

Sensory Storytime Themes and Descriptions

General Information

- We follow the same format for every storytime. Once we moved to a different room because we needed more space. Some of the children were very upset by the change.
- We use a picture schedule to help the children follow along, removing each activity from the schedule as we complete it.
- Everyone (children, caregivers, and staff) introduces themselves at the beginning of each storytime (to encourage social skills)
- We use two staff members during each storytime – one to read, and one to demonstrate. Also, with so many items to pass out and pick up, having two staff members is very helpful. Asking the children to help pick up for us is a good way to encourage social skills.
- We do not use sitting squares (we haven't found them to be necessary), but we do offer them. We also take up the rug in our storytime room, which has a very busy, colorful print on it.
- We do storytime for 30 minutes, then have social time for the children and parents. The children have access to a basket of sensory books and toys. Parents can socialize and build support networks.
- We limit our size to 15 children, including siblings. The purpose of the limit is to help minimize noise and distractions (which upsets many SPD children), as well as set a limit on how many materials we need to prepare.

Storytime Themes and Descriptions

Colors

- Welcome Song
- Shirt song – we made felt t-shirts in many different colors. Each child is invited to come up and choose a shirt matching the color of their shirt (although a lot of the times they just choose whatever shirt captures their fancy) to put on the felt board. While they do this, we all sing “[Name] has a [color] shirt, a [color] shirt, a [color] shirt, [Name] has a [color] shirt and [he/she] is here today.”
- Book: *Brown Bear Brown Bear* – we created 10 tactile copies of the book, using different materials for each animal so the children can follow along with their own book while exploring the animals through touch.
- Bean Bag Song by Hap Palmer – each child has a bean bag and follows the instructions in the song. We do this every storytime, and it is one of their favorite activities.
- Book: *Mouse Paint* – we created props (paint buckets, felt mice, etc), and do a little visual “puppet show” as we read the story
- Twinkle Twinkle Little Star – we hand out dance ribbons and encourage the children to dance while singing the song. We sing the song twice.
- Book: *What Makes a Rainbow* – we purchased a dozen smaller copies of this “magic ribbon” book so the children can follow along with their own book, while exploring the books’ ribbons.

Shapes

- Welcome Song
- Shirt Song
- Book: *Pop Up Shapes* –we filled large ziplock bags with hair gel and food coloring, sealed and taped the bags, and let the kids draw the shapes in the gel along with the book.
(<http://www.teachpreschool.org/2011/08/bright-and-colorful-sensory-bags-for-preschool/>)
- Bean Bag Song
- Book: *Go Away Big Green Monster* – we made a felt board set for each child so they could put together and take apart the scary monster face along with the story.
- Twinkle Twinkle Little Star with dance ribbons
- Book: *Shape Song Swingalong* – this book encourages kids to make the shapes in the story with their arms. It also comes with a CD. So we play the CD, show the book, and make the shapes with our bodies along with the story.

Food

- Welcome Song
- Shirt song
- Book: *At the Supermarket* by Anne Rockwell – each child has a reusable grocery sack full of items discussed during the story. As each item is mentioned, the children are encouraged to find and explore the item (“Can you find the roll of toilet paper and put it back in your shopping bag?”). Each bag contains yarn ground beef, plastic apple, roll of toilet paper, tea bag, emptied single serve ice cream container, empty box of soap (stuffed with paper so it doesn’t get mashed), bottle of sprinkles (rice dyed different colors), empty egg container, and a bundle of candles.
- Bean Bag Song by Hap Palmer
- Book: *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* – we created a feltboard to go along with the story. Before we begin reading, each child receives one of the food felt board pieces. As their food item comes up in the story, they are invited to come up to the room and add their piece food from the story and be invited to add it to the feltboard as it comes up in the story
- Twinkle Twinkle Little Star with dance ribbons
- Book: *Pete’s a Pizza* – each parent receives a baggie of supplies to turn their child into a pizza while we read the story. Items include a small container of glitter for flour, spray bottle of water for oil, red felt circles for tomatoes, and yellow post-it notes for pieces of cheese. Parents knead, tickle, etc. their child along with the story.

Sounds

- Welcome Song
- Shirt song
- Book: *Snake Supper* – we used a snake puppet and stuffed animals to act out the story
- Bean Bag song
- Book: *Can You Choo Choo* – we made a CD with the vehicle sounds mentioned in the book, and played each sound as we read about the vehicle.
- Twinkle Twinkle Little Star with dance ribbons
- Book: *Knock! Knock!* – we passed out rhythm sticks so the kids could make the knocking sound every time “Knock Knock” was read in the story.

Transportation

- Welcome Song
- Shirt Song
- Book: *Next Stop* – in the book, a bus drives around town and stops at various places. We created a poster for each child of a simple road map and bought toy cars so each child could drive their car along the same route and make the same stops as the bus.
- Bean Bag Song
- Book: *Here Comes Grandma!* – Grandma travels to visit her grandchild using different modes of transportation. We either bought or made something to represent each mode of transportation. For example, the toy car for driving, a blown up balloon for a hot air balloon, a paper airplane for an airplane, toy motorcycle for the bicycle, toy horse for the horse, decorated plastic bottle for the submarine, etc. Then, on the back of the map used for the previous story, we created a scene the kids can use for their different modes of transportation. For example, a sky to fly through, a town to bike through, a train track to run their train down, etc.
- Twinkle Twinkle Little Star with dance ribbons
- Book: *Scrubby-Bubbly Car Wash* – We printed and laminated pictures of a shiny red sports car. Then we cut them out and taped them on to a little plastic tray. Each child could get their car “dirty” with an erasable marker, then clean their car like in the story. We squirted on shaving cream for soap, they used a brush to scrub, a spray bottle to rinse, a straw to blow dry, and a hand towel to polish. This was extremely popular with the kids.

Beach

- Welcome Song
- T-shirt Song
- Book: *Senses at the Seashore* – due to length, we did not read this entire story (we paper clipped together any spreads we skipped). Each page discusses a way to experience the beach using the five senses, and we provided a corresponding activity for each one. For example, for smelling sun tan lotion, we provided each child a plastic bottle containing a little sunscreen to smell. For the taste of watermelon, we provided a watermelon flavored jelly belly for them to eat. For touching the warm sand, we gave each child a small container filled with sand to touch.
- Bean Bag Song
- Book: “Oliver Cat Goes Fishing” (from the book *Oliver Cat on Planet B*) – Oliver goes fishing and catches some unusual animals, including a tap dancing lobster and a ballet dancing fish. We created magnetic fishing poles and a set of each of the unusual animals for each of the children so they could fish for each animal along with the story.
- Twinkle Twinkle Little Star, with dance ribbons
- Book: *Pop Out Ocean Shapes* – this is a guessing game book. For each item the children guessed, they had a corresponding tactile item to hold and explore (ie, sea shell, plastic dolphin, toilet paper roll fish, etc).

Hunting

- Welcome Song
- T-shirt Song
- Book: *Mouse Count* – we provided each child with a paper snake puppet, a plastic cup, and ten white pompoms so the children could act out the story while we read it.
- Bean Bag Song
- Book: *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* – we created a sensory obstacle course for the children to go through while we read the story. For the grass, we hung paper strips between two chairs for them to crawl through. For the mud, we had them walk through a box lid of sand (they were barefoot). For the river, they walked through a wading pool of water. For the forest, we pulled together a bunch of potted plants from the library lobby, which the children walked through. For the snowstorm, we tied white curling ribbon on to some fans, which the children had to walk by. For the cave, we covered a table with a parachute and put a giant stuffed bear at the end. This activity was a lot of work, but the children and parents loved it.
- Twinkle Twinkle Little Star with dance ribbons
- Book: *Frog in a Bog* – we decorated green cups to look like frogs with big open mouths, and provided the bugs for the children to feel their frogs along with the story. We bought plastic flies and spiders, made snails out of curled paper, used pom poms for the fleas, and found gummy toy slugs on some website (ew).

Body

- Welcome Song
- Shirt Song
- Book: *Lots of Feelings* – we found pictures of blank faces on the internet. We printed and laminated one for each child. We also provided each child with a dry erase marker (with a pom pom glued to the cap for an eraser). The children were encouraged to draw each type of face along with the story. This activity was too difficult for most of the children. In the future, we'll provide cut out facial features so they can build a face instead of draw one.
- Bean Bag Song
- Book: *How do I put it on?* – we created a simple felt board for each child to do individually along with the story.
- Twinkle Twinkle Little Star with dance ribbons
- Book: *From Head to Toe* – the children were encouraged to move like the animals in the story as we read about them.

Dogs

- Welcome Song
- Shirt Song
- Book: *Bark George* – We bought two identical puppets and cut out the mouth lining in one of them. During the story, we used the intact puppet until George goes to the doctor. Then we switch to the altered puppet and pull out each animal along with the doctor in the story. The children are encouraged to make the animal noises along with George in the story.
- Bean Bag Song
- Book: *Dog's Colorful Day* - We put up a big picture of Dog and gave each child one of the colored spots from the story. The children are invited to add their colored dot to Dog when it comes up in the story.

- Twinkle Twinkle Little Star with dance ribbons
- Book: *Harry the Dirty Dog* – we taped a laminated picture of Harry to plastic trays and passed them out to the children, along with washable markers and scrub brushes. As Harry gets dirty in the story, the children are invited to mark all over their picture of Harry. When it comes time for Harry to get a bath, we sprayed a bit of shaving cream on each child's Harry, and they used their scrub brush to wash him.

Being Clean

- Welcome Song
- Shirt Song
- Book: *Clarabella's Teeth* – each child received a toothbrush and a crocodile stress reliever toy so they could brush Clarabella's teeth along with the story.
- Bean Bag Song
- Book: *Mrs. McNosh Hangs Up the Wash* – before we begin reading, each child received one of the items Mrs. McNosh washes. Each item has a spring clothes pin attached to it. As each item is brought up in the story, the children are invited to come up to the front and hang their item up on a clothesline that we have hung up. Items included a page from a newspaper, an addressed envelope for the mail, a stuffed bat, a stuffed dog, flip flops, socks, stress relievers (a bone, a cell phone, and a chair), a child's t-shirt, a baby dress, and a kite.
- Book: *Mrs. Wishy Washy* – Each child received a container of water, a container of coco krispies (to simulate dirt), a scrub brush, and a toy cow, pig, and duck. The children could then act out the story as we read it.

For more information about Montgomery County Memorial Library System's Sensory Storytime program, please contact Eileen Lee, Children's Librarian, at either 936-442-7727 ext 6363 or eileen.lee@countylibrary.org.