

Section 1 – Videos of storytelling and digital storytelling

Section 2- Importance of storytelling for the promotion of language and literacy

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Introduction :

For a child storytelling is vital for their language and literacy development , enriching their vocabulary , enhancing their comprehension and gives them an understanding of narrative structure. According to the Book Trust(N.D) it is important to start storytelling to the womb as it exposes the sound of rhythm and melody to the foetus which helps towards aiding in early brain and audio development. Storytelling for a foetus in the womb also helps develop a stronger bond with parents as they will recognise voices and tones of their parents and also other relationships around them. Studies have shown that the foetus's hearing system develops at around 24 weeks gestation, which allows them to tune in and allows them to process the sounds around them . Researches have also recognised that newborns are able to recognize words and also recognise spoken passages they have heard during their final six weeks of pregnancy. This shows a significance importance of why storytelling should be introduced throughout pregnancy and should be continued throughout early years.

Storytelling for children has many positive factors , helping a child develop their cognitive skills , particularly in early years as stories are more often instrumental. This allows them to serve as a vehicle for language acquisition , enabling the help of enhancing a child's vocabulary as well as helping them grasp complex concepts through repetition and context. Through a child listening to stories being read to them they then begin to understand sentence structure, narrative flow , and also linguistic nuances which allows the formation of the foundation for future literacy learning. Storytelling also plays a crucial role in problem solving and also develops critical thinking. From the stories being read with the different characters , children engage with characters that face challenges and also make decisions, children then expand their learning by being able to predict outcomes, being able to understand the cause and affect relationships , and evaluate different situations that will happen during

their early years development. All these cognitive skills are critical for their developmental and learning growth journey.

Lev Vygotsky's(1934) explains the importance of storytelling in his sociocultural theory, it serves as a primary tool for developing higher level thinking through social interaction. Vygotsky believed that building the Zone of Proximal Development was the space needed between what a child can do independently and what they could achieve with guidance from a more knowledgeable source such as teachers or parents. His beliefs were that storytelling provided a natural scaffolding framework . For a child to listen to a story there are then exposed to new ideas and complex concepts in an understanding , contextualised way . The adults role for this development helps bridge the gap , by pointing to pictures , asking questions , and also by clarifying events that happens during storytelling.

Use of Props:

The use of props during storytelling is a powerful element . It allows for the enriching narrative by enhancing characters , setting and also the plot of the storyline. For the early years children the use of props is not just used for simple accessories to a story, they are the vital bridge that Vygotsky(1934) links into his theory , that connects abstract language with concrete , and also provides a sensory journey for the children whilst being read a story. Props also help guide children to go from passive listening to a more active listening as they will engage more with the use of props , they will want to participate more and opens up more social opportunities for the children. It helps a child significantly enhance their ability to understand , in the storytelling video based on the story “were going on a bear hunt” the use of props for each scenario the family come across the children understand more with the different sensory tubes used, they will associate the difference of each sensory tube to real life. Props are educational tools that make narrative tangible, accessible and also deeply memorable for young learners.

For the early years children , who are still developing their language skills, props will serve as a crucial visual and tactile anchors for new words and concepts . Using a school setting as an example, a teacher may hold a toy car up whilst saying the word “car” , which allows for the children to connect the object with its correct name.

Using this direct, hands on association helps build up vocabulary far more affectively than just using words alone. Furthermore , the use of props provides a tool for retelling the narrative , which helps the children to be able to structure and sequence the story. When using props such as puppets , children can then physically act out the beginning , middle and end of a story , which allows for them to reinforce their cognitive grasp of the story's plot.

Using props allows storytelling to become a highly interactive and participated event, rather than the usual one way communication from adult to child. Some children may

have shorter attention spans, so introducing the use of props at key points in the story will help them recapture their focus and draw them deeper into the narrative. Interactive storytelling tools, such as a story bag which are filled with objects associated to the story, helps create a sense of wonder and also anticipation. This engagement is beneficial particularly for children with diverse learning needs, as the sensory input helps them access process the story in a way that words alone might not be able to.

During structured storytelling props act as keys for imaginative and also pretend play. These are beneficial for early children's development. Using simple props such as a story mask can inspire a child to create and act out their own narratives. Children using this process is crucial for developing creativity and social emotional skills, as children experiment with different perspectives as well as roles. If using the story of the big bad wolf and using a puppet of the wolf, will allow a child to explore complex emotions such as fear or mischievousness in an environment where they will feel safe and which is controlled.

Overall, the power of the props lies in their ability to engage multiple senses. Also allowing the props to tap into the tactile, visual and also auditory learning styles of children in the early years. The use of props can introduce for children a variety of textures, sounds and movements which allows for the storytelling experience to be richer and more memorable. Using the story "We are going on a bear hunt", it can be brought to life by using different materials for the different terrains. Using this multi sensory approach deepens a child's connection to the narrative and lays a strong foundation for a lifelong love of literacy.

The use of Body Language in Storytelling:

During storytelling for early years children, body language is a powerful and essential tool for communication, capturing children's attention and again same as props enhances their understanding. Since children in the early years are still developing their verbal communication skills, they are heavily reliant on non verbal cues for them to be able to process information and allow for the world around them to make more sense. Using things such as gesture, facial expressions and postures, the storyteller can be able to bring narratives to life which allows for the creation of a more immersive and engaging experience for the audience of early years children.

Body language provides a visual and sensory context which allows for the children to learn the understanding and emotion behind words. Using actions during storytelling helps illustrate narratives, which makes it easier for the children to follow the story's plot and helps the story become more memorable.

It also helps towards the engagement of children. The use of expressive movements, eye contact as well as varied facial expressions helps the memorization of the early years children that are engaged in the storytelling. It helps

them become more focused on the story for a longer period of time. This is particularly useful for captivating children who are usually restless or have shorter attention spans. The storyteller if using a variety of body languages will show how different characters feel and behave. This helps towards children's developmental and emotional awareness and empathy . The story teller may use different actions to imitate different emotions such as frowned face could be linked to angry, or using a jerky movement to represent a nervous character.

Body language also works as an engagement for participation, using various movements and gestures can promote the children to participate in the storytelling. They may join in by imitating noise or movements. This interactive element transforms passive listening into an active, collaborative experience , which plays a crucial part for confidence building for early years.

Conclusion:

In conclusion , storytelling has an importance role in the early years development, serving as far more than just simple entertainment for early years. It plays as such a powerful educational tool that nurtures every aspect of a young child's growth . Developing a child's cognitive and linguistic abilities, to emotional and social understanding. By allowing children to engage with characters, plots and emotions, storytelling allows children to foster the crucial skills like empathy , imagination and critical thinking which they will need during their developmental journey.

The interactive and sensory nature of telling and also acting stories , particularly with the use of body language as well as using props, allows the making of abstract concepts to be concrete and accessible for children of early years . Using this process not only strengthens their vocabulary and literacy but it also creates a shared , positive experience that deepens the relationship between the child or children and the storyteller. A rich storytelling culture in the early years helps build strong foundations for future learning and helps children feel a lifelong love for reading . Storytelling helps the shaping of children to become more confident, articulate and empathetic individuals.

The use of storytelling for children with additional needs , plays a significant part for their developmental journey. Storytelling transcends its traditional role as a narrative device to become a therapeutic , inclusive , and a powerful communication tool. Storytelling adapts the process with multi sensory elements whilst using visual supports and personalized narratives. Storytelling can unlock potential and foster growth across emotional , social domains as well as cognitive.

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