

## LESSON 6 » RETELLING PERSONAL STORIES



*I can help my child be a reader!*

LESSONS FOR PARENTS IN SUPPORTING EARLY LITERACY





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*Whatever you do, wherever you are,  
talk and read with your child.*

### TRAINER'S NOTES

### WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES?

1. Parents will learn:
  - why it is important to tell children personal stories
  - how to tell children personal stories
  - how to ask questions to encourage children to tell personal stories
2. Parents will review how to use songs to teach children new words.
3. Parents will review how to help children listen for rhyming words.
4. Parents will increase the number of times they talk with their children each day.
5. Parents will increase the number of times they read with their children each day.

The focus of this lesson is on personal stories and not on teaching children to retell a story that has been read to them.

### THIS LESSON LINKS TO THESE IOWA EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

*Infant and Toddler Early Learning Standards*

Area 4 – Communication, Language, and Literacy

4.1: Language Understanding and Use

4.2: Early Literacy

*Preschool Early Learning Standards*

Area 10 – Communication, Language, and Literacy

10.1: Language Understanding and Use

10.2: Early Literacy



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**This lesson links to Every Child Reads modules for early care and education providers:**

*Every Child Reads: Birth to Three*

Module III (Engaging in conversation with infants and toddlers)

Module IV (Reading with infants and toddlers using interactive strategies)

*Every Child Reads: Three to Five Years*

**Language Module, Principle 1**

(Children need to have many experiences and interactions to develop background knowledge and language skills.)

**Language Module, Principle 3**

(Children Need to Learn and Use New Vocabulary Continuously)

**Reading Module, Principle 1**

(Children Need Opportunities to Interact with Books.)

### MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT

### WHAT MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT WILL I NEED TO TEACH THIS LESSON?

- Book distributed during Lesson 5 (#5)
- DVD (#20)
- TV and DVD player (#20)
- Chart paper, tape and marking pens (#23, #39, #48, #50)
- Books to distribute to families (#46)
- Sticky notes (#46)
- 3x5 index cards (#54)
- Materials for the parent-child activity. For the storytelling activity, you might want to have some props available such as toy animals. (#59)



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### PREPARATION

#### WHAT DO I NEED TO DO BEFORE TEACHING THIS LESSON?

- Find a video clip you can use for step #20 of an adult telling a story to a child. A possibility is the clip, “Story Time,” from the DVD, *Every Moment Counts*.
- Prepare a personal story to tell during the role play. (#34)
- Prepare chart paper. (#39)
- For #52, prepare a demonstration, using the book you will distribute to families during this lesson, that models for families how to:
  - > make comments when reading books
  - > ask questions when reading books
  - > respond to what a child says and add a little more information
  - > teach children new words
  - > point to pictures when reading
  - > words that rhyme in a louder voice



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### OUTLINE

### TRAINER'S OUTLINE

#### I. Standard Introduction

- A. Participant Introduction
  - 1. Name
  - 2. Child's name and age
  - 3. What rhymes or songs you sang or said with your child since our last meeting.

#### II. Review Parent Follow-Up Activity:

- A. Review:
  - 1. teaching words through songs and books
  - 2. teaching rhyming words
- B. Did your children like singing the songs and rhymes? How could you tell?
- C. What new words did you teach your child before singing a song or saying a rhyme?
- D. What new words did you teach from the book?

#### III. Present Key Points

- A. Introduce personal storytelling
- B. Provide an example
- C. Invite participants to share a story of their own
- D. Explain the importance and value of storytelling

#### IV. Model Key Points

- A. Show and discuss a video of an adult telling a story.
- B. Starting and ending a story
- C. Stories with beginnings, middles and ends
- D. How children tell stories
  - 1. Tips for telling stories



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### V. Conduct an Activity with the Adults to Reinforce Key Points

- A. Participants practice telling personal stories
- B. Distribute book to parents
- C. Identify new words for teaching
- D. Note the new word with sticky notes and put in the book at the appropriate location
- E. Identify questions
- F. Write questions on sticky notes and put in the book on the appropriate location

### VI. Model Reading Book

- A. Making comments when reading books
- B. Asking questions when reading books
- C. Responding to what a child says and add a little more information
- D. Teaching children new words
- E. Pointing to pictures when reading
- F. Saying words that rhyme in a louder voice

### VII. Summarize Key Points and Assign Parent Follow-Up Activity

- A. Review key points of the lesson
- B. Parent Follow-Up Activity:
  - 1. Write how many times you will read with your child during the next month
  - 2. Write how many times you will tell a personal story to your child



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### **VIII. Summarize key points**

- A. Importance of children telling personal stories
- B. Goal: have them tell about something that happen using lots of words
- C. Have a story with a beginning, middle and end
- D. Storytelling is a life-long skill
- E. Modeling storytelling to our children

### **IX. Conduct a Parent-Child Activity to Reinforce Key Points:**

- A. Participants tell personal stories to their children
- B. Observe storytelling
- C. Model correct methods if appropriate and necessary

### **X. Closing Remarks**



## TRAINER'S SCRIPT

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### CONDUCT A FOCUS ACTIVITY

**Introduce yourself.** (See introduction suggestions in the Manual Overview, “How do I begin each session?”)

1. Please tell us:
  - a. your name
  - b. your child’s name and age
  - c. what rhymes or songs you sang or said with your child since our last meeting.

### REVIEW PARENT FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY

**If the participants are not willing to talk in a large group, divide them into small groups and assign two or three questions to each group. After five minutes, call them back together and discuss the questions as a large group.**

2. Did your children like singing the songs and rhymes?  
How could you tell?
3. When did you do these activities with your children?
4. What new words did you teach your child before singing a song or saying a rhyme?
5. What new words did you teach from the book?

**Show participants the book distributed during Lesson 5.**

6. Most of you have children in the two-three year old age range. How could you share this book with an older child—let’s say a four year old? What would you do the same? Differently?



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7. How could you share it with a younger child? Let's say a six month old. What would you do the same? Differently?

### PRESENT KEY POINTS

8. When you were a child, did anyone in your family tell you stories about when they were growing up or when you were a baby or young child?

**The following is an example of how to demonstrate personal story telling. You can use it or tell your own personal story.**

9. For example, I remember a story my mother told my brothers and I. When my mom was a teenager, she was afraid of dogs. Her younger sister had a little black poodle. It was so little it could fit in a coat pocket or purse. One day, every one was gone from the house except for my mom and the dog. When mom was ready to go to work, the little dog stood in front of the door and barked at her. The dog would not let her leave the house and go to work. My mom was scared of the tiny dog so she ran back to her room and jumped on her bed. The dog followed her and kept barking. Mom couldn't go to work that day because she was afraid of the little dog.

We heard that story every time we asked my mother if we could have a dog!

10. Can anyone give us a short version of a family story that they were told when they were little? It was probably a story that was told many times.

**Ask one or two parents to tell a family story if they wish.**



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11. Every family has stories and storytellers. Storytellers might tell stories about moving to America or a special birthday or riding a bike in a race. They might tell stories about the lives of other family members—like how Uncle Joe had to walk ten miles in a blizzard to get to school!
12. Telling children stories helps them know who they are and where they came from. It also teaches them new words. They hear words that we use in our story that they may not have heard before. For example, in my story, I used the words *teenager*, *poodle* and *tiny*. Those words might be new to some children.
13. Telling stories is another way to talk with your children. It teaches them how stories are put together—that stories have a beginning, middle and end. That may be something you think you always knew but children need to learn that stories have a beginning, middle and end. It will help them when they learn to read and write and when they start telling stories themselves.
14. Eventually, we want children to tell us stories—repeat stories we have told them, be able to tell us what happened in a movie or TV show they watched, a book they read or what their day was like at school.
15. When children tell us stories, they practice their speaking skills. They use new words they heard someone say in the movie or in a story they were told. They learn to tell stories that have a beginning, middle and end.
16. We can teach children to tell stories if we tell them stories. They watch and listen to us and learn how to tell stories themselves.



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17. What kind of stories can you tell your children? You can tell them stories that:
- you were told as a child
  - happened to you when you were growing up
  - happened to your child as he was younger. Children love to hear stories about when they were babies.

18. Talk with your neighbor about stories you could tell.

**After one or two minutes, call the group back together.**

19. What are the stories you might tell your child? Give us a short description.

**Ask several participants to report.**

### MODEL KEY POINTS

20. We are going to practice telling stories. Before we do so, let's watch this short video clip. Watch what the adults do when they are telling stories.

**Show the video clip you prepared. You may want to show it twice.**

21. What did the adults do when telling stories?

**Mention the following if the group does not: Used props.**

22. Do you have questions or comments about what the adults did?



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### PRESENT KEY POINTS

23. When you tell your story to your child, how will you start it? Think about how the adults in the DVD started their stories but also think of other ways you could do so.

**Record responses.**

**Mention the following if the group does not:**

- **Once upon a time.**
- **Once, I...**
- **When you were little, you...**
- **Remember when...**
- **Did I tell you about...**

24. When you are finished telling the story, ask a question if your child is old enough to talk. You could ask, “Did that ever happen to you?” or “Can you tell me about...”

25. For example, if you were my children and I told you the story of my mom being afraid of the dog, at the end of the story, I might ask, “Can you tell me about a time when you were afraid of an animal?”

26. I would then look at you and listen to what you said. If you got stuck telling your story, I might say, “Tell me more.” Or, I might ask another question like, “And then what happened?”

27. When you ask questions at the end of your story, you are encouraging your child to tell you a story.



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28. Two and three year-olds won't tell us detailed stories with lots of words and a beginning, middle and end. Two year-olds usually start telling stories by talking about negative or bad things that happened to them. They love to talk about their injuries, for example!
29. So, using my mom and the dog story, if I asked, "Can you tell me about a time when you were afraid of an animal?" a two year old might say, "Puppy bite." They will usually tell you one thing or event. You will need to encourage them to talk more by asking another question or saying something like, "Tell me more."
30. By the time they are three years old, most children will tell a story with more details: "Puppy bite me. He runned away."
31. Even if your child can't talk or only says a few words, get in the habit of telling her stories about your life, the life of others in your family and when she was young. She will be learning to listen to you and she will be hearing new words. She will also be learning who she is and where she came from.
32. Children need lots of practise before they will be bale to tell stories using lots of words and with beginning, middle and end. When they are two and three years old, they are just beginning this skill. Start practising with them now and by the time they are five they will be great story tellers.



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33. Here are a few more tips that will help you tell stories:
- Use props when you can. They work with some stories but not with others.
  - Be dramatic when you tell stories—it keeps the children interested. Use different voices. Use hand gestures and different facial expressions. For example, if the person in the story is scared, look scared.
  - Keep them short.

### MODEL KEY POINTS

34. For this next activity, I need a volunteer who will pretend to be a two or three year old. I will tell the volunteer a story. Then I will ask him/her a question and I hope she or he will answer it!

**Model how to tell a personal story with a parent who is willing to do so. Tell your story and then ask a question to encourage the parent to tell a story. Debrief your modeling with these questions.**

35. How did I start my story? What are some other ways I could have started it?
36. What question did I ask at the end of the story? What other questions could I have asked that would encourage my child to tell a story?
37. Let's say my child was telling a story and then stopped after a few words. What could I say to encourage her to say more?
38. Did my story have a beginning, middle and end?

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### CONDUCT AN ACTIVITY WITH THE ADULTS TO REINFORCE KEY POINTS

Write the following on chart paper.

39. Now it is your turn to tell a story! Here is what we will do. I will give you a few minutes to:
  - a. think about the story you are going to tell your child
  - b. decide how you will begin your story
  - c. decide what question you will ask when you're finished telling your story that will encourage your child to tell a story
40. Then, I will ask you to practice your story with a partner. When your children come back, you will also have a chance to tell the story to them.
41. Take a few minutes now to think about what you are going to do. If you can't think of a real story, make one up.
42. If there is something in the room that you can use as a prop, please feel free to use it.

**After about three or four minutes, call the group back together.**

43. Pick someone to be your partner. First one person should tell his story and ask his question. Then, the "child" should answer the question. Then switch roles.
44. Questions about what to do? Remember when you are the "child" you are only two or three years old so we don't expect you to use lots of words when answering questions or telling a story of your own.





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**When everyone is finished telling his or her story, call the group back together.**

45. What will you do the same when you tell your story to your child?

46. What will you do differently?



**Distribute the book being provided to participants and sticky notes.**

47. Please look through this and see what new words you could teach your child.

**Give the participants about three minutes to do so. Then call the group back together.**

48. What words in the story will you teach your child?



**Record the new words the parents identify on chart paper. If the parents attending have a broad age range of children, ask them which words would be best to teach an infant, two year old and four year old. Talk with them about how you would explain what the word means if you were reading the book to children of these different ages.**

49. Please write a word or two that you are going to teach and what you are going to say when you teach it on a sticky note.

**Give the participants one to two minutes to do so.**

50. What questions could you ask your child when you read this book with him?



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**Record the questions on chart paper. If the parents attending have a broad age range of children, ask them which questions would be best to ask an infant, two year-old and four year-old.**

51. Please write a few questions you might ask your child on sticky notes.
52. Please push your book away. I am now going to read the book. Watch what strategies I use so we can discuss them later.



**Read the book to the parents and model:**

- **making comments when reading books.**
- **asking questions when reading books.**
- **responding to what a child says and add a little more information.**
- **teaching children new words .**
- **pointing to pictures when reading.**
- **saying words that rhyme in a louder voice.**

53. What strategies did you see me use?
54. What other strategies could I have used?



**Distribute index cards to each participant.**

55. Please write how many times you will read with your child during the next month. Write “read” next to that number. Then write how many times you will tell a personal story to your child and write “talk” next to it.



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### SUMMARY

56. Today, we talked about how to tell children personal stories. We do this to help children learn new words and information about themselves and their world. Our goal is to have our children be able to tell a story about something that happened to them using lots of words. Another goal is to have them tell a story that has a beginning, middle and end. Knowing that stories have a beginning, middle and end and knowing lots of new words will help the children learn to read and write reports and stories when they are in school.
57. We are also teaching them a life-long skill—how to be a storyteller.
58. The way we teach them is by modeling—tell a story to get a story. Children listen to us tell them a story and that is how they learn to tell one.
59. Your children will be coming soon and you will have a chance to tell them your story. After you ask them a question, hopefully they will tell you a story!

### CONDUCT A PARENT-CHILD ACTIVITY TO REINFORCE KEY POINTS

**Parents telling personal stories to their children and encouraging their children to tell stories is the activity for this lesson.**

**As the activity is occurring, walk around the group. Observe parents to see if they:**

- are telling a story with a beginning, middle and end.
- ask a question to encourage the child to tell a personal story.
- wait at least five seconds for children to respond to the first question before asking another question or making another comment.
- look at the child when talking with her.



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As the activity is occurring, walk around the group. If you notice a parent not practicing the strategies correctly, try to find an opportunity when you can talk with the child, while his or her parent is watching you, and demonstrate how to use the strategies correctly. Do not call attention to the “mistake.” Instead, demonstrate another example of the correct way to use the strategies with a child.

This will be a short activity so you may wish to do a second one that encourages parents and children to talk with each other.

**END**

### CLOSING REMARKS

60. Thanks for coming! I hope you have learned some useful things during these classes. And, more importantly, I hope you are willing to practice the skills and ideas we talked about over the past lessons. Most important of all, remember *Whatever you do, wherever you are, talk and read with your child.*