



Playing with Print

Background Playing with print helps children develop reading skills using three cue systems—semantics, syntax, and graphophonics. Semantic (meaning) cues help children draw meaning from text. Syntax (structure) cues lead to understanding grammar and sentence structure. Graphophonic (visual) cues help children understand the systematic relationship between letters and sounds and apply that understanding when reading words. These skills develop naturally when children engage in exciting, non-threatening reading activities.

This workshop introduces parents to various playing-with-print activities and how they can help children develop reading skills.

The four stations in this workshop give parents practical techniques to use when reading with children. Each station deals with a different playing-with-print activity. When used over time, throughout parent/child reading experiences, these techniques help children learn specific skills and become experienced readers.

Time Line

Welcome and Introduction	10 minutes
Introduce the concept of playing with print.	
Station Rotation Review	5 minutes
Quickly review each station and rotation directions.	
Station Rotation	40 minutes
Cut-Up Sentences	
Treasure Hunts	
What's Missing?	
Nursery Rhymes, Chants, and Fingerplays	
Closing and Evaluation	5 minutes
Remind group of theme. Distribute and collect evaluations.	
Refreshments and Conversation	10–30 minutes

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome Call the group to attention and thank participants for coming. Invite families to briefly introduce themselves to those sitting around them. Distribute the Parent Record of Activities and invite parents to take

Introduction Using the overhead transparency as a visual aid, briefly discuss the theme for the evening, “Playing with Print.”

Discuss these points.

Reading activities should be fun.

Explain that reading activities should be engaging and presented in an exciting way so they are not perceived as “work.” Invite parents and children to share their favorite activities. Discuss how reading activities should be as exciting as playtime activities.

Reading activities should be meaningful, with clear objectives.

Discuss how teachers have objectives for every lesson they teach. These objectives ensure an activity is meaningful. Explain that just as teachers have lesson objectives and desired outcomes, parents should know the purpose of a reading activity. Explain that by engaging in meaningful activities, children learn more and parents readily see outcomes.

Reading activities should be connected with “real” reading.

Explain that reading activities are most meaningful when used with “real” reading and literature. Discuss how teaching skills in isolation does not teach a child to read, since the act of reading requires making meaning from text. Use an analogy such as teaching a person every basketball strategy, but never allowing him or her to participate in a game. Discuss how difficult playing would be without ever experiencing the “real thing.”

Materials

- Parent Record of Activities (page 190)
- overhead projector
- Playing with Print transparency (T14)

Station Rotation Review

Materials

- hand bell or other device to signal rotation
- four set-up stations

Station Introduction Quickly name each station and explain its purpose. Then discuss the rotation procedure and point out designated station areas. Remind parents that the bell (or other device) will ring to signal rotation.

Station

1 Cut-Up Sentences

Parents read a book with their children, write sentences from the book on sentence strips, cut up the sentences, rearrange the words, and have children place the words in order.

Station

2 Treasure Hunts

Parents read a book with their children and design a treasure hunt with clues for their family.

Station

3 What's Missing?

Parents read a book to their children, leave out words or phrases, and invite them to suggest replacements.

Station

4 Nursery Rhymes, Chants, and Fingerplays

Parents and children do reading activities with nursery rhymes, chants, and fingerplays.

Rotation Review Divide families into groups. Send each group to a station. At the end of the allotted time, use a bell or other device to signal rotation.

Station

1 Cut-Up Sentences

Background Using the poster, discuss why it is important to work with cut-up sentences. Explain that this activity helps children understand sentence structure, see the connection between the written and spoken word, and understand text directionality.

Modeling Introduce the big book. Read aloud and discuss the story. Invite a child volunteer to find his or her favorite sentence in the book (or to make up a sentence about the book). Write the sentence on a sentence strip. Invite the volunteer to read the sentence twice. The second time, cut each word from the sentence strip as the child says it. Rearrange the words. Invite a parent/child team to put the sentence in order again.

Materials

- big books (*Who Will Help?* or *Under the Sky*)
- Cut-Up Sentences (bibliography, page 200, and *Partners in Print Library*)
- Cut-Up Sentences poster
 - sentence strips
 - markers
 - scissors
- home-activity sheet (supplement, page 29)



Activity Invite parents and children to choose a book. Have parents introduce the book, read it with their children, and discuss it. Ask parents and children to follow the directions on the poster to make several of their own cut-up sentences. Have parents and children arrange and rearrange sentences.

Closing Bring the group together. If time allows, invite a parent/child team to share one sentence they made. Distribute home-activity sheets.

Station

2 Treasure Hunts

Background Using the poster, explain that working with treasure hunts reinforces reading skills because it helps children draw meaning from text, understand that reading has a purpose, and demonstrates that reading can be fun.

Modeling In advance, hide a bag of candy and write clues for the whole group to follow. (If you wish, place the clues in envelopes.) Introduce a “treasure” book and read it to the group. Discuss the meaning of treasure and treasure hunts. Explain that you have written clues to find hidden treasure. Invite volunteers to read clues and have the whole group follow the clues until the “treasure” is found. Distribute the candy and explain the steps on the poster.

Materials

- Treasure Hunts (bibliography, page 200)
 - candy
 - slips of paper
- envelopes (optional)
 - pencils, pens
- Treasure Hunts poster
- home-activity sheet (supplement, page

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Activity Have parents and children follow poster directions to make a treasure hunt to use at home.

Closing Bring the group together. Distribute home-activity sheets. Explain how the home activity differs from the station activity. (The home activity asks parents to read a book for a special occasion such as a birthday or holiday, hide “treasure” for the occasion, and invite children to find the “treasure.”)

Station

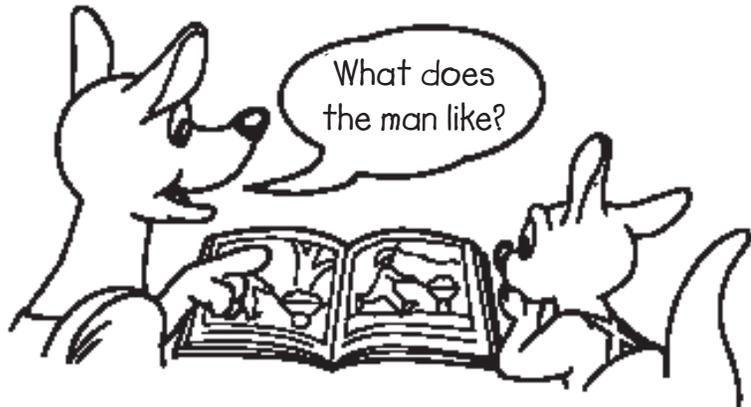
3 What's Missing?

Background Using the poster, explain that removing words from text as you read to children encourages them to read for meaning, increases the use of context clues, and helps them develop prediction skills.

Modeling Introduce the big book. Read the book aloud, leaving out words or phrases. Have child volunteers predict missing words or phrases. Read the book with volunteers' words, even if the words are not exactly like the text. (Be sure to leave enough original words and phrases in the story so the story line has continuity.) Discuss the story.

Materials

- big books (*Spiders, Spiders Everywhere* or *The Bugs Go Marching*)
- Just Right Books (bibliography, page 200, and *Partners in Print Library*)
- home-activity sheet (supplement, page 31)



Activity

Invite parents and children to choose a book to read. Have parents follow the directions on the poster and challenge their children to replace words and phrases for omitted ones. Encourage parents to make this activity into a game. (Remind parents to leave out nouns and verbs to make the activity less complicated and leave in enough original words and phrases so the story line has continuity.)

Closing

Bring the group together. If time allows, invite parents and children to share their revised stories. Distribute home-activity sheets.

Station

4 Nursery Rhymes, Chants, and Fingerplays

Background Using the poster, explain that working with nursery rhymes, chants, and fingerplays helps children learn natural speech and language patterns, encourages children to draw meaning from text, and encourages children to make predictions about text.

Modeling Introduce the fingerplay. Have the group join in with you when they feel comfortable. Display and introduce the nursery rhyme. Read it aloud twice. The second time, have the group take turns with you—you read one line, they read the next. Display and introduce the chant. Read it aloud twice. The second time, omit words, inviting the group to replace what is missing. Explain the steps on the poster.

Materials

- fingerplay, reproduced for the group (bibliography, page 200)
- books with nursery rhymes, chants, and fingerplays (bibliography, page 200)
- Nursery Rhymes, Chants, and Fingerplays poster
- home-activity sheet (supplement, page 32)



Activity Invite parents and children to choose a book. Have parents introduce a nursery rhyme, chant, or fingerplay to their children. Invite parents to follow the directions on the poster to “play” with the literature in several ways.

Closing Bring the group together. If time allows, invite parent/child pairs to share their nursery rhymes, chants, or fingerplays. Distribute home-activity sheets.

Closing and Evaluation

Materials

- Child and Parent Evaluations (pages 192–194)

Bring station groups together in a central location such as a cafeteria or gymnasium. Thank participants for coming. Close by reminding parents that they can reinforce reading skills by arranging cut-up sentences, making treasure hunts, removing words and phrases from text, and “playing” with nursery rhymes, chants, and fingerplays.

Distribute Child and Parent Evaluations. Invite parents to help their children complete the Child Evaluations and then complete their own. Collect the evaluations.

Refreshments and Conversation

Materials

- refreshments

Invite parents and children to share in the refreshments, continue practicing with station materials, and enjoy conversation with others.