

Story Time

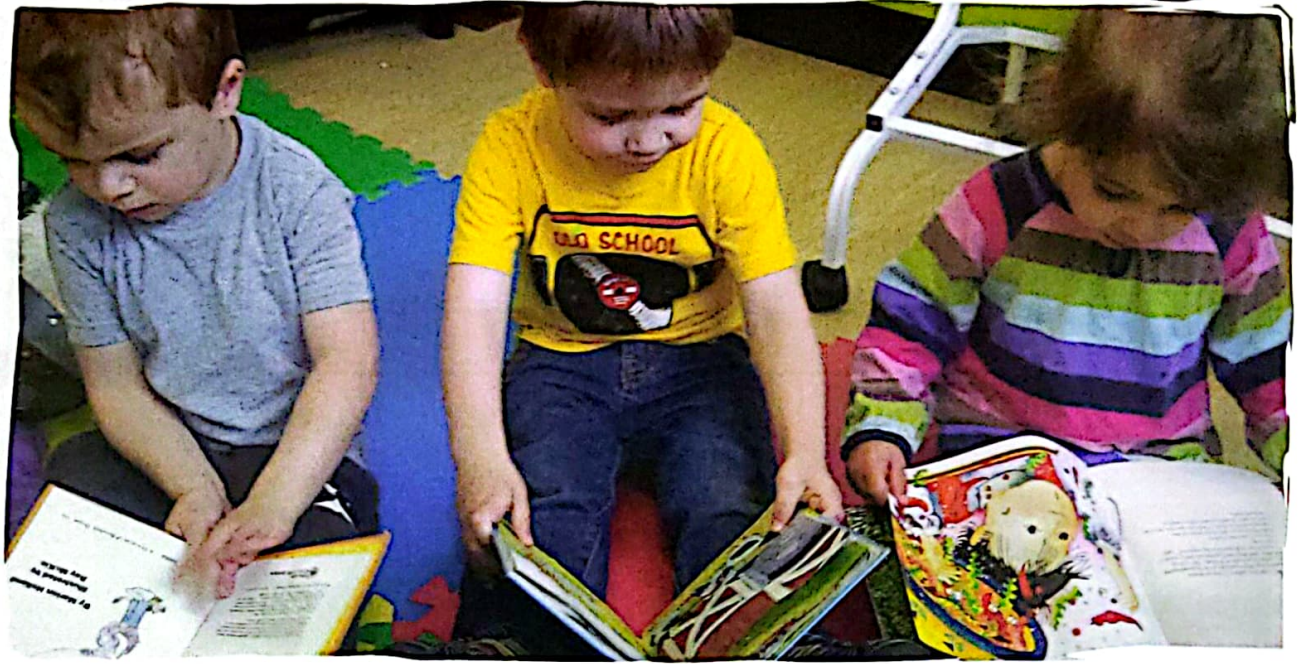
The other day I had the opportunity to spend some time in the Senior Toddler room. I was helping one of the educators clean the tables, when Oliver approached me holding a book. "Would you like me to read that to you?" I asked. "No," he said, "I'm going to read it."

I must admit I was intrigued. I followed Oliver over to the story area and watched as he sat on the floor and opened up the book. "It's eyes to toes," he told me. Before long, Maya, Sophia, Ryder and Max had come to join us. "What are you doing?" Sophia asked me. "I'm listening to Ollie; he's going to read us a book," I replied.

All eyes were on Oliver as he began to read to us. He held the book high into the air so that we might all be able to see. He said he couldn't remember what it was about, so he described what was happening on each page. "Here's a bear on there and the two cats."

We had been listening to Oliver's book for some time when Max decided to read to us. His book had pictures of a farm in it and so he began to sing, "There was a farmer who had a farm, e,i,e,i,o."

Maya selected a Robert Munsch book, "With the trees and the big fast in the trees." Before I knew it, Sophia and Ryder were reading me a book too. In fact, I was the only one left sitting in the audience! We went on to read several more books and eventually they let me read a couple too!



Why this matters:

The children view themselves, not only as listeners, but as readers as well. Reading aloud to a group of your peers can be intimidating even for adults; in doing this, the children are growing in their self-confidence. Oliver inspired the other children to come forward and try something they otherwise might not have.

They understand daily routines and the conventions of reading to an audience. Oliver demonstrated this by choosing the appropriate place in the classroom to read, and by holding the book up for the audience to see the illustrations.

They were unable to read the words on the page; however, they were able to read the illustrations. They used their knowledge of the book and story sequencing combined with imagination and observation to create their narrative.

The children treated each other with respect and consideration when they were reading to them. They shared both the books and the spotlight!

Melissa McCallum, 2012