



## SHARED STORYBOOK READING

Here are some parent-child storybook reading strategies that are useful for improving children's early language and literacy skills.

- **Let child choose the book**  
Hold up two or more books in front of the child and let him/her select which one to read. This gives the child some ownership of the shared book reading activity. It also allows the child to demonstrate which book s/he is most interested in.
- **Follow the child's lead**  
During the book reading activity, attend to what the child is interested in. Too often adults are more interested in their own interests (or assumed purposes) of the story. A child is more likely to attend longer and interact more if the topic is of interest to them. Learn to wait and let the child turn the page.
- **Talk about the print**  
While reading the story, point to the print in the story. Talk about the print. Track along with your finger. Ask questions about the print, like "What does this word look like?", or "See, this word begins with the 'M' like the beginning of your name."
- **Expand child's utterances**  
When the child comments on the story, add to his/her comment. For example, if the child says, "car go", say, "Yes, the car goes, the car goes fast", or "Yes, the car goes, the blue car goes fast, but the red one is slow."
- **Ask open ended questions or make inferences**  
Try not to ask too many questions that require the child to label or point out items in the pictures; for example, do not ask, "Where is the dog?" Instead, ask open ended questions that require the child to make assumptions about the story; for example, "Why did the dog go in the neighbor's yard?" Try to find ways to relate the story to the child's own experiences. "Have you ever seen a black snake? Tell me about it!"

- **Expand on new words and concepts**  
When a new word is read, stop and talk about it. Repeat the word and explain what it means. Explain how the new word is used in the story. Try to use the word several times during the story or after to increase its familiarity to the child.
- **Pause and let the child talk**  
Too often adults expect the child to comment or respond immediately. Learn to wait for several seconds to see if the child will answer your question, or wait to see if the child will comment on the story. Remember to expand on the child's comment.
- **Read and re-read the same book**  
Children talk more about familiar stories. Repeated readings also help the child to retain new words and new phrases. Children love to read and re-read familiar stories, often more than a parent wants. This is, however, an excellent strategy for language learning.
- **Have fun**  
Shared book reading should be fun. Adults should be warm, show signs of interest, and be a participant. Adults should not be too directive or demanding during the activity. Remember to let the child take the lead.

[Visit us on our web site at: <http://www.tandtcommunication.com>]

T & T Communication Services  
100 Meredith Drive, Suite 100  
Durham, NC 27713  
Phone: 919-484-0012 Fax: 919-484-0081  
[www.tandtcommunication.com](http://www.tandtcommunication.com)  
tllayton@earthlink.net