



VIRTUAL CHILDCARE PARENT SUPPORT SERVICES

VOLUME #72
THE ART OF STORYTELLING

HELLO PARENTS,

Storytelling is an ancient art of using narrative, gestures and tone of voice to engage an audience in a story. Every culture, family or other groups of people have their own stories to share. Stories are powerful: they can teach values or history, entertain, make us laugh or cry, and connect us to other people. Storytelling plays an important role in a child's development; it introduces a child to the patterns of words and rhythms of the language, fosters imagination, enriches vocabulary, enhances expressive language, improves social interactions, and helps children understand the world they live in. In this newsletter, we provide activities that will engage you and your child in creative storytelling.

ACTIVITIES

INFANTS (3 – 18 MONTHS)

LOOK IN THE MIRROR

MATERIALS:

- Mirror
- Stuffed animals

DIRECTIONS:

- Sit with your infant in front of the mirror.
- When your child starts noticing your reflections, narrate what is happening.
- Offer your child some stuffed animals and continue the narration as you and your child are interacting.

[Click here](#) for more stories.

TODDLERS (19 MONTHS – 2.5 YEARS)

THE STORY OF ME

MATERIALS:

- Photographs of your child

DIRECTIONS:

- Look at photographs together with your child, point to details and encourage your child to talk about them.
- Help your child by asking questions: "Do you know who this baby is?", "Do you remember when we took that picture?", "Why did we go there? What else did you do there?"
- Repeat this activity often to help your child learn about and tell stories themselves.

[Click here](#) to watch a wordless animation "Goodnight Gorilla" by Peggy Rathmann.

PRESCHOOLERS (2.5 – 5 YEARS)

A STORY FROM A BAG

MATERIALS:

- Paper bag
- 5-6 random objects from around the house and outside

DIRECTIONS:

- Sit with your child and explore the objects in the bag.
- Choose one object and start the story. For example, pick a toy cat and say: "Once upon a time there was a small, white cat".
- Ask your child to choose another object from the bag and use it to add to the story. For example, when they pull out a car, they can say: "The cat found a car."
- Continue telling the story with the objects from the bag.
- You can use the same objects to encourage your child to tell different stories.
- Change the objects in the bag to inspire your child to tell new stories.

[Click here](#) for more storytelling ideas.

JK/SK (4 – 6 YEARS)

A STORY IN THE PAINTING

MATERIALS:

- [Click here](#) to view the painting "Children and Their Pet" by Wai Ming.

DIRECTIONS:

- Encourage your child to tell a story while looking at the painting.
- Use the questions below to help your child tell their story:
 - What do you see?
 - Pretend you are inside this painting. What does it feel like?
 - Describe people in this painting.
 - What do you think happened before this scene?
 - What are the children talking about?
 - What do you think happened next?

[Click here](#) for more ideas.

SCHOOL-AGERS (6 – 12 YEARS)

DRAW A STORY

MATERIALS:

- Paper
- Markers or pencils

DIRECTIONS:

- Have players sit around a table with paper and markers or pencils ready.
- Each player draws a picture of anything they want.
- Players pass the pictures to the person on their right.
- Now everyone adds something to the picture they just got and pass the pictures to the right again.
- Continue passing and adding details to pictures until everyone's original picture comes back to them.
- Each player gets a turn to tell a story based on the drawings in front of them.

[Click here](#) to listen to storyteller, Diane Ferlatte, telling Aesop's fable, "The Ant and The Dove".



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

A TIP FOR TODAY

- Have frequent conversations with your child talking about past and future events.
- Tell stories from your own childhood, family stories, anecdotes, and stories from your culture.
- Use wordless picture books to tell stories with your child.
- Vary your voice, use dramatic facial expressions and body language.
- Use props such as toys, everyday objects or photographs to enhance the narration.
- Involve your child in telling the stories.
- Substitute one of the characters with your child's name – children like being in the stories.
- Ask your child questions to keep the story interactive. For example: "Why do you think they did it?", "What do you think happens next?", "What would you do if you were there?"
- Do research about places you visit on vacation and find out if there are any interesting stories that you can tell your child.