

At Home Activities

Sock Toss

Sit across from your child. Toss a pair of rolled up socks back and forth to take turns retelling a story.

Adult Toss 1: "First, Little Red Riding Hood went into the woods to visit her grandma."

Child Toss 2: "Next, she met a wolf who asked where she was going."

Continue tossing the socks until the whole story has been re-told.

The 5 Finger Strategy

After reading a story, practice using all 5 fingers to retell a story. Hold up your hand and use each finger as a "checklist."

- Thumb: Characters (Who is in the story?)
- Pointer: Setting (Where are they?)
- Middle: Problem (What went wrong?)
- Ring: Events (What happened in the beginning, middle, and end?)
- Pinky: Solution (How was the problem fixed?)

The 20-Token Challenge

Gather 20 small items (pennies, dried beans, Lego bricks, or paperclips). Give your child the 20 items. Tell them they are going to retell the story, but every sentence they say "costs" them one token. The goal is to successfully retell the story using all 20 items.

Don't Say THAT Word

Pick 1-2 common words from the book that your child is banned from using while they retell the story to you. For example, if you read Cinderella, they aren't allowed to say the words shoe ball. Instead of saying "She lost her shoe," they have to think critically and rephrase: "She dropped her glass slipper on the stairs while running away."

Shadow Puppet Retell

Using a flashlight (or a smartphone flashlight) and a dark wall, turn off the lights and use your hands to create simple shadows on the wall. Have your child use the shadow shapes to act out the events of the story. If hand shadows are too tricky, use their favorite stuffed animals or action figures to cast the shadows.

The Emoji Retell

Have your child retell the story to you without using words for emotions. Every time a character has feelings in the story, your child has to freeze and make that exact dramatic face (super angry, terrified, overjoyed) to show the mood of that scene before continuing the plot.

Did You Know?

Around age 7 and 8, children are still developing a firm grasp on how time transitions work. When asked to retell a story, their brains naturally want to jump straight to the most exciting, high-emotion parts rather than processing the events as a logical chain reaction.

