

One Fish, Two Fish, Old Fish, New Fish

Fallon, when the day care centre first opened, I worried that my new early morning routine would disrupt the start of your day. No more leisurely breakfasts in bed over cartoons. Instead, however, you developed your own early morning routine; a morning routine that I would argue has allowed you to flourish and evolve. Beyond turning on the classroom lights, part of your morning routine involves greeting and playing with the younger children, or acting as a "Junior Leader," as you call it. In serving as a Junior Leader, you have formed several special bonds with the younger children. One such child is Sophia.

On one particular morning, Sophia was very sad after drop-off, crying and repeatedly saying "mommy." After several minutes of crying and snuggling in my arms, Sophia motioned to be let down. When Sophia's feet hit the floor, she ventured over to the book shelf, picked out "One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish," and brought it to you. Fallon, you acknowledged Sophia's request by sitting down and asking, "Do you want me to read this to you?" Without

saying a word, Sophia assumed the position on your lap, placing one thumb in her mouth and the other in her belly button. Sophia, content and happy, listened carefully as you read the poetic complexity of Dr. Seuss. Fallon, it seems like it was only yesterday that you were sitting in my lap as I read to you, "Today is gone. Today was fun. Tomorrow is another one. Every day, from here to there, funny things are everywhere."



Why this matters:

Using both Sophia and the Early Childhood Educators as a frame of reference, Fallon is demonstrating an understanding of the conventions of language, by identifying herself as a "Junior Leader." In mixing the age groups in the early morning, Fallon and Sophia are able to form a relationship outside of their peer groups. Part of this relationship involves a shared morning routine, with mutual understandings; understandings which are mostly conveyed through non-verbal communication. Fallon recognizes that her support contributes to Sophia's well-being, while Sophia recognizes that Fallon's support brings her comfort.

Sara Jane Thornton, 2012