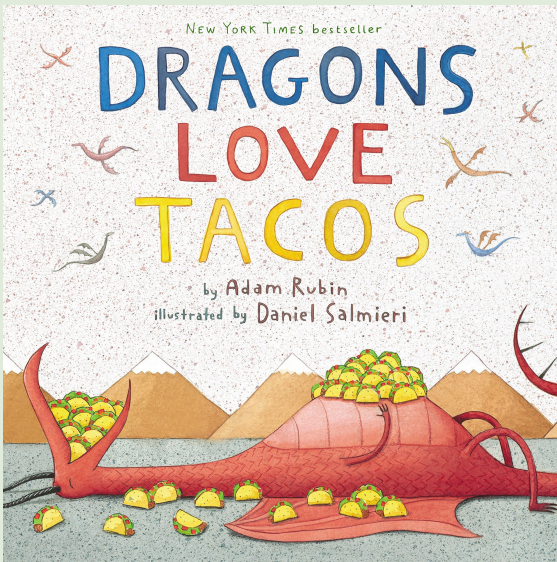


Book Nook

This month's Book Nook topic is...



Building Print Knowledge with *Dragons Love Tacos*

Print knowledge is a key early literacy skill that helps set your child on the path to reading and writing success. There are a lot of things your child needs to understand about print (for example, that letters combine to make words and that we read print from left to right), but the very first thing your child must understand about print is that it **has meaning**. He needs to learn that print is more than strange squiggly lines on a page – it represents spoken language and tells a story.

Here are some simple tips for showing your child that print has meaning.

Let's get started!

The book

Dragons Love Tacos by Adam Rubin, illustrated by Daniel Samieri

Why we picked it:

This funny book will entertain preschoolers with its vivid pictures and interesting storyline – who knew dragons loved tacos but hated spicy salsa?

The text in this book is clearly laid out, making it easy to point out. There are also many instances of print within the illustrations themselves (for example, the dragons go to a restaurant called “Taco Cave” to get their favourite treats). There are many opportunities to talk about print in this book.

POP to build print knowledge

A key strategy you can use to show your child that print has meaning is **POP** or Point Out Print. Often children ignore print and just look at the illustrations. When you make an effort to point out the print, you give your child opportunities to think and talk about the print they see, and to recognize that it has meaning.

You can POP by pointing to the words on a page, making comments and asking questions about the print, or you can use your finger to track the words you are reading. When you do this, you're letting your child know that what you're saying aloud comes from the words on the page, and that those words are communicating meaning.

The first time you read the book

The first time you read the book, track the words with your finger as you say them to help your child connect what you are saying with the symbols on the page. You might also make a comment like, "Look, I'm reading these words. These words are telling me what's happening in this story!"

The second time you read the book

This time, you can try pausing more often as you read to Point Out Print. Continue to track words with your finger, but this time make a comment about something that you read. For example, you could say, "I'm going to start reading at the top of the page. The first words of this story are, 'Hey Kid!'" Or, you could point to the illustration and say, "I'm looking at the dragon's takeout bag and it says 'Taco Cave'. That must be the name of the restaurant they go to."

By bringing print to your child's attention and talking about the features of words, you are teaching your child that the words on the page have meaning – an essential skill for future reading and writing!

The third time you read the book

This time, you can try asking your child a question to see if he remembers what you pointed out in the last reading. You could ask, "Can you show me where we start to read on this page?" and wait to see if your child points to the first word. If he does, you could say, "That's right. It says..." and then read the words. If your child doesn't seem aware of where the words start, you could say, "I think we start over here (*point to the first word with your finger*) at the top left of the page."

Happy reading!