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Using Sentence Stems at Home

Tips for Families

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When reading together, families can support early language and comprehension skills by offering short sentence stems, or sentence starters, to help children share what they are thinking and learning.

Here are three sentence stems you can try at home:

1. "I remember . . ."

Invite your child to use this sentence stem to talk about personal connections they are making. You can begin by connecting to your own experiences, another book, or something in the world around you. "The characters are at a playground. I remember when we went to the playground. You played on the swings! What do you remember?"

2. "I learned . . ."

This sentence starter can spark conversations about different topics and ideas, especially when reading informational books. You can pause while reading to highlight an interesting fact, and then ask your child to reflect. "Wow! I learned that all fruits have seeds. What is something new you learned?"

3. "I wonder . . ."

Preschoolers ask questions all the time! This sentence stem builds on their natural curiosity and helps them express questions more clearly. You can ask what they wonder before, during, or after reading together. While previewing a book cover, you might say, "I see a bear sitting in a tree. I wonder why it is on that branch? What are you wondering?"

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