



The Early Literacy Resource Center for Southern Arizona
makewayforbooks.org
520-721-2334

Tips and Tricks for Sharing Books at Storytime

1. Three simple rules for children at storytime.
 - Sit on your bottoms (so the children behind you can see the pictures).
 - Keep your hands to yourself (so you won't bother other people and they won't bother you!)
 - Be good listeners (so you can enjoy the story).(Always give children the reasons for the rules.)
2. Start each storytime with a fingerplay or rhyme that the child will come to recognize. It will help them settle down.
Example: (Show the children how to do the motions the words suggest.)

Sometimes my hands are at my side,
And then behind my back they hide.
Sometimes my fingers wiggle so:
I shake them fast!
I shake them slow.
Sometimes my hands go clap, clap, clap
And then I place them in my lap.
But now they're quiet as can be,
Because it's storytime, you see.
3. Help children make a connection with the book before beginning to read, such as, "What do you think this book is about?" or "Who do you think these people are on the cover?" Teach a poem or rhyme related to the book's topic.
4. Think of a prop to bring that is related to the story. This could be a stuffed animal or other object. This might help with both attention and comprehension. Other examples:
 - Stack several kinds of hats on your head for *Caps for Sale*.
 - Bring mittens to go along with *The Three Little Kittens*.
 - Wear clothing with a design that might relate to a character in the story or the plot, such as, teddy bears or cats.)

5. Hold the book so everyone can see all of the pictures all of the time. If children sit on their bottoms, the ones in the back can see better. But it is important for children to be comfortable while listening to a story. Be flexible as long as children are not bothering one another.
6. Always say the title of the book while pointing to it. Soon children will expect you to say, "The title of this book is" Gradually introduce the author of books and then the illustrator. Later you can point out to children that they can be authors and illustrators by making their own books.
7. If children become squirmy, stop reading the words and engage them by asking them to help you tell the story from the pictures. Ask, "What do you think will happen next?"
8. **MAKE IT FUN!** (If reading looks like play, it will be taken seriously.) Read with expression and enjoyment. This is your chance to "act" by using character voices and movements. Bring the book to life. Go for the Academy Award!
9. Read stories set in different countries or on different continents. Introduce them by first pointing out where we live on a map or globe, then pointing out where the new country is located. (Children love maps and globes. It is amazing how early children begin to recognize where they live, if given the opportunity.)
10. Select stories with repetition or rhymes. Encourage children to interact with the stories by reading books that allow them to join in. Active participation is crucial to young children enjoying books.
11. Children love to hear books over and over again. Repetition is very good for promoting language development.

"Read to your bunny often, and... your bunny will read to you!"

***Storytimes are most successful when there are no distractions. Ask other adults in the room to model good storytime manners by saving clean-up and conversations for another time. Instead, ask them to sit with the children to help them focus.**

