

Cook's Corner

Teaching Sequence

January

By: Reading Rockets

Kids easily learn that one thing follows another. Their routines at home provide great examples, and are a good introduction to the concept of sequencing. For example, first we eat dinner, then we take a bath, after that we read stories, and finally we turn out the light.

Helping children sequence also develops their scientific inquiry skills. In order to study or observe changes in something, students must follow along and record changes. The changes happen in a particular order, which kids can document by writing or drawing pictures.

Here are a few activities that families can do that provide children with sequencing practice. As you try these, try to include the vocabulary of sequencing, which includes words such as first, then, next, finally, or first, second, third, last.

- * Cut or tear out the pages from an old calendar. Mix up the months and hand the stack of pages to your child. Ask your child to order the months from January to December by laying the pages out on the floor. Which month goes first? Then which one? Which month is last?

- * Create a "sequence of events" story. Start with a sheet of paper divided into 4 large squares. (For older children, you can create more blank sequence squares on the sheet.) Pick an activity your child is familiar with, such as making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich or brushing his teeth. Ask your child to draw the steps of the activity — one step per square in order from beginning to end.

- * Use your story time books as models. The books you read together provide a chance to talk about a sequence of events. After you finish a book, ask your child what happened first? And then what happened? How did the book end? To extend this idea, write each event on a separate index card or popsicle stick. Ask your child to put the cards (or sticks) in order.

Providing your child with opportunities to recall events in the correct sequence will help your child as she participates in science exploration and discovery. Understanding sequence also helps your child understand story structure, which in turn builds reading comprehension and writing skills.



When it comes to reading, the old saying is true:

PRACTICE
MAKES
PERFECT!

According to research, the more a child reads, the better he/she will be able to read. And that goes for all ages and skill levels!



Recommended children's books

These picture books are a good introduction to the concept of sequence — and are best read together to encourage lots of conversation!

Nonfiction and concept books

The Apple Pie Tree, by Zoe Hall (Age level: 3-6)
Every Autumn Comes the Bear, by Jim Arnosky (Ages: 3-6)
Jack's Garden, by Henry Cole (Age level: 6-9)
How a House Is Built, by Gail Gibbons (Age level: 3-6)
Little Green Frogs, by Frances Barry (Age level: 3-6)
The Milk Makers, by Gail Gibbons (Age level: 3-6)
In the Small, Small Pond, by Denise Fleming (Ages: 3-6)
The Very Busy Spider, by Eric Carle (Age level: 0-3)
The Very Hungry Caterpillar, by Eric Carle (Age level: 0-3)

Recommended children's books

Fiction books

And the Doorbell Rang, by Pat Hutchins (Ages: 3-6)
Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain, by Verna Aardema (Age level: 3-6)
Little Red Hen, by Paul Galdone (Age level: 3-6)
The Mitten, by Jan Brett (Age level: 3-6)
Rosie's Walk, by Pat Hutchins (Age level: 3-6)
So Much!, by Trish Cooke (Age level: 3-6)
We're Going on a Bear Hunt, by Michael Rosen (Age level: 3-6)