



VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

MODULE 3: FAMILY ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 2: STORY BOX

AGE: Younger and Older Toddlers

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Empty square tissue box
- Pictures from magazines, or family pictures
- Scissors
- Tape or glue
- Stickers (optional)

PURPOSE

As a toddler, your child is beginning to show interest in hearing and telling stories. This activity provides a way for you to create new stories using things you have in your home.



This activity relates to these elements in the **Language Development** domain of the VELs:

- Receptive Language (Listening)
- Expressive Language (Speaking)

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO!

1. Look for four large pictures in the magazines. Consider things like animals, scenes, people, toys, or things you find around the house as options, but anything that is interesting to your child will work.
2. Cut them out so that they will fit on the sides of the tissue box.
3. Turn the box upside down so the opening is on the bottom of the box. Tape or glue the pictures to each side of the box.
4. While sitting with your child, put your hand in the box opening and tell a story based on the pictures. Turn the box as you do.



- Next, give the box to your child and ask them to tell a story about the pictures. Ask your child simple questions, such as “What happens next?,” and comment on their story, such as “Wow! That’s exciting!” or “I wonder what will happen next!.”
- Take turns telling stories.

SWITCH IT UP!

Here are some different ways that you and your child can do this activity throughout your day together.

- If English is not your home language, you may choose to have your child do this activity in English, or in your home language, or both!
- Use a sticker of an animal or favorite cartoon character on each of the pictures. Make them the main character of the story. Ask your child to tell you what the character is doing in each “scene.”
- Use family pictures instead of pictures from magazines. Tell your child family stories, and have them make up stories using their family members as the main characters.
- Change out the pictures from time to time, so that your story can change from time to time.



BRIDGING ACROSS DOMAINS

These are ways to work on other areas of development (or bridge across domains) during the same activity.

- Dramatic Play:** Together, act out the story that your child tells about the pictures on the box.
- Problem Solving:** While you are telling a story, introduce a problem for the main character. They might get stuck somewhere, or forget something. Ask your child, “I wonder what they should try to solve this problem?.”

CHECK IT OUT!

Visit your local library and check out these books to read with your child.

- Baby! Talk!* – Penny Gentieu
- Moo, Baa, La, La, La!* – Sandra Boynton
- The Cow that Went Oink* – Bernard Most



Activity adapted from:

- McKinnon, E. (1996). *Teaching House: Early Learning All Around the House*. Warren Publishing House, Torrance, CA.

NOTES
