

Example Wording for Early Literacy Instruction in Story Time

Introduction of Class:

“Our goal in story time is to connect reading and learning with love and affection. The more your children equate story time with you, security, and fun, the more likely they are to grow up as lifelong readers and learners.”

“The more they practice literacy skills now, the more prepared they are for school. The more prepared for school, the better grades in school. Better grades in schools, better scores on tests. Better scores on tests, better college and job opportunities. It all starts right now. So who’s ready to have a great life?”

“When your child has a positive experience in story time, when they have fun with their favorite person – you!, they will enjoy story time more and get more out of it.”

“Research has shown that children learn best from their primary caregiver – you! When you engage in story time with your child, you are laying the foundation for a lifetime of learning.”

“You are your child’s first, best teacher.”

“Today your child will be learning and practicing literacy skills. Parents, you will be learning how to take these techniques home and do them over and over every day so that you can raise a lifelong reader and learner.”

For younger groups –

“Your child may not yet have the motor skills needed to do some of our rhymes and activities. They will need your help.”

When Reading a Book:

Upon introducing book -- “I like this book because...

- It uses new vocabulary for your child to learn.
- It has lift the flaps which are great for building your child’s sense of object permanence.
- It can be sung as well as read, which helps your child hear the words easily.
- It provides lots of opportunity for conversation between you and your child.
- It has sounds for you to “sound out” with your child, which helps your child sound other words out when they begin to read independently.

“Okay everyone, let’s read this sentence together!” (Point to words in sentence as they are read. Drag your finger under words that need to be sounded out slowly.)

For Fingerplays or Songs:

“Singing slows language down and breaks words apart, making it easier for your children to form the proper sounds.”

“Children learn best through movement so we’re going to act out this rhyme!”

“Acting out words or stories helps children better understand the meaning of words and builds vocabulary.”

(For rhymes/songs that require clapping or rhythm) --

“Clapping to the rhythm builds self-regulation or self-control skills and increases focus because it requires your child to wait before performing an action.”

Sign Language:

“We teach sign language because it helps children learn vocabulary in three ways. They hear the word, they see the object and/or print word represented, and then they act out a movement to “mean” that word.”

“Sign language helps your young child communicate with you even when they are not yet able to speak full words.”

Flannels or Storytellings:

“Let’s count”

“What color?”

“One ___ went away. Now how many are left?”

(I actually don’t have too many examples for these since I like to let them just get situated into a storytelling.)

Other Tips for Boosting Early Literacy Instruction:

Point out positive examples of early literacy engagement between parents and children in your class.

“These two right here are having so much fun! I love seeing those smiles.”

Bring attention to the attendees of the class. “I see a red shirt over there!”

“That was so much fun, let’s do it again! And this time... (let’s go slower, faster, etc)

Find ways to get the parent and child engaged with each other. Ask parents to tickle their child at the end of songs, pick their child up, etc. For example, in *Pete’s a Pizza* by William Steig, I like to have parents act this book out just as it says in the story and make a pizza out of their child!

