

National Storytelling Week

Friday - Folktale Fun

For the last activity in National Storytelling Week, we are keeping it simple, engaging and accessible for parents and carers. This activity has no resources; just your voice, expressions and gestures needed. This activity is based on a very old folktale; 'The Enormous Turnip' which is a familiar story to many. 'The Enormous Turnip' focuses on mathematical concepts including counting, comparison and pattern.

Resources:

- 'The Enormous Turnip book' or access to YouTube to hear the story read aloud.



Activity:

- Ensure you have a quiet space to deliver the storytelling session. Set out a cushion or spot for each child to sit on. String up fairy lights or drapes to make the space cozy and inviting
- Introduce the characters in the story; an old man, an old lady, a boy, a girl, a dog, a cat and a mouse. Bring the children's attention to how each character is smaller than the last. Use gestures to show the characters getting smaller, or show this in your body by crouching down further as each character is introduced
- As you tell the story ensure to include mathematical language like tallest, medium, shortest, before, after, next as well as labelling the characters in the order they arrive in the story like first, second, third and so on.

It might look and sound something like this:

"The old man was the first to try and pull the turnip from the ground. He was tall and used all his strength to pull and pull, but the turnip did not budge. The old lady came next. She was also tall and strong, but not as tall and strong as the old man. The old lady used all her strength to pull and pull, but still the turnip did not budge...last came the tiny mouse. He was the shortest and weakest of all. The mouse used all his strength to pull and pull and finally the enormous turnip popped out of the ground."

- Remember to use repetition to create a pattern of language in the story, for example, "pull and pull but still the turnip did not budge"
- After listening, support children to sequence the story. Ask "can you remember which character was first to pull the turnip? Who was second? Who came next?"





Extension Opportunity:

This story is usually a favourite with children so ensure there are opportunities to revisit and repeat. Add in simple props like a piece of stretchy Lycra so children can pull when the characters pull the turnip, or support children to compare their own heights. Ask “who is the tallest? Who is the shortest? Who is in the middle?” Compare the characters by asking “who is the tallest character? Who is the shortest character? Which characters are in the middle?”

Top Tip:

Deliver a storytelling session to parents and carers using ‘The Enormous Turnip’. This story will be familiar to many parents and carers at your setting already. It’s a simple yet memorable story making it perfect for repeating at home. Role model how parents and carers can tell the story using gestures and expression, ensuring modelling of mathematical language throughout. Explain the benefits of storytelling, including how it gives parents/carers and children the opportunity to bond and connect.

