

Family Literacy Guided Lesson

For Baby Faces

About the Book

NY State Learning Standards

Related to English Language Arts

Standard 2:

Students will listen and speak for social interaction.

Students will use oral language for effective communication with a variety of people. They will use the social communications of others to enrich their understanding of people.

Baby Faces

Margaret Miller, Author

In this very popular board book, author/photographer Margaret Miller presents photos of eight babies whose expressions range from joy to distress. Parents will warm to the lovable infants in both their good and not-so-good moods; and infants and toddlers, who are fascinated by the faces of other babies will claim the book as a favorite. Children from multiple racial and ethnic backgrounds are featured in the photographs. The one-word exclamations that accompany the photographs give parents ample opportunity to supply the words and language to describe the baby faces making the book ideal for families from all language backgrounds.

Large cardboard pages make the book easy to prop up at the edge of cribs where it can be viewed by newborns who see objects best that are about 12 inches from their faces. The sturdy pages are ideal for toddlers who are learning to turn pages and are easy for parents to hold with a child on the lap.

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The Language/Literacy Connection

The Amazing Developing Brain

Recent research has revealed that babies are born with about 100 billion brain cells and, in the first three years of life, produce trillions of brain cell connections, many more than the child can possibly use. The brain's growth spurt continues until about age ten when some connections are eliminated. What determines which connections are kept and which are eliminated? Repeated experiences. Actions and experiences that are repeated again and again form permanent brain pathways. Connections that are never or seldom used are eliminated. Regular daily parent-child interactions nourish the developing brain and aid in the formation of permanent brain cell connections. Simple, inexpensive, pleasurable activities like singing, repeating nursery rhymes, story telling and playing games help children's brains form permanent pathways for language and literacy skills.

Thinking About the Brain

Brain development is a complex interplay between the genes babies are born with and their experiences after birth. Early experiences have a decisive impact on the development of babies' brains, and on the nature and extent of their capacities when they are adults. Early interventions directly affect the way the brain is wired.

Shore, Rima (1997) *Rethinking the Brain*, New York: Families and Work Institute

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Early Childhood Education-Infant/Toddler Level

Babies and Books

Before the Visit

PLS-4 Skills

Auditory

Comprehension

1. Glances momentarily at a person who talks to him or her
13. Looks at objects or people the caregiver calls attention to

Expressive

Communication

6. Vocalizes when talked to, moving arms and legs during vocalizations

Gather Needed Materials

- ♦ Six magazine pictures of babies
- ♦ Three 6" X 6" squares of cardboard
- ♦ Glue
- ♦ Scissors
- ♦ Clear contact paper
- ♦ Clear packing tape

Prepare Lesson

Props

- ♦ Before the visit follow the directions on the parent education page to make an accordion baby face book to use as a model.
- ♦ Review nursery rhymes and lullabies that are familiar to you and/or the family.

During the Visit

- ♦ With the parent holding the infant, sit nearby and look at and comment on the photographs in the book. Say: *I like this book because it makes me think of the many moods that babies have. And, many babies like this book too, because babies like to look at pictures of other babies.* Select one of the photos and comment on it. Say: *I just love the picture of this baby. It reminds me of my daughter (son, little brother, cousin, friend's baby) when she was that age. Her hair curled just like this baby's hair.* Ask: *Which is your favorite from among these pictures and what is it about the photo that you like?*

Accept the parent's answer and expand on it. If, for example, the parent indicates a smiling baby ask: *What is it about that picture that you like? How is this baby's smile like (child's name)'s smile? What makes (child's name) laugh?*

- ♦ Turn to the photograph of the crying baby and say: *This photo reminds me of the other side of what babies can be like. I remember days when my daughter (son, brother, child I babysat, etc.) cried like this. What do you do when (child's name) is crabby or fussy?*

Whatever the parent's response, say: *That sounds like a good way to help (child's name) gain control of his/her feelings.* OR – If it was not a good idea, say: *Have you ever tried _____? That sometimes helps babies gain control.*

- ♦ Help the parent show the photos to the infant. One or two pages will probably be enough for a very young infant. If the infant gazes at a photo, point out that behavior to the parent. Give the infant as much time as he/she needs before moving to another photo. Talk to the infant about the photo. Coo and ah and say things like: *Look at that sad baby. That baby's crying. I bet she wants her Mommy.*

- ♦ Show the parent the accordion book model and the instructions for making an accordion book. Place the book-making material on the work surface. Work with the parent to make the book. Take turns holding the baby so that the parent can participate in the activity.

(Directions for making an accordion book are on the Parenting Education page.)

Early Childhood Education-Preschool and School Age Levels

An Accordion Book of Likes and Dislikes

PLS-4 Skills

Auditory

Comprehension

37. Makes inferences

Expressive

Communication

46. Completes analogies

48. Responds to why questions by giving a reason

Before the Visit

Gather Needed Materials

- Magazine pictures of interest to the child
- Several 6" X 6" squares of cardboard
- Glue
- Scissors
- Clear contact paper
- Clear packing tape

Prepare Lesson Props

- Before the visit follow the directions on the parenting education page to make a model accordion book of likes and dislikes.

During the Visit

- With the parent and child sitting together, look at the *Baby Faces* book. Involve the child and parent in a conversation about expressing feelings. Ask questions about the feelings expressed by the babies pictured in the book. *Do you think this baby feels happy or sad? How can you tell? What do you think made the baby feel that way? What makes you feel happy (sad, angry, disappointed, worried)? Babies cry or laugh or make a face to let other people know how they feel. How do you express your feelings?*

Accept the child and parent's answers and expand on them.

- Say: *People express their feelings in many different ways. Some write about strong emotions they feel and about what makes them feel that way. They may keep diaries, or journals of trips they have made. School age children may write journals at school. These are ways to write about feelings or special events. Today we are going to make an accordion book as a way to record our feelings. Things that make you feel happy can be recorded on one side and things that make you feel sad, or angry or worried can be recorded on the other side. Show your model. Place the supplies on the workspace.*

Preschoolers

- Ask the child what things he/she especially likes. Say: *What makes you happy - pets, favorite toys, eating an ice cream cone?* With the parent and child, look through magazines for pictures of those things. Then ask about things that make the child feel sad (or worried, angry) and look for pictures that illustrate those feelings. Glue "happy" pictures on one side of the book and "sad" pictures on the other side. Ask the child to "write" about each picture. Cover with contact paper and fold accordion-style.

School-Age Children

- Ask the child to make the accordion book with his/her parent's help. Then ask the child to write about his/her feelings of happiness, sadness, anger, etc. Ask: *What feelings are important to you? What makes you feel that way? What was a time or place that you remember when you felt that way?* When the child finishes writing, say: *If you wish, you can draw or find pictures that illustrate your writing.*

Parenting Education Activity

Parents' playful interaction with children influences children's developing brain, their self concept and their capacity for future learning. As facilitators of play and as play partners, parents are central to the healthy growth of children in infancy and beyond. Word games, books and stories are especially beneficial to young children whose brains are still making brain cell connections.

I Can Do That Too

Imitation Games

- ♦ Children are careful observers of their parents and imitate the actions and words they see and hear. Simple games like pat-a-cake and bye-bye help babies and toddlers figure out that words describe actions- what Mom and Dad do with their hands is connected to the lyrics they hear. Preschoolers enjoy circle games such as ring-around-the-rosy. They like playing with their parents and siblings and will even happily teach the game to a teddy bear partner. School-agers benefit from challenging word games like I spy.
- ♦ Ask parents to name games they know that use language like singing, chanting or asking questions. Make a list and play a few of the games with the parent and child.

Talking with Baby

Language researchers Betty Hart and Todd Risley say that the more language young children hear, the more language they are able to speak. It is never too early to talk with babies. Describe how you are preparing the evening meal. Talk about your day's activities. Read aloud the evening paper. Babies may not understand what is being said, but they are hearing the sounds and rhythm of language.

Word Games For School Age Children

- ♦ **Rhyming:** Choose a word like "cat" and take turns supplying rhyming words. The person with the last word is the winner.
- ♦ **Letter Party:** Pick a letter like "B". Then say: *I'm going to a party and I'm taking a banana. Will you come too?* The next player responds: *Yes, and I'm taking a_____* (fill in with another B word). Play until you run out of words.
- ♦ **Classifications:** Say: *This is the cupboard where I keep my (clothes, vegetables, garden tools, etc.). Do these shoes belong in my cupboard?* Take turns asking and answering questions.
- ♦ **I-Spy:** Give clues about an object in the room. When the child guesses the object, reverse roles.

Directions for Accordion Book

- ♦ Cut 3 cardboard squares 6 inches by 6 inches each.
- ♦ Cut 6 baby pictures from magazines.
- ♦ Glue one picture on the front and back of each cardboard square.
- ♦ Cover the pictures with clear contact paper to make the pages safe for mouthing.
- ♦ Trim contact paper around the edges and round off sharp corners.
- ♦ Line the squares up on a flat surface with about ¼ inch between each square.
- ♦ Tape the pages together with packing tape.
- ♦ Fold accordion style.

Interactive Literacy Between Parents and Their Children

Songs, Poems and Nursery Rhymes

Children are never too young or too old to listen to and join in singing songs and saying rhymes. Besides being fun, the repeated lyrics forge brain cell connections and acquaint young children with the rhythm and sounds of their language. Language research shows that early knowledge of nursery rhymes contributes to later success in reading.

Nursery Rhymes and Babies

Get into a comfortable cuddle with your baby and sing or say a few songs, poems or nursery rhymes. Rhymes you remember from your own childhood are great because as you recite them you pass along the culture of your family. Here are a few traditional nursery rhymes from different cultures that your baby may enjoy.

Around the Village

Traditional European

Go round and round the village,
Go round and round the village,
Go round and round the village,
As we have done before.

Una boquita para comer

Traditional Spanish

Una boquita para comer,
Una naricita para oler,
Dos oídos para oír,
Y la cabecita para dormir.

Some Language Games with Humor

Tongue twisters add spark to language games for school age children. Can your school-ager slide these words around his/her tongue?

Sheep shouldn't sleep in a shack.
Sheep should sleep in a shed.

Eight great gray geese grazing gaily in Greece.

Three tree toads tied together tried to trot to town.

Pop keeps a lollipop shop and the lollipop shop keeps pop.

Colita de rana

Sans, sana,
colita de rana.
Si no sanas hoy
sanarás mañana.

Dos elefantes

En la rama un alto pino
Se columpiaban dos elefantes.
Y apostaban entre ellos
Cuál de los dos volaría antes.

Luna, lunera

Luna, lunera,
casabelera,
cinco pollitos
y una ternera.

An Elephant Song for Preschoolers

As you sing this enchanting elephant song, bend over slightly, clasp your hands together to form a trunk and swing your arms from side to side. Wonder with your child just how many elephants can play on a spider web. And what will it sound like if they all come crashing down?

Un elefante

Un elefante se balanceaba
Sobre la tela de una araña;
Como veía que resistía,
Fue a llamar a otro elefante.

Dos elefantes se balanceaban
Sobre la tela de una araña;
Como veían que resistían,
Fueron a llamar a otro elefante.
Tres elefantes

One Elephant

One elephant went out to play,
Out on a spider's web one day,
She had such enormous fun
That she called for another elephant to come.

Two elephants went out to play,
Out on a spider's web one day,
They had such enormous fun
That they called for another elephant to come.
Three elephants

Adult Literacy - ABE Level

Activity Sheet: Reading for Information

Read the essay below and answer the questions about the information presented.

Parentese

Hellooooo sweeeeet baaaaaby, How are yooou tooday?

Parents all over the world use a special way to talk to their babies called “parentese”. Parentese is just another word for “baby talk”. When parents use parentese they speak slower. They use a high-pitched sing-songy voice. They use shorter sentences, stretch out the vowels and leave longer pauses between words and sentences.

Language experts say that parentese is a good way to talk to babies. The high-pitched voice captures their attention and the sing-songy tones keep their interest. The slower speech with longer pauses between sounds makes it easier for babies to hear the parts of language. The stretched out vowels help babies figure out how the vowels in their language work.

Sooo, if yooou have a baaaby, don't be embaaaressed to uuuse paaarenteese. It's goooood for your baaaby and paaarents aaall over the wooorld are taaalking just liiike this.

.....

Answer the following questions.

What is another word for parentese? _____

The article mentions six characteristics of parentese. What are they?

Why do language experts think that parentese is good for babies?

Write the sentences below as they might look in parentese.
Remember to stretch out the vowels.

Good morning. Do you want some breakfast?

Activity Sheet: Critiquing a Poem

In his poem Edgar Guest writes about the hardships, responsibilities and joys of being a parent. Read the poem and see if you agree with this author.

What a Baby Costs

By Edgar Guest

"How much do babies cost?" said he
The other night upon my knee;
And then I said, "They cost a lot;
A lot of watching by the cot,
A lot of sleepless hours and care,
A lot of heartache and despair,
A lot of fear and trying dread,
And sometimes many tears are shed
In payment for our babies small,
But every one is worth it all.

For babies people have to pay
A heavy price from day to day -
There is no way to get one cheap.
Why, sometimes when they're fast asleep
You have to get up in the night
And go and see that they're all right.
But what they cost in constant care
And worry, does not half compare
With what they bring of joy and bliss-
You'd pay much more for just a kiss.

Who buys a baby has to pay
A portion of the bill each day;
He has to give his time and thought
Unto the little one he's bought.
He has to stand a lot of pain
Inside his heart and not complain;
And pay with lonely days and sad
For all the happy hours he's had.
All this a baby costs, and yet
His smile is worth it all, you bet."

Answer these questions about the poem.

1. Who is the author talking to in this poem?
2. According to the author, what are some of the "costs" of having a baby?
3. How do people pay for babies according to the poem?
4. Does the author think babies are worth their cost?
5. As a parent, what are three things that you find hard about raising children?
6. What are three things that you enjoy about raising children?

Write a Letter

Write a letter to your mother or another older relative. Tell her about the joys and heartaches that you have experienced since you became a parent.

Adult Literacy - ELL Lesson

How Does Baby Feel?

Use magazine pictures and dramatization to teach words that express feelings.

Vocabulary

- ♦ Smiling ♦ Happy
- ♦ Crying ♦ Sad
- ♦ Tired ♦ Feel
- ♦ Sleeping

Before the Visit

Lesson Props

- ♦ Collect several magazine pictures of babies who are sleeping, smiling and crying. *Parent* magazine is a good source for baby pictures.
- ♦ Make paper plate masks that illustrate a happy face, a sad face, and a tired or sleeping face.

Paper Plate Masks

To make a mask of a happy face draw a smiling face on a paper plate. Tape a tongue depressor to the back of the plate. Make masks that illustrate sad and tired.

Introduce the Lesson

- ♦ Find the picture in the book *Baby Faces* that illustrates a baby crying. Point to the picture. Say: *This baby is crying. She feels sad.* Dramatize crying. Say: *I am crying. I feel sad.* Point to the picture in the book that shows a baby laughing. Say: *This baby is laughing. She feels happy.*

Dramatize laughing. Say: *I am laughing. I feel happy.* Show a magazine picture of a baby sleeping. (There is no sleeping baby in the book.) Say: *This baby is sleeping. She feels tired.* Dramatize sleeping. Say: *I am sleeping. I feel tired.*

- ♦ Place the paper plate masks on the workspace.

Point to the crying mask. Say: *This mask shows crying. What does this mask show?* Motion for learner to repeat the word crying. Repeat the procedure three times with other vocabulary words. Repeat procedure with other masks.

- ♦ Give the learner the magazine pictures. Point to the happy mask. Say: *Put the happy babies here.* Point to the sad mask. Say: *Put the sad babies here.* Point to the tired mask. Say: *Put the tired babies here.* Demonstrate.

Practice

- ♦ Check comprehension with Yes / No questions. Pick up a magazine picture. Say: *Is this baby happy? Does this baby feel sad? Does this baby feel tired? Is this baby sleeping?*, etc. The learner should answer *Yes* or *No*.
- ♦ Engage the student in oral practice follow-up. Show a picture of a sleeping baby. Say: *What is this baby doing?* Demonstrate a response. *This baby is sleeping.* Motion for the student to repeat. Say: *How does this baby feel?* Demonstrate a response. *This baby feels tired.* Motion for the learner to repeat. Continue with other pictures.
- ♦ Sing the song on the right of this page to the tune of *If You're Happy and You Know It*.
- ♦ Expand the lesson with the use of the negative. Show a picture of a crying baby. Say: *This baby is not happy.* Motion for learner to repeat. Continue with other pictures.

A Song of Feelings

Sing to the tune of *If You're Happy and You Know It*

If you're happy, happy, happy, happy, happy,
Then laugh, laugh, laugh, laugh, laugh.
If you're happy, happy, happy,
Then laugh, laugh, laugh.
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.

If you're sad, sad, sad, sad, sad, sad,
Then cry, cry, cry, cry, cry, cry.

If you're sad, sad, sad,
Then cry, cry, cry.

Boo-hoo, boo-hoo, boo-hoo, boo-hoo.

If you're tired, tired, tired, tired, tired,
Then sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep.

If you're tired, tired, tired,
Then sleep, sleep, sleep.

Snore, snore, snore, snore, snore, snore.
(Make snoring noises.)