

# Bringing Literature to Life Through Storytelling and Performance

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Storytelling activities should be an integral part of any literacy program. Literacy is listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and storytelling supports all these emergent learning domains. This is especially valuable to English language learners as well as all children because these activities offer multiple opportunities to receive information and then express themselves in enjoyable and creative ways- to build receptive and expressive language. Confidence building, practice with language, and expressing themselves in front of a group are additional benefits.

The goals of storytelling activities are for children to experience the joy of listening and participating in a story. These activities lead to an opportunity to use imagination, collaborate with others, make decisions, and ultimately create stories and performances of their own.

Different types of storytelling:

- **Oral stories**

Studies reinforce the importance of oral storytelling in the development of an individual's social and emotional abilities, cognitive growth, as well as their language skills. Engaging in oral story telling at a young age will help children build this skill early on in life. Telling stories connects our past to our present. It is also what connects us to one another.

- **Story Walks**

Story walks were originally created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT. They were conceived in a way to inspire parents, teachers, and adults to take children outdoors to enjoy reading stories together.

- **Participation Stories**

Participation stories are a collaboration between the reader and the audience-a way to actively involve the listeners. Any time you can get kids involved in the story you have a better chance of getting them to stay focused on the story.

- **Stories with props**

Props could be puppets, flannel boards, interesting materials, toys to re-enact the story, costumes-anything that will ignite a child's imagination.

- **Children creating stories of their own**

Coffee can theater and dictation stories using puppets and props

## **Good books to try in your classroom**

Sitting in My Box by Will Hillenbrand

That's Not A Good Idea by Mo Willems

The Little Old Lady Who Wasn't Afraid of Anything by Linda Williams

Big Pumpkin by Erica Silverman

Stone Soup traditional

Owl Babies by Martin Waddell

The Gingerbread Man

The Nutcracker

The Soup Opera

The Three Bears, The Three Pigs, The Three Billy Goats Gruff

Caps for Sale by Esphyr Solbodkina

The Enormous Carrot

Are You My Mother by P D Eastman

## **Finger plays to act out:**

5 Little Pumpkins

5 Little Monkeys-jumping on the bed/teasing Mr Crocodile

5 Little Snowmen Fat, each with a funny hat. Out came the sun and melted one, what a sad sad thing was that.

**Preschool Curriculum Foundations** that are supported through story-telling

Language-listening, speaking, vocabulary, and grammar

Literacy-concepts about print, phonological awareness (songs, poems, finger plays)

Alphabetics and Word Print recognition-as extension through signs, character labels

Comprehension and analysis of age appropriate text-demonstrates knowledge of familiar story details.

Literacy interest and response-demonstrates enjoyment of literacy activities

# Have fun!!!