Words that Count!
Coaching Families Through Book Sharing

Alana D'Alessandro, M.A., CCC-SLP
Kayley Mayer, M.A.T., TOD
*Sound Start Babies Program
for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children*

Disclosures

Sound Start Babies

Kayley Mayer is a full-time employee and Alana D'Alessandro is an independent contractor with the Sound Start Babies Program for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children in Mountain Lakes, NJ.

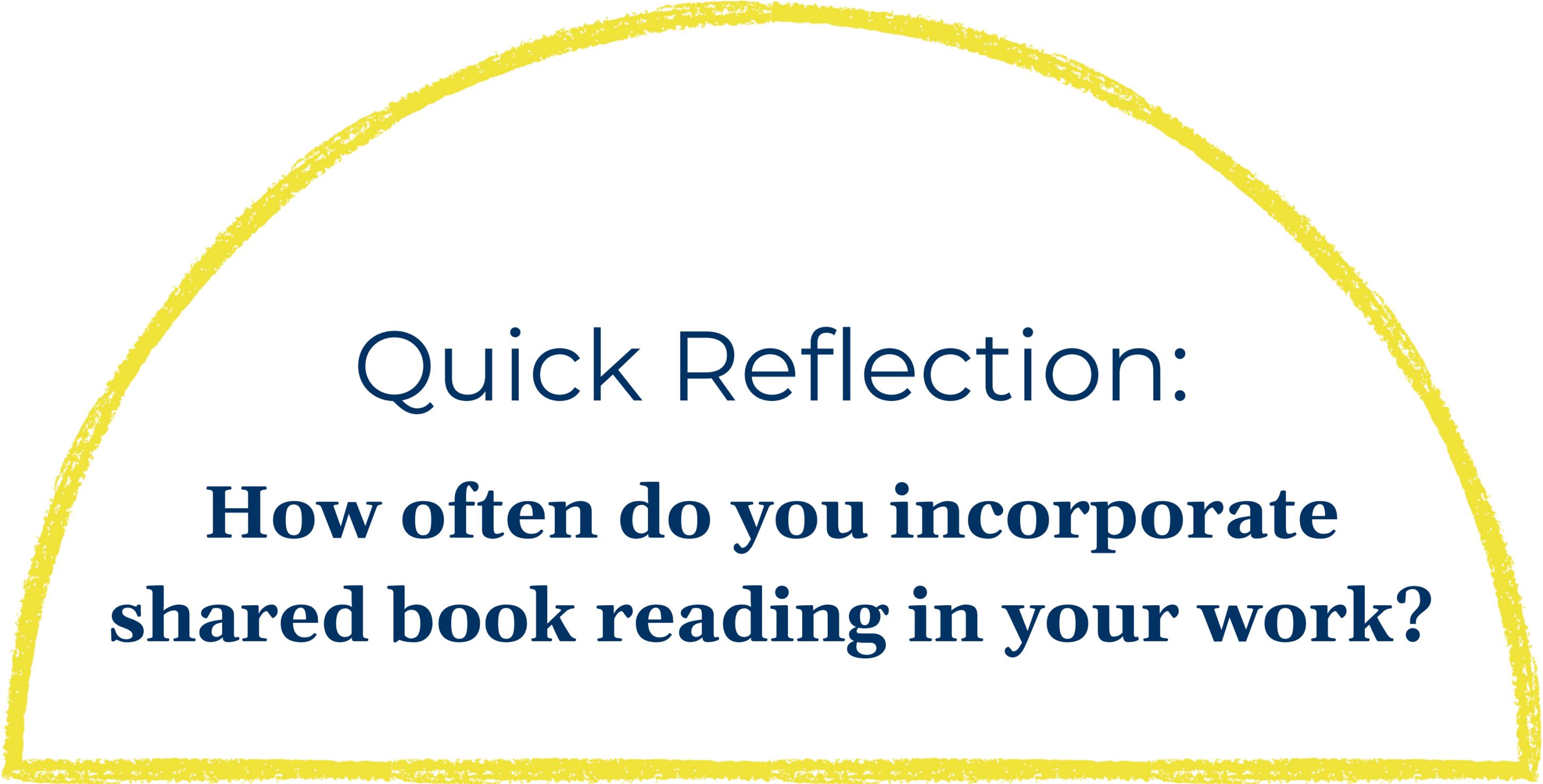There are no additional relationships to disclose.

About Us!

Sound Start Babies

Specialized EI Providers with hearing loss focus

Communication Modalities -- Total Communication or Listening and Spoken Language

Multidisciplinary Team (TOD, SLP, PT, OT, Audiology)

Quick Reflection:

How often do you incorporate shared book reading in your work?

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Research Review

"The Linguistic Genius of Babies"

- Pat Kuhl

+ MEG brain scans of babies - what do they tell us?

+ Baby can discriminate between types of input: TV v. in person
    - **social learning** is key! TV = nothing at all!
    - Reward activity in the brain is higher for social stimulation

+ Engagement is vital to the baby brain but, it does not come naturally to everyone, it is not always easy, & many factors contribute to caregiver engagement

+ Parent-infant brain synchrony -- engagement matters: technology in our hands -- every hour of TV per day = 5 fewer words learned

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Brown et al. (2019)

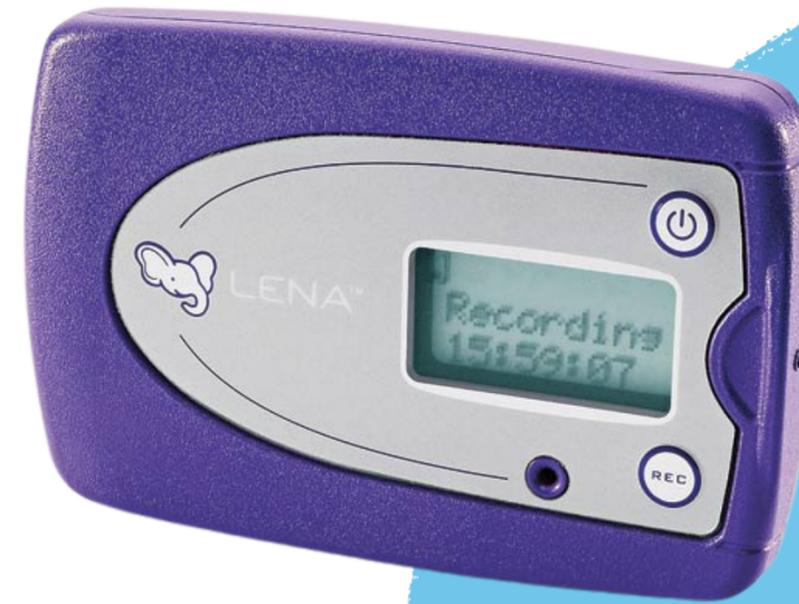## A Pilot Study of Early Storybook Reading With Babies With Hearing Loss

Baseline and post data after coaching and "Book Selection", "Parent-Child Eye Contact", & "Parent-Child Turn-Taking" Workshops

Takeaways:

+ Support parents in **selecting appropriate books**

+ **Consider positioning** (have child on your lap facing the parent and the book); if not possible, bring the baby to eye level

+ **Turn-taking** (Introduce "Wait Time" and "Following the Child's Lead" strategies early!)

Brown, M. I., Trembath, D., Westerveld, M. F., & Gillon, G. T. (2019). A Pilot Study of Early Storybook Reading With Babies With Hearing Loss. Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 62(9), 3397–3412. https://doi.org/10.1044/2019_jslhr-l-17-0305

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LENA (Language ENvironment Analysis)

+ Analyzes the audio sample
  - AWC: Adult Word Count
  - CVC: Child Vocalization Count
  - CTC: Conversational Turn Count
  - AVA: Automatic Vocal Assessment
  - Vocal Productivity Score

+ Analyzes the audio environment
  - Meaningful (close)/Distant
  - TV & Electronic Sounds/Overlap
  - Noise/Quiet

+ Digital Language Processor worn by child

+ DLP holds up to 16 hours of data/day and up to 3 days of data

COMPASS Program: parent coaching using these measure

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+ Book reading addresses all LENA measures!

- Increases AWC

- Encourages CTC subsequently increased CVC

- Exposes children to new sounds/words (AVA)

- Uses longer phrases (Vocal Productivity)

- Typically, by design, reading is done in a quiet environment

- Close proximity (audio environment)

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Establishing a Book Sharing Routine

"They're just a baby, so we don't read to them yet."

"What can I do to work on language if they aren't talking yet?"

→ Use family-directed questions to learn about their routines

→ How do we build book reading into their daily lives?

→ Current approach to book reading...love it? hate it? indifferent? any knowledge on the benefits?

→ Do they need suggestions? resources?

→ Model book reading/sharing during sessions

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Who, When, Where?

+ Child (starting from birth!)
+ Parent/Guardian/Caregiver
+Siblings (readers and non-readers)
+ Extended Family (variety in age, style and book choices)

+ Positioning (lap v. face)
+ Tummy Time
+ Close proximity (bubble)
+ On the floor, at the table...anywhere!

+ Bedtime (or alternative)
+ "Wait Times" (car, offices, diaper bag, potty)

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How (do we keep a toddler interested)?

\+ Select books that are **developmentally appropriate** while modeling language that is *slightly above* the child's current language level (ZPD)

    - **Large photos of everyday objects, animals,** etc. with **bright colors**

    - **Durability**: *Indestructibles* *series,* cloth and board books

    - Sensory and interactive components

\+ Leave a few **books accessible in child's play area or mixed into toy containers**

    Keeping them all up on a shelf or out of reach makes them harder to access

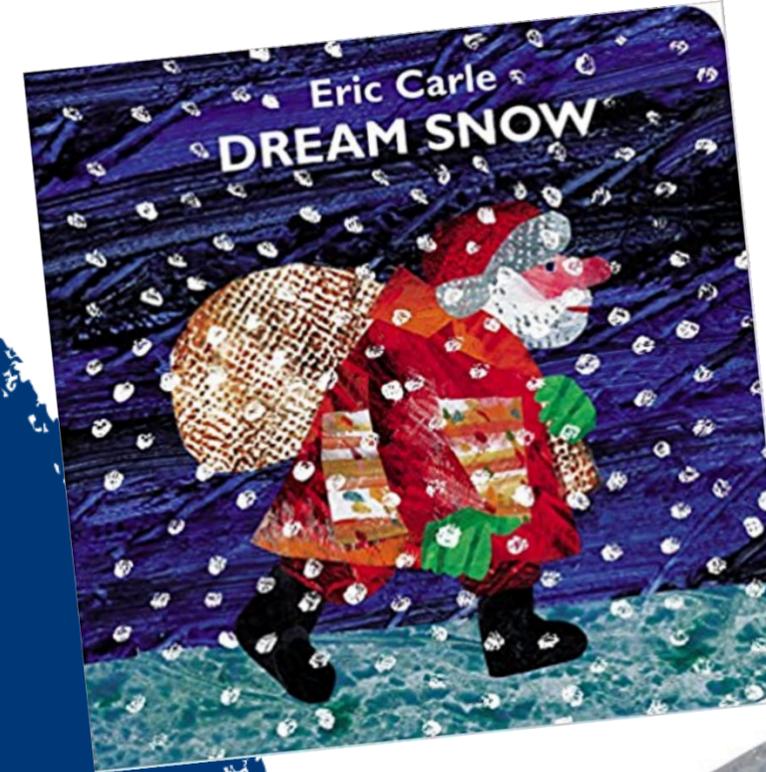+ "Read" to pets & preferred toys

+ Select books about the **child's preferred interests** - allow child to choose books

+ Read a few favorite books **again & again**

+ **"Cycle out"** books every few weeks

+ **Act out/recreate stories** using toys found in the family's home

+ Create a **sensory box** to match the theme of a favorite or seasonal book

Eric Carle
DREAM SNOW

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Creating Experience Books

Toddlers love looking at pictures of themselves & people they know!

Fun!
+ **Family members** (long distance, screenshots of videos)
+ Create **interactive components** (flaps, Velcro, envelopes)

Custom!
+ Target **specific goals** & strategies/**unique vocabulary**
+ Chronological order or one event in greater detail
+ Mementos from meaningful or unique experiences

Purposeful!
+ Preparing for **new experiences**
+ Getting to know new people (masks?)

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Sample Experience Book: Zoo Visit

I see a zebra. He has black and white stripes.

Single Word Level: "Zebra"

Two Word Stage:
"Hungry zebra;" "Zebra eats"

Sentence Level: "*I see a* zebra.
He has black and white stripe**s**."

Theory of Mind: "The zebra is black
and white just like your cat."

https://www.storyjumper.com/

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Why (is book reading so important)?

+ "Reading at home is the most important 'prep course' a child can take." **-- Jim Trelease**

+ "Everything comes from the listening vocabulary. You can't say a word you've never heard, you can't read a word you've never said, and you can't write a word you haven't read."

-- Jim Trelease

listening
vocabulary

speaking

reading

writing

https://www.trelease-on-reading.com/rah-ch1-pg2.html

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Why (is book reading so important)?

Early Literacy Skills

Parents need to know why!

Picture concepts: righting a picture/books, finding a named object in a photo, book handling (turning pages one at a time, start vs. finish)

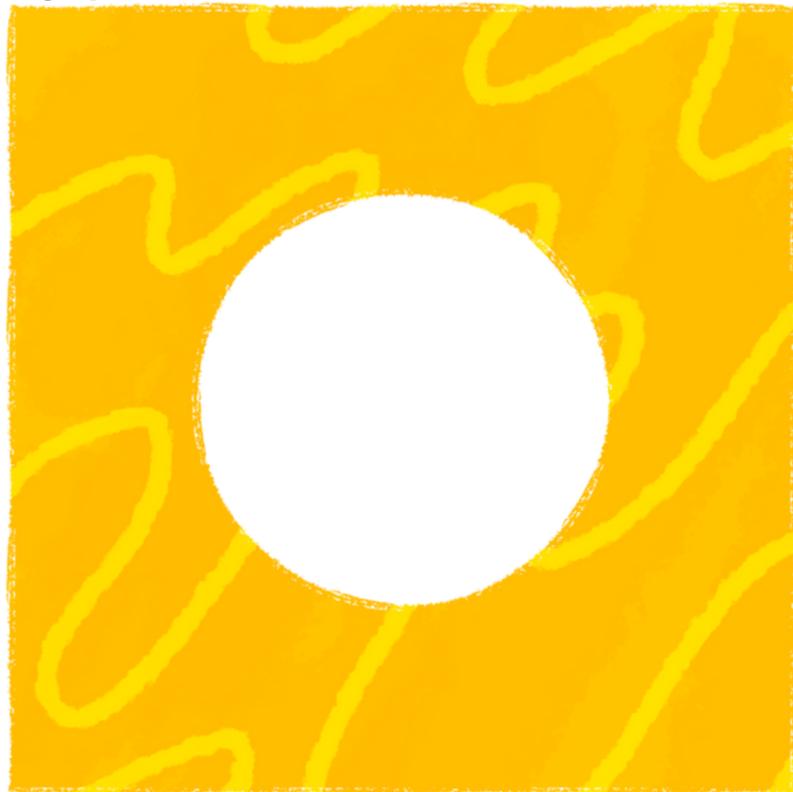**Joint attention:** precursor for conversation (also bonding)

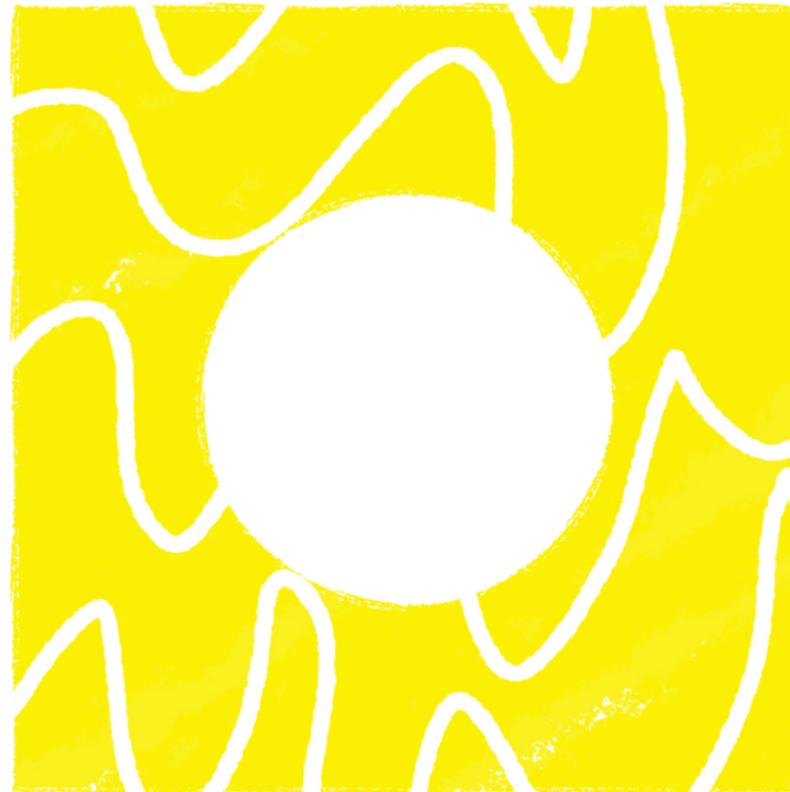**Anticipating events:** repeated reads & books with repetitive phrases encourages child to join in!

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Early Literacy Skills cont.

Auditory Exposure:
link to parentese - reading exposes children to pitches & frequencies that don't occur in typical conversation

Vocabulary Exposure:
novel words --
in books (~31/1,000) vs.
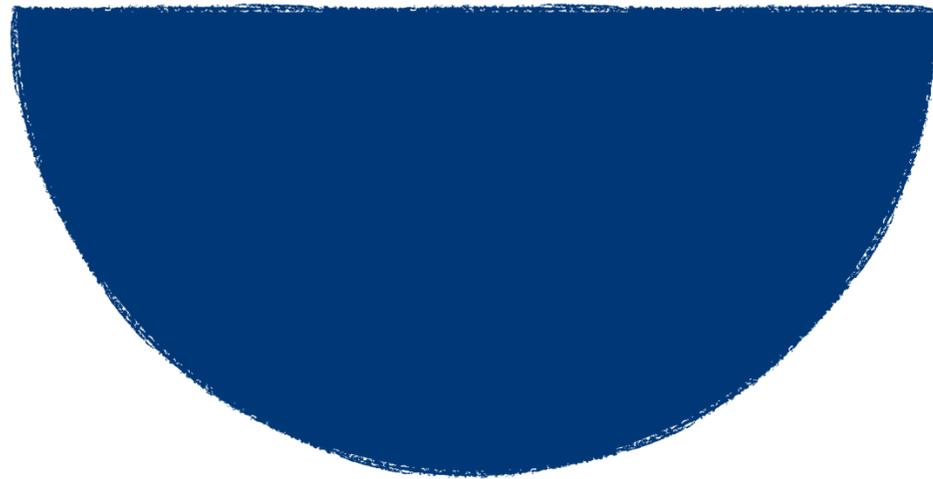conversations (~9/1,000)

Communication Purposes:
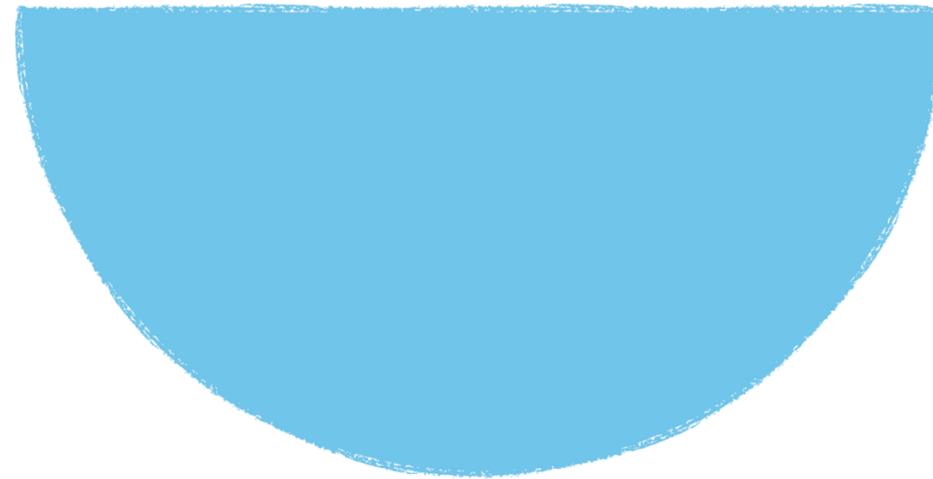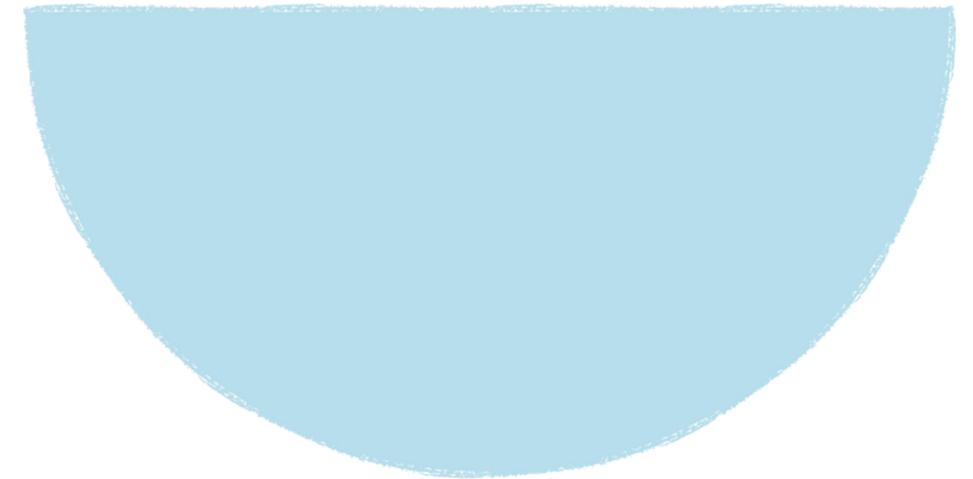Modeling comments, questions, directions, negation, prediction, retelling stories

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Early Literacy Skills cont.

Executive Functioning:
attention and memory

Sequencing:
auditory memory
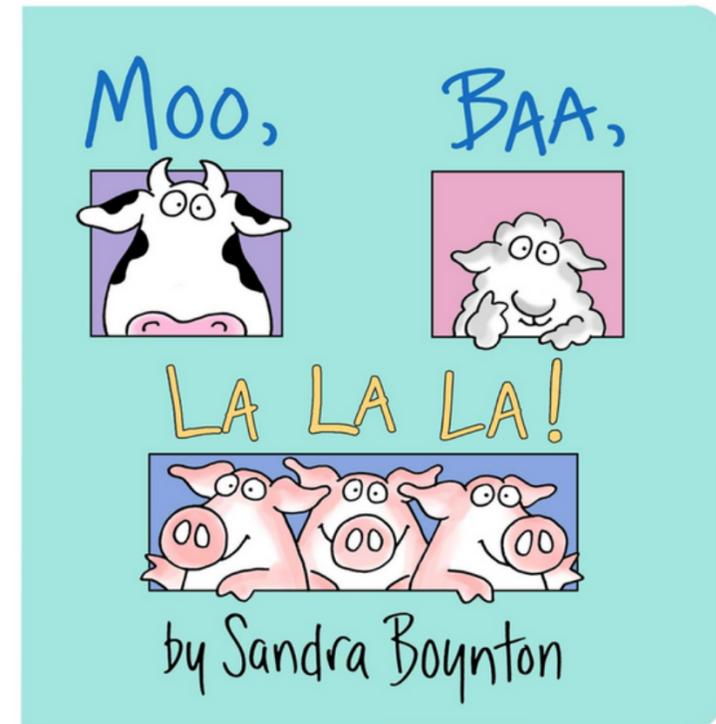
What else?

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Therapy & Coaching Strategies

Following the Child's Lead

+ Parent/caregiver **labels what the child points to** as the child turns the pages
+ Intended to be **child directed**
+ Parent uses **"Teaching Language"** and **reduces questions**
+ **Fosters conversational turn-taking**

Try It!

+ Use wordless picture books
+ *First 100 Words* Book (by DK)
+ *Moo, Baa, La La La* by Sandra Boynton

Video Clips

+ Child is ~14 months old and uses bilateral hearing aids
+ Parent is an active participant in all Early Intervention sessions (have been fully virtual since beginning therapy services in Spring 2020 ; family has EI experience)
+ Recent sessions included family coaching with the following strategies:

Following the Child's Lead

Auditory Bombardment

Acoustic Highlighting for Vowels

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1 https://youtu.be/3DyIt9TPq84

2 https://youtu.be/aYPCjxjeMLU

Theory of Mind

+ Use "thinking language" and label the emotions of different characters

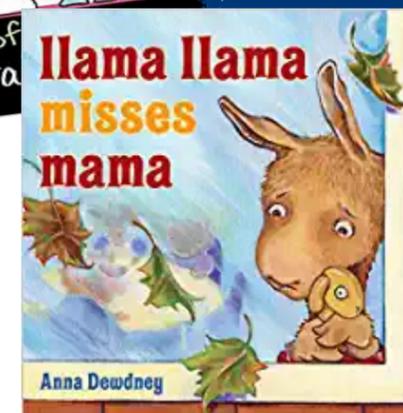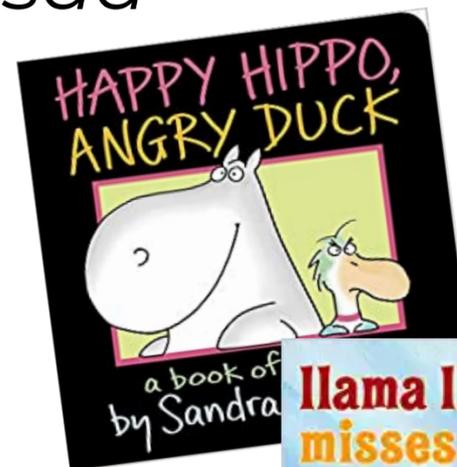+ Connect the content of the story/book to the child's own experiences

+ Explain the "because" of a situation (e.g., "The truck got stuck in the mud because *it was raining so much!") as well as emotions (e.g., "The boy is sad because he dropped his ice cream cone."*)

Children with hearing loss may have more difficulty with Theory of Mind/Perspective Taking than their peers.

Try It!

+ Llama Llama series by Anna Dewdney
+ Happy Hippo, Angry Duck: A Book of Moods by Sandra Boynton

Parent Coaching Considerations

+ Telehealth vs. In Person
  - "Book Tour": see titles, see organization, get a sense of what the reading routine looks like for that family

+ Individual considerations
  - "Thinking Outside the Book"
  - Family skills and comfort
  - Parent learning preferences

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"Thinking Outside the Book"

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If a family...

...doesn't have books

+ Local library (use a session to attend with the family)

+ Create experience books using items found in the home

+ Review family photos or photo albums if available

+ Homemade story book with child or parent as the "illustrator"

...speaks and reads in a home language other than English

+ Book sharing strategies work in any language! (Encourage them to read in the language they are most comfortable & fluent in)

+ Locate books and other resources in their home language, if possible

+ Books from home country (ordered by relatives or during travel)

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If a family...

...is unable to read in their home language

+ "Follow the Child's Lead" and talk about pictures

+ "Wordless" picture books

+ Oral Tradition - fables, nursery rhymes, family stories
Verbal retelling of family stories from parent/caregiver's life
Nursery rhymes: repetitive language and phonological awareness

+ Incorporate singing of childhood songs in the family's home language

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Resources

+ **Read Aloud Handbook** by Jim Trelease
+ **Books with Repeatable Lines** (handout from www.hearingfirst.org)
+ **Creating an Experience Book:**
     https://www.jtc.org/eyes-on-experience-books-using-homemade-books/

     https://www.hearingfirst.org/b/blog/posts/how-to-make-your-own-experience-books
+ **Vooks** -- https://www.vooks.com/
+ **Hear to Read**

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Thank You!

www.soundstartbabies.org

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✉ kayley.mayer@soundstartbabiesprogram.org
alana.dalessandro@soundstartbabiesprogram.org

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