

EVENT READING AND ACTIVITY GUIDE



READ TOGETHER

Reading aloud with children builds key language and literacy skills while you connect with a book. This shared experience ignites children's imaginations, helps them build a greater understanding of the world, and cultivates a lifelong love of reading.

Here are some tips for making the most of story time:

- Hold the book so children can easily see the cover and the illustrations.
- Make a few comments about the illustration on the cover and note the author and illustrator.
- Show excitement and read the story expressively.
- Listen for children's comments or questions and respond briefly to confirm or clarify.
- Provide information to extend children's understanding of the story.
- Have fun!

BUILD VOCABULARY

Providing a simple explanation for words that children may not be familiar with can help build their language skills. You can describe the meaning of a word, point to an illustration, or use your tone of voice to convey the word's meaning.

Here are some words to talk about while you read *With Lots of Love*:

- **Missed:** feeling sad or lonely without someone or something
- **Gentle:** very soft and calm
- **Celebration:** an event for a special person or day
- **Decorate:** to make more beautiful or special
- **Sprinkled:** to drop in small pieces
- **Wish:** a hope for something to happen
- **Recognized:** to know or remember someone or something you have seen before
- **Plucked:** to grab with your fingers and pull off



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WISH UPON A STAR: WALL ART

In *With Lots of Love*, Rocio makes a wish while looking up at the stars. On an empty wall, add a large moon to create the night sky. Cut out paper stars and give one to each child to decorate using markers, stickers, or other craft supplies. Ask children, “What are some things you wish for?” Encourage them to think about different things like wishing to meet somebody, wishing to visit a place, or wishing to get a gift. Assist children in writing their wish on a star. Then, help children tape their stars on the night sky wall. Support language development by reading aloud the wishes you see on the wall of stars.

FAMILY PICTURE FRAMES

The last gift Rocio receives is a picture of Abuela, Tía, and her cousins standing in front of Abuela’s grocery store. Help children to make and/or decorate a picture frame made from popsicle sticks. Attach a family picture or invite children to draw a family picture to add to their frame. Talk with children about the people in their families and family members who may live far away, like in Rocio’s family.



MAKE MUSIC TOGETHER

Rocio and her family love singing the song “Las Mañanitas” a traditional Mexican birthday song. The whole family joins in singing and playing instruments. Collect a playlist of songs children love to sing from their culture, family, or community. Sing or listen to these songs together. Add instruments or special costumes. Invite children to make homemade maracas, like the ones Rocio’s brother plays, by putting beans or beads in an empty container. Shake and dance to the music!

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MORE IDEAS

Here are a few additional ideas for your event:

Send a Postcard: Ask children to think about people they love and miss. Invite them to create a picture on a blank postcard to share with a loved one. Help them to write a message on the back. If possible, mail the postcards or send home to families.

Engage the Five Senses: Lead children in a mindfulness exercise by engaging their senses. Invite children to think of a special place. Ask them to focus on the things they can see, smell, taste, touch, and hear around them. What do they notice? Ask them to describe those things.

Make Shapes and Patterns: Encourage children to take a closer look at the illustrations of *With Lots of Love*, like the towel stitched with Rocio's name or the blanket on her bed. Notice the shapes, colors, and repeating patterns. Support children to use drawing materials to make their own shapes and patterns.

Play in Abuela's Store: Engage children in dramatic play by recreating Abuela's store with materials like a cash register, empty food containers, money, grocery bags, and a place to store and display the items. Play with children as you pretend to shop at Abuela's store.

Create a Banner: Abuela holds a special birthday banner in the picture she sends to Rocio. Create a banner for your special event. Add words and decorations to personalize the banner.

KEEP READING

Create a reading corner for children who might need a quiet space. Integrate theme related books:

Dive into more books about missing someone by reading:

- *Juna's Jar* by Jane Bahk and illustrated by Felicia Hoshino
- *I'll Go and Come Back* by Rajani LaRocca and illustrated by Sara Palacios
- *Mama and Mommy and Me in the Middle* by Nina LaCour and illustrated by Kaylani Juanita
- *Nonni's Moon* by Julia Inzerro and illustrated by Lucy Smith

Deepen conversation about moving. Try:

- *A New Kind of Wild* by Zara Gonzalez Hoang
- *Evelyn Del Rey Is Moving Away* by Meg Medina and illustrated by Sonia Sánchez
- *Everything Naomi Loved* by Katie Yamasaki and Ian Lendler
- *The Many Colors of Harpreet Singh* by Supriya Kelkar and illustrated by Alea Marley
- *Coqui in the City* by Nomar Perez

Dig into themes of intergenerational relationships by reading:

- *Grandpa Grumps* by Katrina Moore and illustrated by Xindi Yan
- *Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt De La Peña and illustrated by Christian Robinson
- *When Lola Visits* by Michelle Sterling and illustrated by Aaron Asis
- *Saturdays Are for Stella* by Candy Wellins and illustrated by Charlie Eve Ryan

