

What Can I Say?

Storytimes and Early Literacy

Sometimes when we are trying to become comfortable with new information, it helps to have a kind of "script" of what we want to tell others until we have internalized what we have learned.

Perhaps some of these suggestions will be helpful. They are NOT meant to be limiting. They are meant as a beginning, with each of us learning new information as time goes by and sharing it with parents/caregivers. One Storytime Piece may have a more than one skill associated with it. When you do it one time, you can emphasize one skill and when you do it at another storytime, you can emphasize a different skill.

You may be highlighting different aspects of early literacy to parents at different programs.

PT = Pre-Talker (newborn - 2 years) T = Talker (2 - 3 years) PR = Pre-Reader (4 - 5 years)

Storytime Piece	Early Literacy Skill	Communication to Parent/Caregiver
"Horse, Horse" (PT) song and activity from <i>Lively Songs and Lullabies</i> by Carol Duane	Phonological Awareness	Aside from being fun, singing songs with your baby/ toddler helps them hear words being broken up into smaller sounds. Later this skill helps with reading.
"Turn- A-round" by Hap Palmer (T) from <i>Getting to Know Myself</i> album	Phonological Awareness Vocabulary	Songs help children hear words broken down into syllables because usually there is a different note for each syllable. Subconsciously children are learning to break words down into parts. This skill helps them with reading. This song points out parts of the body, helping children learn vocabulary. Having a large vocabulary, knowing the names of things, is one of the skills children need when they later learn to sound out words.
"Open Shut Them" (T,PR)	Phonological Awareness	Rhyming is one way that children learn to hear that words are made up of smaller parts. This helps them when they later try to sound out words to read.
Chose a book you like to read (PT, T, PR)	Print motivation	Keeping reading and sharing books FUN is important. If the experience is not a positive one, children will relate reading to something negative, which will make them less likely to choose to read.
"Little Flea" (PT) from <i>Wee Sing for Baby</i> by Pamela Beall	Vocabulary Phonological Awareness	Talking with your baby or singing to him throughout the day exposes your child to a lot of language. Children who are spoken to a lot during their early years, right from birth, end up knowing many more words than when parents speak to their children very little. Even though your child cannot speak, it is important to talk with him. It is critical to language development. Even while you are diapering your baby you can sing this song. Singing songs helps children hear that words are broken down into smaller parts.
<u>Kipper A to Z</u> by Inkpen (T)	Letter knowledge	Reading alphabet books with a story is one way expose children to letters. Some alphabet books are quite complex, so ask a Librarian to help you choose some from our Alphabet and Counting section.

Storytime Piece	Early Literacy Skill	Communication to Parent/Caregiver
<p><u>Where's the Baby?</u> by Christian board book or other flapbook (PT)</p>	<p>Print motivation</p>	<p>It is natural for your baby to bite on books. This is how they learn about their world. You can just gently take the book from her mouth and open the book to show her the pictures. Show her how fun it is to share a book together, even if it is just for a couple of minutes at a time. A book is a toy at this age.</p>
<p>Today we're having stories about Picnics. Have any of you ever been on a picnic? What did you do? (PR)</p>	<p>Narrative skills</p>	<p>Let children tell you what a picnic is or what happened when they went on a picnic. This helps to develop their narrative skills, the ability to retell events. This is an early literacy skill that was hard for many kindergartners. You can hold up a foam letter "P" and say that picnic starts with "P". Let's fill up a picnic basket with different things. What shall we put in? Carrots, paper plates, peanut butter sandwiches, yum yum. Paper and plates start with "P"! So does peanut butter. What else shall we take on the picnic? See how you can incorporate knowing letters into whatever you might be talking about.</p>
<p><u>Blue Sea</u> by Kalan (T, PR) book and then children help you retell with flannel board</p>	<p>Narrative skills</p>	<p>Once children are familiar with a story, let them tell you what happens. This improves their narrative skills, or the ability to retail events. Developing this early literacy skill helps later with reading comprehension.</p>
<p>How many people are in storytime today? Let's count noses, all together. We have 27 nice noses today! [Holds up foam letter "N"] Here's an "en" for all those noses! (PR)</p>	<p>Letter knowledge</p>	<p>You can name the letters and their sounds based on things you are doing throughout the day. Even using signs, like STOP signs, when you are driving or walking around helps children learn letters.</p>
<p><u>Little Red Hen</u> by Galdone (T, PR)</p>	<p>Print Awareness</p>	<p>Run your finger along the lines of repeated text. Running your finger along the words you are reading from time to time helps children understand that you are reading the words, not the pictures. It also helps them understand that in English we read from left to right and from top to bottom of a page.</p>
<p><u>Baby's Toys</u> by Ricklen (PT)</p>	<p>Print awareness</p>	<p>When you use a board book with nice clear pictures like this, you can point to the picture and show your baby the real thing. For example, point to the picture of the toy truck in the book and then show your child a toy truck. This helps your child understand that pictures represent real things. Later Baby will learn that print represents words that represent real things.</p>
<p>Handing out nametags (T, PR)</p>	<p>Letter Knowledge</p>	<p>The most important word to a child is his/her name! It is a good place to begin when learning sounds and letters. You can spell it out in sand, make letters with playdough, or use plastic magnetic letters on the refrigerator.</p>
<p>"Five Little Ducks" by Raffi or other song that has some words with more than one syllable (PT,T, PR)</p>	<p>Phonological Awareness</p>	<p>Singing is fun! Don't worry if you don't have perfect pitch! In songs, each syllable has a different note. Without really thinking about it, children are hearing words being broken down into parts. This helps them when they have to sound out words.</p>

Storytime Piece	Early Literacy Skill	Communication to Parent/Caregiver
True book about trains (PR)	Print motivation Letter knowledge Narrative skills Vocabulary	<p>Some children prefer true books (non-fiction) to story books. We have many books on subjects that young children like in our non-fiction sections. Ask me for the subject your child is interested in – trains, different animals, the planets, etc.</p> <p>Hold up a foam letter of "T" and/or "t". This is the letter T for train. Showing children letters based on subjects they like follows the child's interest. They are more likely to remember the letter than if you drill them.</p> <p>Let children talk about the pictures in the book. They may tell you about a time they saw a train, or even went on one. Taking time to listen and to add to what they say helps them develop their narrative skills which helps later with understanding what they read.</p> <p>When children tell you about a train or a certain train car, you can read more information from the book and add to their description or their information. This helps to expand their vocabulary, knowing the names of things, actions, and ideas.</p>
Big book of <u>Caps for Sale</u> by Slobodkina (P-R)	Print Awareness Vocabulary	<p>Hold book upside down. See if children notice that it is upside down. If not, point it out. Children need to know how to hold a book, which is the cover, which is the back of the book. This is one fun way to find out if they know this.</p> <p>"Peddler" someone who sells things. When you come to a word that is not familiar to the child, you should use that word and explain it in a way the child would understand. This is one way to help the child learn more words. Books give us different words than those we use in conversation or that are on television. Knowing many words helps children with reading when they try to sound out words.</p>
<u>Cows in the Kitchen</u> by Crebbin (T, P-R)	Narrative skills, vocabulary	<p>Read the book together. Go back to one or two pages and model "Hear and Say or Dialogic Reading". There are many ways to read a book. Reading a book through helps children understand the whole story and keeps the story line. Talking about the pictures and taking the child's lead increases your child's vocabulary and narrative skills. Try to ask questions that cannot be answered with Yes or No. If you'd like more information on this way of reading with your child, there is a video, or talk with me after the storytime.</p>
Do a rhyming game (PR)	Phonological Awareness	<p>You can play these rhyming games while you are walking or are waiting on line or just anywhere. These games are a fun way of helping children understand that words are made up of parts which helps them in sounding out words.</p>
<u>Great Blueness and Other Predicaments</u> by Lobel (P-R)	Vocabulary Narrative skills	<p>Predicaments, slouched, etc. – many words that would expand vocabulary. What might you do when your child asks you the meaning of a word and you can't explain it? This is a wonderful opportunity to show your child how to find things out when you aren't sure! You might try to figure it out from the story, or look it up in the dictionary, or call the library and ask!</p> <p>This is a wonderful book about colors. Ask your child how s/he thinks colors might have come to the world.</p>

**What Can I Say?
Storytimes and Early Literacy
Your Ideas**

Storytime Piece	Early Literacy Skill	Communication to Parent/Caregiver