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THE IMPORTANCE OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND ACTIVITIES AND TECHNIQUES TO ENHANCE THE HOME-SCHOOL CONNECTION

by

Meghan Cole

An Independent Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of:

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Approved by:
Lynda Berkowitz, M.S., Independent Study Advisor

Abstract: This study discusses the importance of parental involvement in children's language development, and the related project offers parents books and activities to assist them in developing their children's linguistic skills.

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May 2008

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I would like to thank my advisor, Lynda Berkowitz, for her inspiration and assistance in completing this Independent Study project. I would also like to thank the pre-kindergarten department at the Central Institute for the Deaf for their generous contribution of resources.

“Successful children come from committed parents.”

Easterbrooks and Baker, 2002, p. 84

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Introduction

The most important factors necessary for any child to acquire oral language are listening activities, language instruction, communication strategies, consistent amplification, and family support (http://www.agbell.org). For centuries, people have sought to teach language and academic skills to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. This is a specialized skill for families and teachers because these individuals require unique and specific instruction. The main goal has consistently been to figure out the best way for people who are deaf or hard of hearing to communicate. Determining a means of communication is the greatest priority. From there, forms and uses of language can be learned. Easterbrooks and Baker (2002, pp. 26, 36) proposed that communication is learned and shared within the cultural contexts of the family, and that it will not develop normally without these pragmatic and social contexts in place. Their point is that families are an integral part of language development; they represent the child's first and foremost means to access language. Gunning (2007) reiterated this point by claiming that achieving educational outcomes (regarding literacy specifically) cannot be done only at school. He maintained that it is a responsibility shared by all citizens and, most importantly, "parents… need to become partners in their children's lives" (p. 13).

How then, can parents specifically aid their children who are deaf or hard of hearing in acquiring language? This can be done with help from the children's teachers. Both parents and teachers can be knowledgeable of the children's language levels and learning potential. What should follow is that information held by one party be shared with the other. Parents can assist teachers in providing examples of language and behaviors they have seen exhibited at home. Even if they are not experts in either language or behavior, parental input can be evaluated by those who are. Likewise,

teachers can provide parents with information about their children's assessed language levels, language and vocabulary goals, and ideas for eliciting language at home; however, teachers should not do so with the expectation that parents take on sole responsibility for their children's language development. Instead, expectations should be directed towards parents knowing and understanding their children's language abilities and goals that are being addressed at school. Everyone benefits when the lines of communication are open.

There is no single way to teach language to people who are deaf or hard of hearing (Easterbrooks & Baker, 2002, p. 1). What is known is that language in general must be taught through some mode of communication. Also, increased language exposure is significantly correlated with vocabulary, language, and cognitive development (Hart & Risley, 1995). Depending on hearing status, age of onset of hearing loss, personal learning styles, personal preferences, access to language, and a myriad of other factors, different methods of communication, and the strategies to teach them, will be effective for different individuals. The children meant to benefit from the project related to this paper are those learning to listen and talk. They utilize residual hearing, hearing aids, and/or cochlear implants that give them access to auditory information and potential oral language skills development. Trained teachers of the deaf work with them towards proficiency in these skills and use supplemental visual and tactile aids when necessary. Language instruction, however, is necessary no matter which method of communication is used. These language bags can essentially be utilized by children learning to communicate through American Sign Langauge (ASL), Total Communication (TC), or Auditory-Verbal Therapy (AVT) as well.

Purpose

This project developed from a request made by the pre-kindergarten department at CID- Central Institute for the Deaf. Teachers wanted ideas for books, crafts and other materials that could be given to the parents of their students, to assist in continued progress of language development at home. Some parents are knowledgeable about their children's language development and have already prepared themselves with strategies to monitor and expand their children's linguistic skills. Unfortunately, not all parents have the knowledge or resources to do this. In cases like these, parents benefit from guidance by the classroom teachers. Since the teachers in the pre-kindergarten department hoped to help these parents incorporate language activities into their home environment, I saw this as an opportunity for teachers to keep parents updated regarding their children's current language levels and goals, and for parents to keep teachers updated with samples of their children's language from home. Also, both teachers and parents can share observed skills and behaviors with each other. This information can help parents know what language to expect from their children and what language levels to work towards. For example, the knowledge that a child can request "I want milk" instead of simply "milk" may encourage parents to expect a complete sentence from their child, thus continuing language development and generalization at home. As for the teachers, information gained from parents will help them compile a more complete picture of the children's language capabilities. It can assist them in planning lessons better suited to the children's individual needs and even in planning instruction around language goals important to the child's family.

Methods

Research for this study included articles and texts pertaining to the predictors of language development, the accuracy of parents' estimates of their children's language skills, the quantity and quality of the language that parents provide, literacy skills, parental communication skills, parental involvement, play skills and strategies, and the effects of music on language acquisition. These articles provide evidence to support the necessity of guided language instruction beyond school hours. They also emphasize the importance of open communication between parents and teachers, in order to share information about students' language levels and goals. In addition to the articles and texts, this study includes information on researched and accepted lists of developmental skills pertaining to receptive and expressive language, cognition, literacy, and play. These have been instrumental in creating take-home bags with age- and ability-appropriate materials for the preschool students.

Findings

Literature Review

Children who are deaf or hard of hearing are at a disadvantage for learning spoken language and, even with amplification, do not learn language in the same ways as hearing children. They have the innate ability to learn language, often referred to as the Language Acquisition Device, just like hearing children; however, they first need access to language (Easterbrooks & Baker, 2002, p. 58). Children who are deaf or hard of hearing lack this access, which means that they do not automatically hear and learn to understand the language that occurs around them.

Issues arise with children who are deaf or hard of hearing when they are presented with an incomplete language and incomplete messages (Easterbrooks & Baker, 2002, p. 33). This is true for children who are deaf and whose parents know little to no sign language, as well as for children who are hearing impaired and do not receive the amplification or necessary instruction to understand and use spoken language completely. With regard to the children on the auditory-oral track, insufficient and unclear auditory input leads to delays in, or lack of, the acquisition of a complete language system (Easterbrooks & Baker, 2002, pp. 33, 59, 62).

Another reason that children who are deaf or hard of hearing are at a disadvantage is that even today, many hospitals do not have universal newborn hearing screening (UNHS) programs (http://www.infanthearing.org/screening/index.html). Even with UNHS, some children pass with an undetected hearing loss and others may be affected by a progressive hearing loss that presents after their screening. Finally, young children may be identified late it they only have a unilateral, mild, moderate, or fluctuating loss. This, in turn, allows them to use their residual hearing and contextual cues well enough, or

their speech skills are good enough, to make them appear to hear and understand more than they actually do (Easterbrooks & Baker, 2002, p. 87-91). These circumstances cause deaf or hard of hearing infants, toddlers, and children to remain unidentified, which profoundly affects their language development. Once a hearing loss is detected, some families still do not believe that it will affect their child significantly, and they postpone or reject early intervention services. These situations and beliefs only further delay access to clear language and a complete language system.

For the reasons mentioned above, children who are deaf or hard of hearing need maximum access to language. This includes being enrolled in early intervention programs that can provide them the foundations for a functional communication system (Easterbrooks & Baker, 2002, p. 91) and then an educational environment saturated with appropriate language input and monitored language development. It also includes having a linguistically rich environment at home as well.

Unfortunately, home environments are not always optimal. Despite possible case-specific factors such as poverty, additional developmental delays or disabilities, overworked or overwhelmed parents, absentee or uneducated parents, and English not being the primary language at home that can impair the linguistic environment, other factors are more universal. Laakso, Poikkeus, Katajamaki and Lyytinen (1999) found that maternal interactional sensitivity correlated significantly with language comprehension and early intentional communications. They concluded that this nonverbal communication contributed to subsequent language development. In this study, participants consisted of 111 healthy and hearing mother-child pairs. Their interactions were studied at 14 months, and researchers gathered information on the children's language development at 14, 18, and 24 months. The maternal interactional

sensitivity (MIS) scores were measured by rating 11 variables: initiatives to motivate the child's play, providing reinforcement, drawing into joint activity, versatility of motivational strategies, emotional availability, emotional attunement, affective encouragement, enjoyment of joint interaction, allowing the child's independent activity, sensitivity in guidance of the child's activity, and extending of the child's activity. Laakso et al.'s study had many findings. Mothers who were more sensitive and guiding at 14 months had children with more developed verbal comprehension at 18 months. High MIS scores at 14 months did not predict expressive language at 24 months, but increased actions, gestures and joint attention strategies did. Mothers who were more attentive, motivating, and sensitive to their children's emotional states had children who were more advanced in early intentional communication.

Other studies show that similar results hold for mothers of late-talking children. One such study, done by Vigil, Hodges and Klee (2005), found that parents are aware of the language abilities of their children and that they respond accordingly by modifying their linguistic behaviors as early as 24 months. For instance, the study documented how parents of late-talking toddlers provided about half the number of responses compared to parents of children with normal language. These parents also gave less feedback, fewer expansions, and less self-directed speech. Although there is no clear consensus as to whether or not overall parental language input is affected by having a child with a language delay, the aspects that are clearly affected do add to the "inadequate feedback loop" (Tannok & Girolametto, 1992) described in this study. One aspect of this "loop" is that parents respond to their children's language delay by starting new topics instead of responding to and maintaining the conversation at hand. Vigil et al. postulated that these parents thought that a new topic would be easier, that their child had exhausted their

comments on the current topic, or that their child would not understand any more information about the topic. Unfortunately, when topic changes occur frequently, children lose valuable opportunities to listen to "contextually relevant language without having any pressure to respond" (Vigil et al., 2005, p. 120). In conclusion, these findings are relevant because they suggest that parents need to increase and improve their communicative interactions. These are areas in which educated professionals can assist parents, thus improving the quantity and quality of language input for their children.

Parents, whether or not they have knowledge in the fields of language and child development, are valuable sources of information about their children. They observe them in multiple settings over time, which can increase the overall knowledge about their children, as it brings a more representative sample of their children's language skills to the table (Thal et al., 1999). Parents' input in the estimations of their children's language abilities can play an important role in identifying special needs and emerging skills. It can also help differentiate preschool children with normal language from those with language delays (Hauerwas & Stone, 2000). Although professionals are knowledgeable in these areas, they cannot observe or work with the children during all waking hours. Therefore, parents and professionals must work together and combine their knowledge so it can be used to plan each child's individual educational program. A study done by Thal, O'Hanlon, Clemmons, and Fralin (1999) delves more into this issue. They examined 20 preschool children's language abilities using the Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test (EOWPVT), Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised (PPVT-R), the Preschool Language Scale-Revised (PLS-R), and spontaneous language samples. They also gave the parents the MacArthur Communicative Development Inventory: Words and Sentences (CDI-WS) to record their knowledge of their children's vocabulary and

grammar skills. This study concluded that parental reports of vocabulary are valid for preschool children with language delays because the CDI-SW and EOWPVT were strongly correlated. The CDI-WSs were correlated moderately-moderately high with mean length of utterances (MLU) and the Index of Productive Syntax (taken from the language samples). Parental reports also accurately reflected their children's relative strengths and weaknesses regarding various aspects of language development. However, Dale (1991) disagreed that the CDI-WS and EOWPVT are significantly correlated, and Thal et al. (1999) themselves conceded that one thing the parents in their study were not very good at was differentiating between vocabulary and grammar. Because some correlations are significant and others are questionable, it is important for information to be shared between parents and professionals. Each can strengthen the other's understanding of assessment outcomes and observed linguistic skills of the children. This creates a more complete picture for parents and professionals alike.

As parents and professionals share information, and pieces of the puzzle come together, both can use strategies and keep in mind factors that will facilitate and improve language acquisition. These strategies and factors relate to, but are not limited to, play skills, non-directive play, visual and tactile stimulation, exposure to literacy, and family involvement.

Easterbrooks and Baker (2002) asserted that play skills aid children in developing pre-linguistic skills. His claim is that as children manipulate toys, they "develop the ability to represent objects, actions, their descriptions, and their relationships as a precursor to representing these through language" (p. 52). Easterbrooks and Baker also cited a study done by Snyder and Yoshinaga-Itano (1998) that found play behaviors to be significantly correlated with the receptive comprehension of simple phrases. Symbolic

substitution and sequenced symbolic play were the two play behaviors that correlated most highly (p. 50). Thus, increased exposure to play activities, both at home and at school, has the potential to strengthen children's receptive language.

Cogher (1999) advocated for the use of non-directive play. This is when play is structured by an adult but led by the child's focus of attention and play behaviors. While the child is engaging in self-directed play, adults play alongside, imitating and commenting. Cogher claimed that non-directive play can be useful for children at any stage of language development and for those with a wide range of communication difficulties. His reasoning for the success of non-directive play is that it utilizes joint attention, gently challenges children, and develops confidence by way of pressure-free and positive interactions. It also provides consistent responses to communicative behaviors, opportunities to develop play routines, and a running commentary. (Cogher however, recognizes that it is not successful with all children and suspects that this is because some children avoid the activity due to a lack of spontaneous play ideas.) When provided with play materials and coaching from teachers, parents can be a part of their children's linguistic development by continuing to engage their children in non-directive play, symbolic substitution, and sequenced symbolic play outside of school.

Regarding literacy, Raikes et al. (2006) linked maternal bookreading practices to children's language and cognitive development at 14, 24 and 36 months of age. They did this by interviewing and assessing 2,581 mother-child pairs. They interviewed the mothers on their timing, intensity, and patterns of bookreading. They also gave them the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-Revised, Picture Vocabulary Test (WJ) to measure maternal expressive verbal ability, the Home Observation and Measurement of the Environment (HOME) to measure "maternal warmth" (eg. responsiveness, supportive

parenting, etc.), and the MacArthur Communicative Development Inventories (CDI) to rate their children's language and cognitive abilities at 14 and 24 months. As for the children, Raike et al. used their Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) scores (Spanish speaking children were given the Spanish equivalent, the TVIP) and Bayley Mental Development Index (MDI) scores for comparisons. The latter provided cognitive measures.

Results revealed that reading to children daily or several times weekly at 14 months correlated significantly with vocabulary and comprehension at 14 and 24 months. Reading to children daily at 24 months marginally predicted PPVT scores at 36 months. Being read to daily *at some point* from 14 to 36 months significantly predicted higher receptive vocabulary scores on the TVIP and higher cognitive scores on the MDI than never receiving daily reading at any point during the study. Finally, reading to children daily over 3 data points within the study significantly related to the child's language and cognitive outcomes at 36 months. Therefore, in multiple ways, this study supports the existence of a strong and direct relationship between bookreading and language outcomes in the first few years of life.

Children are dependent on adults to provide them with books and to introduce them to new words and language experiences. Hart and Risley (1995) studied the relation between the quality and quantity of language input, and its effects on children's vocabularies. They found that parents (generally from low-income households) exposed their children to approximately ten million words by the time they were four, and that most of the language they used was for the purpose of controlling. More talkative families, who tended to be those with a high socio-economic status, exposed their children to upwards of fifty million words by age four. Hart and Risley also found that

these parents used a greater number of words (p. 132) and a greater variety of word forms including more clauses, past and future verbs, declaratives, affirmations, questions, and question forms (p. 123-124). As a result, children from the low-income families had vocabularies that were half the size of those from the high-income families. This is evidence that not all parents are as engaged in the role of language facilitator as others. Because of this, professionals can take responsibility for encouraging language input at home by way of shared bookreading experiences between the parents and their children.

Music is another medium in which teachers and parents can enhance the learning and retention of language. Natural and essential aspects of education, music and language are arguably the most interesting stimuli for developing humans (Saffran, 2003). When children are repeatedly sung to, they are exposed to authentic examples of language, as well as vocabulary, grammar, routines, and patterns (Medina, 2002). According to Krashen (1982), music also provides children with a relaxed and motivating learning environment, which is optimal for language acquisition. Rainey and Larson (2002) experimented in this area, attempting to prove two hypotheses. First, adults will take fewer trials to memorize a list of names when the list is sung to music than when the list is spoken. Secondly, these same adults from the music group will also take fewer trials to relearn the list one week later. Rainey and Larson performed two experiments corresponding to these hypotheses, and each produced similar results: the data supported the second hypothesis but not the first. They concluded that although short-term memory does not appear to be enhanced, information that is put to music is more easily recalled at a later date. They postulated that the second test was successful because participants had, purposefully or not, rehearsed the lyrics and melody in the week between testings. If this is true, it would be beneficial for students to learn information by song, as they would

potentially rehearse it casually at other times throughout the day. Studies done by Schon, Gordon, and Besson (2005), help further explain the effect of music on long-term memory skills by showing that a significant overlap exists in the parts of the brain that involve language, music, and song processing. Due to the convincing evidence in this area, I have elected to include children's songs in the language bags that correspond to the bags' themes.

Finally, as implied by the studies reviewed above, the key to this project is family involvement. Teachers can only do so much to facilitate and improve deaf or hard of hearing children's language development at school. For optimal results, some accountability must be placed at home. As Easterbrooks and Baker (2002), stated, "Successful children come from committed parents" (p. 84). Calderon (2006) emphasized this point. Calderon compiled parent questionnaires, which included information on parental input in Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), requests for additional services, volunteering in the classroom, attending classroom functions, observing in the classroom, using teacher-established systems for keeping in contact, reviewing classwork, and reinforcing/expanding lessons at home. Her study also measured maternal communication skills with the Language Proficiency Profile-Parent Version (LPP-PV). Credit was given for using the child's mode of communication, using multiple-word messages, introducing new vocabulary, using wh-questions to elicit language, and other such skills. In addition, Calderon assessed children with the Preschool Language Scale-3 (PLS-3), the Test of Early Reading Ability-D/HH (TERA-D/HH), and finally gave teacher rating forms including the Social Emotional Assessment Inventory-Preschool Version (SEAI), to rate positive social-emotional adjustments, and

the Teacher Rating Form for the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL), to assess externalizing behavior problems.

Outcomes from Calderon's study (2006) reflect the aim of this project. She found that maternal communication skills were one of the biggest factors contributing to deaf or hard of hearing children's language development, second only to the hearing loss itself. Also, she found that additional services and high maternal communication scores were the strongest predictors of positive sociable and communicative behaviors. And although the amount to which parents were involved in school-based activities was a significant factor in predicting early reading skills, the maternal communication scores were a more significant factor in predicting the children's language development, early reading skills, and social-emotional development. Therefore, Calderon concluded that better maternal communication skills leads to more advanced language, higher reading scores, and fewer behavioral problems in children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Furthermore, maternal communication skills play a more important role in education than does parental involvement alone. These findings show that parental involvement in classroom activities and lessons can lead to positive linguistic and behavioral outcomes, but the ways in which parents communicate with their children are an even greater indicator of success. For that reason, the current project not only encourages parents and teachers to interact with each other, but it also provides teachers with opportunities to share reading and language activities with parents so they can be implemented at home.

Developmental Domains

In order to compile age-appropriate materials for the language bags, I researched current descriptions and lists of skills that children develop from birth to five years of age across many domains. They include the Teacher Assessment of Grammatical Structures (TAGS; Moog & Kozak, 1983), the CID-Central Institute for the Deaf Developmental Checklist for 3-year-olds and for 4-year-olds (CID, revised by P. Hoffman, 2007), St. Gabriel's Curriculum (Tuoby, Brown, Mercer-Moseley, & Walsh, 2005), and Parents as Teachers' developmental lists (Parents As Teachers National Center, Inc., 1999).

The TAGS is normed for hearing children up to about 5 years of age, so information from it is included in this project. The TAGS- Pre-Sentence Level, normed for hearing children up to about 2 ½ years, has children working on one-, two-, and three-word structures consisting of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and prepositions. The TAGS-P also documents children's progress on using pronouns, wh-questions, and tense markers in three-word combinations. Keep in mind that the TAGS forms are not meant to be followed in a prescribed sequential order; sometimes more complex skills can emerge before ones listed before it are mastered. For that reason, I also included the TAGS-Simple Sentence Level form, which is normed for hearing children from three to four years of age. The TAGS-S documents children's language at the point at which they use four-word sentences containing a subject and a verb. Noun modifiers, pronouns, prepositions, adverbs, verbs, and questions are the grammatical structures addressed at this level. Finally, the TAGS-Complex Sentence Level form monitors children's utterances that are at least six words long and contain a subject and a verb. More specifically, it rates the production of nouns, pronouns, verb inflections, secondary verbs, conjunctions, and questions. St. Gabriel's Curriculum also has useful language goals for

children birth to five. Goals relevant to this study include (in order from earlier to later development): taking vocal turns with an adult, sharing information with an adult by looking, pointing and vocalizing, imitating words and syllables, beginning to use single words, following simple directions/commands, choosing objects from an array of two, pointing to objects in books when named, beginning to combine words, enjoying songs/rhymes, attempting to sing, and asking simple questions about own concerns. As the goals progress through this curriculum, they begin to resemble the more specific syntax goals from the TAGS forms.

CID's Developmental Checklists, Parents as Teachers' lists, and St. Gabriel's Curriculum all contributed to the cognitive/intellectual development areas addressed in this project. The following skills were obtained from these guides, and are presented in chronological order of development up to five years of age. These include: begins to understand the use of household objects, uses trial and error to figure out simple problems, stays with an activity for a short amount of time, matches objects, pictures, shapes and colors, sorts objects, matches associated pictures (e.g. umbrella-rain), understands that events happen in a certain order, places up to 4 pictures in a sequence, demonstrates imaginative, creative and original thinking in play, compares items, tells the sequence of events in a story, predicts, uses basic time words to talk about things in the past, present and future tenses, rote counts from 1 up to 20, and names numerals 1 to 13.

As for literacy skills, CID's Developmental Checklists (2007) and St. Gabriel's Curriculum (2005) were the most useful. Goals from these sources include: finding a specific book when requested, listening to stories, scribbling or making shapes for writing, then writing letter-like forms, identifying words that rhyme, writing first name,

retelling stories, recognizing environmental print, and identifying and labeling some letters.

The last domain is that of play skills. This is a particularly critical domain because playing is a major way in which children practice language and develop cognitive skills (Ahola and Kovacik, 2007). The text, Observing and Understanding Child Development (Ahola and Kovacik, 2007) offered two models for the development of play skills. Piaget classified the first model in 1951, referred to by Ahola and Kovacik as his "Developmental Taxonomy of Play" (p. 139). In this model, Piaget claimed that children aged two to eighteen months progress from sensorimotor play, to coordinating secondary schemes, to forming ritualistic action patterns. More specifically, children enjoy cause and effect relationships, begin to combine toys and use them in different ways, and then pretend to play with objects conventionally. After that, Piaget claimed that children begin to use symbolic play. Up to 24 months of age, children will project their symbolic play skills onto new objects, pretend to play with objects that they do not typically use, pretend that one object is something else, and then pretend to "be" something else themselves. Finally, from three to fours years of age, children will combine simple play scenes, play out scenes that they have only partially accomplished in reality, play out scenes positively that were actually unpleasant situations, and then play out complete scenes that have never happened but that they can anticipate (p. 139).

The second model that Ahola and Kovacik presented was the "Levels of Social Play" according to Howes and Matheson (1992, pp. 160-162). The first level is parallel play, where children play near each other but are not engaged with each other. The second level is parallel aware play, where children play near each other, acknowledge each other, and imitate each other, but are not socially engaged. The third level is simple

social play. At this level, children are engaged with each other and socialize by smiling, sharing, talking, etc. Complementary and reciprocal social play is the fourth level and here, children "trade" props and places, and begin to develop play scripts. In the fifth level, cooperative social pretend play, children use play scripts and role play, but do not necessarily label their pretend identities. Finally, the sixth level of play is complex social pretend play. This is when children engage in pretend role playing and also pause to talk about what they are pretending. For instance, children may negotiate or assign who is playing what role, or propose an entirely new play script. To incorporate play skills into the language bags, provided and suggested toys, dress-up clothes, and other materials, and a variety of suggested uses/play scripts are included.

Conclusion

As made clear from the research, children achieve higher language levels when they have access to more parental input and involvement. Children do not learn complete language systems in a vacuum, such as the learning environments where teachers use direct instruction to develop children's vocabulary and teach language structures. To develop language fully, it must also be learned within the social contexts found at school and at home. Although teachers have no control over the quantity or quality of language that their students have been exposed to in the past, they can affect future language development in two important ways. They can increase the quantity and quality of language used in the classroom, and they encourage parents and other caregivers to do the same at home (Gunning, 2008, p. 5). Professionals may blame a child's current language levels on their home environment, socioeconomic status, or parental involvement; however, once given the responsibility of a child's linguistic development, those factors must not be used as excuses for failure. Time and effort must be concentrated on what can be done from there. When parents and teachers work together during this process, children make the greatest gains in language development.

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Introduction to the Language Bags

The purpose of the language bags is to encourage linguistic interactions at home and to foster the home-school connection. Every level of each developmental domain mentioned in the literature review is not included in the bags, as that is not their main focus. The bags do, however, contain language and materials that fall within the developmental domains and cognitive skills of children aged birth to five, which is the population intended to benefit from them.

Each bag is based around a specific theme and is appropriate for pre-kindergarten aged children. The goal is to increase the amount of verbal communication between parents and their children. To do so, the bags contain a variety of children's literature, children's songs, crafts, games, and dramatic play ideas with play scripts, each based on a unifying theme. Some bags also provide parents with written ideas for additional activities or experience trips, although materials for these are not provided. Also included, are basic instructions for the activities, general guidelines for parents to ask related questions or broach topics, and "Story Sharing Sheets" (some were taken from Curiosity Corner, 2001; others were written by CID teachers and me). These sheets guide parents through the process of reading literature to their children, taking them through the book's title, the author, a summary or purpose for the story, "before reading" suggestions, "while reading" suggestions, and "after reading" suggestions.

In the CID pre-kindergarten classrooms, students range from 3 to 5 years of age, representing a very wide range of linguistic and developmental levels. The bags are designed for parents to complete the activities with children at any level. Parents receive guidance for the activities by suggested questions and topics, and then can decide how simple or complicated to make the activities, depending on their children's abilities.

Parents can give their children more or less responsibility for reading and participating in the projects. For example, if a child has fine motor delays, parents are given the option to pre-cut or glue to simplify the activity. When reading, parents can ask their children to participate by pointing to named items, naming items themselves, explaining illustrations in detail, or even reading parts of the books.

To assist parents further, the bags include a parent-teacher communications page. Using this page, teachers make general suggestions as to what language structures parents should try to elicit from their children. Teachers can also include any other suggestions or comments that they feel are necessary. Parents, in return, have the opportunity to respond with their thoughts about and reactions to the bags: what their child liked and did not like, what their child said, what they themselves liked or did not like about the bags, and other comments or questions. When the language bags are implemented, the communication pages will be used for teachers and parents to share information and to guide teachers in modifying and updating the language bags. They will not be used for research purposes.

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Appendix A

Parent-Teacher Communication Page

Parent-Teacher Page

Teacher Suggestions:

_____

_____

_____

Parent Response:

My child liked _____

_____

_____

My child did not like _____

_____

_____

My child said _____

_____

_____

I liked _____

_____

_____

I did not like _____

_____

_____

Comments or questions about the language bag: _____

_____

_____

Appendix B

Language Bag Contents and Instructions

Preschool Language Bag Activity

This language activity bag was created especially for you and your child. We hope that it provides you with many opportunities to read, play, sing, and talk with your child. There is no right or wrong way to do these activities. Let your child be your guide and feel free to include siblings and friends! Also, please ask your classroom teacher any questions that come up while you have your bag, and fill out a parent-teacher page when you are finished.

Here are some helpful tips for gaining maximum enjoyment from this bag. Enjoy!

BOOKS

If the bag has more than 1 book, read the ones that you think are appropriate for your child. Remember, if the language in the book is too difficult, you do not have to read every word! You can even just look at and talk about the pictures. If your child can, let him/her read the book (or parts of the book) to you.

Read the books as many times as you want while you have this bag! Also, sitting your child on your lap is the best way to read. You are both looking at the book the whole time and you create a great listening environment for your child.

ACTIVITIES

You can make the activities easier or more difficult, depending on your child's abilities. If you need to, prepare some parts before you start by doing the cutting or gluing yourself. Remember, the more you do *with* your child, the more you can talk about!

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

These are activities that you can do on your own with your child at any time. Materials are not included in the bags.

SONGS

Listen, sing along, and dance to the CD's as many times as you want. After your child is familiar with the CD, let him/her request favorite songs.

Included in the "Alphabet" Language Bag

- **CD of "Alphabet Songs"**
- **Read Chicka Chicka Boom Boom** by Bill Martin Jr. & John Archambault
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtvtYjLbnDk
- **Read It Begins with an A** by Sue MacDonald
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **Construction paper**
- **Glue**
- **Glitter**
- **Palm Tree and Letter Cutouts**
- **Construction Paper**
- **Glue**
- **Scissors**
- **Capital Letter Papers**
- **Crayons**

The Story Sharing Sheet

It Begins with an A

By Stephanie Calmenson

This interactive book contains a series of riddles, each giving hints to help your child think of a specific word. There is one riddle for every letter of the alphabet.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it. Point to the author's name and read it as well.
- Ask your child what he thinks will be in the book.
- Have your child identify the letters that he sees on the cover.
- Sing the ABC's to get your child thinking about the alphabet.

While reading

- Identify the letter on each page.
- Read each page then stop and have your child guess the answers to the riddles. If their guesses are off track, remind them what letter it starts with, and sound out the letter for them to hear.
- See how many other words you can think of that start with the same letter.
- Since it appears on every page, encourage your child to start asking "What is it?"

After reading

- Practice coming up with your own riddles! Choose an object in your house or let your child choose an object, hold it behind your back, and give 3 hints about it, including what letter it starts with. Your riddles may or may not rhyme.

Story Sharing Sheet

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom

by Bill Martin, Jr.

The letters of the alphabet are the characters in this book. This story claps and sings like a jump-rope rhyme. *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* gives you and your child a chance to play with words!

Before reading

- Read out loud the title and the name of the author written on the front cover.
- Open to the pages with the alphabet. **Here are uppercase or capital letters (A, B, C)** and their matching **lowercase** or **small letters (a, b, c**). In this story the **uppercase letters** are the adults and the **lowercase letters** the children. Point to each pair of letters and name them. Count all the **uppercase letters.** Now count all the **lowercase letters.**
- Turn to the title page with its different colorful shapes and lines. Point to and help your child name the colors, straight lines, curves, points, and circles.
- Ask what kind of fruit could be on that tree. Is the fruit large or small? **Let's read the story and see.**

While reading

- During the story, point to each **boldfaced alphabet letter** as you read it in the text. If your child would like, take his or her finger, point to the letter, trace it, and say it together. Your child will get the sense that she or he is reading the book.
- Find the matching **lowercase letter** that is climbing the tree. You can say that the adult letter is watching its child climb the tree.
- Ask what kind of tree the alphabet letters are climbing. Does this tree grow where you live? Where does it grow? (Answer: In the tropics where it is always hot.)
- Ask what is happening to the trunk of the tree. Why is it bending?
- After the letters fall from the tree, the mama and papa letters come running to the tree. Point to the adults and name them. Point to the children and name them.

After reading

- Read the story again and again. Try clapping along in a 1-2-3-4 rhythm.
- Find the following letters: skinned-knee D, stubbed-toe E, patched-up F, crying J and K, tied-up L.
- From circulars, magazines, or newspapers, your child can cut out letters and play with them to make their own *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* story.

Developed in collaboration with Gerard Cohee © 2002 **Success for All Foundation CURIOSITY CORNER ®**

Activity Instructions

1. Make Your Name In Glitter

- Take out construction paper, liquid glue, and glitter, but do not give them to your child yet.
- **We are going to write our names!**
- Choose a piece of construction paper.
- **What color paper do you want?**
- Encourage your child to say "green", "green paper", or "I want the green paper".
- Choose a piece of paper for yourself, then model the activity by writing your name in liquid glue, sprinkling glitter over the glue, and setting it aside to dry. Talk through the steps as you do them.
- Help your child hold and squeeze the glue to write his name. Let him do it on his own if he as able to.
- Have your child say the letters out loud as you write them.
- Have your child sprinkle glitter over the glue then set it aside to dry.
- Note: If your child does not know the alphabet, you may choose to write only the first letter of his name. You can make it as large, as small, or as many times as you'd like on the page.
- Finally, make the connection between his name and what is written in sparkles.
- **Look, you wrote Michael! M-i-c-h-a-e-l. That spells Michael. Can you read it?** or **Mmmm. "M" says mmm. Mmmmichael! You try!**

2. Visit a Website

- Visit http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtvtYjLbnDk and watch the animated version of Chicka Chicka Boom Boom.

3. Decorate Palm Trees with Letters

(http://www.dlt-teach.com/books/chicka/index.htm)

- After reading Chicka Chicka Boom Boom, remove the palm tree, leaves, and coconuts from the bag.
- Cut them out and glue them onto construction paper.
- Encourage your child to ask for the items before giving them to him.
- **What goes on our picture next? What do you need now?**
- Next, take any letters a-z and glue on and around the tree.
- Name the letters and say their sounds as you glue them, then do the same thing after the tree is finished.

4. Make Up Alphabet Riddles

- Like the book It Begins with an A, come up with your own riddles!
- Choose an object in your house, or let your child choose an object.
- Hold the object behind your back.
- Give 3 hints about it, including what letter it starts with. Your riddles may or may not rhyme.
- **Example: It begins with a "g". I wear them on my face. They help me see. *Glasses!***
- Trade places and let your child choose an object and give you hints.
- Note: You may want to have your child work with a buddy to come up with appropriate hints.

5. Decorate Letters

- Take out the papers with the large capital letters and crayons.
- Encourage your child to choose a letter by asking for it.
- **What letter do you want?**
- Your child might say "B", "I want B", or "I want the letter B, please."
- Think of as many things as you can that start with that letter.
- Choose one of the ideas and turn your letter into that object.
- For example, you can draw airplane wings on the "A" and clouds around it, or draw black and white zebra stripes on the "Z".

6. Play "Going on a Picnic"

- Sit down with your child and introduce the game.
- **We're going to play "Going on a Picnic"! We have to go through the alphabet and think of a food that starts with every letter, and bring it on our picnic.**
- Model the game by beginning with the first letter.
- **I'm going on a picnic and I'm going to bring something that begins with the letter "A". I'm going to bring an "apple"! Your turn. What are you going to bring?**
- Note: If your child does not know the names of the letters, say the letter sounds instead. **I'm going on a picnic and I'm going to bring something that begins with rrrrr.**
- Go through the alphabet thinking of foods that start with every letter.
- If your child knows the alphabet well enough, you can pretend to forget the next letter during your turn.
- **I'm going on a picnic and I'm going to bring something that begins with the letter… Oh no! I don't know what comes after "D". Do you? A, B, C, D…**
- You may have to help your child remember the next letter of the alphabet, sound out that letter, or think of foods that begin with that letter.
- At any point during the game, you can ask your child to list the foods you have already put in your basket.

Included in the "Apples" Language Bag

- **Apples** by Samantha Berger & Betsey Chessen
- **The Seasons of Arnold's Apple Tree** by Gail Gibbons
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **Apple and apple barrel coloring pages**
- **Crayons**
- **Finger plays**
- **Pretend play ideas**
- **Play dough**
- **Pie tins**
- **"Counting Apples and Pumpkins" game** (Curiosity Corner, 2001)
- **Small red pom poms**
- **Die**
- **"I Like Apples!" sheets**
- **Extra activity ideas**

The Story Sharing Sheet

Apples

By Samantha Berger & Betsey Chessen

This is a counting book with apples; it counts from one to eleven.. The pictures of apples are real paintings from around the world.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it, then point to and read the authors' names.
- Make comments about apples. For example "Mmm! I like apples." or pretend to bite and eat an apple.

While reading

- On each page, count the number of apples.
- Point out the numerals 1 through 10 at the bottom of the pages.

After reading

- Congratulate your child on counting the apples so well, and ask her to try to count as high as she can on her own.
- Have your child look back through the book and find red, yellow, green, and blue apples.
- Have your child pick which fish is her favorite
- Read the paragraphs about all of the paintings in the back of the book, and look back at the paintings.

The Story Sharing Sheet

The Seasons of Arnold's Apple Tree

By Gail Gibbons

This story is about what a boy named Arnold does with his apple tree and how the tree changes throughout the year. Since Arnold uses apples from the tree to make apple pie and apple cider, the book also contains recipes/explanations of how to make them.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it. Point to the author's name and read it too.
- Ask your child to name the seasons, then ask what an apple tree might look like in the different seasons. Does it have leaves? Flowers? Apples?
- Have your child predict what Arnold will do in his tree. You can also have him make more specific predictions about what Arnold will do during each season.

While reading

- Ask your child to identify each new season as it appears in the story.
- On any page, count the apples on the tree. You will be counting from zero up to 34 (including the cover).
- On any page, ask your child to tell you what Arnold is doing and what he is making.
- On the page with the recipes, think of other things that you can make out of apples (apple juice, apple strudel, candy apples, etc.)

After reading

- If you are feeling adventurous, make an apple pie with your child! Let him do as much of the pouring and mixing as he can.
- If your child does not like apples, talk about other fruits that he does like.
- Ask your child questions like "What comes next?" and encourage him to tell you about what he is doing. If your child doesn't like apples, you can still do this activity with any other kind of pie!

Extra Activities

1. Snack

- Hold an apple behind your back. Give hints as to what it is and encourage your child to make guesses.
- **I have something you can eat. It is a kind of fruit. I am going to cut it into slices. This fruit can be green, yellow, or red. It grows on trees.**
- When your child guesses "apple", show it to him, cut it up, smell it, taste it, eat it by itself, and eat with other foods like peanut butter or caramel.
- Talk about how it feels (hard, crunchy) and how it tastes (sweet, sour, juicy, dry). Also while eating, you can talk about other foods that are made from apples like applesauce, apple juice, candy apples, and apple butter.

Finger Plays

- Before or during any activity, you can sing "Ten Little Apples" (Curiosity Corner, 2001). Hold up a finger each time you add an apple.
- **We're going to sing a song about apples. Get your fingers ready to count!**

"One little, two little, three little apples.
Four little, five little, six little apples.
Seven little, eight little, nine little apples.
Ten little apples in a tree.

Ten little, nine little, eight little apples,
Seven little, six little, five little apples,
Four little, three little, two little apples.
One little apple in a tree."

Pretend Play

1. Make an apple pie (Curiosity Corner, 2001).

- Roll balls of “dough” out of the play dough.
- Flatten them out and put them in the tins. Pretend to put “apples” into the tins, and then the tins into a pretend oven.
- Wait for the pie to bake, take the pie out of the oven, wait for the pie to cool, slice the pie, serve the pie with scoops of ice cream, and pretend to eat!

Activity Instructions

1. Apple and Apple Barrel Coloring Pages

- Take out red, yellow, green, and brown crayons from the bag, but only show them to your child.
- **What do you want? What color do you want to make your apple?**
- Encourage your child to say "red", "red crayon", or "I want the red crayon".
- Give your child the crayon and color the pictures. Repeat this as many times as your child wants to change crayons. Feel free to color along with your child!

2. "Counting Apples and Pumpkins" game

- Take out the gameboard, red pom poms, and a die from the bags.
- Find plastic or real cups from your house. You will need 1 for each person.
- Roll the die and count the dots.
- Take that same number of apples (red pom poms) from the middle of the board and put them in your basket (cup).
- Play until all the apples are gone, then everybody gets to count their apples.

3. Make and Read the "Apple Emergent Reader Book"

- Take the apple book pages and the red, yellow, green, and brown crayons out of the bag, but only show them to your child.
- **What do you want? What color do you want to make your apple?**
- Encourage your child to say "yellow", "yellow crayon", or "I want the yellow crayon".
- Give your child the crayon and color the pictures.
- Repeat this with the leaf and stem of the apples, and allow your child to change crayons as many times as he wants.
- Talk about the apples while you are coloring.
- **That is a beautiful apple! I think green apples taste the best. What color apple do you like best?**
- Staple the pages together to make a book.
- Read and reread the book with your child. The more he sees and reads it, the more he will remember the words.

Included in the "Bugs" Language Bag

- **CD of "Bug Songs"**
- **In The Tall Tall Grass** by Denise Fleming
- **The Very Busy Spider** by Eric Carle
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **Bug pictures**
- **Fly swatter**
- **Paper plates**
- **Yarn**
- **Spider pictures**
- **Glue**
- **Play dough**
- **Cards for "The Itsy Bitsy Spider"**
- **Extra activity ideas**

The Story Sharing Sheet

The Very Busy Spider

By Eric Carle

Your child may have read other books by Eric Carle in school or at home. Children come to know the characters, subjects, and illustrations typical of an author by reading several books by the same author.

This book takes you through the story of a spider who busily weaves a web while her friends try to come up and ask her questions.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it. Then, point to the author's name as read that as well.
- Have your child name or repeat the animal (spider).
- Have your child point to or name different parts of the spider's body (head, body, legs, eyes, etc.).
- Ask your child what she thinks the spider will do in the story. Create excitement by opening the book and saying "Let's find out!"

While reading

- On any page, ask your child to name the animal and tell you what sound it makes.
- On any page, ask your child to predict whether or not the spider will answer the animal (no), and then why she didn't answer the animal (she is busy making her web).
- On any page, find the fly and ask one time what your child thinks will happen to the fly.
- On the page with the rooster, ask what the spider will do with the fly or why she wants to catch the fly.
- On the last page, find the sleeping spider and count the stars.

After reading

- Ask your child to tell you about a time when she saw a spider or a spider web. What happened? How did she feel about it?
- Ask your child what her favorite part of the story was, and why she liked that part best.
- Go to the library and look up other insect books to read by Eric Carle, such as "The Very Lonely Firefly" and "The Very Quiet Cricket".

The Story Sharing Sheet

In The Tall, Tall Grass

By Denise Fleming

This is a simple rhyming book that is about various bugs and animals living in the tall grass. Depending on reading and language abilities, and how often the book is read, children may be able to read the second half of the rhymes on each page.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it, then point to and read the author's name.
- Ask your child to predict, "What do you think the boy will find in the tall grass?"

While reading

- Throughout the book, act out the movements and sounds that the bugs and animals make.
- On any page, ask your child to identify the bugs and animals he sees.
- Look for the caterpillar on every page. Encourage your child to use words to tell you when he sees it. For example, "Here it is!" or "I found the caterpillar!"
- On any page, ask your child if caterpillars can do what the other bugs or animals are doing. For example, "Do caterpillars hum?" or "Can a caterpillar flap its wings?"
- On the last page, ask your child "Where did all of the bugs and animals go?" or "What are the bugs and animals doing now?"

After reading

- Ask your child to recall the bugs and animals from the book. Once he names one, ask him to tell you what that bug or animal did. For example, "Good! You remembered the rabbits! What do rabbits do?"

Activity Instructions

1. Identify Bug Pictures

- Look through pictures of bugs located in the bag.
- Have your child name as many pictures as she can. Provide names for the others that she does not know or cannot remember.
- Lay the bug pictures out on the floor.
- Call out a bug name.
- Have your child use the fly swatter to hit the picture of the bug you named.
- Trade places, if your child is able to say the bug names. Let her call out the names and you hit the pictures with the fly swatter.

2. Make Spider Webs (Curiosity Corner, 2001)

- Find the paper plates (with precut notches in them) and yarn in the bag.
- Choose a color of yarn.
- **What do you want? What color yarn do you want?**
- Encourage your child to say "blue", "blue yarn", or "I want the blue yarn".
- Tie a knot in the end of the piece of yarn your child chooses.
- **What do you think we're going to make? *A spider web.* Where does a spider get her web? Does she buy it at the store? *The web comes from her body. She makes it.***
- Hook it into one of the notches on the plate.
- Bring the yarn across the plate over and over again, hooking it into more notches every time. Help your child do this if it is difficult for her.
- Note: The web does not have to be symmetrical.
- Take a paper spider out of the bag and glue it onto the spider web.
- Extra: You can also draw pictures of other bugs and glue them into the spider web as well. Make up a story with your child about the spider making the web, and waiting for bugs to fly into it, and eating them for dinner. **How did the spider make the web? What did she do first? What did she do when she finished her web? Who got caught in her web? What did she do with that bug?** Share this story with other family members.

3. Make Bugs Out of Play Dough

- Make different insects out of play dough (Curiosity Corner, 2001).
- For example, you and your child can make a spider, a bee, or an ant.
- There are no limitations; let your child be as creative as he can be!
- Talk about your bugs as you're making them.
- **What color is your bug? What bug are you making? What is your spider's name? What does your spider eat? Where does he live?**
- Label the body parts of your bugs.

4. Sequence Cards for "The Itsy Bitsy Spider" (Listening Games for Littles, 1997)

- Lay out the pictures that correspond to lines from "The Itsy Bitsy Spider".
- Sing the song and have your child point to pictures.
- Or, have your child sequence the pictures as you sing the song together.

Pretend Play

1. **Be Fireflies** (Curiosity Corner, 2001)
    - Get out your flashlights, and make up a code for what flashes mean, or designate that one person will do a certain number of flashes and the other person has to copy with the same number of flashes
    - Turn out the lights and send messages to each other by turning the flashlights on and off quickly.

Extra Activities

1. Bug Hunt

- Take a walk outside and look for insects and spiders.
- Talk about what bugs you are looking for and what you think you'll see.
- **What bugs do think we will find today? I think we will find some ants!**
- Talk about where to look for the bugs.
- **Where should we look? Where do bugs live? Do you think we'll find some bugs in that tree? Let's go see!**

Included in the "Butterfly" Language Bag

- **The Very Hungry Caterpillar** by Eric Carle
- **Butterfly by Susan Canizares**
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **Sequence cards from The Very Hungry Caterpillar**
- **Construction paper**
- **Scissors**
- **Glue**
- **Butterfly bodies**
- **Butterfly heads**
- **Markers**
- **Sequins**
- **Egg carton sections**
- **Googly eyes**
- **Pipe cleaners**
- **Butterfly pictures**
- **Popsicle sticks**
- **Toilet paper rolls**
- **Pretend play ideas**

The Story Sharing Sheet

Butterfly

By Susan Canizares

Using real life pictures and few words, this book takes you through the stages of a butterfly's life.

A variety of animals lead children in moving the parts of their body.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it. Then, point to the author's name as read that as well.
- Ask your child look at the cover and guess what the book is about.
- If your child knows much about butterflies, ask her to share this information with you.
- Create excitement by opening the book and saying "Let's find out what happens to the butterfly!"

While reading

- Let your child try to answer the question on the 1st page: How do butterflies grow?
- Feel free to add original sentences as you read.
- On the 2nd page, you can add "The baby caterpillar is inside the egg."
- On the 3rd page, you can add "The caterpillar crawls out of the egg."
- On the 4th page, you can add "The caterpillar eats plants and grows bigger."
- On the 5th page, you can add "The caterpillar makes a cocoon."
- On the 6th page, you can add "A butterfly come out of the cocoon. The caterpillar changed into a butterfly!"
- On any page, have your child predict what will happen to the caterpillar next.

After reading

- Let your child reread the story to you by looking at and explaining what is happening in the pictures.
- Ask your child to recall the butterfly's stages of life.
- Talk about what caterpillars eat (plants) and compare that to what you eat. Do you eat any plants too?

The Story Sharing Sheet

The Very Hungry Caterpillar

By Eric Carle

Your child may have read other books by Eric Carle in school or at home. Children come to know the characters, subjects, and illustrations typical of an author by reading several books by the same author.

This is a classic story about how a caterpillar turns into a butterfly

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it. Then, point to the author's name as read that as well. Ask if your child remembers any other books by Eric Carle.
- Your child may have read this story before. If so, ask him to tell you what he remembers from the story. If not, have him predict what he thinks the story will be about.
- Identify parts of the caterpillar (find the eyes, nose, head, antennae, body, and feet).
- Tell your child that you will see the days of the week in the story too. Sing a days of the week song together.

While reading

- On any page, count the number of foods the caterpillar eats.
- On any page, let your child begin to read the repetitive parts with you. For example, he can read "but he was still hungry".
- On any page, read "On Monday he ate through 1 __" and let your child fill in the fruit. Point to the picture of the fruit if he needs help.
- After reading "That night he had a stomachache!" ask why the caterpillar had a stomachache (because he ate too much food, or because he ate a lot of junk food).
- Copy the animals by acting out all of the same movements while you're reading.

After reading

- Have your child name things that the caterpillar ate.
- Crawl like caterpillars or fly like butterflies.
- Talk about your favorite part of the story.
- Go to the library and look up other insect books to read by Eric Carle, such as "The Very Lonely Firefly" and "The Very Quiet Cricket".

Pretend Play

1. Be Caterpillars Turning into Butterflies

- Pretend to be caterpillars crawling around on the floor.
- **How do we act like caterpillars? Let's crawl around on the floor!**
- Build a cocoon out of a blanket, pillow case, or sheet hanging over a table, Encourage your child to think of ways to make a cocoon.
- **What can we use to make a cocoon? I have a pillow case… how can we use a pillow case?**
- Pretend to sleep inside your cocoons.
- **You know, caterpillars sleep in their cocoons for 2 weeks! How many days is that? Let's count the days we're inside the cocoon… 1 day, 2 days, 3 days…**
- When you're ready, squirm out of the cocoon and pretend to be a butterfly flying around.
- Note: If your child does not know much about caterpillars, cocoons, and butterflies, show her pictures of them as you act out each part.

Activity Instructions

1. Make Hand Butterflies

- **What do you think is inside the bag? What do you think we will make today? It's small. It has wings. It begins with "b". It starts as a caterpillar and turns into a b…**
- Take the butterfly bodies, butterfly heads, construction paper, glue, markers, and sequence out of the bag.
- Glue the body onto the construction paper.
- **Where are your hands? Can you put your hands on the paper?**
- Trace both of your child's hands onto construction paper.
- Help your child cut out the hand shapes.
- Glue the hands onto the butterfly body.
- **Where does the head go?/Where should we put the butterfly's head?**
- Glue the head on top of the body.
- Decorate the wings with crayons or pieces of sequence.

2. Butterfly Puzzle

- Take the butterfly pictures and the bag of shape cut-outs out of the language bag.
- Take turns picking a shape out of the bag and identifying it.
- **What do you have? I have a blue circle!**
- Match the shape to a missing shape on the butterfly's wings.
- Glue the shape onto the wing. Include simple shapes on some butterfly patterns (ex. circles, squares, & triangles) and more difficult shapes on others (ex. rectangle, pentagon, & oval).
- You can also color the background of the butterfly if your child wants to do so.

3. Make Stages of a Butterfly's Life

i. <u>Caterpillar</u>:
- Color a 3-egg section of an egg carton green.
- Glue on googly eyes.
- Stick in short pipe cleaners on the head for antennae.

ii. <u>Cocoon</u>:
- Glue brown construction paper around a toilet paper roll. When the butterfly is finished, it will fit into this cocoon.

iii. <u>Butterfly</u>:
- Color a small butterfly picture.
- Cut it out and glue it onto a popsicle stick.

4. **Sequence cards from <u>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</u>**
   (www.dltk-teach.com)
   - After reading the story, take the cards out of the bag.
   - Try to put them in order without looking at the book, but let your child use the book if he needs help.
   - **What did the caterpillar do first? What did he do next? What is the last thing the caterpillar did?**

Included in the "Colors" Language Bag

- **Borax powder**
- **Glue**
- **Food coloring**
- **Teaspoon**
- **BINGO sheets**
- **BINGO color cards**
- **BINGO color word cards**
- **Markers (dots) for BINGO**
- **Beads and string**
- **Bead patterns**
- **Paint**
- **Paint brushes**
- **Bowls**
- **Painting papers**
- **Extra activity ideas**

Extra Activities

1. Make your own crayons.

- Gather up broken or whole crayons with your child.
- **We need to find crayons. Do you have any broken crayons?**
- Peel off leftover paper together.
- **Peel, peel, peel. Say it with me!**
- Sort crayons into groups according to color.
- **What color is this crayon? What color do you want in this pile?**
- Choose a pile to melt first.
- **What color do you want? Pick a pile.**
- Drop the crayons into a pot and melt them on low heat.
- **What is happening to our crayons? They are melting! Look at the colors swirl together.**
- Pour melted crayons into muffin tins (about a ½ inch deep) and let them cool.
- **Do you think the crayons are hot or cold? Feel the air above the crayons. We need to let them cool off.**
- Repeat choosing the crayons, melting them, and pouring them into the muffin tins as many times as you like.

Activities

1. Make Slime

What you need:

Borax Powder	1 teaspoon
1 cup Water	2 bowls
1 Bottle of Glue	Food Coloring

What to do:

1. Pour the glue into one bowl.
2. Fill the glue bottle with water.
3. Empty the glue bottle into the same bowl.
4. Stir.
5. Add food coloring.
6. In the other bowl, pour one cup of water.
7. Add one teaspoon of Borax powder.
8. Stir.
9. SLOWLY stir the two bowls together.
10. Pull the slime out of the bowl and play with it.

2. Play BINGO

- **We're going to play BINGO! When you hear a color, put a dot on it. Can you name some colors? Pick a BINGO sheet.**
- Pick up a BINGO card and read the color.
- Place a marker onto that color on your BINGO sheet.
- You can win by filling in a row, column, or diagonal, or by filling up the entire sheet with markers.
- Trade places and let your child call out the colors. You may need to help him pick up the card, identify the color, or read the color word at first.

3. Make Beaded Jewelry

- Take out beads from the bag but only show them to your child.
- Talk about what kind of jewelry your child wants to make.
- **What do you want to make? Do you want to make a bracelet? Do you want to make a Necklace? Who is it for? Who will you give it to?**
- Cut the string for a bracelet or necklace.
- Tie a knot at one end of the string.
- **What color do you want?**
- String colored beads onto string by following colored patterns or making up your own.
- **What color is next?**
- Add beads until the bracelet or necklace is finished.
- **What do we need to do now? What will happen if I turn the bracelet upside down?**
- Tie a knot at the end.
- Tie it onto the child or search out the person who the child made it for and tie it onto them.
- **Where is your sister? What can you say when you have a present for someone? *Here. I made this for you. I hope you like it.***

4. Experiment with Mixing Paints

- Take out 2 paints from the bags and talk about the colors.
- **What color is this? Can you tell me some things that are yellow?**
- Discuss what will happen if you mix the 2 colors together.
- **Will it change colors? What color do you think it will make?**
- Pour a small amount of 1 paint into a bowl, then slowly pour the other color in as well.
- Stir the paint and talk about the colors.
- **What color did blue and yellow make? Can you think of something green?**
- Take out the paper labeled “Blue and Yellow”. Paint something green on it, using the green paint you just made.
- **Tell me about your painting! What did you paint? How did you make the green paint?**
- Note: For younger children, you may want to let them stir the colors together (with your help) and spread the paint around on the paper. Painting an actual object is not as important.

Included in the "Cooking" Language Bag

- **I Shop With My Dad** by Grace Maccarone
- **Peanut Butter and Jelly** by Scholastic, Inc
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **Beads**
- **Plastic silverware and plates**
- **Jell-O packet**
- **Muffin packet**
- **Bags of round cereal**
- **String**
- **Scissors**
- **Extra activity ideas**

The Story Sharing Sheet

Peanut Butter and Jelly

By Scholastic, Inc.

This book puts the well-known play rhyme to pictures. The baker goes through the whole process of making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich from scratch.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it.
- Explain that this book doesn't have an author because the words are really a song that was made up a long time ago, but there is an illustrator. Point to and read her name.
- Look at the very last page. It gives you suggested hand motions to do with each verse. You can practice these before reading or introduce them while you read.

While reading

- Look at the kids on the first page. Ask your child how the kids feel, what they want, and how they will get it.
- Before turning any page, ask your child what he thinks will happen next or what the baker and kids will do next with the food.
- The book says "Peanut butter, peanut butter, jelly, jelly" on every page. Encourage your child to read or say that part with you.
- Before reading on any page, ask your child "What are they doing?!"

After reading

- Ask your child if he liked the pictures that Nadine Bernard Westcott drew for the song. Were they good, bad, silly?
- Ask your child if he can remember how they made parts of the sandwich, like the bread, peanut butter, and jelly. You can look back through the book to find the answers.
- Make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich! Let your child do as much of the work as you are comfortable with. Ask your child questions like "What comes next?" and encourage him to tell you about what he is doing. If your child doesn't like peanut butter and jelly, you can still do this activity with any other kind of sandwich!

The Story Sharing Sheet

I Shop With My Daddy

By Grace Maccarone

This book has 1-2 sentences per page, and tells about a girl going grocery shopping with her dad. They are only at the store to buy healthy food, but the girl tries to get her dad to buy sweets too.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it, then point to the author's name and read it as well.
- Ask your child where the girl and her dad are, and what they are doing there.
- Ask your child what foods they will buy.
- Create excitement by saying "Let's find out!"

While reading

- Ask, "Why does the daddy say 'not today'" when the girl wants to buy treats?
- Have your child repeat after you when the dad says "Not today". When your child learns that the dad says that every time the girl asks for sweets, encourage your child to fill in "not today" before you read it.
- Ask your child to tell you the names of the different foods you see in the book.
- When the girl picks up different foods, you can also ask your child if the foods are healthy (good for you) or unhealthy (not good for you).

After reading

- Talk about foods that are good for you, like the fruits and vegetables in the story, and foods that are bad for you, like the cookies and candy. Talk about how we need to eat healthy food to stay strong, but sometimes it's ok to eat a little candy.
- Look back through the book and ask your child to find healthy and unhealthy foods.
- Ask your child what foods she liked in the story and what foods she did not like. Instead of saying "Do you like carrots?" (and getting a "yes" or "no" answer back), say "What do you like on this page?" (so your child will answer "I like…")

Extra Activities

1. Make a Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich

- After reading Peanut Butter and Jelly, make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich with your child.
- **Wow that sandwich looked good! Do you think we can make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich too?**
- Identify and find the ingredients and silverware needed. Be silly and name things that don't go into a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.
- **What do we need to make the sandwich? Where is the peanut butter? I think we need pickles! Can we spread the jelly with a fork? What should we use?**
- Let her help you do as many of the steps as she can.
- Get your child to tell you what step is next and explain what she is doing while she works.
- **What do we need to get out next? What do we do after we take out the bread? What are you doing now?**
- Note: You can do this activity by making any kind of sandwich; it does not have to be peanut butter and jelly!

2. Experiment with measuring spoons and cups.

- In the kitchen, play with the spoons and cups with water.
- See how many teaspoons you need to fill up a tablespoon, how many tablespoons you need to fill up a quarter cup, how many quarter cups it takes to fill up a cup, or any other combination.
- Your child doesn't need to know all of the names of the measuring spoons and cups. This activity is a chance for them to experiment with liquids and volume, and to see the relationship between different sized containers.

3. Make a shopping list with your child.

- Look through your refrigerator and pantry and think of food you are missing.
- Ask your child for ideas of foods you need.
- **What food do we need? What do we need to buy at the grocery store?**
- Write down, draw pictures of, or print off pictures of what you want to buy.
- Let your child hold the list and cross things off as you find them in the grocery store.
- **Look! We found milk. Can you cross "milk" off the list?**
- Talk about where you think you will find certain foods?
- **Where will we find the milk? Will it be somewhere warm or cold? Do you remember where the bread is?**

Pretend Play

1. Pretend to Cook and Eat Meals

- Take out pots and stirring spoons from the kitchen.
- Take out colored beads/marbles from language bag.
- Label the beads/marbles as certain foods. For example, green beads can be peas, or yellow marbles can be corn.
- Pretend to cook the food in the pots, serve it on the plates, and eat (using plastic plates and silverware from the bags).
- You can also take on roles while you play, like the cook, server, and person out to eat in a restaurant, or the parent who cooks at home and the family who eats the meals.

Activity Instructions

1. Make Jell-O

- Take the Jell-O packet out of the bag and show it to your child.
- **Mmm! What are we going to make? It's called Jell-O!**
- Follow the directions on the packet and talk to your child through each step.
- Talk about the hot water.
- **The water is hot! Don't touch it! Ouch!**
- Talk about the cold water.
- **We need cold water too. Brrr it's cold!**
- When stirring, talk to your child and encourage her to repeat what you say or ask to stir.
- **Stir stir stir! Do you want to stir? Tell me what you want.**
- When pouring, talk to your child and encourage her to repeat what you say or ask to pour.
- **Pour pour pour! Do you want to pour? Tell me what you want.**
- Help her pour the water or mix.

2. Bake Muffins

- Take the muffins packet out of the bag and show it to your child.
- **Mmm! What are we going to make? We are going to make muffins!**
- Follow the directions on the packet and talk to your child through each step.
- Let your child help you read the temperature on the muffin packet and set the temperature on the oven.
- When stirring, talk to your child and encourage her to repeat what you say or ask to stir.
- **Stir stir stir! Do you want to stir? Tell me what you want.**
- When pouring, talk to your child and encourage her to repeat what you say or ask to pour.
- **Pour pour pour! Do you want to pour? Tell me what you want.**
- Help her pour the water, milk, or mix.

3. Make cereal necklaces (Curiosity Corner)

- Take out cereals from the bag but only show them to your child.
- Talk about what kind of jewelry your child wants to make.
- **What do you want to make? Do you want to make a bracelet? Do you want to make a Necklace? Who is it for? Who will you give it to?**
- Cut the string for a bracelet or necklace.
- Tie a knot at one end of the string.
- **What kind of cereal do you want?**
- String cereal pieces onto string.
- **What do you want next?**
- Add cereal pieces until the bracelet or necklace is finished.
- Encourage your child to make patterns with the different kinds of cereal.
- **What do we need to do now? What will happen if I turn the bracelet upside down?**
- Tie a knot at the end.
- Tie it onto the child or search out the person who the child made it for and tie it onto them.
- **Where is your brother? What can you say when you have a present for someone? *Here. I made this for you. I hope you like it.***

Included in the "Fall" Language Bag

- **Autumn Leaves** by Eileen Curran
  The Big Leaf Pile from the television script by Scott Guy
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **Finger plays**
- **Songs**
- **Construction paper (green, tan, and brown)**
- **Cotton balls**
- **Paint (green, red, yellow, orange, and brown)**
- **Ziploc baggies**
- **Glue**
- **Scissors**
- **Pumpkin counting book**
- **String**
- **Extra activity ideas**

The Story Sharing Sheet

The Big Leaf Pile

From the television script by Scott Guy

Your child may have read other Clifford books in school or at home. Children come to know the characters, subjects, and illustrations typical of an author by reading several books by the same author.

This book tells the story of Clifford jumping into his friends' leaf pile and then searching high and low to find every leaf that flew away, before he and his friends enjoying jumping into the pile again.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it. Then, point to the author's name as read that as well.
- Ask your child what the big, red dog's name is. Encourage him to tell you about other Clifford stories he's read in the past.
- Create excitement about this story by opening the book and saying "Let's see what Clifford does this time!"

While reading

- Have your child name or find parts of the dogs, like head, tail, nose, paws, etc.
- Ask your child what season he thinks it is in the story. Bring his attention to the brown, red, yellow, and orange leaves on the trees and on the ground.
- Ask your child what he thinks Clifford and his friends will do with the leaf piles.
- Find red leaves, yellow leaves, orange leaves, and brown leaves in the book.
- Have your child count to three with you when the dogs jump into the leaf piles.
- When Clifford is watching T-Bone's pile of leaves, ask your child what he thinks Clifford really wants to do (jump in the leaves!).
- Ask your child how T-Bone felt when Clifford told him about jumping into his leaf pile (He was not mad. He was glad that Clifford told him the truth.).

After reading

- Ask your child to retell you the story. He can look through the book for help.
- Ask your child what her favorite part of the story was, and why she liked that part best.
- Go to the library and look up other books to read about Clifford.

The Story Sharing Sheet

Autumn Leaves

By Ken Robbins

This is in informational book about different kinds of leaves, their names, and what they look like. It includes real pictures of leaves and occasionally pictures of the trees they are found on as well.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it. Then, point to the author's name as read that as well.
- Explain that this book will show you many different leaves and will tell us their names.
- Ask your child to name any leaves or trees that she already knows.

While reading

- On any page, count the number of leaves you see.
- On any page, let your child try to repeat the names of the leaves.

After reading

- Ask your child which leaves are her favorite. This might be based on their name, shape, or color.
- Ask your child if she's seen any of these leaves before, and where she remembers seeing them.
- Use this book as a reference to name leaves that you found outside.

Fingerplays

- Sing "Gray Squirrel" (Curiosity Corner, 2001) after making the squirrel puppets. Hold up the puppets, sing, and do the movements described in the song.
- **We're going to sing a song about squirrels. Put your squirrels on and get ready!**

Gray squirrel, gray squirrel

Shake your bushy tail!

Gray squirrel, gray squirrel

Shake your bushy tail!

Wrinkle up your funny nose.

Hold a nut between your toes.

Gray squirrel, gray squirrel

Shake your busy tail!

Fingerplays

- Sing “A Squirrel Song”. It goes to the tune of "She'll Be Coming Round the Mountain".
- http://www.preschooleducation.com/sforest.shtml

I'll be gathering all the acorns till they're gone.
I'll be gathering all the acorns till they're gone.
I'll be gathering all the acorns, gathering all the acorns,
Gathering all the acorns till they're gone.
(Children make collecting motion with their hands.)

And I'll put them all inside my little home.
I will put them all inside my little home.
I will put them all inside, put them all inside,
Put them all inside my little home.
(Children pretend to place nuts in tree house.)

And I'll eat the nuts until the winter's gone.
I will eat the nuts until the winter's gone.
I will eat the nuts until, eat the nuts until,
Eat the nuts until the winter's gone.
(Children pretend to eat acorns.)

Then I'll do it all again come next fall.
I will do it all again come next fall.
I will do it all again, do it all again,
Do it all again come next fall.
(Children make gathering motion with hands and arms again.)

Extra Activities

1. Snack

- Roast pumpkin seeds (Curiosity Corner, 2001). Talk through the steps as you do the activity.
- Buy pumpkin seeds from the store or clean off pumpkin seeds from a carved out pumpkin.
- **What do the seeds smell like? Do you want to taste a pumpkin seed?**
- Preheat the oven to 300 degrees.
- **Where does it say 300 on the dial?** or **Press 3-0-0 on the oven.**
- Spray cooking sheet with a nonstick spray. Your child can help you do this. Bring your child's attention to the sound the spray makes.
- Spread a single layer of seeds on the sheet.
- **Let's count the seeds. 1, 2, 3…**
- Bake for 30-40 minutes.
- Remove sheet from the oven.
- Take out the salt shaker and salt immediately if desired. Your child can be responsible for this step.
- **What is this *(salt)*? Do you know what this is called? Let's taste it.**
- Let the seeds cool.
- **Are the seeds hot or cold? We have to wait and let them cool off.**
- Eat the pumpkin seeds and talk about how you made them!
- **Do you like the pumpkin seeds? How did you make them? Let's tell Daddy how we made the pumpkin seeds.**

2. Jump Into Leaf Piles

- Rake leaves in your yard into a big pile. Talk about what you will do as you rake up the leaves.
- **First, we will rake up the leaves. How high should we make the pile? What do you think we'll do after that?**
- Jump into the pile of leaves.
- Talk about how they feel and look.
- **The leaves are dry, crunchy, sharp, brittle, red, brown, etc.**
- Repeat this activity as many times as you like.

Activity Instructions

1. Make Squirrel Puppets

- Take out crayons, scissors, popsicle sticks, glue, and squirrel coloring sheets, but only show them to your child.
- **We are going to make squirrel puppets! How do you think we will do that? What do you think we need to do first?**
- Wait for your child to ask for a crayon (brown, gray, or red) and then color a squirrel.
- **What color do you want? What color is your squirrel going to be?**
- Choose another crayon and color another squirrel until your child has as many squirrels as she wants.
- **What should we do now?** Point to the materials. **You're right! We need to cut out the squirrels.**
- Cut out the squirrels. You may want to help your child do this, or do it for her.
- **We colored the squirrels. We cut out the squirrels. Now what do we do?**
- Glue the popsicle sticks to the back of the squirrel cutout.
- Let them dry, then use them as you sing the fingerplays about squirrels.
- Note: Throughout the activity, talk about squirrels.
- **Where do squirrels live?** ***In holes in trees or in burrows in the ground.*** **What do squirrels eat?** ***Nuts.*** **Have you ever seen a squirrel? What was the squirrel doing?**

2. Make Trees

- **We are going to make a tree! But first we need to go outside and find everything we need.**
- **What do we need to make a tree?**
- Make a list of items to find: grass, bark, leaves (or needles).
- Go outside and collect grass, bark, and leaves. Let your child cross them off the list as you find them.
- Glue the grass to the bottom of a piece of construction paper.
- Glue the bark up the center of the paper.
- Glue the leaves to the top of the paper (or glue the needles up and down the sides of the bark)
- Note: If you cannot find bark or woodchips outside, cut up squares of brown construction paper instead.

3. Make Cotton Ball Trees

- Take the construction paper, scissors, and glue out of the bag.
- Choose a green or tan piece of construction paper for the background of your scene.
- Cut out a tree trunk out of brown construction paper.
- **What do we need to do now? Cut, cut, cut! Say it with me!**
- Glue the tree trunk onto the paper.
- Take some cotton balls out of the bag and place them in a Ziploc baggie. Only take a small amount, so you can repeat the activity again and again until all of the cotton balls you want are painted and glued.
- Count the cotton balls.
- Choose a color for your leaves and add that paint to the cotton balls in the bag.
- **What do you want? What color should we paint the leaves?**
- Encourage your child to say "orange", "orange paint/leaves", "I want the orange paint", or "I want orange leaves."
- Shake until the cotton balls are covered.
- **What do we need to do now? Shake, shake, shake! Say it with me!**
- This part is messy! The cotton balls will be a little wet so you might want to put newspaper down under your project.
- Put glue above your tree trunk and set the cotton balls on top.
- Continue to mix cotton balls with different colors of paint and glue them onto your tree.
- Note: You can make any kind of tree you want! Summer trees can have all green leaves, fall trees can have all yellow leaves, fall trees can have red, orange, and yellow leaves, winter trees can have no leaves at all… It is up to you.

4. Make a Pumpkin Flipbook

- Count the pumpkins on 1 page, write the number of pumpkins in the middle section, and write out the number word in the right section. (Follow the example below.)
- Cut out the pages.
- Hole punch the pages.
- Tie them together with short strings.
- Read through your book as often as you'd like!

Included in the "Farm" Language Bag

- **CD of "Farm Songs"**
- **Farm** by Wide Wide World
- **Old MacDonald Had A Farm** by Scholastic, Inc.
- **I Went Walking** by Sue Williams
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **Farm animal coloring pages**
- **"What Am I?" animal cards**
- **Small box**
- **Styrofoam ball**
- **Pipe cleaners**
- **Pink buttons**
- **Googly eyes**
- **Pink paint**
- **Glue**
- **Pretend play ideas**
- **Extra activity ideas**

The Story Sharing Sheet

Farm

By Wide Wide World

This is a labeling book. There is no story, but children can look through it, find and label items, and become more familiar with the people, animals, buildings, and tools that belong on a farm.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it.

While reading

- Point to some items and name them. Encourage your child to repeat you.
- Ask your child, "Where is the …?" and let her find it on the page.
- Ask your child, "What is the … doing?"
- On any page, count the animals or people. For example, "How many cows are there?" or "Let's count the ducks!"

After reading

- If your child lives on a farm, has visited a farm, or has been to the farm animals area of a zoo, ask her to tell you what animals she has, or what animals she saw, and what the animals were doing.

The Story Sharing Sheet

Old MacDonald Had a Farm

By Scholastic, Inc.

This book puts the famous American song to pictures. All school children learn the sounds that different animals make, so this book can be used to introduce animal sounds or as fun practice making the sounds your child already knows.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it.
- Explain that this book doesn't have an author because the words are really a song that was made up a long time ago, but there is an illustrator. Point to and read her name.
- Ask your child if she knows the song "Old MacDonald Had a Farm" and allow her to sing part of it for you.

While reading

- Have your child sing along with you as you point to the words.
- Ask your child to point the names of the animals in bold, and identify the letters E, I, and O when they see them on the page.
- Before you turn the page, make predictions as to what animal will be next.
- On any page, once you know the animal, pause and ask "What sound does a ___ make?"
- Point out and name the instruments that the farmer gives the animals.

After reading

- Sing the song again with your child. The last page of the book has the score and words for the song, if you wish to play it on the piano while you sing.
- Make up new verses to the song! Put in new animals, people, or other items, and the sounds that go with them. For example,
  Old MacDonald had a farm.
  EIEIO
  And on that farm he had a tractor!
  EIEIO
  With a rattle rattle here
  And a rattle rattle there.
  Here a rattle,
  There a rattle.
  Everywhere a rattle rattle.

The Story Sharing Sheet

I Went Walking

By Sue Williams

The book is repetitive, much like “Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?”. A little girl walks around a farm and sees different farm animals looking at her. The animals tag along as she continues to walk around.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it, then point to and read the author’s name.
- Ask your child to predict, “What do you think the girl will do?” and “What will she see?”
- Look at and name the different articles of clothing that the girls wears, as she will take off her shoes, socks, and coat throughout the story.

While reading

- As your child learns the pattern of the book, encourage him to read the sentence “I went walking.” and the question “What did you see?”
- Ask your child to predict what animals will be looking at the girl next.
- As the little girl loses articles of clothing, point to what’s missing and say “Uh-oh! What happened?!”
- If the child is familiar with the book, split up the roles of the reading. One of you can say “I went walking.” and “I saw a ____ looking at me.” every time, and the other one can say “What did you see?” every time.
- On any page, ask your child what the little girl is doing.

After reading

- Ask your child to recall the animals from the book. Once he names one, ask him to tell you what that bug or animal did. For example, “Good! You remembered the rabbits! What else did you see?”
- Ask your child where he thinks the little girl lives (probably on a farm) and why (she sees lots of farm animals).

Extra Activities

1. Eating

- Any time you and your child eat together, point out that some of your foods come from different farm animals! For example, chickens give us eggs and chicken strips, and we get milk, ice cream, and hamburgers from cows.
- Next time you go to the grocery store, find as many kinds of foods as you can that come from farm animals.

Pretend Play

1. Be Farm Animals

- Move around like different farm animals and make sounds they make.
- Cows moo and walk slowly or stand still and chew food. Chickens run around clucking and flapping their wings. Pigs roll around in the mud and oink. Horses gallop and neigh. Ducks quack, waddle around, and swim…
- Think of and act out as many farm animals as you can!

Activity Instructions

1. Farm Animal Coloring Pages

- Take the coloring pages out of the bag and name them with your child.
- **What is this? What does a cow say?**
- Let your child choose an animal to color, then show him the crayons.
- **What do you want? What color do you want to make your cow?**
- Encourage your child to say "brown", "brown crayon", "I want the brown crayon", or "I want to color the cow brown."
- Give your child the crayon and color the picture.
- Repeat this as many times as your child wants to change crayons. Feel free to color along with your child!

2. "What Am I?" Animal Cards

- Find the "What Am I?" cards in the bag.
- **OK, we're going to listen to animal sounds and guess what animal makes that sound. Are you ready?!**
- Pick a card and read it: **I make this sound, "oink oink!" What am I?**
- Let your child guess the animal.
- Turn the card over to reveal the answer.
- Make the animal sound together and then pick another card.
- Take turns reading the card and guessing the animal.

3. Make a Pig

- Take out the small box, a Styrofoam ball, pipe cleaners, googly eyes, a button, glue, and pink paint.
- Put the ball into the box and pour in some pink paint.
- **Shake shake shake!** Encourage your child to say this with you.
- Shake the box until the ball is covered, then set it out to dry.
- Hold up the short pipe cleaners.
- **What can we use these for? What do pigs hear with?/What do pigs walk with?**
- Fold 2 short pipe cleaners in half and stick in the ball as ears.
- Stick 4 more pipe cleaners in the bottom of the pig as legs.
- Curl 1 pipe cleaner around a crayon or pencil.
- **What will this be?/What part of the pig is this?**
- Stick it in as the tail.
- **Look at our pig! Uh oh, it's missing something. What are we missing?**
- Glue on the googly eyes and the button as the nose.

Included in the "Fish" Language Bag

- **CD of "Fish Songs"**
- **Fish Eyes** by Lois Ehlert
- **Rainbow Fish** by Marcus Pfister
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **Blue paper**
- **Stamp pad**
- **Fish bowl cards**
- **Fishing pole**
- **Coffee filters**
- **Markers**
- **Sequins**
- **Googly eyes**
- **Scissors**
- **Extra activity ideas**

The Story Sharing Sheet

The Rainbow Fish

By Marcus Pfister

This story is about a special fish who treasures his shiny scales. He learns that even though he loves his shiny scales, he will be a happier fish when he shares them with his friends.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it. Then, point to the author's name as read that as well.
- Your child may have read this book before. Ask him to tell you what he remembers about the story or what he thinks will happen in it.
- Talk about sharing. What is sharing? Is it nice or mean to share? How do you feel about yourself when you share with your friends?

While reading

- On any page, count the fish.
- On the 1st page, count the fish's shiny scales.
- On the 2nd page, ask why the rainbow fish wouldn't play with the other fish. Explain that he thinks he is too beautiful to play with the ordinary fish.
- On the 3rd page, predict whether or not the rainbow fish will give one of his shiny scales away.
- On the 4th page, ask how the rainbow fish made the little blue fish feel.
- On the 5th page, ask your child why the rainbow fish is lonely.
- On the 6th page, see if your child can remember what question the rainbow fish wants to ask the octopus. Look back to the previous page if he needs help.
- On the 7th page, ask if the octopus really means that the waves talked to him. Then make guesses as to what he meant. (Maybe fish swam to him in the waves and told him the story).
- On the 8th page, predict if the rainbow fish will give away any of his shiny scales.
- On the 10th page, when the rainbow fish shared his scale, how did that make him feel. (He felt good about himself.)
- On the 11th page, ask your child why the other fish came to find the rainbow fish. Also, why did the rainbow fish finally "feel at home"?

After reading

- Ask your child if he liked the book or not.
- Ask your child if he would share his shiny scales too.
- Think back to a time when your child shared something or when a friend shared something with your child. Ask him how that made him feel and how he thinks his friend felt.

The Story Sharing Sheet

Fish Eyes:
A Book You Can Count On

By Lois Ehlert

This begins as a rhyming book and turns into a descriptive counting book about fish. It counts from one to ten.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it, then point to and read the author's name.
- Ask your child to find the fish's eye.
- If you feel it's necessary, you can look through the book before reading it, find words that your child does not know, and explain them to her.

While reading

- On the first and second page, indicate what the scales, fins, and tails are by pointing to them on the fish.
- On each page, count the number of fish or fish eyes. Have your child pick which fish is her favorite

After reading

- Congratulate your child on counting the fish so well, and ask her to try to count as high as she can on her own.
- Have your child look back through the book and find some fish eyes, tails, fins, scales, teeth, and/or stripes. Also look back through the book to find the different kinds of fish (skinny fish, red fish, jumping fish, smiling fish, etc.).

Extra Activities

1. Snack

- Hold the goldfish crackers out of sight. Give hints as to what they are and encourage your child to make guesses.
- **I have something you can eat. It is orange and cheesy. It's a kind of cracker. It's shaped like a fish.**
- When your child guesses correctly, show them to her, smell them, and taste them.
- Count the goldfish, make them swim, and make them jump into bowls or your mouth.
- **Do you want the goldfish to jump into your mouth? OK, tell it to jump!**
- Talk about how it feels (hard, crunchy) and how it tastes (salty, cheesy).

2. Take a Trip to a Pet Store

- Find a Petsmart or other pet store in your neighborhood.
- They often have a large variety of fish on display in tanks, and employees who are knowledgeable about the fish and how to care for them.
- Think of questions to ask pet store employees before you go. You may even want to write them down to remember them, and write down the answers so you can share what you learned with other friends or family members at home.
- For example: **What do fish eat? How long to fish live? Which fish are nice? Which fish are mean? Where did you get these fish from?**

Activity Instructions

1. Make Fingerprint Fish

- Take the blue paper and stamp pad out of the bag.
- Make guesses as to what you will do with these items.
- **What do you think we're going to do today? Remember, we've been reading a lot about fish. We have paper and a stamp pad but no stamps. Hmmm. What do you think we'll do? How do you think we're going to make a fish?**
- Press your fingers or thumb onto the stamp pad and then press them onto the blue paper.
- Talk about how the ink feels (wet, slimy).
- Show your child how to draw on eyes and fins, or help them do this.
- You can also draw on waves, seaweed, seashells, other fish, etc.
- Make as many thumbprint fish as you want! Count them up after you are done making them.
- After the ink dries, you may also want to make up a story about your fish and write it at the bottom of the page. It can be as simple as "I see 5 fish." or be an elaborate story that fills up the back of the paper.
- Ask your child questions to help her come up with a story.
- **Do the fish have names? Are they friends? Is that the mom and dad fish? Where do they live? Do they live in a lake or in the ocean? Where are they going?**

2. Go Fishing for Fish Bowls

- Remove the fishbowl cards and fishing pole from the bag.
- Take turns dangling the fishing pole over the upside down fish bowls to "catch" one.
- When you "catch" a fish bowl, turn the card over and count the fish.
- Note: The fish bowls will have 1-10 fish. You can remove cards that have more fish than your child can count.

3. Color and Decorate a fish coloring sheet (Curiosity Corner, 2001- pets)

- Make up your own design on the fish or copy one from a fish in "Fish Eyes" or "Rainbow Fish".
- Use markers, sequins, and glue to decorate the fish.

4. Make a Coffee Filter Rainbow Fish (www.dltk-teach.com)

- Take out a coffee filter from the bag and flatten it.
- Give your child a marker after she asks for one and let her color the filter however she likes. She can trade markers as many times as she likes.
- Flick drops of water onto the colored filter, or spray it lightly with a squirt bottle.
- Let the filter dry. Dry it with a blow dryer or let it sit out (this may take a couple of hours).
- Cut the shape of a fish out of the filter.
- Decorate your fish further by gluing on a googly eye and sequins.

Included in the "Frogs" Language Bag

- **Frogs** by Golden Books
- **Jump Frog Jump!** by Robert Kalan
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **Paper plates**
- **Googly eyes**
- **Green paint**
- **Red paint**
- **Paint brushes**
- **Strips of red construction paper**
- **Strips of green construction paper**
- **Bug stickers**
- **Extra activity ideas**
- **Pretend play ideas**

The Story Sharing Sheet

Frogs

By Golden Books, Inc.

This book exposes children to many different kinds of frogs and provides information about their diets, sizes, habits, colorings, sounds, and much much more.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it.
- Ask your child what he knows about frogs (what they look like, what they sound like, what they do).
- Tell your child that you are going to learn about many different kinds of frogs.
- Create excitement by telling him that some of the frogs look really funny!

While reading

- As parents, you know your child best. Use this book for what is appropriate for him. If your child is saying 1 to 2 words at a time, have him find and count frogs on the pages, croak and ribbit like frogs, and tell you their color and what they do (jump). If your child is talking in sentences, read as much of the information as he will allow. He may be more interested in some pages than others and that is OK!

After reading

- Ask your child to look back through the book, find his favorite frog, and tell you as much as he can about it (what color it is, what it looks like, what it eats, etc.).
- Ask your child to recall 2-3 things he learned about frogs.
- Refer back to the frogs in this book when you are designing frogs in other art activities.

The Story Sharing Sheet

Jump, Frog, Jump!

By Robert Kalan

This story is about a frog jumping away from animals that want to eat him. It has simple illustrations and provides children with many opportunities to repeat a simple phrase and make predictions about what will happen.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it.
- Ask your child what she thinks the frog will do.
- Point to the animals on the cover and say their names, or have your child name them herself.

While reading

- On any page, have your child find the animals that are hiding in the trees and grass.
- Encourage your child to say "jump frog jump!" with you each time it appears in the story. She can also jump along with the frog when it jumps.
- If your child is able, let her read with you for the sentences that appear over and over again, like "How did the frog get away?" and "Jump, frog, jump!"
- Ask your child to predict if the frog will get away or if the animal will catch/eat him. Then, after you read the next page that says "Jump, frog, jump!", ask your child if the frog got away or if the animal caught/ate him.

After reading

- Ask your child how she thinks the frog felt (scared) and why he felt that way (the other animals were trying to eat him).
- Pretend to be the fish, snake, turtle, and children in the story, and have your child pretend to be the frog who has to jump away from you. You can say, "I am the snake coming to eat you! What will you do?!"

Extra Activities

1. Snack- Eat Like Frogs

- Take out pretzels, peanut butter, and raisins from your kitchen.
- **We're going to act like frogs and eat a froggy snack! What do frogs eat? (Bugs) What can we use for bugs? (Raisins) What can the bugs sit on? (Sticks/Pretzels) What can we use to make them stick to the pretzels? (Put peanut butter on them.)**
- Spread peanut butter on the pretzels.
- Arrange raisins on top of the peanut butter.
- Pretend to sneak up on the bugs, stick your tongue out really far, and then eat up the bugs!
- Note: You can mix up the foods, depending on your child's preferences. For example, switch pretzels for crackers, icing for peanut butter, or M&Ms for raisins.

Pretend Play

1. Pretend to be Frogs

- Put on green clothes.
- Hop around the room like frogs.
- Say "**rabbit**" and "**croak**" like frogs.
- Stick out your tongue and pretend to catch bugs like frogs.
- **Mmm I'm hungry! Let's catch some bugs for dinner!**

Activity Instructions

1. Make Frog Plates

- Take out a paper plate from the bag.
- Take out the green paint and have your child tell you the color.
- **What color paint do we have? What do you think we're going to make?**
- Paint the bottom of the plate green
- Take out the red paint and have your child tell you the color.
- **What color paint do we have? What do you think this is for?**
- Paint the top of the plate red.
- Let the plate dry.
- Fold the plate in half so that the outside is green and the inside is red.
- Glue googly eyes to the top.
- Fold a red strip of construction paper accordion style.
- **What is this? Where does the tongue go?**
- Tape or staple it into the mouth.
- Fold 4 green strips of paper accordion style also.
- **What are these? Where do the legs go?**
- Tape or staple them onto the bottom as legs.
- **What do frogs eat? Let's put a bug sticker on his tongue!**
- Put a bug sticker on the frog's tongue.

2. Play the Frog Board Game

- Take out the frog game board, die, and frog markers.
- **We're going to play a frog game! Do you want to play too?**
- Choose frog markers and set them on "start".
- Take turns rolling the die, reading it, and making your frog markers hop around the board.
- Say "**Hop hop hop!**" or count "**One two three**" as you move your frog marker. Encourage your child to do the same.

Included in the "Me" Language Bag

- **CD of "Songs About Me"**
- **What Makes Me Happy?** by Catherine & Laurence Anholt
- **From Head to Toe** by Eric Carle
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **Paper plates**
- **Tan, brown, and black crayons**
- **Construction paper**
- **Yarn**
- **Glue**
- **Scissors**
- **Plastic spoons**
- **Googly eyes**
- **Long-armed monkey doll**
- **Extra activity ideas**

Story Sharing Sheet

What Makes Me Happy?

by Catherine and Laurence Anholt

The young children in *What Makes Me Happy?* tell about their feelings. Reading this book with a child may lead to a discussion between the two of you about what makes YOU happy, sad, angry, or excited. Hearing the rhyming will help children develop skills important for learning to read when they are older.

Before reading

- Read out loud the title and the names of the authors written on the front cover.
- Ask your child what might make each child on the cover happy.
- Then share what makes you happy. Finally, ask your child what makes her or him happy.

While reading

- Look at the picture on each left page together while you read the question. Cover the right page with your hand. Ask your child to predict what the child in the book will answer. Then read each right page without stopping to focus on the rhymes.
- Ask, "What was the scariest thing you ever saw?" "How did you stop being scared?"
- Ask, "Why do you think the two girls in the blue dresses look so much alike?"
- Discuss what the child in the book says makes him shy. Ask, "What is he doing on this first day?" "Who will help him get over his shyness?"

After reading

- Look through the book with your child and find all the balloons. How many red balloons can you find?
- There are many different types of laughs. Laugh three different ways with your child. Who do you know who laughs each of those ways?
- Go through the book and show each other what your face looks like when you're happy, sad, etc. Have fun imitating each other's expressions. Say the name for each feeling as you are making your faces. Say a sentence explaining why you feel that way. Doing it in front of a mirror may be fun.

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The Story Sharing Sheet

From Head to Toe

By Eric Carle

Your child may have read other books by Eric Carle in school or at home. Children come to know the characters, subjects, and illustrations typical of an author by reading several books by the same author.

A variety of animals lead children in moving the parts of their body.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it. Then, point to the author's name as read that as well.
- Have your child name or repeat the animal (gorilla).
- Have your child point to or name different parts of the gorilla's body (head, tummy, legs, toes, etc.).

While reading

- On any page, ask your child to name the animal and tell you what it and the girl or boy are doing.
- Copy the animals by acting out all of the same movements while you're reading.
- Encourage your child to say "I can do it!" on every page. You can point to that sentence when it appears to prompt your child to say it.

After reading

- Ask your child what the different animals did. She can look back through the book to find the answers.
- Think of other movements you can make with your body, like shake your head or jump with your legs.
- Go to the library and look up other books to read by Eric Carle.

Extra Activities

1. Snack

- Make candy faces by baking sugar cookies, covering the cookies with vanilla or chocolate frosting, and designing faces on them with various candies.
- Talk about what to use to design the face.
- **What should we use for eyes? Could we use raisins for something? What would make a good mouth?**

2. Look Through Family Albums (Curiosity Corner, 2001)

- Name and talk about family members. Especially make time to show your child pictures of himself as a baby.
- Talk about how much your child has grown, and ways he has changed.
- For example: **You used to be bald, now you have lots of beautiful hair!**

3. Keep a Growth Chart for Your Child

- Every couple months, measure your child and look at how much he's grown.
- Count how many feet and inches tall he is, and mark it next to the date or age of your child. For example, "John. 3 feet 9 inches. December, 2008."

4. Make a Poster for Your Child's Door

- Write your child's name and some of his favorite things on a poster board.
- Glue pictures of your child, his friends, and his family onto the poster board.
- Let your child draw pictures of things that he likes to eat and do.
- Let your child do as much of the writing, coloring and gluing as possible.
- Note: Anything can go on your poster!
- Hang or tape the poster onto your child's bedroom door.
- **What do you want to put on your poster?**
- **Which pictures should we put on it?**
- **What is your favorite thing to eat?**

Songs

- Gather family or friends together to sing "Who Ate the Cookie from the Cookie Jar?" (Curiosity Corner, 2001).
- Review family and friends' names if necessary.
- Let your child repeat after you and pick names to call out.
- Be as dramatic as possible while you sing!
- **We're going to sing "Who Ate the Cookie from the Cookie Jar?"!**

"Who ate the cookie from the cookie jar?

(Name) ate the cookie from the cookie jar!

Who me?

Yes, you!

Couldn't be.

Then who?"

Activity Instructions

1. Make a Paper Plate Face

- Take out a paper plate and tan, brown, and black crayons.
- Put the crayons up to your child skin and have him pick which one matches best.
- **What color is your skin?**
- Color the plate with your chosen crayon.
- Take out blue, green, brown, and black paper.
- **What color are your eyes?**
- Have your child look in a mirror if he does not know.
- Help your child cut eyes out of the paper.
- **Where do your eyes go?**
- Glue the eyes onto the middle of the plate.
- **What is under your eyes?/Where is your nose?**
- Take a dark crayon and draw a nose under your eyes.
- Take out pink, red, and brown paper.
- **What color are your lips?**
- Have you child look in a mirror if he does not know.
- Help your child cut lips out of the paper.
- **Where do your lips go? Do they go above your eyes?**
- Glue the lips onto the plate.
- Take out tan, brown, and black paper.
- **What color are your ears?**
- Match the paper to the color of the plate.
- Help your child cut out ears and glue them onto the plate.
- Note: You can also cut out and glue on hearing aids, cochlear implants, glasses, and/or earrings!
- Take out yellow, red, brown, and black yarn.
- **What color is your hair?**
- Pick the yarn that matches your child's hair best.
- **Is your hair long or short?**
- Cut many pieces of yarn that are the length of your child's hair.
- **Where should we put your hair? Does it go under your nose?**
- Glue the yarn to the top of the plate.
- After the glue has dried, you can modify the hairdo by braiding it or putting it in pig tails.

2. Hug Body Parts

- Find the long-armed monkey in the bag.
- Ask your child where he wants to be hugged. Start with some suggestions if your child doesn't answer.
- **Mr. Monkey wants to give you a hug! Where do you want Mr. Monkey to hug you? Do you want him to hug your arm?**
- Encourage your child to say as much as he can, "Arm", "My arm", "Hug my arm", "Monkey hug my arm", or "I want the monkey to hug my arm".
- Wrap the monkey around the named body part to give your child a hug.
- Trade places. Your child can hold the monkey and wait for you to tell him where you want a hug, or he can ask "Where do you want Mr. Monkey to hug you?"

3. Make Family Members on Plastic Spoons

- Take out the plastic spoons, googly eyes, yarn, glue and scissors.
- **We need 1 spoon for everyone in the family. Let's count them out.**
- Glue on googly eyes to the back of the spoon.
- **What can we use to make the hair?**
- Cut short pieces of yarn to match family members' hair.
- Glue the yarn onto the "head".
- Take out the construction paper and cut out outfits to glue onto the spoon as well.
- **What does Mom like to wear? Should we make a dress or pants for your sister? What color shirt do you want to make?**

4. Play the Name Game (Curiosity Corner, 2001)

- Gather friends or family into a circle.
- **We are going to play the name game! Are you ready?**
- Call out someone's name, and roll the ball to that person.
- Change up the activity by bouncing or throwing the ball.
- Change up the activity by calling out whole names, only last names, or family member names like "sister" or "dad".

Included in the "Monkey" Language Bag

- **Monkeys** by Susan Canizares & Pamela Chanko
- **Five Little Monkeys** by Eileen Christelow
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **Monkey finger puppet sheets**
- **Crayons**
- **Scissors**
- **Glue**
- **Monkey puppet sheets**
- **Tape**
- **String**
- **Finger play ideas**
- **Extra activity ideas**

The Story Sharing Sheet

Monkeys

By Susan Canizares and Pamela Chanko

This is a simple and informative about book about things monkeys do. It is repetitive since almost every sentence starts with the word "monkeys" and ends with an action word, so children can follow along easily.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it. Point to the author's name and read it as well.
- Count the monkeys on the cover.
- Ask your child what he thinks the monkeys will do.

While reading

- Point to the words as you read. Your child may soon learn to sight read the word "monkeys" since it appears on every page. Let him read that word, or let him read the whole sentence if he is able.
- Act out what the monkeys are doing on each page! Repeat the action word as you do it. For example, while you are jumping around, say "Jump! Jump! Jump!" and encourage your child to say it with you.
- When there is more than one monkey on a page, ask who the monkeys are. You are listening for your child to say "baby", "that's the mama", or maybe "they are sisters".

After reading

- Ask your child to think back and tell you about two to three things the monkeys did in the book.
- Look back through the book, and think about what other animals do those actions. For example, "What other animal jumps?" (kangaroos or grasshoppers).

The Story Sharing Sheet

Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed

By Eileen Christelow

This book is a slightly extended version of the popular children's song. Monkeys get ready for bed, jump on and fall off of the bed, and finally get put to bed. It is repetitive so children can help tell the story and make predictions.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it. Point to the author's name and read it as well.
- Sing a line from "Five Little Monkeys", ask your child if he knows the song, and then ask him what he thinks will happen to the monkeys in the book.
- Have your child identify any words that he recognizes on the cover.

While reading

- Read the line "It was bedtime." then ask your child what he does to get ready for bed.
- Act out the same actions that the monkeys are doing: taking a bath, brushing their teeth, laying down quietly in bed, etc.
- After reading page 7, ask your child if he thinks the monkeys will go to sleep or get up.
- Any time the monkeys are jumping on the bed, stop and ask "What will happen next?" or "Who will bump his head this time?"
- Any time a monkey bumps his head, ask "What will mama do?"
- Any time you read "The doctor said," pause and let your child finish the line by saying "No more monkeys jumping on the bed!"
- After the monkeys are asleep, ask "What will mama do now?" or "Where is mama going?"

After reading

- Make the monkey finger puppets and sing "Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed" as many as times as you'd like with your child.
- Ask your child to retell you the story. He can look back through the pictures to help him out. Also, ask him questions like "What happened next?"

Extra Activities

1. Snack

- Eat animal crackers for snack one day. Try to find as many monkeys as you can, but feel free to find and label other animals as well.
- Count the monkey crackers.
- Make the monkeys jump and swing.
- Make monkey noises while you play and eat.
- **The monkey says, "Ooo ooo ooo! Aah aah aah!" Jump monkey, jump!**

2. Make a Monkey Jungle

- Make a jungle for stuffed monkeys or your monkey finger puppets to play in.
- Use household items such as chairs for cliffs, plates for ponds, or tall cups for trees.
- Let your child guide building the jungle and playing, but ask questions to get her to talk.
- **Where do the monkeys sleep? Where do the monkeys play? What do the monkeys eat? What will the monkeys do today?**
- You can also jump around like monkeys and act out what the monkeys in your jungle are doing.

3. Make a Collage of Monkeys

- Look up pictures of monkeys online (there are many different kinds!), print them off, cut them out, and glue them onto paper or poster board.
- If you find fun facts about monkeys while you're looking for pictures, you can write them down on your collage as well.
- Note: This can be as big or small as your child wants to make it.

Finger Plays

- Before or during any activity, you can sing "The Five Little Monkeys".
- Put on your monkey finger puppets. Make them jump up and down and fall down.
- **We're going to sing a song about monkeys. Get your monkeys ready!**

Five little monkeys jumping on the bed.

One fell off and bumped his head.

Mama called the doctor and the doctor said,

"No more monkeys jumping on the bed!"

Repeat with four, three, two, and one monkeys.

Activity Instructions

1. Play Hide-and-Seek with Monkeys

- Take turns hiding and searching for the monkeys in your house. Use stuffed monkeys you already own or the monkey finger puppets you just made.
- Give hints (and encourage your child to give hints) as to where to find the monkeys.
- **The monkey is in the kitchen. The monkey is under something. The monkey is behind something you sit on.**

2. Make a Monkey Puppet (www.dltk.teach.com)

- Take out the monkey sheets, crayons, scissors, string, and tape out of the bag.
- Find something hard, like cardboard or cereal boxes.
- Color the monkey parts.
- **What color do you want to make your monkey?**
- Cut out monkey parts.
- Trace the monkey parts onto something hard, like cardboard, and cut them out.
- Glue the monkey parts onto the cardboard.
- Arrange the parts upside down and spaced a couple inches apart.
- Cut four 6-inch pieces of string and two 2-foot long pieces of string.
- Attach the body parts together by taping the short strings between the parts.
- Tape the 2 long strings between the hands and the monkey's head.
- Hang up the puppet or play with him and make him dance!

3. Make Monkey Finger Puppets (www.dltk.teach.com)

- Get the finger puppet sheets, scissors, crayons, and glue out of the bag.
- Have your child ask you for different colored markers to color in the monkeys and doctor.
- Cut out the monkeys and doctor.
- Glue the ends of the loop together to fit your child's finger.
- Use these finger puppets when you read and sing "The Five Little Monkeys".

Included in the "Trains" Language Bag

- **The Little Engine That Could** by Watty Piper
- **Clickety Clack** by Rob & Amy Spence
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **Train flip book of activities**
- **Train board game and cards**
- **Numbers train**
- **Train sheets made of shapes**
- **Cut-out shapes**
- **Glue**
- **Tape**

The Story Sharing Sheet

The Little Engine That Could

By Watty Piper

The Little Engine is exhausted from trying to carry a big load of toys and food over the mountain. No one will help pull the train until the Little Blue Engine comes along and saves the day.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it, then point to and read the author and illustrator as well.
- Ask your child what is on the cover (a train) and what the train is pulling.
- Predict where the train is going and who will get the toys.
- Create excitement about the story by saying "Let's read the story and find out!"

While reading

- Page 6: After reading, ask your child "How does the train feel?" and "Why is the train happy?"
- Page 8: Have your child tell you what toys he sees and which does he like best.
- Page 10: Have your child tell you what foods he sees and which are his favorite.
- Page 12: Ask your child why the train stopped.
- Page 15: Ask your child if he thinks the shiny new train will help them.
- Page 17: Look at the train's face. Does he look like a nice train or a mean train? Will he pull the train full of toys?
- Page 19: What will the dolls ask the Big Engine?
- Page 24: Look at the Kind Engine. What does he look like? Is he new or old? Big or little? Do you think he can pull the train full of toys?
- Page 34: Have your child repeat the Little Blue Engine, "I think I can. I think I can." Ask "What does the Little Blue Engine think he can do?"
- Page 38: Have your child repeat the Little Blue Engine, "I think I can. I think I can."

After reading

- Ask your child to tell you about the trains that would not help the broken engine. Look back through the book for help. Ask why those trains refused to help.
- Ask your child if he thinks the children got their toys and food, and how does he know? Look back at page 43 for help.

The Story Sharing Sheet

Clickety Clack

By Rob & Amy Spence

This is a story about a train and the cargo it's carrying. It's fun for children because of its rhymes and repetitive nature.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it.
- Ask your child what "Clickety Clack" means; tell your child that it is the sound the train makes on the track.
- Make guesses as to what the train will be carrying in the story.

While reading

- On any page, ask your child what he sees and what he thinks is happening, then read that page.
- On any page, count the animals.
- Encourage your child to say "clickety clack" with you each time it appears in the story. You can pause or point to "clickety clack" to prompt him.
- When Driver Zach appears in the story, ask your child how he thinks Driver Zach feels and why he feels that way.

After reading

- Make guesses as to where the train was going.
- Look back through the book to find different animals and people.
- Look back through the book to find every time it says "clickety clack".

Activity Instructions

1. Make a Train Flipbook

- Find the blank train pictures in the bag.
- Together, think of movements or skills that your child can do and write them down on the trains.
- For example, you could write "I can jump up and down", "I can clap my hands", "I can turn around", "I can count to 20", "I can sing my ABCs", etc.
- You can use this as a listening game, where you read the card and your child acts it out. It can be a reading game where your child reads the card and you act it out. Or, you can take turns and it could be both.

2. Play the Train Board Game

- Take out the file folder train game and game cards.
- Put your markers on "start".
- Take turns picking a card and moving your marker accordingly.
- Say, and encourage your child to say "**It's my turn!**"
- When your child picks a card, ask her what it says.
- **What is on your card? What color do you have? What does the card say?**
- Note: There are 2 piles of cards you can use. One has colored trains that match trains on the board. The other has written directions that you have to follow (you can read these for your child). Choose whichever one is best for your child, or try both!

3. Make a Numbers Train (www.kinderprintables.com)

- **We're going to make a numbers train to hang in your room.**
- Take the train cutouts out of the bag.
- Help your child write numbers 1-20 on separate train cutouts.
- **What comes after 1? What is after number 5?**
- Note: You can write only a few numbers, like only 1-5 for younger children.
- Help your child put the trains in numerical order and tape them together.
- Hang up the train in your child's room.

4. Make a Train Out of Shapes

- Take the shape train worksheets out of the bag.
- Talk about the different shapes that the train is made out of (rectangles, circles, squares, ovals, triangles).
- Take the baggies of shapes out of the bag.
- **What shape is this?/What shape goes here?**
- Encourage your child to say “circle”, “that’s a circle”, or “I need a circle” and then take out those shapes.
- **What size circle do you want?**
- Encourage your child to say “big/medium/small”, “that’s a big circle”, or “I need a big circle” and then take out those shapes.
- **What color rectangle do you want?**
- Encourage your child to say “blue”, “blue circle”, or “I need a blue circle” and then give your child that shape.
- Glue that shape to the train picture.
- Repeat until the picture is finished.

Included in the "Transportation" Language Bag

- **Changes, Changes** by Pat Hutchins
- **Flying** by Donald Crew
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **"What Am I?" vehicle cards**
- **Transportation Memory cards (18 sets)**
- **Egg carton**
- **Yellow paint**
- **Paint brushes**
- **Black construction paper**
- **Scissors**
- **Finger plays**
- **Pretend play ideas**
- **Extra activity ideas**

The Story Sharing Sheet

Flying

By Donald Crews

Your child may have read books by Donald Crews from our classroom collection. Children come to know the characters, subjects, and illustrations typical of an author by reading several books by the same author.

This book uses many pictures and few words to tell you about what a plane does on a flight, including taking off, flying over cities, and coming back down.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it. Point to the author's name and read it too.
- Ask your child who flies a plane (the pilot).
- Ask your child where the pilot sits and where the people sit (the last page shows you that people are coming out of the middle of the plane).
- Ask your child what letters she knows in the title, or ask her where a certain letter is. For example, "Can you find the F?"

While reading

- On any page, count all of the planes that you see.
- On each page, find the same plane that is on the cover.
- Talk about what the plane is flying over. You can say, "I see houses down there! What do you see?"

After reading

- Ask your child to tell you two or three things that the plane flew over.
- If your child has ever flown in a plane, ask her to tell you about it. You can ask, "Where did you go?", "How did you feel?", or "What did you do on the plane?"
- Go to the library and look for more books by Donald Crews.

Story Sharing Sheet

Changes, Changes

by Pat Hutchins

In this book without words, a wooden man and woman make a house with colored wooden blocks. Their adventures begin when they smell smoke and see that their house is on fire. They stay one step ahead of disaster by making quick plans to meet each change.

Before reading

- Read aloud the title on the front cover. It gives a clue as to what will happen in the story. The word CHANGES is repeated. Ask your child if she or he thinks there will be one thing that changes in the story or many things.
- Tell your child that the other words on the page tell us the author's name. If your child wrote a book, she or be would be the author, Write your child's name on a piece of paper. Help your child identify each letter.
- Ask if your child has ever built with blocks or other building materials. Encourage your child to tell you about her or his building.
- What is happening in the picture on the title page? Ask your child how the man and woman might take care of the problem.

While reading

As you tell the story together talk about each problem and how it is solved. Point to the number at the top of each page. After saying it, ask your child to point to it and say it. Identify the shapes and colors of the blocks. Ask some of the following questions.

- What did they build to put out the fire? How would you solve that problem?
- What did they build when the water got too deep? What could you have done?
- What did they build to travel on dry land? What would you have built?
- What did they build to put on the tracks? Why do you think they did that?

After reading

- Wow many blocks were used to build the first house? Count with your child. Count how many were used to build the last house?
- Ask how the houses are the same? How are they different?
- Find the page with the first house. Find all the matching blocks. Which blocks are exactly the same size and color?
- In your house there are many different items that will match the shape of the blocks in the story. See how many matches you can find (soup cans, doors, roof of the building, etc.).

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Extra Activities

1. Build Vehicles with Blocks

- Use blocks you have at home to create cars, buses, trucks, boats, etc.
- To make it more interesting, play this as a "barrier game".
- Split the blocks up so you and your child have the exact same blocks.
- Set up a barrier between you and your child by propping up a book or other object.
- Take turns giving directions on how to arrange the blocks to make a vehicle.
- **Put the big square block in the middle. Lay it flat. Find the medium triangle block and set it on top of the square. What do you think we made?! Let's see if they are the same!**
- Lift the barrier and compare the two vehicles.

Activity Instructions

1. "What Am I?" Vehicle Cards

- Find the "What Am I?" cards in the bag.
- **OK, I'm going to tell you about some vehicles, but I'm not going to tell you what they're called. You've got to think of the name! Are you ready?**
- Pick a card and read it: **I drive on the road. I am big and yellow. I take kids to school. What am I?**
- Let your child guess after each clue.
- Turn the card over to reveal the answer.
- Talk about each vehicle after looking at the picture.
- **You ride the bus to school! What do you do on the bus? Is the bus driver nice or mean?**
- Take turns reading the cards and guessing the vehicle.

2. Play Memory with Transportation Pictures

(http://www.abcteach.com/free/t/transportation_memorygame.pdf)

- Lay the transportation cards upside down on the table or floor.
- **Let's count the cards as we put them down! Oh there are 18 cards- that's an even number. I wonder if any 2 are the same? Let's turn them over and find out!**
- Take turns flipping 2 cards over at a time. Say the name of the cards you turned over.
- **Sail boat. Truck./ I got a sail boat and a truck.**
- Encourage your child to say "I got a match!" or "I have 2 trucks!"
- **Look! What do you have? You have a match! There are 2 trucks!**
- Take out the matching cards and keep playing until all the matches are found.
- Count up your matches at the end of the game.
- Note: You can play with all 18 pairs or you can take some out, depending on your child's attention span. You can still play with all of the pictures, even if your child doesn't know what they are called. She can still match based on the pictures.

3. Make a School Bus

- Get an egg carton, paint brushes, black construction paper, scissors, and glue out of the bag.
- Encourage your child to guess what you will be making.
- Note: You may want to lay down newspaper to protect your table or floors.
- **What color should we paint our school bus?**
- Take out the yellow paint and help your child paint the top of the egg carton yellow.
- Let the paint dry.
- **What else does our bus need?/How can we make the wheels?**
- Hold up the construction paper and scissors as a hint.
- Help your child cut out and glue 4 wheels onto the bus.
- If you want, you can also cut out faces from magazines and glue them onto the sides of the bus.

Included in the "Weather" Language Bag

- **CD of "Weather Songs"**
- **Weather** by Pamela Chanko & Daniel Moreton
- **The Wind Blew** by Pat Hutchins
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **Weather Memory cards**
- **Landscape pictures (blank)**
- **Crayons**
- **Paper towel roll**
- **Construction paper (brown, blue, yellow, gray, and white)**
- **Tape**
- **Pipe cleaners**
- **Scissors**
- **Beads/rocks**
- **Paper plates**
- **Glue**
- **Crayons**
- **Red paper arrows**
- **Brads**
- **Pretend play ideas**

The Story Sharing Sheet

Weather

By Pamela Chanko & Daniel Moreton

This book presents six types of weather and an activity you can do outside for each of them. It uses real life pictures and contains repetitive language.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it.
- Ask your child what is happening on the cover and what he thinks will happen in the story. Create excitement by saying "Let's find out!"
- If you feel it's necessary, you can look through the book before reading it, find words that your child does not know, and explain them to him.

While reading

- Pause after you read "When it is…" and let your child fill in the weather word by looking at the picture or reading.
- On any page, ask your child if she likes that outdoor activity.
- On any page, ask your child "What else can you do when its ____ out?" Allow for answers that include outdoor and indoor activities.

After reading

- Ask your child what her favorite type of weather is, and what her favorite activity is during that type of weather.
- Look back through the book and ask your child to tell you what the kids are doing.

The Story Sharing Sheet

The Wind Blew

By Pat Hutchins

A mischievous wind steals items away from people, who have to chase after them to get them back. The vocabulary is difficult; however, the book will still be a success if your child understands some of the words while he looks at the pictures. Your child may ask you what a word means- it is OK to stop reading for a second and explain it to him, then reread that page.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it.
- Ask your child what is happening on the cover and what he thinks will happen in the story. Create excitement by saying "Let's find out!"
- If you feel it's necessary, you can look through the book before reading it, find words that your child does not know, and explain them to him.

While reading

- On the first page, pretend to be the wind by blowing and moving your arms back and forth.
- On most pages, you see a person who is about to lose something. Predict what the wind will take away next.
- Have your child name the items that the wind has taken away.
- Ask your child if he thinks that the people will get their things back, and how he thinks they will get them back.

After reading

- Ask your child what is wrong on the page where the people get their things back. You are looking for answers like "That's not her hat!" and "The balloon goes with the girl!" Look back through the book to figure out who the different items belong to.
- Read the book again, but this time let your child look at the pictures and tell you what is happening. Repeat what your child says and then model the sentence they are trying to say.
  (If your child says "Man uh-oh", you can say "Man uh-oh! The man lost his umbrella! Uh-oh!")

Pretend Play

1. Pretend to Play in Different Kinds of Weather

a. Sunny

- Pretend to play outside, shade your eyes because the sun is so bright, get hot and sweaty, etc.
- **It's so bright! I'm hot!**

b. Cloudy

- Pretend to take off your sunglasses. Talk about the clouds.
- **I see clouds coming in. I hope it doesn't rain!**

c. Windy

- Talk about the wind- how it feels and what it does to the trees and grass.
- **The wind is cold. Look, the wind is blowing the leaves off the trees! We better get inside before it rains.**

d. Rainy

- Pretend to get rained on. Talk about the rain- how it feels and what it looks like.
- **Did you feel something? I felt a rain drop! What does it feel like? It feels cold and wet to me. What should we do? Let's run inside!**

e. Stormy

- Talk about what you see and here. Talk about what you do during a thunderstorm.
- **What do you hear? Boom Boom Boom! I hear thunder! Can you make thunder? What do you see? Flash Flash! I see lightening! What should we do? Let's hide!**

f. Snowy

- Pretend to play in the snow. Talk about what the snow looks and feels like.
- **Wee! I love the snow! What should we make? Let's make a snowman/snow angel. What does the snow feel like? It feels cold and wet. Is there a lot of snow or a just a little snow? What color is the snow?**

Activity Instructions

1. Play Memory with Weather Pictures

- Lay the weather cards upside down on the table or floor.
- **Let's count the cards as we put them down! Oh there are 12 cards- that's an even number. I wonder if any 2 cards are the same? Let's turn them over and find out!**
- Take turns flipping 2 cards over at a time. Say the name of the cards you turned over.
- **Sunny. Rainy./ I got a sunny and a rainy picture.**
- Encourage your child to say "I got a match!" or "I have 2 snowy cards!"
- **Look! What do you have? You have a match! There are 2 snowy cards!**
- Take out the matching cards and keep playing until all the matches are found.
- Count up your matches at the end of the game.
- Note: You can play with all 12 pairs or you can take some out, depending on your child's attention span. You can still play with all of the pictures, even if your child doesn't know what they are called. She can still match based on the pictures.

2. Make Rain Sticks

- Take a paper towel roll, 2 pipe cleaners, brown construction paper, tape, scissors, and beads/rocks out of the bag.
- Trace the end of the roll onto the construction paper two times and cut out those circles.
- Tape one of the circles onto one end of the roll.
- Tie 2 pipe cleaners together and wrap them around something long and skinny.
- Put the curly pipe cleaners into the paper towel roll.
- Add beads/rocks into the roll.
- Tape the second circle onto the other end of the roll.
- Wrap the whole construction paper piece around the roll and tape it on.
- Decorate your rain stick any way you like: Draw pictures of rain drops, put jungle animal stickers on it, etc.
- Turn the rain stick over and over to hear the rain.
- **Do you hear that? Where's that sound coming from? What does that sound like? I hear rain!**
- Share your rain stick with a friend or family member: tell them how you made it and what it sounds like.

3. Draw a Weather Picture

- Look outside one day and talk about the weather.
- **What is the weather like? What does it look like outside? Is it sunny or cloudy?**
- Take the blank landscape picture out of the bag and color it to match the weather outside.

4. Make a Weather Wheel

- Take a paper plate, construction paper, crayons, glue, scissors, and cotton balls out of the bag.
- Draw 3 lines like pizza slices on the back of a paper plate. You should have 6 sections.
- Decorate the 6 sections as Sunny, Windy, Cloudy, Rainy, Stormy, and Snowy.
- **We need to make a sunny section. How should we do that?** Show your child the materials to give her a hint. **What color paper should we use for the sky? For the sun?**
- Ideas: Sunny- Cut out a blue triangle to glue on one section and cut out a yellow sun to glue on top.
  Windy- Cut out a blue triangle to glue on one section and draw lines across it.
  Cloudy- Glue cotton balls to that section.
  Rainy- Draw raindrops on that section.
  Stormy- Draw rain drops and cut out lightening bolts to glue onto that section.
  Snowy- Cut out a gray triangle to glue and white snowflakes to glue on the last section.
- Write the weather words on their sections.
- Stick the brad through the whole in the red arrow then through the hole in the plate, and fasten it.
- Look at the weather every day and move the arrow on your weather wheel.
- **What is the weather like? What does it look like outside? It is rainy or snowy?**

Included in the "Winter" Language Bag

- **Winter Is For Snowflakes** by Michelle Knudsen
- **Christmas Is Coming** by Claire Masurel
- **Story Sharing Sheets**
- **Mitten Memory cards**
- **Winter BINGO cards**
- **Round poster board cut-outs**
- **Green markers**
- **Macaroni noodles**
- **Ziploc baggies**
- **Green food coloring**
- **Glue**
- **String**
- **Scissors**
- **Play dough**
- **Finger plays**

The Story Sharing Sheet

Winter is for Snowflakes

By Michelle Knudsen

This story is a rhyming story about a fun-filled day playing in the snow. Your children may have done some of the same winter activities. Reading this book may trigger those memories and can be a perfect opportunity for them to recall and share them with you again.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it.
- Ask your child what season it is and why she thinks that.
- Ask your child what she thinks the boy will do in the story.
- Tell your child that some words in the story rhyme (have the same sound at the end). See if she can tell you some words that rhyme.

While reading

- On any page, have your child tell you what the boy or other characters are doing.
- Before turning the page, make predictions as to what the boy will do next.
- Ask your child to tell you which words on the page rhymed.
- On the pages when the family eats, ask your child to tell you why they eat hot food (because it's cold outside and the hot food warms them up).
- Have your child find or name the snow clothes that the kids put on. Why do they need all of those clothes?

After reading

- Reread the book. Read each page except for the last word. Pause and encourage your child to fill that last rhyming word.
- Talk about your favorite thing to do in the snow.

The Story Sharing Sheet

Christmas is Coming!

By Claire Masurel

This is a story of a little girl preparing for Christmas by decorating and baking, and then celebrating Christmas morning with her family and toys.

Before reading

- Read the title out loud and have your child repeat it. Then, point to the author's name as read that as well.
- Ask your child look at the cover and tell what season she thinks it is. You can help her out by asking about weather (it's snowing) and what the people are doing (buying Christmas trees).
- Ask your child to predict what she thinks might happen in the story.

While reading

- Talk about how "trimming the tree" means decorating it. Talk about how you decorate your own Christmas tree and your favorite ornaments.
- Ask your child what the dolls and toys are doing (helping decorate). Ask your child if that is real or pretend/Can dolls and toys really help you do things?
- As you read, continue to talk about real verses pretend. Can dolls eat cookies or walk around the house at night?
- Have your child predict what presents Juliette will get for Christmas. Also, talk about what presents your child wants for Christmas.
- Ask what your child thinks the dolls see flying in the sky.
- Ask what Santa will do and where your child thinks he will go when he leaves the house.
- Have your child make guesses as to what the dolls will get for Christmas.

After reading

- Ask your child what presents the dolls and toys got for Christmas.
- Make a Christmas list with your child. You can write down what she says or let her write it herself.

Finger Plays

1. - While dressing up in winter clothes, sing "This Is The Way We Put On Our Hats" (Curiosity Corner, 2001). It goes to the tune of "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush".
- Replace the word "hats" with "boots, coats, scarves, or mittens".
- Identify the different articles of clothing and take turns picking something else to put on.

"This is the way we put on our hats,

Put on our hats, put on our hats.

This is the way we put on our hats,

Before we go outside."

2. - Sing "What Do Animals Do In Winter?" (Curiosity Corner, 2001). It goes to the tune of "Mary Had A Little Lamb".

"What do animals do in winter,
do in winter, do in winter?
What do animals do in winter,
when it gets so cold?

Bears and chipmunks go to sleep,
go to sleep, go to sleep.
Bears and chipmunks go to sleep.
That is what they do.
(rest head on your hands)

Repeat the chorus:
What do animals do in winter?...

Squirrels and mice make a nest,
make a nest, make a nest.
Squirrels and mice make a nest.
That is what they do.
(pretend to pile up leaves into a nest)

Repeat the chorus.

Birds and butterflies fly away,
fly away, fly away.
Birds and butterflies fly away.
That is what they do.
(spread arms like wings and fly)

Repeat the chorus.

Snakes and reptiles hide in rocks,
hide in rocks, hide in rocks.
Snakes and reptiles hide in rocks.
That is what they do.
(curl up on the ground like hiding in an opening in the rocks)

Repeat the chorus.

Activity Instructions

1. **Play Memory with Mitten Pictures** (Curiosity Corner, 2001).
   - Lay the mitten cards upside down on the table or floor.
   - **Let's count the cards as we put them down! I wonder if any 2 cards are the same? Let's turn them over and find out!**
   - Take turns flipping 2 cards over at a time. Describe the cards as you turn them over.
   - **Striped. Polka dots./ I got striped and polka dot mittens.**
   - **Look! What do you have? You have a match! There are 2 striped mittens!**
   - Encourage your child to say "They do not match.", "I got a match!" or "I have 2 striped mittens!"
   - Take out the matching cards and keep playing until all the matches are found.
   - Count up your matches at the end of the game.
   - Note: You can play with all of the pairs or you can take some out, depending on your child's attention span.

2. **Make Wintry Things out of Play Dough** (Curiosity Corner, 2001).
   - Make different wintry things out of play dough.
   - For example, you and your child can make a snowman, snowflakes, or Santa and his sleigh.
   - There are no limitations; let your child be as creative as he can be!
   - Talk about your creations as you're making them.
   - **What should we make first? How do you make a snowman? What goes on the snowman's head?**

3. **Play BINGO with Winter Cards** (www.dltk.teach.com)
   - **We're going to play BINGO! I'm going to pick a card and tell you what I see. You have to listen carefully!**
   - Choose a BINGO sheet.
   - Pick up a BINGO card and describe the picture.
   - Place a marker onto that picture on your BINGO sheet.
   - You can win by filling in a row, column, or diagonal, or by filling up the entire sheet with dots.
   - Trade places and let your child call out the pick and describe a card. You may need to help him pick up the card, identify the picture, or describe the picture at first.
   - Note: You can both have a BINGO card, or you may choose not to give the card picker/reader one.

4. Make Christmas Wreaths

- Put green food coloring into 1 of the macaroni bags and shake it.
- **What do you need to do? Shake, shake, shake!**
- Set the noodles out to dry.
- **Mmm noodles! Can I eat these noodles! (No!)**
- **What color should we make the wreath?**
- Look at a picture of a wreath if your child needs help.
- Color one side of the poster board donut green.
- Cut a piece of string about 5 inches long.
- Put the string through the small hole in the donut and tie a knot.
- Cover the green donut with glue.
- **Squeeeeze the glue!**
- Put the green macaroni noodles onto the glue.
- Set it out to dry.
- **Tell me where you want to hang your wreath.**
- Hang it up!
- Note: Let your child do as much of the shaking, coloring, gluing, and cutting as she can!