



Bright Start Foundation - Parenting in a Pandemic

Storytelling Module 2:

Bringing stories to life at home by Tell Tale Hearts

Handout to accompany Session 2

Introduction: Welcoming Participants, thanks and Outline:

Brief re-cap of last week – how did you find the task? I hope you enjoyed creating your own fairy character and story routine/ritual, if you have questions – please put them in chat box.

This is our 2nd practical webinar to focus on **Language development through gesture and repetition.**

We will look at how to enable your child to bring their own words to the story by giving them gestural prompts and we will also explore repetition and how it helps to build confidence and reinforce their learning.

Artist background: Natasha Holmes and how she became a storyteller:

- Trained in storytelling and physical theatre at Ecole de Philippe Gaulier, in London
- Performer/puppeteer for range of theatre companies touring UK & internationally
- Artistic Director of Tell Tale Hearts, making theatre for Early Years since 2004
- Performed storytelling in theatres, festivals, libraries, nurseries, universities, literary events and schools for over 15 years

Why are Stories important for young children?

- Develops language and vocabulary
- Builds sequencing capabilities – how to order events & narrative
- Discovery of meaning through story
- Provides moral lessons
- Shared experience – between Parent/carer child
- Develops empathy and compassion
- Introduces other characters, people and cultures
- Stimulates the imagination and critical thinking

How can you develop children's language through storytelling?

- 1) Repetition of certain words and phrases, giving context to them
- 2) Replacement of key words with gesture, to encourage children to vocalise – it doesn't matter if the word they use is exactly the same as yours.
- 3) Encouraging vocal play: experiment with voice/tongue placement/etc... ie creating sound-scapes or sound effects as part of speech development.
- 4) Provide role-play opportunities to encourage children to speak/vocalise



Shared Story -The Fisherman and the Ring – From West Africa.

When watching the story I want you to observe:

- 1) Which words and phrases I repeat
- 2) Which words I replace with a gesture
- 3) What sound effects I create using my voice.
- 4) What role the children get to play in the story

Demonstration Video 1: <https://vimeo.com/user4282205>

(video lasts 11 mins, played to end)

Check in with set Questions: What answers did you come up with? You might notice different things to me – that's fine. Everything you noticed is valid.

- 1) **Repeated Words & Phrases:** 'I wish to become a fisherman so much', 'He tried to catch a.....' 'Fresh fish, fresh fish, who wants to buy fresh fish?'
- 2) **Replaced Words with Gesture:** 'His father..... and told him to follow his..... And to do whatever made him.....' And 'He bought himself a.....'
How about the slipper (an object used to replace the word)?
- 3) **Vocal Sound Effects:** waves of the sea, catching the fish as they jump out of the water, return of the fish to the water
- 4) **Role the children play in the Story:** Fish (when trying to catch the fish in the sea), and market traders.


Hopefully these pointers will help you to support your child(ren)'s engagement with the story when you come to watch it with them later on.

How to build on the story experience post video:


- Have you any spare fabric that your child(ren) can use to make the sea, what objects (such as socks) can they use as fish? Can your child go into role as the fisherman, catching the fish in a net (which could be a hat or bag)
- Can you play at market trading together with your child(ren). What pretend objects can they find to sell. Ideally let them use substitute objects instead of the actual things to encourage their imagination
- How about playing at rowing the boat (the boat could be anything from a large cardboard box to a couple of chairs facing each other) to different shores and seeing what kind of sea creatures they can catch?

How can you incorporate gesture and repetition into your storytelling / reading to encourage language development?

- 1) Can you choose three words from your story/book that you can find simple gestures for? It could be a feeling (like scared, excited) – see demonstration, or an object (like heart or boat) – you choose. Practice your gesture and when you're confident read/tell the story replacing the three words with your gesture and see what your child(ren) come up with.

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- 2) Choose two or three phrases/lines from your story and find different ways you can repeat them. Can you repeat with more intensity each time (building to a climax) or can you get your child(ren) to repeat with you a 2nd time and then on their own a 3rd time?
 - 3) Can you come up with a sound effect that you can do as part of the story, for part of the action? Can you encourage your child(ren) to do the sound effect together with you?

Suggested Task:

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- 1) If your child had a golden ring what would they wish for? Can they draw it or mime it without words?
 - 2) Can you find another story that has a wish in it and can you replace some of the words in the story with a physical gesture when reading it aloud?

Other Storytelling Links:

<https://www.telltalehearts.co.uk/families/>

<https://storynet.org/what-is-storytelling/>

<https://childdevelopmentinfo.com/child-activities/storytelling-for-children/#gs.emkcur>

<https://medium.com/@yash.hsquare/importance-of-storytelling-in-child-development-b63593921a33>

<https://earlyarts.co.uk/story-telling-role-play>

<http://web.uvic.ca/~mroth/teaching/580-14Win/0224/Example2R.pdf> - academic study on importance of gesture in Early Years storytelling

<https://littleangeltheatre.com/online-shows-and-activities/watch/> - free online shows for young children but donations welcomed.

