

Listening library

Gamesley EEC (Early Excellence Centre), Derbyshire operates a regular Listening Library for children and families. The aim of the scheme is to enable children to access and listen to 'core stories' in the home setting. Many of the children in the setting are not read to or told stories on a regular basis at home. Some parents may find this difficult, for a variety of reasons.

The Listening Library contains packs comprising a bag, a copy of a core book, cassette player, and a cassette with a story recorded by a member of staff.

Before beginning to borrow from the library, children are taught how to operate the cassette player so that they can use the equipment as independently as possible. Experience in the centre has shown that this is more successful with children who are 4 years old.

The scheme has been a great success. It has helped to develop confidence within the children, allowing them to make independent decisions on when to listen to a story. It also enables them to listen to the same story over and over again.

This idea is now being extended and adapted. A video and DVD collection has been developed to complement the existing stories on cassette.

Children are increasingly saturated by a world full of computer, television and video images. As children are undoubtedly engaged and entertained through the moving image, the centre decided to think of ways to harness this enthusiasm, in order to help and promote access to books and stories.



The video and DVD section of the listening library is based on exactly the same principle as the cassette lending project, but is aimed more at building parents' own confidence in reading stories to children and developing the 'art' of story-telling.

The video/DVD library packs comprise either a video or DVD, a core story book and book bag.

Members of the centre staff have been videoed reading one of the core stories. It is very special for a child to see a significant adult from their nursery setting on the television at home!

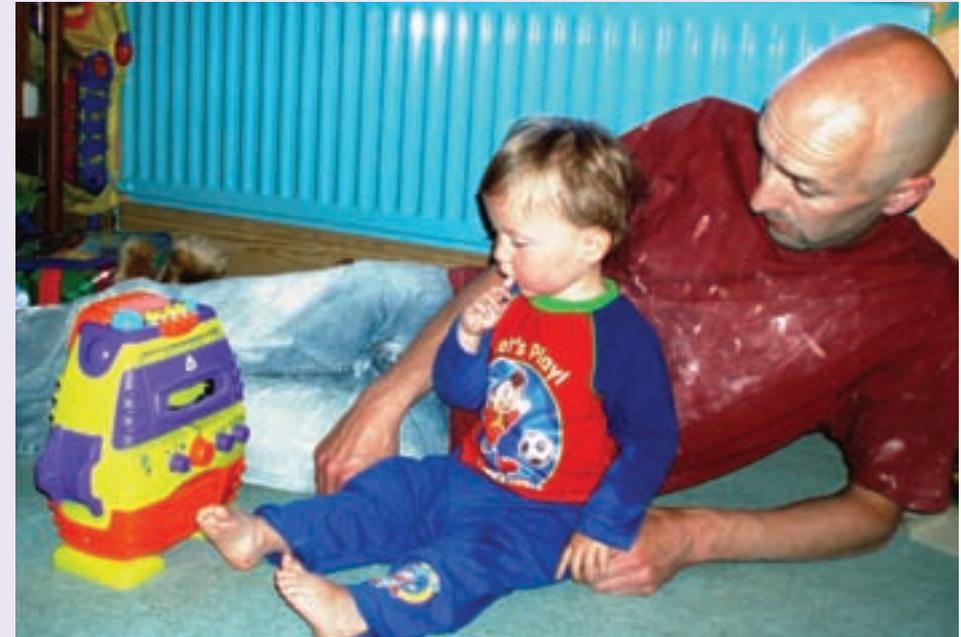
Initially the story is read through once – using a variety of voices, intonation, facial expressions and gestures. This modelling of how to read a story is felt to help illustrate to parents the ways in which a story can be read to best effect.

The story is then read through a second time, with the adult stopping to ask questions and make comments based on the pictures or text.

Again it is felt that this empowers parents and builds confidence to move on to reading to their children in a way which encourages interaction between adult and child.

When the family returns the cassette, video or DVD, the children are encouraged to retell the story to a member of staff. This is recorded, typed up on the computer, printed out and shared with the parent.

The centre is also beginning to adapt this approach for the very youngest children. Packs will include a nursery rhyme tape, CD, video or DVD. The recordings will be made of children from the setting singing familiar nursery rhymes and songs. A rhyme book has already been produced to accompany the packs.



© Crown copyright 2006

