

The Magic of Storytime |





Why tell stories?

One of the many daily activities we undertake is story time. It plays an integral part in caring for and educating young children because of its ability to enhance a range of development areas. Dynamic story telling not only develops a child's language skills but also cognitive functions, such as the concepts of cause and effect and moral and ethical behaviours.

A child's imagination can run wild with their curiosity stimulated. Storytelling presents a great way to explore emotions which can help in a child's understanding of change and frightening events. Books about going to the dentist or hospital, starting at school or making new friends will help a child make sense of the world around them.

As childcare practitioners we have the ability to ensure children are engaged with the world of books and develop into literate young people. We are in the privileged position of helping children enjoy books by reading with them and telling stories that build on a child's interests.

There is far more to engaging a child in books than picking one up and reading the text.



Before reading a book

1

Use age-appropriate books - A four-year-old child will soon lose interest in a book if it is aimed at a different audience age.

2

Choose books in line with the interests of the children - Children are far more likely to become engaged in a story if the content interests them.

3

Don't limit books to story time - If a child shows an interest in a book and is excited to share it with you, take the time to read the story with them.

4

Be familiar with the book - This will help when needing to emphasise a word in the correct place, learn the pace and tune of a rhyme or answer any questions the children may have.

5

Reading den! Create an interesting, enticing and calm place to read stories and allow the children to access this area freely.

6

Rotate books regularly - Add new books as children's interests and the curriculum themes change.



Reading to babies and toddlers

Sharing a story book provides an excellent opportunity for a warm, positive and secure relationship to be built between practitioner and child. There are a host of ways to ensure that the one-to-one time spent reading books with the children meets their needs.

- Find a quiet place to read to young children.
- Allow babies to handle, explore and even taste the books as you're reading. This is how they learn. Make sure that books are cleaned regularly and are part of the cleaning rota.
- Let babies and toddlers try to turn the pages with your help. Talk about the content of the book. What colours can be seen? Encourage the repetition of words or sounds.
- Have books available to explore throughout the day and read little and often.
- Don't expect children to sit still for a whole book.
- Calm babies with nursery rhymes and songs.
- Read books before rest times to help children relax and sleep.



Reading to pre-schoolers

Reading and storytelling can play an important role in learning. Try to incorporate some of the following tips to help pre-school children engage in and enjoy their books.

- Don't overload reading time. Children have different attention spans, look to increase reading time gradually.
- Read to children on a one-to-one basis, this can make them feel special and provides an opportunity for assessment.
- Have books available to explore throughout the day and read little and often.
- Before reading a book take the time to explore it, looking at the illustrations and asking open-ended questions. Ask children what they think is happening. This helps them develop their imagination and problem solving skills.
- Make sure the illustrations are visible to all children.
- Use sound and voice to help enthuse the children. Make the word 'happy' sound happy or the word 'tired' sound tired.
- Incorporate the story into other parts of the day to enhance storytelling and learning opportunities.

Enhancing storytelling

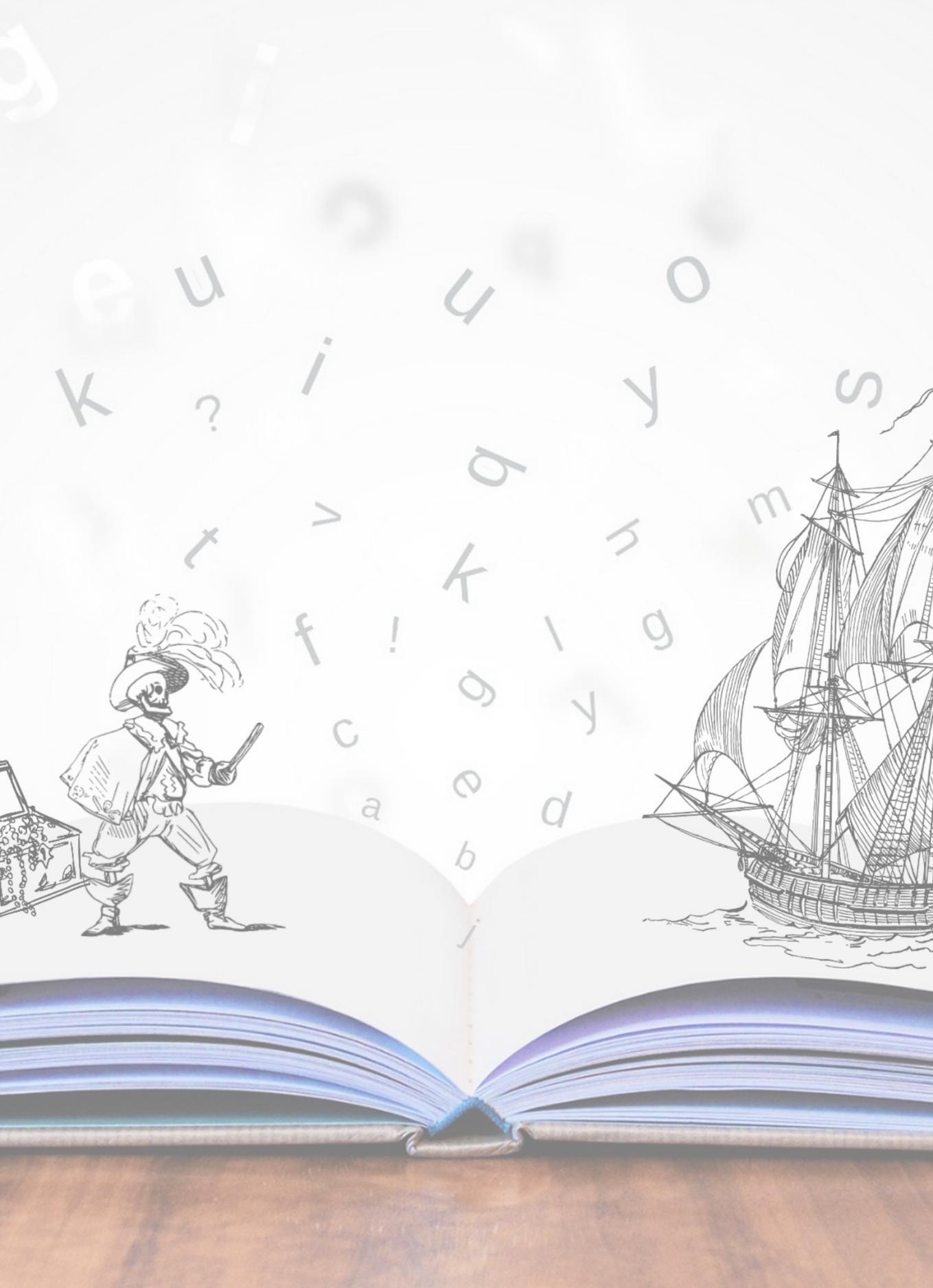
There is an abundance of learning opportunities that can be used to enhance a story outside the book corner. Here's just a few;

A story bag is a great and simple way to enhance story telling. Use a large bag to put a favourite story in and collect supporting materials. Materials can be anything: photographs, pictures, maps and puppets etc. Story bags help provide stimulating language activities, allowing the child to access the resources independently, and can even be taken home to allow parents the opportunity to extend the child's learning at home.

Using illustrations to tell stories is fun and engaging. Imaginations and creativity can run wild. Allowing children to create their own illustrations encourages them to change the narrative of a familiar story.

Story telling is not confined to indoors. As well as allowing their imaginations to run freely, children can be physically more expressive in an outdoor play area. Other materials can also be used, such as water, mud and sand.

Using recyclable materials commonly found in the home, children can make their own recreation of a scene in their favourite story.





Early Years Wales Blynyddoedd Cynnar Cymru

For more resources please visit:

<https://www.earlyyears.wales/en/welsh-language-support>

Am fwy o adnoddau ewch i:

<https://www.earlyyears.wales/cy/hwb-adnoddau>