

Book ideas for parents

“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more you learn, the more places you’ll go.”

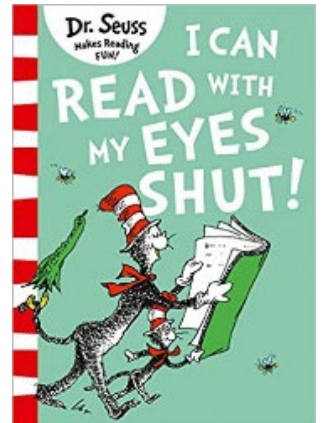
Dr. Seuss, ‘I Can Read With My Eyes Shut!’

Sharing books with your child creates special opportunities for quality interactions which expose them to language and nourish their language development.

When sharing a new book for the first time it is important to read aloud just for enjoyment. This allows children to build knowledge of story structure. Stopping too frequently with questions interferes with this process. Reading aloud also enables children to hear what text sounds like so that they can internalise the voice when they read to themselves.

Occasionally, you may want to stop at a key point to predict what might happen next, encouraging the children to use clues from what you have already read, but do this sparingly. Reading a book or passage for a second time allows you to check understanding at both literal and inferential levels and to discuss themes and ideas.

Children often ask for the same books to be read time and time again. Research has indicated that being repeatedly exposed to the same books increases children’s ability to learn and retain new vocabulary. So if you don’t have access to a wide range of books, just return to those old favourites. Below are suggested ideas for some of our favourite books. Don’t worry if you don’t have access to the book at home, many of these are now available to listen to online.



Where’s Spot?

Focus - Early Vocabulary

Simple lift the flap book, with a surprise on each page.

Even children with few words can participate by lifting the flaps while adult names the animal underneath.

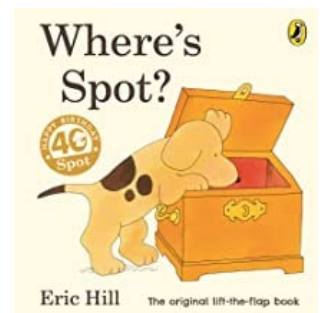
The variety of word types in the book worth introducing to your child:

Object names – door, clock, bed, etc.

Action words – open, hiding, eating

Location words – inside, behind, under

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jD7hvWtb4ns>



Dear Zoo

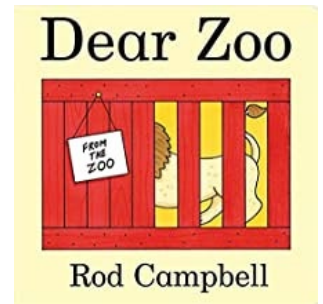
Focus - Building Early Vocabulary

Lovely repetitive text, with each page including *"I wrote to the zoo to send me a pet, they sent me a"* Followed by a flap to lift and see which animal was sent.

Provides nice opportunities for child to join in if they can.

Variety of animals and describing words, e.g. tall giraffe, scary snake etc. extending simple one-word vocabulary.

<https://www.worldbookday.com/videos/dear-zoo/>

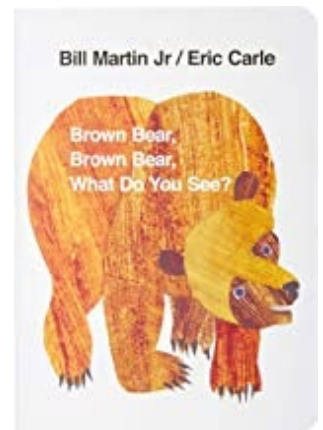


Brown Bear Brown Bear What Do You See?

Focus - Simple sentence building

A timeless classic providing great opportunities for building two-word phrases, i.e. colour + animal.

Lots of repetition of carrier phrases *"What do you see?"*, *"I see Looking at me!"* phrases that are easy for children to join in with.



The Very Hungry Caterpillar

Focus - Concepts

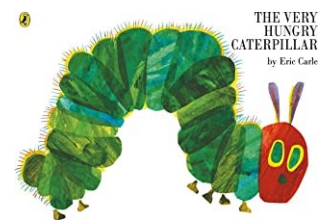
Classic book that has a simple repetitive text which makes it an effective book for teaching concepts:

Descriptive – big, little, colour words

Quantity – one, two, three, four, etc.

Time – days of the week, morning, day, night

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXHScpo_Vv8



We're Going on a Bear Hunt!

Focus - Prepositions

Again, predictable text with repetitive phrases that allow child to “read” along. Good for emphasising positional words – in, under, over, through, etc. Use gesture to emphasise these words while reading.

Could make this into a movement game- tell the child to crawl under the chair, over the cushions, through your legs etc.



Giraffes Can't Dance

Focus - Vocabulary Enrichment

This delightful rhyming tale exposes the reader to a rich variety of higher-level vocabulary, e.g. swaying, entranced, rooted, buckled, shuffling, sneered, clumsy, and elegant.

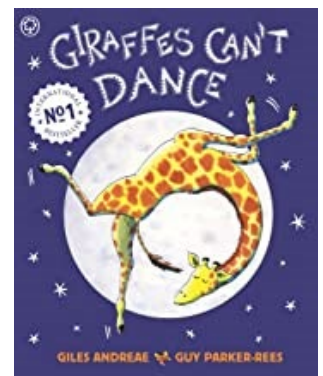
When sharing the story with your child use your voice to, emphasise the new vocabulary. Each time you revisit the story you can choose a different word to explore.

Use the illustrations to show the vocabulary in action. Describe what you see, relating it to simpler words that your child already knows, and make connections to your child's own experiences.

“Look, how clumsy he is, he is always moving in awkward ways, falling, or bumping into things. Remember when I was clumsy and bumped into my bed and hurt my toe.”

Reinforce the vocabulary by using it in context,

“I dropped the ball that was clumsy.” Stress the word as you say it. Use the new vocabulary as often as you can and eventually your child will start to use it too!



Wacky Wednesday

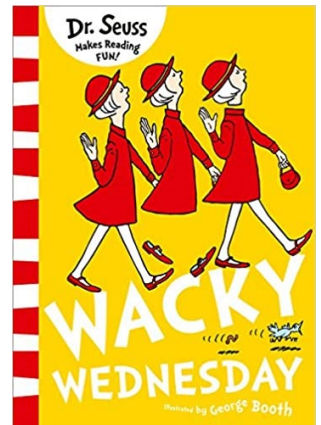
Focus - What's wrong? (semantic absurdities)

A young boy wakes up on a Wednesday and everything has gone wacky.

Each page allows opportunities for you and your child to comment on and have a conversation about what is wrong in the picture and why. Don't jump in, allow your child time to enjoy the illustrations. This will give you time to see what has caught their attention. You can then respond with interest to what they have said or pointed to, you can continue the conversation by making a comment or asking a question about it. For example, your child might say, *"He is showering with socks on."*

You could reply, *"That's really wacky you can't shower with socks on because they would get wet."*

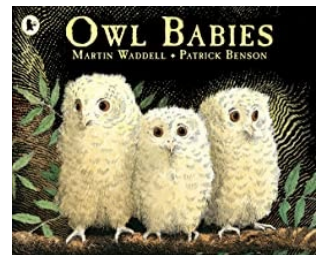
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b653k3-wIM>



Owl Babies

Focus - Feelings and emotions

This is a great book to encourage children to identify with the feeling of others. Develop your child's understanding of the emotions of the characters feelings by commenting on what you see and by asking questions that build their understanding. Alternate questions with comments:



- *"How do you think they are feeling? (Happy? sad? scared?)."*
- *"Yes, I think they are miserable that means really, sad can you think of another word for sad?"*
- *"How can you tell they are sad?"*
- *How do they feel when they wake up and their mommy is gone?*
- *"Did you ever have a time when you felt like that?"*
- *"How do the owl babies feel when their mummy comes home?"* (happy, safe)
- *"What makes you feel this way?" "Why do you think their mother went away?"*
- *"If their mother goes away again, do you think the owl babies will be as unhappy and afraid? Why not?"*

Emotions Vocabulary

Sad, lonely, unhappy, miserable, gloomy, sorrowful, abandoned, happy, glad, overjoyed, delighted, thrilled, ecstatic, etc.

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/have-some-fun/storybooks-and-games/owl-babies/>

The Gruffalo

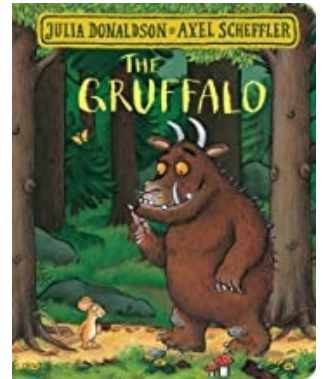
Focus - Sound awareness

This book offers lots of opportunities to build your child's sound awareness. At first simply read it aloud to your child and expose their ear to the rhythm and rhyme of the language. The repetition in the story creates opportunities for them to join in and predict the rhyming refrains. Pause at the end of each line and let your child try to fill in the missing word.

The Gruffalo is full of alliteration (a sequence of words beginning with the same sound).

Purple prickles, terrible tusks, knobbly knees. Emphasize the sounds of the words as you say them. Encourage your child to listen to the sounds and see if they can find one that sounds the same. Have fun and make up funny personalised phrases "Brainy Ben" or "Silly sally's socks", challenge your child to join in.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LshGQmaJc9I>



Peace at Last

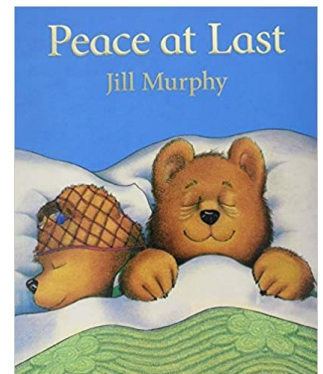
Focus - Problem solving

This story provides a simple opportunity to model and develop problem solving skills. Talk about the characters problem, e.g. "Mr Bear was tired, but no matter how hard he tried, he could not get to sleep." Comment on how the characters attempts to solve the problem, e.g. "He wants to solve his problem and get some sleep, so he is going to try find a new place to sleep."

Think aloud, this will help your child to know what you are thinking about the story and help share with them ways to express their own thoughts and ideas, e.g. "I don't think the garden will be a good place to sleep." Pause after sharing your thoughts and allow your child join in with their thoughts. Share how you would solve the problem and get them to think of their own solution, e.g. "I think I would get a set of ear plugs, what do you think?"

At the end of the story connect the problem and the solution, making sure they have understood the meaning that is not stated explicitly by the words. "Mr Bear can sleep now because it is quiet and Mrs Bear has stopped snoring."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9U9y35kWBvM>



Room on the Broom

Focus - Sound awareness

Room on the Broom is a great resource for developing children's sound awareness.

Written as one long rhyme it presents lots of opportunities to demonstrate rhyming words.

Explain what you mean by rhyme, "*Listen, 'room' and 'broom' rhyme because they sound the same at the end.*" Read the story using your voice to stress the rhyming words.

When you have read the book a few times pause before the second rhyming word to see if your child can fill in the missing word.

Highlight the rhyming words from each page of the story, suggesting other rhyming words of your own and reminding your child that they rhyme because you can hear they sound the same at the end.

Rhyme production can be hard so model lots of your own rhyming words before asking your child to join in with their suggestions. When you think they are ready let them have a go if they are still finding it difficult ease them in by offering them a choice, "*I am thinking of zoom and whoosh, which one do you think rhymes with broom?*"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUn4dFUONRc>

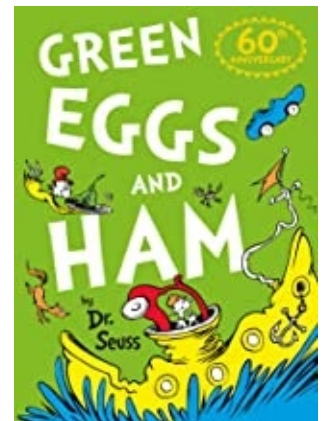


Green Eggs and Ham

Focus - Pronouns

This repetitive tale creates great opportunities for your child to hear and imitate the pronouns (I, you) and the objective pronouns (me, them) as they join Sam in his journey to discover who likes green eggs and ham. Follow up by using Sam's phrase to discuss likes and dislikes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdotPwVJYzs>



Fancy Nancy

Focus - Higher level vocabulary

This is an ideal book for extending your child's vocabulary. Nancy likes to be fancy and use fancy words. As we follow Nancy on her adventures, she teaches us some sophisticated vocabulary, as she matches the sophisticated vocabulary with a simpler word with a similar meaning, e.g. "...*stupendous*. *That's a fancy word for great!*" Have fun with your child by trying to be like Nancy and use Nancy's fancy words in everyday situations.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wIRskMWtT4>

