

A sensory story follows a simple narrative which usually combines a sentence or two from the book with a sensory experience which helps bring the story to life. For example, in a story where it is raining you might watch water drip through a colander or if the characters are walking along the beach, you might put your feet into sand. It is important to think about all the senses, touch, sounds, smell, taste, and visual stimuli, and how these appropriately match the story. Sensory stories are a great way for children to engage in stories in new and different ways rather than listen to an adult or watching the pages being turned.



Within our centres our children regularly enjoy sensory stories to support their development of interaction, attention, and early literacy skills. It is important to make story telling a fun and engaging experience as this widens the learning opportunities for each child and supports our children in growing a love for books, stories, and their imagination. As children become familiar with regularly repeated stories, they often seek to take the lead on the next sensory prompt or begin to repeat singular words or short phrases as their confidence to communicate them grows.

Creating your own sensory stories at home takes just a little preparation followed by time enjoying the interaction with your child and repeating this as you both become increasingly familiar. You can grow your collection of sensory stories, however, do not feel pressured to keep creating new exciting experiences as you will be able to see your child's familiarity and confidence to participate grow the more they are exposed to the same opportunity. Don't forget to get involved and show your child how to play with your collection of items as they may not know what to expect at first.



You might want to try:

**"We're Going on a Bear Hunt" by Michael Rosen**

With the following materials you could fill a selection of empty clear plastic bottles which you and your child could shake or turn over during the story or you could lay them out on the floor or a table to feel with your hands or feet together. You will notice between these objects you will explore different visual stimulation, different textures, a range of smells and they might even make different sounds.

Grass - real grass cuttings/ artificial grass/ green paper

Water - water in a spray bottle/ water in a tray/ blue fabric

Mud - real mud/ brown paint/ water mixed with brown food colouring

Forest - natural sticks or bark/ chopsticks/ cardboard tubes

Snow - snowflake sequins or glitter mixed with water (sealed if your child is likely to put these in their mouth)/ shredded paper/ cotton wool balls

Cave - large cardboard box/ hide under a towel or sheet/ hide under the table

Don't forget a teddy or toy bear!



**"The Very Hungry Caterpillar" by Eric Carl**

For this experience you may wish to set a table with the different objects to explore as you tell the story. It might support with a mealtime to encourage trying new or different foods.

Moon - torch/ photo of the moon/ ball of tinfoil

Leaf - real leaves/ green cushion/ green fabric

Caterpillar - toy caterpillar/ or be the caterpillar yourselves!

Fruit - select two or three real options from the fruit in the story/ gather play food that matches the story

Butterfly - brightly coloured material to wrap around you and become the butterfly.

