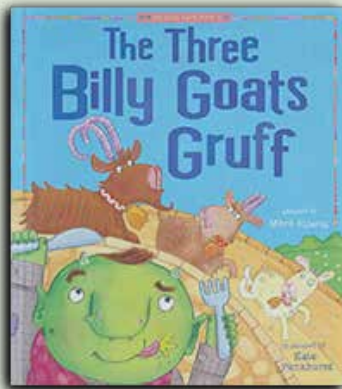


Book Nook

This month's Book Nook topic is...



Point Out Print with “The Three Billy Goats Gruff”

In order to be able to read and write, children need to understand quite a bit about print. Print knowledge means understanding how print works (e.g. that we read from top to bottom and left to right, and that letters combine to make words). One of the first and most essential elements of print knowledge is that **print has meaning**. That means understanding that the squiggly shapes that a child sees on a page mean something –they describe the picture and tell the story. If children don't understand that print communicates like talking does, they may ignore it, and miss out on early opportunities to figure out how print works.

My chosen book:

The Three Billy Goats Gruff adapted by Mara Alperin and illustrated by Kate Pankhurst

Why I chose it

This book has an engaging storyline, clear pictures and presents print in a variety of ways – some words are written in a larger font, to show that they are louder words, some words are bolded for emphasis, and the characters' speech is written in speech balloons. The print really sticks out!

How to show that print is meaningful

A key strategy to making print meaningful is to stop and Point out Print (POP). This means drawing your child's attention to what's written on the page. You might point to the words and make comments and ask questions about the print, or you can use your finger to track the words you are reading (move your finger along the line as you read it). When you do this, you are letting your child know that the story is in the words, not just in the pictures.

The first time you read the book

The first time you read "The Three Billy Goats Gruff", you can track the words that you are reading with your finger. This subtle way to Point out Print (POP) won't take away from the meaning of the story.

The second time you read the book

Now that your child is familiar with the story, you can Point out Print (POP) by making a comment like, "The words in this speech-balloon tell me exactly what the troll is saying. He says 'Who's that trip-trapping over my bridge?'" You can also continue to point to the words as you read them - be sure to read in your scariest troll voice for extra impact!

The third time you read the book

Since you've pointed out words in speech balloons in the last reading, this time you might Point out Print (POP) by using a question to see if your child remembered what you pointed out. You could say, "Can you show me where I can find out what the troll says?" and wait to see if your child points to the right speech balloon. If he does, you could say, "That's right. He says..." and read the words in the speech balloon. If your child doesn't seem aware of the speech balloons, you could say "I think the words in this white balloon are telling me what the troll says. He says ...".

Once your child has demonstrated his understanding of speech balloons (by pointing to it), you can start to point out other print concepts. Stay tuned to future book nooks where I will introduce other aspects of print that you can POP.

I hope you enjoyed this Book Nook topic. If you have a favorite book that's easy to point out print with, I'd love to hear about it! Please send me your feedback.



A little more about me

I'm a Speech-Language Pathologist working at The Hanen Centre as a Program Specialist. I combine my background in language and literacy development with my knowledge of adult learning to offer evidence-based face to face and online trainings to early childhood educators, SLPs and parents.

The Book Nook combines my passion for children's literature with my knowledge of language and literacy development. I hope you enjoy it!

Tamara