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Kindergarten Newsletter

Tell Me a Story: Developing Your Child's Language Through Storytelling



WHAT is storytelling?

Storytelling has existed for thousands of years, long before writing and books. Telling a story is different from reading a book; it is a creative, interactive event that makes connections between people of all ages. It is a wonderful way to teach life lessons and learn about each other.

WHY tell stories?

Storytelling helps children develop all communication skills:

- listening and understanding
- imagining events when hearing about them
- building vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation
- putting thoughts into words
- putting events in order
- reasoning and problem-solving with language
- imagining and creating
- understanding and talking about feelings

WHO can tell stories?

Anyone can be a storyteller! Encourage all family members and friends to tell stories with your child.

WHEN and WHERE to tell stories?

Anywhere, anytime – at the kitchen table, at bedtime, in the car, on the bus, when you are out for a walk, at family gatherings...whenever you are together!

HOW do I tell stories?

Tell stories about your family.

This helps children understand where they've come from and who their ancestors are. Ask other family members and friends to share their stories as well.

Tell your child a story about your day.

Talk about what happened today, and what may happen later. This will help your child learn to talk about the past and the future using correct grammar and sentence structure.



Tell stories that you remember and enjoyed as a child. Reflect on your feelings, the strength of the characters and the expression of the storyteller. Folktales that are passed down from generation to generation are an excellent way to pass along traditions and an appreciation of culture.

Incorporate books.

Tell a story first without the book, and then read the book. This helps to link stories with print. You and your child can also re-tell or act out a story from a familiar book. Use toys, old clothes, puppets, or anything you can think of to help act out the story.

Make up pretend stories together.

Take turns adding to the story. Use your imagination! Record your stories and your child's stories with a tape recorder so you can listen again and again. You can never tell the same story too many times!

Use photographs or baby memory albums to talk about special family memories. Young children love to hear stories about when they were babies.



Whenever you are telling stories:

- make sure that both the storyteller and the listener are actively involved
- use words like first, next, finally
- include all the parts of a story:
 - who was in the story
 - where did it happen
 - when did it happen
 - what was the problem
 - what was the plan
 - what happened
 - how did people feel
 - how did it end
- play with language: incorporate rhymes and nonsense words, use words from your culture, try different voices or accents
- encourage your child to help tell the story - especially the repetitive or very familiar parts
- connect things that happen in the story with your family's experiences
- tell stories in the language you are most comfortable speaking
- most of all, have fun together!

Ask your child's teacher about the TCDSB video *Ready, Set, Read!* It provides helpful tips on storytelling and is available for loan in various languages.