



Sharing stories and poems with your child in Nursery



Research shows that children benefit from daily sharing of high-quality stories and poems from a young age: they learn language faster, enter school with a larger vocabulary and become more successful readers (Mol et al., 2008).

From the start of Nursery, children should have lots of opportunities to engage with books that fire their imagination and interest, as well as immerse them in language they would not otherwise be exposed to. They should also be provided with a range of high quality books to choose and read (in their own words), as well as to share with an adult.

Children will benefit from reading both as part of a group and one-to-one with an adult.

Further information about sharing stories and poems with children can be found in the [Everybody read!](#) section of the Little Wandle website.

Effective ways of sharing books and poems

- Use a balance of reading styles. Research suggests that the most effective styles are:
 - dialogic – where the children are active participants in the reading (rather than just reading being read to) and where they are talking about and around the book (rather than just focusing on the text)
 - pause reading – where the practitioner pauses and encourages the children to talk (Colmar, 2014)
 - use of props or objects – particularly effective for children with low levels of language (Wasik and Bond, 2001)
 - use of elaborative reminiscing – where the practitioner and children relate events in the story to events in the children's life (Reece et al., 2010).

It is important that, over time, children have a balance of these styles of sharing a story, even though children with language impairments seem to benefit less from the dialogic style and more from the simpler styles of pause reading and use of props or objects (cf. Mol et al., 2008).

- Use high-quality books that provide children with a range of new vocabulary and develop a love of books and reading.
- Build anticipation – provide children with snippets of information about the book before you read.
- Share your passion and enthusiasm when reading – discuss your favourite books so that children can develop their own passions and enthusiasms.
- Read the book yourself, before reading it to the children, to ensure you can develop interest and draw out new and interesting vocabulary.
- Encourage the children to join in with repeated refrains (such as 'Run, run, as fast as you can, you can't catch me, I'm the gingerbread man').
- Use different voices for different characters, to spark interest and imagination.
- Trigger the children's curiosity and invite their participation by 'wondering aloud' (for example, say: I wonder why that happened? I think that means...)
- Read stories over and over again. Hearing words repeated is crucial to children learning new language.
- Select books that reflect the children you are sharing stories with.



Sharing stories and poems with your child in Nursery



Learning nursery rhymes and action rhymes

Singing a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes must be part of the daily routine. Children need to experience a rich repertoire of nursery rhymes and action rhymes that include multi-sensory experiences, such as action rhymes in which children have to add claps, knee pats or foot stamps, or move in a particular way. They need to build a stock of rhymes through hearing them in different contexts.

To share nursery rhymes and action rhymes in an effective way:

- Use a wide range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes.
- Repeat these often, so that children learn the words and actions for themselves.
- Use actions and clapping.
- Use different voices and sound effects.