages of a book or within their own context, adding familiar words</li> <li>Invites children to join in with actions in books and songs, using some less familiar words</li> <li>Explains new words using simple examples when talking with children</li> <li>Explains new words using simple examples when talking with children</li> <li>Explains new words using simple examples when talking with children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand questions, some basic concepts, and simple directions</li> <li>Ask others to label unfamiliar objects</li> <li>Enjoy hearing meanings of new words</li> <li>Use sound effects in play</li> <li>Use adjectives in phrases (e.g., "big dog," "green bear")</li> <li>Use words to express emotions (e.g., "happy," "sad," "tired," "angry")</li> <li>Identify objects, actions, adjectives by name</li> <li>Respond to directions that include verbs (e.g., "up," "down")</li> <li>Demonstrate understanding of words by responding appropriately</li> </ul>

**Vocabulary continued next page**

**Early Literacy Planning Tool based on Every Child Ready to Read2®**

**Background Knowledge—Content Knowledge/Knowledge of the world**

**Goal:** Children demonstrate interest in factual information and informational text. Children share factual information with others. Children draw meaning from factual information. Children relate factual information to own experiences.

Storytime Provider/Educator/Adult	Children
<p><b>18 to 24 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows factual books with bold illustrations, labeling and adding information</li> <li>Asks children simple questions that can be answered with gestures based on picture object, shows some factual information about the object</li> <li>Points to objects when named</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Show eagerness and curiosity as learners</li> <li>Recognize familiar words</li> <li>Point to objects when named</li> </ul>
<p><b>24 to 30 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides opportunities for children to identify objects by pointing</li> <li>Shows factual books, labeling objects and adding information</li> <li>Asks children simple questions that can be answered with gestures based on picture object, shows some factual information about the object</li> <li>Points to objects when named</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify some people, objects, and actions by name</li> <li>Recognize some signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)</li> <li>Use symbols with activities during play to show print</li> <li>Recognize some signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)</li> </ul>
<p><b>30 to 36 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talks about different kinds of text, such as signs, books, characters, names</li> <li>Discusses print in everyday life</li> <li>Provides opportunities for children to point to pictures, characters, or objects in books</li> <li>Discusses what is on each page, acknowledging that letters will show on books and that they are on the pages in between</li> <li>Encourages children to explore books (e.g., what is on the pages) as part of hands-on activity</li> <li>Discusses what is on each page or what is on the page of children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use symbols with activities during play to show print</li> <li>Recognize some signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)</li> <li>Use symbols with activities during play to show print</li> <li>Recognize some signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)</li> </ul>

**Early Literacy Planning Tool based on Every Child Ready to Read2®**

**Background Knowledge—Book and Story Knowledge/Print motivation (enjoyment of books and reading), story structure (how stories work), and narrative skills (ability to recount events and tell and retell stories)**

**Goal:** Children demonstrate an appreciation and enjoyment of books and reading—print motivation. Children demonstrate knowledge of how stories work, story structure. Children demonstrate narrative skills, the ability to recount events, to tell and retell stories.

Storytime Provider/Educator/Adult	Children
<p><b>18 to 24 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows expression and interest in the look of reading early reading books</li> <li>Shows books with bold, colorful, clear images of familiar objects</li> <li>Provides opportunities for children to play with books, using books as a way of exploring them</li> <li>Explains children to books in a variety of ways, responding to their interests</li> <li>Provides opportunities for children to play with books, using books as a way of exploring them</li> <li>Explains children to books in a variety of ways, responding to their interests</li> <li>Provides opportunities for children to play with books, using books as a way of exploring them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond positively to look at books with adults, showing, choosing, looking at books</li> <li>Show eagerness and curiosity as learners</li> <li>Recognize some signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)</li> <li>Use symbols with activities during play to show print</li> <li>Recognize some signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)</li> </ul>
<p><b>24 to 30 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows expression and interest in the look of reading early reading books</li> <li>Shows books with bold, colorful, clear images of familiar objects</li> <li>Provides opportunities for children to play with books, using books as a way of exploring them</li> <li>Explains children to books in a variety of ways, responding to their interests</li> <li>Provides opportunities for children to play with books, using books as a way of exploring them</li> <li>Explains children to books in a variety of ways, responding to their interests</li> <li>Provides opportunities for children to play with books, using books as a way of exploring them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognize some signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)</li> <li>Use symbols with activities during play to show print</li> <li>Recognize some signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)</li> <li>Use symbols with activities during play to show print</li> <li>Recognize some signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)</li> </ul>
<p><b>30 to 36 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talks about different kinds of text, such as signs, books, characters, names</li> <li>Discusses print in everyday life</li> <li>Provides opportunities for children to point to pictures, characters, or objects in books</li> <li>Discusses what is on each page, acknowledging that letters will show on books and that they are on the pages in between</li> <li>Encourages children to explore books (e.g., what is on the pages) as part of hands-on activity</li> <li>Discusses what is on each page or what is on the page of children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use symbols with activities during play to show print</li> <li>Recognize some signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)</li> <li>Use symbols with activities during play to show print</li> <li>Recognize some signs and symbols in the environment (e.g., stop sign, exit sign)</li> </ul>

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

### Activities to Help You Learn

These activities are to help you become more comfortable with identifying ways that we support or can support early literacy by the way we share books, songs, activities, and play.

As a first step, choose one of the early literacy components. Think of your storytimes as a whole, not just one particular storytime.

Put a ✓ by any of the bulleted strategies in Column 1 that you already do in your storytimes.

Now put a + by any of the strategies that you think you could easily add to your storytimes.

Every Child Ready to Read® Planning Tool	
Vocabulary/Knowing the meanings of words: objects, actions, feelings, concepts, ideas	
<b>Birth to 18 months</b>	
Storytime Presenter/Educator/Adult	Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Models use of "parentese" while talking with babies till about 9 months old (higher pitch, elongated vowels, clear speech, repeat words)</li> </ul>	Respond to tone of voice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses all kinds of words and many types of language including conversation, stories, nursery rhymes, songs</li> <li>Encourages children to chime in with names of items in pictures in book or names of props being used</li> <li>Encourage children to imitate motions, using names for actions</li> <li>Uses repetition to increase children's understanding</li> </ul>	Show understanding of gestures and words
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses gestures in combination with words when communicating</li> </ul>	Combine words and gestures (e.g. waves when saying good-bye)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invites children to label familiar objects in books or in the environment</li> </ul>	Use eight to ten understandable words (e.g. "daddy," "bottle," "up")
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presents children with the opportunity to label aspects of people, places and events</li> </ul>	Use short telegraphic sentences (e.g. "Me go." Or "There mama.")
<b>18 to 36 months</b>	
Storytime Presenter/Educator/Adult	Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Makes opportunities for children to follow one or two step directions when gathering, transitioning from one activity to another, during songs/music/movement activities, while reading books</li> <li>Uses all kinds of words (objects, actions, feelings, concepts, ideas) through conversations, books, songs, rhymes, movement activities, craft time, playtime</li> </ul>	Understand questions, some basic concepts, and simple directions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduces unfamiliar objects and prompts children to request labels from caregiver</li> </ul>	Ask others to label unfamiliar objects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses simple three-to-four word (with mostly 1 – 2 syllable words) sentences at least twice followed by a pause so children can imitate</li> </ul>	Imitate simple two-word phrase/sentence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides experiences that prompt children to ask questions</li> </ul>	Use simple questions in speech, but may not use correct grammar
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invites children to use adjectives to describe objects or things described in stories</li> </ul>	Use adjectives in phrases (e.g. "big" bag, "green" bear)
<b>36 to 60 months</b>	
Storytime Presenter/Educator/Adult	Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses all kinds of words (objects, actions, feelings, concepts, ideas) through conversations, books, songs, rhymes, movement activities, craft time, playtime</li> <li>Explains differences between two words with similar meanings (e.g. tired, exhausted)</li> <li>Adds less familiar synonym to a familiar word</li> <li>Explores words by category or related to theme, explores word relationships to understand concepts of common category (e.g. food, farm/wild animals, vehicles)</li> </ul>	Understand and use increasingly complex vocabulary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Models using multiple words to explain ideas (e.g. "Another way of saying that is . . .", defining a new concept/idea)</li> <li>Points out multiple meanings of a word (e.g. wave in an ocean and wave goodbye)</li> </ul>	Use multiple words to explain ideas (e.g. when talking about primary caregiver says "mother/father")
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asks children to talk about how they feel about what is happening in the story</li> </ul>	Use words to express emotions (e.g. happy, sad, tired, scared)
<b>All ages</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Models the activities and articulates their importance for language and literacy development to parents and caregivers</li> </ul>	

Now, look at each early literacy component and do the same thing, putting checkmarks and plus signs.

## 9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

You may be surprised at how much you are already doing, or at how easily you may be able to support early literacy development through these strategies.

Remember, the strategies listed here are only examples. You may think of other strategies and activities to support the goals.

### Early Literacy Planning Tool Worksheet

Next, have a look at the Early Literacy Planning Tool Worksheet on the following two pages.

Downloadable Worksheet

Word <https://tinyurl.com/wjelplwkshtw>

PDF <https://tinyurl.com/wjelptwkshtp>

Using a book you have used or may use in storytime, fill in the sheet for the early literacy component of your choice. You will use this worksheet in tandem with the Early Literacy Planning Tool. As noted previously, the downloadable Early Literacy Planning Tool <https://tinyurl.com/elptool>

After the blank Worksheet is a sample of one that is filled in.

Here is the link to the filled-in example, if you like: Early Literacy Planning Tool Worksheet filled in sample <https://tinyurl.com/wjelptwkshtex>

### More Places to Look

WebJunction Self-Paced Course  
Applying the Early Literacy Planning Tool  
for each Early Literacy Component:

Phonological Awareness:

<https://tinyurl.com/wjelptphaw>

Print Awareness/Concepts:

<https://tinyurl.com/wjelptpraw>

Letter Knowledge:

<https://tinyurl.com/wjelptlk>

Vocabulary:

<https://tinyurl.com/wjelptvoc>

Background Knowledge:

<https://tinyurl.com/wjelptbk>

9. Early Literacy and Intentionality

# Early Literacy Planning Tool WORKSHEET<sup>1</sup>

This worksheet is a companion to the Early Literacy Planning Tool (ELPT). See the endnotes for directions on how to make use of it to be intentional about planning your storytimes.

<b>ELPT Component:</b> <sup>2</sup>		
<b>ELPT Goal:</b>		
<b>Storytime Age Level(s)</b> <sup>3</sup>	<b>Your Strategy</b> <sup>4</sup> (column 1 of ELPT)	<b>Children's Behavior</b> <sup>5</sup> (column 2 of ELPT)
B – 18 months		
18 – 36 months		
36 – 60 months		
<b>Storytime Item</b> <sup>6</sup> (book, song, movement activity, flannel board, craft, etc.):		
<b>Activity</b> <sup>7</sup> (What you are doing with the item. How could you make it more interactive?)		

### How to use the worksheet

- <sup>1</sup> This worksheet is derived from the “tip sheets” developed by the VIEWS2 research team and the WebJunction Supercharged Storytimes pilot program.  
We all think and plan differently. You may fill in this form in any order. The goal is to make a connection between how you are using an item in your storytime and one of the early literacy components.
- <sup>2</sup> Select one of the early literacy components from the Early Literacy Planning Tool to highlight in your storytime.
- <sup>3</sup> You may have more than one age level in your storytimes. Identify strategies for each age level and do your best to incorporate activities that address all ages present at storytime.
- <sup>4</sup> Identify one strategy as you begin your intentional planning related to the early literacy component and goal. You are not limited to the examples listed in the ELPT as long as it supports the goal. You may add more strategies as you become more comfortable making connections between activities and the early literacy components.
- <sup>5</sup> These are the behaviors you look for in the children as a result of the early literacy strategies you are using.
- <sup>6</sup> There is a wide range of items you can choose for your storytime. Use things you like, that the children like, that are appropriate for the age level, and that work well in a group.
- <sup>7</sup> Describe what you plan to do with the item you have chosen. Consider how you might make it more interactive. This may include interactivity between you and the children and/or facilitating interactivity between the children and their parents/caregivers.



## Early Literacy Planning Tool WORKSHEET<sup>1</sup>

This worksheet is a companion to the Early Literacy Planning Tool (ELPT). See the endnotes for directions on how to make use of it to be intentional about planning your storytimes.

<b>ELPT Component:<sup>2</sup></b>	<i>Phonological Awareness</i>	
<b>ELPT Goal:</b>	<i>Children demonstrate phonological awareness, the ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words</i>	
<b>Storytime Age Level(s)<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Your Strategy<sup>4</sup></b> (column 1 of ELPT)	<b>Children's Behavior<sup>5</sup></b> (column 2 of ELPT)
B – 18 months		
18 – 36 months		
36 – 60 months	<i>Builds on rhyming pairs in books by encouraging children to come up with new rhymes, including nonsense words</i>  <i>Encourages children to say the second word of a rhyming pair using books</i>	<i>Begin to identify words that rhyme, completes familiar rhyming word, produces original rhymes</i>
<b>Storytime Item<sup>6</sup></b> (book, song, movement activity, flannel board, craft, etc.):		
<i>Llama, Llama, Red Pajama by Anna Dewdney</i>		
<b>Activity<sup>7</sup></b> (What you are doing with the item. How could you make it more interactive?)		
<i>I will read the story through. Then I will come back to a page with rhyming words such as soon and tune. I will say that this page has some words that rhyme, they sound alike at the end of the word. See if you can hear two words that rhyme.</i>		
<i>I read the words emphasizing soon and tune. Then I ask, What rhymes with soon?</i>		
<i>Give them a chance to respond or tell them the answer</i>		
<i>Sing the rhyming song—Soon, tune, these words rhyme . . .</i>		
<i>Have children come up with another word that rhymes with soon. Sing song again.</i>		



## 10. Early Literacy Tips for Parents and Caregivers

So, now YOU have made connections between early literacy and ways you share books and other activities in storytimes.

Now it's time to share this information with the parents and caregivers as well.

### Why?

It is important to share early literacy information with the parents and caregivers because they are the ones who are with the children every day. When parents and caregivers understand the importance of these activities, they are more likely to continue doing them with their children.

### More Places to Look

*Storytimes for Everyone*

Chapter 12: Early Literacy Asides

Chapter 11: Storytime Extras

Mel's Desk Tips on Early Literacy Messages

<https://tinyurl.com/meleltips>

Storytime Share

<http://www.earlylit.net/read-storytime-share>

WebJunction Supercharged Storytimes

Self-Paced Course Early Literacy Tips

<https://tinyurl.com/wjeltips>

The public library is a great place to share this information. We are a bastion for informal learning and lifelong learning.

Many parents may not be aware of the important role they play to help their children enter school ready to learn to read. Yet, we can assure them that we are not talking about formally teaching their children to read. We are talking about laying a strong foundation so that when children are taught to read, they are ready. AND . . . we can show them ways to support their children's language development in enjoyable ways!

### How?

One of the ways we can share early literacy information is by offering early literacy tips during our storytimes. An early literacy tip, or aside, is a couple of sentences, taking about 10 to 15 seconds, to articulate the connection between an activity we are doing in our storytime and early literacy. Cheryl in Currituck County has the tip projected as part of her storytime Powerpoint. She has the adults read the tips along with her.

By going through the process in the Early Literacy section of this *Manual* where you used the worksheet Intentionality: Early Literacy Practices and Components Working Together and the Early Literacy Planning Tool Worksheet on **page X**, you have become intentional about the connection between early literacy and some of the things you do in storytime.

You can see that books and other items are quite rich in that we can relate any of these items to any of several early literacy components depending on what we do with them or how we talk about them. That leaves lots of room for choice for what to share a tip on with the adults.

Let's look at what makes an EFFECTIVE early literacy tip. We want the tip to connect what we are doing to early literacy and to later reading. Articulating the connection motivates the adults to continue to do activities at home.

## 10. Early Literacy Tips for Parents and Caregivers

To recap from the Early Literacy and You Overview page 80:

### Early Literacy and Later Reading

There are three major skill areas needed to be a successful reader by third grade:

- Decoding—recognizing words and sounding them out
- Comprehension—understanding what you read
- Fluency—reading text accurately, quickly, and with expression, building on both decoding and comprehension

Researchers have found that phonological awareness, print awareness and letter knowledge most directly support decoding. A strong vocabulary also helps children be able to recognize words as they try to sound them out.

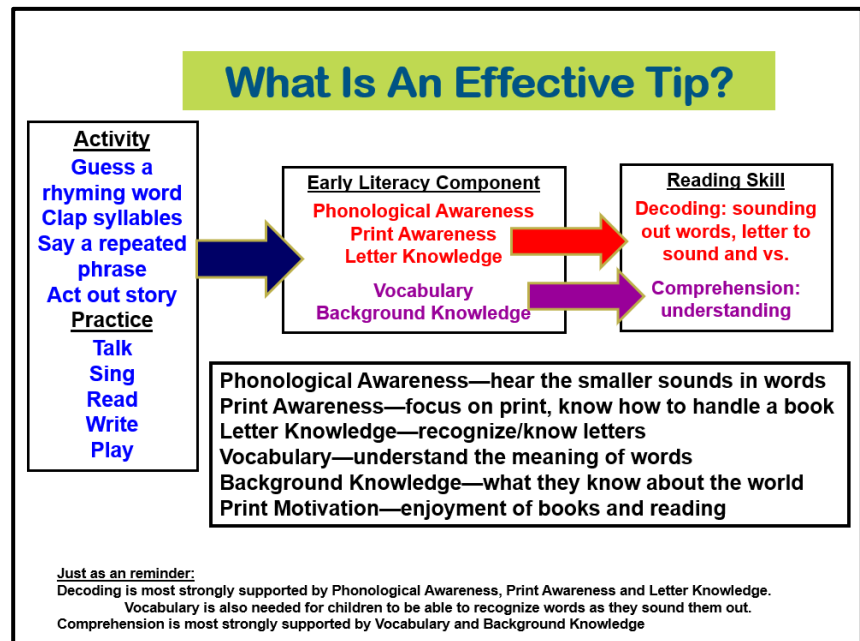
Vocabulary and background knowledge most directly support comprehension, understanding what they are reading.

Children need ALL the early literacy components starting from birth to be good readers.

This information helps us as we develop our early literacy tips and help parents and caregivers see the connections to later reading.

This diagram shows the connections and the sequence, from the activity we are doing to early literacy, to later reading.

In the tip, you may choose to use the easier description of the early literacy component terms or you can use both the explanation and the term. You will see some examples below.



I learned from a colleague one way to write an early literacy tip using the “When we . . .” structure. You are not required to use this structure. However, it may be a good jumping-off point. The “when we” gives the sense that we are all in this together, which makes it not feel condescending, but rather that we are sharing some information. It also solidifies the connections.

## 10. Early Literacy Tips for Parents and Caregivers

So, the structure is:

**When we . . .** and we insert the activity,  
**we help children . . .**

**This helps them . . .** here we either say the name of the component or explain it  
**which will later help them . . .** and you choose sounding out words or understanding what they will read.

### The “When we . . .” Format

**“When we** *[insert activity]*, **we help children** \_\_\_\_.

**This helps them** *[explain skill]* **which will later help them** *[choose one: sound out words or understand what they read when they learn to read]*.

### Let’s look at an example:

Let’s say that there is a book that has a less familiar word. For example, in *The Wonderful Book* by Leonid Gore, on one page it says “The mice scampered away.” However, the picture on that page does not show the mice running away. As I read this book, I might say, “The mice scampered away. They ran away.” So, I did not replace the word scampered with ran because then the children will have never heard the word scampered. After I have finished reading the book, I could point out to the adults that I let the children hear the word scampered, but I did explain the word briefly. Then I could say this tip.

### The “When we . . .” Format

**“When we** explain a word, rather than replace a hard word with an easier one, **we help children** learn new words. **This helps** *build their vocabulary* **which will later help them** *understand what they read when they learn to read.*

Here are some video clips of early literacy tips: Saroj’s videos of tips <http://www.earlylit.net/videos>  
Webjunction Supercharged Storytimes Vocabulary Mari Nowitz <https://tinyurl.com/maritipvocab>  
Print Awareness Mari Nowitz <https://tinyurl.com/maritippraw>  
Using a Tip Jar Mari Nowitz <https://tinyurl.com/maritipjar>

Writing, practicing, and sharing tips in storytimes can be a bit daunting and may take some time to get used to. I urge you to persevere. You will find your own comfort level, your own way of conveying the information, and your own voice. You may find writing out your tip helpful. Then be sure to say it aloud. The way we write and the way we speak are different. So, you can

1. Write it
2. Read it
3. Edit it to the way you would say it
4. Write what you say!

It is important to remember that parents and caregivers are motivated to do these activities at home once they are aware of their importance for later reading.

The example above is what I call an Example Tip. You are sharing the tip around something you are demonstrating in the storytime, an example.

## 10. Early Literacy Tips for Parents and Caregivers

Another kind of tip is the Empower Tip. This is usually given at the end of storytime and may be supported with a handout. You offer ideas of ways they can support the same early literacy component you highlighted in the example tip with something they can do at home.

When you write your empower tip, you are thinking about what parents and caregivers do with their children when not in storytime. So, they eat, cook together, play together, go to the grocery store, do laundry, go to a clinic or doctor's office, have a bath, wake-up and going to sleep routines, and more. So, you would suggest ways that the adults could support that early literacy component doing any of these activities.

Feel free to read through and use this document *What Can I Say?* which has 15 pages of early literacy tips. They are divided by type of tip (Explain, Example, and Empower).

<https://tinyurl.com/eltipswhatcanisay>

You have used the Early Literacy Planning Tool Worksheet. The Worksheet below builds on the previous Worksheet by adding a space for an early literacy tip.

Downloadable versions

Early Literacy Planning Tool Worksheet with Tip

Word <https://tinyurl.com/wjelptwkshttipw>

PDF <https://tinyurl.com/wjelptwkshttip>

A thought from Cheryl Carollo, Currituck County

*When we first learned about incorporating early literacy tips in our storytimes, I was uncomfortable doing them. But after practicing, I became more comfortable. Seeing how attentive the adults in my storytimes were to what I was saying, and seeing some of the "Aha moments" that some of the parents/grandparents were having when I was teaching the tips, was so wonderful!*

## 10. Early Literacy Tips for Parents and Caregivers

# Early Literacy Planning Tool WORKSHEET<sup>1</sup>

This worksheet is a companion to the Early Literacy Planning Tool (ELPT). See the endnotes for directions on how to make use of it to be intentional about planning your storytimes.

<b>ELPT Component:</b> <sup>2</sup>		
<b>ELPT Goal:</b>		
<b>Storytime Age Level(s)</b> <sup>3</sup>	<b>Your Strategy</b> <sup>4</sup> (column 1 of ELPT)	<b>Children's Behavior</b> <sup>5</sup> (column 2 of ELPT)
B – 18 months		
18 – 36 months		
36 – 60 months		
<b>Storytime Item</b> <sup>6</sup> (book, song, movement activity, flannel board, craft, etc.):		
<b>Activity</b> <sup>7</sup> (What you are doing with the item? How could you make it more interactive?):		
<b>Tip to share with parents/caregivers</b> <sup>8</sup> :		

## 10. Early Literacy Tips for Parents and Caregivers

### How to use the worksheet

This worksheet is derived from the “tip sheets” developed by the VIEWS2 research team and the WebJunction Supercharged Storytimes pilot program.

We all think and plan differently. You may fill in this form in any order. The goal is to make a connection between how you are using an item in your storytime and one of the early literacy components.

<sup>2</sup> **ELPT Component:** Select one of the early literacy components from the Early Literacy Planning Tool to highlight in your storytime.

<sup>3</sup> **Storytime Age Level(s):** You may have more than one age level in your storytimes. Identify strategies for each age level and do your best to incorporate activities that address all ages present at storytime.

<sup>4</sup> **Your Strategy:** Identify one strategy as you begin your intentional planning related to the early literacy component and goal. You are not limited to the examples listed in the ELPT as long as it supports the goal. You may add more strategies as you become more comfortable making connections between activities and the early literacy components.

<sup>5</sup> **Children’s Behavior:** These are the behaviors you look for in the children as a result of the early literacy strategies you are using.

<sup>6</sup> **Storytime Item:** There is a wide range of items you can choose for your storytime. Use things you like, or that the children like, that are appropriate for the age level, and that work well in a group.

<sup>7</sup> **Activity:** Describe what you plan to do with the item you have chosen. Consider how you might make it more interactive. This may include interactivity between you and the children and/or facilitating interactivity between the children and their parents/caregivers.

<sup>8</sup> **Tip to share with parents/caregivers:** Write the early literacy tip you will share with parents/caregivers. Remember to “connect the dots”—from your activity to early literacy to later reading.

## 11. Storytime Elements

In this section, we will look at each of the storytime elements—books, songs, movement activities, flannel boards, puppets, toys—how we choose them, how we interact around them, and how to adapt for different ages/stages. In order to do so, we need to better understand the “context” of storytime, how we make storytime programs inclusive and welcoming to all.

### Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity

Before we look at each of these individual elements, it is important to reflect on how we share them from a cultural perspective. We want to make sure that we select materials and plan programs that act as both mirrors and windows for children and their families.

By mirrors, I mean that children see themselves and their experiences reflected in books. By windows, I mean that books expand on children’s experiences and offer new experiences. Books we use show people of diverse backgrounds and situations.

We need to

- Acknowledge societal values—groups may have different norms
- Build relationships
- Learn about groups in your community
- Develop authentic community building
- Recognize the power of language, including that, in libraries, we tend to use more academic language, some groups use more casual language
- Value respectfulness
- Listen carefully, non-judgmentally

To support equity in storytimes we can

- Create inclusive spaces
- Incorporate the value of storytelling
- Make intentional book choices
- Encourage conversations with families about what will help them feel more comfortable in the library and in programs
- Encourage conversations with families about ways they can participate and have input into the planning and delivery of storytimes

### More Places to Look

Even when a community is all White, or nearly so, it is important to address race in society

Article: What If All the Kids Are White? Multicultural/Anti-Bias Education with White Children by Louise Derman-Sparks <https://tinyurl.com/dermankidswhite>

Book: *What If All the Kids are White? Anti-Bias Multicultural Education with Young Children and Families* by Louise Derman-Sparks. Teachers College Press.

How to Talk to Kids about Racism: An Age-by-Age Guide <https://tinyurl.com/racismbyage>

Let’s Talk About Race in Storytimes Webinar from Washington State Library by Jessica Bratt <https://tinyurl.com/wslrace>

Video about 18:40 starts practical applications to storytimes

**Resources from Jessica Bratt, Youth Services Manager, Grand Rapids (MI) Public Library:**

Talking About Race at Storytime <https://tinyurl.com/brattracest>

Baby Storytime with Racial Awareness Tip <https://tinyurl.com/brattbabyst>

Family Storytime with Racial Awareness Tip <https://tinyurl.com/brattfamst>

Talking About Race: Quick Staff Coaching Guide <https://tinyurl.com/brattcoach>

Steps 2 Success Entry Points in Talking About Race <https://tinyurl.com/brattentrypts>

Five Myths of Talking About Race with Your Child <https://tinyurl.com/mythstalkingrace>

100 Race-Conscious Things You Can Say to Your Child to Advance Racial Justice <https://tinyurl.com/100racetalk>

## 11. Storytime Elements

In the WebJunction course on Supercharged Storytimes, CiKeithia Pugh of Seattle Public Library has a presentation in Week 5 entitled “Supercharged Storytimes Through an Equity Lens: Building Community Connections.” This is a good introduction and overview of ways we can rethink library services and storytime programming practices. <https://tinyurl.com/wjequitylens>

Equity, inclusion, and diversity apply to all groups in many ways. We must be aware that each person’s story is unique, not defined only by what may be concluded from appearances. People have multiple stories and can identify with aspects of several groups at once. The more we develop relationships with people in our community, the more we are able to learn, to be responsive, and to be a catalyst for enriching all. For example, you may become aware of families who have children on the autism spectrum or who have conditions we can include in our programs and services once we become aware of ways to support children and their families. It is often the parent/caregiver who can offer us the best advice.

This Manual does not go into depth on the topic of storytime for children with special needs. However, there are many resources both books from ALA Editions and online where you can find information such as WebJunction and InfoPeople.

### More Places to Look

Webjunction webinars on helping children with disabilities feel comfortable in the library.

<https://tinyurl.com/wjdiabilities>

Serving the Underserved: Children with Disabilities at Your Library

<https://tinyurl.com/wjunderserved>

Serving Library Users on the Autism Spectrum: Project PALS

<https://tinyurl.com/wjautism>

Taking Autism to the Library has some tips for storytimes (NC State)

<https://tinyurl.com/nctipsautism>

Using Sign Language ALSC Blogs

<https://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/2008/10/using-sign-language-in-early-literacy-programs/>

<https://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/2018/10/american-sign-language-celebration/>

### Storytime Environment

Storytimes are delivered in a variety of settings such as in a separate, cozy storytime room, in a large meeting room, in the children’s area of the library, in an open space in the library, at an outreach location such as a child care center or community center. No matter where the storytime occurs, we want to make sure that the space feels welcoming, that it is as conducive as possible to helping children focus on the storytime content, that it includes the parents and caregivers, and that it supports interactivity. As you are planning and each time you set up for a storytime, it is helpful to walk into the space as if you are an attending adult. Then go back and walk in bending lower or on your knees, as if you are at the height of a young child. What do you see? How does it feel? What might you want to adjust?

We often have a table upfront for the storytime books and materials we need. Some storytime providers sit on the floor, some sit on a low chair, some on an adult-size chair, and some stand up, or some combination of these. You can decide depending on your own comfort level, the size of the group, and the age of the children. You may have carpet squares to designate spots for participants to sit. It is sometimes helpful to put painter’s tape on the floor as a line the children sit behind. You may not find this necessary. The physical set-up conveys cues as to what is expected. For example, if you have chairs set up at the back of the room, then parents are more likely to sit in the back, separately from the children. Having children and adults sit together increases the likelihood of everyone participating together.



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Posting words to songs and rhymes, either on a flipchart or projected on a screen, often increases adult participation and can also support print awareness. Having a display of books and other items they can check out along with handouts is a great way to support continued reading and language fun at home. A handout may have the words to songs you did in storytime so they have them to continue singing at home. I have found that when I have used the handout during the storytime instead of having the words on a flipchart or screen, the adults are all looking down and fiddling with the paper while trying to do the motions with their children. There is much more participation when they are all looking up at the words. The handout can be passed out at the end of the storytime as a take-home reminder.

Use the Library Walk-Through Observation Checklist as a tool to think about your spaces.

<https://tinyurl.com/wjlibenvobs>

CiKeithia Pugh’s presentation on Welcoming Spaces and Collections from WebJunction’s Supercharging Storytimes Through an Equity Lens: Welcoming Spaces is a helpful guide.

<https://tinyurl.com/wjequitylensenv>

Now that you have a sense of environment, both physical and social, let’s look at the storytime elements themselves.

### Books

Books are the “bread and butter” of storytime. There are many reasons this is so. Traditionally, certainly, books have been the focus of preschool storytimes, and historically children might have heard four books in a storytime with not much time devoted to other language activities. Nowadays, we include more than books, recognizing that many activities support children’s language development. We also allow more time for interaction around the books we share because children will come away with a better understanding of the characters and what happened in the book. Interaction may take the form of informal talking about the book, movement activities, and a variety of strategies for retelling and telling stories.

#### More Places to Look

Interview with author Pat Mora on using diverse books <https://tinyurl.com/moradiversebooks>

Talking to Kids About Race: Racially Diverse Storytime Books Jbrary  
<https://jbrary.com/diverse-storytime-books/>

Let’s look at how we might decide what books to choose.

- The first requirement of the books you choose is that YOU like the book.
- We think the children will like it
- It suits the age-level you are targeting
- It works well in a group
- The format of the book and its illustrations are clear and inviting
- How does it support inclusion and diversity or ways you can talk use it to talk about inclusion and diversity
- It has elements that make it interactive
- It has an understandable sequence or plot

The chart Young Children: Stages and Books <https://tinyurl.com/bookstages> guides you in choosing books that suit particular age-levels. It also summarizes the connection between the developmental stages of children, the books that are most engaging for them, ways we can share the books, and connections to early literacy.

The organization of the chart allows you to see a progression, which can help you when you have children of varying ages in your storytime.

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### **What books work well in a group?**

Many books work well one-on-one, but not so well in a group. The size of the book needs to be taken into consideration in relation to the size of your group. If your group is small, you can pass the book among the participants. You can also use small books as part of “storytime sets” of books for a read together time. Even with standard-size picture books, the amount of small detail in the pictures can affect the engagement with the book. If the details in the pictures are needed to understand what is happening in the book, then it is best left for one-on-one sharing. You could certainly put it on display for families to check out and read at home. Children can often sit for a longer book or one with a more involved plot when sharing it one-on-one, on a lap. In a group setting, we hold the book face-out to a number of children so it is not as intimate an interaction. Also, in groups, children are easily distracted. Choosing books with simpler plots and repeated phrases often help keep their attention.

### **What about the book format and illustrations?**

For babies, it is best if the illustrations are very clear and that there is a stark contrast in color between the objects in the picture and the background. They focus more on bright colors than on pastels. They also like clear photographs and pictures of faces.

Toddlers still do best with clear pictures but the illustrations have more objects in them and more detail. You may get more responses from them when the illustrations and plot have situations that are familiar to the children.

Preschoolers often like to pore over the details in illustrations and notice details even if they are not mentioned in the text. Again, if the details in the pictures are small and are essential to understanding the book, then the book is best left to a one-on-one interaction. However, if the details can be easily pointed out or are not essential to comprehension of the story, then these are appropriate to share in a group.

### **What are the elements that make a book interactive?**

Being interactive around a book means engaging the children in the book as you share it. How you do so, depends on the age of the children and the way the book is written and illustrated. There are aspects of books that lend themselves to interactivity and make it easier for children to become engaged. Certainly, the subject of the book plays a part in this because children are often interested in certain topics like animals, vehicles, the world around them. Books with rhythmic language, repetition of words, phrases or sentences, and books that have rhyme or alliteration lend themselves to our being interactive with the children, keeping their interest.

Have a look at Jbrary’s blog on repetition which includes specific books and songs and looks at different ways to repeat with a storytime and over different storytimes.

<https://tinyurl.com/jbraryrepetition>

Here is an article “Repeat After Me! Repetition and Early Literacy Development” Children and Libraries Summer/Fall 2013 <https://tinyurl.com/calrepetition>

### **What kinds of plots work well?**

Because, in a group setting, we cannot engage each individual child, children may not grasp the meaning of books with involved plots. Books with more involved plots often have a lot of text on each page. If the children in the storytime have a lot of experience sitting for books, you may be able to use books with more involved plots. You will be able to decide once you get to know your participants.

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Many books that we consider simple do not have a plot—a problem to be solved with a conclusion. Some books are what we call episodic, each page with a different, separate instance. For example, *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* by Bill Martin, Jr. is considered an episodic book. There is no real plot, but there is a sequence. Another example would be *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats where the child finds different ways to have fun in the snow. These books are good choices for younger children. If needed, you can hurry through a page or even sometimes skip a page and the understanding of the book is not affected.

Other books have simple plots and some repetition, such as *Blue Sea* by Robert Kalan or *William's Winter Nap* by Linda Ashman. Longer plot books that work well include *Thank You, Omu!* by Oge Mora, books by Keiko Kasza, Anna Dewdney, and Karma Wilson. Humorous books also work well, books by Mo Willem's and Jan Thomas' books, for example.

As you are choosing books for your storytime, keep these options in mind:

- Books with simple plots
- Songbooks—picture book with each line of a song illustrated  
Herrick District (MI) Library <https://tinyurl.com/kdlsongbooks>  
Santa Clara County Library District Singable Books for Storytime  
<https://tinyurl.com/sccldsongvooks>
- Books that allow children to act out motions
- Flap books or pop-up books
- Concept books (ABC, counting, shapes, colors, etc.) that are interesting
- Books with large, realistic illustrations for younger children, can be less realistic for preschoolers
- Books with clear photographs
- Books with rhymes and repetition
- Books with humorous characters or situations
- Books that allow children to build on their own experiences
- Books that depict authentic experiences of diverse groups
- Factual books that support their curiosity and help them learn about the world  
<https://jbrary.com/nonfiction-storytime-books/>  
Some factual books to explore from Saroj Ghoting <https://tinyurl.com/factualsg>

### More Places to Look

Dinosaurs, Dogs and Dump Trucks: Informational Text for Our Youngest Readers by Lisa Sensale Yazdian, Boone Public Library (KY)

<https://tinyurl.com/factualbpj>

Using Factual Books

<https://tinyurl.com/usingfactbks>

Factual Books and Early Literacy Tip

<https://tinyurl.com/factualelt>

*Storytimes for Everyone* Chapter 5: Using Information Books with Young Children

## 11. Storytime Elements

You can explore the books on these lists in addition to looking through your own collection.  
Suggestions from Amber Jarvis, Moyock Public Library  
<https://tinyurl.com/bksugg>  
Jbrary Favorite Storytime Books by Year Published  
<https://tinyurl.com/jbraryfav>  
Jbrary Favorite Books for Babies  
<https://tinyurl.com/jbrrybabyfav1>  
<https://tinyurl.com/jbrarybabyfav2>  
Jbrary Favorite Books for Toddlers  
<https://tinyurl.com/jbrarytodnf>  
<https://tinyurl.com/jbrarytodfav>  
Favorite Storytime Books by Year  
<https://jbrary.com/2019-favourite-storytime-books/>

### Ways to Share Books

When we think about ways to share books, we think about two aspects. One is how we share books in storytimes, in a group setting. The other is how parents and caregivers may share books with their children one-on-one. We want to be aware of these differences so that when we speak with parents or demonstrate with books, we can mention how it might look to share books at home.

Because children at different ages/stages have different skills and abilities, we need to take their development into consideration. In Chapter 17 you will see information on child development which will help you with nuances as you grow your storytimes. These areas take into consideration their thinking abilities, language abilities, physical development, and social skills.

Before we look at individual age levels, let's look at ways we can be interactive around books. It is common to think that we simply read the text when we share a book in storytime. Reading the text is certainly one aspect of sharing books! However, we also expand on the text and the illustrations. Why? It makes the book more engaging for the children. In addition, researchers have found that when we help children relate what is happening to their own experiences, they understand the book better. When they chime in with a repeated phrase or retell some of the story after we have read it, it helps them remember the story and internalize it.

Here is a presentation on Interactive Reading that might help you as you share books.  
<https://tinyurl.com/sginteractiverdg>

Here is a handout that summarizes interactive reading <https://tinyurl.com/interactrdghandout>  
In addition, the storytime videos that have been noted show storytime providers sharing books in a variety of ways.

You may also have heard the term dialogic reading which takes place one-on-one with a child. The adult follows the child's lead and does not read the text, but instead has a conversation around the pictures in the book. This supports print motivation, the child's enjoyment around the book, print awareness, knowing how books work, vocabulary as you talk about new words or add new words, and background knowledge, relating what is happening in the book to the child's experiences, and building their knowledge about the world.

Here is a handout for dialogic reading <https://tinyurl.com/dialrdghandout>

### More Places to Look

Cooperative Children's Book Center  
Multicultural Books  
<https://tinyurl.com/cbcmult>

Diverse Book Finder  
<https://diversebookfinder.org/our-categories/>

A Diverse Book List for the Under Five Set  
*School Library Journal*  
<https://tinyurl.com/sljdive>

Everyday Diversity  
<http://everydaydiversity.blogspot.com/>  
(not all work well for storytimes)

30 Days of Diverse Books for  
Preschoolers What Do We Do All Day?  
Blog <https://tinyurl.com/psdiverse>

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Babies don't have the language ability to interact around books in the same way. Here is a handout explaining the SHARE STEP technique of sharing books with babies that was developed by Dr. John Hutton, a pediatrician at Cincinnati Children's Hospital. You may offer this handout to parents and caregivers on ways to share books with their babies.

Sharing books with babies handout: SHARE STEP <https://tinyurl.com/sharestephandout>

Here are some examples of ways to share books with children of different levels:

### All Ages

Keep the interactions around the book enjoyable. You need not read all the words on a page. If children are clearly not interested, it is fine to stop reading in the middle of a book and move on to another activity. This also models for adults that they can stop in the middle of a book, and not turn book sharing time into a power struggle!

It is good to make note of books that do not go over so well. Sometimes it is just that particular group on that day. You may try it once or twice more with some adaptations. If it still does not go over so well, then best not to use it again.

Children often love hearing the same book over and over again. Their brains are programmed to learn through repetition. For that reason, you may repeat the same book in different ways in one storytime (read the book, then a flannel board of it, or use puppets to retell it), or repeat the same book over several storytimes. In addition, if you can gather several copies of some books for your storytime, you can encourage parents and caregivers to check the book out and continue to read it at home.

Ask parents what their children's favorite books are and incorporate them into different storytimes. The children often get SO excited. They may even help you read the book in its entirety they had read it so often! Still make sure that these books are ones you would like other children to hear and that they work well in a group.

Add words, words that describe an object (wet, sticky, enormous, bumpy), use action words (climb, fly yell), words for feelings of a character, location words (above, beside, below, behind), and words for time (next, after, later), even if they are not in the text. Expand on what the children notice or seem interested in.

### Babies

In storytimes, the parents and caregivers are holding their babies. The storytime provider is the facilitator between the baby and their caring adult. Babies can see only about 12" in front of them, so they are really focused on their caregiver. That means that we need to provide opportunities for the adults to be joining in with the book we are sharing.

Babies will listen to the adult longer if the adult speaks in "parentese," that high pitched voice with elongated vowels, and very clear speech. This is something you can demonstrate and let parents know that it builds children's language until they are about 10 months old.

One way we might engage the adults to interact with their children is to use a big book with just a few words on each page where the adult can easily follow along, saying the text aloud along with you. It is helpful if the book also makes it easy to add motions. The adults can do these motions on or with the baby, or the baby can watch the adult doing the motions. The book *I Love Animals* by Flora McDonnell would be a good example of this. Having the adults say the sounds of the animals, allowing time for babies to babble back, is another way to add engagement around the book.

Big Books available in EARLS (Big books work for storytimes of all ages.)

<https://tinyurl.com/earlsbigbks>

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You can also use sets of small board books and pass out a copy to each family. In this situation, the adults get a chance to practice what you have demonstrated. Many parents simply read the one or two words on a page of a board book. You can demonstrate using the pictures in the books as “conversation starters,” so that the baby hears more different words, building vocabulary and knowledge about the world around them. It also builds the bonding and positive relationships between the adult and the child.

Sets of Board Books available in EARLS <https://tinyurl.com/earlsboarbkssets>

### Toddlers

Many toddlers need to come right up to a book to see and understand it. The board book sets work well for toddlers also. We may ask “what” questions while pointing to objects in a picture. Allow five to twelve seconds for toddlers to respond. You can then tell them the answer and have them repeat it. “What do you see on this page?” is a harder question than “What’s this?” as you point to a specific picture, because they are looking at so many objects and need to process all that information.

Flap books, pop-up books, books with sounds, or texture relate to the playfulness around books and reading. They help build enjoyment around books and reading, help children learn about the world around them, develop their print awareness as you point out words and pictures, and background knowledge as you talk about things in the book that help them learn about the world around them. Pausing in anticipation before you raise a flap or turn to a popup page adds to their delight.

Songbooks, books with pictures to songs often draw children in. You can sing the song first together and then share the book of the song to make it easier for them to join in. Sing slowly; toddlers need time to make the brain connections that allow them to join in.

Some toddlers do not yet have a lot of expressive language, so you can think of ways to have them participate by adding motions to a book from a sitting position. You can build on that following the book with motions that they can do while standing or moving around the room. Toddlers have more coordination with large or gross motor skills, such as the whole arm or leg, rather than small motor actions such as moving each finger individually.

With the book *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle, you could have the toddlers, in a seated position, move their whole arm in an undulating motion as the caterpillar eats through each item, or put fingers to their mouths as each item is eaten. After the book, they may imitate you flying like a butterfly, either standing in place using their arms like wings or flying around the room.

### Two-Year-Olds

Books for two-year-olds often may have a simple plot. You need not read every word on the page. Twos have a bit more language and coordination than toddlers and more coordination, but it still takes them several seconds of pausing time to make connections in their minds between what you are saying and what they should do or say. It helps if they can imitate you. So, if you are involving them by having them say certain sounds in a book or make certain motions, it helps to practice those before you even start sharing the book. Repeat several times till they get comfortable. Also, it helps to keep actions simple. When having children repeat what you say, it may just be one word, not a whole phrase. For example, with the book *Blue Sea* by Robert Kalan, a repeated phrase is “Ouch! Good-bye [big] fish,” with the size of the fish changing throughout the book. For two-year-olds, I would encourage them to say “Ouch!” while older children could say the full phrase.

Some advice for parents on sharing books with toddlers and twos from the Hanen Centre:

<https://tinyurl.com/hanentodtwos>



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### Preschoolers

Preschoolers are at a point where their language is catching up to their thoughts. They are more able to describe what they think and feel, especially if their families have given them the skills and language to do so. Encouraging them to relate what is happening in a book to their own experiences makes the book more personal to them and helps their comprehension. For example, before or after reading *Dear Zoo* by Rod Campbell, you may ask the children if they have ever been to a zoo. Books can be a jumping off point for talking about how the world works, how we behave, developing empathy, and learning about people and things not in their immediate surroundings.

Situations in books may pose a problem and before finishing the book, we can have children think about what they might do. By involving the children more in discussions, we also have to think, during our planning time, about how to manage the conversations so that children have a chance to speak. Some storytime providers do a “pair and share” where children and adults partner up to share their thoughts. This technique also supports children who are shy to speak in a larger group but will speak one-on-one with their parent or caregiver or with another child. You will also want to plan for ways to bring the conversation back to the story in the book. So, for example, if you had asked the children for ideas on what they might do to solve the problem presented in the book, then you might say after some conversation, *Those are all interesting and thoughtful ways to solve the problem. Now let’s see what the author thought of*, and then read the book. The discussion can take place before you start the book or when you come to a certain part in the book when the problem has been described.

Preschoolers are very proud of what they know and are eager to learn more. Using factual books, even if you don’t read the whole book, can be very engaging. They also love to learn new words, whether with factual or storybooks. Giving them a chance to say the new word and use it builds their confidence.

Having preschoolers retell stories and act them out is yet another way to help them internalize the story. They may decide to elaborate on the story as well!

Children ages three to five are often able to express complicated thoughts and emotions. They try to make sense of their world. Some can talk quite a bit and will respond at length to a relatively simple question. Others won’t say much during the storytime itself but may share their thoughts with you individually before or after storytime. Preschoolers can not only follow your motions but respond creatively to your prompts. For example, going back to *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, after reading the book, you might say, *Let me see how you might go from being a little egg, to being a caterpillar, to being a cocoon, and then a butterfly*. You can repeat that sequence slowly as they decide for themselves how these stages of the sequence might look.

We can build on the eagerness of preschoolers to learn new words and information about the world around them. It is important to learn time before or after a book to let them share their experiences and ideas. If there are too many children to share individually, they can “share in pairs.”

#### More Places to Look

New York Public Library Raising the Bar  
Infant Read Aloud 1 Demo—good  
<https://tinyurl.com/nyplinread1>

Infant Read Aloud Demo 2—better  
<https://tinyurl.com/nyplinread2>

Toddler Read Aloud Demo 1—good  
<https://tinyurl.com/nypltodread1>

Toddler Read Aloud Demo 1—better  
<https://tinyurl.com/nypltodread2>

For more detail on different kinds and levels of questions:  
Hierarchy of Questions based on Bloom’s Taxonomy  
<https://tinyurl.com/bloomques>

## 11. Storytime Elements

The chart Young Children: Stages and Books <https://tinyurl.com/bookstages>

Pulls together the age of the child, what they do, the types of books they respond best to, ways we share books with them, and how we support early literacy.

### Sample page

Age	What They Do	Books	Sharing Books	Early Literacy Behaviors
Birth – 3 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise their heads briefly, turn head side to side</li> <li>Look around; look back and forth between 2 objects</li> <li>By 2 or 3 months some control over head when they are supported</li> <li>Things look fuzzy to them and they see best 8 – 12 inches from their eyes</li> <li>Prefer patterns to solid colors, sharp contrast in brightness between design and background</li> <li>Black or bright bold color on white background more interest than design in lighter color on white background</li> <li>Cannot manipulate objects voluntarily with their hands but will grasp tightly a finger or other object placed in their hands—grasping reflex</li> <li>By about 3 months, bring the object to their mouths to suck</li> <li>Pay attention when you speak to them, especially if it is “parentese” style.</li> <li>Cry, coo with vowel sounds coming first</li> <li>Turn head toward speaker</li> <li>Focus on faces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple large pictures or designs set against a contrasting background</li> <li>Designed to stand up</li> <li>Stiff cardboard books</li> <li>Zig-zag pages</li> <li>Black on White or White on Black by Tana Hoban</li> <li>Books of individual nursery rhymes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responding to baby is of utmost importance, encourage parents to do so</li> <li>Display books with bright bold illustrations along side the crib</li> <li>If baby likes to lie on the floor, book can be opened wide and placed on the floor</li> <li>Allow baby to choose to focus on the pictures or not so s/he won't become overstimulated</li> <li>Say nursery rhymes</li> <li>Sing songs</li> </ul>	<p><u>Print Motivation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read with your child from birth</li> <li>Read anything!</li> <li>Read with a cheerful, clear voice</li> <li>Don't worry if you child chews or bites on the book; “Oh this looks good, let's see what it is!”</li> </ul> <p><u>Phonological Awareness:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk clearly and slowly</li> <li>Sing songs; say rhymes</li> </ul> <p><u>Vocabulary:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk with your child</li> <li>Look at your child as you speak</li> <li>Speak slowly, clearly, in short sentences</li> <li>Speak using a slightly higher pitch</li> </ul> <p><u>Narrative Skills:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As you talk with your child, remember to leave time for your child to “talk” or babble back</li> </ul>
4 – 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become able to reach and grasp, if awkwardly</li> <li>Hold toy or small objects</li> <li>Into the mouth it goes! Hands, toys, everything</li> <li>Use hands to bang objects or wave them in the air</li> <li>Start to sit up freeing up both hands to manipulate objects</li> <li>Add consonant sounds to their cooing</li> <li>Engage in playful conversations (adult and child make sounds back and forth to each other)</li> <li>Repeat arm/ leg movement to cause an action to recur</li> <li>Reach for and grab toy</li> <li>Pull cloth from face</li> <li>Smile at own reflection in mirror</li> <li>Smile in response to speaker</li> <li>Bounce when standing and supported by adult</li> <li>Turn head when called by name</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple, bright pictures on contrasting background</li> <li>Cloth books, soft vinyl books—easy to grasp and pick up, washable</li> <li>Some cardboard books, but they may be a bit heavy for baby to handle on their own</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold baby and book now that the baby can hold up head</li> <li>Know that babies will grab the book and may not listen long—that's fine!</li> <li>Baby is getting to know books by chewing, sucking, shaking, and crumpling them. Books are one more thing to be explored.</li> <li>Try sharing books with baby on your lap and a toy in baby's hand.</li> <li>Babies enjoy listening to nursery rhymes, songs, fingerplays</li> <li>Follow baby's cues—ready to read or wants to stop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When your child coos or babbles, talk back to him/her</li> </ul> <p><u>Print Awareness:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share board books with your child</li> <li>Don't worry if your child chews or bites on the book</li> </ul> <p><u>Letter Knowledge:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give your child opportunities to look at things that are both the same and different. They love to look at all different kinds of faces, for example.</li> <li>Talk about things that are alike and different.</li> </ul>

Based on information from:

*Much More Than the ABCs: The Early Stages of Reading and Writing* by Judith A. Schickedanz (1999)

*Building Literacy with Love* by Betty Barton and Marilyn Segal (2005)

*Ages and Stages* by Karen Miller (2007)

Milestone Charts from [www.babycenter.com](http://www.babycenter.com)

How I Grow charts from zerotothree.org

### Young Children: Stages and Books

Please note: These are general statements.  
Each child develops differently.

Early Literacy Skills from Every Child Ready to Read @ your library®

Print Motivation: a child's interest in and enjoyment of books and reading

Phonological Awareness: ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds in words (rhyming, hearing words broken down into parts)

Vocabulary: knowing the names of things

Narrative Skills: ability to describe things and events, to retell stories (expressive language)

Print Awareness: knowing that print has meaning, how to handle a book, directions of print, environmental print

Letter Knowledge: same letter can look different, letters have names and represent sounds



## 11. Storytime Elements

### Songs, Rhymes, and Fingerplays

These three formats overlap. Many nursery rhymes are sung. Songs may be rhymes or not. In storytimes, they are often songs with actions. Fingerplays are rhymes that are spoken or sung with hand and finger motions to “act” them out.

You may notice that when we sing or have music, children are suddenly attentive. This resource from Carnegie Hall gives information on how music engages children.

<https://tinyurl.com/musicchildren>

### Choosing Songs and Rhymes

Jbrary has a helpful blog for new storytime providers on choosing rhymes and songs.

<https://tinyurl.com/jbrarychoosingsongs>

The resource books accompanying this *Manual* all have rhymes and songs for you to choose from, some in separate chapters, others as part of storytime plans.

Parents and caregivers are a great resource for songs and rhymes. You can ask them to share with you the songs and rhymes they do with their children at home.

### Ways to sing with young children

The Hanen Centre in Toronto has some good advice for parents/caregivers on ways they can sing with their children.

The full articles are here:

<https://tinyurl.com/hanensingbabies>

<https://tinyurl.com/hanensingtoddlers>

Don’t worry if you can’t sing well. Many parents are shy to sing because they feel like they can’t sing well. Hearing you singing encourages them, because they realize they don’t necessarily have to sing in tune.

There are different types of songs, some of which are easier to sing than others. The range of notes, the tempo, the rhythm, and repetition all make a difference in the difficulty of the song. Also, if children are already familiar with a song, that will obviously make it easier. A song like “Open, Shut, Them” is hard because there is not much repetition.” London Bridge” has repeated phrases and tunes repeated. “The Eensy Weensy Spider” (or “Itsy Bitsy Spider”) is hard because no lines are repeated; however, it is a song that children often already know. Zipper songs are songs that stay mostly the same and just certain words are changed in each verse. “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” is an example of this. The words stay the same, but in each verse the name of the animal and the sound the animal makes are changed. This makes it predictable and there is repetition for children to learn it more easily. Call and response songs such as “Down by the Bay” or “The Green Grass Grows All Around” offer an interactive way for storytime participants to engage in songs. The storytime provider says one line and then the participants (adults and children) repeat the line. If you have the words on a flipchart or projected, you can have the adults say the line the first time with you and then the children echo it.

### More Places to Look

Examples of Rhymes:

*Baby Rhyming Time* Chapter 7 Rhymes and More Rhymes

*Mother Goose on the Loose Updated*  
Chapter 7: Selecting Books, Rhymes, Songs and Felt Pieces

Resource A p. 149 + Songs and rhymes

Kididdles

<https://www.kididdles.com/lyrics/busy.html>

StoryBlocks

<https://www.storyblocks.org/about/>

King County (WA) Library System

<https://kcls.org/content/>

## 11. Storytime Elements

Piggy Back Songs take a familiar tune and put different words to it. This is often done with the tune of “Here We Go ‘Round the Mulberry Bush.” The original is “Here we go ‘round the mulberry bush, the mulberry bush, the mulberry bush. Here we go ‘round the mulberry bush, so early in the morning.” The song can be adapted to different themes. “This is the way we wash our clothes . . .” “This is the way we plant a seed . . .” “This is the way we pick up the toys . . .”

### Ways to Share Songs

Sometimes storytime providers like to use recorded music. If you do so, make sure the tempo is suited to the abilities of the children participating. Be sure to sing along saying your words clearly so they understand the words better. If they are doing motions to the song, it helps to practice the movements in order first and then give them a verbal heads up about what is coming next. When you sing the song without the music, you are able to vary the tempo to the children’s abilities, both slowing it down to make it easier, but also picking up the pace to make it more challenging for older children.

You might pause to see if young children will join in. For example, with “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star,” sing it once through. The second time around, you might pause just slightly before “star” and see if they fill in the word.

When doing songs, be sure to repeat them. How many times will depend on the reactions of the children and how much repetition there is within each song. For example, in “Bumpin’ Up and Down in My Little Red Wagon” by Raffi, the chorus is repeated, so doing the whole song twice would probably be enough. For songs with no repetition within the song, you may need to repeat it three times. Watch for the comfort level of the participants.

The kinds of motions you put to the words of a song also change its difficulty. For babies, the parents will be doing the song on or with the baby. Toddlers enjoy trying on their own and can use large muscles like the whole arm or leg or body more easily than just fingers. Preschoolers are more adept at using small muscles, like fingers.

The way you give instructions for the song can also make a difference in how much participation you get. It is helpful to talk through the rhyme and show the motions slowly, then have children join in with the motions as you sing or say the song or rhyme slowly, then go at the normal pace. If some of the older children are bored, you can get faster and faster.

Here is an example with “Eensy Weensy Spider” <https://tinyurl.com/scafews>

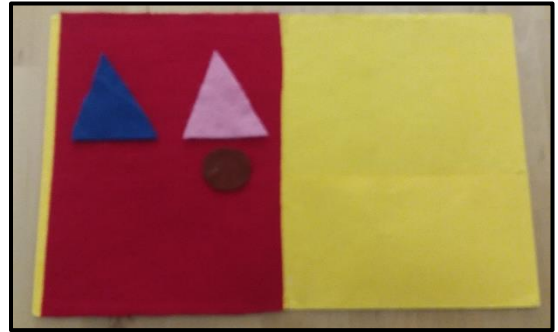
Doing songs, rhymes, and fingerplays with children offer us opportunities to engage them in joyful ways and respond to their need for movement while building language skills.

### Flannel Boards or Felt Boards

A flannel board is a piece of cardboard or other stiff material covered by a piece of flannel or felt. It can be used in a variety of ways. Pieces of felt stick to the flannel board without any other backing, making it easy to take pieces on and off. People also make pieces out of cardstock backed with heavy sandpaper or Velcro. This had the advantage of being able to print off clipart to use for the pieces.

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Pellon, the non-woven, non-fusible interfacing, also sticks to felt. If you get the heavyweight (at a fabric store) and cut it down to paper size, you can run it through jet-ink printers. The figures on your document will be printed onto the Pellon and you can cut them out. You can also draw on Pellon with markers or crayons. Pellon makes it easy for children to make their own figures to go on a flannel board. If you have access to a laminator, you can also attach small pieces of Velcro or sandpaper to laminated images to use on your flannel board. Children and their parents and caregivers like flannel board activities so much that we gave each child a pocket folder with a felt square glued down to one side. The other side had the pocket visible to put pieces in it.



How to make a flannel board and ways use it.

<https://tinyurl.com/usingfb>

You can support various aspects of early literacy depending on what you do on your flannel board. For example, if you have pieces to a song like “Five Green and Speckled Frogs,” then singing supports hearing the smaller sounds in words. Children are also learning about math. If you add information about frogs and eating bugs and pond life, you are supporting background knowledge. What does the word speckled mean? Vocabulary building!

If you have just read the book *Caps for Sale* by Esphyr Slobodkina, then you can use the flannel board to help the children retell a story, building their narrative skills which helps them understand how stories work.

*Mouse Shapes* by Ellen Walsh is a fun story that shows how shapes make different objects. Recognizing shapes helps children later recognize letters because children identify letters by their shapes.

In deciding what to make into a flannel board, my first consideration is, does the flannel board bring a better understanding of the story for the children. Does the book stand just as well on its own? In what ways might I use the flannel board that could enhance the book experience for the children? As an example, with the book *Blue Sea* by Robert Kalan, each fish of different sizes goes through smaller and smaller holes. It is a little hard for young children to “get” this concept from two-dimensional pictures. While the preschoolers can imagine it, this is a harder concept for two-year-olds who are often also present as siblings in the preschool storytime. Adding the flannel board makes it easier for them to be more engaged and also to gain a better understanding of the story. Blue Sea flannel board pattern and handout: <https://tinyurl.com/fbblueseas>

Flannel Board stories/pieces available at Barco Public Library <https://tinyurl.com/earlsfb>

### Ways to use flannel boards

Here are some ideas from Jbrary: <https://tinyurl.com/jbraryfb>

As mentioned, we can use flannel boards to retell a story of a book we have just read. This is a great way to reinforce the story and have the children join in with retelling it. The pieces become clues for them to remember what comes next. You can pause before putting up a piece to see if they remember. If they don't, then put up the piece and all joyfully join in with the next part of the story. Depending on how large your group is and the type of story, you can make multiple copies of pieces and have children come put up pieces on the flannel board.

Children can play with the pieces after storytime on the flannel board.

We can also play games on the flannel board. For example, a mitten match, where you have made pairs of mittens, each with different designs. You pass out one mitten from each pair and keep one from each pair yourself. You put one up and then the child with the matching pair comes to put it up on the flannel board. Everyone claps. One time when I ran out of mittens, I passed out my half of the pair and remembered what the pattern looked like, so I described the pattern and two children came up. To get the adults more involved, you can give out one of each pair to the children and the other of each pair to the adults, but not necessarily to the caregiver of the child. Then you ask an adult to put up theirs, and the child with the matching pair puts theirs up. It

makes for a nice group dynamic, everyone in it together. A mitten match is a visual matching game. A harder one is to match adult and baby animals. And then a harder kind of matching is by function—who has a picture of something that cuts (a lawnmower, a knife, scissors), who has pictures of things that measure (scale, ruler, cooking cups)

We do a lot of counting rhymes. Flannel boards are a good visual support for seeing how many items are left as we count up or down, one more or one less each time. By adding felt pieces of the numerals 1 2 3 4 5 alongside the figures themselves we emphasize both math and the concept that the numeral is representing the number being counted.

You can be as creative as you like with flannel boards. In this demonstration, you can see how they adapted the book *Jamberry* by Bruce Degen, from Jbrary <https://tinyurl.com/fbjamb>

#### More Places to Look

Examples of flannel board activities:

<https://tinyurl.com/fbcircletime>

“Little Mouse”

<https://tinyurl.com/fblittlemouse>

*Blue Goose*

<https://tinyurl.com/fbluegoose>

*Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*

Children play with the flannel board after storytime

<https://tinyurl.com/fbbbsee>

Mel's Desk flannel board patterns

<https://tinyurl.com/fbpattmel>

Flannel Friday

<https://storytimekatie.com/flannelboards/flannel-friday/>

## 11. Storytime Elements

### Props

In terms of storytime, a prop is an object that is used by the storytime provider and/or the participants to enhance, extend, or explain a concept or activity. Items include but are not limited to puppets, shakers, rhythm sticks, scarves, and parachutes.

An essential prop in baby storytimes is for you to have a doll or stuffed animal. You have a “baby” and can demonstrate rhymes and movement activities. It makes it easier for them to follow along.

You may bring in a prop to help explain something in a book or a concept you are sharing. For example, you may be sharing the book *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Bill Martin, Jr. It has a coconut tree in it. Perhaps some of the children are not familiar with coconuts. You might bring in a coconut and let them feel it. You could even break it open and allow children to taste it. Especially for toddlers and twos, it can be easier to understand a story when using props. Bringing in a box and puppets or stuffed animals when doing the story *Thank You Bear* by Greg Foley may not only keep the children more engaged in the story but also helps them understand it.

This article explains why we use props and how they support children’s learning.

Wave, Shake, and Wiggle with Storytime Props: Why Are They Important?  
<https://tinyurl.com/propswhy>

When sharing props with the whole group, be sure to have enough so that adults can have one too. This will encourage their participation and help them feel included. You can also encourage interactions between the children and their adults.

Passing out and collecting props songs from Jbrary  
<https://tinyurl.com/jbrarymanagingprops>

### Puppets

Puppets can be used in many ways in storytimes: as a host, welcoming the children and adults, as a way to tell or retell stories, as an aid to doing songs and rhymes, and to make transitions from one activity to another, and to share early literacy tips.

Puppets can also be handed out to children so they can act out stories. These may not be the more expensive puppets you use in storytimes. They may be made from paper and popsicle sticks or other inexpensive materials.

And puppets can be a craft activity so that children can take them home and play with them, perhaps continuing to retell a story or make one up for themselves.

Jbrary Introduction to Using Puppets <https://tinyurl.com/jbrarypuppets>  
<https://tinyurl.com/jbraryshypuppets>

### More Places to Look

*School Library Journal* article: Use Props in Early Learning Programs to Add a New Dimension  
<https://tinyurl.com/sljprops>

Props in Storytimes blog by Katie Salo  
<https://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/2012/11/props-in-storytimes/>

Mel’s Desk 9 Props for Storytime  
<https://tinyurl.com/melprops>

Using Mirrors in Storytime  
<https://tinyurl.com/jbrarymirrors>

Preschool Storytime prop ideas  
<https://tinyurl.com/psprop>

Scarf Songs and Rhymes for Storytime  
<https://jbrary.com/scarf-songs-rhymes-storytime/>

Parachute Songs for Storytime  
<https://tinyurl.com/jbrarypara>

Parachute in Baby Storytimes  
<https://tinyurl.com/babypara>

Storytime Katie: Discovery! Parachute  
<https://tinyurl.com/kaatiepara>

Rhythm Sticks  
<https://jbrary.com/rhythm-sticks/>

### More Places to Look

Katie Cunningham Scherrer shares an early literacy tip using a host puppet:  
<https://tinyurl.com/hostpupkatie>

Puppets! An Early Literacy Tool  
<https://tinyurl.com/puppetel>

5 Tips for Using Puppets in Library Storytime  
<https://tinyurl.com/puptips>

Folkmanis Puppets: Bringing Your Puppets to Life by Kim Faurot  
<https://tinyurl.com/folkmpup>

And more from Folkmanis:  
<https://tinyurl.com/folkmpupact>



## 11. Storytime Elements

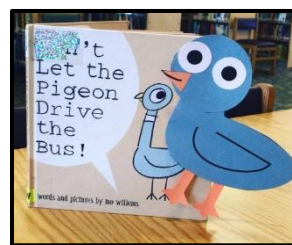
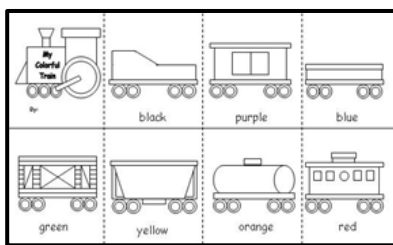
### Playtime/Process Art and Activities

Some storytimes include a time for arts and crafts, activities, and/or play. The amount of time may vary from about five minutes at the end of storytime with the activity being continued at home to leaving an extended amount of time for activities, such as playing with blocks and other manipulatives. This open-ended time is a rich opportunity to get to know your families and develop relationships with them.

Depending on how you set up the activity and what you focus on, this time offers opportunities for many kinds of growth. If, for example, you put out some toys for free play, children and adults have opportunities to interact around these objects. Having fewer toys can encourage more interactions because children must talk with each other and take turns as they play. Having too few toys can make interactions challenging.

Offering children “experiences” rather than just an activity can change the dynamic. For example, if you were reading books about building a new house, you might direct children to build houses or buildings out of blocks. To turn this into more of an experience, you might have them think about how a whole town might look, discuss what they would need, have adults and children work together as a whole group. Parents often take photos of the whole project and their own children’s contributions to the whole. This different mindset allows for more creativity and verbal interactions. You would specifically model and talk about ways to encourage rich language and creative thinking.

Some storytime providers offer materials to do a craft related to the storytime theme or a book in the storytime. There are different types of crafts. One way to classify them is “product” and “process.” With the product craft, the specific representation is defined. The craft may include a pattern to color or cutouts and some craft materials to embellish the item. The storytime provider usually provides a sample so children are trying to make theirs look like the sample.



These product crafts don’t leave much to the imagination and adults are often stuck on having their children’s craft look like the one the storytime provider has shown. It is more age-appropriate and supportive of children’s own creations and creative thinking when we offer “process art.” It is child-directed and celebrates the experience of discovery. What each child does is unique.

Please read the following two articles on process art.

What is Process Art for Kids? <https://tinyurl.com/whatprocessart>

“How Process-Focused Art Experiences Support Preschoolers by Laurel Bongiorno  
*Teaching Young Children* NAEYC <https://tinyurl.com/processartnaeyc>

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Process arts and crafts are open-ended and encourage children to use their imaginations. You provide open-ended materials such as rocks, pipe cleaners/chenille stems, paper plates, bags, playdough, blank paper and crayons. How these materials are used and presented is what makes the difference. With process art, the child is taking the lead, a sense of discovery is part of the experience, and the outcome is unique. The child is not copying a sample. There is still a product, but it is from the child's initiative. It is both fun and affirming to display the children's work for a couple of weeks in the library.

PowerPoint presentation on Processed-Based Art and Early Childhood Development by Loudoun County Public Library: <https://tinyurl.com/processartlib>

Here is a poster with conversation starters, "I notice... .," "I wonder... .," and "Tell me more . . ."  
<https://tinyurl.com/posterconvstarters>

Make sure to have enough materials for both the children and the adults. It gives the adults an opportunity to explore the materials, and for adults and children to talk with each other about what they each made.




Sometimes parents want directions and want the item to come out a certain way. We can assure them that process art offers opportunities for children to explore, use their imaginations, and build creativity. Exploring different possibilities and experiences is part of the storytime environment. Developmentally, babies are not ready to make crafts. Offering a playtime where they can explore toys and objects that they might not have at home with their parents and caregivers or where you can encourage interaction among the children will provide experiences they may not otherwise have.

### Early Literacy Tips

One very important aspect of storytimes is to share early literacy information with parents and caregivers so that they can continue to nurture these skills at home in enjoyable ways. Please refer to Chapter 10 on Early Literacy and Tips for Parents and Caregivers on how to incorporate them into your storytimes.

In addition, we help children learn about themselves and the world around them through equity learning tips. These examples are from Jessica Bratt, Grand Rapids (MI) Public Library:

### Example Parent Tips

Sample #1	Sample #2	Sample #3
While reading to your child, it is okay to point out racial differences.  "Is that skin darker or lighter than your own?"  Did you know that we can be born with different skin colors? Well, this skin tone is called _____."	Respect your child's curiosity of the world around them by answering their hard and sometimes embarrassing observations.  "Let me think about that for a while," or try "That is a good question---and I do not know." are great starting responses.	Point out cultural differences when reading picture books. When exploring those differences reinforce that "different" and "weird" are not the same thing.  Q: "Why is her hair weird?" R: "Her hair type is different. Some people have straight, curly, or wavy hair." "I think it is great we are all different."
		

## 11. Storytime Elements

### Interactivity Between Children and Their Parents/Caregivers

Just as we try to be interactive with the children to keep the storytime engaging, so do we also want to involve the parents and caregivers. Having adults join in with storytime activities makes it more likely that they will continue to do them at home with their children. Children follow the lead of their adult. If the adults are involved, the children are also more likely to pay attention and to understand that their caring adult finds reading and storytimes fun. It is a time to develop a bond as well. Here is a song to encourage adults to turn off their cell phones and participate:

<https://tinyurl.com/songcellyankee>

Being more interactive in storytimes means our role moves from being a presenter or an entertainer to being a facilitator. That doesn't mean we can't be entertaining, of course! Acknowledging the adult's key role is a first step. If you give nametags to the children, then adults should get nametags as well. They can certainly write their own. If we give nametags only to the children, then we signal that it is the child that is important. Having adults have nametags also makes it easier for new participants to be included.

If we give the adult a role to play, they are more likely to rise to the occasion. For example, you may include "pair and share" activities, where the parent and caregivers and their children are sharing ideas together or reading part of a book together.

Fingerplays can often be done in tandem. With the song "The Itsy Bitsy Spider," you can do it once all together. Then, the children join up with their adult and the children are the spiders; the adults are everything else. <https://tinyurl.com/ewsadchild>

With Two Little Blackbirds, do the actions all together. Then repeat with the adults being Jack and the children being Jills. Rhyme as you would do it all together: <https://tinyurl.com/twobbadchild>

In the book *Jump, Frog, Jump* by Robert Kalan, you can have everyone together say "Jump, frog, jump," as a repeated phrase, while bouncing their fists on their knees. To include the adults, you can have them say "How did the frog get away?" and the children say "Jump, frog, jump," so it becomes more interactive and more of a dialog.

As you hand out shakers or scarves, make sure there are enough for children and adults so that they can play together.

With art, activity and play time, emphasize talking between the adults and the children in ways that encourage conversation, asking open-ended questions. Adults and children can share what each of them made and play together. The way you set up the activities can also make a difference. More social, problem-solving, and language interactions will be encouraged if some of the materials are centrally placed on small group tables or in piles across the floor for groups to share.

### Storytime Themes

Many storytime providers like to use themes especially for the preschool age. We may use themes for a variety of reasons:

- It helps us focus on a topic or idea out of the huge universe of books to choose from
- It can be used in publicity or marketing efforts
- It can be a draw based on children's interests or special happening
- It provides a structure for transitions
- It provides a focus for the children, putting what we are sharing "in context" so they are building on what they know



## 11. Storytime Elements

Some storytime providers use themes around seasons or holidays. Rachel Bryant of Camden County Public Library likes to use “Spooky Stories,” “Pumpkins,” or “Monsters” to keep a Halloween theme going throughout October. Themes need not be “nouns.” Nouns may come most easily—vehicles, dinosaurs, spring, farm animals, but we need not stick to nouns. In a storytime with the theme “Catch Me If You Can,” I included *The Gingerbread Boy* by Paul Galdone, *Jump, Frog, Jump* by Robert Kalan, and *Blue Sea* by Robert Kalan. In a storytime that I gave the theme “Talk, Talk, Talk,” I had an Anansi story, a Frog and Toad story with puppets, and *Yo! Yes!* by Chris Raschka.

Having a theme should not be the prime consideration or the first thing you think of for planning your storytimes. In choosing your books, the main thing to remember is that you are choosing books YOU like, that the children will like, that are appropriate for the targeted age-level, and that work well in a group. If you use a theme, the theme should never supersede the choice of books and activities that are appropriate for the children. “Librarian’s Favorites” is a theme! The younger the children, the more importance of repetition from storytime to storytime, and the less a theme is needed. So, even if some rhymes and songs don’t “fit” with a theme, it is important to have repetition for learning and a sense of competence to grow.

You can still plan and make transitions between your items without an overall theme. You can use threads that tie each book or activity to the next or to each other.

Here is a blog from Lindsay on Jbrary about Storytime Themes vs. Storytime Flow

<https://jbrary.com/storytime-themes-vs-storytime-flow/> She includes an example of storytime flow and transitioning from one element to another. This allows a lot of flexibility and opportunities to make different kinds of connections in children’s thinking.

Laurie Reese, Children’s Librarian at Felipe de Neve Library in Los Angeles talks about using threads as transitions throughout her preschool storytime. <https://tinyurl.com/laplst16>

## 12. Scaffolding

### What is scaffolding?

Scaffolding is an educational term describing the process where the adult adjusts the level of assistance provided to fit the child's abilities. More support is offered when a task is new; less is provided as the child's competence increases, thereby fostering the child's independence and mastery. So, when a child is learning to walk, we first hold both hands, then one hand, then let go and move progressively farther away as the child can walk farther and farther.

The underlying concept of scaffolding is "The Zone of Proximal Development," developed by psychologist and educator Lev Vygotsky. It is defined as the distance between what a child can accomplish independently and what he can accomplish with the help of an adult, the region where learning and development take place. Learning takes place most readily when the adult starts with what the child already knows or can do and builds on it to something new. When introducing a new concept, relating it to something the child already knows helps the learning process and the child's understanding.

### Why should we know about scaffolding?

In our storytimes, we have children of different ages and abilities. When we understand the progression of child development in various areas—social, emotional, cognitive thinking, language, and physical—then we can adapt what we do to the levels of the participants.

In the education field, scaffolding can be done with a child one-on-one because they see children daily and they perform assessments to see how a child is developing. In the library setting, it is not our objective to ensure that individual children reach specific goals. Knowledge about scaffolding helps us as we interact with children. In our storytimes, we are constantly assessing whether the children show interest and understanding. If we are "losing" them, knowledge of scaffolding can help us regroup and engage them at their level. In planning our storytimes, we need to prepare multiple steps or alternative activities in case the children need more support or more challenge.

In the chart referred to in Chapter 11 Storytime Elements, you can see the developmental progressions of the types of books, ways to share them, and the early literacy skills.

Young Children: Stages and Books <https://tinyurl.com/bookstages>

You can also use the book *STEP into Storytime*, which is part of the Manual Kit, to give you both the background to support scaffolding as well as to get specific ideas to scaffold with storytime activities.

Chapter 4 talks about scaffolding with each of the early literacy practices: talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing.

In order to have a good sense of child development, you can read about each domain:

Chapter 5: Emotional and Social Development

Chapter 6: Cognitive Development

Chapter 7: Physical Development

Chapter 8: Language and Literacy Development

In each chapter, there is a description of the subcategories of each of these domains and what children know and do related to them. Then, each area of the subcategories is divided into age levels relating them to what we do in storytimes.

In *STEP into Storytime* Chapter 9 Spanning the Ages, you can see how to scaffold books, use repetition, fingerplays, puppets, and more throughout different stages of development.

## 12. Scaffolding

Here is one example. In order to get children to be able to retell a story, which preschoolers can often do, sometimes with the support of props or visuals as cues, it develops even from babies. First, we are helping them label objects in a book. We say the word, later they repeat the word. Toddlers may imitate a word or two of what we say. Two-year-olds can imitate a repeated word or phrase as we go through a book with a repeated phrase. Preschoolers can repeat a whole sentence. They can tell us what happens next in the book, especially if it is one we have read with them before. Repeating books helps with retelling the story. Using a flannel board or props as cues for what comes next can help them get more comfortable telling the story.

### More Places to Look

Youngstown and Mahoning County (OH) Public Library Kindergarten Readiness Resources for Librarians (Scroll down to Implementation Guides for each child development domain)

<https://tinyurl.com/ohkgr>

Using Scaffolding in Library Programs with Young Children: <https://tinyurl.com/scafews>

Scaffolding to develop background knowledge: <https://tinyurl.com/scafbk>

Chapters 10 and 11 of *STEP int Storytime* offer different models for and examples of mixed-age storytimes.

As you have more experience and build your knowledge, you will not only implement these ideas but also come up with your own. You will notice patterns, where children are less likely to join in. You will talk with colleagues and get ideas. Becoming more flexible and responding to the participants at a particular storytime will become easier as your confidence builds and as you try out more possibilities so that you are building on your experiences.

In what ways do you notice that you adapt materials and the ways you share them to different children of different ages/stages?

## 13. Assessment

It is important to consider how we are doing with our storytimes. Sometimes we do this as we are cleaning up and thinking back on how the storytime went. This is quite informal. When we are more intentional around assessment, our deeper thought allows us to reflect on how we might improve our storytimes in any number of ways. We can assess each program or programs overall and focus on different aspects, a few being:

- Were they fun? Did the children and -parents and caregivers have fun?
- How did I support early literacy?
- Did I articulate how to support early literacy?
- Did I include books that are both mirrors of children and windows to the world?
- Did the children participate? Did the adults? Were they engaged?
- Was I responsive to the different ages/stages of the group?

### More Places to Look

*Storytimes for Everyone* Chapter 13: Evaluation and Assessment especially pages 246+ parent surveys

*Supercharged Storytimes*: Part 3 Assessment, Pages 143-145 Outcome Based Planning Tool and Self-Reflection Worksheet

Please note that in this book, the term VPT or VIEWS2 Planning Tool is used. You may substitute the Early Literacy Planning Tool or ELPT, which is based on the Every Child Ready to Read® early literacy construct.

There is also a self-reflection worksheet at the end of the chapter on each practice: talking, singing, reading, writing and playing.

*Mother Goose On The Loose, Updated* Chapter 10 Evaluating Your Program

### First, what do we mean by assessment?

Using tools and techniques to determine if goals are being met, to determine the effectiveness and impact of our storytimes.

We often think of assessment or evaluation as testing, having an element of judgment. However, in our informal learning setting, we are not testing to see if children have met certain learning goals.

We are not testing ourselves or judging our colleagues. We are working together to do the best job we can to implement effective storytime practices. This can be done in a variety of ways.

We assess ourselves in how well we met the storytime goals, and we assess how the storytime was received by the participants.

There is some overlap in the terms assessment and evaluation.

Assessment is an ongoing process of understanding and revision, formative and focused on process  
Evaluation is a more finite appraisal of product, summative and focused on the product

Because we are looking at professional development and the public library is an informal learning environment, we lean towards assessment in our appraisals.

Please watch this presentation on Assessment from WebJunction's Supercharged Storytimes:

<https://tinyurl.com/wjassess>

There are two purposes to assessment:

1. To assess ourselves, the storytime provider--regarding interactivity, intentionality, the materials we used and how we used them, and how we might improve
2. To assess storytime outcomes--observe children's early literacy behaviors, find out from parents about children's reactions to storytime content

### More Places to Look

Example of a supportive peer observation conversation from WebJunction Supercharged Storytimes

<https://tinyurl.com/wjpeerobs>

## 13. Assessment

It is important to look at different ways we can assess our storytimes, both ourselves and the effects of what we do, the outcomes.

There are three ways that we can gather information for assessments of our storytimes:

1. Self-reflection
2. Peer sharing and peer observation
3. Feedback from storytime participants

Let's look at each of these.

### Self-Reflection

Self-reflection can be a powerful tool in helping to understand if your storytime is achieving the goals you set. It is being intentional about reviewing storytime content and the impact that it has on the children and families that are attending. You can think about your storytimes compared to what you used to do, and see your growth. Perhaps you had certain goals for yourself, like making smoother transitions, or more process-oriented crafts. You can reflect on how those went, both what went well and what you might change. You can reflect on how you were successful in incorporating early literacy activities, how your early literacy tips were received, or how you facilitated interaction between the children and their parents/caregivers.

Here is a Self-Reflection Worksheet for the storytime provider to be used in tandem with the one noted under Peer Observation below. <https://tinyurl.com/srwksht>

### Peer Sharing

Peer sharing is just as it sounds, sharing ideas with your peers. This might be done informally or in a planned discussion time. It can be done face-to-face or virtually with someone you know or by using social media formats and online resources. Perhaps a song you used with toddlers did not work out as you had planned. You might ask advice from a colleague, explaining what you noticed. They may suggest trying it another way or using another song. We are always getting ideas from one another. It is one way we keep things fresh.

### Peer Observation

Another way to get feedback from colleagues is to observe the storytimes of other storytime providers, discuss them together, and then to have a colleague or colleagues observe your storytimes. This can feel intimidating and it certainly takes more staff time and adjustment of schedules. However, it can be very valuable. It may happen only once or twice a year. Some storytime providers record their storytimes and then put them up on YouTube marked private. They give that URL to a colleague and the colleague can give feedback.

Sometimes the perceptions we have as a storytime provider are not the same impressions that people who are participating get, so it is good to get another perspective.

Here is a Peer Observation Worksheet for the Observer to be used in tandem with the one noted under Self-Reflection above. <https://tinyurl.com/peerobswwksht>

After you observe a colleague's storytime or a colleague observes yours, it is good to have a conversation to both get and give feedback. Here is an example of a peer observation conversation from <https://tinyurl.com/peerobsconv>

You can see that it was very supportive, an exchange of ideas.

### Feedback from Parents/Caregivers

Another important piece of assessment is to get feedback from parents and caregivers. You may get feedback in many ways. Informal verbal feedback following a storytime can be very valuable. In addition, you may want to get more in-depth feedback from as many participants as possible. In the list below you will see some examples of this type of survey.

Below are some assessment tools you may find useful. Use them and adapt them to fit your situation and goals.

#### Self-Reflection

- Self-Reflection Worksheet for Early Literacy Tip <https://tinyurl.com/srwelt>
- Early Literacy Enhanced Storytime Checklist <https://tinyurl.com/elestcklist>
- Intentionality Self-Reflection Worksheet <https://tinyurl.com/intensrw>
- Self-Reflection Storytime Practices and Components <https://tinyurl.com/srpracomp>
- Storytime Reflection Worksheet can be used for one or several storytimes <https://tinyurl.com/srwksht>
- Ongoing Outcome-Based Planning and Self-Reflection Worksheet pages 143-144 in *Supercharged Storytimes* <https://tinyurl.com/outcomeplgsrw>
- Long-Term Self-Reflection Worksheet page 145 in *Supercharged Storytimes* <https://tinyurl.com/ltsrw>

#### Peer Observation

- Partner Observation Worksheet for Early Literacy Tip <https://tinyurl.com/pobswelt>
- Peer Observation Worksheet <https://tinyurl.com/peerobswwksht>
- Arapahoe Library District Literacy-Based Storytime Competencies <https://tinyurl.com/aldstcompet>
- Arapahoe Library District Supervisor Storytime Observation <https://tinyurl.com/aldsupstobs>
- Arapahoe Library District How to Complete a Supervisor Storytime Observation <https://tinyurl.com/aldsupstobsinstr>

#### Parent/Caregiver Feedback

- Idaho Commission for Libraries Parent/Caregiver Participants (Pre- and Post) Pages 240 - 249 *Storytimes for Everyone*
- Brooklyn Public Library surveys Pages 249-253 of *Storytimes for Everyone*
- Douglas County Early Literacy Storytime Survey Pages 255-258 *Storytimes for Everyone*
- Parent/Caregiver Feedback for Storytimes (SEFLIN) <https://tinyurl.com/seflinpcsurvey>

### Looking at Children's Early Literacy Behaviors

The Early Literacy Planning Tool can be used in several ways to help you assess your storytimes. It identifies early literacy strategies that you can use to support early literacy. Once you have incorporated any of them, or any of your own strategies to support the early literacy component goals, you are able to reflect on how you supported early literacy and what you noticed in the children's behaviors.

Another way to use the Tool is to look down Column 3 Children's Behaviors. As you come to know your group of regulars, you can see which early literacy components the children are strong in and which ones may need additional support. Then you can think about what strategies you may want to emphasize for the children and their parents/caregivers.

### 13. Assessment

It is important to get parent feedback on what their children may be doing at home. A child may be quite shy or like to sit and observe in storytimes. However, you may find from conversations with the parent or through parent surveys that the child sings a certain storytime repeatedly or retells a story from a book you read.

Using the information you collect from parent surveys and feedback is one way to articulate some of the values of storytime to administrators, staff, partners, and funders.

Amber Jarvis of Moyock Public Library says:

Something that helps me is to create a list of goals after I have done my assessments for a “season” of storytimes. It gives me clear examples of what I learned from assessment and how to incorporate what I need to change.

Here are her “Things to Improve On” after assessing one set of storytimes:

- Incorporate six skills into storytimes-be more intentional with planning.
- Provide handouts to parents about the six skills to get ready to read.
- Letter knowledge: use foam letters in learning activities
- Early literacy message in each storytime—at least 3.
- Explain how to continue to support early literacy after Storytime is over.
- Clap out syllables in words.
- Include more fingerplays (Print Awareness)
- Phonological awareness: say it slow, say it fast.
- I subscribed to “Bookworm” from Idaho Library and I also subscribed to the *School Library Journal* to keep up on the new award-winning books.
- Have more alike and different activities (Letter Knowledge)
- Have children practice writing their names once they are finished with their notebooks.
- Occasionally bring out the puppets and have them play with each other. (Print Conventions)
- DIALOGIC READING: Have kids repeat phrases in books.
- Have the same ending each day to storytime.
- Include more “Big” Books to help promote letter knowledge.
- Have literacy stations. Have a station with puppets they get to play with-known as play literacy since they are using language to play.
- Read more books in preschool and toddler storytime.
- Have more rhyming activities (phonological awareness)

You can see she has been very thoughtful. Some of these items would be easy to incorporate, others may take more thought and planning. And, it may be that she won’t incorporate all of her items in the next set of storytimes. Still, the very thinking process and writing down your goals can keep you thinking of ways to improve as you continue to observe the effects of what you do on the children and families you serve.

You may assess different aspects of your storytimes in different ways over time. Assessment is an on-going process.



## 14. Advocacy

In terms of the library, what does it mean to be an advocate? An advocate is a person who publicly supports a particular cause or policy. In our case, you could say that we can be advocates for many aspects of library services and advocates for our patrons as well. More specifically, in terms of early literacy and storytimes, we are advocates for sharing early literacy information with families and partners, advocates for children entering school ready to learn, and advocates for the role of the library in these endeavors.

There are several aspects to advocacy and many ways that we can carry it out. We will look at some of them here:

- Library Branch/System
- Assessments Show Value
- Elevator Speeches
- Children, Families, Community

In terms of early literacy and the library's role in supporting families in helping all children enter school ready to learn to read, a first step is to recognize the knowledge we have, the resources we can offer, the role you play in developing programs and services to support early literacy, and to be able to articulate both the importance of early literacy and ways that families are or could support their children's early learning.

Once you are able to make the connections between early literacy knowledge, applying those skills to programs and services, and articulate them to families, staff, and partners, you will find numerous opportunities to do so.

### Library Branch/System

Sometimes our advocacy has to start from within our own branch or library system. You may find you need to educate other staff, circulations staff, tech staff, adult services, branch managers, and administrative staff, on what early literacy is, why it is important, and your role in the community. You may have to help them see the connections between storytimes and early literacy. Many people see us having fun, and may discount the importance of what we are doing. Yes, we certainly DO have fun, AND what we do is also important from many perspectives.

#### More Places to Look

A brief overview of early literacy that may be helpful to all staff: WebJunction Presentation: Encouraging Early Literacy <https://tinyurl.com/wjence1>

There are many different dynamics in any branch, library system, or community. It would be impossible to address them here. The best thing you can do is to become knowledgeable about early literacy, serve your patrons the best way you can, and look for ways to enlist support and "grow early literacy" in whatever ways work for you personally and in your organization. You can look at your library system's vision and goals and see how what you are doing fits in with the bigger picture.

### Assessments Show Value

We can also link advocacy to our assessments. We can use the information we gather from assessing our storytimes using self-reflection, peer observation, and feedback from parents and caregivers. For example, using the Early Literacy Planning Tool or information we know about early literacy and its developmental progression, we may notice children's increased engagement and comprehension of stories, or perhaps they are understanding rhyming words when they did not



## 14. Advocacy

recognize them before. It may also be that we gain information from the parents about what they notice about their children's knowledge and behavior from their participation in library storytimes. Some libraries have used the data from parent surveys as a powerful way to promote storytimes and to convey this information to funding agencies.

One library made a bookmark that said:

Did you know . . . ?

Parents and caregivers who attend our storytimes report that their children are learning new skills to help them get ready for kindergarten. Here are some quotes:

- Storytime helps them learn new words and that will help them learn to read.
- I have noticed that children are answering the questions asked in storytimes more frequently.
- We are now enjoying playing rhyming word games because this will help my child later read words.

### **Elevator Speeches**

Sharing elevator speeches is a good way to acknowledge your "added value" in a nutshell. An elevator speech is a couple of sentences that convey quickly the importance of what we do. It is called an elevator speech because it can be said to someone in an elevator between the time they enter and exit an elevator.

The Association for Library Service to Children has developed a template to help us write elevator speeches. (See following pages.) You will also find sample speeches.

Elevator speeches can be used with parents, caregivers, partners, library board members, people in funding agencies, and business people. The speech itself will change according to what you are emphasizing and what is important to that audience.

#### **More Places to Look**

Elevator Speeches Association for Library Services webpage:  
<http://www.ala.org/everyday-advocacy/speak-out/elevator-speech>

Storytime Descriptions emphasizing value:  
<http://www.earlylit.net/storytime-resources> Scroll down to Promoting Storytimes

# Creating an Elevator Speech

Using value-based language to advocate for library services to children & families



Successful elevator speeches use value-based language to allow you to advocate for the transformative services the library offers children and families every day. Start building your own strong elevator speech with this template, where you replace the bracketed sections with the specific patron group, program, and outcome you want to tout:

"I help [ target audience\* ]  
[ verb phrase\* ] at the library so that  
[ proven/expected positive outcome for target audience\* ] ."

Use this template to answer the common question asked of library staff: "What do you do at the library?"

Instead of answering with a job responsibility (e.g., "I do storytime at the library.") you can instead reply in a manner that highlights the impact of what the library offers in your community:

*"I help parents and caregivers promote kindergarten readiness at the library so that their young children can start school ready to learn."*

This type of value-based elevator speech is much more powerful for advocating for the library.



This infographic was created for ALSC by the 2014-2015 ALSC Public Awareness Committee (Amy Koester, Chair) using material created as part of the Everyday Advocacy Initiative (Jenna Nemecek-Loise, Member Content Editor).  
This infographic was created using easel.ly. © 2015



## Sample Scenarios for Elevator Speeches

### Talking with a local community organization:

What does the library do?



We help youth from low-income households to find, read, and learn from high-quality, interesting materials at the library over the summer so that they maintain their reading level and return to school ready to learn.

### Talking with teachers & school administrators:

What does the library do for students?



We help students access a range of print and digital resources related to school assignments so that they can achieve school success.

### Talking with a manager or board member:

What goes on in the youth department?



We provide opportunities for young children and their caregivers to talk, sing, read, write, and play together at the library so that caregivers understand their vital role in helping their children be prepared to start kindergarten.

**ALSC**

Association for Library Service to Children

### Elevator Speech about Every Child Ready to Read® from ALSC

An elevator speech is a short (30 to 45 seconds) “commercial” that usually is delivered one-on-one or to a small number of people. Your elevator speech about ECRR should focus on the importance of developing early literacy skills and how your library can help.

To be most effective, follow these guidelines.

- Keep the elevator speech simple and easy to understand.
- Include a benefit.
- Customize it to your audience.
- Practice so your elevator speech sounds conversational and natural.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Don’t rush.
- Use the elevator speech as a way to start a conversation about early literacy and Every Child Ready to Read® @ your library®.

Here are a few examples of an elevator speech that you can use or adapt. Example 1

At the [library name] we help children get ready to read. Learning to read is a complex process and it begins long before children start school. We teach parents how to develop early literacy skills in children from birth to age five. This gives children an advantage when they start school. They are ready to learn to read.

Example 2

Do you know about the library’s early literacy program? We teach parents how to use simple activities to help children develop the skills they will need to learn to read.

Children who struggle with reading in kindergarten and first grade often lack important early literacy skills. We want every child in [name of community] to develop these skills so they are ready to learn to read once they start school.

Example 3

If you have children younger than five, we have several exciting new programs for you. They focus on what parents can do to help children get ready to read. You’ll learn how to use simple but fun activities to develop important pre-reading skills, and you’ll see how easy it is to make these part of everyday routines. Here’s a program schedule. I hope you can come.

Example 4

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I work with parents who want to help their children become good readers. So much of school success is based on reading, but learning to read begins years before children start school. Children from birth to five need to develop early literacy skills before they can actually learn to read. Parents are in the best position to teach these skills. Let me give you some additional information.

Example 5

You might be interested in the storytime kits we have for you to check out. They include activities to help you help your child develop the pre-reading skills necessary to become a good reader in school while having fun together.

### Sample Elevator Speeches from Library Staff

In a social situation where asked what I do at the library.

I help children explore their world and expand their imaginations at the library so that they will develop a love of reading, learning, and sharing literature and ideas.

Board members

I help parents, caregivers and children foster the love of reading, promote reading readiness, and enhance learning at the library so they all become lifelong learners.

Table at events in the community

We at the library help parents or caregivers to understand the importance of early literacy through programming, outreach, communication, and community partnerships at the library so that children learn and grow in enriching environments and are prepared for preschool and kindergarten.

Library Friends group wonders why we need toys in the children's room.

I make a space in the library where children and their caregivers are supported in playing, singing, talking, reading, and writing, which helps children grow into readers.

At a meeting of a large collaborative of local non-profits and social service agencies

We work to provide an enriching environment, quality materials, and inviting programs so that caregivers feel supported in their efforts to help their children develop the skills needed to become excellent readers who love to read.

Someone says libraries have become irrelevant due to the Internet/technology

I help children develop early literacy skills at the library. These skills help children succeed in school and life by enhancing brain and cognitive development. Research shows that children learn best through meaningful, personal interactions.

Conversation with a city council member who is unfamiliar with the role of the children's division of the public library:

Children gain the skills they need to learn how to read well before they start school. Library staff provide intentional resources, programs, and spaces that support the development of these critical early literacy skills and informs parents and caregivers of their key role at this stage of their child's life. This public service helps ensure all children are ready for success.

Our library is attempting to set-up "Pop-Up" libraries in other community service centers. My elevator speech could be used to convince one of these centers of the importance of the library.

We help parents and caregivers find and share interesting and educational materials with their children at the library so that they can grow to be lifelong learners with a love of reading.

This would be said to preschool/daycare staff

I help educators and childcare workers find enjoyable and appropriate resources at the library so that children will build early learning skills and love reading.

## 14. Advocacy

Latino parents ask how best to support their children before they start school. I am often asked if I think their child is ready for school or if they seem like they're on the right track, and what else they can do.

I help families of all backgrounds and economic status gain access to resources and free programming so that they can learn about the many opportunities available to get their child/ren ready to excel in school and in life, from day one. I do early education programs from babies onward because we want all kids to be able to start and stay on the same level regardless of backgrounds or if they have less or more access to readily available resources.

Many mothers who want their children to be readers and are not aware of the early literacy components or how to go about helping them get ready to read. By familiarizing parents with the five components and practices of early literacy, parents realize there are many ways to help prepare their children to get ready to read.

I help parents find books that promote early literacy skills at the library so that children will be prepared for school and on the road to becoming lifelong learners. As we find books, I help guide parents with tips on how to engage with books by talking, singing, writing, playing, and reading to help encourage their child to be ready to read. Helping children reach their full potential.

I am an outreach librarian who is often in non-traditional library spaces, I am often asked simply, "What are you doing here?" I love opportunities to talk about what I do and what today's libraries are all about.

In Illinois, 3 out of 4 children are unprepared when they enter kindergarten. I help provide parents and caregivers with the tools that they can use and the skills they need to help ensure that they are setting their children on the path to academic success. Through storytimes based on the early literacy skills of talk, sing, read, write, and play, we are learning and growing together to ensure a brighter future for the children of Chicago.

Outreach at one of the tables the library hosts at a farmers market or large city/town events where many community organizations, politicians, and patrons and their families gather.

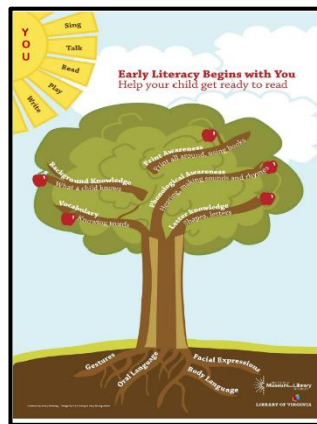
I help children at the library read, learn, and discover the world around them. My focus is on our youngest patrons, and their parents, as they grow and learn together. Using the foundations of early literacy as a guide, I help them focus on, and achieve, early literacy skills to prepare them for their futures

Staffing a table at a preschool fair or other public event

In the library, all of us work to create a fun and welcoming environment where families can enjoy spending time with each other, where kids can play and learn, and where we connect everyone with books and experiences that inspire a love for learning.

### Sharing Early Literacy Information in the Library

We spoke of sharing information with coworkers. We can also take opportunities to share early literacy information with parents and caregivers as part of conversations in the library. Everyone cannot come to storytime, but we can still share early literacy information. You can make more opportunities for these conversations by setting up the environment in ways that encourage it. For example, putting up posters or signage that highlight early literacy information can be an entrée into a conversation. The signage does not take the place of the conversation but is a jumping off point to share information. When you see a parent or caregiver having a look at it, it is a great opportunity to strike up a conversation! It can also help them see the connections between all these elements even if you talk only about one of them.



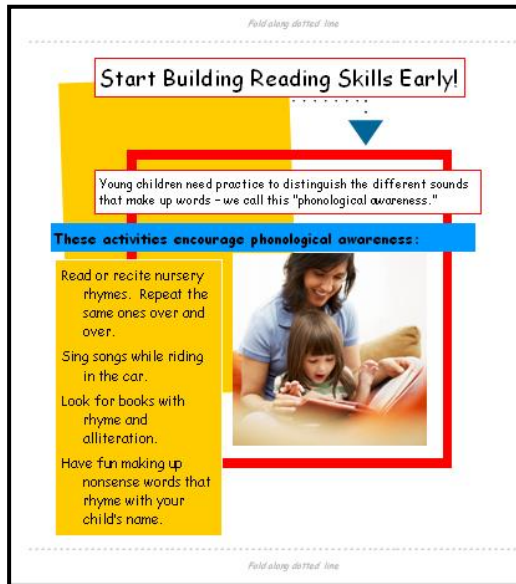
<http://www.earlylit.net/s/treeposteryou.pdf>

Here are some examples of ways that some libraries have used signage to support early literacy, and to use these as opportunities to talk with parents/caregivers about early literacy and to support children’s early literacy skills.





## 14. Advocacy



Iowa Library Service Areas



Early Literacy Spot example on endcap  
Ridgedale Public Library  
Hennepin County (MN) Public Library






**together**

The activities in the library are designed to help your children build the skills they need to succeed in school. Explore these areas with your child!

**together**  
learn words



**"What is this?"**

I'll have an easier time learning to read words that I've heard before. Please talk and play with me!

Ridgedale Public Library  
Hennepin County (MN) Public Library



Puzzles support early literacy because children have to orient the pieces the correct way, a skill they need for letter recognition.



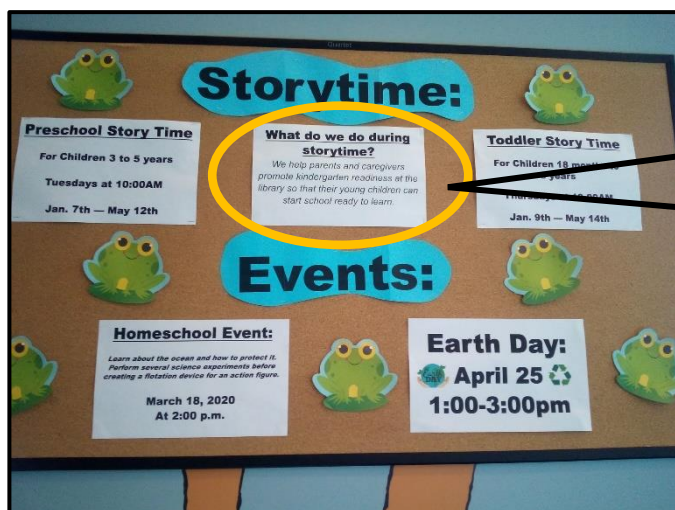
**What is Phonological Awareness?**  
Definition & why important

**Clap Syllables**  
Together, clap the syllables of the words in the rhyme.

**Rhyme Time**  
Together, think of words that rhyme with moon. How about dish? Cat?

Bulletin board related to early literacy, changed every other month

## 14. Advocacy



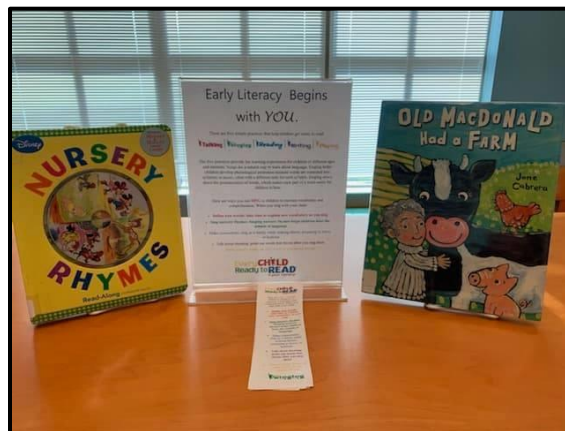
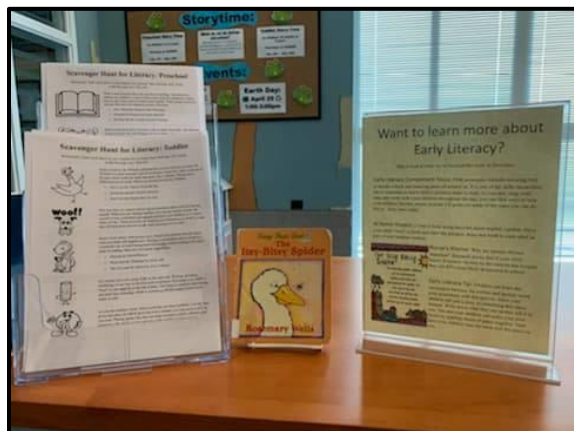
**What do we do at storytime?**  
We help parents and caregivers promote kindergarten readiness at the library so that their young children can start school ready to learn.

Strike up a conversation with a parent by talking about something you see the child doing. For example, when you see a child playing with puzzles, you can point out the connection to letter knowledge. If a child is building with blocks, you might offer paper and crayons so the child could make signs, which would build print awareness. You would explain to the parent why you are offering those items. *I thought your child might like some materials to add signs to the castle he built. Doing so also builds his awareness of print which will help him focus on print when he learns to read.*

Amber Jarvis at Moyock Library offers scavenger hunts with an early literacy focus, which is articulated so parents and caregivers understand the connections. (See page 146 – 149)

She uses the handout “Early Literacy Begins with You!” as part of a display with books that promote each early literacy practice. One week, she displays the flyer on “talk” with a variety of books. The following week, she displays the sing flyer, and so on. You could also use these as part of a display IN storytime with books around the flyer. You’ll notice that the activities are fairly general so just about any book works. She also makes blurbs for books that are taped to the front of books that are on display. They have the shape of a callout. (See pages 150 and 151)

Early Literacy Begins With You! flyer <https://tinyurl.com/elbeginsyou>



# Scavenger Hunt for Literacy: Toddler

*Instructions: Color each object as you complete the scavenger hunt challenge. Don't forget to flip this page over! Have fun!*



Read a book by Mo Willems and point to several words as you read. Mo Willems is a great example of print awareness; notice how some words are in all caps, some words are small and quiet, like a whisper. Discuss these differences as you read. Below are several favorites by Willems:

- *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus*
- *Leonardo and the Terrible Monster*
- *Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late*

## Woof!

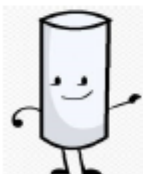


One way that you support phonological awareness, hearing the smaller sounds in words, starts with just hearing sounds. When you are reading together, you can say animal sounds, the sounds of cars, a doorbell (any sound) and have your children try to repeat what you say. These activities are helping your children hear words in a way that will help them decode words while learning how to read.

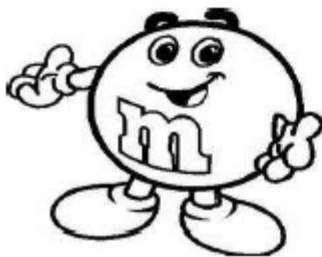


Read a book solely with pictures in it. Point to the pictures and talk about what you think will happen next. Having a conversation about a book is a wonderful way to build background knowledge, which facilitates the enjoyment of reading. Here are a few great suggestions:

- *Pancakes for Breakfast* by Tomie DePaola
- *Flora and the Flamingo* by Molly Idle
- *Truck* by Donald Crews



Go outside and write using chalk on the sidewalk. Writing, including scribbling, is one way to develop print awareness. Encourage your child to "read" to you what he or she has written. This helps to reinforce that writing and print have meaning, which is something children need to know to be ready to read.

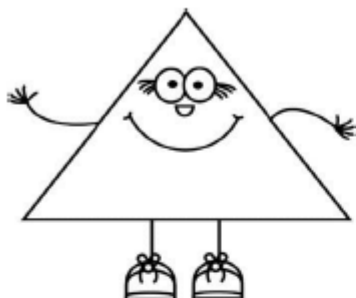


As you are reading a book, find a word that has three syllables. Use the chart given and place an M&M down for every syllable you clap out in words as you read. Playing games like this one helps increase a child's phonological awareness, the ability to hear and play with smaller sounds in words.



# Scavenger Hunt for Literacy: Toddler

*Instructions: Color each object as you complete the scavenger hunt challenge. Don't forget to flip this page over! Have fun!*



Explore the following books and talk about the shapes, colors, and sizes. Then play an I spy game using objects in the books. Say, "I spy with my little eye something \_\_\_\_\_. (Choose a color, shape, or size) Can you find it?" Games such as this one help to increase letter knowledge, knowing that letters are different from one another.

- *Bulldozer's Shapes* by Sherri Rinker
- *Color Zoo* by Lois Ehlert
- *Mouse Shapes* by Ellen Walsh



Read one of your child's favorite books. Repetition is great for a toddler! See if they can predict what happens next in the story.



Nursery rhymes are important. Check out books that contain nursery rhymes and sing them as you read. Children who know eight nursery rhymes by the time they are eight years old are 80% more likely to succeed in school. Nursery rhymes break down language and introduces new vocabulary words. Below are several suggestions:

- *Itsy Bitsy Spider* by Emily Bannister
- *Big Fat Hen* by Keith Baker
- *Hey Diddle Diddle!* By Annie Kubler



Check out two books about colors. After your done reading, do a painting together where you combine several different colors, have fun! Below are a few suggestions:

- *Bear Sees Colors* by Karma Wilson
- *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* By Bill Martin
- *Colors* by Chez Picthall

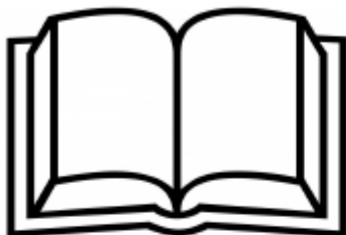


Read a book that was awarded a Caldecott Medal. The Caldecott Medal annually recognizes the preceding year's "most distinguished American picture book for children"; the Association for Library Science to Children awards it to the illustrator. Here are a few recent Caldecott winners:

- *Hello Lighthouse* by Sophie Blackall
- *A Ball for Daisy* by Chris Rashka
- *May I Bring a Friend?* by Bernice de Regniers

# Scavenger Hunt for Literacy: Preschool

*Instructions: Color each object as you complete the scavenger hunt challenge. Don't forget to flip this page over! Have fun!*



Read a book of poetry this week and discuss rhyming. Talk about how authors use syllables to create a haiku poem. Clap out syllables for objects you see and create your own haiku poem together. Poetry doesn't have to be serious! Here are a few humorous poetry collections:

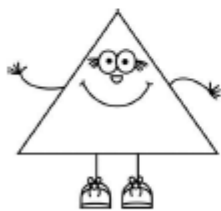
- *Don't Bump the Glump* by Shel Silverstein
- *Pocketful of Nonsense* by James Marshall
- *My Dog May Be a Genius* by Jack Prelutsky



Read a book about nature and take a walk in nature afterwards. Talk about the sounds you hear, the colors/shapes you see in nature. For example, read *Birds* by Kevin Henkes and try to identify birds while walking. Talking is a great way to build background knowledge, an early literacy component.



Have a basket with a variety of animals/items within it. Ask your child to begin pronouncing the word for each object as you pull each item out. What sound does the word *fish* begin with? Fish begins with the sound /f/. Is there anything else in this basket that begins with /f/? This is a pencil; does the word pencil begin with the /f/ sound? No, it begins with the /p/ sound. Playing games like this one helps increase a child's phonological awareness, the ability to hear and play with smaller sounds in words.



Paint shapes using washable finger paint. Include math skills by counting the number of sides on each shape. Point out shapes that are a part of letters such as the letter O being a circle, or the letter A having a triangle in it. Letter knowledge starts with seeing and recognizing shapes.



Read a book about a lion and talk about the behavior/habitat of lions. Where do they live? What do they look like? Are they large or small? What sound does a lion make? What sound does the word lion start with? Hearing sounds helps develop phonological awareness. Here are several book title suggestions:

- *Dear Zoo* by Rod Campbell
- *Go Cub!* by Susan Neuman
- *Lion Lessons* by Jon Agee

# Scavenger Hunt for Literacy: Preschool

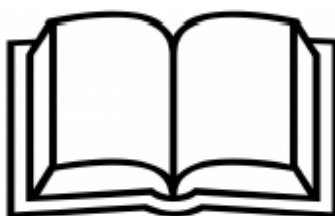
*Instructions: Color each object as you complete the scavenger hunt challenge. Don't forget to flip this page over! Have fun!*



Alphabet books are a fun way to learn the alphabet as you pronounce words that begin with those letters as you read. Check out two alphabet books and read them at home. Children are most interested in the letters that are in their name so be sure to pay special attention to letters within your child's name.

Below are a few suggestions:

- *R is for Robot* by Adam Watkins
- *Dog's ABC* by Emma Dodd
- *LMNO Peas* by Keith Baker



Create your own book at home by folding paper in half and stapling it together. Have your child write what is happening in the book and draw illustrations. Talk about the format of a story: the beginning, middle, and the end. Children will learn the connection between the written and spoken word with this activity (Print Awareness).

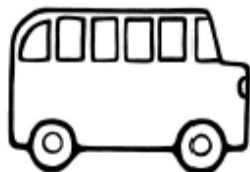


Read a book that won a Caldecott award. The Caldecott Medal annually recognizes the preceding year's "most distinguished American picture book for children"; the Association for Library Science to Children awards it to the illustrator. Here are a few recent Caldecott winners:

- *Hello Lighthouse* by Sophie Blackall
- *Thank You, Omu!* By Oge Mora
- *A Big Mooncake for Little Star* by Grace Lin



Read one of your child's favorite books. Repetition is great for a child! Letter knowledge is knowing that letters are different from one another and that the same letter can be written in different ways. As you read this book, point out a variety of letters and talk about the difference between an uppercase letter and a lowercase letter.



Wheels on the Bus

Nursery rhymes are important. Check out books that contain nursery rhymes and sing them as you read. Children who know eight nursery rhymes by the time they are eight years old, are 80% more likely to succeed in school. A nursery rhyme breaks language down and introduces new vocabulary words. Below are a few great suggestions:

- *Old MacDonald Had a Farm* by Jane Cabrera
- *Wheels on the Bus* by Raffi
- *Baa, Baa, Black Sheep* by Annie Kubler



## Early Literacy Tip:

While reading this book explore objects on the clothes line. Describe their uses; and compare and contrast what they do. Point to the text as you read the words, making connection between printed and spoken words.

Encourage children to tell you what they know, and add to their information to build background knowledge.

Ask the following questions while reading:

- What is alike and different?
- What job do you think this is? Why?
- Have you ever seen a (Insert job title here) before?
- Tell me a story about a time we...



Book: *Max Explains Everything: Grocery Store*  
Expert by Stacy McAnulty



Book: *Clothesline Clues to Jobs People Do* by  
Kathryn Heling



## Early Literacy Tip:

Did you know that the way you talk as you share books develops language and helps children later learn to read?

While reading this book explore emotions and feelings. How do you feel while at the grocery store?

Talk about the colors of the fruit versus the taste or texture. Encourage children to tell you what they know about food, and add a bit of information that you know.

Talk about the following while reading:

- Point out signs and logos (environmental print)
- Discuss letters and shapes within the book
- Encourage children to guess and predict what might happen





Book: *Dear Zoo* by Rod Campbell

Every **CH**KLD  
Ready to **READ**  
at your library

### Early Literacy Tip:

While reading this book learn new words such as: fragile, danger, and heavy. Explain each new vocabulary word. Talk about the size and color of the animal. In addition, talk about the habitat for each one. Encourage children to tell you what they know.

Ask the following questions while reading:

- What sound does this animal make?
- What letter does the word, zoo, begin with?
- Why do you think a lion wouldn't make a good pet?
- Tell me a story about a time we went to the zoo....

**KTalking** | **KStrgtrs** | **KReading** | **KWriting** | **KPlaying**

Book: *Llama Llama Misses Mama* by Anna Dewdney

Every **CH**KLD  
Ready to **READ**  
at your library

### Early Literacy Tip:

While reading this book explore both rhyme and experiences. Have you ever missed someone? What did you do feel better? Encourage children to tell you what they know about school.

Talk about the following while reading:

- What are the steps you take to get ready in the morning?
- Point out and talk about words that rhyme and words that start with the same sound.
- Encourage children to guess and predict what might happen
- Recall an experience you had when you were in school

**KTalking** | **KStrgtrs** | **KReading** | **KWriting** | **KPlaying**



**Children, Families, Community**

We often think of advocacy only in the context of budget cuts, but there are critical opportunities to share our impact in our everyday interactions. We can identify gaps in our services through meaningful communication with groups in our community. Using the assessment tools will help in articulating the value you and the library bring to the community.

**More Places to Look**  
 Possible Partnerships:  
 Albemarle Alliance for Children and Families  
[www.aacfnc.org](http://www.aacfnc.org)

**Outreach**

You can be one of the leaders in your community in terms of helping all children enter school ready to learn to read. Developing partnerships with organizations that serve parents and caregivers of young children is one way to build visibility in the community. Some examples are Head Start parent meetings, child care providers, WIC programs that offer services to low-income families with young children, city and state-funded early learning programs, schools with Pre-K programs, home visiting programs, community coalitions, PTA groups, health providers, and the Department of Social Services or Children, Youth and Families. You may also find opportunities with churches and other religious groups, service clubs like Lions Club or Rotary Clubs, and through contacts with the Chamber of Commerce and the business community.

As you think about equity and programming, here is a tool that can help you through the process. It is not meant to give you specific answers. It is meant to help you slow down and think so that you may come to a different, more responsive results. The pathway is through the person and relationships, not the Tool itself.

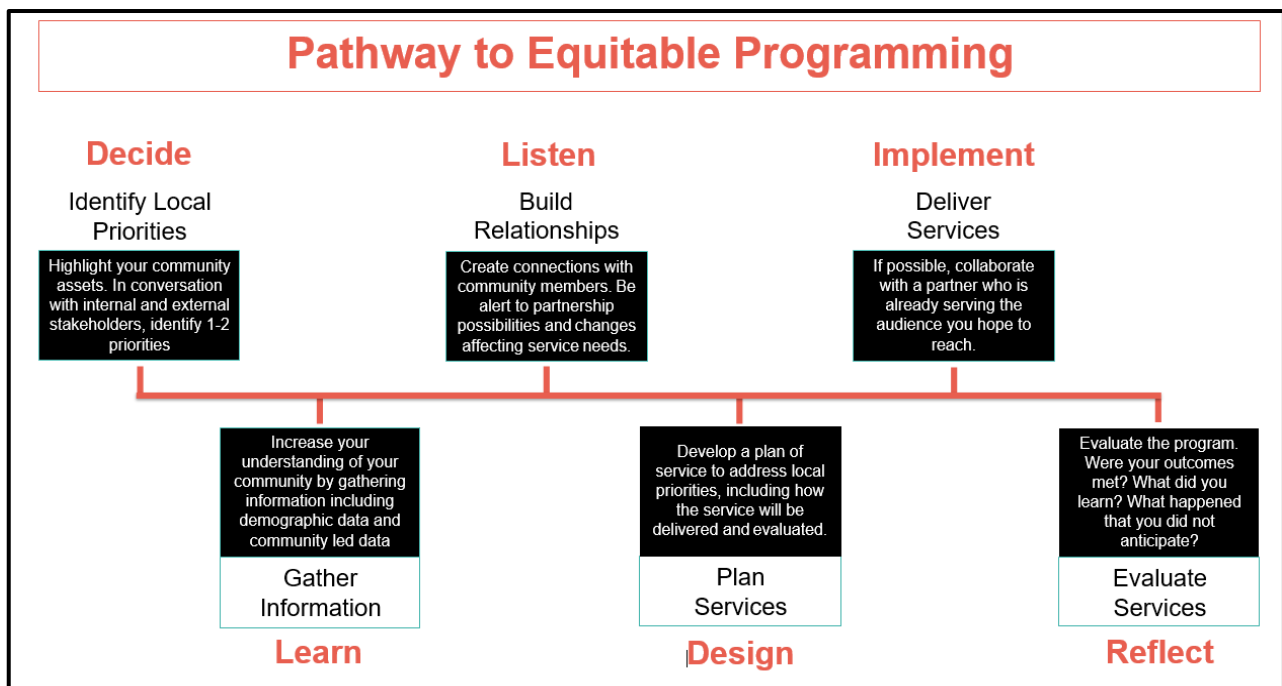
Here is the tool for your reference: Pathway to Equitable Programming

<https://tinyurl.com/wjpatheqprog> and

Community Engagement Best Practices <https://tinyurl.com/wjcmtyeongbp>

The Webjunction presentation on Supercharged Storytimes Through an Equity Lens: Building Community Connections gives you an explanation on using this tool.

<https://tinyurl.com/wjequitylens>



## 14. Advocacy

In order to get to know your community and the groups that make up your community, you may go to community events/gatherings, school events, explore local restaurants, grocery stores and shops, community sports events, craft fairs, and more. As you spoke with families and partners, what did you learn? What patterns or themes did you notice? How do they like to get information (flyer, word of mouth, social media, etc.) How does this information influence your programs and services?

If you come to find out that a high percentage of families do not have books in their homes and the educational attainment is low, then you can work with partners and talk with families directly about their goals and desires. Do families need to know what “storytime” means? Do they think children must be quiet in the library and therefore do not come to the library? Are they leery of overdue fines and are so reluctant to check out books? Are your programs being held at times that your targeted families can attend? Would parents or others be interested in sharing or presenting books or activities from their culture?

Sometimes it is hard to even know what questions to ask. Being a good listener can bring you opportunities to learn in ways you may not have anticipated. Give yourself time, but also take advantage on all opportunities to get to know the groups, the traditions, the opportunities, and the strengths of all those in your service area.

### More Places to Look

Access Isn't Equity

<https://tinyurl.com/accessnotequity>

ECRR Outside the Library: Providing Meaningful Family-Focused Community Outreach by Kathleen Campana et al.

<https://tinyurl.com/ecrroutlib>

Taking Early Literacy Messages to WIC Centers by Marisa Conner <https://tinyurl.com/wicel>

Creating Our Family Story

<https://tinyurl.com/crfamstory>

This Library Takes an Indigenous Approach to Categorizing Books

<https://tinyurl.com/categbks>

Using the Village to Raise a Reader laudromats

<https://tinyurl.com/villagereader>

### LatinX Community

Partnering with Latino Parents, and interview with author Pat Mora

<https://tinyurl.com/partlat>

“Educators are Optimists” and “Going Out of the Comfort Zone” (Parts 1 and 2)

<https://tinyurl.com/educopt>

Excerpt from Introduction of *ECRR for Spanish Speakers Toolkit*

<https://tinyurl.com/ecrjspintro>

## 15. Handouts

We have seen that handouts and flyers offer opportunities to be an advocate for early literacy, library programs and services. They are also one way to support the empowering aspect of the storytime. We want adults to continue to support their children's early literacy development at home in enjoyable ways. Having a handout can make the saying of the last early literacy tip easier because you are focusing on the handout and explaining its use.

**Considerations** for handouts that support early literacy:

- They relate directly or build on something that took place in the storytime.
- They incorporate an early literacy component and its connection to the activity on the handout.
- They are not too overwhelming.
- They suit the reading level of the adults in the communities you serve. They are offered in the languages of families in your communities.
- They emphasize the importance of the adult-child interaction and of adults and children doing something together
- They may include an activity, something they make or do, encouraging parents to talk with the children as they do it. Process activities should be emphasized.

At the end of your storytime, you can pass out the handout, mention the activity on the handout, and lead into your empower tip.

### Examples

Hickory Dickory Dock: <https://tinyurl.com/handhickory>

Use the handout on this webpage to make flannel board pieces.

In the storytime, you would say the rhyme "Hickory Dickory Dock." After saying the rhyme, repeat it using the flannel board. Then play a game where you put the mouse in different positions in relationship to the clock, such as *above*, *below*, *behind*, *next to*. Your example tip can relate to this activity to learning words for prepositions which develops their vocabulary and comprehension. You can then use the handout on the webpage for their take-home activity.

*Too Much Noise* by Ann McGovern <https://tinyurl.com/handtoomuchnoise>

This handout gives children the opportunity to draw the animals and then retell the story. Some children may scribble for the animal picture. That is fine. You will notice that in this tip on the handout, you see a progression describing how children at different stages can engage with the story and the activity.

*Something from Nothing* by Phoebe Gilman <https://tinyurl.com/handsfn>

You can use the handout as a pattern to make a flannel board using materials similar to the pattern in the book. Read the book and/or tell the story with the flannel board during your storytime. Have the children join in with the words, "It's time to throw it out." They may join in with other phrases as they get used to the repetition in the story. At the end of storytime, you can pass out the handout which has a tip about retelling stories.

Handouts can be used as aids in situations other than storytimes. They can be used to convey information to parents and caregivers when you are speaking with them one-on-one in the library

## 15. Handouts

and in outreach venues. For example, when you do a storytime at a Head Start or pre-k location where parents are not present, you may offer a handout for the children to take home to their parents. You can also use handouts, boosted with early literacy tips, when participating in a Parent Fair or school parent night. You may use handouts to reach out to businesses or other agencies or partners. The handout does not replace your personal contact. It is a reminder or support for what you are saying and the relationships you are building.

Here are some handouts about early literacy with some suggestions from Amber Jarvis at Moyock Public Library about ways to use them. Here is what she says:

I pass out the Ready to Read Bookmark when I first begin storytimes to help parents/caregivers understand the five practices that they can do, or are already doing, at home to encourage early literacy. I use it as a talking point to discuss early literacy skills.

Ready to Read Bookmark <https://tinyurl.com/bkmkelbeginsyou>

One storytime a month I focus on an early literacy practice each week using one of the flyers. I talk so much about the early literacy COMPONENTS in storytime. These handouts are a way to remind me to talk about the practices because that's where parents put early literacy into action! Handout for each of the five practices <https://tinyurl.com/handprac>

This is an example of handouts related to specific storytimes. For example, I pass out this Watermelon handout after we focus on watermelon for that specific storytime. It helps take what we learned in storytime and apply further learning for both the child and the parent/caregiver.

Watermelon Storytime Handout <https://tinyurl.com/handwatermelonst>

While in storytime I do this exact syllable activity, counting the number of syllables in words. I give this handout to parents/caregivers to help promote early literacy, specifically phonological awareness, at home. They are familiar with the activity, but the handout promotes further practice at home. Handout for How Many Syllables? <https://tinyurl.com/handsyl>

Taneshia at Library had several parents who asked for help for their children learning to write their names. She found this worksheet from [www.megaworkbook.com](http://www.megaworkbook.com) Here is one example of the handout. <https://tinyurl.com/handleters>

### More Places to Look

Handouts and Activities

<http://www.earlylit.net/handouts-and-activities>

Five Practices Literacy Cards Library of Virginia

<http://www.earlylit.net/s/LiteracyCards.pdf>

Any Book, Any Skill Bookmarks

<https://tinyurl.com/bkmkabas>

Ready to Read Carroll County (MD) Public Library

<http://www.earlylit.net/s/readtalkplay.pdf>

Booklist with Literacy Activities Kent (MI) Public

Library <https://tinyurl.com/bklistkpl>

Parent Handouts English and Spanish

<http://www.earlylit.net/spanish-resources>

Any Book, Any Skill

<http://www.earlylit.net/any-book-any-skill-bookmark>

Marisela Munoz, Avondale AZ Public Library

Promoting Oral Language in Children

<https://tinyurl.com/handolang>

*Baby Rhyming Time*: Chapter 12 Handouts, Displays and Signs

## 15. Handouts

Children try to do some things that may be hard for them. We and their parents may also encourage them to try to do something they haven't mastered yet. And for many children learning to read, when they are formally taught to read in school, it can be a daunting task. Here is a handout from Amber Jarvis, Moyock Public Library, about the Growth Mindset, which offers advice about ways to help children, and their parents/caregivers, have a positive outlook. <https://tinyurl.com/handgm>  
Here are more handouts on the growth mindset: <https://tinyurl.com/growthmindsetex>  
These handouts may be used one-on-one on the floor when talking informally with parents and caregivers or as part of storytime resources.

Handouts can serve many purposes including supporting library advocacy, sharing information, being a voice for community groups, sharing storytime ideas. It is important to remember that the handout alone is not sufficient. It is the interactions you have, the relationships you build, the information you share verbally that makes the handouts valuable, serving as a reminder of what you said.

# **PART III**

# **APPENDICES**

## 16. Appendix A: Equity

### Overview

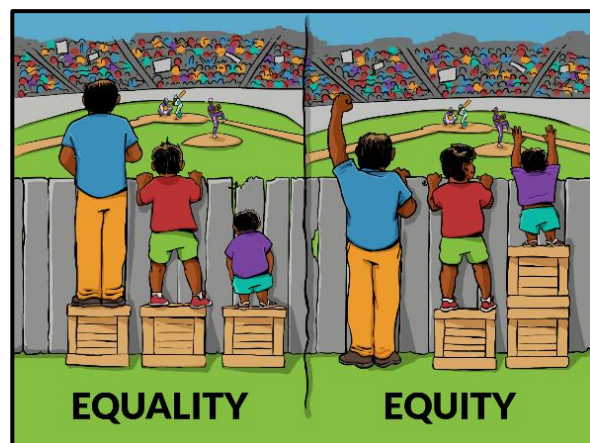
There are several terms related to diversity and equality that are often used interchangeably but that actually have different definitions.

- Equity—individualized strategies designed to address historical barriers to access.  
Racial Equity—condition that would be achieved if one’s racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares.
- Inclusion—Authentically bringing traditionally excluded/under-represented individuals and/or groups into processes, activities and decision/policymaking in a way that shares power
- Diversity—The ways in which people differ; includes different ideas, perspectives, and values; encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another.

There are a number of images that have been used to try to explain the different aspects of equity. Figure 1 is the one I saw first and I thought, “Ohhh, OK, I get it now. Then I read this article “Can We Stop Using the Box Graphic When We talk About Racial Equity?”

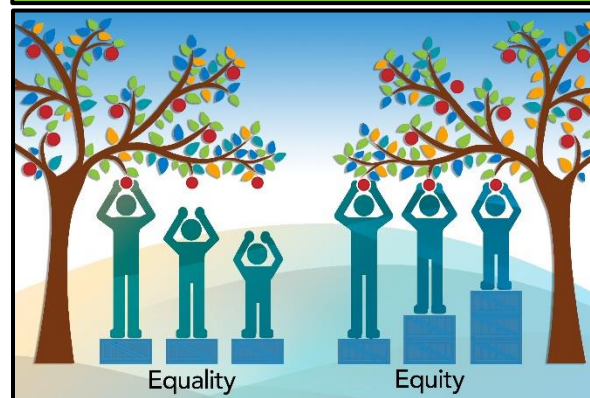
<https://tinyurl.com/equitygraphic>

Figure 1



That gave me pause. One issue was that the people are spectators, not taking action. So, I thought Figure 2 would be more appropriate. Also, unlike in Figure 1, the first person is not lowered.

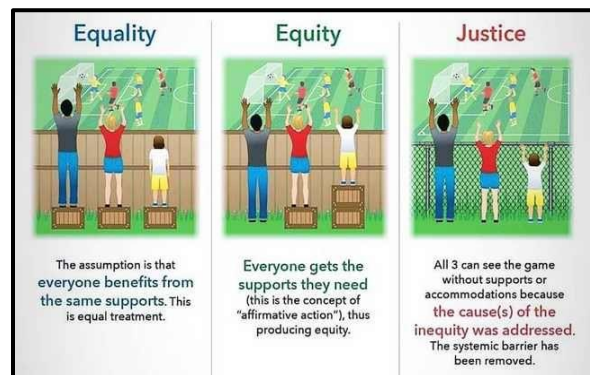
Figure 2



In Figure 3, we see that the fence in Figure 1 symbolizes systemic barriers. There is no such equivalent in Figure 2.

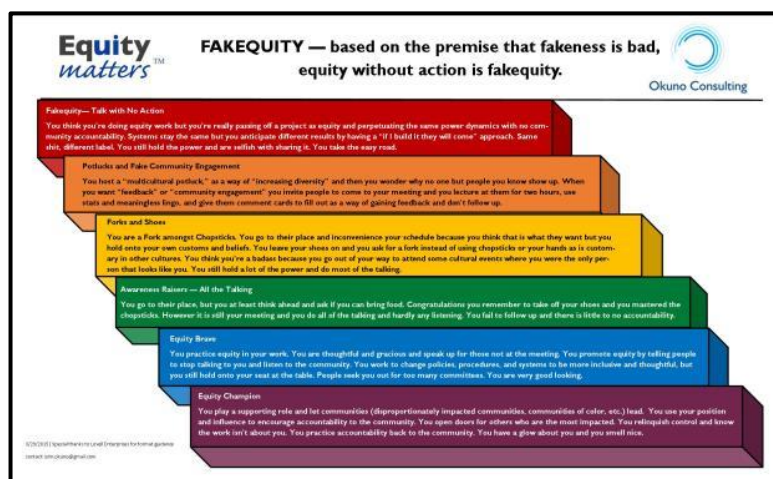
Realistically, there is probably no image that can capture the many facets of equity and certainly cannot convey the complex process that needs to take place in all communities. Deeping your knowledge and how it informs your practices is ongoing work. Creating an intentional practice to learn more about systemic inequities and strategies that yield equitable outcomes for all in your storytimes and services will make a powerful difference to the growth of the children, their families, and your community as a whole.

Figure 3





Fakequity is a blog that addresses issues around equity, diversity, inclusion, culture, community engagement, and more. This graphic on their homepage by Okuno Consulting offers levels of awareness and action in the equity journey. <https://tinyurl.com/fakequityblog>



Two websites offer free comprehensive courses on equity. You can examine a specific topic or go through the whole course in order, on your own, or as part of a group.

#### Project READY: Reimagining Equity & Access for Diverse Youth

Free, online professional development modules for school and public youth services librarians, library administrators, and others interested in improving their knowledge about race and racism, racial equity, and culturally sustaining pedagogy. The primary focus of the Project READY curriculum is on improving relationships with, services to, and resources for youth of color and Native youth. <http://ready.web.unc.edu/>

#### COR360: Addressing Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion with Young Children

Tools and resources for early childhood educators on ways to engage children in conversations about race. Includes strategies you can implement now to strengthen the quality of our practices and programs. Public libraries can adapt what is presented here for early childhood educators. To the children, families, and communities we serve. <https://360.coradvantage.com/>

#### ACEs and African Americans

ACE stands for Adverse Childhood Experiences. This organization supports people, organizations, and communities to mitigate trauma and build resilience-building practices. They list anti-racism resources including resources on talking with children about race and racism. <https://tinyurl.com/acesres>

## **More Places to Look**

NAEYC Position Statement on Advancing Equity

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/equity-position>

Voices of Immigrant Parents in Preschool Settings (NAEYC) <https://tinyurl.com/immppaar>

Advancing Racial Equity in Public Libraries: Case Studies from the Field by Government Alliance on Race & Equity

<https://tinyurl.com/raceqpl>

Things I Never Learning in Library School: Decolonizing Our Public Libraries *School Library Journal*

<https://tinyurl.com/sljdecol>

First Steps Column in *School Library Journal*: Discussing Race with Young Kids <https://tinyurl.com/sljraceyc>

Building tools to talk about race with children—Embracerace [www.embracerace.org](http://www.embracerace.org)

Equity Literacy for Educators: Definition and Abilities Equity Literacy Institute <https://tinyurl.com/equitylited>

Webinar from Public Library Association: Understanding Power, Identity and Oppression in the Public Library

<https://tinyurl.com/plapowerpl>

Family Engagement Practice Level Strategies US Child Welfare

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/FEI/practice-strategies/> Scroll down to Early Childhood Ed

Racial Equity in the Library: Where to Start? WebJunction blog <https://tinyurl.com/wjraceq>

Racial Equity in the Library: Diverse Collections, Programming, Resources WebJunction blog

<https://tinyurl.com/wjraceqcoll>

Whimsy Librarian Blog <http://whimsylibrarian.com/>

Jessica Bratt, Youth Services Librarian, Grand Rapids (MI) Public Library. Resources and trainings on racial equity.

African-American English and Main Stream American English <https://tinyurl.com/aaemsae>

Pronouns Matter: Gender Expression and Early Learning *School Library Journal's* First Steps Column

<https://tinyurl.com/sljpron>

## 17. Appendix B: Child Development

### Why

Why do we need to know about child development—how children progress through stages in various areas such as emotional, social, cognitive, language, and physical development?

If we have knowledge of how children generally develop, a progression of skills we can

- Have more realistic expectations of children’s abilities and behaviors in our storytimes
- Be more flexible in the way we share books and other activities depending on who comes to a particular storytime
- Choose our storytime items in ways that will be supportive and enjoyable for children
- Understand how to make some books and activities more challenging to help children grow
- Share information with parents/caregivers about children’s development

### More Places to Look

*Baby Rhyming Time* Chapter 1: Understanding How Baby Learns

Zero to Three

Your Child’s Development: Age-Based Tips from Birth to 36 Months

<https://tinyurl.com/zttchdev>

### Agencies That Can Help

<https://www.aacfnc.org/>

The Circle of Parents Support Group

<https://www.aacfnc.org/special-needs/>

Specific resources in Currituck

<https://www.ecac-parentcenter.org/county-resources/currituck/>

Pasquotank/Camden

<https://www.ecac-parentcenter.org/county-resources/pasquotank/>

Dare

<https://www.ecac-parentcenter.org/county-resources/dare/>

Of course, there is wide variation among individual children, but the progression is fairly constant. For example, crawling before walking, before running, before jumping before hopping, before galloping.

In Chapter 11 on Storytime Elements, I gave some examples of ways to scaffold or adapt what we do to make the item easier or harder. That information is based on what we know about children’s stages of development.

Many resources offer information on child development. Many have charts for different age levels. It is important to note what information they are offering you. Some of them are letting you know “warning signs.” These would be minimal expectations.

For example, for North Carolina’s Developmental Watch Alert: <https://tinyurl.com/ncdevwatch>

Other charts are giving examples of what a normally developing child would be doing.

Center for Disease Control and Prevention Developmental Milestones <https://tinyurl.com/cdcmiles>

Language Development:

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

<https://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/chart/>

Sunnyvale, CA Mighty Beginnings: Early Literacy Milestones: Newborn to Twenty-Four Months

<https://tinyurl.com/sunnyvalemb>

## 16. Child Development

You can also use the book *STEP into Storytime*, which is part of the Manual Kit, to give you both the background to support scaffolding as well as to get specific ideas to scaffold with storytime activities.

Chapter 4 talks about scaffolding with each of the early literacy practices: talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing.

In order to have a good sense of child development, you can read about each domain:

Chapter 5: Emotional and Social Development

Chapter 6: Cognitive Development

Chapter 7: Physical Development

Chapter 8: Language and Literacy Development

The time you spend getting to know areas of child development combined with your own interactions with young children will evolve into your increasing ability to be responsive to the varied stages of children who attend your storytimes.

## 18. Appendix C: Additional Storytime Forms

Jbrary has a Toddler Storytime Planning Sheet and a Family Storytime Planning Sheet. Here they are with links to the actual form:


Toddler: <https://tinyurl.com/jbrarytodplg>

Toddler Storytime		Date:
Early Literacy Tip:		Week:
Books:		Branch:
Puppet Activity:		Stamp Used
Songs:		Flannel Activity:
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.		1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

Family Storytime		Date:
Early Literacy Tip:		Week:
Books:	Opening Songs/Rhymes:	
Puppet Activity:	Flannel Story:	
Movement Activities:	Rhymes/Felt Songs:	
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.	

Family: <https://tinyurl.com/jbraryfamplg>

<https://jbrary.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Babytime-Outline.pdf>



## Babytime Outline

By Lindsey Krabbenhoft and Dana Horrocks

**Welcome Song: [Wake Up Feet](#)**

Wake up feet, wake up feet,  
Wake up feet and wiggle, wiggle, wiggle,  
Wake up feet, wake up feet,  
Wake up and wiggle in the morning.

Verses: hands, ears, etc.  
(Encourage caregivers to wiggle each body part on baby)

**Lap Bounce: [Cha-Cha-Chabogin](#)**

Cha, cha, chobogin  
Cha, cha, chabin  
Watch out little baby  
You might fall in! (*Swing baby between legs or lift baby up*)

**Lap Bounce: [This is the Way the Ladies Ride](#)**

This is the way the ladies ride.  
Nim, nim, nim  
This is the way the gentleman rides.  
Trim, trim, trim  
This is the way the farmer rides.  
Turot, turot, turot  
And this is the way the hunter rides,  
Galop, galop, galop, galop.


**Lap Bounce: [Pudding on the Plate](#)**

Pudding on the plate, pudding on the plate  
Wobble wobble, wobble wobble (*gently bounce baby*)  
Pudding on the plate.

Candies in a jar, Candies in a jar  
Shake them up, shake them up (*lift baby*)  
Candies in a jar.

Sausage in the pan, Sausage in the pan  
Turn it round, turn it round (*twist baby back and forth*)  
Sausage in the pan.

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**Song: [I Wish I Were A Little Bar of Soap](#)**

Oh I wish I was a little bar of soap.  
Bar of soap! (*lift baby*)  
Oh I wish I was a little bar of soap.  
Bar of soap! (*lift baby*)  
I'd slippy and I'd slidy over everybody's hidy,  
Oh I wish I was a little bar of soap.  
Bar of soap! (*lift baby*)

**Diaper Changing Song: [Sign Language Song](#)**

When my diaper's on I like it dry,  
And when it's wet, I get upset.  
When my diaper's on I like it dry,  
And when it's wet, I get upset.  
I want it off,  
I cry, "Please change me!"

**Diaper Changing Song: [You Roll It](#)**

You roll it, you roll it, you roll it, (*rock baby back and forth*)  
And then you put the raisins in. (*poke baby's belly*)

**Diaper Changing Song: [Charlie Chaplin Went to France](#)**

Charlie Chaplin went to France  
To teach the ladies how to dance.  
First he did the rumba, rumba, rumba  
Then he did the kicks, the kicks, the kicks  
Then he did the samba, the samba, the samba,  
Then he did the splits, the splits, the splits.

**Movement Song: [Go In and Out the Window](#)**


Go in and out the window,  
Go in and out the window,  
Go in and out the window,  
As we have done before.

Stand up and face your partner,  
Stand up and face your partner,  
Stand up and face your partner,  
As we have done before.


**Movement Song: [The Elevator Song](#)**

Oh the city is great and the city is grand.  
There's a whole lot of people  
on a little piece of land.  
And we live way up on the 57th floor  
and this is what we do when we go out the door.  
We take the elevator up and the elevator down,  
take the elevator up, take the elevator down.  
Take the elevator up and the elevator down  
and we turn around.

### Books We Shared



*Counting Kisses*  
by Karen Katz



*Old MacDonald Had A Farm*  
by Jane Cabrera

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