



WORDLESS BOOKS

little
happy
learners

How to

USE WORDLESS PHONICS BOOKS

(Fun, hands-on ideas to boost early reading and phonics skills)

Tell the story to each other

Take turns describing what's happening in the pictures.
Invite your child to retell in their own words.

Model full sentences

Talk about the pictures using complete sentences (for example, "The cat is chasing the ball") so children hear clear, rich language.

Play "I Spy" with sounds

Choose a sound (e.g. /m/) and say, "I spy something that starts with /m/" – scan the page together and name pictures.

Add CVC words to the pages

Use sticky notes or labels to write simple 3-letter words (e.g. cat, dog, bed) and place them beside matching pictures. Let your child read them.

Speech bubbles

Draw or stick speech or thought bubbles next to characters. Ask your child to suggest what they might say, then write it together.

Sound hunt

Pick one phoneme (for example /a/). Turn every page and find pictures that include that sound (in the start, middle or end). Say the word, emphasising the sound.

Story sequencing

If possible, mix up the pages and ask your child to put them back in the correct order. Then retell the story from start to finish.

Label picture parts

Encourage your child (or help them) to write short labels for objects in the images using phonics they know (invented spelling is fine).

Make a new ending

Ask: "What happens next?" and invite your child to draw an extra page or imagine a new ending. Then label or talk through it.

Name the characters

Give each character a phonics-friendly name (e.g. Sam Snake, Pam Pig). Use these names in your storytelling.

Rhyming challenge

Pick an object in the picture (e.g. "hat") and together think of as many rhymes as possible: cat, mat, rat, bat.

Act it out

Use toys, puppets or gestures to act out the scenes. Narrate what's happening, pause for your child to join in or predict what happens next.

Tips for success

- Keep it short and sweet: 5 to 10 minutes is plenty (little brains get tired!)
- Let your child lead sometimes – follow their interests in the story or pictures
- Celebrate effort – even if the sounds or words are imperfect, the practice counts
- Be consistent: revisit the same book over several sessions, building fluency
- Use visual support: stickers, arrows, highlighters or coloured sticky notes make it more engaging