



St. Andrew's Curriculum Information Leaflets: 'Books for 4- to 5-year-olds'

Overview

Here are some more books to enjoy with your child. They are ideal for developing your child's use of language, helping them to guess what might happen next and beginning to say whether they like the story and why. These skills will help them to enjoy their reading. Some children develop these skills more quickly than others. Whatever stage your child is at, make sure they have fun reading!

Ten Play Hide-and-Seek

By Penny Dale, published by Walker Books,
ISBN 0 7445 6125 6

Ten Play Hide-and-Seek is the follow-up book to *Ten in the Bed*, also by Penny Dale. The stories are based on the traditional song ('There were ten in the bed...') and features the Little One and his toy animals. It is bedtime and the characters decide to play hide-and-seek. The story follows the Little One's search for the animals.

Ideas for sharing the book

Cover Who is in the story? How many characters are there? Can you count them?

Illustrations Talk about where the animals are hiding. Count the characters in each picture. Ask 'How many are there now? Who hasn't been found? Who do you think will be found next? If you look carefully at the pictures, can you see where the animals are hiding?'

Story There is lots of repetition in the story giving children the chance to read some of the story with you. The story gives the opportunity for lots of counting activities – counting the animals as they're found, finding out how many animals are still hiding, singing the song to encourage counting backwards.

Pig in the Pond

By Martin Waddell, published by Walker Books,
ISBN 0 7445 3153 5

It is a very hot day, Farmer McGinty has gone to town and all the animals are sitting by the pond watching the ducks and geese. As the day progresses, it gets hotter and hotter and McGinty's pig begins to wish he were a duck. Eventually he can't bear the heat anymore and jumps into the pond, throwing out the ducks and geese in the process. McGinty returns from the town, takes one look at the pig and joins him in the pond. The story ends with all the animals in the pond.

Ideas for sharing the book

Cover Who do you think the story is about? Why do you think the pig is in the pond?

Illustrations What can you see in the picture? Why do you think the pig is sweating? What do you think he is thinking?

Story Why did the pig jump in the pond? What did the other animals think? What did the ducks and geese think? Were they happy that the pig was in the pond?

Children enjoy repeating the catchphrase, 'The pig's in the pond' and pointing to the words as they occur. They also enjoy the humour and the surprise on the animals' faces when McGinty starts to undress so that he can jump into the pond as well.

Once Upon a Time

By John Prater, published by Walker Books,
ISBN 0 7445 3690 1

Once Upon a Time is about a day in the life of an ordinary boy. As his parents go about their business and he plays in the garden, various characters from traditional tales and nursery rhymes pass through.

Ideas for sharing the book

Cover Who can you see on the cover? What are they doing?

Illustrations and story There is so much going on in the pictures that the story is almost unnecessary. As the story progresses, each character in the illustrations tells their own story. The witch has an ongoing battle with her broomstick (which the broomstick wins), Humpty Dumpty gradually falls off the wall, the giant slowly comes into view as he walks across the horizon. Talk about each character and what they are doing, why they are doing it and what your child thinks will happen. Do they know which story or rhyme the characters come from? Can they recite the rhyme or tell the story?

Once Upon a Time is a wonderful book to use with young children. They love the story and see different things happen each time they look at it. It helps them to really look at the pictures, something which will help them as they begin to read. It also develops their language, as they talk about what they see.

Rosie's Walk

By Pat Hutchins, published by Red Fox,
ISBN 00 99 413 99X

This story is about Rosie the hen going for her daily walk. Throughout the story, she is being followed by a fox who is trying to eat her. She doesn't know that he is following her and doesn't see the accidents which happen to him. As she gets back in time for dinner, the fox is chased away by a swarm of bees.

This is an old favourite which is easy for young children to memorise and to read. They enjoy the humour in the story, particularly the disasters experienced by the fox.

Ideas for sharing the book

Cover Who do you think the story is about? What do you think the fox is going to do?

Inside cover This illustration shows the whole farm and where Rosie walked. After you have shared the story with your child, you can follow Rosie's route and see where the fox got into trouble.

Illustrations Where do you think Rosie lives? What do you think is going to happen?

Story The writing is large and easy for children to point to or to follow. You can start reading the phrases and let the children finish them. Ask 'Did Rosie know the fox was following her? What do you think will happen to the fox at the end?'

This is a lovely book to act out. Young children love making maps and large pictures and Rosie's route can be reproduced by using toys, 'found materials' such as toilet roll holders and boxes, or even furniture. Doing this will give them a better understanding of position words such as 'under' and 'over' and will encourage them to act out other well-known stories.

Elmer

By David McKee, published by Andersen Press,
ISBN 0 996 9720 3

David McKee's *Elmer* stories are firm favourites with children. The illustrations are bright and attractive. Children love the idea of a multi-coloured elephant, especially one who plays tricks on his friends.

This introduction to Elmer tells us that he is unhappy being different and thinks of a plan to become the same as other elephants. He covers himself with berry juice and joins the elephants but finds it very difficult to be 'serious'. Suddenly it rains and Elmer is revealed. The other elephants think it is very funny and they all agree to have an Elmer day when Elmer is grey and they are covered with patterns and colours.

Ideas for sharing the book

Cover Talk about Elmer. What colours can you see? What do you think will happen to Elmer in the story?

Illustrations What can you see in the pictures?

Story Do you think Elmer is happy being different? Talk about how your child feels about things. What makes them happy or sad? Did you like the way the story ended? Do you think it is a good ending?

There are many *Elmer* books. They are all humorous and give many opportunities for guessing what will happen in the story and discussing the feelings of the characters. They also inspire many children to produce some brightly coloured artwork!

One Duck Stuck

By Phyllis Root, illustrated by Jane Chapman, published by Walker Books, ISBN 0 7445 6344 5.

This story is about a duck who gets stuck in a marsh and all the animals who try to help him out. The pages are simply set out, with large, colourful writing. The repeated 'Help! Help! Who can help?' is always written in the same place on the page so that children can locate it and read it each time. There are also rhyming phrases which together with the wonderful sound words make this book a joy to share with young children.

Ideas for sharing the book

Cover What do you think the duck is doing in this picture?

Illustrations How did the duck get stuck? How do you think he will get out? How many fish/moose/crickets are there? Who do you think will be able to help the duck?

Story Did you think the story was funny? Which was your favourite page? Do you think the duck will go back to the marsh?

Children never seem to become bored with this book. The language is so rich, with so many different words and phrases to talk about. It is a wonderful book to use to develop in children a love of words and to encourage them to play with words. One way of doing this is to ask them if they can think of other words which sound the same as 'zing', or if they can remember a word that began with 'spl'. Once they get the idea, it's amazing how many words children can think of or make up!