

English Language Learner Storytimes Newborn to Five Year Olds and Their Parents

Opening: Welcome

Opening Song

On flip chart, follow text with finger

Same song repeated every time, something like “Hello and how are you?” with names. This is the kind of wording in regular conversation too.

Big book

Read once, pointing to text

Choral read it, pointing to text

Choral read again for rhythm/fluency

In future storytimes, say 2 or 3 weeks later read it again.

Song or rhyme

Write it on flipchart

Importance of rhyme

Rhymes and songs in your own language are important!

Have them share some of their own childhood rhymes. You can also have pre-recorded ones that you have asked patrons to record previously. Then, if they are shy, you can play a rhyme in say, Urdu. Once they hear a common one they really get into it! [Points to make: songs allow children to hear words broken into parts because different note for each syllable/part. Rhyme is not a concept in all languages, but it can be done in any language.]

Book for dialogic reading

Open to one page of a book, something with a familiar scene/situation

Demonstrate What questions.

They can ask questions in English or own language

Depending on group or as the group progresses, can ask open-ended questions, or save for another session. You can have them compare dialogic reading in native language and dialogic reading in English. They will see that the child can get a lot more vocabulary from language they are most fluent in.

Hearing Sounds

Phonological awareness, choose a sound to talk about. Show the letter and say the sound. [Choose the sounds that are most easily heard and for those letters that have only one sound, like B, M, N, S]

What words start with that sound—can be in English, in a native language, or made up word. Main thing is hearing the beginning sound. Make a game of it, or “I Spy”. You can bring in realia to have around if you want.

Talk Time

General conversation. Talk about common situations with children. Can simulate it and say phrases in English, then have them repeat.

Examples: waking up and getting breakfast; child wants to stay up late; at the dinner table, etc.

Good bye song

On flipchart, same each time

Talk about ways we say good bye. (Come again, see you soon. Thanks for coming. I’m glad you came.)

Other suggestions:

Make sheet of vocabulary from one of the books you have chosen. Write words in English words and have pictures so they can understand.

Bring realia, empty cereal, food, etc.--name items in English so they get the vocabulary

Rebus reading—in middle of story, word would be a picture and you say word in picture, they repeat.

Offering same program several times is okay, repetition is necessary.