

SHARING STORIES WITH YOUR CHILD

NEWCOMER
PARENT
RESOURCE
SERIES



Telling stories—whether they are real or imagined—is a fun way to interact with your child.

Together, you can remember real events in your family’s life. Each person can enjoy re-telling the story as they remember it. You can also share stories from when you were a child or re-tell traditional stories from your culture to help pass on important life lessons and give your child a sense of belonging.

Storytelling can be magical. Stories help your child to be creative and imaginative and to understand the world around them. They’re even a great way to ease anxiety and to help your child feel more comfortable with change in their life. Finally, stories are a powerful way to help your child learn to better understand and speak your home language- and this will help them to learn new languages!

Tips for Telling Stories:

- Use clear and simple language.
- Repeat what your child is saying, so your child sees that you understand.
- Help your child learn new words and ideas.
- Talk about familiar people, places and things.
- Help your child learn new words and ideas.
- Provide opportunities to talk about personally meaningful things.
- Ask and answer questions.
- Listen and talk together in your home language.
- Re-tell your child’s favourite stories again and again.
- Enjoy telling stories in your home language whenever possible.

Storytelling builds language skills.

Research shows that talking about family events, traditions and feelings in your home language can be very helpful to your child's early development. We also know that the most important time to develop language skills is when your child is from zero to three years old. This is when their brain is ready to make language connections. The more words a child hears during this time, the more words they will soon understand and learn. The more they know and use lots of words, the more likely they are to become good readers. Being able to listen and talk, in any language, are basic skills for being ready for school.

Tell stories in your home language.

Talking, listening and telling stories in your home language provides a strong base for learning a second language. Keep using your home language with your child. It will help them to feel more connected to you and to the rest of the family. They will be more likely to grow up proud of their language and culture. We know that a strong base in your home language will make English language learning easier for your child.

It is also recommended that parents don't mix languages or stop using the home language. Keep talking, telling stories and speaking in your home language to keep it alive and strong. This will help your child learn the second language faster and better.

Telling stories in your home language and spending time listening to your child's stories helps them in many ways:

- They will feel important, listened to and valued.
- They will feel closer to you as they are encouraged to share their ideas and feelings.
- They will become more interested in books.
- They can learn many new words and ideas in your language.
- They are encouraged to talk with you in your home language.
- Your child will learn to recall events, tell stories, make choices and talk about everything they are doing.
- They will learn to recognize repeated sounds and start to point out words. (This is the beginning of learning to read.)

Activity Idea: Make A Storybook with Your Child

- You can use your child's drawings or photographs to make a storybook.
- Talk with your child about their drawings or about a family story they would like to make into a book.
- Encourage your child to tell you the words to use for the story in your home language.
- Print these words in your home language.

Visit cmascanada.ca/cnc/parents for more multilingual parent information



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