

Building Your Child's Speech and Language Skills Through Early Reading Experiences

SPEECH

LANGUAGE

PATHOLOGY

Center

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Children begin to develop early speech and language skills from the day they are born. Through listening to people talk around them and to them, children are able to develop a solid base for their speech and language skills to grow.

They eventually learn to use language to express their thoughts, ask and answer questions, and communicate with others. Starting in infancy, parents can help foster speech and language development through shared reading with their children. Below you will find some tips to create meaningful reading experiences to help your children expand their speech and language skills starting at an early age.

Before reading...

- Choose books together with your child
- Pick out different types of books about a variety of topics
- Talk about the title of the book
- Look at the picture on the cover
- Predict what the story is going to be about
- Recall any background experience your child may have about the story

While reading....

- Label the pictures you see in the book and encourage your child to say these words
- Use describing words to talk about the pictures you see (big/little, shiny, spotted, etc...)
- Ask your child to point to pictures throughout the book ("point to the doggy")
- Introduce new vocabulary words and provide simple definitions that your child will understand ("I see a bulldozer! That's a big machine that pushes dirt!")
- Ask a variety of wh- questions ("Where is the doggy? Who is in the tree?") If your child can't answer verbally, encourage your child to point to the answer and you say the answer for your child to hear
- Pause while reading to allow your child to fill in words that he/she may know (twinkle, twinkle, little _____)
- Read with varying tone and inflection

After reading...

- Ask your child to recall information from the story ("Do you remember what the doggy's name was? Where did this story take place?")
- Retell the story with your child in your own words and have your child fill in parts ("What happened next...")
- Look back through the pictures and encourage your child to retell the story in his/her own words
- Ask your child if he/she liked the book and ask them to explain why ("What did you like about this book?")
- Read books with similar themes and talk about how they are alike and different
- Don't be afraid to read books over and over again! Repetition is key to learning.



It may seem like your child is too young to understand what you are saying. But, every time you talk, you are modeling speech sound production and the complicated language rules that make up our language! Children are born ready to learn and talking to your child will encourage speech and language development!

Book Suggestions for Building Speech and Language Skills

If you notice your child is having trouble with particular speech sounds, choose books that contain those sounds. Hearing repetitions of the sound and watching you model how to produce them will help your child learn!

Early Developing Sounds

/b/, /p/, /m/, /n/, /w/, /h/, /d/, /k/, /g/

- Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see? by Bill Martin and Eric Carle
- The Wheels on the Bus by Paul D. Zelinsky
- More Bugs in the Boxes by David A. Carter
- Buzz Said the Bee by Wendy Cheyette Lewison
- A Pair of Socks by Stuart J. Murphy
- Purple Sock, Pink Sock by Jonathan Allen
- If You Give a Moose a Muffin by Laura Joffe Numeroff
- Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown
- Barnyard Dance by Sandra Boynton
- In the Tall Tall Grass, by Denise Fleming
- Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear? by Eric Carle
- Cows Can't Fly by David Milgrim
- No, David! by David Shannon
- The Very Busy Spider by Eric Carle

Later Developing Sounds

/f/, /l/, /s/, /r/, /th/, /ch/, /sh/

- Seaweed Soup by Stewart J. Murphy
- Sam I Am by Dr. Seuss
- Sheep on a Ship by Nancy Shaw
- 5 Little Ladybugs by Karen Henley
- Smile Lily by Candace Fleming
- Fox in Socks by Dr. Seuss
- Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault
- The Little Engine That Could by Watty Piper
- The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats
- Ah-Choo by Mercer Mayer
- Miss Nelson is Missing by Harry Allard and James Marshall
- Arthur's Eyes by Marc Brown
- Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile by Bernard Waber
- One Fine Day by Nonny Hogrogian

Expressive and Receptive Language Skills

- Opposites by Sandra Boynton
- How Do Dinosaurs Go Up and Down? by Jane Yolen
- Big Dog...Little Dog by P.D. Eastman
- Big Words for Little People by Jamie Lee Curtis
- Who Hops? by Katie Davis
- Are You My Mother? by P.D. Eastman
- Freda Plans a Picnic by Stuart Murphy
- It Looked Like Spilt Milk by Charles Shaw
- The Little Mouse, the Red Ripe Strawberry, and the Big Hungry Bear by Audrey Wood
- My Friend Rabbit by Eric Rohmann
- Tall by Jez Alborough
- Carrot Soup by John Segal
- Come Along, Daisy! by Jane Simmons

Something else to think about...

Your body positioning while reading to your child is also important!

- Try to sit next to or across from your child so he/she can see your face
- When your child can see your face, he/she can watch your mouth move while you produce speech sounds
- Facing your child will also allow your child to read your facial expressions
- Make eye contact with your child to ensure your child is following along with the story

Are you concerned about your child's speech and language development?

Call the Speech Language Pathology Center today to schedule an appointment for a FREE screening!

781-792-2700

Speech-Language Pathology Center (SLP Center) provides quality, professional speech and language therapy in an individualized and family-centered manner. Emphasis is placed on the client's functional needs while utilizing innovative research-based therapy within the speech and feeding clinic. Consultation is offered in various natural environments such as school, child-care center, adult habilitation and home settings.

