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## Family storybook reading

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## Family storybook reading

### Abstract

The value of storybook reading in fostering emergent literacy is well documented. I am confident through this project that the amount and quality of storybook reading conducted in the homes will be increased and that it will have a positive effect on the students' academic growth at school and their love of books and reading. I am also looking forward to the partnership between home and school this project will encourage. By working together as a team, we will be able to maximize the benefits in our efforts to meet the needs of each child in my class. My hope is that all parents will be excited about participating in the program, but especially those that are currently unaware of the benefits they can give their children by reading to them every day.

Family Storybook Reading

A Graduate Project  
Submitted to the  
Department of Curriculum and Instruction  
In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts in Education  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

by  
Judith L. Ray  
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This Research Project by: Judith L. Ray

Entitled: Family Storybook Reading

has been approved as meeting the research project requirement for  
the Degree of Master of Arts in Education.

Jeanne McLain Harms

10/20/97

Date Approved

Director of Research Project

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Literacy is a process that begins at birth and continues throughout life. Literacy does not begin when children enter school for the first time (Morrow, 1989).

Many studies of emerging literacy have been done to determine how children learn language. The results indicate that children in all cultures understand a great deal about the forms and functions of written language before they ever enter school (Smith, 1988). Just as young children model after the spoken language they hear people using in their environment, usually in order to get something they want, they also model reading and writing in the same way. These real-life activities lead to understanding the functions of language (Teale, 1986).

Because children see language as tools to reach their goals, their instructional programs need to focus on active engagement in the processes rather than on isolated skill practice (Teale & Sulzby, 1989). Children need to be involved in using written language in situations in which they can create meaning by relating their language knowledge and also can make and test hypotheses to extend their literacy (Smith, 1988).

Because learning to read is no longer considered a series of skills to be learned when children enter school, many teachers have a new appreciation for the impact families have on children's early literacy. Children with many language experiences in their home usually come to school ready to learn.

Unfortunately, many children do not have this background (Taylor & Strickland, 1986).

Children do not need to be privileged economically or to receive special kinds of instructional support in the home setting to learn to read and write (Smith, 1988). From an observational study of children's literacy experiences in low-income families, Teale (1986) concluded that the homes varied a great deal in the amount and quality of literacy events taking place. Although income was a factor in the amount of literacy materials available in the home, it did not always restrict the richness of the experiences. The most common literacy activities were those needed for the daily routine of living (paying bills, using recipes, and checking the TV Guide). Very few of these families had storybook reading experiences, but in the few that did, children went to school with a higher awareness of print and better book handling ability.

#### Influence of Storybook Experiences on Emerging Literacy

The importance of storybook reading has been reemphasized by many writers in recent years (Cullinan, 1992; Morrow, 1989; Teale, 1986; Taylor & Strickland, 1986; Smith, 1988) even though E. B. Huey said in 1908, "The secret of it all lies in parents reading aloud to and with the child" (cited in Teale, 1981,

p. 902). This reemphasis is stated in Becoming a Nation of Readers (1985):

The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children. This is especially so during the preschool years. The benefits are greatest when the child is an active participant, engaging in discussions about stories, learning to identify letters and words, and talking about the meanings of words (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, p. 23).

Many parents read to their children as part of their daily routine. Many others do not, because they do not realize its importance or the power they have to help their children in such a simple and enjoyable way (Teale, 1981).

Teachers can assist parents in becoming aware of the many learning experiences for children through storybook reading. The first thing children should learn as they snuggle up to a parent to read is that reading is a pleasant experience (Morrow, 1989; Taylor & Strickland, 1986; Cullinan, 1992; Hill, 1989; Huck, Hepler, Hickman, & Kiefer, 1997). The reading aloud experience should be fun. It should show children that the parent enjoys reading. According to Frank Smith (1988), "Children will endeavor to understand, and engage in, anything they see adults doing,

provided the adults demonstrate enjoyment and satisfaction in doing it" (p. 201).

From reading aloud experiences, children gain book handling knowledge--how to hold a book, open it, and turn the pages (Chapman, 1986; Huck et al., 1997; Doake, 1986). They learn about concepts of print, such as print has stability, moves in a certain direction, and corresponds to spoken words. Children gradually learn that print carries meaning and that sounds and symbols are related (Taylor & Strickland, 1986; Cullinan & Bagert, 1993).

Reading aloud experiences provide models of language. From these experiences, children learn about the structure of stories (beginning, middle and end), about story language (Once upon a time), the predictability of some characters and their actions, and the sounds of language. Also, children learn about authors, illustrators, and genres (Cullinan, 1992; Taylor & Strickland, 1986; Huck, 1992).

#### Strategies for Reading Aloud Experiences in the Home

Schools need to emphasize to parents the many advantages they can give their children by reading to them and then help parents know how to go about it. Stories should be read at least once a day at a regular time and place so children get the message that reading is important (Taylor & Strickland, 1986;

Cullinan & Bagert, 1993). A variety of quality literature should be offered (Jett-Simpson, 1984; Cullinan & Bagert, 1993; Rasinski & Fredericks, 1990). Parents should introduce the parts of the book and their functions, such as the cover and title page. They should also tell about the author, illustrator, or poet so children learn to recognize their favorites (Cullinan, 1992; Mavrogenes, 1990).

Children need to be active participants in the home reading experiences. They should be encouraged to think and talk about the stories and illustrations. Their participation can be encouraged by asking questions, scaffolding (a brief phrase of explanation), giving additional information, and relating the story to events in the children's lives (Taylor & Strickland, 1986; Morrow, 1989; Huck et al., 1997; Teale, 1981).

When they are ready, children should have the opportunity to behave like readers by taking over the parent's role of holding the book, turning the pages, telling the story from the pictures, guessing what will happen next, and supplying words the parent leaves out as they read (Chapman, 1986; Meek, 1982; Jett-Simpson, 1984). During the reading experiences, children should be encouraged to examine print by pointing to words as they are read to and to talk about letters and words (Adams, 1990; Meek, 1982; Cullinan & Bagert, 1993).

The children's favorite books should be read over and over. Rereading allows children to begin to take over by saying repeated words, phrases, or rhymes. As they learn more and more of the text from rereading, children can eventually read independently (Meek, 1982; Doake, 1986; Huck, 1992).

To gain the most from reading aloud sessions, it is important to offer expressive activities to extend the ideas in the literature experiences. These activities can be some form of retelling such as puppets or flannel board stories, engaging in an art or cooking activity, relating the story to another familiar book, or writing one's own story (Huck et al., 1997).

#### A Project to Promote Read Aloud

##### Experiences at Home

This project involves encouraging parents to read aloud to their kindergarten children. The three objectives for the project, that will be proposed at the beginning of the school year, are: (1) to alert parents to the importance of reading aloud to their children, (2) to provide parents with suggestions on how to read books interactively with their children, and (3) to provide parents with packets which include pieces of quality literature along with questions and related activities to extend the literature experiences.

The first two objectives will be accomplished early in the year during the Parent Discussion Nights. After briefly

explaining the many learning experiences provided through storybook reading, part of a video entitled Parent's Role or The Lap Technique (Jett-Simpson, 1981) will be shared. This video demonstrates how to involve a child in a reading aloud experience. A handout will also be distributed at this time, giving parents ideas of things to consider when reading to their children (see Appendix A). Finally, the Family Storybook Packets will be shared.

In addition to a piece of quality literature, each packet includes a laminated card with a story summary and questions or ideas to discuss before, during, and after the reading on one side and suggested literature response activities on the other. Materials needed to complete the literature response activities are provided. A form is included for the parents to share with the teacher the literature experiences and related experience activities presented in the home, their child's responses, and their own reactions to these read aloud sessions (see Appendix B).

After sharing the contents of the packets and the guidelines for taking care of them (see Appendix C), the procedure for checking out the packets will be explained. Packets are to be checked out by one-third of the class each Friday for a period of a week. During that week, the parents are encouraged to share the book several times and choose at least one of the

expressive activities to do with their child. On Thursday, the packet, the completed parent response sheet, and, in some cases, the finished projects are to be returned to the class. Time will be provided each Thursday for the children to tell about their book and the related activities. A record will be kept of which packets each child has had a chance to experience.

#### Examples of Storybook Packet Experiences

Sixteen packets were created in all (see Appendix D).

Figure 1 shows an example of the materials included in one of the packets. Examples of the story cards are presented below.

Figure 1

#### A My Name is Alice



## Example 1

Side 1: **A My Name is Alice**

Bayer, J. (1984). S. Kellogg, (Il.), New York, Dial.

**Summary:**

This is an alphabet book that combines beasts with a rhythmic rhyme. Each page has two animals whose names begin with the same letter. They come from a place beginning with that letter and sell something that also begins with the same letter. Your child will soon know the pattern of the text and will enjoy the humorous illustrations.

**Guide for the Experience****Before you read:**

Look at the cover, and read the title and names of the author and illustrator. What do you think this book will be about?

Who do you think Alice is?

Where do you see the letter "A" in the picture on the cover?

**As you read:**

Look at the illustrations to find the animals and objects mentioned in each sentence. Some of the animals may be ones your child does not know.

Many of the letters appear in the illustrations. Have your child see how many they can find and suggest that they say the letter each time they see it.

**After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:**

If you have a map or globe, see if you can find the places mentioned on each page.

What other names begin with each letter? (just do a few--as long as your child is interested)

What else could they sell for each letter?

What other places could they come from?

What other animals could have been in the pictures?

Other alphabet books:

- Banks, K. (1988). Alphabet Soup. P. Sis, (Il.), New York: Knopf.  
 Ehlert, L. (1989). Eating the Alphabet. New York: Harcourt.  
 Feelings, M. (1974). Jambo Means Hello: A Swahili Alphabet Book.  
 T. Feelings, (Il.), New York: Dial.  
 Hoban, T. (1982). A, B, See! New York: Greenwillow.  
 Martin Jr., B. & Archambault, J. (1989). Chicka, Chicka, Boom Boom.  
 L. Ehlert, (Il.), New York: Simon & Schuster.

## Side 2: A My Name is Alice

Literature Response Activities

### Cooking

Alphabet Soup - A recipe card is included in the packet.

Jello Jigglers - Use a 9 x 13 pan and follow the directions on a box of jello. Use the alphabet cookie cutters in the packet and have your child cut out letters for their name or the names of other family members.

### Create a New Version

Using the included storyframe, make a book with the names of the people in your family. Have your child illustrate each page.

### Make a Book

Look through the house with your child and try to find something that begins with each letter of the alphabet. Help them make an "At Home Alphabet Book" using the book included in the packet. They can illustrate each page, and you can help them write the word that goes with each picture.

### Magnetic Letters

Have your child pull a letter from the feely box.

1. Name the letter.
2. Complete the sentence, "\_\_\_ is for \_\_\_\_\_."

or

Use the letters to spell words on your refrigerator.

### Fine Motor Abilities

Using the playdough in the packet, have your child roll it into a snake. Have them use the snake to form the letter you say. You can also have them pull a magnetic letter from the feely box and make that letter or the lower case letter with the same name.

### Large Motor Abilities

Letter Walk - Take a walk in your neighborhood to look for letters on street signs, license plates, mailboxes, etc. Take paper to keep track of the letters you find.

### Alphabet Soup

If you have Alphabits cereal or alphabet pasta, have your child glue letters or words onto the paper soup pot from the packet. Have them read the letters or words as they are glued.

## Example 2

## Side 1: Ask Mr. Bear

Flack, M. (1958). New York: MacMillan.

## Summary:

Danny wants to give a very special gift to his mother. He consults with several of his animal friends for their suggestions. The hen offers some eggs; the goose some feathers; the sheep some wool. But Danny's mother already has those things. The cow suggests asking Mr. Bear who knows what the perfect gift for Danny's mother will be.

## Guide for the Experience

## Before your read:

Look at the cover and read the title and name of the author.

What do you think this book will be about?

Have your child name the animals on the cover.

What sounds do the animals make?

Have your child identify the beginning letter of the animals' names.

## As you read:

See how many times your child can find the names of the animals as they appear on the pages. The cow and the bear are not shown on the cover so you will have to talk about the sounds they begin with when you get to their page.

Before reading about the bear's idea, have your child predict what it will be.

## After you read, select some of these items to discuss:

What was the problem Danny wanted to solve?

Who did Danny ask first? What did they suggest?

Question why the book is called, Ask Mr. Bear.

Why didn't the other animals want to go with Danny to see Mr. Bear?

Talk about why the best present to give mother for her birthday was a bear hug.

What are some other things mother would like that would not cost any money?

Would you be afraid to look for a bear?

What other animals could Danny have met on the farm?

What would they have offered as a gift?

How do you feel when you get a special gift?

How do you feel when you give a special gift?

Other books by Marjorie Flack:

Flack, M. (1930). Angus and the Ducks. New York: Doubleday.

Flack, M. (1987). The Story About Ping. New York: Scholastic.

Other books about giving:

Fox, M. (1990). Shoes From Grandpa. P. Mullins (Il.), New York: Orchard.

Pfister, M. (1992). The Rainbow Fish. New York: North-South.

Zolotow, C. (1977). Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present. M. Sendak, (Il.), New York: Harper.

### Side 2: Ask Mr. Bear

#### Literature Response Activities

##### Rereading:

Reread the story several times, letting your child read with you the parts they remember. After several times, see if they can retell the story by looking at the pictures.

##### Retelling

Have your child use the enclosed stick puppets to retell the story in the order that it happened.

##### Large Motor Fun

Practice doing all of Danny's actions in the story: skip, hop, gallop, trot, run, walk, hug.

##### Science

Find out what special things animals provide us. For example, chickens give us eggs to eat, sheep give us wool for clothing, etc. What other things do we get from animals?

##### Art

Help you child select someone to send a card to. Make a birthday card, Mother's Day card, or thank you card. Fold a sheet of paper in half. Have your child draw a picture on the cover and

What are some other things mother would like that would not cost any money?

Would you be afraid to look for a bear?

What other animals could Danny have met on the farm?

What would they have offered as a gift?

How do you feel when you get a special gift?

How do you feel when you give a special gift?

Other books by Marjorie Flack:

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Find out what special things animals provide us. For example, chickens give us eggs to eat, sheep give us wool for clothing, etc. What other things do we get from animals?

### Art

Help you child select someone to send a card to. Make a birthday card, Mother's Day card, or thank you card. Fold a sheet of paper in half. Have your child draw a picture on the cover and

write a message on the inside. Help him/her as much as needed with the writing.

#### Animal Memory Game

Directions: Players take turns turning over two cards and saying the animal names. If they are alike they keep the pair. If not, they turn them back over.

#### Ask Mr. Bear Game

Directions: To start the game, put all markers on the board at start that is Danny's house. In turn, each person picks up a number card and moves that number of places. If they land on an animal, they must tell what gift the animal offered. If wrong, they must return home. The first person to Mr. Bear wins. You also can make up your own rules.

#### Create a New Version

Fill in the blanks on the storyframe with an animal, the sound they make, and a gift they could offer. Have your child illustrate Danny talking to the animal.

## Example 3

Side 1: **The Doorbell Rang**

Hutchins, P. (1986). New York: Greenwillow.

## Summary:

Ma made cookies for Victoria and Sam and told them to share them. They figured out that each of them would get 6 cookies. Before they got to eat them, the doorbell rang and friends arrived so they agreed to share with them. The doorbell kept ringing, and friends kept arriving until each child had only 1 cookie to eat. Then, the doorbell rang again. What should they do? The story has a surprise ending. The story also provides an opportunity for a math lesson.

## Guide for the Experience

## Before you read:

Look at the cover of the book. Can you tell what this story will be about? Read the title and the author's name. Who do you think is at the door?

## As you read:

Ask your child to look at the children's faces. How are they feeling as the doorbell rings again and more people come? Stop before the last time the doorbell rings and ask who they think is at the door. What should they do?

## After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:

What is your favorite kind of cookies?

What are other things you could share with your friends?

## Other books by Pat Hutchins:

Hutchins, P. (1968). Rosie's Walk. New York: Macmillan.

Hutchins, P. (1969). The Surprise Party. New York: Collier.

Hutchins, P. (1972). Good Night Owl! New York: Macmillan.

Hutchins, P. (1976). Don't Forget the Bacon. New York: Greenwillow.

## Side 2: The Doorbell Rang

### Literature Response Activities

#### Retelling

As you read the book a second time, have your child join by repeating the repetitious phrases. Have them use 12 of the Cookie Crisp cookies and stand-up people from the packet to retell the story. As more children join the group, divide the cookies up as in the story.

#### Math

Using the playdough, cut a rectangular cake. Use the knife to cut the rectangle to share with 2 people, 3 people, 4 people. Use the stand-up people to show who gets each piece.

#### Cooking

Find your favorite cookie recipe and ask your child to help in planning to make cookies. You will need to read the recipe to him/her and make a list of all the ingredients that you need to check on in the cupboard or to purchase. If ingredients need to be purchased, take your child to the store with you to do the shopping. Line up all the ingredients and utensils that are needed and include your child in making the cookies. Share the cookies with a neighbor or invite a friend.

#### Counting

Using the Cookie Crisp cookies, have your child practice counting and number concepts. Start by putting a few cookies on Cookie Monster's plate for your child to count. Have them find the number card that matches the number of cookies on each plate. Also, you can choose the number card and ask him/her to make groups representing the number with the cookies (e.g., four cookies for the number four). Remember to start with low numbers that will be easy for your child and then add 1 or 2 more each time. Once s/he is comfortable with making groups, have him/her put a few cookies on each plate and ask, "How many cookies does Cookie Monster have all together?" or "What if he eats all the cookies on 1 plate? How many will be left?" (Children love being the Cookie Monster and eating the cookies). Continue with different addition and subtraction stories until the cereal is gone.

### Summary

The value of storybook reading in fostering emergent literacy is well documented. I am confident through this project that the amount and quality of storybook reading conducted in the homes will be increased and that it will have a positive effect on the students' academic growth at school and their love of books and reading. I am also looking forward to the partnership between home and school this project will encourage. By working together as a team, we will be able to maximize the benefits in our efforts to meet the needs of each child in my class. My hope is that all parents will be excited about participating in the program, but especially those that are currently unaware of the benefits they can give their children by reading to them every day.

Parent Response Forms will be examined as they are returned with the packets. In this way, the project can be modified to meet the needs of my students and their families. Responses will assist me as I continue developing packets so the program can be expanded.

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Appendices

## Appendix A

## Things to Remember When Reading Aloud to Your Child

1. HAVE FUN!
2. Sit with your child beside you or on your lap so he/she can see the words and illustrations.
3. Read every day at a regular time and place if possible.
4. Tell the title of the book and the name of the author/illustrator and discuss the cover before beginning the story.
5. Relate the story to something they are familiar with (another book or a family experience).
6. Sometimes have your child predict what will happen in the story.
7. Point to the lines as you read.
8. Encourage your child to be an active participant by encouraging comments and asking questions as you read.
9. Let your child read repeated lines, give sound effects, or pause and let them fill in the blanks as you read.
10. Expand on the child's responses by giving additional information or explaining new words or concepts.
11. Encourage your child to examine print when he/she is ready by pointing to known words and letters and talking about the sounds in words. Do not engage in this activity so much that it spoils the story or before they are curious about it.

12. Let your child act like a reader by holding the book, turning the pages, and retelling the story from the pictures.
13. Limit the talk about the book after reading to one or two ideas. These are examples of things to discuss:
  - a. What was your favorite part of the story?
  - b. Who was your favorite character? Why?
  - c. How did the story make you feel?
  - d. Do you remember anything like this ever happening to you?
  - e. What happened first, next, last?
14. Let your child lead--sometimes they may just want to hear the story. DO NOT try to do too much.
15. Read favorite books over and over.

Appendix B  
Parent Response Form

1. Name of book\_\_\_\_\_.
2. Did your child enjoy the book?\_\_\_\_\_
3. Which activity or activities did you choose to do with your child?
4. How long did you spend on the activities?\_\_\_\_\_
5. Were the directions clear and understandable?\_\_\_\_\_
6. Did you enjoy the activity?\_\_\_\_\_
7. Did your child enjoy the activity?\_\_\_\_\_
8. Comments (child's or yours) or special adaptations you'd like to share.

## Appendix C

### Storybook Activity Packets

#### Guidelines

Included in each packet is a book, an activity card, and materials to help you complete some of the activities. (Please note that in order to complete a few of the activities you may have to supply a few materials from around the home.) Also included in the packet is the parent response form which needs to be completed and returned with the materials from the packet.

Listed below are a few guidelines that will assist you in caring for the packets.

1. Consumable materials should be used by your kindergartner but do not hesitate to invite younger or older siblings to listen to the story and participate in activities that do not require additional materials. The materials should never be used without an adult assisting.
2. The materials should be put in a safe place when they are not in use.
3. Return materials promptly on the requested date (Thursday) so that they can be shared with other classmates.
4. It is your responsibility to see that your child returns the book and other items within the packet in good condition. No parts should be missing. Check the materials list on the outside of the packet.
5. Please send a favorite item or activity that you completed back to school with your child so they can share it with the class.
6. **HAVE FUN!** Enjoy the storybook activities. Thank you for taking good care of the books and the materials.

Appendix D

### Side 1: The Alphabet Tale

Garten, J. (1964). M. Batherman, (Il.), New York: Random House.

#### Summary:

This is an animal alphabet book with riddles. Each letter has two pages. On the front page, the letter, the tail of an animal, and the text giving riddle clues to the animal's name is shown. The riddle is written in rhyme so that gives more help in figuring out the name of the animal. On the back of the page, the rest of the animal's body appears along with its name.

#### Guide for the Experience

##### Before you read:

Look at the cover and read the title and the names of the author and illustrator. What do you think this book will be about?

What animal do you think the tail belongs to?

What does the animal's name begin with?

##### As you read:

On each page, have your child name the letter and predict what the animal will be by looking at the tail.

Read the text. Does that guess make sense?

Talk about the rhyming words. What word rhymes with the animal's name? (You may need to read the page again.)

##### After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:

What other animals begin with each letter? (Just do a few--as long as your child is interested.)

The last sentence of each riddle is always the same (This tail is the tail of the \_\_\_\_\_). On many of the pages, one word is added to describe the animal. Go back through the book and see if your child remembers the word used.

What other words would describe the animal? (Ex: This tail is the tail of the spouting whale. Other words might be huge, gray or enormous.)

#### Other Alphabet Books:

Duke, K. (1983). The Guinea Pig ABC. New York: Dutton.

Gag, W. (1978). The ABC Bunny. New York: Putnam.

Kitchens, B. (1984). Animal Alphabet. New York: Dial.

Lobel, A. (1989). On Market Street. A. Lobel, (Il.), New York: Mulberry.

Oxenbury, H. (1972). Helen Oxenbury's ABC of Things. New York: Watts.

## Side 2: The Alphabet Tale

### Literature Response Activities

#### Cooking

Initial Crackers or Letter Pretzels - Use one of these two recipes from the card in the packet. Have fun making letters you can eat.

#### Create a New Version

Use the storyframe provided and make up some new alphabet riddles. Help your child fill in the describing word on the blank and draw the animal's tail. Turn the paper over and have your child draw the rest of the animal. Help the child write the animal's name. Can you think of a riddle clue to add to the first page? Making it rhyme with the animal's name is tricky but will give an extra clue.

#### Writing

Jello Writing - Pick some letters or a word your child wants to practice. An example of a word could be the child's name. Write one letter at a time with glue on the paper from the packet. Have your child sprinkle dry jello over the glue. Pour the extra jello into a small container to reuse. The glue will release the flavor of the jello, so this will be a fragrant way to learn letters and words.

#### Small Motor Skills

Make an Alphabelt - Have your child look through old newspapers and magazines for letters of the alphabet. Glue the letters to the tagboard strip in alphabetical order until the alphabet is complete. The alphabelt can be worn around the child's waist. It can be tied to a belt loop to be an alphabet tail.

#### Large Motor Skills

Action Alphabet - Choose one alphabet card from the deck at a time. Have your child say the letter and act out the action pictured on the card. Can you think of other actions that begin with that letter?

### Side 1: Chrysanthemum

Henkes, K. (1991). New York: Greenwillow.

**Summary:** Chrysanthemum thought her name was perfect. She loved to hear it, see it, say it, and write it until the first day of school. Then, she began to think her name was dreadful. Her parents tried to make her feel better, but it was up to an understanding teacher to help her appreciate it again.

#### Guide for the Experience

##### Before you read:

Look at the cover and read the title and author's name.  
 What do you think this book will be about?  
 What is a chrysanthemum?

##### As you read:

Talk about all the things Chrysanthemum is learning to do on the page which says she grew and grew and grew.  
 When did she like to hear her name?  
 How did she like to see her name?  
 Do you think Chrysanthemum was excited about starting school?  
 What makes you think so?  
 Why did the children at school giggle when they first heard her name?  
 In the story it said that Chrysanthemum wilted. What does that mean?  
 Why did she think her name was dreadful?

##### After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:

Were her classmates being kind when they first heard Chrysanthemum's name? Why or why not?  
 What were some of the things Chrysanthemum's parents did to help?  
 Did the students like Mrs. Twinkle? What makes you think so?  
 What finally happened to make Chrysanthemum like her name?  
 Why did Chrysanthemum giggle when Victoria forgot her lines in the musicale? Do you think Chrysanthemum should have done that? Why or why not?

##### Other books by Kevin Henkes:

Henkes, K. (1988). Chester's Way. New York: Greenwillow.  
 Henkes, K. (1989). Jessica. New York: Greenwillow.

- Henkes, K. (1990). Julius, The Baby of the World. New York: Greenwillow.
- Henkes, K. (1996). Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse. New York: Greenwillow.
- Henkes, K. (1993). Owen. New York: Greenwillow.
- Henkes, K. (1987). Sheila Rae, The Brave. New York: Greenwillow.

## Side 2: Chrysanthemum

### Literature Response Activities

#### Art

Stand Up Name - Have your child decorate each letter of their name with crayons, markers, glitter, puff paint, or whatever you have available. Fold the card in half so it will stand up.

or

Write your child's name on the doorknob hanger or have them write it. Have your child decorate the hanger as suggested above and hang it on his/her bedroom door.

or

Have your child decorate a sun visor with his/her name on it. Tie yarn or narrow elastic to each end so the visor can be worn. When the child returns the book packet, whatever is made can be worn to school to share.

#### Memory

Directions: Each flower has two cards with matching illustrations. Mix the flower cards and lay them out face down. Take turns with your child turning over two cards, saying the name of the flower and seeing if you have a match. If so, take the pair; if not, turn them back over.

#### Language/Writing

Talk with your child about the source of his/her name. Was the child named after a relative or someone special in your family or was it just a name that was liked? Who thought of the child's name? Does your child have a nickname? If so, talk with the child about where it came from. Have your child draw a self portrait and write the information about his/her name under it. Send it to school to share when the book packet is returned.

#### Real Life Experience

Go to the library and find a book of names like parents use to select a name for their child. Find the meaning of your child's name and the names of other family members.

#### Cooking

Make pancake batter. Put it in something with a pour spout and pour it out in the shape of your child's initials instead of in a circle.

### Side 1: Ira Sleeps Over

Waber, B. (1972). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

#### Summary:

This story is about a little boy's dilemma: Should he take his teddy bear when he goes to stay overnight at a friend's house? His parents are very comforting and helpful, but his sister teases him about taking his teddy bear. He eventually decides not to take his bear only to find out that his friend has a bear, too. This story will provide material for conversations with your child about fears, growing up, and friendship.

#### Guide for the Experience

##### Before you read:

Have your child get his/her favorite doll or stuffed animal to hold while you read the story.

Talk about it. What is its name? What do you do with it?

Look at the cover of the book and read the title and name of the author. What do you think this book will be about?

##### As you read:

At certain times during the story, ask your child to predict:

What will happen next? What will Ira do? Do you think Ira will take his teddy bear? Why or why not?

What is a ghost story?

##### After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:

What are some different feelings Ira had about sleeping overnight at Reggie's house?

How many things can you remember that Ira and Reggie did on their sleepover?

If your child has stayed overnight at a friend's house, talk about the times. What things did you pack? What kinds of things did you do?

Do you think Ira should have taken his teddy bear to his friend's house? Why or why not?

Why did Reggie finally get out his teddy bear?

Why did Ira finally decide it was alright to bring his bear?

Was Ira's sister helpful?

Other books by Bernard Waber:

- Waber, B. (1988). Ira Says Good-bye. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.  
Waber, B. (1973). Lyle, Lyle Crocodile. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.  
Waber, B. (1962). The House on East 88th Street. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

## Side 2: Ira Sleeps Over

### Literature Response Activities

#### Real Life Experience

Invite a friend of your child's over to play and spend the night if possible. Read the book to them and talk about it.

#### Writing

Have your child draw a picture and tell a story about a favorite stuffed animal. While your child watches, write down your child's story and then have him/her point to the words and read it with you.

or

Have your child draw a scary picture and tell a ghost story. While the child is watching, have him/her help you write the story.

#### Math/Science

Using the shells in the packet, talk about what the shells look like. Are there any that are similar? Let your child explore the collection. Ask your child to make groups of those that are alike in some way. Do not tell your child how to group them. Just observe how he/she does it. Ask your child to tell you why he/she grouped the shells that way.

#### Cooking (Great Sleepover Snacks)

Toast English muffin halves. Put some pizza sauce on each muffin half. Add shredded mozzarella and pepperoni or other toppings. Heat in the oven at 400 degrees until the cheese melts.

#### Language

I'm going on a sleepover - This is a memory game for the whole family. The first person says, "I'm going on a sleepover and I'm going to take \_\_\_\_\_" (choose any item to fill the blank). The next person has to name the first item and add one more. Continue around the group, adding one item each time, until the list is too long to remember. (You can help each other remember. Prompting is alright.)

#### Collections

Reggie showed Ira his junk collection. Have your child put together in a shoe box some of his/her favorite junk. Have your child tell you about the collection. Why are they special? Have your child bring this box to share with the class when the book packet is returned.

### Side 1: The Little Red Hen

Galdone, P. (1973). New York: Seabury.

#### Summary:

The Little Red Hen must tend her wheat and bake her bread without the help of her friends. They come running when it is time to eat the cake. The Little Red Hen reminds them of who did all the work. This story, which reinforces the concept of cooperation, lends itself to easy retelling because of its repetitive form.

#### Guide for the Experience

##### Before you read:

Look at the cover of the book, and read the title and the name of the author. What do you think this book will be about?

Can you name the tools the Little Red Hen is carrying?

##### As you read:

What are the Little Red Hen's friends dreaming about?

Do you think it is fair that the Little Red Hen has to do all the work? Why or why not?

How do you think that makes her feel?

What is a mill?

What made the animals wake up?

##### After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:

Why didn't the Little Red Hen share her cake? Do you think that was fair? Why or why not?

What things did the Little Red Hen have to do after she found the seeds so she could eat the cake?

How would the story have been different if her friends had helped?

What would you say to your friends if they did not help you with some hard work?

Do you think her friends learned their lesson? What makes you think so?

##### Other books by Paul Galdone:

Galdone, P. (1972). The Three Bears. New York: Seabury.

Galdone, P. (1974). Red Riding Hood. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Galdone, P. (1975). The Gingerbread Boy. New York: Clarion.

Other books about cooperation:

Brown, M. (1947). Stone Soup. New York: Scribner.

Heide, F. P. (1971). That's What Friends Are For. S. Van Clief,  
(Il.), New York: Scholastic.

## Side 2: The Little Red Hen

### Literature Response Activities

#### Cooking

Alphabet Bread Sticks - Use the recipe card included in the packet or use your favorite bread, cake, or biscuit recipe to do a cooking activity with your child. Talk about which ingredients are the same as the ones the Little Red Hen used. Did you have to go to the mill to have your flour made?

#### Language/Sequence

Discuss with your child how things in the story happened in a certain order. Cut apart the pictures on the enclosed sequencing sheet. Talk about what is happening in each picture and read the words. Talk about and decide what happened first, second . . . and last. Glue the pictures in order to the enclosed bread outline. Have your child retell the story.

#### Retelling

Using the enclosed flannel board and flannel board characters, help your child retell the story. You may need to reread the book, allowing your child to move the flannel board pieces and speak the parts of the animals.

#### Math

Little Red Hen's Garden - Use the kernels of corn and the copy of Little Red Hen's Garden:

1. Have your child choose a numeral card and count out that many kernels of corn to plant in the garden.
2. Have your child choose a number. How many different ways can you "plant" that many kernels in two rows? (Ex: If the numeral is 7, 2 in one row and 5 in the other; 1 in one row and 6 in the other; 3 in one row and 4 in the other or 0 in one row and 7 in the other). See if the child can say the number sentence ( $3+4=7$ ).

#### Craft/Retelling

Finger Puppets - Have your child color and cut out the small heads for the four characters in the story. Roll the four 3" X 2" pieces of paper into a tube that will fit on your child's fingers and glue. Glue one head to each tube and use the puppets as another way to retell the story.

### Side 1: The Mixed-Up Chameleon

Carle, E. (1975). New York: HarperCollins.

#### Summary:

The Mixed-Up Chameleon came from the interactions Eric Carle has had with groups of children. That is why this book is dedicated to "All the children who have worked with me on this book." When he has demonstrated how he draws animals, he has asked for suggestions of favorite animals to draw. The suggestions come in faster than his hand can draw because a curious mixed-up creature results. He combined this idea with his wonder when observing a chameleon one day, "What if the chameleon could change more than just its color?" The result is this creative product, The Mixed-Up Chameleon. Besides the humorous animal theme, Eric Carle has arranged the animals in an order that creates a rainbow of colors.

#### Guide for the Experience

##### Before you read:

What is a chameleon? What does it look like? What can it do?

Look at the chameleon on the cover. How is this chameleon mixed-up?

Are there any animals you would like to be? Why?

Have you ever wanted to be a different person? Who?

##### As you read:

Each time the chameleon changes, find the new parts that were added to the illustration. How will the new parts help or bother the chameleon?

Why couldn't the mixed-up chameleon catch the fly?

##### After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:

Name the animal that represents each color of the rainbow. Was the chameleon happy when his wishes came true? Why or why not?

Why did the chameleon wish to be like other animals?

Why did he want to change back into a chameleon?

What other animals do you know that are blue? green? red?

Did the chameleon like himself better mixed-up or ordinary?

Why do you think that?

Other books by Eric Carle:

- Carle, E. (1972). Walter the Baker. New York: Knopf.  
Carle, E. (1977). The Grouchy Ladybug. New York: Harper.  
Carle, E. (1984). The Very Busy Spider. New York: Philomel.  
Carle, E. (1990). The Very Quiet Cricket. New York: Philomel.

## Side 2: The Mixed-Up Chameleon

### Literature Response Activities

#### Motor Skills

Mixed-Up Animal Puzzles - Put three pieces together to make each animal correctly or choose pieces from three different animals to make a mixed-up animal.

#### Art

Mixed-Up Animal - Create your own mixed-up animal using magazine pictures. Cut parts of at least two animals and glue them together on a piece of paper (head of one animal and body of another). What would your animal be called?

#### Cooking

Rainbow Cookies - Mix: 1 cup soft margarine  
 3/4 C. white sugar  
 3/4 C. brown sugar  
 2 eggs  
 1 t. vanilla  
 Add & Mix: 3 C. flour  
 1/2 t. baking soda  
 1/2 t. salt

Divide dough into 4-6 equal parts, one for each color that you want in your rainbow. Color each part of dough with food colors. Flatten each section into a rectangle 4" wide and 1/4" thick. Stack the rainbow strips on top of each other. Press down gently. Refrigerate dough overnight. Slice through all layers of dough in 1/4" slices. Curve each slice into a rainbow shape. Bake on ungreased cookie sheet at 375 degrees for 7 minutes.

or

Rainbow Jello - In a clear bowl make different colored layers of gelatin or jello jigglers using the directions on the box. Let each layer set for about 1 hour before adding the next layer.

#### Real Life Experience

Take your child to a pet store that you know has a real chameleon. Have them tell you about chameleons. Find out what they eat, what care they need, and how changing colors helps them. You can also go to the library to find this information.

#### Create A Book

Use the storyframe papers and fill in a different action and animal on each page (Ex: I wish I could swim like a whale.)

Have your child draw a picture of the animal or of themselves with part of the animal added to their own body to illustrate.

Side 1: **Mouse Paint**

Walsh, E. S. (1989). San Diego: Harcourt.

## Summary:

Mouse Paint is a simple story about colors that also has an interesting plot. It shows in a fun way what happens when different colors are mixed together.

## Guide for the Experience

## Before you read:

Look at the cover and read the title and name of the author. Can you tell what this story will be about?  
Look at all the pages and ask your child to tell what s/he thinks is happening on each page.

## As you read:

What color paint are the mice playing in?  
What is happening to their feet?  
What happens when they get in another color?  
What colors are they making by mixing red and blue? yellow and red? blue and yellow? See how many combinations your child can remember.  
When they wash off in the cat's water dish, what do you think is happening to the water?  
Do you think the cat will be happy when she wants to get a drink?  
Why are they leaving some of the paper white at the end of the story?

## After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:

What is your favorite color?  
Why do you like it?

## Other books by Ellen Stoll Walsh:

Walsh, E. S. (1991). Mouse Count. San Diego: Harcourt.  
Walsh, E. S. (1994). Pip's Magic. San Diego: Harcourt.

## Other books about color:

Ehlert, L. (1988). Planting a Rainbow. San Diego: Harcourt.  
Ehlert, L. (1990). Color Farm. New York: Lippincott.  
Jonas, A. (1989). Color Dance. New York: Greenwillow.  
Lionni, L. (1975). A Color of His Own. New York: Pantheon.

Martin, B. (1983). Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?  
E. Carle, (Il.), New York: Holt.

## Side 2: Mouse Paint

### Literature Response Activities

#### Art

Dot Painting - Have your child use the bottles of paint to make dot pictures. Encourage him/her to use different colors and in some places overlap the colors to see what happens. Spread newspaper on the table first so that you will not have a mess to clean up.

#### Nature Walk

Use the colored squares to take on a walk. As you are walking, try to see things in nature that match the color squares. Do not pick anything or remove parts of nature, just enjoy it from a distance. By drawing your child's attention to common and unusual things, his/her observation skills will be increased. Also by talking with him/her about the things you notice, you will be increasing vocabulary, language skills, and understanding of concepts. Have your child draw a picture of some of the things you see.

#### Science

Colored Solutions - Mix a container each of red, blue, and yellow food coloring mixed with water. Show your child how to use an eye dropper to mix a small amount of two different colors into the empty container to see what happens. How many different colors can he/she make? To extend this experiment, use the colored plastic windows. Have your child overlap two colors and look toward a light source to see a new color.

#### Color Collage

Supply your child with old magazines, glue and paper. Decide upon one color and cut out magazine pictures of this color. Glue to the paper in an interesting design and write the color word on the collage.

#### Make a Book

Use a book with the storyframe to help your child illustrate a book about Little Red and Little Blue or Little Red and Little Yellow. Use the construction paper to tear circles like Leo Lionni did. Help the child write in the color words.

### Side 1: My Visit to the Aquarium

Aliki. (1993). New York: HarperCollins.

#### Summary:

This story tells of a little boy's visit to an aquarium. Although the aquarium in the book is invented, it is based on several actual aquariums. The book is filled with all kinds of animals shown in their natural settings. You will get to visit tide pools, coastal streams, coral reefs, deep seas, rain forests and splashing rivers and learn many facts about the animals that live there.

#### Guide for the Experience

##### Before you read:

Look at the cover of the book and read the title and the name of the author. What do you think this book will be about?

What is an aquarium?

Do you see any animals you recognize?

If you have ever been to an aquarium, help your child recall some of the things you saw there.

What animals do you think we might see in this book?

##### As you read:

Ask about or explain difficult words, such as natural settings, camouflage, marine, crustaceans, habitat, environment.

After reading about each place, ask what it was like (example, a tropical coral reef is like a sunny underwater garden).

Read the names of the fish labeled in the illustrations.

Would you like to be a diver and feed the fish in the aquarium?

Why do you think the little boy did not touch the crab?

##### After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:

What was your favorite part of the aquarium? Why?

If you have visited an aquarium, compare this aquarium to the one you visited.

Look back through the book. Have your child identify the animals s/he knows. Tell the child the names of any he/she does not know and are interested in.

Why do we have aquariums?

Read the page about why animals are endangered. What could you do to help?

Other books by Aki:

Aki. (1962). My Five Senses. New York: Crowell.

Aki. (1981). Digging up Dinosaurs. New York: Crowell.

Aki. (1992). Milk: From Cow to Carton. New York: HarperCollins.

## Side 2: My Visit to the Aquarium

### Literature Response Activities

#### Art

Stuffed Fish - Unroll the white paper from the packet. Keep it folded in half. Have your child draw a large sea creature on the paper (taking up as much of the paper as they can). Color the creature, cut it out through both thicknesses. Staple around all but one side. Color the back side of the creature, stuff it with torn pieces of newspaper, and staple it closed.

#### Create a Book

Use the Fishy Facts cover and create a book with some of the facts you learned from this book. For each page, help your child complete the sentence "Did you know . . ." with a fact from the book. Then have your child draw a picture to illustrate the fact. Cut each page out to make a fish-shaped book.

#### Real Life Experience

Visit a large grocery store and look at fish, lobster and other sea animals or visit a pet store and look closely at all the different kinds and colors of fish.

#### Math

Use the underwater scene in the packet and the bag of goldfish crackers. Tell number stories, such as "There were 3 fish in the ocean and 4 more came. How many are there all together?" Your child will especially like subtraction stories when they get to be a big whale and eat some of the fish.

#### Fine Motor/Sequence

Use the fishing pole with the magnet attached. Lay the different sized fish on the floor each with an attached paper clip. Have your child try to catch them from smallest to largest.

#### Aquarium Lotto

Use the underwater scenes and the matching cards. Take turns drawing a card from the pile and covering the matching fish on your card. If you draw one that is already covered, put it in the discard pile. The person who covers all their fish first is the winner.

Side 1: **Noisy Nora**

Wells, R. (1973). New York: Dial.

**Summary:**

This funny story is told in rhymes about a mouse child who feels ignored by her mother and father. No matter what she does, baby brother Jack and big sister Kate get all the attention while she has to wait. Only when her noise stops does the family notice and start looking at her. Then, Nora gets the attention she wants.

**Guide for the Experience****Before you read:**

Look at the cover of the book and read the title and the name of the author. What kind of mouse do you think Nora is? What do you think will happen to her?

**As you read:**

Stop occasionally to have your child predict what will happen next: What is Nora's problem? Why is she being so naughty? How do you think she will solve her problem?

**After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:**

How did Nora feel about having to wait?

Talk with your child about times he/she had to wait. How did the child feel? What did the child do?

Look at each picture - What is Nora doing to attract attention? (Many of Nora's antics are told only in the pictures.)

Why did Nora leave? Why did she come back?

Did Nora get attention by being naughty?

What could she have done that might have gotten her the attention she wanted?

Do you think Nora's mother and father love her? If so, why didn't they pay attention to her?

**Other books by Rosemary Wells:**

Wells, R. (1979). Max's First Word. New York: Dial.

Wells, R. (1979). Max's Toys: A Counting Book. New York: Dial.

Wells, R. (1981). Timothy Goes to School. New York: Dial.

Other books about jealousy:

Henkes, K. (1990). Julius, Baby of the World. New York: Greenwillow.

Hoban, R. (1964). A Baby Sister for Frances. L. Hoban, (Il.), New York: Harper & Row.

## Side 2: Noisy Nora

### Literature Response Activities

#### Art/Writing/Language

Have your child use the crayons and paper from the packet to draw a scene similar to, but different from, the ones in the story. Have them show one parent doing something with Jack, the other parent doing something with Kate, and Nora alone and misbehaving. When they are done, help them copy the caption "So Nora had to wait." onto their paper. Have them tell you what everyone in the picture is doing, so they can bring it to school and share it when they return the book packet.

#### Retelling

Have your child color (they may want to look at the colors used in the book), cut, and assemble the paper doll characters from the story. To assemble, cut along the dotted lines and fold along the solid lines to form A-frame dolls. Glue or tape the bottom strips together so they will stand. Help your child recall the names of the characters. Have them use the characters to retell some of the things that happened in the story. What happened first? next? then? last?

#### Create a New Version

Use the storyframe paper and help your child think of words that will fit in the blanks and then draw a picture to illustrate their story. Bring it to school to share. For example:

Jack was very cranky.  
 Mother sewed with Kate.  
 Jack needed rocking  
 So Nora had to wait.

#### Craft

Make a noise maker - Color the underside of both paper plates. Staple almost all the way around the edges, leaving a space for filling. Put in a few dried beans, macaroni, rice, or anything else that will make a sound. Staple the plates closed and shake to make a noise.

### Side 1: The Patchwork Quilt

Flournoy, V. (1985). J. Pinkney, (Ill.), New York: Dial.

#### Summary:

A grandmother, mother, and daughter lovingly quilt a masterpiece made of family memories. This book shows a special relationship between a girl and her grandmother, as the grandmother makes a patchwork quilt from fabric scraps taken from the family's clothes. When her grandmother gets sick, the little girl and her family finish the quilt. This book won the Coretta Scott King Award in 1986.

#### Guide for the Experience

##### Before you read:

Look at the cover of the book and read the title and names of the author and illustrator. Can you predict what this book will be about?

What is a quilt?

If you have a quilt at home, look at it before you read the story. Does your family have a special story about it?

##### As you read:

Why did Grandma want to make the quilt rather than buy it?

What did Grandma mean by, "A quilt won't forget. It can tell your life story."?

What do you think Tanya meant when she said, "Grandma and the quilt are telling each other stories."?

Why do you think Mama decided to work on the quilt?

How do you think Tanya felt when her grandma got sick?

What did Tanya mean by "Someone was missing from the quilt."?

How do you think Tanya felt when she saw Grandma sitting up and working on the quilt again?

##### After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:

What are some special memories you have of your family?

Help your child recall what Grandma put in the quilt that was special to each member of the family (Tanya's Halloween costume, Mama's Christmas dress, Jim's pants, etc.). Look back in the book if you need to.

Do you think it was a good idea that Mama and Grandma gave the quilt to Tanya? Why or why not?

Another book by Valerie Flourney:

Flourney, V. (1995). Tanya's Reunion. J. Pinkney, (Ill.), New York: Dial.

Other books about quilts:

Johnston, T. (1985). The Quilt Story. New York: Putnam.

Jonas, A. (1984). The Quilt. New York: Greenwillow.

Polacco, P. (1988). The Keeping Quilt. New York: Simon & Schuster.

## Side 2: The Patchwork Quilt

### Literature Response Activities

#### Art

Make a quilt - Use the pattern provided and make your own quilt with one of the following suggestions:

1. Color it with lots of bright colors.
2. Draw a picture about yourself in each space (self portrait, favorite things).
3. Use the colored squares and glue them to the outline. They can also be cut in half to make triangles for a more complicated design.

#### Language/Math

Quilt Poem - Use the five paper quilts in the packet to act out the poem that follows. For each name put in a different name your child is familiar with (his/her own, brothers, sisters, friends, parents). Repeat it until your child can say it with you.

*Five colorful quilts with patches galore;  
 One covered (name), and then there were four.  
 Four colorful quilts as pretty as can be;  
 One covered (name), and then there were three.  
 Three colorful quilts with patches red and blue;  
 One covered (name), and then there were two.  
 Two colorful quilts made just for fun;  
 One covered (name), and then there was one.  
 One colorful quilt left out in the sun;  
 It covered (name), and then there were none.*

#### Family History

Kinship Tree - Work with your child to fill in the Kinship Tree provided in the packet. Glue the two pieces together when you have it completed.

#### Writing

Tanya's family had many special memories of different holidays. Have your child draw a picture of something special they remember about a holiday. Have them write with "ear spelling" or dictate their story to you.

We learned many things about Tanya's family. Work with your child to answer the questions about your family on the "Families" sheet included in the packet.

Side 1: **Strega Nona**

de Paola, T. (1975). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

**Summary:**

Strega Nona is a folk tale about an old woman with magical powers who leaves her house and places Big Anthony in charge. She warns him not to touch the pasta pot, but he does not listen. As a result, a disaster takes place when he starts the pasta pot but cannot stop it. His punishment definitely fits his misdeed. This story can lead to a good discussion of the dangers of not listening and following directions.

**Guide for the Experience****Before you read:**

Look at the cover of the book and read the title and the name of the author. What do you think this book will be about?

Point out the medal on the cover. The Caldecott Medal is given for outstanding illustrations.

Can you think of a time when you did not follow directions? What happened?

**As you read:**

Stop at different times during the book and have your child predict what will happen next.

How did Strega Nona help the townspeople?

Why do you think Strega Nona warned Big Anthony not to touch her pot?

Why did the townspeople not believe Big Anthony when he told them about the pot?

What did Strega Nona mean when she said, "The punishment must fit the crime."?

**After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:**

Do you think Big Anthony needed to be punished? Why or why not?

If you could do magic, what would you like to do?

If you had a magic pot, what would you want it to cook?

Do you think Strega Nona will trust Big Anthony again? Why or why not?

Do you think Big Anthony learned to pay better attention?

Other books by Tomie de Paola:

- de Paola, T. (1978). Pancakes for Breakfast. New York: Harcourt.  
de Paola, T. (1978). The Popcorn Book. New York: Holiday House.  
de Paola, T. (1989). The Art Lesson. New York: Putnam.

## Side 2: Strega Nona

## Literature Response Activities

Cooking

Make spaghetti for supper some night, or use the spaghetti salad recipe that is included in the packet. Let your child help. Sing or say the magic pasta pot song to your pot as you cook. Point out how much more spaghetti there is after it cooks. How else does spaghetti change?

Art

Make a spaghetti house - Arrange cooked and rinsed spaghetti on the house cut-out that is included in the packet and let it dry.

or

Glue different shaped undyed pasta from the packet to decorate the house shape.

Sorting/Classifying

Open the junk box of pasta. Take out a big handful. After exploring the collection, have your child sort the pasta into groups that are alike in some way. Do not tell your child how to group them. Just observe how the child does it. Ask him/her to tell you why he/she did it that way.

Motor Skills

Pasta necklaces - Use the length of yarn in the packet. Help your child string on a variety of the colored pasta to make a necklace. Encourage the child to put them on in a pattern (Ex: yellow, red, green, yellow, red, green; straight, straight, round, straight, straight, round).

Listening

To show the importance of following directions, play "Simon Says." If you give a direction without saying "Simon Says," your child should not follow it.

Language/Writing

Help your child think of a new kind of food they would like the magic pot to cook. Review the magic chant from the book. Use the paper provided to write a new magic chant, similar to the one in the book, to make the pot start cooking the food you chose. Have your child bring their chant to school to share when they return the book packet.

### Side 1: Ten Black Dots

Crews, D. (1986). New York: Greenwillow.

#### Summary:

Donald Crews' colorful counting book shows what can be done with ten black dots--one can make a sun, two a fox's eyes, or eight the wheels of a train. The rhythm and rhyming of the text will be inviting your child to join in the reading.

#### Guide for the Experience

##### Before you read:

Read the title and the name of the author. Look at the picture on the cover of the book. What do you think this book will be about?

Count the black dots on the cover and point out the number.

##### As you read:

As you go through the book, ask, "What else could you make with one black dot? two black dots? three black dots?" and so on.

What is a porthole?

What other animals have spots?

What other things have wheels?

What is freight?

Can you count how many dots are on the last two pages (or maybe just the 1-5 page)?

##### After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:

What is a rhyme? You may have to explain or use an example with your child (bat - cat). Find the words that rhyme in the book.

What other words rhyme with sun, fox, face, grow, coat, hold, snake, train, rank?

Re-read the book, hesitating before the last word in the sentence. Let your child fill in the word using the pictures as clues.

#### Other books by Donald Crews:

Crews, D. (1979). Freight Train. New York: Greenwillow.

Crews, D. (1984). School Bus. New York: Greenwillow.

Crews, D. (1995). Sail Away. New York: Greenwillow.

Other counting books:

- Bang, M. (1983). Ten, Nine, Eight. New York: Greenwillow.  
Hague, K. (1986). Numbears. M. Hague, (Il.), New York: Holt.

## Side 2: Ten Black Dots

## Literature Response Activities

Create a New Book

Design your own Ten Black Dot activity book. Use the black dots in the baggie. Think of what you can do with the black dots. Write under each picture as your child describes it. Have your child share his/her book with the class when s/he returns the book activity packet.

Art

Black Dot Pictures - Use the dot stamp and the stamp pad to make black dot pictures. Your child can experiment with this medium or can create his/her own design with other materials. Your child can bring this design when he/she returns the book and activity packet to show the class.

Math

Dot counting. Use the egg carton. Have your child look at the number in each cup and put the corresponding number of circle counters in each cup.

Rhyme/Fingerplay

Say these rhymes with your child.

One, Two Buckle My Shoe

1, 2, buckle my shoe.  
3, 4, shut the door.  
5, 6, pick up sticks.  
7, 8, lay them straight.  
9, 10, a big fat hen.

One, Two, Three, Four, Five

One, two, three, four, five.  
Once I caught a fish alive.  
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten.  
Then I let him go again.

This Old Man

This old man, he played one,  
He played nick nack on my thumb  
With a nick-nack paddy-whack, give a dog a bone,  
This old man went rolling home.

Repeat the rhyme using these verses:

two - shoe  
three - knee  
four - door  
five - hive  
six - sticks  
seven - heaven  
eight - gate

nine - spine  
ten - hen

### Side 1: Tops and Bottoms

Stevens, J. (1995). San Diego: Harcourt.

#### Summary:

This folk tale is about how a clever Hare outsmarted a lazy Bear. It is an excellent story to lead into a discussion of what parts of plants we eat and also what happens if we are lazy and expect others to do our work for us. It received a Caldecott Honor Medal for its beautiful illustrations.

#### Guide for the Experience

##### Before you read:

Look at the cover of the book and read the title and the author's name. What do you think this book will be about? Point out the Caldecott Medal and explain it. Why do you think all the vegetables are in the picture? Where do vegetables come from? Where does the store get them?

##### As you read:

What does it mean to be a partner?  
 Why didn't Bear like getting tops of the carrots, radishes and beets?  
 Why didn't he like the bottoms of the lettuce, broccoli and celery?  
 What do you think Hare will plant when Bear gets both the tops and bottoms?  
 Did Bear like getting the tops and bottoms of the corn? Why do you think so?  
 How did Bear solve his problem?

After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:  
 Was the title "Tops and Bottoms" a good one for this book? Why or why not?  
 Was it fair that Hare and his family always got the good parts to eat? Why or why not?  
 Do you think Bear learned his lesson?  
 Look at the pictures of Bear's house. Why is it falling apart?

##### Another book by Janet Stevens:

Stevens, J. (1987). The Princess and the Pea. New York: Scholastic.

Other books about plants:

Ehlert, L. (1987). Growing Vegetable Soup. San Diego: Harcourt.

Ehlert, L. (1989). Eating the Alphabet. San Diego: Harcourt.

## Side 2: Tops and Bottoms

### Literature Response Activities

#### Art

Cut non-juicy vegetables in half. Put paint into shallow containers. Dip the cut side of the vegetables into paint and stamp onto paper. You can use a variety of paint colors and vegetables to make interesting designs. You can also carve shapes into the cut side of the potato and stamp these shapes. Fabric paint can be used and stamped onto a T-shirt.

#### Real Life Experiences

Have your child help you plant a flower or vegetable garden. If planting vegetables, talk about which part of the plant you will eat (top, middle, or bottom). If space is limited, you can plant some seeds inside and watch them grow.

or

Go to the grocery store and look at the vegetable section. Which vegetables are the tops, middles, and bottoms of the plant?

#### Cooking

Make your favorite vegetable soup or vegetable salad recipe. Name the vegetables that you use. Talk about what part of the plant each vegetable is. Taste the raw vegetables. How do they change after they cook?

#### Story Review

Use the Leapin' Ladder sheet to review the story sequence. Have your child draw what Hare got first in the bottom space; what Hare got next in the Next space; what he got last in the Then space; and in the Last space, draw what Bear decided to do from now on.

#### Sorting

Food sort - Use the food picture cards and have your child sort them according to what parts we eat (tops, bottoms, middles or roots, stems, leaves, flowers).

#### Language/Memory

Grandma's Garden - Play this memory game with your child. You start with "I went to Grandma's garden and brought back (name a food)." Have your child say "I went to Grandma's garden and brought back (your food) and (a new food)." Continue adding garden items until the list is too long to remember. (You can help each other remember. Prompting is alright.)

### Side 1: Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge

Fox, M. (1984). J. Vivas, (Il.), New York: Kane/Miller.

#### Summary:

Wilfrid is a small boy who has many friends at the home for the elderly next door. His favorite friend is Miss Nancy who has lost her memory. Wilfrid goes about trying to find out what a memory is so he can help Miss Nancy get hers back.

#### Guide for the Experience

##### Before you read:

Look at the cover of the book and read the title and names of the author and illustrator. Can you tell what this book will be about?

Who do you think Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge is?

What is a memory?

##### As you read:

Do you know anyone who has four names?

What kind of secrets do you think Wilfrid told Miss Nancy?

Who do you tell your secrets to?

Do you know anyone who is 96 years old like Miss Nancy?

As you meet Wilfrid's friends a second time in the book, see if your child can remember what Wilfrid said about them

(Ex: Mrs. Jordan who played the organ.)

##### After you read the book, select some of these items to discuss:

Why did Wilfrid like Miss Nancy?

How did he help her find her memory?

Think of a memory that is as precious as gold to you. Think of one that makes you laugh. Are there any that make you want to cry?

What did Wilfrid find that was warm (egg), from long ago (shells), makes you cry (medal), makes you laugh (puppet), was as precious as gold (football)?

##### Other books by Mem Fox:

Fox, M. (1987). Hattie and the Fox. P. Mullins, (Il.), New York: Bradbury.

Fox, M. (1987). Possum Magic. J. Vivas, (Il.), Nashville: Abingdon.

Fox, M. (1988). Koala Lou. P. Lofts, (Il.), San Diego: Harcourt.

Other books about the elderly:

Ackerman, K. (1988). Song and Dance Man. S. Gammell, (Il.), New York: Knopf.

MacLachlan, P. (1980). Through Grandpa's Eyes. D. Ray, (Il.), New York: Harper.

**Side 2: Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge**

## Literature Response Activities

Art

From the materials in the packet, make a basket and decorate it with pictures or designs. Cut on the solid lines and fold on the dotted lines. Glue or staple the ends together. Attach a strip of paper to make the handle. Do you know an older person you could give the basket to? What could you put in it?

Writing

Have your child draw a picture of a special memory--one that is as precious as gold. Have the child dictate to you about a memory and why it is special.

or

Make a memory book - Using the book included in the packet, help your child fill in the sentence at the bottom of each page. Then have him/her draw a picture to illustrate their idea.

Collect Some Memories

Help your child collect things that represent memories (a medal, a souvenir from a vacation, a picture from a party, a special gift, etc.). Put them in a box and have your child bring it to school ready to tell us about the memories.

Real Life Experience

Take your child to visit someone you know who lives in an old person's home or who lives at home but can't get out very often. Prepare them for the visit by helping them understand about elderly people. It would be nice if your child could draw a picture or make a decorated basket to offer as a gift to the elderly person. If you take the basket, do you have a flower or fruit you could put in it?

Names

Talk with your child about the source of his/her name. For example, is he/she named after someone else or is the name one you liked? Who thought of this name?