

Oral Language Activities (Pre-K, Kindergarten)

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3 Ways to Read a Book

This activity will help your child learn to tell a story, using a book as a guide at first, and then without the book if possible. Tell your students that there are a number of ways to "read" a book. Practise the following: 1. Read the pictures- go through the story with children having them tell the story through pictures. 2. Read the words- read the story. 3. Retell the story- have students retell the story. You can show them the pictures again if they need prompts.

A Fishing Story

This activity gets children to remember a time when he/she went fishing or imagine a fishing trip. Talk about a time you went fishing or pretend you went on a fishing trip. Some story starters may be:

- Do you remember when you caught a fish? Tell me about it.
 - Can you describe the fish?
 - Who were you with when you caught the fish?
- Pretend you went fishing. Can you tell me about it?
- Who would you share your fish with?

Extending Activity: Say the poem: (This could be sung to "Are You Sleeping?") **Fishing** Catch a fish. Catch a fish. Fry a fish. Fry a fish. Eat a yummy fish. Eat a yummy fish. Ooooooh, I wish. Ooooooh, I wish.

Alphabet Scrapbook: Words and Letters in the Environment

This activity will help your child recognize letters in environmental print.

- Use a notebook or large art scrapbook and label each page with a letter from the alphabet.
- Look through flyers, magazines, cereal boxes, packages, etc. and cut out pictures of products that start with that letter.
- Which products have the same letters from your name?
- Which letters can you find in your community? (i.e. M - for McDonalds, EXIT, city signs, etc.)

Animal Guessing Game

This activity helps the child recognize the beginning letter sound of a word and helps the child learn how to ask questions in order to guess an animal.

How to play:

- Write the first letter of the name of an animal on paper or on the board.

- Have the child ask questions to determine what the animal is. This could be a direct question, such as "Is it a bear?" or an indirect question, such as "Does this animal live on a farm?"
- Keep a tally of the number of questions. You may want to set a goal, for example: "Let's see if you can guess the animal before we have 10 tally marks!"

Possible extensions:

- Trade roles and have the child choose the animal and write the letter
- Have the child name 3 things he/she knows about the animal after guessing it.

Antlers

This activity will help your child with counting, mental math, and problem solving as the child solves "antler problems".

- Put your hands on top of your head, with your fingers spread out to make "antlers."
- Curl down some of your fingers, and ask your child how many fingers you need to put up to make 10.
- Your child will have to count the fingers that are visible and figure out how many more would make 10.
 - For example, if 7 fingers are stretched out, the child would answer, "Three more fingers are needed to make 10."

Ashton's Xs and Os.

This activity encourages the recognition of shapes or numbers or letters, as they are used in place Xs and Os in a traditional X and O game.

On a standard 3 x 3 "X and O grid" choose to use a variety characters as counters. Examples:

- 1s and 10s or other numbers
- Practice shapes (for example, squares vs circles)
- Player's initials or other letters
- Two different coins

When you have chosen your shapes, letters, or numbers, play the game as you would play Xs and Os.

Possible questions:

- Can you suggest two shapes we could use to play our game?
- What letters should we use if we want to have the first letter of your name and the first letter of my name?
- What is different about the two kinds of coins we are using?

Aski Goes Camping

This game develops vocabulary, memory and turn-taking.

- With your child, use the sentence stems to keep adding items to the list.
 - Caregiver: Aski went camping and packed _____ (clothes).
 - Child: Aski went camping and packed _____ (clothes), and _____(water)
 - Caregiver: Aski went camping and packed _____(clothes), and _____(water) and _____(a sleeping bag).
- Continue as long as possible until someone forgets some items and you have to start over!

This game can also be played in school with classmates taking turns continuing the sentence.

Askî, Askî

This activity will get your child to use and identify rhyming words. Sing or say the following rhyming song about going to bed. *Askî, Askî, turn around, Askî, Askî, touch the ground. Askî, Askî, shine your shoes, Askî, Askî, that will do. Askî, Askî, walk upstairs, Askî, Askî, say your prayers. Askî, Askî, turn off the lights, Askî, Askî, say goodnight!*

- Perform the actions of the rhyme.
- Ask your child to identify the rhyming words in the poem.

Make an Askî mask with your child.

Extension Activity

- Let the child wear the mask as they perform the rhyme
- Act out rhyme while singing
- Create additional verses for the rhyme
- Pretend that you are Askî and it is time to go to bed.

Baking Cupcakes

Baking cupcakes with a child is an easy, fun, and tasty way to practice measurement and counting in the home.

- Read the cake mix directions with the child.
- Preheat the oven as directed on the cake mix package.
- Have the child open the cake mix box and pour into a large mixing bowl, help the child if needed.
- Let child help measure water (fill it up to this line).

- Talking points: Ask child "how full is the bowl?" Say "Watch what happens when you add water."
- Let the child add water.
- Have them count to 15 out loud while they mix the batter.
- Measure the amount of oil and eggs needed.
- Ask the child to count the ingredients as you add them.
 - Talking Points: "Can you count how many eggs I use?"
- Have the child count to 15 out loud while they mix the batter.
- Have the child put one cupcake liner in each hole in the cupcake pan
- Have the child watch you pour batter into one cupcake liner.
- Get child to watch you fill the rest saying stop when it has about the same as the first or have the child pour the batter.
- Set a timer and have the child watch for when the timer says they are done.
- Let the cupcakes cool.
- Put icing on the cupcakes.
- Have the child decorate with candies, if you wish.
 - Talking point: "If we put two candies on each cupcake, how many candies do we need?" (count by twos)

Extra Activities: Have the child count all the cupcakes. Have the child place completed cupcakes in a container or on a plate counting as the cupcakes are placed.

Be a Shape Detective

This activity will help your child visualize and possibly describe shapes that appear in the world around us. Give clues about a shape, and have the child find the shape that has the characteristics you have described. You could also reverse roles and have the child give the description of what you are to find.

Examples:

- Find something in the house that has 4 sides and 4 corners? (window, picture, etc.)
- Find something in our backyard that is a triangle (the roof of a birdhouse, etc.)
- Find something that has no corners. (clock, apple, etc.)

Possible extension: Go for a walk in the community and look for shapes. For example, perhaps a pine tree has a triangular shape, and a mailbox might have a rectangular shape.

Being Together is Stronger

This activity gives your child the opportunity to have a conversation with you about things that are important to or about your family. With your child count out 21 single strands of the material mentioned.

- Divide the strands into 3 sections.
- At one end of the strands, bind all 21 together either in a knot or with an elastic band.

- Have your child hold the end that is bound and start to braid the 3 strands together saying to the child things that are special or important to your family or about your family.
- Share with your child what you like to do and what you did when you were a child his/her age.

“The whole message for this activity is the braid represents the braid of sweet grass that is sacred to us and when it is being braided, the person braiding says the prayers to protect and strengthen the family and the people of the earth.”

Blast Off

This activity helps the child become familiar with counting backwards (English, French, Cree, other languages.)

- Choose a number from where to begin.
- The child counts backwards from the selected number to 1 and then calls out "Blast off!"
 - If you wish and circumstances allow - child could release a blown-up balloon when it is "Blast off" time

Blueberry Picking and Baking

This activity will help your child communicate about math concepts, measure, count, and enjoy a blueberry snack!

At the blueberry patch:

- Point out the blueberry plant characteristics.
- Talk about picking clean, unshrivelled berries with no white spots.
- Use a small container to collect berries. Empty the containers into a big one as you fill them.
- Ask the child how many will it take to fill the big basket?

At home, baking muffins:

- Clean berries together.
- Read over the recipe, and talk about quantities with the child.
- Have the child help gather ingredients.
- Measure out ingredients (fill measuring cups appropriately, mix the wet and dry ingredients in separate bowls. Then mix wet ingredients into the dry ingredients.
- Mix together ingredients, have the child stir and count as they go (up to 100).
- Set oven temperature, cook for 20 minutes.
- While waiting snack on blueberries!

Possible Questions/Statements:

- Count out ten berries.
- Eat 5.
- How many do you have left?
- How many blueberries fit in your hand?
- How many berries do you think will fit in this 1/4 cup measure?

Brushing Teeth

Use this song/rhyme to help children learn the meanings of "front" "back" and "in-between", as well as having them enjoy a rhyming song. As you brush your child's teeth, sing the song (to the tune of *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*): *Brush, brush, brush your teeth Brush them till they are clean Brush the front Brush the back Brush them in between.* Sing the song twice while brushing their teeth, brushing the front and back when the song gives the instruction. Have your child sing the song while you brush your teeth. Some sentence starters may be:

- The reason we brush our teeth is _____.
- I like the feeling of clean teeth because _____.
- When I went to the dentist _____.

Card Games

A deck of cards provides a lot of ways for you to explore numbers and matching with your child. They can learn about the order of numbers, about making pairs and about things that are the same or different. Use the deck of cards to:

- Sort the numbers (Example: All of the As or 1s, 2s, etc.)
- Put numbers in order (1, 2, 3, 4)
- Match pairs (2s, 3s, 4s, etc.)

Possible questions to ask:

- Is this number higher or lower than the one in your hand?
- What makes these two cards different? (number, colour, shape)
- What is the same about these two cards? (number, colour, shape)
- How do the shapes on the card help you know that 6 is more than 5?

You can also use these skills to learn simple card games with your child, like *Go Fish* or *War*. They both use the concepts of matching and higher-or-lower to create fun games you can play together.

Circle of Courage - Family Ties

This activity gets parents and children to share their experiences with one another about the relatives in their circle and the impact that they have on their lives.

Possible sentence starters:

- I remember when my Kookum/Grandma taught me how _____.
- I think it is important to have family because _____.
- One family tradition that I think is important is _____.

Possible questions to ask:

- How does our family help us succeed?
- How do we show our family members respect and how have they shown you respect?
- How do people in our families make us feel?

Classifying Animals

This activity will help students talk about similarities and differences between animals, and it will give them practice sorting animals into groups. After students have become familiar with the animals in the Askî books, discuss categories of animals. (flyers, swimmers, land, 2-legged, and 4-legged). Brainstorm and classify other animals that belong in these groups. Go outside to explore the different environments where these animals live (sky, pond/river, grass/trees, etc.). Discuss the categories.

As a follow-up:

- Ask students to draw animals and place it on a mural or on the large Aski Poster.
- Introduce animal words in different languages.
- Count the number of animals in each category. Use terms such as more, most, fewer, least.
- Explore animal books.
- Use animal figurines and categorize the animals. Let the children play with animals.

Clean Up

Chant the verse while cleaning up. Continue singing the song until cleanup is complete. *Clean up, Clean up, Everybody, everywhere. Clean up, Clean up, Everybody do their share.*

Possible questions:

- Why do you think it is important to clean up?
- What do you like (or dislike) about cleaning up?
- Is our job finished?
- Do you think you did a good job?
- What could we use to clean up?
- How could we do things differently?

Clean Up Time

This activity gives you and your child the opportunity to practice counting and sorting while cleaning up. Play a game of "I spy" with your child during clean up time. Have your child find the items and put them away. For example, "I spy 5 cars." You could also incorporate colour words, locations around the room, sizes and positional words (beside, behind, on top). Have your child count the objects before putting them away. As a variation, your child could count the items backwards as the items are put away.

Cookie Count

This activity will help your child count forwards and backwards, and count on. Have your child count the cookies on one cookie sheet to determine how many cookies are on the sheet. Then have your child count on from the number of cookies on the first pan to include the cookies on the second pan. For example, if there are ten cookies on the first pan your child will say, "Ten" and then continue to count on pan two by saying, "Eleven, twelve, thirteen," and so on. Ask questions such as:

- How many cookies were there altogether?
- How many would we have if we each ate one cookie?

Extension: As you are taking the cookies off the sheet have your child count back from the total until you reach zero.

Count the Cows

This activity will help your child count, do mental math, and do simple addition or subtraction. While out in the community or driving, look for farm animals or other things to count. Possible questions:

- How many cows are in that field?

Additional questions for Grade 1 students.

- If 3 of the cows went into the barn, how many cows would be left?"
- I see other animals in the field. How many animals are there altogether?
- There are too many animals behind that fence to count as we drive by. Can you estimate how many animals there might have been? Why do you think that is a good estimate?

Count the Fruit

This activity will help your child count and do simple addition and subtraction using real objects. While in your kitchen, ask your child to go and get a certain number of a type of fruit / canned food. Then ask questions like:

- How many did you get?
- If you add 2 more how many would there be?
- If you put 1 back how many would there be?

You can also ask questions using 1 more, or 2 less.

Count The Words

This activity will help your child count, as well as understand that groups of letters form specific words.

- Find a book with less than ten words on a page.
- Ask the child to count how many words are on a page.
- When you have counted the words together, point to each word as you read it. See if the child can recognize any letters.
- Discuss how the words relate to the picture(s) on the page.

Counting Anything and Everything!

This activity will give your child practice counting objects. Possible questions/statements:

- Count your fingers. Without counting, can you tell how many fingers AND toes you have? Now count to find out if you were right.
- Here is a box of Smarties for you! Count how many of each colour are in the box. Now count all of the Smarties.
- Do you think there are more than ten toys on the floor? Count the toys as you put them into the toy box.

Counting in Nature

This activity will help your child count and make connections between nature and numbers.

Go for a walk outside and look for opportunities to count. Sample questions:

- How many leaves are on this branch?
- How many legs does this ladybug have?
- Can you count the trees on this block?
- How many rocks are in this small pile?

Counting Our Relatives

This activity helps you have a conversation with your child about your family tree. With your child, create a family tree, beginning with the child and creating "branches" as you talk about those relatives.

Possible questions /discussion items:

- Who do you think your relatives are?

- Can you name people who do not live with us, but are our relatives?
- Do you have any (cousins, aunts, uncles, etc.?)
- Do you know who your grandparents' children are?
- Let me tell you a story about _____ (one of the relatives).
- Can you count all the relatives that we put on our family tree?

Counting Steps

This activity will help your child count (and estimate). Have your child count the number of steps he/she takes while walking from one destination to another. Count out loud by ones. If desired, have the child estimate the number of steps from one location to another before walking. For example:

- Classroom to washroom
- Bedroom to kitchen
- Band office to clinic

Possible extension: Count by twos, counting out loud only when the right (or left) foot goes forward. Counting could be done in any language.

Counting/more than, less than

This activity will help your child practice counting skills, and comparing numbers zero to five (then six to ten, once they are comfortable with lower numbers). Choose two players: Player #1 and Player #2. Ask Player #1 to choose one to five cards/tokens. Ask player #2 to choose more cards than Player #1 (or fewer cards than Player #1). Lay the cards down and compare quantity using the terms "more than" and "fewer than". Switch turns between the players. Sentence examples:

- Brad has 4 cards and Sarah has 2 cards. Brad has (how many?) MORE cards than Sarah.
- Sarah has 6 cards and Brad has 2 cards. Brad has (how many?) FEWER cards than Sarah.

Creating our own version of a familiar story

This activity helps students expand vocabulary and work on story telling skills.

Read a familiar story such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears several times. Retell the story, substituting children's names for the characters. Encourage children to retell the story as they act it out. Focus on expanding storytelling and vocabulary. Video and share with children. Take still photos of the dramatization and have children retell the story on another day.

Cree Counting

This activity will help your child learn to count in Cree, and identify the correct number of objects as he/she learns the numbers. Watch the video. [Click here](#). Cree counting 1 – 10. Sing the words along with the video. Try focusing on one number at a time – for a day or two. Look for that number of objects around the house, and say the number as you hold up that many fingers.

- How many crayons? ('nisto' as you hold up three fingers)

Possible questions:

- Do you know that you can count in different languages?
- Would you like to learn to count in Cree?
- Say the Cree word for (four) as you hold up that number of fingers: *“What number do you think that is?”*
- I wonder how people talk to each other when they don't talk the same language? (draw pictures, make actions)

Cree numbers 1 - 5

This activity will help children learn the numbers 1 - 5 in Cree, and practice simply addition and subtraction using the numbers.

Practice counting from 1 - 5 in Cree. Using numbers 1-5, create simple addition and subtraction questions.

1- pêyak 2-nîso 3-nisto 4-nêwo 5-niyânan

Cupboard Counting

This activity gives you and your child the opportunity to practice counting while looking at the contents of the cupboards to prepare to provide a meal for the family.

Children enjoy the opportunity and responsibility of a job. In this activity your child can have the responsibility of counting and organizing items in the cupboard. **Some questions to ask:**

- How many cans of _____?
- Are there more cans of _____ or boxes of _____? How many more?
- What is your favourite item in the cupboard?
- Why do you think we have..... in the cupboard?
- How many more _____ do we need to complete our recipe for supper?
- I think it's easier to count if the cans are all together in the same spot. Can you help me organize them?
- I wonder where some of this food came from? (Discuss where things grow, how they grow, etc.)
- I wonder if we have enough _____ to share with another family?

Cut Out Letters

This activity will help your child recognize letters and connect the letters with sounds that are in familiar names.

- With your child, cut out letters from magazines.
- With the letters, construct your child's name and the names of other significant family members.
 - Be sure to mix up the letters after each name.

Possible questions:

- What letter does your name begin with? Can you help me find that letter in this magazine?
- Your sister's name begins with the letter _____. Can you help me find that letter?
- Can you count the number of letters in your name? Can you count the number of letters in your sister's (brother's, etc.) name?

Days of the week

This activity will help your child learn the days of the week, and will engage the child in a conversation about activities for the day. Sing the days of the week to the tune of "Found a Peanut". Possible questions and conversation starters:

- What day of the week is it today?
- What day of the week was it yesterday?
- What day of the week will it be tomorrow?
- Do you remember what we did yesterday?
- What do you think we will do tomorrow?
- If you have a "routine" of something you do once a week on a certain day, you may want to ask about it, or point it out to the child.
 - Example: Do you know something we do every Sunday? (Go to church, go to grandma's house, etc.)

Possible extension: Create or use a calendar that has the days of the week on it (as well as the numbers for the days of the month) and put symbols on the calendar for things the child can recognize.

- Example: A rubber ducky placed on the day the child will have a bath

Disappearing Letters

This activity will encourage your child to learn the letters of the alphabet.

Using coloured markers, print three to five letters on a flattened coffee filter. Place the filter on a dish towel. Using an eye dropper full of water, have your child say the name of the

letters, each time placing a drop of water onto the letter correctly identified. The letters will spread out and mingle, creating a lovely piece of artwork. Repeat with other letters of the alphabet!

Family

This activity will help your child have conversations about his/her family. Look at photos and talk about people in your family. Possible questions/conversation starters:

- Can you find grandma in this picture? Grandma's name is _____.
- The person standing beside grandma is grandma's brother. His name is _____. He is my uncle _____. Do you have an uncle? Do you have a brother (sister, etc.)?
- How many people are in this family picture? How many people are in our family?
- What are the names of all the people in our family?

Family in Photos

This activity encourages your child to answer questions and tell stories, using photos as a starting point. Look at pictures of family. Talk with your child about the people in the pictures, asking questions such as:

- “Who the people in this picture?”
- “Why these people important to us?”
- “When do you think the picture was taken?” (at a special event, such as a birthday; while we were on vacation, etc.)
- “How old do you think this person is in this picture?”
- “What’s happening in this picture?”

Tell a story about each person and their relationship to the family. Possible sentence starters:

- “These photos were taken... (by whom, when, where)”
- “Something funny that happened...”
- “Look at how happy we were when...”

Other ways to look at photos:

- Talk about pictures on your cell phone while you are away from home.
- Hide a picture from your child and describe the people in it, then ask your child “Can you guess who is in the picture that I am hiding?”
- Allow your child to take photos and then talk about them.
- Look for photos in magazines and make up stories about the people and places you see.

Family Portrait Counting Activity

This activity gives you an opportunity to have a conversation with your child while doing a drawing and counting activity. Alternatively, the activity could be done using photos of family groups.

- Have your child draw a family portrait (or use a photo). Ask your child to count different body parts.
- Ask, "What do you think would be a good way to count the number of (hands, feet, ears, noses, etc.)?"
 - Encourage your child to skip count when it is applicable. For example,
 - Would it be easy to count eyes if you skip counted by 2's?
 - What else could you count by 2's?
 - How could you use skip counting to count fingers and toes of those in the picture? (use 5's)
- Continue, using other body parts.

Family Tradition

This activity will engage your child in a conversation about family traditions.

Tell your child about your favourite family tradition.

- Be sure to talk about the definition of 'tradition' in a way that your child can understand.
- Talk about why the tradition you are talking about is your favourite.
- If you have any pictures that show you participating in the tradition, show them to your child.
- Have your child draw a picture of himself/herself participating in the tradition.

Possible questions to ask are:

- What is your favourite tradition?
- Do you remember when...?
- Some of our traditions involved doing things for others. Which would make you happier—giving someone a present, or shoveling Kookum's/Grandma's sidewalk? Why?

Possible extensions:

- Make a book of pictures about your family traditions.
- Make a family book of things you do that show how you love and care for other people.

Feeling Safe

This activity encourages your child to talk about a time when he/she was afraid, and how someone helped him/her feel safe.

Have your child tell about a situation when they felt scared and about what made them feel safe. Possible questions:

- Who helped you feel safe and how did that person help you feel safe?
- What did they do that made you trust them?
- How did you feel?
- How do you feel about that situation now?
- Would you do anything differently?
- Why is it important to talk to someone when you are feeling afraid?

Fixing a Problem

This activity will encourage your child to have a conversation about a problem, and the emotions that might be involved in encountering and solving a problem.

Tell your child a story about a time when you, or someone you know, was in trouble and how the problem was solved. You may use questions such as:

- Why do you think...?
- How did make you feel when...?
- What would you do if...?

Possible extension:

- Read a story about a character who solved a problem. Ask questions such as:
 - How did the character feel?
 - Do you think you would have solved the problem in the same way?

Garden Helper

Gardening is a fun outdoor activity that can introduce a child to nature and also help a child develop counting, measuring, and sorting skills. Examples:

1. Have the child put one potato in each hole. Count the potatoes as each hole is filled.
2. In a row demonstrate putting three corn seeds in a triangle about a thumb apart and then do it again one-foot length away. Ask the child to finish the row.
3. Have the child hold string when marking rows. Talk about the rows being one big step apart, far enough away to fit the cultivator and close enough to cross pollinate.
4. Have the child put pea seeds in a row about two finger widths apart. If needed, demonstrate first.
5. Ask the child to count the seeds as the seeds are placed in each row.

Talk about non-standard measurement. For example:

- About a thumb in-between
- As deep as your finger
- The length of one foot (could be child's foot or adult's foot)

Extra Activities

- Have the child count to 5 while watering the plants.
- Have the child count how many plants have sprouted.
- Ask the child to count and sort vegetables as they are being picked.

Get Moving!

You can use simple physical activities to help your child learn counting in a fun and active way. This is a good way to incorporate learning into active play time. Sample activities:

- Together with your child, touch your toes ten times. Count each time.
- Together with your child, do ten jumping jacks. Count each time.
- Together with your child, balance on one foot while counting to ten.

Possible Sentence Starters:

- "All this moving is very good for us because..."
- "If I keep jumping and running, I will..."

Possible questions to ask:

- "What is your favourite way to move?"
- "How many times do you want to do _____?"

You can use these questions to start a conversation with your child about how important exercise is to keep your whole family healthy.

Gingerbread Poem

This activity helps your child learn a short rhyme.

Teach the following rhyme to your child. You might want to read the story of "The Gingerbread Man" first. I'm a gingerbread boy/girl, as quick as can be. My name is _____. You can't catch me." Possible questions:

- What are two rhyming words in the poem?
- Why don't you want to be caught if you are a gingerbread person?
- Do you think gingerbread people can run fast? Why or why not?

Good Choices

This activity prompts conversation with your child about good choices. Tell your child about three things that he/she has done that make you proud. Ask your child if they can tell you more good things they have done. Count the good things with your child and name the choices again. Give them the same number of high fives as good choices.

Possible questions:

- Why was that a good choice?
- How did making that choice make you feel?
- Can you describe a good choice that someone else made?
 - Would you have made the same choice?

Guess How Much I Love You

This activity engages children in conversations about love, based on a book.

Book: [Guess How Much I Love You](#) by Sam McBratney. (Click [here](#) to access the story online.)

"Guess how much I love you," says Little Nutbrown Hare. Little Nutbrown Hare shows his daddy how much he loves him: as wide as he can reach and as far as he can hop. But Big Nutbrown Hare, who can reach farther and hop higher, loves him back just as much. Well then Little Nutbrown Hare loves him right up to the moon, but that's just halfway to Big Nutbrown Hare's love for him. Pre-reading activity questions:

- Whom do you love?
- How much do you love that person?
- Is it hard to describe how much we love a person?

Read the story to your child. Post-reading activities:

- Together with your child retell and act out the story.
- Have your child show with a 'measurement' (ie stretch out arms, reach to the sky, etc.) how much he/she loves the person.
- Have your child draw a picture of a person he/she loves and tell how much he/she loves that person. (ie "I love my mom as big as the ocean")

Happy Bag

This activity encourages your child to practice rhyming and asking questions about an object.

Have your child decorate a bag/container and help him/her write "Happy Bag" on it. Put a special object in the bag each time you use the Happy Bag. Give your child clues about what is in the bag and use the rhyme below: *I don't mean to brag, but I have something in my bag. If you listen to my clue I bet you can guess it, too. It rhymes with _____.* Other clues could be the colour of the object or something the object goes with (for example, "This object often is

used with a bat.") To extend the activity have your child choose their own special object to put in the happy bag. The child can give clues to help you guess what is in the bag. You may need to help your child with giving clues. If, for example, the child puts a toy in the bag, you could get him/her to give clues such as:

- This is my favourite toy because...
- I remember I got it when.....
- It makes me happy when I....

After you have shared your favourite items, share a story with your child about a time when the item made you happy. Teachers, you can use this activity as a "show and tell" activity. The student must give clues to the other students before showing the object.

Happy Thoughts

This activity will help your child listen to something you are sharing, and then provide his/her own answers to questions about a similar theme.

Tell your child about the best thing that happened to you today, using sentence starters such as...

- I feel today was a good day because...
- It made me happy when...
- I think tomorrow will be a good day because...

Possible questions to ask your child:

- What happened during your day today that made it a good day?
- When did you feel especially happy today?
- What would make tomorrow a good day for you?

Head and Shoulders Knees and Toes

This is a fun activity that gets children to sing, do actions, and learn about simple rhymes. Songs don't come much simpler than "Head Shoulders Knees and Toes," right? It begins by first saying each of the body parts clearly and leaving room for the children to repeat as they touch/point to each part. This is great for a warm up song to use at the start of a lesson, or play it anytime you need a short break.

You could give each student a stuffed animal or doll and have them point to their parts of the body as they sing the song.

Your child will gain body awareness, listening skills and singing skills as they participate along with the YouTube "Head and Shoulders Knees and Toes" video.

Help Me Set the Table

This activity will help your child become familiar with the meaning of words such as beside, under, left, and right. Set the table with your child while having a conversation about where the objects should be placed. A sample dialogue could be:

- Put the plate on the table.
- Place the knife on the left side of the plate.
- Place the spoon beside the knife.
- Place the fork on the right side of the plate.
- Put a folded napkin under the fork.

Hopes and Dreams

This activity will engage your child in a conversation about your future hopes for the child, as well as the child's own hopes and dreams.

Share your hopes and dreams for your child... (give a short explanation of why you hope these things).

- I hope you get to go to _____ .
- I hope you get to see _____ .
- I hope to go with you when _____ .
- When you are finished school I hope _____ .

Follow-up questions might be:

- Did you ever hope for something and it happened?
- What would dad/kookum/auntie/brother hope for?
- What do you hope for?
 - What do you hope to see someday?
 - What do you hope to do next summer (winter, etc.)?
 - Who do you hope to spend time with, and what would you like to do with that person?
 - What do you hope to do when you are grown up?

How Do We Show Respect?

This activity will help your child communicate about what it means to be show respect for others, and how we can help others.

Ask your child to solve one of these problems:

- You see your friend taking a toy from another friend. What would you do to help?
- You see a friend who has fallen and hurt their knee. What can you do to help?

Explain how helping friends shows respect for others. Possible questions you may ask:

- Did anyone ever help you when you were hurt or sad?
- How do you feel when people help you?
- Can you tell a story about a time you helped someone else?
- How do you feel when you help others?

Extending Activity:

- Make up a situation where a person needs help, and role play the situation with your child.

How Long Do I Wash? Sing to Know!

This activity prompts a conversation about hand washing, and helps the child learn "Happy Birthday" in Cree.

How long should you wash your hands to kill the germs? Wash your hands as long as it takes you to sing this song. Then you will have killed the germs on your hands. As a bonus, you learn how to sing Happy Birthday in Cree!!! Happy Birthday in Cree *Mino tipiska anohc Mino tipiska anohc Mino tipiska awasis (awasis = child) Mino tipiska anohc*

Possible questions to ask may be:

- How do you know when you have killed all the germs on your hands?
- What might happen if you don't kill all the germs on your hands?
- Where do the germs and dirt go when you have washed your hands?

Hula Hoop Finds

This activity will provide counting practice.

Put a hula hoop on the grass/dirt/sand. Have your child count objects within the hoop; for example: insects, pebbles, fallen leaves.

- What was the highest number you counted to?
- If I put one more (rock, leaf) into the hula hoop, how many (rocks, leaves) would you have?

Possible Extension

- Combine object counts so the child has to count to a higher number. For example, "How many insects and leaves are in the circle?"

Humpty Dumpty

This is a rhyming activity that your child can enjoy while he/she learns about rhyming words, and enjoys some conversation about eggs!

Create a Humpty Dumpty out of craft materials or an actual hardboiled egg. You can put on eyes, nose and mouth and have Humpty sit on a wall and act out and sing or tell the nursery rhyme. Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall; Humpty Dumpty had a great fall. All the King's horses and all the King's men couldn't put Humpty together again! Or another version: Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall; Humpty Dumpty had a great fall. All the King's horses and all the King's men had scrambled eggs for breakfast...again! *Possible questions:*

- Can you pick out the rhyming words in the poem?
- What do you know about the eggs we eat? (come from chickens, etc.)
- Can you think of different ways to eat eggs? (fried, scrambled, cooked, etc.)
- What kinds of animals lay eggs? How many can you name? Let's count them!

Humpty Dumpty Science

This activity will help your child learn and talk about rhymes, and also engage in conversation as you do an activity with an egg! Have your child learn the Humpty Dumpty nursery rhyme. While learning (or talking about) the rhyme, ask questions such as:

- Which word in the poem rhymes with "wall"?
- Do you think it is a good idea to have an egg sit on a wall? Why or why not?
- Why do you think Humpty could not be put back together?

After you have learned and talked about the nursery rhyme, create Humpty with an egg (decorate as you wish), and build a wall out of available materials (a box, Lego or other bricks). Ask questions such as:

- What kind of materials should we use to make the wall?
- (If you used building bricks...) How many bricks did we use to make the wall?
- Do you think Humpty will be able to sit on our wall? Why or why not?
- What will happen if Humpty falls off of our wall?

When you have made your predictions, test them out by putting Humpty on the wall! Be prepared for a little clean up. Talk about how hard it would be to put Humpty together again!

I am Thankful

Singing with your child provides an opportunity to extend vocabulary and enjoy rhythm and rhyme.

With your child, sing a song about being thankful. You can do this while you're doing something kind for others, while you are getting ready for the day, before bedtime, at supper time, etc.

I am Thankful (sung to the tune of Frère Jacques) I am thankful, I am thankful On this day, on this day for my neighbours 'round me (or "For my friends around me") For my neighbours 'round me Every day, Everyday.

Possible Questions:

- What do you think being thankful means?
- Tell me a time when you were thankful.
 - How did that make you feel?
- Why do you think it's a good idea to help others?
- What do you think would happen if everyone did one kind thing a day?
- How can you be helpful to others?

I Have Ten Little Fingers

Here are a variety of "finger activities" that will get children to count, tell stories, and learn a rhyme. Traced Finger People

- Trace the child's fingers on a piece of paper.
- Using crayons and supplies have them decorate each finger to look like a person
 - Can you describe the "people" you drew?
 - What is the same about them? What is different?

Washable finger faces

- Have child make a face on each finger using a felt tip marker that is washable.
 - Count the people with your child.
 - Have your child count forwards and backwards.
 - Can you make up a story using your finger faces?

Ten Little Fingers Rhyme *I have ten little fingers, (hold up fingers) And they all belong to me. (point to self) I can make them do things, Would you like to see? I can shut them up tight. (make a fist) I can open them wide. (open up fist) I can put them together. (hold fingers together) I can make them all hide. (put fingers behind you) I can make them jump high. (make finger jump high) I can make them jump low. (make fingers jump low) I can fold them up quietly, (fold up fingers) And hold them just so. (be still)*

I Spy a Rhyme...

Children need to listen to the sounds they hear in words. Eventually they must learn to match sounds to letters. Children need the help of an adult to learn this skill. Rhyming words are a great way to play with words and sounds. Play "I spy" with rhyming words for clues. For example:

- "I spy with my little eye something that rhymes with bee." The child must guess that you are looking at the tree.
- "I spy something that rhymes with blue." The child guesses that you spy a shoe.

If playing "I Spy" inside, use a picture from a book or magazine, photo or use the room environment.

I Spy Cleaning Game

This activity encourages your child to think about and describe the attributes of objects. In this activity you will play, "I Spy" with your child while they clean up a room. For example:

- Child says: "I spy with my little eye something that is _____ (could be a colour, a shape, a size, or another kind of descriptor.)"
- The parent then has to guess which item the child is going to pick up and put away.
- When the parent guesses correctly, the child puts the item away.
- Continue until all objects are put away.

I Spy Guessing Game

This activity will help your child learn to look for characteristics of objects, and also communicate about object characteristics.

Invite your child to play a guessing game. Directions:

1. The adult states "*I spy with my little eye something...*".
2. Give a clue to your child about something that you see.

Example:

1. Adult says, "*I spy with my little eye something that is green*".
2. If the child gives the correct answer, the adult gives the next clue.
3. If not, the adult repeats the clue and child guesses again.
4. Give additional clues as needed.

Some sentence starters or questions may be:

- Why did you...?
- We could try... (choosing something that is square, choosing something that starts with an "s" sound, etc.)
- What could you do to find it?

I Spy Letter Sounds

This activity will help your child connect letter sound with the object and the way it is spelled. Play I spy with your family. Use letters or letter sounds instead of colour.

Examples:

- I spy something that starts with the "p" sound
- I spy something that ends in the "k" sound

Alternative: Play I Spy by looking for the actual letter in various environmental print.

I Spy' While We're at Home or in the Community

This activity encourages conversation, thinking skills, and recognition of letters and letter sounds. While at home or out in the community, play 'I Spy'.

Example prompts:

- I spy with my little eye, something that is red.
- I spy with my little eye, a store that starts with 's'.
- I spy with my little eye, the letter 't'.
- I spy with my little eye something that is big.
- I spy with my little eye something that is beside us.
- I spy with my little eye something that is round.

If You Love Me and You Know It...

This activity will help children talk about loving others and why it is important to show love for others.

Sing the following song to the tune of *"If You're Happy and You Know It"*. *If you love me and you know it, count the ways. If you love me and you know it, count the ways. If you love me and you know it, and you really want to show it, if you love me and you know it, count the ways.* Count 5 ways that you can show love to others. Count 5 things that you love about yourself.

Possible questions:

- Is it important to love one another? Why?
- What could you do to show others that you love them?
- Can you remember a time when someone showed that he/she loved you? How?

In Motion on the Land (nok'e)

This activity expands the Dene vocabulary of students. Take students out on the land, giving commands in the Dene language. Here are the commands:

- kozigal (come here),
- t'ok'e thiyi hhasi bowil?a (find a spot),
- yanelgus (jump),
- hilti/hiyi (stop),
- dit'eth (walk),

- tthebaigal (run),
- dzinelgui (crawl).

Inside The Book

This activity will help your child look carefully at some of the features of a book, beyond the pictures in a storybook. Choose a book that you will read to your child. Before and during reading, ask questions such as:

- Can you point to the title of the book?
- Can you use your finger to show which direction we read the words on a page?
- Can you find a word on this page starting with the letter ____?
- (If the book has page numbers...)
 - Can you find a number somewhere on this page?
 - Can you predict what number we will see when we turn the page?
- Can you find the last word in the story?

Itsy Bitsy Spider

Singing songs with your child, such as *Itsy Bitsy Spider*, encourages language development and rhyming skills.

Sing and do actions with your child. *The Itsy Bitsy Spider, Climbed up the waterspout. Down came the rain, and washed the spider out. Out came the sunshine, and dried up all the rain; So the Itsy Bitsy Spider, Climbed up the spout again!*

Hand gestures: The rhyme usually is performed along with hand gestures.

- When “The Itsy Bitsy Spider” is sung, alternately touch your thumb of one hand to the pointer finger of the other, making a twisting motion.
- When “down came the rain” is sung, raise your arms above your head and wiggle your fingers and you slowly drop the arms.
- When “washed the spider out is sung, make a single motion sweeping your hands to the side.
- For “out came the sun”, make a circle with your hands. Start the circle down low and raise it up high to make the sun rise.
- When “dried up all the rain is sung, drop your hands low and wiggle the fingers of your hands as you raise them up.

Sample questions and discussion starters:

- An Itsy Bitsy Spider is very small...
- Let’s try it with a great big voice. Let’s try it with a quiet voice. Let’s try it with an itsy bitsy voice.
- How does the spider feel? How would you feel if you kept getting washed away?

- Can you think of a time when you had to try, try and try again to succeed at something? (child or parent tell a story)

Jigging

This is a fun activity that can be done in the home or community with a small or large groups. It teaches patterns and helps the child make connections between math and music.

1. Listen to the music.
2. Tap your foot to the beat.
3. Ask children to tap their feet or clap to the beat, and help them find the beat if needed.
4. Show the children your jig steps (or look at Metis jiggers on YouTube)
5. Have the children count the beat. 123 123
6. When the music changes, the children do their fancy jigging steps
7. When the music changes back, do basic jigging steps.

Keeping Safe

This activity will start a conversation about safety with your child.

- Tell your child a story about a time when you, or someone you know, was lost.
- Help your child figure out ways to stay safe and not get lost (stay close to you when shopping, or outside playing).
- Ask your child what they would do if they got lost. Help your child figure out who or where they would go for help.

The next time you go shopping plan a meeting place with your child in case they do get lost. Possible questions might be:

- Why is it a good idea to stay close to an adult?
- What would you do if you got lost?
- Can you tell me what you could do to stay safe?

Kon's Song

This activity will help students with singing, using patterns and rhythms, and working together to add more words to the song. Kon's math song has been developed to follow a Dene drum beat. View the video to hear an example of the drum beat.

Kon's Song: My name is Kon, I am a fox, I am Dene And I love math, I love to learn, I love to play. I play with blocks, with dice and cards and iPads too It is so fun, there is no end to math we do!

- You can use this song as a group chant to encourage language play and singing.
- You can have the students practice clapping the drumming beat pattern while the teacher reads the poem.

- You can make mini-hand drums and have the students practice making this beat and other drumming patterns.
- You can work together to add lines to the song.

[Video link - click here](#)

...There is no end to the fun we can have with language and poetry.

License Plate Bingo

This activity encourages quick recognition of numbers.

- While driving in your car or walking in a parking lot, find license plates that have numbers 1 - 9 in order (i.e. you must find the number 1 before number 2). You may find more than one number in one plate. The first person to get to 9 in the fewest number of license plates wins.

Possible extension:

- Go beyond 9. In this extended game, you would have to find 1 and 0 on a single plate, then 1 and 1, followed by 1 and 2.
- Literacy extension: Place the same game with letters of the alphabet.

Listening is fun

This activity will help your child give and follow directions using a fun, drawing activity.

- Caregiver and child sit side by side. Both should have access to paper and crayons.
- Place a barrier (container) between the caregiver and the child.
- Take turns giving each other one step, then two step directions.
- Both individuals should draw the suggested objects.
- Compare the drawings and talk about the similarities and differences.

Examples of one step direction activity: Draw something red. Draw something yellow. Draw something blue. *Examples of two step direction activity.* Draw a little ball. Draw a big worm. Draw a skinny house. *Extended activity- three step directions.* Draw a big worm and colour it red. Draw a skinny house and colour it yellow. Draw three fat blue worms. Continue, making up your own objects to draw and colour. Be sure to take turns offering suggestions!

Little Red Riding Hood

This activity will help your child retell a story, and also discuss questions arising from the story.

Read or tell the story of Little Red Riding Hood to your child or view the story at <http://www.dltk-teach.com/rhymes/littlered/1.htm>. Have your child retell the story using pictures as a guide. Discuss the idea of playing tricks on people.

- What tricks are funny?
- What tricks are harmful?
- How do you feel when someone plays a funny trick on you?
- How do you feel when you play a harmful trick on them?

Possible questions:

- What do you think would have happened if Little Red Riding Hood had listened to her mother?
- What lesson did she learn? (Always listen to your elders, don't make fun of others.)
- Why do you think we should listen to what older people tell us?
- Why did Little Red Riding Hood's mother warn her about strangers?
- Did Little Red Riding Hood listen? Why or why not?

Love Counting Activities

This activity will help your child practice counting and using and identifying rhyming words.

Here are some finger plays for you to sing and do together at home. Use fingers as you say the numbers in the rhymes.

Valentine Finger play

Let's count valentines, One, two, three.
Let's count valentines, All for me!
Let's count valentines Four, five, six
Let's count valentines Match and mix
Let's count valentines Seven, eight, nine
Let's count valentines I'm glad you're mine

Five Big Valentines

Five big valentines from the corner drug store. I mailed one to a friend - then there were four
Four big valentines, lovely ones to see. I mailed one to my Mommy - then there were three
Three big valentines - red, shiny, and new. I mailed one to my Daddy - then there were two.
Two big valentines, the best is yet to come. I mailed one to Grandma - then there was one.
One big valentine, the giving is almost done. I mailed it to Grandpa - and now there are none.

Possible questions:

- How many rhyming words can you remember from the poem(s)? (Recite poems again as necessary, picking out the rhyming words.)

- Do you remember which number came after "5" (or any other number) as we were counting backwards?

Special Valentine

Prepare 5 valentines and 5 envelopes to use on a flannel board or on any surface that the child can see. Look at all these valentines; (put valentines on board) I made one for each friend. I'll put them in some envelopes, so each one I can send. How many valentines do you see? Start to count them now with me. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 One for _____(name of child) One for _____ One for _____, too. One for _____ And here is one for YOU! (Point to child) Repeat until each child's name is mentioned. Possible activity:

- Have the names of the children (or family members) on the envelopes and have the child match a valentine to a name as you say it together

Other counting activities to do at home and in your community: 1. Cut out six hearts and label them 0-5 and then hold up a heart and have your child show you the correct amount of fingers or objects. 2. Have your child sequence the hearts 0-5. 3. Have your child begin at any number and count to five. 4. Have your child begin at any number and count backwards to zero. 5. Hold up a heart and have your child tell you what comes before or after that number. 6. Hold up a heart and have your child show that many fingers with two hands.

Love You Forever

This activity encourages conversation about families and helps the child relate a story to his/her own life. Book: Love You Forever by Robert Munsch. (Located at your school or public library) The story details the cycle of life through chronicling the experiences in the life of a young son and his mother throughout the course of the boy's life.

Pre-reading activity questions:

- Who looks after you when you're sick?
- Who looks after you at home?
- Who tucks you in at night?
- Is there a song someone sings to you before you go to sleep?
- Do you ever "drive your mom CRAZY?" How? (i.e. Taking forever to get dressed in the morning.)
- How do your mom and dad, grandma, grandpa, etc. show you how much they love you?

Read the story to your child. Your child can join in and sing the song with you as the book is being read.

Post-reading activity:

- Retell the story with your child.
- Act out the story.
- Sing the song together.
- Discuss how even when 'You're driving me CRAZY', mommy/daddy still loves you.
- At bedtime sing the song together again as you tuck in your child.

You can listen to more stories by Robert Munsch at: <http://robertmunsch.com/>

Magnetic Letters

This activity will help your child recognize letters and think about beginning sounds of words.

Put magnetic letters in a bowl or basket. Have the child reach in and pick a letter and name it. Put it on the fridge or another magnetic surface. Have the child identify the letter sound and try to think of something that begins with that letter.

Possible Extension:

Ask the child to name something in a specific category. For example: "You picked the letter B. Can you think of a food that begins with B?"

Making a Sandwich

This activity encourages conversation using the five senses as a starting point.

Making a sandwich at home can give us many opportunities for oral language development. While making a sandwich you can use your senses to discuss some of the following:

- Smell: bread and other ingredients
 - "The smell of ... reminds me of ... "
- Feel: texture of the bread, weight of the bread, jars or cans used for ingredients, texture of the ingredients (gooey, smooth, soft, wet, dry) and temperature of spread
 - What does this feel like to you?
 - Can you describe the texture (smooth, sticky)?
- Hear: jar being opened, knife hitting the edge of the container, pickle bitten into
 - Listen to this sound. It sounds like ...
 - How can you describe the sound? (loud, soft, unpleasant)
- See: different ingredients are handled differently (some are spread, some are laid on the bread, some are cooked), how to cut the sandwich, colour of the bread, colour of spread
 - How do our eyes help us know how to use the ingredients? (We can tell if we have to spread it with a knife, pick it up with our fingers, etc.)
 - How many colours are in our sandwich?
 - How could we cut this sandwich to share?
- Taste: try each ingredient as you are putting it on your sandwich, then all the ingredients together as a sandwich
 - What do you like best? What do you want to put in your sandwich?

- Can you describe some of the tastes? (sour, sweet)

Marshmallow Mix Counting

This activity will help your child practise counting to 10 (or higher, if your wish to add more items of each kind).

The child will be making a chocolate mix by counting out five or ten of each of the food items (depending on the learning level of the child). As she/he counts out the food items, the articles can be put into the container. Marshmallows can be added twice, counting out to ten each time, once at the beginning, and once at the end, or the child could try counting to twenty. The full container can either be a post activity snack or a take home snack. Alternate Idea: -Count out pieces of fruit to make a fruit salad.

Melting snowmen

Using the following poem helps children with counting skills and rhyming skills.

Ten little snowmen standing in a row

Each with a hat and a great big bow

Out came the sun and it shone all day

And little (child's name)'s snowman lined up to go away

Typically, the snowmen will "melt away" at the end but it is useful for organizing students to line up for transition. This is a countdown poem. Use with any number of children. Snowmen can be grouped by colour, beginning name sounds, etc.

Metis 7 Step

This is a fun activity that can be done in the home or community with small or large groups. It teaches counting and patterns, and has the child connect music to math concepts.

- Listen to the music (possibilities below)
 - <https://youtu.be/fi7WCw5s1hQ>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j30vh3oqBCE>
- Count the beat in the music and have the child join in.
- Tap your toe in time with the music.
- Pat your hand with child's hand to the beat.
- Teach child the dance.
 - 7 steps to the right (count it out with the child).
 - 7 steps to the left.
 - 1-2 right.
 - 1-2 left.
 - 1-2 right.
 - Repeat.

Missing Rhyming Words

This activity will help your child recognize and identify rhyming words.

Say a nursery rhyme that your child knows, but leave out the rhyming word.

- Ask him/her to fill in the word you left out. For example:
- You say, "Hickory, dickory dock, the mouse ran up the _____." The child must say, "clock".

Extension:

Make up a rhyming statement (or find a poem with rhyming words) that is *unfamiliar* to the child and have the child fill in the missing word. For example:

- You say, "There are too many children in this tub. That means there are too many elbows to _____" The child should say, "scrub".
- You say, "I love running around in the sun. Playing with friends is so much _____" The child should say, "fun".

My Kokum Went Shopping

This is a game that helps develop vocabulary and reinforces turn-taking. It can be played with two or more people. The first person starts by saying,

- "My kokum (grandma) went shopping and bought _____ (apples).

Next person repeats statement and adds another item.

- "My kokum went shopping and bought _____ (apples) and _____ (milk).

First person (or the next person if you are playing with more than two people) repeats and adds another item.

- "My kokum went shopping and bought _____ (apples) and _____ (milk) and _____(bananas).

Mystery bag

This activity will help your child learn to describe characteristics of an object that he/she can feel but not see. Create a "mystery bag" by using a non-transparent bag and putting a familiar object from home or school inside the bag. Have your child put his/her hand into the bag and feel the object. Ask questions such as:

- What does it feel like? (hard soft, smooth, rough, round, sharp edges, etc...)

- Does it make a sound?
- What could you do with this object?
- What do you think the object is?

Take the object out and see if the guess is correct. Play again with a different object.

Names and Numbers

This activity will help your child print letters and also compare the number of letters in his/her name to the number of letters in another name.

- Have your child print his or her name and then count the number of letters in his or her name.
- "Do you know any of the letters?" Name the letters.
- Print your name or the name of another family member. Have your child count the number of letters in the other name.
- Ask your child to tell you which name has fewer letters or which name has more letters.
 - Examples: "Sam has fewer letters than Mary" or "Mary has more letters than Sam"
- The game can be played again using the names of other family members.

Nature Scavenger Hunt

This activity can be done outdoors in the community and it will help your child count, make conversation, and communicate ideas about math concepts and make connections. Have the child collect items OR take a picture of items such as the following:

1. 4 pinecones
2. 2 smooth rocks
3. 2 rough rocks
4. A stick shorter than your forearm
5. A stick longer than your forearm
6. Something green
7. A tree taller than you are
8. Something that is round
9. A bucket half full of water

When done count how many steps to the meeting point. Ask questions such as:

- Which item is the largest/smallest?
- Which item is the heaviest/lightest?
- Which item was hardest to find? Why do you think it was hard to find?
- How many items (or pictures) did you collect altogether?

Nature Walk, Nature Talk

This activity will encourage a conversation about nature, and how important nature is for everyone. Go for a walk or play outside. Point out some trees, animals, and birds. Afterwards, read the following poem:

A Tree

Look up high, At a tree.

Tell me now, What do you see?

A squirrel, a bird, an owl, too.

If you cut down the tree, what will they do?

Possible questions:

- Why do you think the trees are important to us?
- Why are the trees important to animals and birds?
- How would the animals feel if they didn't have trees?
- How would you feel if you were the animal that lived in the tree?

Nice Dice

This activity will help your child identify numbers quickly without counting.

Subitizing is "instantly seeing how many." It is being able to quickly see how many objects are in front of you (rather than counting 1 by 1.) In Kindergarten, students subitize up to 5. In Grade One, students work on subitizing numbers up to 10.

Recognize numbers up to 12 at-a-glance with this quick task. It works great on its own, or if you are playing a board game with dice, build it into the game! Roll **1 dice**. Ask students to quickly identify how many there are (1-6). Support them by talking about groups you see: "I see 3 and 3 together. I know that's a 6!" For students who are ready, roll **2 dice** together. Students can quickly recognize groups. This also works on quickly visualizing **addition**. Old board game sets at garage sales are a great place to stock up.

Nipi's Poem

This activity encourages signing and rhyming, as well as learning about the Métis culture. Nipi is a character representing the Métis culture and Michif language. A poem has been written inspired by a European poetry format. Follow the link below to learn more about the Métis culture in Canada. <http://www.learnmichif.com/culture/overview>

Nipi's Poem

Nipi can have fun every day

By helping with making Lebay (*note: Lebay is Métis fried bread*)

Biting shapes in tree bark
Counting stars in the dark
I wish I could be with him today!

Nipi can do math many places
As time-keeper at dogsled races
At home solving a riddle
At a dance playing fiddle
Putting smiles on many happy faces

- You can use this as a group chant to encourage language play and singing.
- You can work together to add lines to the poem

Odd One Out

This activity will help your child learn how to explain why one item does not belong.

Explain that you are going to name four items. Ask your child to listen carefully, and then tell you which of the things does not belong with the other three. Name things such as, “cow, horse, bike, dog” or “apple, ball, pear, cherry.” Ask the child to explain WHY the object does not belong.

Once the child is comfortable with the game, you can make the item choice more difficult if you wish. (For example, “ball, orange, peach, box” or “tomato, snowman, stop sign, ladybug.” Be sure to give hints if the child is having difficulty!

On the Road

This activity introduces your child to symbols and words on street signs.

Wander through the community, looking for and counting the street signs. If possible, take pictures of the street signs. Talk about the importance in respecting the message behind each street sign as you go along.

Possible questions to ask:

- What do you think the street sign means?
- Why do you think that street sign is here?
- How many street signs do we have altogether?
- How can you sort those street signs?

Once Upon a Time

The single most important activity for nurturing literacy learning in children is to read quality books to them. When you read to children you help them learn new ideas and new words. Shared storybook reading means that the children help you read and talk about the book. Read a favourite fairy tale to your child.

- Ask if he/she believes this story is real or make-believe.
 - What was make-believe in the story?
 - Were there any make-believe characters in the story?
 - Were there some things that really could happen? What were they?

An extension would be to discuss what is the same about most fairy tales:

- They begin with "Once upon a time."
- They usually have a happy ending.
- They often have a villain.
- Many times there are kings, queens, fairies, and magical animals.
- Did the story we just read remind you of another similar story?

Ask what kinds of feelings the children have when they listen to fairy tales.

- How do you feel?
- How did (the character) feel?

Outdoor Survey

This activity will start a conversation about outdoor observations, and also have the child count animals and objects, and compare numbers. Make a simple survey chart with words or pictures of animals, insects, or other things you might see (trucks, tall buildings, nests). Have the child make a check mark or tally mark every time you see the item. When you return from your talk, count the marks beside each one.

- Which category has the most marks?
- How many more (birds) did we see than (dogs)?
- Which category has the fewest marks?

Variation: Make a survey of different colours of vehicles, kinds of vehicles, numbers on signs.

Over in the Meadow

This activity will help your child learn vocabulary and rhyme through the poem/chant "Over in the Meadow" This rhyme (or song) has 10 verses for counting animals 1 to 10.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9pwVtUbA8c>

Start with the first verse and practice until you and your child(ren) learn it. Listen to how your voice starts "chanting" all by itself the more you say it. Use your fingers to show the number of animals. By the time your child learns the verse, they will have learned the number of fingers that goes with the verse!

Make up actions for the rhyme. (For example 'blink', 'wink', 'swim', 'dive', 'fly', etc.)

Challenge: You could look for pictures of animals in magazines or newspapers, or draw pictures of the animals to make your own book with your child. They would love making their own counting book!

Possible conversation starters may be:

- “This momma is teaching her babies and taking care of them.”
- “I was so proud of you when you took your first steps.”
- “How do the baby (birds) feel when they learn how to (fly)?”
- “Let’s pretend to swim like the baby fishies.”

Paper Bag Puppet Story

This activity will get your child to think about a conversation between two different characters.

Design your own paper bag puppets with your child or use one of the many templates available on various internet sites such as <http://www.cbc.ca/parents/play/view/printable-paper-bag-animal-puppets>

Talk about a story idea and act it out using the puppets!

- Can you use different voices for your puppets?
- How will your story start (and end)?
- How did you decide on your idea?
- How can you show what your characters are feeling?

Possible Extension:

Increase the number of puppets and the number of people involved in the story.

Parts of a story

This activity helps children predict, talk about what the parts of the story they heard.

Preview book

- Look at the cover
- Brainstorm questions you have about the book using sentence stems such as:
 - "I wonder who/what/why..."
 - "I think..."
- Introduce author and illustrator

Read Story

- Discuss new words during reading
- Review pre-reading questions as you read

Post Reading

- Who were the characters in the story?
- Where did the story take place?
- What was the problem?
- How was the problem solved?
- Ask child to retell the story (first, next, finally)

Pet Paws

This activity will help your child communicate about ways to count.

Have your child count the number of paws on your family's pets or in a picture of pets to determine the total number of paws.

Possible questions:

- Can you count paws in a way other than by ones?
- Do you get the same number if you count by ones or by twos?
- How do you know?
- Is there another way you could count paws?

Photos and Names

This activity will help children match written names (and/or symbols) to faces of people they know.

- Take pictures of all the children in the classroom or of all the people in the family.
- Create name tags for each person. For younger children, each name can have a symbol in addition to the name. It is fun to let the child choose their own symbol or pick something that begins with the same letter as their name. For example, the symbol for Ethan could be an egg.
- Have children match the names/symbols to the pictures of the people.

Possible questions:

- What letter do you think the name "Leo" begins with? Can you think of a symbol for Leo that would also begin with an "L" sound?
- How can we decide which name belongs with each picture? Can you listen carefully to the beginning letter sounds?
- Do you know a story about this person? Have you done something fun with this person?

Picture Captions

This activity will help your child use words to describe a photo taken at an event.

Print some pictures of events in which your child participated. (For example: a camping trip, a picnic at grandma's house, playing with a friend.) Talk about the photos as much as you wish, and then have the child describe the photo in a sentence. Record the sentence and paste the child's description under the correct photo.

- How could you explain what is happening in this picture?
- How can you make your sentence sound interesting to someone who will read it?

Possible Extension:

When you have written the sentence strips, mix them up, then read them to the child and have her/him place them under the correct picture.

Places of Power

This activity encourages your child to have a conversation about our responsibility to the Earth, using a book as inspiration.

Read the book *"Places of Power"* by Michael DeMunn to your child. It tells of how the Earth has many places where we, as humans, can learn about our responsibility to the Earth. We can all leave good things for people around us and our children and grandchildren. What makes your child feel strong and happy? What makes your child feel like he/she is being a helper to others and to the earth? What could he/she do to share this with others? A story starter may be:

- I feel strong when...
- I want to help the earth by...
- I want to help others by...

Planting Seeds

This activity will initiate conversations about seeds, have the child practise counting, and give an opportunity to tell a story about plants.

- Open a packet of seeds, such as peas or beans or corn.
- Discuss how they look. Count them.
- Divide up the seeds so each child and adult get some to plant.
- Prepare the soil, plant the seeds, and water them.

Possible questions and sentence starters:

- Can you tell me different ways to count the seeds? (by ones, by twos, by fives)
- What do you think seeds need in order to grow?
- I remember when I planted _____. This is what happened! _____.
- I think this is going to grow into a_____.

Possible extensions:

- Have children pretend they are seeds; water them, and watch them grow.
- Check the growth of the plants regularly and talk about the changes.

Playing Respectfully

This activity will help your child think and talk about playing with friends, and how to make choices that are respectful.

Tell a story about when you were a child and a game you enjoyed playing with other kids.

Talk about being a good sport.

- For example: hide and go seek, kick the can, skipping, board games...
 - Talk about how you felt when everyone played fairly
 - Talk about a time when there was a disagreement, and how you resolved it.

Questions you might ask are:

- How do you feel when you play with your friends?
- When are games the most fun? (When everyone gets along and makes good choices.)
- What kinds of things make you sad when you are playing with friends?
- What could you do to make sure everyone gets along and have fun?

Predicting the Story

This activity will help your child predict what will happen in a story and be able to express his/her thoughts about a book before actually reading it. This is a great activity to do using library books that the child is not familiar with.

- Choose a picture book that is interesting to your child, or have the child choose it himself/herself.
- Before reading the book, look at the pictures and have your child predict what will happen in the story.
- You may want to supply a few prompts if the child is having difficulty, such as:
 - Did you notice the _____ in this picture? Why do you think it is there?
 - What has changed in this picture, compared to the picture on the previous page?
 - Look at the face of that character! Why do you think he/she has that facial expression?

Recognizing Attributes - I Spy

This activity is a fun, easy way to help a child recognize shapes, sizes, and colours while you are out in the community. Play I spy with your child.

- Can play traditionally (I spy something that is red...)
- Move into other attributes (I spy something round, flat, soft, light...)
- Move into shapes in environment (I spy a triangle, square...)
- Use numbers (I spy two of something...)

Recycle Fun

This activity will help your child practise reasoning skills, and communicate about decisions he/she has made. Have your child sort your recyclable materials into groups.

Possible questions:

- How did you sort these materials?
- Is there another way you could sort them?
- Can we put some of these groups together? What is the same about the groups you chose to combine?
- What should we do with these materials?
- Where else have you seen someone collect and sort materials like this?

Extension: You could have your child count the materials in each group.

Relatively Speaking

This activity engages your child in a conversation about family members and the history of your family. Talk about who your family members are and where they are now.

- Who are the family members who live with you?
- Can you name family members who do not live with us?
 - Do you know where they live?
 - Do you know if they live close to us? Let's talk about where they live.
- Which family members do we see often? Sometimes? Not often?

Share with your child what you know of your family history.

- Where you are from?
- Where are your parents/grandparents from?
- Is there anyone in your family who may have signed treaties?

Possible Extension:

- You may want to show pictures of family members, particularly those not seen often.

Rhyming Riddles

This activity will help your child identify rhyming sounds, and practice thinking about rhyming words to solve a riddle.

Talk with your child about what rhyming is. “*Rhyming is when words have the same sound at the end, like bat and cat, frog and dog, and row and go.*” Say a riddle to the child. Ask the child to solve the riddle with a word that rhymes.

Examples of rhyming riddles:

- *I am thinking about a colour. It rhymes with head.*
 - *What is it? (red)*
- *I am thinking about a colour. It rhymes with Jello.*
 - *What is it? (yellow)*
- *I am thinking about a colour. It rhymes with frown.*
 - *What is it? (brown)*
- *I am thinking about a vehicle. It rhymes with star.*
 - *What is it? (car)*
- *I am thinking about a vehicle. It rhymes with duck.*
 - *What is it? (truck)*

Possible questions:

- I wonder what colour rhymes with shoe? Can you think of another word that rhymes with shoe?
- Do you think that orange rhymes with head?

Possible extension:

- Have the child make up the riddle.

Riding in a Car

This activity helps your child engage in conversation while you are riding in a vehicle. While riding in a car discuss and talk about what you smell, feel, see, hear, and do.

Smell: Talk about what you smell and how it smells.

- Odours when window is open
- Odours within the car

Feel: Talk about how things feel (hard, soft, cold, warm, hot, etc.)

- Pressure of the wind blowing against your hand or arm when it is put on or out the window
- Vibrations of the car moving, through the floor board, through the doors
- Air from air conditioner or heater
- Body movement as the car turns corner
- How the car ride makes you feel (eg. sleepy)

Hear: Talk about what you hear, what sound is it, is it loud or quiet.

- Horn
- Motor running
- Radio
- Outdoor sounds

See: Talk about the things you see.

- Name the things you see in the car (eg. gas gauge [empty or full], radio, steering wheel)
- Name the things you see outside while riding (eg. train, bird, clouds)
- Count things you see while riding (eg. cows, barns, signs)
- Discuss events going on outside of the car

Do: Talk about things you are doing.

- Putting the key in the ignition and turning it makes the motor start
- Cars must stop at stop lights or stop signs
- After getting in the car the first thing to do is buckle your seat belts
- The harder it rains, the faster the windshield wipers must go
- When it gets dark the headlights must go on

Roll of the Dice

This activity will help your child problem-solve, using the number of dots on dice.

Have your child roll a dice. Ask the child, “How many more do you need to get to 10?” The child can then count on using fingers. Example: Child rolls a 6. He/she starts at 6 and count on to 10. “7, 8, 9, 10. Four more makes 10.”

Possible extension: Use two dice and have the child count on to a number of your choice.

Setting the Table

This activity will encourage your child to think and talk about things you feel, hear, see, and do while setting the table.

Feel:

- Difference in texture between a place mat or table cloth, utensils, and plates (Hard, smooth, cold, soft, bumpy, rough, silky, etc.)
- Difference in weight between objects (light/heavy)
- The smooth bowl of a spoon compared to the points on the fork.

Hear:

- Utensils clanging together or being taken out of the drawer
- Sound made when you tap a glass or plate with cutlery
- Plate being placed on table

See:

- Difference between left and right
- Shape of different pieces (plate is round, knife is long, glass is tall)
- Plates are clean before a meal and dirty after a meal
- Colours and designs on plates or cups
- What plates/cups are made of (plastic, glass, china)

Do:

- Take the cutlery from the _____ (cupboard, drawer, etc)
- Count number of items needed
- Decide where every member will sit. (You could make name cards.)
- Put glasses/cups on table

Hint: Let the child do one thing at a time.

Shape Walk

This activity will help your child visualize shapes, communicate about shapes, and make connections between the standard shapes and objects in the community.

Go for a walk around your community. What shapes do you and your child see?

Possible questions:

- Can you name the shapes (square, circle, rectangle, triangle, octagon, hexagon)?
- How would you describe the shape? (long, short, pointy, curved, tall, flat, number of sides)
- Can you see something that is made up of more than one shape? (For example, a house might be a rectangle and a triangle.)

Extension: When you get back home, draw the different shapes you saw.

Sharing Personal Stories

This activity will help children relate to a story about a skill or talent, and have them talk about their own skills.

Read aloud a picture book or tell a story that highlights someone demonstrating a talent. Afterwards, have your child share what he or she is good at doing. Some sentence starters might be:

- I think I would like to do that because...
- I remember when...
- Pretend that you are...

Some questions you might ask are:

- Why do you think you are good at that?
 - Tell me about a time you used that skill/talent.
- What do you think you would like to do when you grow up?
 - How would what you enjoy doing now help you decide what you want to do when you grow up?

Silly Socks!

This activity will help your child recognize ways to sort objects, and explain a sorting rule.

Child and parent can gather at least 10 socks. Place the socks in a pile. Sort the socks in different ways...ask the child to sort them into 2 piles. The parent could suggest a sorting rule OR have the child determine various ways to sort. Have the child explain the rule that was used. Ways to sort could include:

- by size
- by colour
- by pattern [stripes, spots, no pattern]

Similar and Different Stories

This activity will help your child think about and express similarities and differences in books.

Choose at least two books that have a similar theme, or a similar story line. For example, it could be two books about transportation, or it could be two versions of a fairy tale. Read both books to your child. When you are finished reading, ask questions such as:

- What was the same about the books?
 - There could be a large variety of answers! Perhaps, "They were both about cars" or "They both had lots of pictures and not many words" or "The books are the same size."
- What was different about the books?
 - Again - there are many answers, and this is an opportunity to discuss the differences the child noticed and perhaps prompt for additional differences.
- Does this book remind you of another book or story? In what way?

Simon Says

Simon says is a fun activity that gets you and the child moving. It improves communication skills and enforces the concept of quantity. It is a great activity for a group of children outside or inside.

Invite your child to play a "following directions" game. Tell your child that you are going to be Simon and they have to follow the directions. Tell them they have to listen closely because you are going to try and trick them! Play Simon says: (traditional game -give directions using "Simon Says" and occasionally omitting "Simon Says". If the child does the action without Simon saying it, he/she sits down for one round, or whatever you decide to have as the "penalty.") Give directions such as:

- Take 5 steps backward
 - count backwards as you walk
- Take 2 steps left
- Take 4 steps right
- Take 1 large step forward
- Take 4 small steps back
- Touch your nose twice
- Raise your left hand
- Raise your right hand
- Jump 3 times
- Make yourself really small

Possible extension:

- Have the child be Simon, giving directions.

Singing and Rhyming about Love

Singing and rhyming help your child learn new vocabulary, rhyming words, and develop a sense of rhythm. Have fun singing these songs and finger plays with your child. Do the actions too.

My Heart

When I say I love you (point to lips), it comes from my heart (hand on heart).

You hear it in your ear (Point to ear). and it sounds very smart. (Point to head)

I love it when you're proud of me (stand very tall), you say it all day long (stretch arms wide).

And when I hear you say it (point to ear), my heart sings a merry song (hand on heart)

.

I'm A Little Valentine

I'm a little valentine, red and white

With ribbons and lace I'm a beautiful sight

I can say, "I Love You" on Valentine's Day

Just put me in an envelope and give me away

I'll Make a Valentine *Sung to: London Bridge*

I'll make a bright red valentine, valentine, valentine.

I'll make a bright red valentine, and give it right to you.

I'll trim it with lace and bows, lace and bows, lace and bows.

I'll trim it with lace and bows, and give it right to you.

Yes, I do *Sung to: Three Blind Mice*

I love you, I love you,

Yes, I do, yes, I do

I love you every night and day,

I love you when I work and play,

I love you in so many ways,

I love you!

Possible questions/conversation starters:

- Can you tell me some of the rhyming words that you heard in the songs?
- Can think of someone who would like to get a valentine from you? Why did you choose this person?
- What are some of the things we do for people we love? (Tell them we are proud of them, tell them we love them, do kind things for them, etc.)

Smartie Counting

This short activity will help your child sort, count, and use words such as most, least, more, and fewer.

When your child receives a treat such as Smarties, Skittles, or M&M's, ask questions such as:

- Can you sort the Smarties by colour?
- Which colour group has the most Smarties?
- Which colour group has the least Smarties?
- How many more (red) Smarties are there than (brown) Smarties? How do you know?
- How many fewer (green) Smarties are there than (red) Smarties? How do you know?

Song or rhyme: Five Little Turtles

Rhymes and songs are fun for children and help them develop vocabulary and a concept of rhyming words.

Sing this song to the tune of "Five little monkeys jumping on the bed", or recite it as a rhyme.

Five little turtles *[Hold up five fingers.]* swimming in the river. *[Make swimming motions with arms.]*

One swam out *[Hold up one finger and then roll your hand down towards the floor.]* and started to shiver. *[Tilt head, place hands by cheek and close your eyes.]*

Askî called Kokum and Kokum said, *[Cup your hands around mouth as if to call]* "No more turtles swimming in the river!" *[Put one hand on your hip and wag your index finger.]*

You may want to continue singing/reciting and "count down" the turtles - 4 turtles, 3, turtle, 2 turtles, 1 turtle. To learn more about Askî and friends download the four digital storybooks by searching for "Aski and friends" in the app store or on Google Play.

- Askî and Turtle Island
- Kon and the Circle of Life
- Nipi and Mother Earth
- Tate and the Flyers

Song: The Eensey Weensey Beaver

Singing and rhyming activities are fun and expand the vocabulary of your child.

Sing this song to the tune of "The eensey weensey spider".

The eensey weensey beaver climbed up the beaver dam. *[climbing gesture]*

Down came the rain and away the beaver swam. *[Rain gesture and then swimming motions. Sad face.]*

Out came the sun and dried up all the rain. *[Sun gesture. Happy face.]*

Then the eensey weensey beaver went up the dam again. *[climbing gesture]*

To learn more about Nipi the beaver and his friends download the four digital storybooks on your iPod, iPad, or iPhone in the App Store. Search for "Aski and friends."

- Askî and Turtle Island
- Kon and the Circle of Life
- Nipi and Mother Earth
- Tate and the Flyers

Special Older Person

This activity encourages conversations with your child about special older family members (or friends) in our lives, and helps the child think about and express things they know about people in his/her life.

Tell your child about a special older family member in your life.

- Tell stories about special times you spent with this family member and what makes them important to you.

Possible questions/conversation starters:

- Can you tell me about a special older person in your life?
 - Can you remember a story about that person?
 - Can you remember a special activity you did with that person?
- In the story I told you about, I felt _____. How do you feel when you are with your older friend?

Stack a Story

This activity can be completed over several days and used over and over. This activity will help encourage your child to tell stories while building with homemade blocks.

As you empty cereal boxes, tissue boxes, and other food packages, save them for building blocks. Together with your child you can cover the box with your child's drawing, or a picture from a magazine or a calendar. Make several blocks with various pictures of people, places, items, seasons, animals, etc. Help your child to stack the blocks while telling a story from the pictures on the blocks.

Possible story starters...

- Once upon a time....
- One day...
- A long time ago....

Encourage story telling with:

- What do you see in this picture?
- How do you think these people in the picture feel?
- Where do you think they might be going?
- What happened next?

Story About Trouble

This activity will encourage your child to have conversations about a story, and perhaps make a story him/herself.

Tell a story about an animal who got into trouble. You can start the story with: “One time there was a puppy who got into trouble because he...”

Some questions you may ask are:

- How would you feel if you got into the same trouble as the puppy?
- What would you do if...?

- Can you think of a story about an animal who got into trouble?

You may want to read the book "The Tale of Peter Rabbit" by Beatrix Potter (link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EuTIQCGxE5Y>) OR "Pokey Little Puppy" by Janet Lowry (link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zW5ioliJI5Y>) and talk about some of the trouble the animals got into!

Story Box

This activity will help your child learn to tell a story, using objects such as prompts for the story.

Place various objects in a box. Have the child pull one item out of the box and tell a story and/or facts about it. The child can work towards telling a story with more than one item, creating a more complex story. Objects in the box could range from clothing items to simple objects around the home or classroom.

Possible questions to help the child begin:

- Who do you think might wear a (hat, badge, necklace, etc.) like this?
- Why would someone want to use a (ruler, measuring cup, pencil, etc.)?
- Where might a person be if they were using this (measuring tape, book, phone, etc.)?

Story Cards

The activity will help your child put a story in sequence, and re-tell the story.

Purchase two copies of a small, short, inexpensive storybook. Keep one copy for reading to your child, and cut out the pictures from the other copy and glue them on poster board squares. After you have read the story and your child is familiar with it, give the child the poster board squares and have them arrange the pictures in the proper sequence. Have the child retell the story.

Possible Extension:

Put the squares facedown and have the child draw one card. Ask:

- "What is happening in this part of the story?"
- Is this card in the beginning, middle, or end of the story?"

Story Theatre

This activity will give your child an opportunity to act out (and re-tell) the events of a story.

Read a book, such as "The Gingerbread Man" and act out the story, or parts of the story together with your child. Have the child be the "leader" in the re-telling and acting of the

story, giving prompts only when necessary. You may want to start conversations with questions such as:

- Can you remember what the Gingerbread Man said to the horse? (Any conversation, according to the story you read.)
- Do you remember what happened right after _____?
- I can remember something that happened near the end of the story that involved a _____. Can you remember that part?

Telling stories with the theme of "Love"

This activity will help your child talk and tell stories about people and experiences that he/she enjoys.

Display pictures of family members doing various activities and have your child tell you the people in the pictures that he/she loves. Have your child tell you why he/she loves each person. If you wish, you could take pictures together with your child and then have the child explain what is happening in the picture. To promote language, ask specific questions such as:

- How did you feel when you were with this person? (Ex. "I felt happy when...")
- How does the person you love feel in the picture? (Ex. "My grandma feels excited because...")
- What was your favourite thing about that day? (Ex. "I loved it when..")
- What other things do you love to do with the person you are within the picture? (Ex. "I love it when we..")

If photographs are not available, you could have your child draw a picture of someone that he/she loves and tell a story about the picture and person.

Thank You Creator

This poem encourages a conversation about things we are thankful for, and response to the Creator.

Read or sing the poem with your child. This could be part of a bedtime routine or used as a prayer before meals.

Thank you, Creator, for the trees so high.

Thank you, Creator, for the big blue sky.

Thank you, Creator, for the birds that sing.

Thank you, Creator, for everything!

Possible questions to ask may be:

- Can you think of other things we should be thankful for?

- Why is good to be thankful?

Thank You!

This activity will help children practice talking about their lives, and you can use it to introduce new words and concepts to them if they need help describing the things for which they are thankful.

Ask your child to name (a certain number, such as 5) things that they are thankful for. You can do this on more than one day by simply adding to the list that you have already started. Vary the activity by:

- Taking turns with your child naming things to be thankful for
- Doing a countdown with the numbers from 10 to 1. For example, 1 can always be being thankful for each other.
- Doing the activity in an ancestral language such as Michif: *“Nesto, I give thanks for my Kohkom! Newo, I give thanks for my Mushum!”*

The Best Part of Me

This activity will expand the vocabulary of children, encouraging them to talk about themselves, often using a pattern from a book.

After reading [The Best Part of Me: Children Talk About their Bodies in Pictures and Words](#) by Wendy Ewald or viewing the video below, help child complete the sentences: The best part of me is my _____. It is my favorite part because _____. Without my _____ I could not _____. For example: The best part of me is my arms. It is my favourite part because they help me hug. Without my arms, I could not hug you!

[Best Part of Me video](#)

- Extension Ideas: Books: Songs: Kindergarten Curriculum Outcome Connections:
 1. Take a picture of their best part and post with their story about their best part.
 2. Draw a picture of your whole body. Draw an arrow pointing to the favorite part of your body.
 3. Have a conversation about similarities and differences.
 4. Read another book or sing a song from the list below
 - I Like Me - Nancy Carlson
 - My Book About Me - Dr. Seuss
 - Here are my Hands - Bill Martin Jr.
 - From Head to Toe - Eric Carle
 - All by Myself - Mercer Mayer
 - Eyes, Nose, Fingers and Toes - Judy Hindley
 - Hello Toes! Hello Feet! - Ann Whitford Paul
 - Oh What a Miracle I am - Hap Palmer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFIVciz8aGs>

- Hokey Pokey
- **INK.1** Demonstrate an understanding of similarities and differences among individuals in the classroom.
- **INK.2** Describe the diversity of groups represented in the classroom.
- **CRK.1** Comprehend and respond to a variety of visual, oral, print, and multimedia texts that address identity (e.g., exploring interests), community (e.g., belonging), and social responsibility (e.g., contributing).
- **CRK.2** View and interpret the basic message of visuals and objects in a variety of texts including models, photographs, dramas, dance creations, and videos.

The Happiest Day of My Life

This activity is an opportunity to tell your child about a happy day in your life, and have the child respond, telling about a happy day in his/her life. Tell your child a story about the happiest day of your life.

- If you have any pictures from that day you can show them to your child.
- Talk about why it was a happy day, and the people involved in the happy day.

Possible questions:

- What was your favourite day?
 - Why did you choose that day?
 - Who helped make the day happy for you?
- Do you remember when...?
- How did you feel when...?

The Stranger in the Woods

This activity will promote conversation with your child, and will also help with reasoning skills and making connections between numbers and the objects used.

The Stranger in the Woods by Carl R. Sams II, Jean Stoick is a book about a snowman that is made in the woods to help feed the animals in the winter. If you have this book, it would be a great way to begin a play activity with your child outside. After reading the book, go outside and create a snowman together to help feed the birds. (For example, use raisins, carrots, a hat with bird seed on it etc.) Talk about why we feed birds in the winter and why it is important to give back to Mother Nature. If you do not have the book, you can still have a conversation about snowmen and what kind of things could be used to make a snowman and also benefit the birds that are around in the winter.

Ways to engage your child and work on creating meaningful conversation skills, while building the Snowman could be:

- Build the snowman where you can observe him from your home and talk about what the snowman might see and tell us if he could talk.
- What are some things we might need to make a snowman? What are some things they used to build the snowman in the story? What will we use? Where can we find the materials?
- How should we dress to go outside? (Take time to encourage independent dressing.)
- Create three different body parts and count them. Count other materials as you use them. Talk about "more" or "fewer" as you decide on objects to use.
- Have conversation about the body parts of the snowman. Are they all the same size? Which one would you use for the head? How can we put the Snowman together?
- Count the objects needed to create the snowman. How many eyes does the Snowman have? How many buttons should we use?
- Continue the conversations with the any ideas that you and your child have.
- After creating your Snowman, share a snack inside and watch for the birds!

There was a Little Turtle

This activity will help your child with singing and rhyming. There is also opportunity for counting and conversation.

Sing the following song with your child. If you would like to see a version of it, use the following link. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rmZySo00HIQ>

Tiny Tim Song

I had a little turtle, his name was Tiny Tim.
 I put him in the bathtub to see if he could swim.
 He drank up all the water, he ate up all the soap,
 And now he's in his bed, with bubbles in his throat.
 Bubble, bubble, bubble, bubble, bubble, bubble,
 Bubble, bubble, bubble, bubble, bubble, pop!

Possible questions and conversation starters:

- Did you hear a word in the song that rhymed with "Tim"?
- I don't think turtles really eat soap! What do you think turtles eat?
- Using the song, count how many bubbles were in Tiny Tim's throat.
- Why do you think Tiny Tim was sick?
- Do you remember a time when you were sick? What kinds of things made you feel better?

Thinking After Reading

This activity will help your child think about the story in a book, and then evaluate and express his/her feelings about the book.

Read a book or a story from a book to your child. Ask questions such as:

- What was your favourite part of the story. Why?
- What was your least favourite part of the story? Why?
- Did this story make you think of anything in your life?
- Did this story remind you of any other stories you have heard?

Thinking before (and after) reading

This activity will help your child use background knowledge to think about and discuss the topic of a book.

Choose a book about a subject that is somewhat familiar to the child. Fact books work well for this activity, although you can also use fiction. Before reading, ask your child what he/she knows about the topic. For example:

- Here is a book about turtles. What do you know about turtles?
 - You might discuss the size of turtles, turtles' shells, how turtles move
- This is a story about three bears. What do you know about bears? Do the bears on the cover of this book look like real bears?
 - You might discuss that bears live in the woods, but in this story it looks like they live in a house, so perhaps the story is not "real"!

After reading the book, ask questions such as:

- Did you learn anything new about turtles?
- Now how do you know that the bears in this story were make-believe bears?

This is the Way We Plant the Seeds

This activity provides a song for you to sing while you plant seeds together, and gives some opportunity for conversations about seeds and plants.

Sing a song with your child while you plant seeds.

This is the way we plant the seeds, plant the seeds, plant the seeds, so early in the morning.

This is the way we cover the seeds, cover the seeds, cover the seeds, so early in the morning.

This is the way we water the seeds, water the seeds, water the seeds, so early in the morning.

his is the way we thank the creator, thank the creator, thank the creator, for all the things that grow.”

Possible questions:

- What do you think is going to grow?
- What will help the seeds grow? (sunshine, water)

- How tall do you think the plants will be?
- Do you have a favourite plant? Why?

Extension Activity: Have your child pretend to be a flower growing as you water them.

Time to Eat!

This activity engages your child in conversation during preparing to have a meal. Possible questions, while preparing for a meal and setting the table:

- What are we eating? Do you know where _____ (kind of food) comes from?
- What do you think we need to use to eat this food? Should we use bowls? Plates? (Spoons, forks, knives..) Explain why you made those choices.
- How many people are eating this meal?
- How many plates, cups, bowls, cutlery, etc. do we need? (Have child name the items.)
- When child sets the table have him/her say the names of the items that you are using and count them.

Today I Can Be Kind

This activity encourages you to talk with your child about what you and the child can do today (and following days) to be a kind person.

Examples of "kindness activities" could be:

- Say only nice words to others.
- If someone is crying/hurt give them a hug or tissue.
- Feed the family pet.
- Count how many times you hear "thank you" today.
- Say "I love you" to...

Possible questions:

- How does being kind make you feel?
- How does being kind make others feel? How do you know?
- What is the opposite of being kind?
- Can you think of new "kindness activities"?
- Can you tell me about a time someone was kind to you?
- Can you tell me about a time you were kind to someone else?

Possible extension:

- Make a kindness calendar and add an activity each day

Treasure Hunt

This is an engaging activity that will help your child associate words with messages while he/she goes on a treasure hunt.

Go on a treasure hunt with your child. Write a positive message to your child and hide it in a box somewhere in your house. Create clues that lead you to the treasure. Put symbols on the clues so that your child can "read" the clue.

A sample treasure hunt may be:

- Read clue 1: *"Look on the _____ that lets you in the house"* (clue to go to the door). Follow the directions and at the door you will find clue 2.
- Read clue 2 (found on the door) which says, *"Look under the blue chair"*. Follow the directions and under the chair you will find clue 3.
- Read clue 3 (fridge clue) which says, *"Look in a place that is cold."* Follow the directions.
- The treasure box is hidden in the fridge. When your child finds it, open it and read the positive message you have written to your child.

Things you may or may not want to include in the box along with the positive message:

- Snack to share
- Photograph

Possible sentence starters:

- We are going on a treasure hunt. A treasure hunt is...
- We need to listen and then look for clues. Can you help me read the clues?
- Let's pretend we are...

Wash Your Hands

Use this song/rhyme to help children learn the meanings of "front" "back" and "in-between", as well as having them enjoy a rhyming song while washing hands.

As your child is washing his/her hands, sing a song to him/her and then sing together (to the tune of *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*).

Wash, wash, wash your hands, wash them 'til they're clean.

Wash the front, wash the back, wash them in between.

Some sentence starters may be:

- The reason we wash our hands is _____.
- After washing my hands with soap, they feel _____.

Waskawiwin ekwa akicikewin (moving and counting)

This activity will help your child with counting and making connections between the written number, a number of objects and a number of actions.

1. With your child cut paper into 10 squares
2. Write the number 1 on one of the squares, have your child put one dot on that square.
3. Continue with numbers 2-10.
4. Turn all squares over on the table or floor.
5. Have your child choose a square.
6. Have your child read the number (with help if needed).
7. Have your child preform a movement activity that many times. (jumping jacks, bunny hops, push-ups, skipping, running back and forth, rolling, twirling, walking backwards, animal walking, or make up your own fun way to move)
8. Count with your child as they move. Count in English or in Cree. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6nuDkp3iEY>)

Other idea:

1. Take turns with your child. Have the child tell you how to move.
2. Count in your ancestral language.

What Are They Doing?

This activity gives your child the chance to practice telling stories in nature. If they are having trouble beginning their story, you can tell them one first and then help them create their own step by step.

Go for a walk with your child, or observe animals or birds in your yard. When you see an animal or a bird, ask your child to tell you a story about what the animal or bird is doing. Some questions you can ask are:

- "What do you think that bird is doing?" "What makes you think that?"
- "What do you think the bird does when it is cold out? "
- "What would it be like if that bird had no food?"
- "If we saw a little bird with no food, what could we do?"

What is it called?

This activity encourages your child to use vocabulary they know to describe an item. The game can be played in two different ways.

1. Both you and the child see the item (could be a picture card or an actual item), and you use questions such as suggested below to get the child to describe the item.
2. Only the child sees the item, and after the child answers the suggested questions (or additional questions), you guess the item.

Some suggested questions:

- What size is it?
- What colour is it?
- What shape is it?
- How does it feel?
- How do we use it?
- What is it made of?

Possible extension: The child does NOT see the item, but guesses it after asking the questions.

Word Search

This activity will help your child recognize that there are letters and words in many places in the environment, and not just in books! Go on a word or letter search around the house and see how many places you and your child can find words/letters. For example:

- Open the cupboard doors to find words on cereal boxes and other products
- Find words on the telephone or the TV remote control
- Are there words on the washer? Dryer? Box of laundry soap?

Would You Rather

This activity encourages conversations between you and your child, and helps your child tell a short story (explanation) of his/her own.

Play a game of "Would You Rather" by asking questions such as:

- Would you rather have an elephant or a lion as a pet?
- Would you rather go swimming, or go fishing?
- Would you rather paint a picture, or build a block tower?

Be sure to ask "Why?" after each question in order to give your child a chance to tell you about the reasons for the choice.

Extension: Have your child think of "would you rather" questions to ask YOU. Be sure to tell the reasons for your choice as well!

You Sing Along

This activity has children singing songs about love, and then engaging in conversations about loving others.

Sing the "You" songs to your child, and then with your child.

"I Love You" (Skinnamarink a Dink)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPdV8jXAJUQ>

Skinnamarink a dink a dink, Skinnamarink a doo, I love you.
Skinnamarink a dink a dink, Skinnamarinkk a doo, I love you.
I love you in the morning and in the afternoon,
I love you in the evening and underneath the moon;
Oh, Skinnamarink a dink a dink, Skinnamarink a doo, I love you!

"You Are My Sunshine"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fpJXLNO6MF4>

*You are my sunshine, my only sunshine.
You make me happy when skies are grey.
You'll never know dear How much I love you.
Please don't take my sunshine away.*

Possible questions:

- How do you feel when someone says I love you?
- How do you feel when someone hugs you?

Possible sentence starters may be:

- I think to love someone means...
- I showed someone I loved them by...

You Told Me!

This activity engages your child in a conversation and helps the child describe a previous conversation and emotions that may have surrounded the conversation.

Have your child describe a time where you (or another adult in your child's life) warned them about something. Discuss why they were warned, whether or not they listened to the older person, and whether or not they understood why they were being warned. Possible questions you may ask:

- Why do you think we should listen to what older people tell us?
- How did it make you feel when _____ told you...?
- What might have happened if you did not listen?