

Ready to Read Michigan Programming and Resource Guide 2019

Written by Meagan K. Shedd, PhD

with contributions from the Library of Michigan's Youth Services Advisory Council

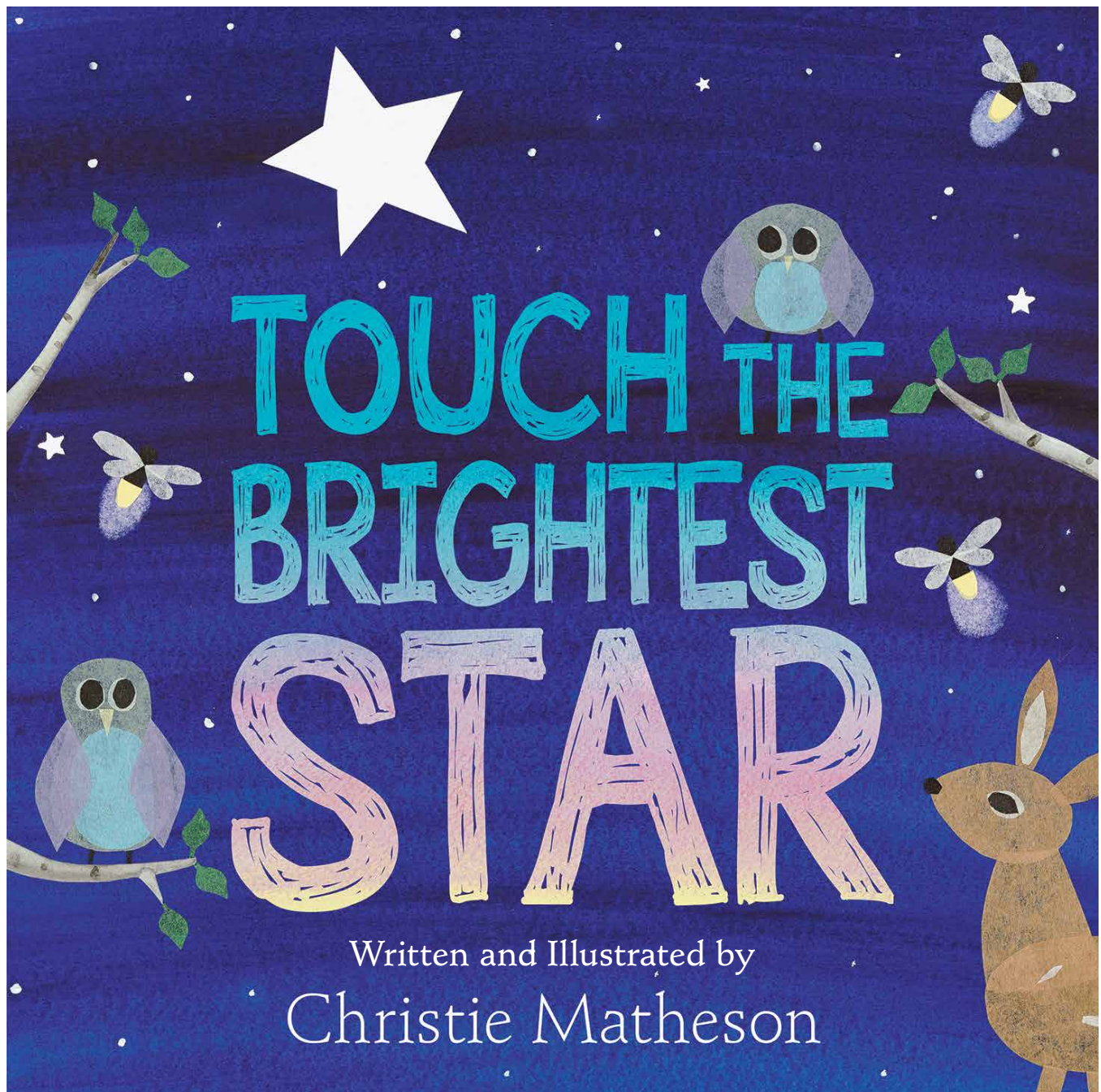


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Ready to Read Michigan Introduction

About Ready to Read Michigan

Ready to Read Michigan shares information about early literacy with families and caregivers through storytimes and other library programs, displays and signs within libraries, various outreach activities, and social media too. Using the five key areas of talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing, *Ready to Read Michigan* is intended to support early literacy skills development as a foundation to future reading development to enable success in formal schooling and beyond. The specific play-based activities are the base for the storytime learning guides for librarians. Equally important, the *Ready to Read Michigan* program emphasizes the role adults have in shared reading experiences with young children as early as birth and continuing through preschool to support the development of their literacy skills.

Provided by the Library of Michigan, with support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Consumers Energy Foundation and the Library of Michigan Foundation, *Ready to Read Michigan* recognizes the critical link between libraries and children and their families to provide quality books, programs, and services. For more information about *Ready to Read Michigan* program and its sponsors, visit the Library of Michigan website at <http://www.michigan.gov/readytoread>.



About the Book

The 2019 *Ready to Read Michigan* book is *Touch the Brightest Star* written and illustrated by Christie Matheson.

Beautiful watercolor and cut-paper collage illustrations help guide readers through an interactive bedtime story from sunset to sunrise. With rhyming text, each reading encourages children to engage with the book to navigate the nighttime sky.



The Importance of Early Literacy



The definition of literacy has long been expanded to include more than reading and writing, but also speaking and visual ideas (National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and International Reading Association (IRA), 1996). Recognizing this definition of literacy has been expanded to include more than simply “reading and writing” for over 20 years, it emphasizes the importance of adults supporting the early experiences of young children. Equally important, it underscores the need for intentional planning for materials and opportunities for activities with specific objects to develop literacy skills.

Research suggests early literacy knowledge and skills such as the ability to pay attention to sounds in language, or phonological awareness, the ability to identify letters of the alphabet, and understanding or knowledge of concepts of print as predictive of future literacy success (Lonigan, Schatschneider, & Westberg, 2008). Adults are key to developing these important knowledge and skills through the materials and experiences they provide (Bracken & Fischel, 2008; Britto & Brooks-Gunn, 2001; Britto, Brooks-Gunn, & Griffin, 2006; Payne, Whitehurst, & Angell, 1994; Senechal & LaFevre, 2002; Zill & Resnick, 2006).

Through Ready to Read Michigan, the Library of Michigan is supporting shared reading experiences, also known as read alouds, with children. Libraries have long been a natural place for children to access materials and experiences to support literacy development. Not only do they support the importance of reading with young children, small group with story times or individual support in choosing books help facilitate and model shared reading experiences. Reading early and often is important for children to develop early literacy skills but modeling the skills through read alouds is an important way for children to develop foundational literacy skills necessary as they enter elementary school (Garton & Pratt, 2009). Understanding why reading with children early as well as often, as well as learning how to select a wide variety of books is also important for the development of early literacy skills (Bus, Van IJzendoorn, & Pellegrini, 1995; Garton & Pratt, 2009). Research suggests that the different ways adults read with young children is important (Dickinson & Smith, 1994; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998) but also shared reading experiences like library storytimes help children to learn to love reading for a lifetime. Equally as important, reading a variety of books or genres during story time is essential (Beck & McKeown, 2007; Duke, 2000).

This can include books such as storybooks, informational text, poetry, and other books that encourage and allow children to interact with the text, like activity books, to enable children exposure to different types of text that will support the development of vocabulary learning and try different techniques to think about the text or improve their comprehension strategies (Dickinson & Smith, 1994). Shared reading experiences can also support the development of children’s language skills (Beck & McKeown, 2001) and general literacy skills (Aram, 2006).

The immediate and long-term effects of adults reading aloud with young children matter with respect to literacy development (Dickinson & Smith, 1994; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). The shared reading experience is more than simply reading, however. The Public Library Association’s *Every Child Ready to Read* returns to the NCTE and IRA expanded definition of literacy by suggesting there are five things that can be done when sharing reading experiences with young children, including Talk, Sing, Read, Write, and Play. Because librarians are often modeling read aloud experiences for families with children, they can use each of the five key areas each time they read as a way to develop early literacy skills. At the same time, using the five key areas shows families how to engage in each of the skills so they can try them while they are reading with their children at home:



Talk as you read with young children. Ask children questions, expanding on the things they say or asking them to tell you more as you read the text together. Ask questions about the text, asking them to share more about what they see in the illustrations or to explain about what you've just read together. Find out what they might want to learn more about through their responses or using additional open-ended questions such as "how do you..." or "why do you think..." or "tell me more about..." Later in conversation or as you are talking with children, ask children about something about the book as you think about it to help them make connections back to the book that aren't directly tied to the reading.



Sing during read alouds. Use the rhymes in the text of the book or songs that children may already know related to the book. Try new voices, different volumes, and add puppets or stuffed animals or other props to add variety to the songs and to help children pay attention to the sounds they hear in the words of the songs. Word games or finger plays are a great way to help children pay attention to sounds, and you can share some you know from your childhood, learn new ones, or ask families to share ideas they know to include in read alouds and teach to others.



Read books and other types of print with young children. Share story or picture books, as well as information books and interactive books to help children gain exposure to different types of books and learn how to read different types of text. As you share each type of book with children, talk about the different type of book and share its purpose so children and their families learn to do so at home. Talking about the type of book and its purpose helps children to learn how to make meaning from it, but also

shares with families the importance of reading different types of books with children. In addition to storybooks, share a variety of text with families, including newspapers, magazines, and signs, explaining how we use this text every day as a way to help model this for families to continue to practice the technique outside of the library as well.



Write in front of and with children. Model the process of writing for children, showing them both how to think about ideas and form letters and words to share them in text. Ask children to help you come up with ideas during read alouds and then write them on large post-it notes so they can see their ideas on paper or have them jot their ideas down in journals to look at later. Encourage them to write or draw illustrations, sharing with families that beginning marks that might not look like real letters are the early stages of writing. Families can help children with writing by asking children to share their ideas and write them down, ask children to help create lists such as for the grocery store or for things to do together for family nights at home, and write out menus for to help with planning family meals and shopping.



Play while reading text to help children make sense of the book. Children can use props such as puppets to talk about the characters in a storybook and retell the story or use other objects to think more deeply about informational text. If there are vocabulary words that are unfamiliar, acting them out through dramatic play helps them by using words they already know and put the new words into action. Helping children to understand text in ways that are meaningful to them is important, and play is one way to do this that is critical to literacy learning.

Resources... More Great Books to Share with Children

Books about bedtime:

Infants

- ***Goodnight Moon*** by Margaret Wise Brown and illustrated by Clement Hurd (2007, HarperFestival)
- ***Buenas Noches, Luna*** (*Goodnight Moon, Spanish Edition*) by Margaret Wise Brown and illustrated by Clement Hurd (2002, HarperCollins Espanol)
- ***Guess How Much I Love You*** by Sam McBratney and illustrated by Anita Jeram (2008, Candlewick)
- ***Good Night, Gorilla*** by Peggy Rathmann (2000, Puffin Books)
- ***Counting Kisses*** by Karen Katz (2003, Little Simon)

Toddlers

- ***It's Time to Sleep, My Love*** by Nancy Tillman and Eric Metaxes and illustrated by Nancy Tillman (2008, Feiwei & Friends)
- ***Bedtime*** by Elizabeth Verdick and illustrated by Marieka Heinlen (2010, Free Spirit Publishing)
- ***The Going to Bed Book*** by Sandra Boynton (1982, Little Simon)
- ***Buenas noches a todos*** by Sandra Boynton (2004, Libros para Ninos)
- ***Bedtime in the Meadow*** by Stephanie Shaw and illustrated by Laura Watkins (2013, Tiger Tales)
- ***Time for Bed*** by Sylvia Andrews and illustrated by Ellen Mueller (2001, Harper Growing Tree)
- ***Es Hora de Dormir*** by Sylvia Andrews and illustrated by Ellen Mueller (2001, Harper Growing Tree)

Preschoolers

- ***A Bedtime for Bear*** by Bonny Becker and illustrated by Kacy MacDonald Denton (2016, Candlewick)
- ***Just Go to Bed*** by Mercer Mayer (2001, Random House Books for Young Readers)
- ***The Goodnight Train*** by June Sobel and illustrated by Laura Huliska-Beith (2012, HMH Books for Young Readers)
- ***Bedtime in the Southwest*** by Mona Hodgson and illustrated by Renee Graef (2017, Muddy Boots)
- ***Dios te bendiga y buenas noches*** by Hannah Hall (2015, Grupo Nelson)
- ***La luz de Lucía*** by Margarita Del Mazo (2015, Cuento de Luz)

Books about astronomy/nighttime sky/stars:



Infants

- ***Hello World! Solar System*** by Jill McDonald
- ***Little Owl's Night*** by Divya Srinivasan (2013, Viking Books for Young Readers)
- ***Andy Warhol So Many Stars*** by Mudpuppy and illustrated by Andy Warhol (2014, Mudpuppy)
- ***Ten Wishing Stars*** by Treesha Runnells and illustrated by Sarah Dillard (2003, Piggy Toes Pr)

Toddlers

- ***Kitten's First Full Moon*** by Kevin Henkes (2015, Greenwillow Books)
- ***The House in the Night*** by Susan Marie Swanson and illustrated by Beth Krommes (2011, HMH Books for Young Readers)
- ***Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me*** by Eric Carle (1999, Little Simon)
- ***Papá, por favor, bájame la luna (Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me)*** by Eric Carle (2018, Libros para Niños, Bilingual Edition)
- ***Stars*** by Mary Lyn Ray and illustrated by Marla Frazee (2011, Beach Lane Books)

Preschoolers

- ***Find the Constellations*** by H.A. Rey (2016, HMH Books for Young Readers)
- ***Our Stars*** by Anne Rockwell (2002, HMH Books for Young Readers)
- ***The Sky is Full of Stars*** by Dr. Franklyn M. Branley and illustrated by Felicia Bond (1983, HarperCollins)
- ***Stargazers*** by Gail Gibbon (1992, Holiday House)
- ***Owl Moon*** by Jane Yolen (1987, Philomel Books)
- ***How to Catch a Star*** by Oliver Jeffers (2004, Philomel Books)
- ***Good Night, Little Sea Otter (Spanish/English)*** by Janet Halfmann and illustrated by Wish Williams (2012, Starbright Books, Bilingual Edition)



Books about cause and effect:

Infants

- ***Peck, Peck, Peck*** by Lucy Cousins (2016, Candlewick)
- ***The Best Mouse Cookie*** by Laura Numeroff and illustrated by Felicia Bond (1999, HarperFestival)
- ***The Very Hungry Caterpillar*** by Eric Carle (1994, Philomel Books)
- ***The Wind Blew*** by Pat Hutchins (1993, Aladdin)

Toddlers

- ***When the Elephant Walks*** by Keiko Kasza (2004, G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers)
- ***Press Here*** by Herve Tullet (2011, Chronicle Books)
- ***Push Button*** by Alike (2010, Greenwillow Books)
- ***TouchThinkLearn: Wiggles*** by Claire Zucchelli-Romer (2018, Chronicle Books)
- ***The Rain Came Down*** by David Shannon (2000, Blue Sky Press)

Preschoolers

- ***Before After*** by Matthias Arégui and Anne-Margot Ramstein (2014, Candlewick)
- ***Mr. Gumpy's Outing*** by John Birmingham (1990, Square Fish)
- ***Frog and Beaver*** by Simon James (2018, Candlewick)
- ***Mix It Up*** by Herve Tullet (2014, Chronicle Books)
- ***Tap the Magic Tree*** by Christie Matheson (2016, Greenwillow Books)
- ***Don't Blink*** by Amy Krouse Rosenthal (2018, Random House Books for Young Readers)

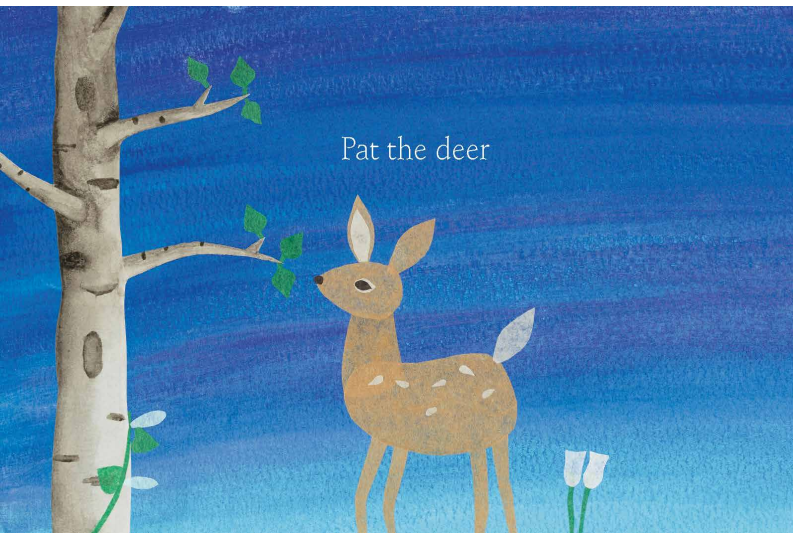
Activities for *Touch the Brightest Star*

Activities: Infants



Talking

Talk with infants about anything and everything. While reading, talk about the details in the book or focus on an illustration on a page. For example, in *Touch the Brightest Star*, you might talk about the shooting star and talk about what a shooting star is with infants and moving your hands across the space in front of you, help to describe how it moves, using the word “Wow!” as Christie Matheson does in the text. Draw out the word (woooowwww) and wait for the infant’s response too.



Place a variety of “space themed” objects that are safe for infants on the floor in front of or just out of reach. This can be used for “tummy time” or for infants who are sitting and starting to crawl. You might include a teething-safe star or a moon-shaped object, rainbow rocket wooden stacking blocks, an outer space crinkle toy, or even a wooden rocket teether. As the infant reaches for the objects, talk to them about each one, asking them questions about what he sees and waiting for their response. Note the texture and shape of each object, their effort in trying to reach it, and their facial expressions as they succeed or needs support.

Encourage infants to listen to the rhythm in your voice as you read the text. Call attention to their own voice as you talk to them and they respond by encouraging them when they do. Make eye contact as you talk with them, nodding your head, and asking them to “tell me more.” As you read the text, pause on the words that rhyme, such as “deeply” and “sleepy”. Take time to rhyme words with their names or stretch out words “shhhhhhhh” while you are reading, but also as you talk with them.



Singing

Encourage infants to sing, or try to sing with you, with this favorite children’s song about cause and effect as part of a naptime or bedtime ritual:

Hush Little Baby, Don’t Say a Word

*Hush little baby, don’t say a word,
Papa’s gonna buy you a mockingbird.*

*And if that mockingbird won’t sing,
Papa’s gonna buy you a diamond ring.*

*And if that diamond ring turns to brass,
Papa’s gonna buy you a looking glass.*

*And if that looking glass gets broke,
Papa’s gonna buy you a billy goat.*

*And if that billy goat won’t pull,
Papa’s gonna buy you a cart and bull.*

*And if that cart and bull turn over,
Papa’s gonna buy you a dog named Rover.*

*And if that dog named Rover won’t bark,
Papa’s gonna buy you a horse and cart.*

*And if that horse and cart fall down,
You’ll still be the sweetest little baby in town!*

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46950/hush-little-baby-dont-say-a-word>

Place glow-in-the dark stars on the ceiling or paper cut-out stars on the ceiling and point to them as you sing this song with infants:

There's a Tiny Little Star

(sung to the tune of Little White Duck)

There's a little tiny star

Way up in the sky.

A little tiny star,

Up so very high

She twinkles brightly

Through the night:

The stars are shining oh so bright.

There's a little tiny star

Way up in the sky.

A little tiny star.

<http://www.preschooleducation.com/sspace.shtml>

Share an easy fingerplay with an infant while holding them in your lap and gently moving their arms and hands to the motions:

Stars Fingerplay

At night I see the twinkling stars

(fist up and open hands over your head)

And a great big smiling moon

(circle arms overhead)

My Mommy tucks me into bed

(Lay pointer of one hand across the palm of the other hand)

And sings a good-night tune.

(Rock your hands back and forth)

<http://www.preschooleducation.com/sspace.shtml>



Reading

After reading the page “Now let’s blow a quiet breeze”, gently blow on the back of baby’s neck or across an arm and talk about what a quiet breeze might feel like, expanding on the word “breeze” using words like “wind” and “puff” and “air”. Talk about what a breeze feels like as you gently exhale your breath on them and talk about how it cools her off or can warm them, depending on what it feels like.

Choose another book about the moon, stars, or nighttime sky to read with infants by visiting the Read Alike section. As you read, make connections between that book and *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson. Talk about the stars in both books, the nighttime sky, or the moon, looking for it on the pages and asking infants to help you “find it”.

Read *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson again with infants, reading in your quietest voice. Read poetry to babies, looking for poems about stars, nighttime, or even simple lullabies to help lull them to sleep, pausing at the ends of lines to draw attention to words that sound alike.



Writing

Write with infants, talking with them about what you are writing and how you do it as you make the marks.

Invite families to share what they do to help their infant fall asleep at bedtime using the [template on page 30](#) and create a bedtime book. Ask families to share favorite bedtime stories, songs they sing, or other rituals that can be safely shared.

Encourage infants to write with their fingers using child-safe water color (must conform to ASTM-d4236 guidelines). Like the beautiful watercolor illustrations Christie Matheson uses in *Touch the Brightest Star*, encourage finger painting with non-toxic water color paints, writing on water mats, or other age-appropriate materials. As infants make marks, talk about the shapes they are making, the letters in their names, and the materials they are using.



Playing

After reading the page “Magic happens every night. First wave good-bye to the sun’s bright light.” Wave goodbye with infant. Gently wave at the infant and help them wave goodbye if they are learning how to wave.

Play hide and seek with infants. Encourage caregivers to cover their faces with their hands to “hide” and then uncover their faces after a few seconds to return. Using a blanket, they can cover their faces (encourage caregivers to cover their own faces rather than the infants) or place a soft object between their face and the infants (never ON the infant’s face). Suggest they ask the infant, “where is [name?]” or “show me [name]” and then remove the blanket or soft object from between them saying, “there [name] is.”

Just as the book encourages children to gently touch the pages, talk with infants about gently touching things. Place an object in front of the infant such as a stuffed owl or a wooden star and encourage them to gently tap it. You can sweep it across the rug or table from left to right, talking about how you are doing so, and ask them to do the same.

STAR

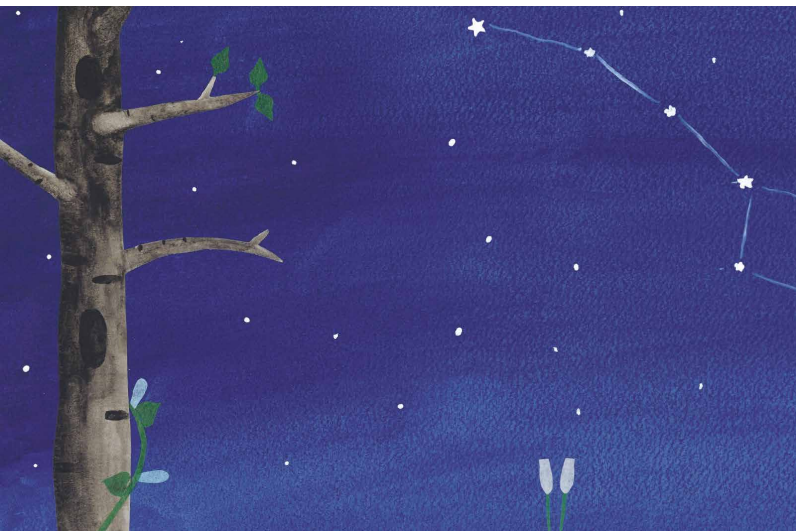
Activities: **Toddlers**



Talking

Talk with toddlers about the fireflies on the pages of the book. Ask them how a firefly might move or what it would sound like. Expand on their responses to encourage them to say more.

Before you turn the page while reading, ask toddlers to help you think about what might happen next. Pause before turning the page, asking them to look at the sky in the illustration, the tree, and anything else. Listen to what they say and comment on what they say as you turn the page, elaborating on their contributions.



Talk with children about the words that sound alike in the book. Note if any of the words sound like any of their names or if the beginnings of the words sound like the beginning sounds of any of their names.



Singing

Share an easy fingerplay with toddlers while they sit in caregivers' laps or next to them gently supporting the movement of their fingers and hands to Twinkle Twinkle Little Star:

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Twinkle twinkle little star
(Hold hands up about shoulder height.
Open and close hands)

How I wonder what you are
(Raise shoulders and hold hands out)

Up above the world so high
(Raise hands high in the sky and open
and close them again)

Like a diamond in the sky
(Form forefinger and thumb from each
hand in a diamond shape)

Twinkle twinkle little star
(Hold hands up about shoulder height.
Open and close hands)

How I wonder what you are
(Raise shoulders and hold hands out)

<http://laptimesongs.com/twinkle-twinkle-little-star-actions/>

Sing a classic children's bedtime song with toddlers when you sing "Are you sleeping?" with them:

Are you sleeping?
Are you sleeping?
Brother John?
Brother John?
Morning bells are ringing.
Morning bells are ringing.
Ding, ding, dong.
Ding, ding, dong.

Or try singing it in French:

Frere Jacques,
Frere Jacques,
Dormez-vous?
Dormez-vous?
Sonnez les matines!
Sonnez les matines!
Din, dan, don.
Din, dan, don.

<http://laptimesongs.com/frere-jacques/>

Teach toddlers a new song about the moon:

We're Flying to the Moon
(sung to the tune of *The Farmer in The Dell*)

We're flying to the moo
We're flying to the moon
Blast off, away we go
We're flying to the moon

<http://www.preschooleducation.com/sspace.shtml>



Reading

As you read with toddlers, ask them to pay attention to the tree in the book and notice how it changes as you turn the pages. When you are done with the book, ask them to share with you what they noticed about the tree. You might go back through the book from beginning to end, looking at the tree and talking about how it changes from "light" to "dark" and back to "light" again as it gets darker at night and then becomes day.

Ask toddlers (perhaps with some help from a caregiver) to share with you their favorite thing to do before bedtime. You can offer examples as you read the book such as patting the deer and asking if any of the toddlers like to have their backs gently patted as they fall asleep.

Have a variety of "read alike" books available for toddlers to explore but within the same general theme. Talk with toddlers about the different types of books available but point out that all of the books are about bedtime/nighttime or stars. As you show them the books, ask questions such "what do you notice about this book that is like *Touch the Brightest Star?*" or "Can you point to the object in this book that is also in another book we've read together?"



Writing

Write a bedtime story with toddlers. Using large chart paper, ask toddlers to share one thing they do at night before bed (a caregiver may have to help). Like in *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson, list out the bedtime activity such as “close my eyes”. As each toddler shares, be sure to write each of their responses too on the chart paper, showing talking about the marks you are making as you write on the pages (you can stretch out the sounds of the words to help them hear each sound, too).

Have small cups or containers and a large shallow box available. Include cut up scraps of paper or other non-edible items that children cannot fit in their mouths or will not choke on and are non-toxic (must conform to ASTM-4236 safety standards). To help build small muscle control which children need for writing, encourage children to scoop the items from the large shallow box with the containers, pouring from one container into another. You can also ask them what will happen if they pour from a large container into a small one, helping them to think about cause and effect.

Using the [template on page 31](#), encourage toddlers to trace over the shapes with their fingers, copy with crayons (they can write directly over the shapes to practice making lines and circles, or look at the shapes and attempt to imitate them on another sheet of paper. Be sure to explain to parents that drawing is also writing and that encouraging drawing at home, whether it is tracing lines or drawing whatever a child wants can help develop writing skills.



Playing

Build on the interactivity of the text through this variation of a toddler favorite of pat-a-cake:

Pat-a star (pat hands), Pat-a-star (pat hands), astronaut man

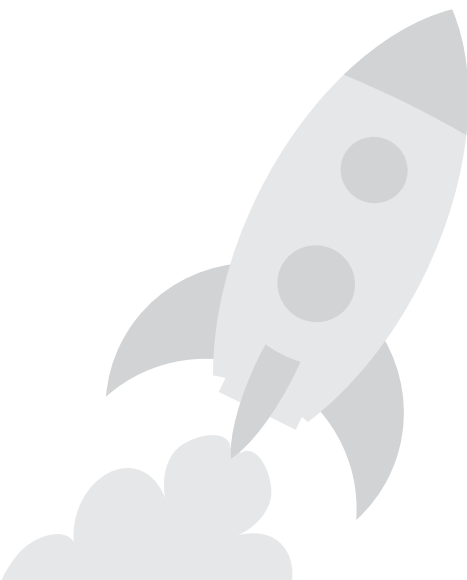
Make me a rocket as fast as you can

***Build it (pat hands back and forth)
and launch it (stretch hands up to sky)
and mark it with a [child's initial]***

***And put it on the launchpad
for [child's name] and me.***

Using the [templates on page 32](#), help toddlers create star and moon finger puppets to help retell the story. Toddlers can choose their favorite shape or character from the book and decorate it, closing the loops to fit their fingers and then look for stars all around them. Finger puppets in simple and easy shapes let them “carry the story with them” and also enable them to connect to the story as they see things in their everyday lives.

Help toddlers learn cause and effect. Like the illustrations in the book *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson, toddlers can learn a gentle pat or touch of watercolor on paper or one color added to another can create an incredible change. Offer paper to each toddler. Have blue, red, and yellow watercolor non-toxic paint (must conform to ASTM-4236 safety standards) available with paintbrushes and encourage children to paint with one color first and then add another, asking them what happened when the second color was added. Then encourage them to add another color and talk about what happened.



Activities: Preschoolers



Talking

Take a blanket outside as the stars come out and ask preschoolers to look up at the sky, talking about what you see (stargazing). Talk with them about how what you are doing together is called “stargazing” or looking up at the sky at night to see the stars. You can also create the night sky indoors by using butcher block paper and glow in the dark paint (paint stars on the paper) or glow in the dark stickers.



Christie Matheson asks readers to do a variety of different actions in order to interact with the text. Talk with children about their favorite thing to do with the book. Listen to their responses and add to them, encouraging children to share more as you ask open-ended questions.

Have a preschool parade, creating a constellation. After reading the book, encourage children to line up and create a “dipper”, marching along together moving along like stars in the night sky. As they move, talk with them about how the stars move across the sky, explain what a shooting star is and encourage them to move out of “formation” like shooting stars as you call their names, or use the “action cards” (see template) asking each one to take a turn deciding what action the group will do next.



Singing

Share an easy fingerplay with preschoolers that plays on the interactivity of the book while also helping them learn their left and right (directionality) with this children’s song:

Right Hand, Left Hand

***This is my right hand, I’ll raise it up high
(raise right hand)***

***This is my left hand, I’ll touch the sky
(raise left hand)***

Right hand (wave)

Left hand (wave)

Roll them around

(roll hands in a circle around each other)

Right hand (wave)

Left hand (wave)

Pound, pound, pound

(pound in lap or together gently)

Encourage preschoolers to sing, or try to sing with you, this favorite children’s song as part of a naptime or bedtime ritual:

You Are My Sunshine

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

Encourage preschoolers to sing, or try to sing with you, this favorite children’s song as part of a naptime or bedtime ritual:

Star Light, Star Bright

***Star light, star bright,
First star I see tonight,
I wish I may, I wish I might,
Have the wish I wish tonight.***



Reading

As you read the page “What a starry night! Touch the brightest star you see. Psst. It’s right there, near the tree,” ask children to talk about a time they saw a bright star. Talk about a shooting star and what it is. Visit (<https://www.nasa.gov/kidsclub/index.html>) and show children video of shooting stars too.

Read the book *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson again, focusing on one page. Talk with preschoolers about the page and help them to connect to the text they are reading by asking questions such as “how is that like when you...” or “tell me about a time when you...”

Read a text more than once with preschoolers, looking for themes or exploring an idea with them. For example, after reading *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson, you might focus on the stars in the book and how the big dipper was joined by the little dipper. Have other books about the nighttime sky for children to look through and encourage them to find stars in those books too (see Read Aloud selection on [page 8](#) for more great book ideas).



Writing

Invite families to share their favorite bedtime strategy, writing it on a large sheet of construction paper or newsprint.

As you read the page “Make a wish and count to three,” ask preschoolers what a wish is and talk about what it means. After reading, ask preschoolers to share a wish with you, writing their wish on a piece of paper they can tuck under their pillow at bedtime. Encourage caregivers to talk about the wishes with the child as they settle for naptime or the night.

Using a finger to trace letters in the air or on the carpet or floor in front of them, encourage preschoolers to write their names (or the first letter of their names), talking about the differences between upper case (big) letters and lower case (little) letters. You can go back to the page in the book to “trace the picture of the dipper” as you model how to trace a letter by looking at it on a page and showing children how you make it on your hand.

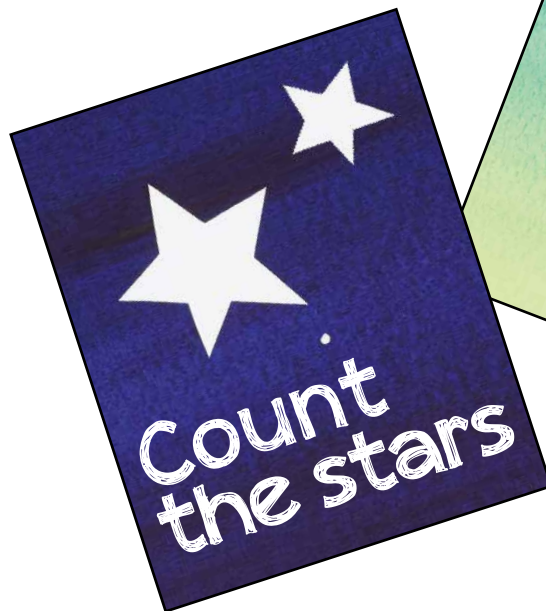
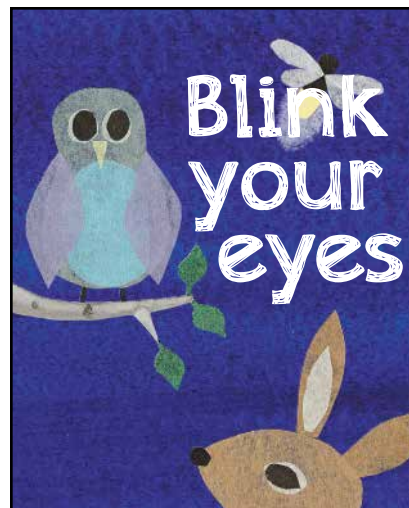


Playing

Share with preschoolers how they can make shadow puppets. First you will need to set up a light against a wall or screen. A flashlight can work, and children can take turns holding the light for one another against a light-colored wall. You can have cardboard cut-outs of images for children to hold up ([see template page 34](#)) to cast a shadow on the wall or visit <https://etc.usf.edu/clipart/galleries/266-hand-shadow-puppetry> to help children learn how to create images of animals against a wall too.

Play this variation of “Simon says” with preschoolers to encourage young children to have fun while listening to directions. You can use the activity cards ([see template page 35](#)) for follow the leader or make up your own directions for “Simon says” based on the children in your group in the tradition of “Simon says” using text from the book such as “gently blow” or “tap your knee”.

Build a telescope with preschoolers. Families will need to know ahead of time to bring in an empty paper towel roll for their children (be sure to have extra on hand). A supply of child-safe, non-toxic paint (must conform to safety standard ASTM-D4236) and brushes or crayons to decorate the outside of the telescope, markers (for the “slides”), and acetate sheets will need to be provided. Adults can pre-cut the acetate sheets into circles for children to decorate with stars, moons, or other nighttime scenes (note: they should be cut into circles slightly larger than the paper towel rolls). After children have decorated the outside of the paper towel roll (wait for paint to dry!) and the circular acetate sheet, the acetate sheet can be taped to the end of the “telescope” for children to view the nighttime scene. (See <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/nature/make-a-telescope/> for a guide to building a telescope if you need additional help or ideas).

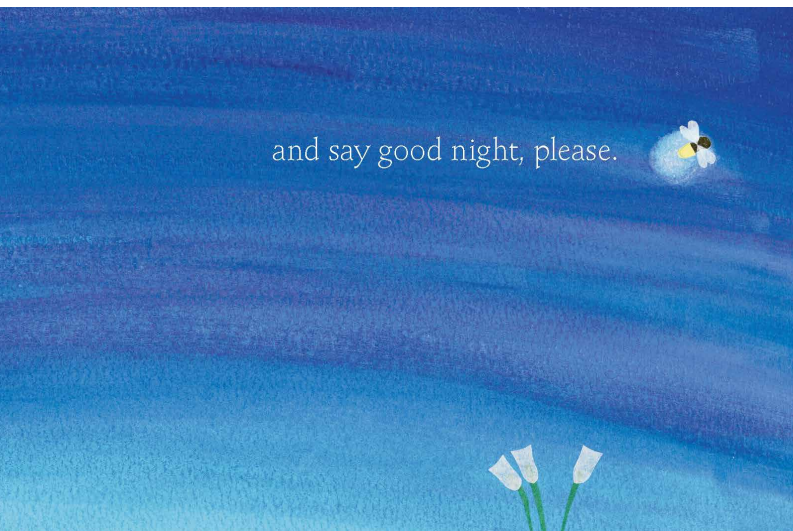


Storytime Guides for Librarians

Touch the Brightest Star

Storytime Guide: **Infant**

During story sessions with infants (12 months and younger), suggest caregivers hold infants in their laps and make eye contact and interact with babies as much as they can. The storytime sessions for infants should be short, while still modeling the early literacy practices caregivers can use at home with their babies. As you engage in storytime, be sure to call attention to what you are doing as you do it, as well as why it is important.



For example, you might remind caregivers that singing with infants is not only a great part of bedtime routines, it can help develop literacy skills as it helps infants to hear the sounds in words which is a skill they need as they learn to read. As you introduce the book, you can talk about how reading a book together each night can be part of settling children for the night but can also help develop a love of reading that can last a lifetime. As you read, try to make eye contact with each infant, encouraging their caregivers to look into their babies' eyes as well.

Greeting

Invite infants and caregivers to the storytime area as you sing a greeting song (it may be helpful to announce storytime is beginning prior to starting to sing):

(sung to the tune of Twinkle Twinkle Little Star)

Welcome, welcome, everyone

Now you're here

We'll have some fun.

First we'll clap our hands just so.

Then we'll bend and touch our toe.

Welcome, welcome, everyone.

Now you're here,

We'll have some fun.

Opening

Before reading *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson, share with caregivers that during the reading of the book you'll be focusing on the action words. Because the book is interactive, they can gently help babies move and stretch with the action words as a form of play, but also talk with their babies to help them learn new words from words they already know. Encourage caregivers to make eye contact with their infants and to follow the cues and reactions of babies. For example, if an infant coos or giggles, suggest the caregiver repeat the action to see if baby responds again.

Book reading

Read the book, pausing with each of the "action words" and allowing caregivers time to interact with infants. You might offer suggestions of how caregivers can engage in certain actions, such as "gently press the firefly" and offering that they might gently press hands with their infants. Or as you read the page "Now let's blow a quiet breeze" that they gently blow across their infant's arm and talk for a minute with babies about what a breeze might feel like and use other words for breeze like "wind", "puff", and "air".

Notice the reactions of infants, asking caregivers to offer responses as well. As you read, pay attention to the ways in which caregivers are sharing with their infants and ask them to share as they feel comfortable any experiences and repeating of words engage in the “action words” or help their infants learn vocabulary words.

After reading

After reading the book, go through the list of action words with caregivers, repeating all of the actions or vocabulary words their infants just did as you read together. The list includes: wave, press, blow, pat, tap, count, swipe, blink, touch, trace, whisper, call, rub, and nod (note: there may be others within the pages caregivers opt to use).

Fingerplay/Rhyme

Share with caregivers that just like in the book, spending time with babies learning action words can help them learn words through motion. One way they are already doing this is through fingerplays or rhymes, such as the “Stars Fingerplay”:

At night I see the twinkling stars
(fist up and open hands over your head)

And a great big smiling moon
(circle arms overhead)

My Mommy tucks me into bed
(Lay pointer of one hand across the palm of the other hand)

And sings a good-night tune.
(Rock your hands back and forth)

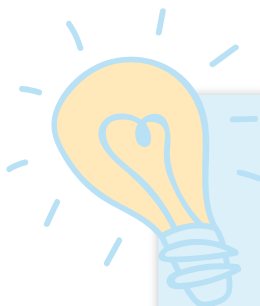
Activity

Just as the book encourages children to gently touch the pages, talk with infants about gently touching things. Have a variety of infant-safe objects available for caregivers to explore with infants using the action words in the book. Encourage caregivers to place an object in front of their infant such as a stuffed owl or a wooden star and encourage him to gently tap it. Model how they can sweep it across the rug or table from left to right, talking about how you are doing so, and asking the infant to do the same.

Closing

Wrap up the storytime session by thanking families and caregivers for taking time to share reading with infants. Point out where the book *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson will be available for them to read again, as well as other books they might like to borrow from the library to read with infants. To close the session, sing the following, being sure to acknowledge each of the participants:

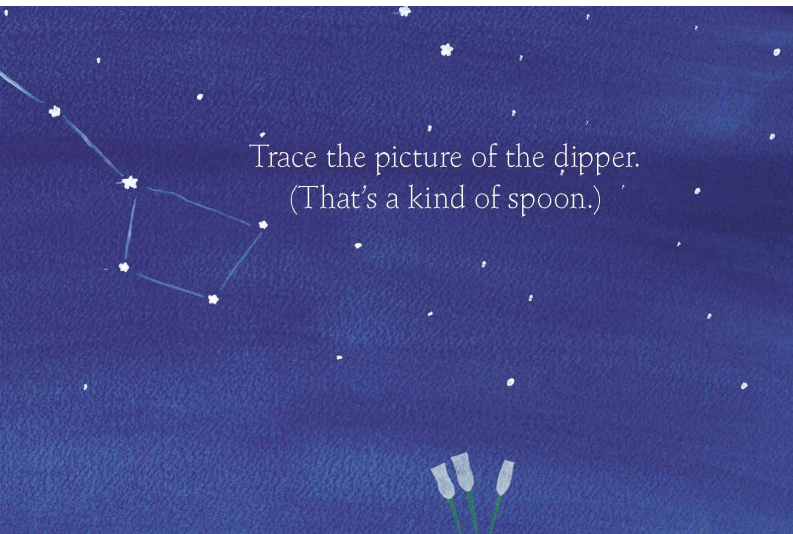
Open, shut them.
Open, shut them.
Raise your hands up high.
Open, shut them.
Open, shut them.
Wave and say goodbye.



Tip for Libraries: Offer a basket of materials that relate to the story, in a variety of textures: soft stuffed deer and/or owls, star shapes cut from fabric, baby spoons, etc. Allow babies to touch and hold these items throughout storytime.

Storytime Guide: Toddler

During story sessions with toddlers (children 13 months to 35 months), suggest caregivers hold toddlers in their laps and/or interact with their children as much as they can. The storytime sessions for toddlers should be short, with several smaller sections while still modeling the early literacy practices caregivers can use at home with their toddlers. As you engage in storytime, be sure to call attention to what you are doing as you do it, as well as why it is important.



For example, you might remind caregivers that singing with toddlers is not only a great part of bedtime routines, it can help develop literacy skills as it helps toddlers to hear the sounds in words which is a skill they need as they learn to read. They can also point to the print as they read so toddlers start to learn that it is the text that is being read. As you introduce the book, you can talk about how reading a book together each night can be part of settling children for the night but can also help develop a love of reading that can last a lifetime. As you read, try to make eye contact with each toddler, encouraging their caregivers to do the same.

Greeting

Gather toddlers and caregivers to the storytime area as you sing a greeting song (it may be helpful to announce storytime is beginning prior to starting to sing):

(Sung to the tune of "Goodnight Ladies")

Hello friends, Hello friends

Hello friends

It's time to say hello.

Opening

Before reading *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson, share with caregivers that during the reading of the book you'll be focusing on the words that sound alike in the book. Encourage caregivers to help children recognize when two words sound alike by speaking the rhyming words aloud with you as you read. Active toddlers might enjoy stomping with their feet or clapping their feet if they hear a word that rhymes with another word.

Book reading

Read the book, pausing to let children hear words that sound alike and asking them to repeat the two words that rhyme, repeating the two rhyming words for them. Note if any of the words sound like their names. You might also comment if the beginnings of the words sound like the beginnings sounds of their names too to help them pay attention to the sounds in words. Read all the way through the book and then if there is time and/or if the group of toddlers seems to have the attention span, revisit the book repeating the rhyming words (note: this might be a bit much for some groups).

After reading

If you don't already know the names of the toddlers in the group or have nametags, ask each caregiver to share their names as you go around and ask toddlers to stomp their feet or clap their hands as you offer a word that rhymes with their name. Encourage caregivers to react with their toddlers as well.

Fingerplay/Rhyme

Share with caregivers that just like in the book, spending time with toddlers learning action words can help them learn words through motion. One way they are already doing this is through fingerplays or rhymes, such as "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star":

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Twinkle twinkle little star
(Hold hands up about shoulder height.
Open and close hands)

How I wonder what you are
(Raise shoulders and hold hands out)

Up above the world so high
(Raise hands high in the sky and open
and close them again)

Like a diamond in the sky
(Form forefinger and thumb from each
hand in a diamond shape)

Twinkle twinkle little star
(Hold hands up about shoulder height.
Open and close hands)

How I wonder what you are
(Raise shoulders and hold hands out)

Activity

Toddler tracing

Using [template page 31](#), encourage toddlers to trace over the shapes with their fingers, copy with crayons (they can write directly over the shapes to practice making lines and circles, or look at the shapes and attempt to imitate them on another sheet of paper. Be sure to explain to parents that drawing is also writing and that encouraging drawing at home, whether it is tracing lines or drawing whatever a child wants can help develop writing skills. If you have an active group, you can create "writing stations" and encourage toddlers to visit each station by having chart paper on the floor and music playing, encouraging them to move from station to station as the music is playing, then write as the music is paused.

Closing

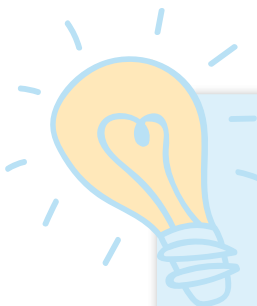
Wrap up the storytime session by thanking families and caregivers for taking time to share reading with toddlers. Point out where the book *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson will be available for them to read again will be available, as well as other books they might like to borrow from the library to read with infants. To close the session, sing the following being sure to acknowledge each of the participants:

(Sung to the tune of "Goodnight Ladies")

Goodbye friends, Goodbye friends

Goodbye friends

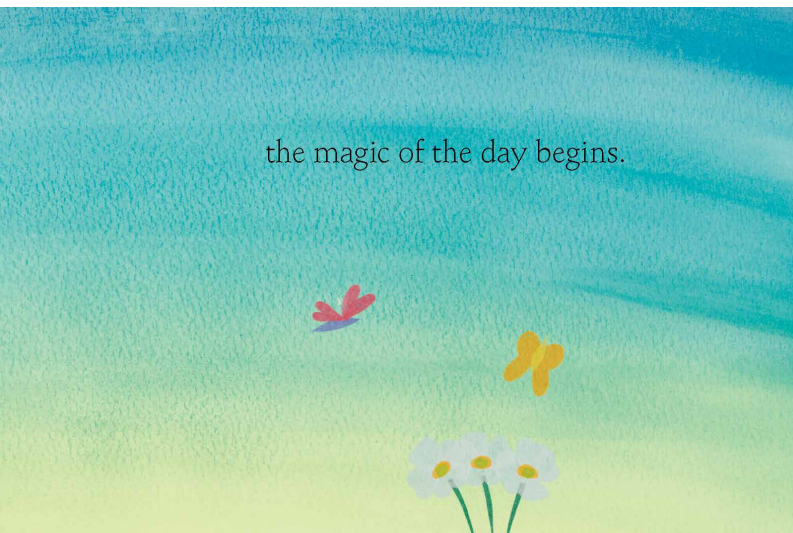
It's time to say goodbye



Tip for Libraries: Practice taking deep breaths throughout storytime, passing out a bean bag, scarf, or other prop for each child to put onto their belly or chest to create a visual connection to breath going into the body. Let families know that it's ok to close their eyes for a moment when they take a breath. When breathing out, instruct children to open their eyes and "blow a quiet breeze" like we do in the story.

Storytime Guide: **Preschool**

During story sessions with preschoolers (3 to 5 year olds), encourage caregivers to interact with their children as they can, knowing preschoolers might prefer to sit in laps, next to their caregivers, or may need to have space to roam in the storytime area. The storytime sessions for preschoolers should be short, while still modeling the early literacy practices caregivers can use at home. As you engage in storytime, be sure to call attention to what you are doing as you do it, as well as why it is important.



For example, you might remind caregivers that singing with preschoolers is not only a great part of bedtime routines, it can help develop literacy skills as it helps preschoolers to hear the sounds in words, which is a skill they need as they learn to read. Asking questions as you read together will help them to develop comprehension skills and new vocabulary words too. As you introduce the book, you can talk about how reading a book together each night can be part of settling children for the night but can also help develop a love of reading that can last a lifetime. As you read, try to make eye contact with each preschooler, encouraging their caregivers to make eye contact with their children as well.

Greeting

Gather preschoolers and caregivers to the storytime area as you sing a greeting song (it may be helpful to announce storytime is beginning prior to starting to sing):

(Tune: Twinkle Twinkle Little Star)

Hands go up and hands go down.

I can turn round and round.

I can jump upon two shoes.

I can clap and so can you!

I can wave, I'll show you how.

Storytime is starting now.

Opening

Before reading *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson, share with caregivers that during the reading of the book you will ask children to share their own experiences to help them connect with the story and develop comprehension skills.

Book reading

Read *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson. Share with children you are going to read the book AGAIN, but this time, focus on only one page. Talk with preschoolers about the words and the illustration on the page and help them to connect to the text you are reading by asking questions such as “How is that like when you...” or “Tell me about a time when you...”

After reading

After reading the book, have children share with a partner (either a caregiver or another child) or take turns as part of the whole group sharing their favorite part of the book. For children that need help to remember (and easier to do with smaller groups), you might have them come up to the book and find the page containing their favorite part. You might also review the book by going through each of the pages quickly and reviewing the action words. To help connect to their own experiences, you can also ask them to share their favorite thing to do that was also in the book. You might provide an example, such as, “My favorite thing to do that was also in *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson is the page with the starry night. I love to go outside and look up at the stars.”

Fingerplay/Rhyme

Share with caregivers that just like in the book, spending time with preschoolers singing helps them to learn rhyming words but singing songs that relate back to the book can help them with comprehension skills. Remind children about the page in the book with one star and the text “Make a wish and count to three” and then talk with them about a favorite song about wishing on a star.

Encourage preschoolers to sing, or try to sing with you, this favorite children’s song as part of a naptime or bedtime ritual:

Star Light, Star Bright

*Star light, star bright,
First star I see tonight,
I wish I may, I wish I might,
Have the wish I wish tonight*

Activity

Toddler tracing

Play this variation of “Simon says” with preschoolers to encourage young children to have fun and get up and move around a little bit while listening to directions. You can use the activity cards ([see template page 35](#)) for follow the leader or make up your own directions for “Simon says” based on the children in your group in the tradition of “Simon says” using text from the book such as “gently blow” or “tap your knee”.

Closing

Wrap up the storytime session by thanking families and caregivers for taking time to share reading with preschoolers. Point out where the book *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson will be available for them to read again, as well as other books they might like to borrow from the library to read with preschoolers. To close the session, sing the following, being sure to acknowledge each of the participants:

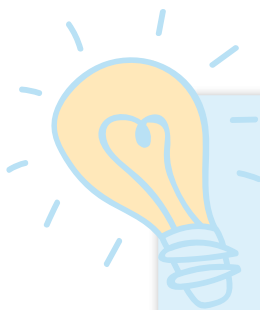
(Tune: Farmer in the Dell)

We wave goodbye like this.

We wave goodbye like this.

We clap our hands for all our friends.

We wave goodbye like this.



Tip for Libraries: Create a picture of the big dipper with pom poms for stars and pipe cleaner sections connecting the stars. Allow each child to take a turn tracing the constellation with a finger. After storytime, allow families to create their own starry night picture using a variety of craft supplies.

Storytime Guide: Multiple Ages

During story sessions with children of all ages, encourage caregivers to hold babies in their laps and interact with their infants as much as possible. Toddlers might like to sit in their caregivers' laps, or they may want to road around. Preschoolers may also decide to do the same, so having a space large enough to accommodate those who wish to sit and those who need space to move around is important.



As with any age group, sessions with children of multiple ages should be short to accommodate the different age groups, with care to model the literacy practices caregivers can continue at home. As you engage in storytime, be sure to call attention to what you are doing as you do it, as well as why it is important. For example, you might remind caregivers that singing is not only a great part of bedtime routines, it can help develop literacy skills as it helps children to hear the sounds in words which is a skill they need as they learn to read. Asking questions as you read together will help them to develop comprehension skills and new vocabulary words too. As you introduce the book, you can talk about how reading a book together each night can be part of settling children for the night but can also help develop a love of reading that can last a lifetime. As you read, try to make eye contact with each child, encouraging their caregivers make eye contact with their children as well.

Greeting

Gather children and caregivers to the storytime area as you sing a greeting song (it may be helpful to announce storytime is beginning prior to starting to sing):

The More We Get Together

*The more we get together
Together, together
The more we get together
The happier we'll be
'Cause your friends are my friends
And my friends are your friends
The more we get together
The happier we'll be
Oh, the more we get together
Together, together
The more we get together
The happier we'll be.*

Opening

Before reading *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson, share with caregivers that during the reading of the book you'll be focusing on children's experiences and asking them to think about times or events in their own lives that connect to the book to help develop comprehension skills or to make meaning from the book. Explain that for younger readers, you want them to recognize a time in their own lives that might be somewhat similar and relate it to what they have experienced to help them to understand and make meaning from the text or illustrations.

Book reading

Read *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson, stopping to point out each of the action words. Encourage caregivers to help children gently act out the action words with young children while they are seated or near them as you ask children questions to help them connect the things in the book to things in their own lives. An example of this could be as you

read the page “What a starry night! Touch the brightest star you see. Psst. It’s right there, near the tree.” to ask children to talk about a time they saw a bright star. Talk about a shooting star and what it is.

You might also have the NASA website available for families to view (see <https://www.nasa.gov/kidsclub/index.html> and explain to families there is a NASA site or a child-friendly NASA for kids site) and show children video of shooting stars too.

After reading

After reading the book, have children share with a partner (either a caregiver or another child) or take turns as part of the whole group a time when they first saw a star like in the book. For children that need help to remember (and easier to do with smaller groups), you might have them come up to the book and use the page with the first star as a reminder or because the book might be the first time they saw a star!

Fingerplay/Rhyme

Share with caregivers that just like in the book, spending time with children of all ages singing a song that plays on the interactivity of the book is a great way to help them enjoy reading, but also pay attention to the sounds in words. Songs like “Right Hand, Left Hand” help children to learn the directionality (left and right), but also encourage gentle movement for infants through preschoolers.

Right Hand, Left Hand

***This is my right hand, I’ll raise it up high
(raise right hand)***

***This is my left hand, I’ll touch the sky
(raise left hand)***

Right hand (wave)

Left hand (wave)

Roll them around

(roll hands in a circle around each other)

Right hand (wave)

Left hand (wave)

Pound, pound, pound

(pound in lap or together gently)

Activity

Show children of all ages how they can make shadow puppets, including stars and a moon. Children can decorate cardboard stock cut-outs ([see template page 34](#)), and with help from adults, secure the cutouts onto wooden sticks with tape. Have a light-colored wall or screen available as a backdrop and a light ready (note you will need to have enough overhead light available and create a safe floor space so children and others do not fall). A flashlight can work, and children can take turns holding the light for one another against a light-colored wall. Encourage children to cast their shadows on the wall and re-tell *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson to one another.

Closing

Wrap up the storytime session by thanking families and caregivers for taking time to share reading with their children. Point out where the book *Touch the Brightest Star* by Christie Matheson will be available for them to read again will be available, as well as other books they might like to borrow from the library to read with children, noting the different books they might choose based on the ages or interests of their children. To close the session, sing the following being sure to acknowledge each of the participants:

(Tune: Oh My Darling Clementine)

Thanks for sitting, thanks for listening,

Thanks for coming here today!

Now that storytime is over

Hope you have a lovely day!



Tip for Libraries: Create a visual schedule of your storytime, posting it in an area that faces families. At the beginning of storytime, talk about each activity you will do together, in the order in which they will occur, pointing out each activity on the visual schedule. Once an activity is complete, remove that activity from where you have it posted. For more information on how to create visual schedules for storytimes, and the benefits for a variety of learning styles and needs, visit [The ALSC blog](#).

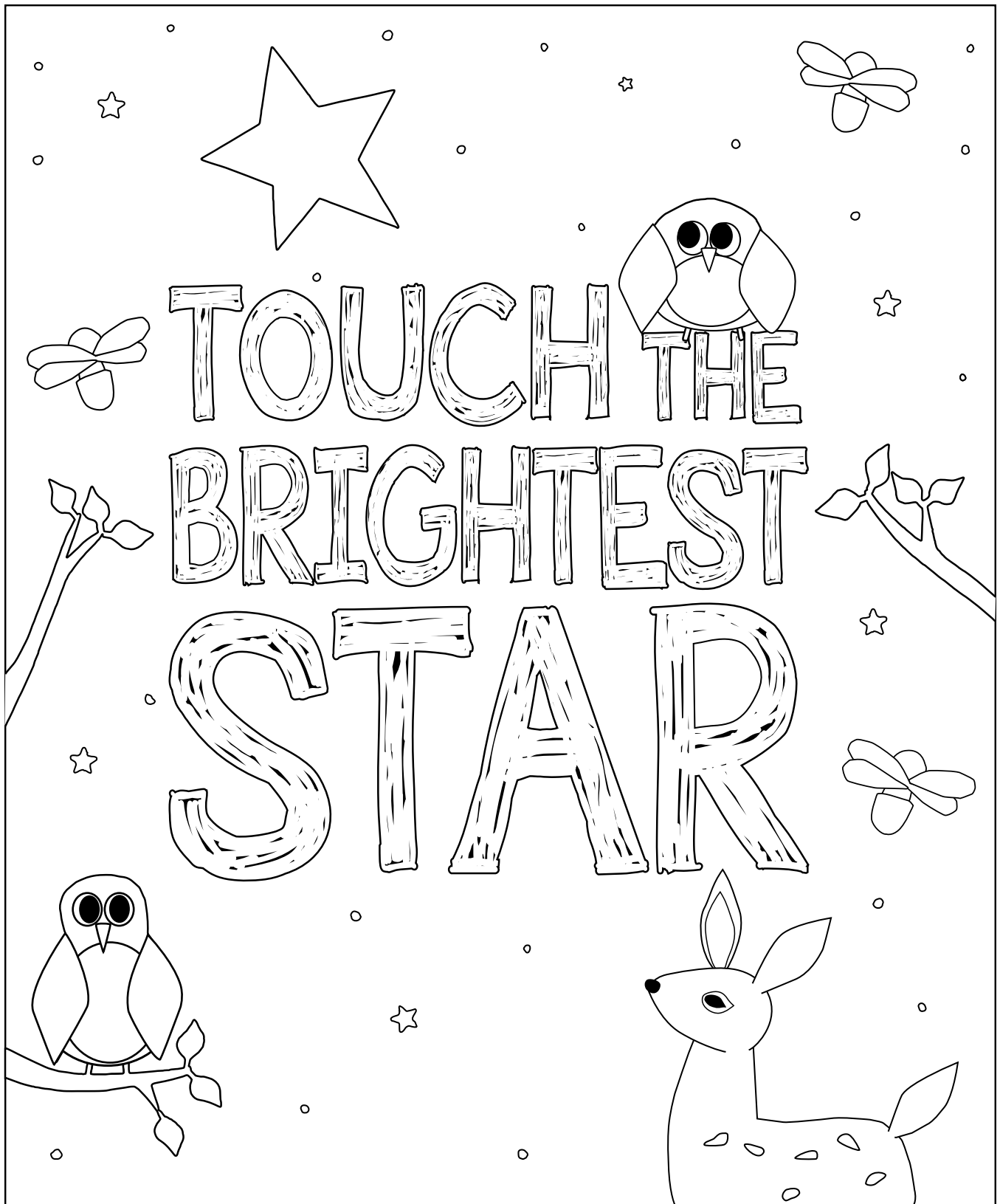
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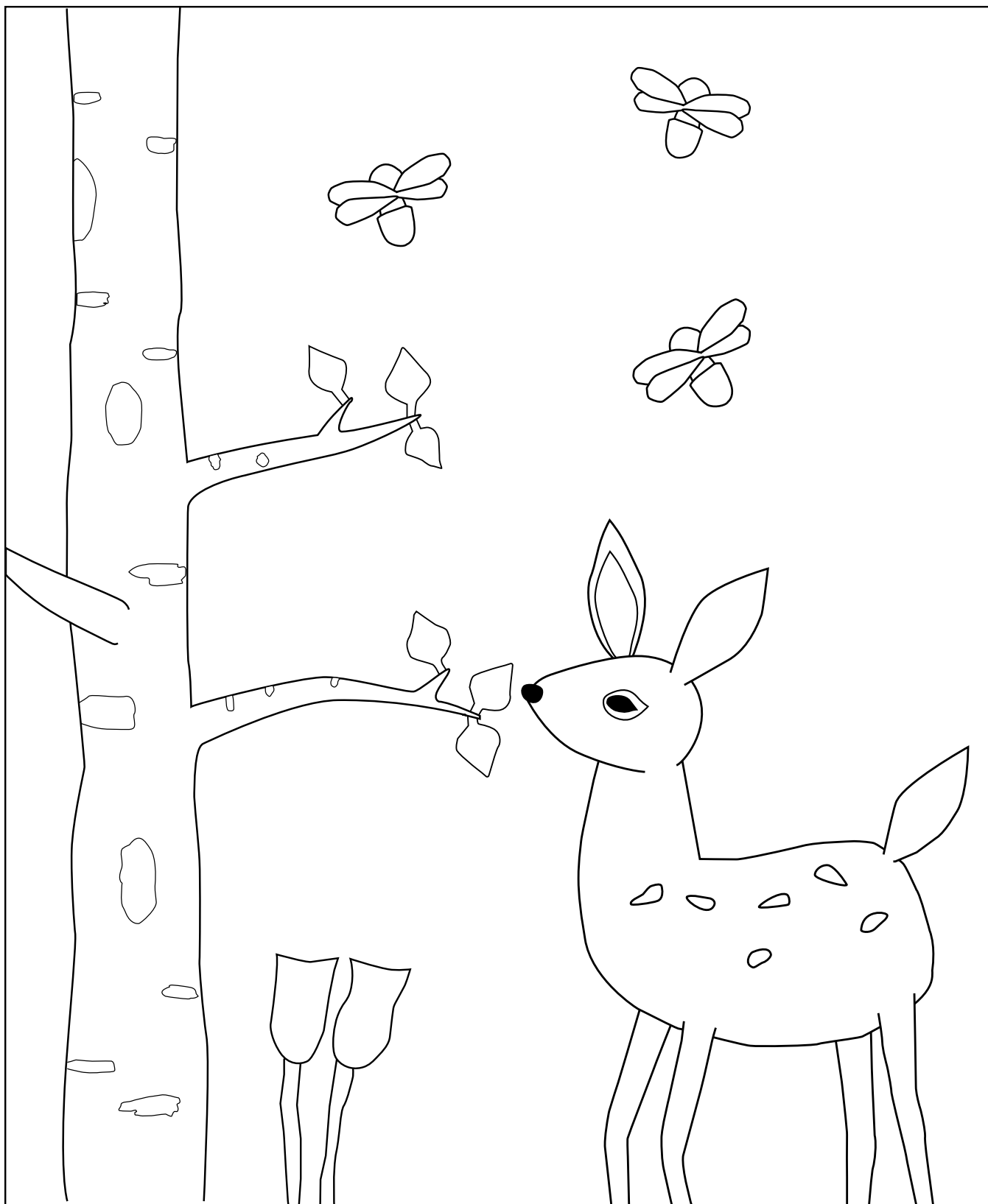


Additional activity ideas can be found at:
<https://www.pinterest.com/readytoreadmichigan/>

Coloring Sheet (A)

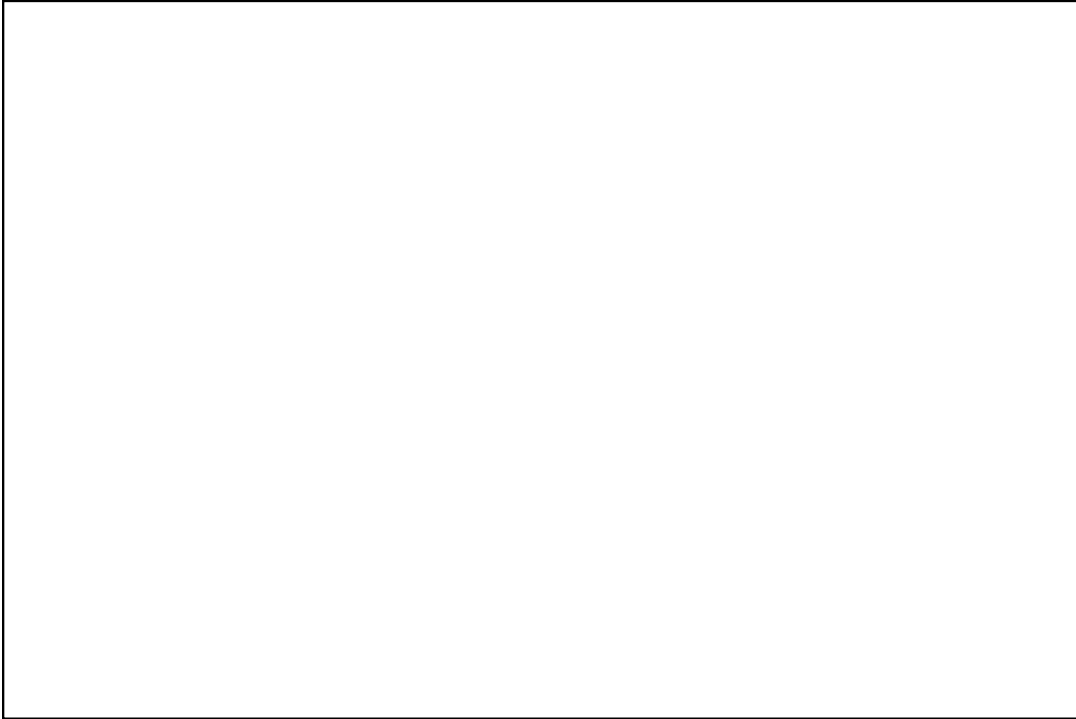


Coloring Sheet (B)



Infant: Bedtime Traditions

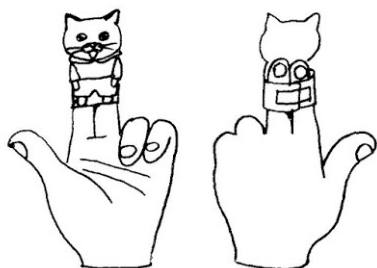
Share a photo of your baby and write about their bedtime routine; what stories you tell, bath time, etc., that help your child to fall asleep at bedtime.



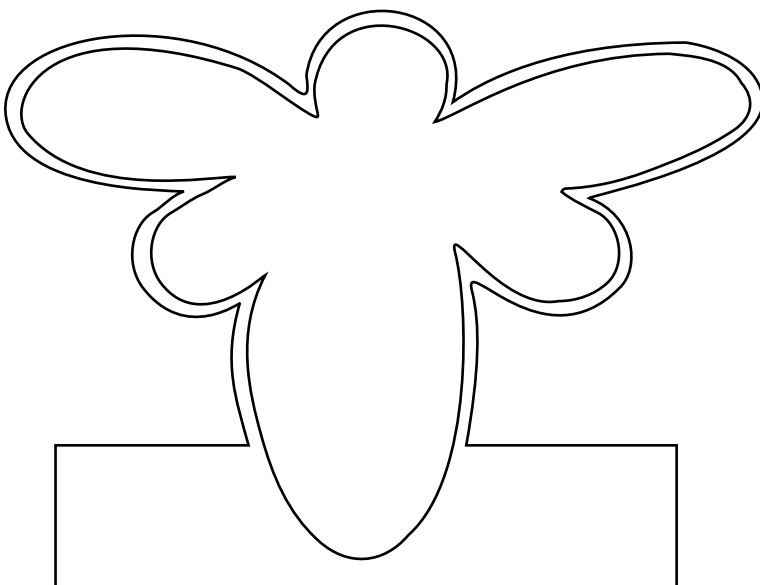
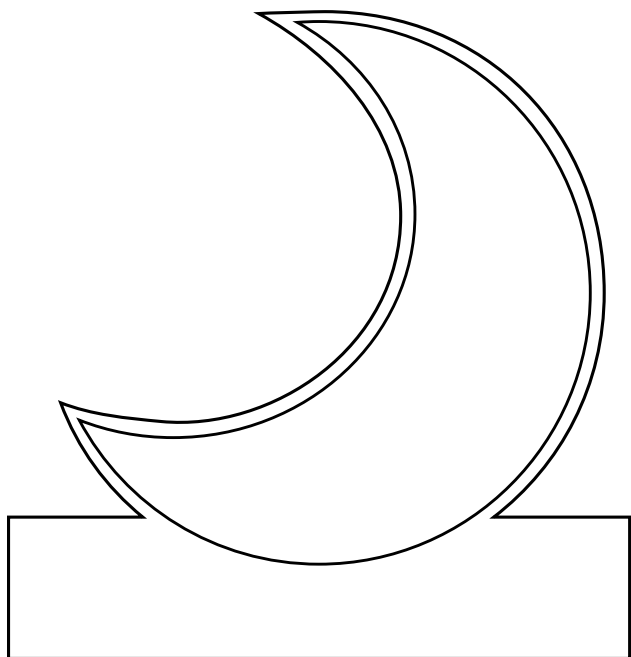
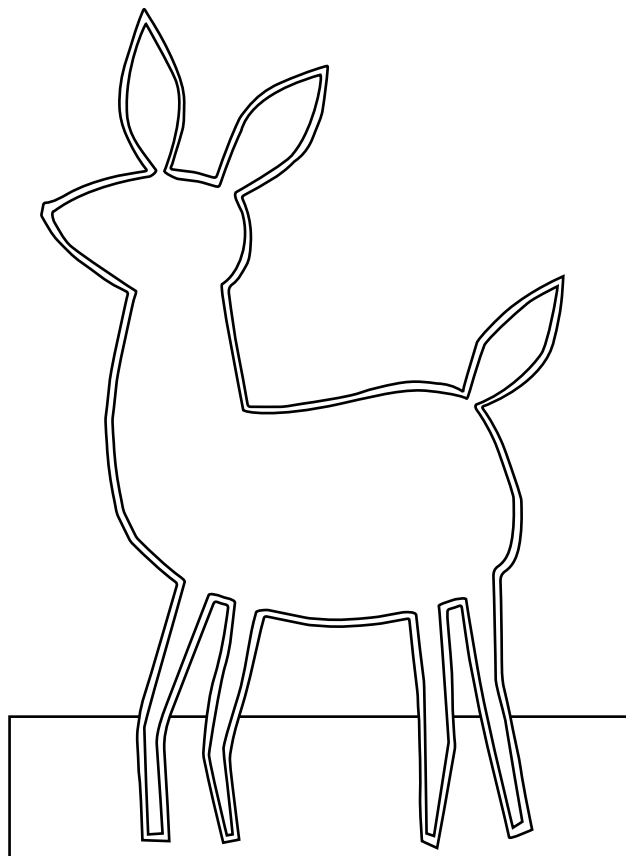
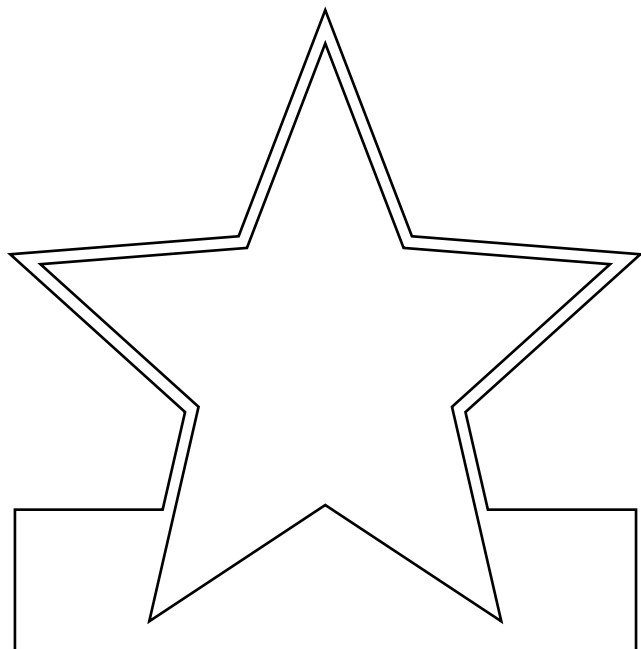
Toddler: Tracing Shapes



Toddler: Finger Puppets

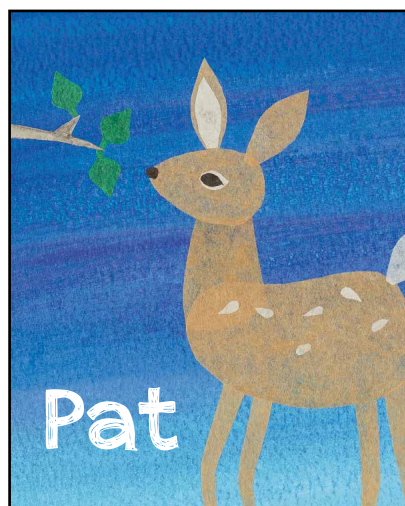
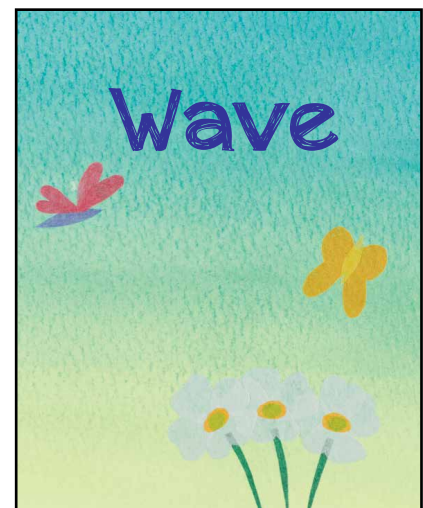
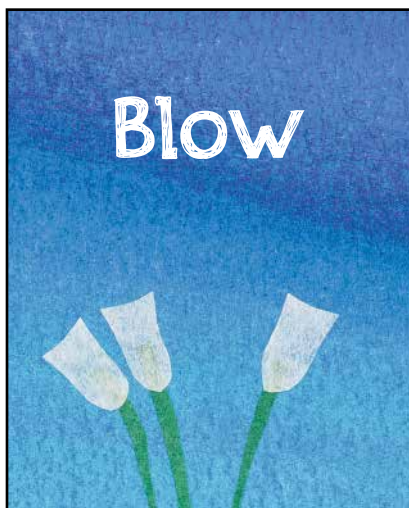
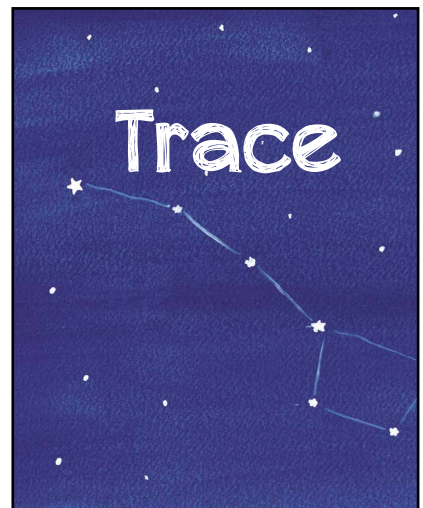
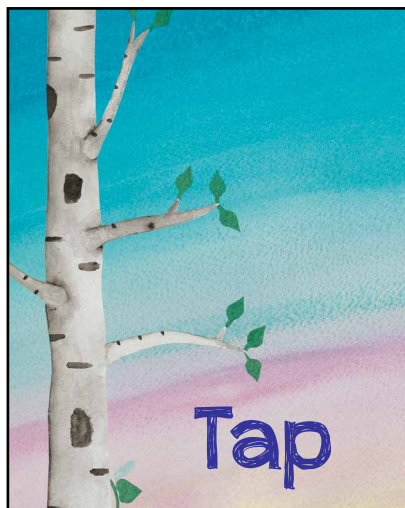
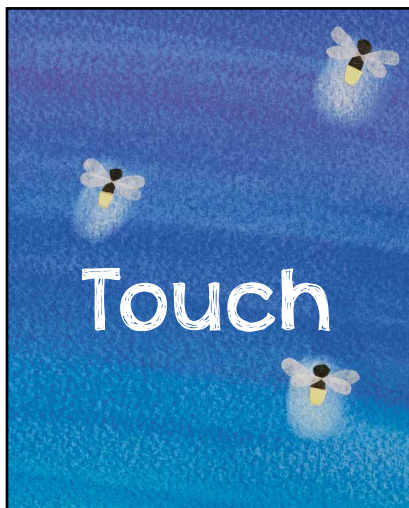


Encourage toddlers to color their favorite finger puppet. Then cut along the outlines, bend the tabs around two of their fingers and fasten with tape.



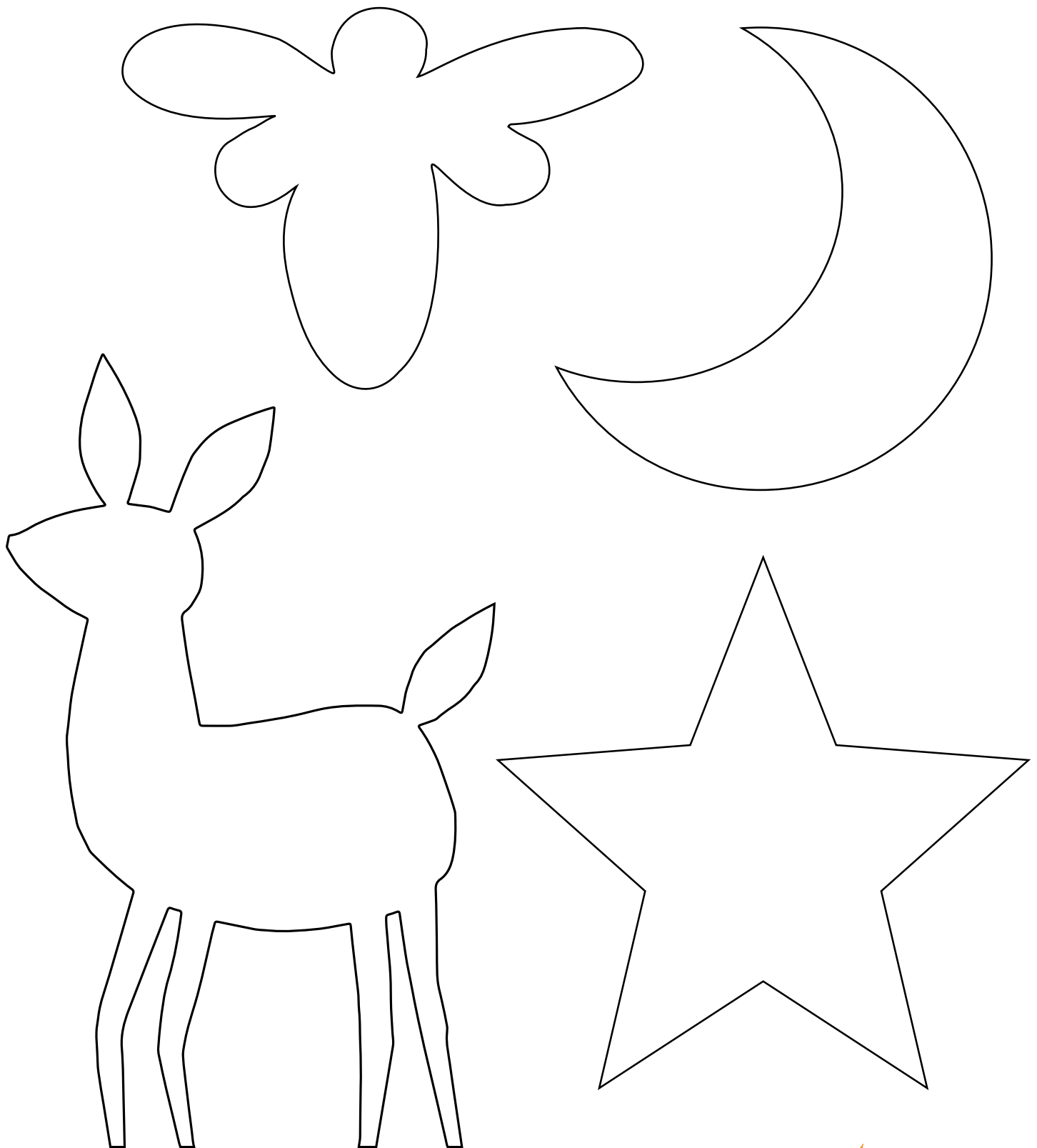
Preschooler: Parade Action Cards

After reading the book, encourage toddlers to march in their own parade. Print and cut out the cards below to assist each toddler take a turn deciding what action the group will do next.



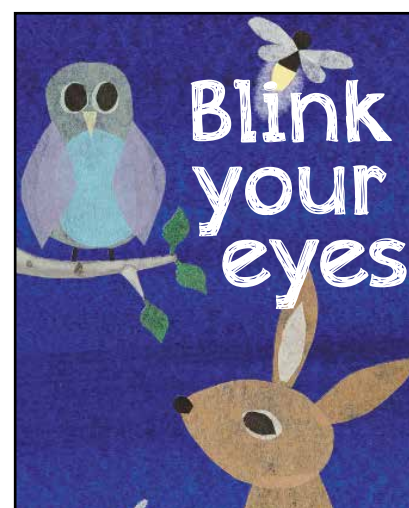
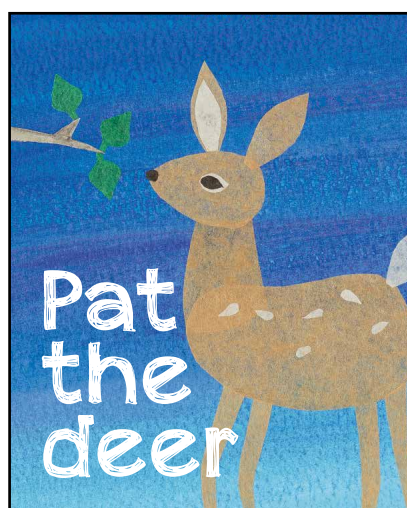
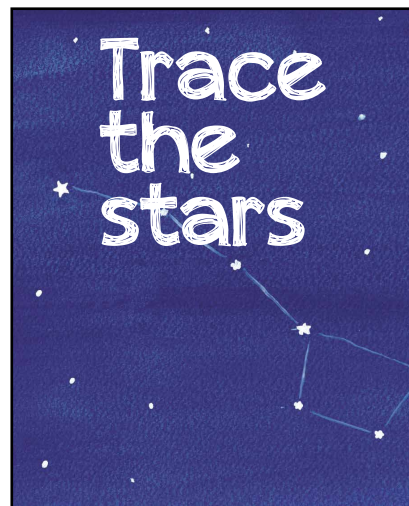
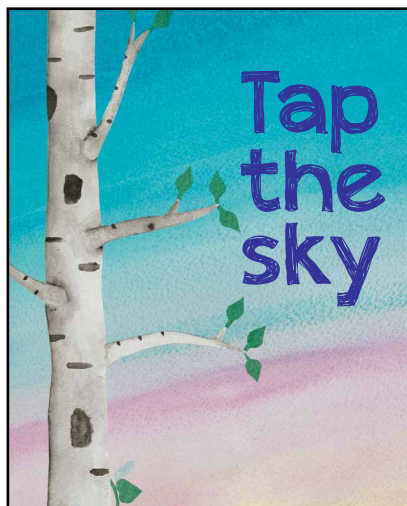
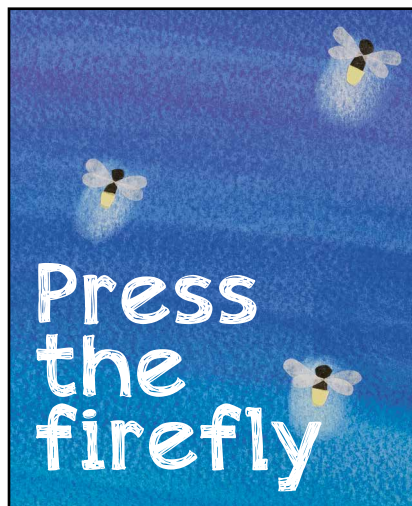
Preschooler: Shadow Puppets

After reading the book, put on a Preschool shadow puppet show! Print and cut out the shapes below to assist each preschooler take a turns casting different puppet shadows.



Preschooler: Simon Says Action Cards

Print and cut out the cards below to assist determining what action Simon might say to perform.



Book Suggestions for **Infants**

after reading *Touch the Brightest Star* written and illustrated by Christie Matheson

Books about bedtime

- ***Goodnight Moon*** by Margaret Wise Brown and illustrated by Clement Hurd (2007, HarperFestival)
- ***Guess How Much I love You*** by Sam McBratney and illustrated by Anita Jeram (2008, Candlewick)
- ***Good Night, Gorilla*** by Peggy Rathmann (2000, Puffin Books)
- ***Counting Kisses*** by Karen Katz (2003, Little Simon)

Books about astronomy/nighttime sky/stars

- ***Hello World! Solar System*** by Jill McDonald
- ***Little Owl's Night*** by Divya Srinivasan (2013, Viking Books for Young Readers)
- ***Andy Warhol So Many Stars*** by Mudpuppy and illustrated by Andy Warhol (2014, Mudpuppy)
- ***Ten Wishing Stars*** by Treesha Runnells and illustrated by Sarah Dillard (2003, Piggy Toes Pr)

Books about cause and effect

- ***Peck, Peck, Peck*** by Lucy Cousins (2016, Candlewick)
- ***The Best Mouse Cookie*** by Laura Numeroff and illustrated by Felicia Bond (1999, HarperFestival)
- ***The Very Hungry Caterpillar*** by Eric Carle (1994, Philomel Books)
- ***The Wind Blew*** by Pat Hutchins (1993, Aladdin)

Book Suggestions for Toddlers

after reading *Touch the Brightest Star* written and illustrated by Christie Matheson

Books about bedtime

- ***It's Time to Sleep, My Love*** by Nancy Tillman and Eric Metaxes and illustrated by Nancy Tillman (2008, Feiwel & Friends)
- ***Bedtime*** by Elizabeth Verdick and illustrated by Marieka Heinlen (2010, Free Spirit Publishing)
- ***The Going to Bed Book*** by Sandra Boynton (1982, Little Simon)
- ***Bedtime in the Meadow*** by Stephanie Shaw and illustrated by Laura Watkins (2013, Tiger Tales)
- ***Time for Bed*** by Sylvia Andrews and illustrated by Ellen Mueller (2001, Harper Growing Tree)
- ***Es Hora de Dormir*** by Sylvia Andrews and illustrated by Ellen Mueller (2001, Harper Growing Tree)

Books about astronomy/nighttime sky/stars

- ***Kitten's First Full Moon*** by Kevin Henkes (2015, Greenwillow Books)
- ***The House in the Night*** by Susan Marie Swanson and illustrated by Beth Krommes (2011, HMH Books for Young Readers)
- ***Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me*** by Eric Carle (1999, Little Simon)
- ***Papá, por favor, bájame la luna*** (*Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me*) by Eric Carle (2018, Libros para Niños, Bilingual Edition)
- ***Stars*** by Mary Lyn Ray and illustrated by Marla Frazee (2011, Beach Lane Books)

Books about cause and effect

- ***When the Elephant Walks*** by Keiko Kasza (2004, G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers)
- ***Press Here*** by Herve Tullet (2011, Chronicle Books)
- ***Push Button*** by Aiki (2010, Greenwillow Books)
- ***TouchThinkLearn: Wiggles*** by Claire Zucchelli-Romer (2018, Chronicle Books)
- ***The Rain Came Down*** by David Shannon (2000, Blue Sky Press)

Book Suggestions for Preschoolers

after reading *Touch the Brightest Star* written and illustrated by Christie Matheson

Books about bedtime

- ***A Bedtime for Bear*** by Bonny Becker and illustrated by Kacy MacDonald Denton (2016, Candlewick)
- ***Just Go to Bed*** by Mercer Mayer (2001, Random House Books for Young Readers)
- ***The Goodnight Train*** by June Sobel and illustrated by Laura Huliska-Beith (2012, HMH Books for Young Readers)
- ***Bedtime in the Southwest*** by Mona Hodgson and illustrated by Renee Graef (2017, Muddy Boots)
- ***Dios te bendiga y buenas noches*** by Hannah Hall (2015, Grupo Nelson)
- ***La luz de Lucía*** by Margarita Del Mazo (2015, Cuento de Luz)

Books about astronomy/nighttime sky/stars

- ***Find the Constellations*** by H.A. Rey (2016, HMH Books for Young Readers)
- ***Our Stars*** by Anne Rockwell (2002, HMH Books for Young Readers)
- ***The Sky is Full of Stars*** by Dr. Franklyn M. Branley and illustrated by Felicia Bond (1983, HarperCollins)
- ***Stargazers*** by Gail Gibbon (1992, Holiday House)
- ***Owl Moon*** by Jane Yolen (1987, Philomel Books)
- ***How to Catch a Star*** by Oliver Jeffers (2004, Philomel Books)
- ***Good Night, Little Sea Otter*** (*Spanish/English*) by Janet Halfmann and illustrated by Wish Williams (2012, Starbright Books, Bilingual Edition)

Books about cause and effect

- ***Before After*** by Matthias Arégui and Anne-Margot Ramstein (2014, Candlewick)
- ***Mr. Gumpy's Outing*** by John Birmingham (1990, Square Fish)
- ***Frog and Beaver*** by Simon James (2018, Candlewick)
- ***Mix It Up*** by Herve Tullet (2014, Chronicle Books)
- ***Tap the Magic Tree*** by Christie Matheson (2016, Greenwillow Books)
- ***Don't Blink*** by Amy Krouse Rosenthal (2018, Random House Books for Young Readers)
- ***The Rain Came Down*** by David Shannon (2000, Blue Sky Press)



Supporting Early Literacy at Home

Families are a child's first teacher, and adults are an important part of helping children to develop knowledge and skills they will need to last a lifetime, especially when it comes to reading. Sharing books with young children helps them not only to learn the things they need to become lifelong readers, but to love reading as well. Using the five key skills identified by ReadAloud.org, families can help the young children in their care develop important literacy skills at home to create a foundation of success that will last a lifetime!



Read a variety of books with young children. Try story or picture books, but also information books and interactive books that encourage children to “do things” with the words or pictures on the page. Talk with your child about the different kinds of books as you read with him. Talk about the purpose of different types of books with your child or show him that he can look up what a shooting star is in an information book which is different from reading a story book.



Write with your child. Talk with her about what you are writing and why, helping her to understand that the marks on the page you are making have meaning. Ask her to help you come up with ideas for the different things you might be writing, such as a grocery list, a letter to a family member, or instructions for someone who might be caring for something for you. Give your child something to write with too, encouraging her to make her own marks on paper. Ask her to share what the marks mean as well.



Talk with your child as you read with her. Ask questions as you read. Add to her answers or ask her to tell you more as you read together. Ask questions about the text or have her tell you about the illustrations and share about what she notices. Try open-ended questions, such as “what do you think will happen next?” or “tell me about a time when you noticed...” Later in the day after reading a book, connect something that is happening in your day to something you read in the book to help your child make connections to the things she reads after reading them.



Sing as you read together. Make up silly songs using the words from the book. Sing songs you already know that might be related to the book. Ask your child for songs he might want to hear as you read together or that might remind him of what you are reading about together. For example, if you are reading “Touch the Brightest Star”, ask him if it reminds him of any songs he might know. You can help him by starting to sing “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” and encourage him to sing along with you too. Use different voices, try new volumes, or add his favorite stuffed animals or toys as you sing to add variety too.



Play with your child as you read books. Use his toys or stuffed animals to help him understand the book by acting out the characters or retell a story. If you come across new words, use words he already knows to act them out. Use play to put words into action or to understand text you've read together. Put on puppet shows after reading a book together to help him show he understands a story or use his toys to show you something he has learned in an information book.

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HOW THE MAGIC HAPPENS

What we see at night looks magical,
but there's a reason for everything.

FIREFLIES have special light-making organs in their bodies. They flash their lights to attract friends.

A **METEOR** is often called a "shooting star." But it is actually the streak of light from a small space rock that's burning up as it travels through the Earth's layers of air.

The **MOON** travels around the Earth. It glows because the sun is shining on it. Sometimes the sun only shines on part of the moon, so it might look like a crescent in the sky. And sometimes the sun shines on the whole face of the moon. That's when it looks like a circle and is called a full moon.

WHITE-TAILED DEER

often eat at dusk, when there is still some light in the sky. They like to eat plants, including the leaves of birch trees.

The **BIG DIPPER** and **LITTLE DIPPER** are patterns of stars. The Big Dipper is shaped like a ladle, or large spoon, and the Little Dipper is shaped like a smaller ladle.

STARS are huge balls of hot plasma. Most are very, very far away from Earth and look like tiny spots of light in the night sky.

OWLS are nocturnal birds. That means they are active at night. An owl's call is known as a **hoot**, and it often sounds like this: "Whoo!"

MORNING GLORIES

and **POPPIES** are flowers that close at night and open in the morning.

