

# **CHILDREN'S BOOK GUIDE FOR LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT**

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# PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS



Shared story reading is a method that can be used to target phonological awareness. Ziolkowski and Goldstein (2008) found that both a rhyme and initial sound intervention using shared book reading was effective for improving phonological awareness.

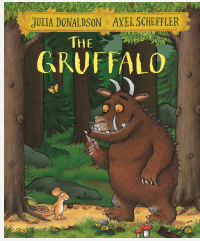
## Targeting rhyme through shared book reading:

- Choose books that have a lot of rhyming pairs
- Help the child become accustomed to hearing rhymes.
  - Highlight the rhymes for the child, for example, “Sheep rhymes with jeep. They sound the same at the end. Sheep Jeep.”
- Help the child recognize two words that rhyme.
  - Have child complete the rhyme, for example, “Sheep sounds like \_\_\_\_”
- Help the child to produce rhymes
  - Have child think of new words that rhyme, ex: “What else rhymes with sheep?”

## Targeting initial sounds and alliteration through shared book reading

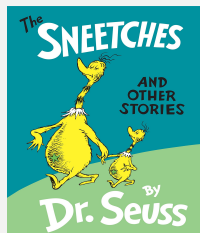
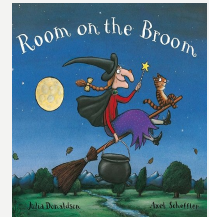
- Choose books that can highlight certain sounds, such as books that use a lot of alliteration
- Emphasize the letter you want to work on
  - For example, “This is the letter S”
- Have child point to the target letters
  - For example, “Find the letter S”
- Use a sentence completion strategy using words and sounds in the book
  - For example, “Snake starts with the /s/ sound. Sock starts with \_\_\_ sound”

# PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS BOOKS



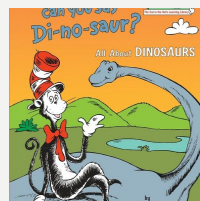
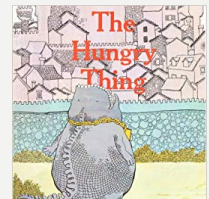
*The Gruffalo* by Julia Donaldson tells the story of a mouse who takes a walk in the woods and meets many animals who want to eat him. So the mouse invents a story about a creature called the Gruffalo! This book has many rhymes that may be used to target phonological awareness. Other goals that can be targeted with this story include narrative sequencing and character description.

*Room on the Broom* by Julia Donaldson tells the adventures of a witch and her cat on one windy night. This book has many rhyming pairs that can be used for targeting phonological awareness. Other goals that can be targeted include both regular and irregular past tense verbs.



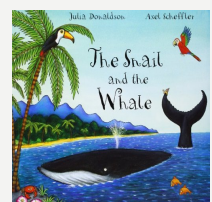
*The Sneetches* by Dr. Seuss has many rhyming pairs with novel words making it excellent for targeting phonological awareness. The star-bellied Sneetches and plain-bellied Sneetches treat each other disrespectfully until realizing how it would be better if they treated each other respectfully. Therefore on top of rhyme, this book can be used for targeting social-emotional communication.

*The Hungry Thing* by Jan Sleipan is filled with many rhyming pairs. All the towns people try to understand what the Hungry Thing wants, but only one little boy is able to understand that “feetloaf” sounds like “meatloaf”. You can have the child try and guess what the Hungry Thing wants to eat by finding the rhyme.

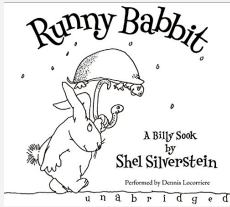


*Oh Can You Say Dinosaur* by Dr. Seuss teaches kids all about fossils and dinosaurs, therefore can easily be incorporated into school units. The story uses rhymes, great for targeting phonological awareness. The book also teaches the different dinosaur names which is great for having kids break them up into syllables.

*The Snail and the Whale* by Julia Donaldson tells the adventures of a snail who hitches a ride on a whale's tail and gets to see the world. This book is filled with many great rhyming pairs excellent for targeting phonological awareness. This book also uses lots of adjectives and descriptive language.

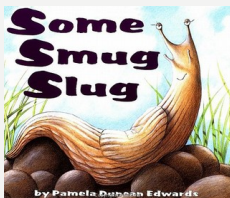
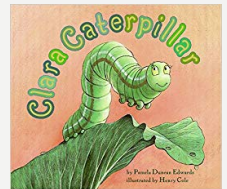


# PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS BOOKS



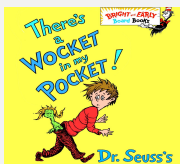
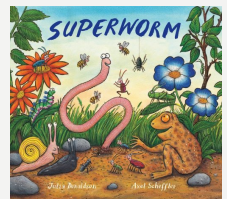
*Runny Babbit* by Shel Silverstein tells the story of Runny, who speaks in spoonerisms. For example, instead of calling Mummy and Dad, he calls them “Duddy and Mad”. This book is a fun way to have older children play with the sounds in words. You can have kids predict how Runny would say certain things.

*Clara Caterpillar* by Pamela Duncan Edwards tells the story of Clara, a shy caterpillar who is confronted by a rude caterpillar named Catisha. The alliterations in this book can be used to highlight the /k/ sound. The book can also be used to support inferencing because of the rich social-emotional content.



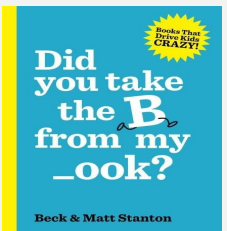
*Some Smug Slug* by Pamela Duncan Edwards tells the story of a slug whose pride gets him into trouble when he ignores the warnings of others. The alliterations in this book can be used to target the /s/ sound. The letter /s/ is hidden in the illustrations on each page, so you can try and have kids find it!

*Superworm* by Julia Donaldson is a story about a super strong worm who gets kidnapped by the Evil Wizard King, and needs his friends to save him. This story is filled with many rhyming pairs great for targeting phonological awareness. There are also multiple alliterations in this book that may be used to target the /s/ sound.



*There's a Wocket in my Pocket* by Dr. Seuss is a book of hilarious nonsense rhymes that may be used to target phonological awareness. The nonsense rhymes may be entertaining for kids and can encourage them to come up with their own rhymes.

In *Did You Take a B from My \_ook?* by Beck and Matt Stanton, when the narrator sneezes all the Bs are suddenly missing from the book. This interactive book is great for targeting phonological awareness through initial sound deletion, sound/phoneme manipulation. This book is also great for developing print awareness.



# VOCABULARY



Reading stories aloud is a great way to develop vocabulary in young children, beginning readers and even older and more proficient readers (Kindle, 2009).

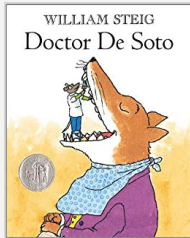
Reading stories aloud exposes children to vocabulary used in books, which can be different than their everyday vocabulary. This can be achieved implicitly, but also through use of explicit strategies.

## Instructional strategies

- Questioning
  - Asking the child “Do you know what a \_\_\_ is?”
- Providing examples
  - Giving the child an example
    - Ex: “Cars and trucks are types of vehicles”
  - Asking the child for examples
    - Ex: “What’s a type of vehicle?”
- Clarification and correction
  - Correcting or clarifying responses to misunderstandings or partial understandings
- Extension
  - Extending a child’s simplistic definition by providing more information
- Labeling
  - Pointing to the illustrations while reading tricky words
- Imagery
  - Using facial expressions, sounds or physical movements to show word meanings
- Morphemic analysis
  - Teaching children to look for any familiar parts of the word

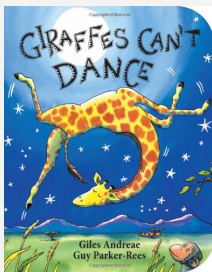
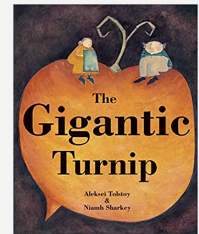
(Kindle, 2009)

# VOCABULARY BOOKS



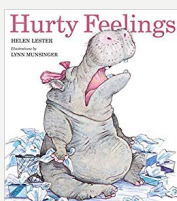
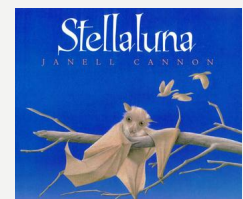
*Doctor De Soto* by William Steig is about an animal dentist who, with the help of his wife, is asked to treat a fox with a bad toothache. The story is filled with rich tier 2 vocabulary words such as *popular*, *timid*, *delicate*, *promptly*, *dainty* and many more. The story can also be used to work on narrative retell, since there is a clear sequence of events.

*The Gigantic Turnip* by Aleksei Tolstoy is an amusing retelling of the classic Russian tale about a farmer whose turnip is impossible to pull from the ground. There are a lot of new vocabulary words that may be targeted in this book, such as *speckled*, *ripened*, *yanked*, and many more. The repetition in the book helps to highlight these vocabulary words even more.



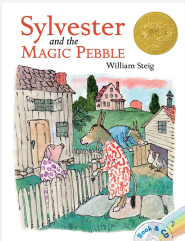
*Giraffes Can't Dance* by Gilles Andreae is a story about Gerard the Giraffe, who wants nothing more to dance, but his crooked knees and thin legs make it difficult. The book contains several higher level vocabulary words that can be targeted such as *entranced*, *miracle*, and *dumsy*. The story has an important moral which can be inferred by children. The rhyming nature of the story is also great for targeting phonological awareness.

*Stellaluna* by Janell Cannon is a story about a young bat who becomes separated from its mother and becomes adopted by a group of birds. The book is filled with rich vocabulary such as *curious*, *gripping*, *embarrassing*, and much more. The story also teaches an important lesson that may be inferred by kids. The story is also good for narrative retell.



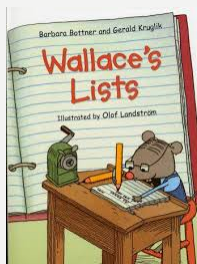
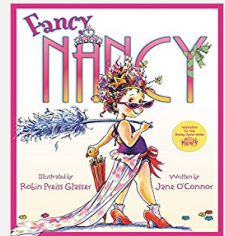
*Hurty Feelings* by Helen Lester is about a sensitive hippo whose feelings become hurt very easily. The book has lots of vocabulary that may be targeted for language therapy, such as *sturdy*, *fragile*, *perfection*, *rude*, etc. The story also has a lot of social-emotional content that may be targeted as well.

# VOCABULARY BOOKS



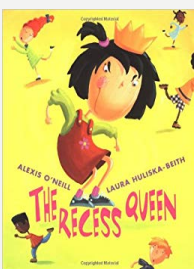
*Sylvester and the Magic Pebble* by William Steig is about a donkey who finds a pebble that grants wishes. The story is filled with a lot of rich vocabulary that may be targeted in therapy, such as *relatives*, *startled*, *bewildered*, *inquire*, and much more. The story may also be used to work on narrative retell, since there is a clear sequence of events that can be retold.

*Fancy Nancy* by Jane O'Connor is about a girl with a larger than life personality, who likes anything fancy – even using what she calls “fancy words”. This book is great for targeting some new vocabulary words such as *stupendous*, *ecstatic*, *accessories*, *posh*, *escort* and much more. There are many sequels to this book as well with even more new vocabulary words.



*Wallace's Lists* by B. Bottner and G. Kruglik is about a mouse named Wallace who only likes to do things that are on his list. One day, he meets Albert who teaches him about spontaneity. The book contains some advanced tier 2 vocabulary words that may be introduced, such as *automatically*, *dreary*, *torrents*, *dumbfounded*, *drenched*, and many more. The book may also help children who have a hard time with unexpected changes.

*Big Words for Little People* by Jamie Lee Curtis is about a large, boisterous family that discover the power of language. New vocabulary words are taught in a more explicit manner in this book, such as *cooperate*, *impatient*, *privacy*, *persevere*, and much more. Children can be asked to link these new words to their life.



*The Recess Queen* by Alexis O'Neill is about Mean Jean, a bully who rules the playground, until a new girl named Katie Sue comes to school and asks to play with her. The two become friends and the playground is a happy place again. This book has some tier 2 vocabulary words that may be targeted such as *gaped*, *disaster*, and *record*. The book is also good for targeting social-communication through inferencing of feelings.

# NARRATIVE LANGUAGE

Narrative language skills are difficult for many children with DLD. Impaired narrative language skills can impact both academic achievement and social communication skills (Crawford & Landa, 2018).



Shared book reading can be used to target narrative language development in children. Stories may bring children's attention to the characters, settings, plot, sequencing, and solution, which are all important elements in narrative development.

## Prompts

When reading stories with rich narratives, children can be prompted to think about these different elements that go into a story.

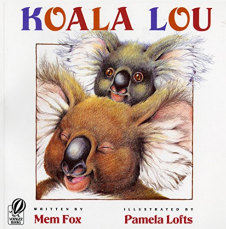
- Characters
  - Who are the characters in the story?
- Setting
  - Where does the story take place?
- Initiating event, problem, plot
  - What big event started the story? What is the problem?
- Story sequencing
  - What happened at the beginning of the story?
  - What happened next?
  - What happened at the end of the story?
- Solution/lesson
  - How was the problem solved?
  - What did the characters learn?

## Narrative Retell

Narrative retell is another common method of eliciting narratives from children. Children may hear the story once and be asked to retell the story using the pictures. Wordless picture books can be a useful tool for narrative retell as well. Children can use the pictures to retell it in a cohesive narrative.

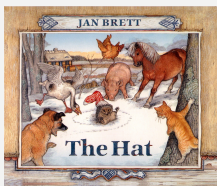
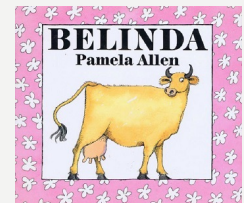


# NARRATIVE LANGUAGE BOOKS



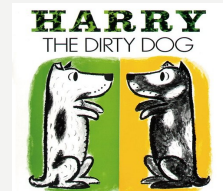
*Koala Lou* by Mem Fox is about a koala who loves to hear her mother tell her how much she loves her. However, when her mother forgets one day, Koala Lou enters the Bush Olympics, intending to win her mother's love. This book is great for narrative retell, since children are able to describe the characters, the problem, the sequencing, and the resolution.

*Belinda* by Pamela Allen is about a cow that is particular about who milks her. This story is great for narrative retell since there are clear characters, setting, an initiating event, problem, and resolution. The ending of the story also offers a great opportunity for children to make inferences about the story.



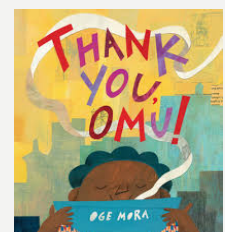
*The Hat* by Jan Brett is about a hedgehog who wears a stocking as a hat. All the other animals make fun of him. This story may be used to work on narrative retell. Children may be guided to identify the characters, setting, and plot of the story. The vivid illustrations also make it a great story for making predictions.

*Harry the Dirty Dog* by Gene Zion is about a white dog with black spots who hates baths, until one day he becomes so dirty that his family don't recognize him anymore. The story has a traditional opening, character description, setting changes, a problem, and resolution that make it excellent for narrative retelling.



*Goldilocks and Just One Bear* by Leigh Hodgkinson is a modern version of the classic fairy tale, except in this version, a bear is lost in the city until he stops to rest at an apartment. This story is great for making predictions especially if kids know the original story. This book is great for narrative retelling because the sequencing events can help guide children to retell the story.

*Thank you Omu* by Oge Mora is about a woman who makes stew and shares it with her neighbors one by one until there is no stew left for herself. This story is great for narrative language since there are many characters to describe, a clear sequence of events, and a final resolution. The book is also great for vocabulary development with words such as *wafted* and *scrumptious*.



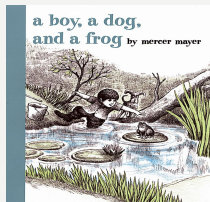
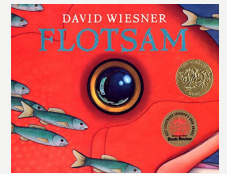
# NARRATIVE LANGUAGE BOOKS

## WORDLESS PICTURE BOOKS



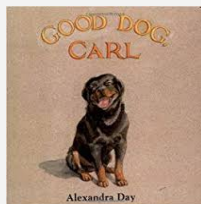
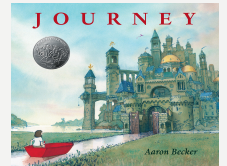
*Chalk* by Bill Thomson is about three children who find a magical piece of chalk that sparks an exciting series of events. This wordless picture contains an initiating event, sequencing, and solution that may be retold by children.

*Flotsam* by David Wiesner is a wordless picture book about a boy who likes to collect things that wash up on the beach, until one day he finds something spectacular. Children may use this book to describe the characters, setting, plot, and resolution.



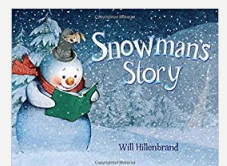
*Frog Where Are You?* by Mercer Meyer is a classic wordless picture book used by SLPs for narrative retell. The book tells the story of a boy and a frog as they go searching for their new friend. The story can be used for identifying characters and setting, and for sequential story telling.

*Journey* by Aaron Becker is a wordless picture book about a bored little girl who is longing for adventure. With her red marker in hand, she draws her way to an exciting journey. The story can be used for identifying characters, settings, and different obstacles.



*Good Dog Carl* is about a mother who leaves her baby with their dog Carl for the day, and they go on an exciting adventures. This wordless picture book may be used for expanding oral narratives and sequencing events through the vivid images. There are also multiple other Carl books that use the wordless book format.

*Snowman's Story* by Will Hildebrand is about a snowman who comes to life when a rabbit hiding inside a hat lands on his head. The vivid illustrations make this story good for narrative retell and sequencing.



# INFERENCING AND PREDICTING



Inferencing is the process of connecting ideas in a text to produce non-explicit details about a text in order to develop better understanding. Inferencing has been found to be an important factor for comprehension (Kelly & Moses, 2018).

## Selecting books to foster inferential discussions

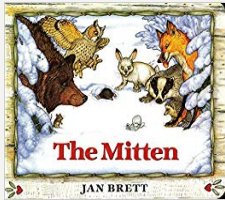
- Ambiguous texts
  - These texts can be used to spark discussions for inferring the ending of stories
- Stories that are being used to teach a lesson
  - These texts can be used to spark discussions about inferring the authors message
- Fractured fairy tales
  - These texts can be used to spark discussions about the trustworthiness of characters

Inferential book reading strategies have been found to be effective for improving children's language and literacy development (Dunst et al., 2010).

## The inferencing strategies found to be most effective were:

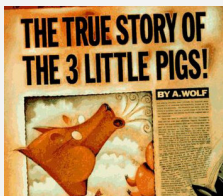
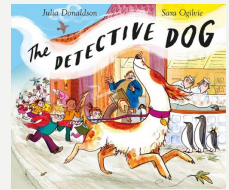
- Asking open ended questions
- Providing or requesting decontextualized explanations
- Relating events to a child's personal experiences
- Asking children to make predictions about a story

# INFERCING AND PREDICTING BOOKS



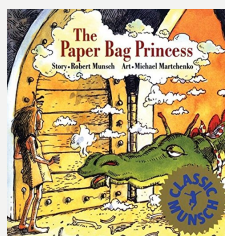
*The Mitten* by Jan Brett is a great book for engaging kids and helping them make predictions about a story. When Nicki drops his white mitten in the snow, one by one forest animals make it their home. Each page includes a little illustration showing what's going to happen making the book great for making predictions.

*The Detective Dog* by Julia Donaldson follows Nell, the detective dog as she uses her sense of smell to solve mysteries. This book is great for helping kids make inferences and predictions in the story to help Nell solve the mystery. The book also has many rhyming pairs great for targeting phonological awareness.



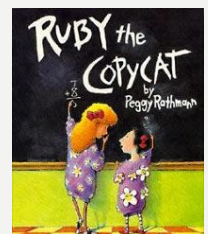
*The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs* tells the story of the three little pigs through the perspective of the wolf. This fractured fairy tale style book can be used to help children make inferences about the trustworthiness of characters. This book can also help highlight point of views necessary for social communication.

*The Night Gardener* by the Fan brothers is about a boy who wakes up every morning to find trees in his neighbourhood transformed into beautiful animals. The vivid illustrations in this book makes it great for helping kids make predictions and inferences about what will happen next.

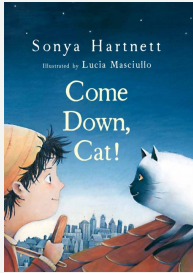


*The Paper Bag Princess* by Robert Munsch reverses the princess and dragon stereotype. After Elizabeth saves Prince Ronald from the dragon, Prince Ronald's ungratefulness leads Elizabeth to decide that she is okay without him. This book is great for having kids make inferences. For example, you could ask kids "why do you think Elizabeth decided not to marry Ronald?"

*Ruby the Copycat* by Peggy Rathmann tells the story of Ruby, a new student at school who wants to be just like Angela, until Ruby's teacher teaches her the importance of being yourself. There are a lot of emotions throughout the story that can be inferred through the captivating illustrations. The story also has many opportunities to make predictions about what will happen next.

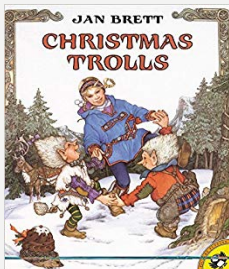
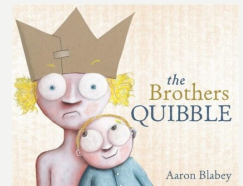


# INFERCING AND PREDICTING BOOKS



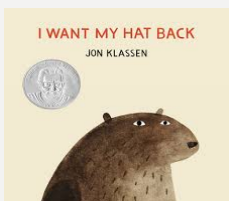
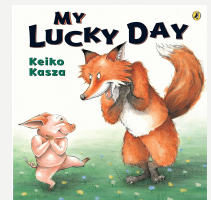
*Come Down, Cat* by Sonya Hartnett tells the story of Nicholas whose cat won't come down from the roof. This book is great for having kids inference the emotions of the characters. The story also provides opportunities for kids to predict what will happen next. For example, asking kids "what do you think that sound is". The structure of the story is also great for working on sequencing and narrative retell skills.

*The Brothers Quibble* by Aaron Blabey is about a Spalding, an only child, who must adjust when he becomes an older brother. The illustrations in this book are excellent for drawing inferences from body language and facial expressions. The story can also spark discussions to help kids infer the authors message.



*The Christmas Trolls* by Jan Brett is a wonderfully illustrated story about a girl named Treva who confronts two trolls to teach them how to celebrate Christmas. The vivid illustrations in this story are helpful to help children make predictions and inferences about what is happening behind the scenes. The story also has a lot of social-emotional content to help highlight the importance of sharing and being kind to one another.

In *My Lucky Day* by Keiko Kasza, a fox thinks it's his lucky day when he answers the door to a delicious-looking piglet. But the seemingly innocent piglet is smarter than he looks! This story is great for helping children make inferences, because there is much more to the story than what is explicitly said in the text.



*I Want My Hat Back* by Jon Klassen is about who encounters many animals as he searches for his hat, until he remembers something important. The ambiguous ending to the story makes it great for drawing inferences. Children may also have to draw inferences about the reliability of the characters.

# PRAGMATICS AND SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

Shared story reading is a great method to develop social communication skills in both typically developing children and children with DLD.



**The following items should be considered when choosing books to work on social communication skills:**

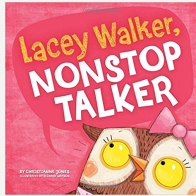
- Rich social and emotional content
  - Specific social situations
  - Characters experiencing specific emotions
  - Characters learning to express feelings appropriately, manage emotions, behave prosocially
- Engaging illustrations that help highlight certain emotions that characters are feeling
- Level of language complexity that is appropriate for the child so that they are able to attend to the social and emotional content

**The following tips can be used to help highlight social-emotional content while reading:**

- Introduce the book by setting up the context and drawing attention to what the child should focus on
  - Example: ‘This is a story about X’ ‘Think about how X is feeling in this story’
- Use prompts throughout the story to draw the child’s attention to the social-emotional content
  - Examples: ‘Look at X’s face, ‘See how her mouth and eyes are wide open’, ‘Can you make an excited face’, ‘Why do you think she’s excited’, ‘What should she tell her friend’
- Summarize the story to help direct children to explain new concepts, make conclusions, draw parallels to their own life
- Use exaggerated intonation and stress to help bring the child’s attention to the social-emotional content of the story
- Reenact the story!

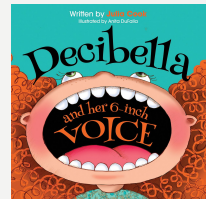
(Brinton & Fujiki, 2017)

# PRAGMATICS AND SOCIAL COMMUNICATION BOOKS



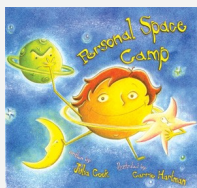
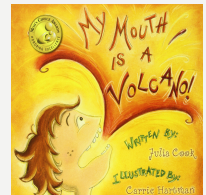
*Lacey Walker, Non-Stop Talker* by Christianne Jones tells the story of Lacey Walker, a girl who likes to talk. One day, Lacey loses her voice and she learns the importance of listening. This story book can be useful for teaching kids about turn-taking and listening to others.

*Decibella and her 6-inch Voice* by Julia Cook is a great book for teaching pragmatics. Decibella is always using a really loud outdoor voice until she learns how to use the right voice at the right time. This book is fun way to teach kids social skills, and how to adjust your voice based on situation.



*Even Superheroes Have Bad Days* by Shelly Becker is a useful book for teaching self-regulation. This book talks about how even superheroes can have bad days. But they can learn how to control their negative emotions in a good way. This book also has a lot of rhyming pairs great for working on phonological awareness.

*My Mouth is a Volcano* by Julia Cook is a story about Louis, a boy who has the bad habit of interrupting others. He learns a witty trick to hold back his thoughts and feelings until the appropriate time. This book is great for teaching social communication skills in a fun way!

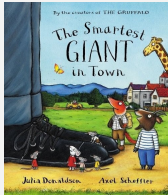


*Personal Space Camp* by Julia Cook tells the story of Louis who gets invited to personal space camp by his teacher. Excited to learn about all the planets, Louis learns even more about respecting others personal boundaries. This book is great for teaching kids the importance of personal space with their peers.

*The Pocket Dogs and the Lost Kitten* by Margaret Wild tells the story of two dogs named Biff and Buff who must learn to adjust when a new kitten becomes part of their family. This book is great for teaching kids about acceptance and sharing. The detailed illustrations can also be used to target the inferencing of some more complex emotions such as jealousy.

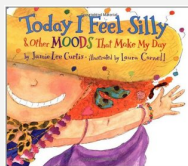
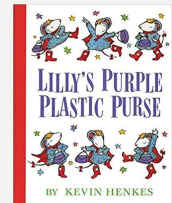


# PRAGMATICS AND SOCIAL COMMUNICATION BOOKS



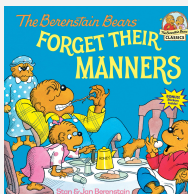
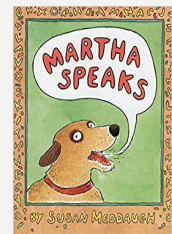
*The Smartest Giant in Town* by Julia Donaldson is about a kind giant who donates his clothes to animals in need. This book can be used to target different social communication skills such as sharing, empathy, initiating conversation, and listening skills. The rhymes also make it great for phonological awareness too!

*Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* by Kevin Henkes is a great book for teaching self-control and self-regulation. Lily gets a brand new purse that she can't wait until sharing time to show off. This book can be used to teach social communication skills since Lily learns about sharing at the right time.



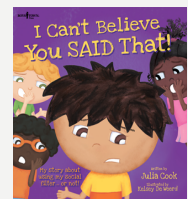
*Today, I Feel Silly* by Jamie Lee Curtis explores the many moods that a person can experience. This book can be used to help kids explore these emotions, and kids can be encouraged to identify a time when they felt that way.

*Martha Speaks* by Susan Meddaugh is a story about a dog who is fed alphabet soup one day and suddenly gains the ability to speak. However, Martha must learn to speak appropriately. This story is great for teaching directness, politeness, appropriate behaviours, and requesting which are all important aspects of pragmatic communication.



In *The Berenstain Bears Forget Their Manners* by Stan and Jan Berenstain, Mama Bear becomes fed up when her family starts forgetting their manners. This book is great for highlighting social communication skills because while reading children can help to identify the appropriate and less appropriate behaviours.

*I Can't Believe You Said That* by Julia Cook is about a boy who has a hard time thinking before he speaks. This is a great book for teaching kids about how their words can effect others. Kids can help to infer the emotions of the characters. The book also has good vocabulary to target such as *feedback*, *filter* and *disrespectful*.





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