Introduction to StoryCycles for Families

Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome Parents. Introduce yourself and role at the center.

- “We’re here to talk about StoryCycles; an exciting school-to-home book-rotation program provided by Tandem, Partners in Early Learning, a local bay area non-profit.”

- “Every week, your child will go home with a green book bag filled with 2-4 high quality, age-appropriate, multilingual books [Hold up a StoryCycles bag to show parents what it looks like]

- “We strongly encourage you to share the books in the bag with your child each week and then return the bag when it’s due. When you return the bag, you will receive a new bag of books to share the following week so that by the end of the year, you will have shared about 100 books with your child!”

- “In our case, book bags will be sent home every ____________________, and need to be returned every________________.”

Tandem Tip: Send bags home on Thursday (Friday is a high absentee day). Have them return on Tuesday so you have an extra day (Monday) to remind parents that bags are due!

Talking Points to Share With Families

- It is important you help your classroom care for these books so the entire class can benefit from the whole library! The following are some talking points you should consider sharing with your students’ families:

- “Return all the books on the due day. If you lose a book/bag, please look for it.”

- “Your child will not get another bag until this is returned. Of course, we understand life happens. If you do lose a bag and you truly can’t find it, let the teacher know and you can work with the teacher to arrange a way for your child to begin receiving books again. If you damage a book, please return it and notify the teacher.”

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Talking Points to Share With Families, Continued

- "Reasonable damage and loss is expected, but the sooner we know, the sooner we can fix the problem."

- "We put these green Tandem Stickers on the books so you know it’s a StoryCycles book." [Hold up a Tandem book and point out the green sticker]

- "So even if you find them under the bed or in a closet a few months later, bring it back! Your child’s teacher will be happy to put it back in the collection."

- "Bags are machine-washable, so if you get a spaghetti stain on it, feel free to throw it in the wash."

Talking Points to Share With Families

- "You might wonder why I keep saying ‘share’ instead of ‘read’ books. Anyone know why?"

Answer if families are not talkative: "We say ‘share’ because the most important thing you can do for your child is have a back and forth conversation. Books are simply a wonderful tool to give you something to talk about!"

- "You will also notice that sometimes the books might come in English, another language you do not speak, or might not have words at all! Tandem carefully chooses these books for their beautiful illustrations so that no matter what language you speak, talking about the pictures or having your child tell you about the illustrations is just as meaningful of an experience as reading the words on the page."

- "Sharing books with your child should not be a chore. Follow these three simple tips to make book-sharing a fun time for all."

- Pass out copies of the handout “3 Tips for Sharing Books” and ask participants to volunteer to read them aloud one at a time.

- Have a parent read each tip aloud. If they are unwilling or unable, read it aloud yourself.

- Start with “Follow the child’s pace.” Explain, “It is important to let the child drive the process. If your child wants to start at the end of the book, that is fine! If they want to spend 5 minutes on 1 page and flip through the rest, that is also okay! Let your child turn the pages. Talk about what your child shows interest in.”

- Model Tip # 2 (Make it a Conversation). Use the book to model how to answer the different types of question on the handout.

TIPS FOR BOOK-SHARING

1. Follow the child’s pace
2. Make it a conversation
3. Have fun!
Talking Points to Share With Families, Continued

- Model “Comment” and explain that when you comment on a picture it’s an invitation for them to talk too!
- Model “Ask questions”. Explain that open-ended questions invite more back and forth conversation.
- Model “Respond with more information”. Explain that this is how we show interest in what the child says, and are offering them more vocabulary to talk about it!
- Model Tip 3 (Have Fun!)
- Use just the cover or your favorite page to model silly voices, movements, or facial expressions.
- Have them make a silly voice, sound, or movement for that page.

2 Minute Video to Share with Parents

- If you have an internet connection, and time, show this two minute video. If not, skip slide:

  - “We’re going to watch a short video. While we do, think about these two questions:
    - What did you see in the video that you already do with your children?
    - What new techniques did you see that you are going to try at home?
  - Things to note about the video: Use these observations to get parents talking
    - “The baby was paying attention. Many parents say they don’t bother reading with their youngest children because ‘the baby doesn’t pay attention anyway’. Even if it seems like they are not learning, they are internalizing many different concepts including vocabulary and grammar. Most importantly, they are learning that books are fun.”
    - “The Chinese speaking mom was reading a book written in English. Even if you get a book you can’t read, you can still tell a story based on the pictures, talk about the illustrations, count objects, talk about colors, etc.”
Quick Review: Go Through Each Point With Your Families

1. When do we send books home?
   - Answer: Teacher’s choice! Tandem recommends Thursday, but pick whatever day works best for your families

2. When do we bring them back?
   - Answer: Teacher’s choice! Tandem recommends Tuesday, but pick whatever day works best for your families

3. What do you do if you lose/damage a book?
   - Answer: Let the teacher know as soon as possible. If you still have the book, return it to the teacher.

4. What can you do if the book is not in your language?
   - Answer: We can look at the pictures in the book and talk about what we see and create our own story

5. How much time do we recommend you share books with your child on a daily basis?
   - Answer: At least 15 minutes a day

Plug for the Library

“Libraries have more than just books, there are language classes, help with taxes, children’s games you can borrow, movies, music, story times, and more! All completely free, and available to any California resident regardless of immigration status.”

Contact Info for Tandem

Thank participants for their time and participation. Direct them to all of Tandem’s social media outlets: Facebook, Twitter, Webpage, if they’d like to get information about future trainings and events.