(The Speechie Show Ep.16)

Welcome to the Speechie Show! Being a speech language pathologist often means having too much work and not enough planning time. To beat the overwhelm, we’re bringing you the tricks and tools that will make your job a little bit easier.

**Carrie**: Hello everybody and welcome to the Speechie Show. We are here today to talk about your wiggly preschoolers and how to keep them engaged during some storybook group activities. I'm here today with Lisette from Speech Sprouts. How are you today Lisette?

**Lisette**: I'm good, how are you Carrie?

**Carrie**: I'm great. Thank you so much for joining us on the show. If you guys are new to the show, this is the Speechie Show. We do this every Monday afternoon and I interview a new speech language pathologist each week and we talk about one topic. We're going to share five tips with you today and then we are going to do some giveaways here in just a bit. So, if you are watching on Facebook live with us, hang tight because we'll get to the giveaways. Alright now is the part where we need you guys to comment and share and like so we can make sure everybody sees this. So, if you are on here watching, go ahead and type in a comment. Give me a thumbs up or a thumbs down, do you have wiggly preschoolers that you're working with right now. You can use the like button or you can go in and type a comment with the emoji with the thumbs up. Wiggly preschoolers, do ya have them...give me a thumbs up! Madeline says Hi from Florida. Hello Madeline and welcome to the show. Thank you for joining us today. Alright, so we're talking about wiggly preschoolers and how to keep them engaged. Lisette before we get started, why don't you tell everyone a little bit about you and speech sprouts.

**Lisette**: Well I'm a school based speech language pathologist and I probably have about 20-25 preschoolers on my caseload at any given time. We have several different programs for them. I started on teacher pay teacher about 4 years ago and my store is called Speech Sprouts. And I blog at Speech Sprouts Therapy. I think the blog has been going about 3 years now.

**Carrie**: Nice. Is that [speechsproutstherapy.com](http://www.speechsproutstherapy.com/)?

**Lisette**: [Speechsproutstherapy.com](http://www.speechsproutstherapy.com/), yeah. And I also do a little bit of PRN after school, working with adults and the older population, so I do a little bit of everything.

**Carrie**: Anybody else out there that's watching, do you do a little bit of everything as well? I feel like that is a common trend in our field. Doing a little bit of this and a little bit of that, trying to make ends meet and ya know being kind of everywhere. Alright, so we are going to talk today about what to do if you have a big group of preschoolers and you want to do a storybook activity with them. But you want it to be meaningful and you want it to be engaging. So, before we move into our five tips today, Lisette can you talk to us a little bit about why it is important to incorporate those literacy activities for our preschoolers with speech and language delays?

**Lisette**: Oh especially in the schools, our focus us building those oral language skills which are so important for learning to read and literacy skills later on. So, storybook is sort of natural. It gives us an opportunity to work on all of our goals, all at once. It's either cheap or free because I get most of mine from the library, so little cost there. The kids love it and we can really work on those narrative skills at the same time that we're working on all of our other goals that we are working on.

**Carrie**: And what was that research you were telling me earlier about, narrative skills and later development.

**Lisette**: I have read that research is telling us that children with strong narrative skills, those narrative skills are a strong predictor of later success in reading in school. So, we really want to build those narrative skills, don't forget those. Those story re-telling skills are important.

**Carrie**: Wonderful, yes. So, we know we need to do it. We know we need to get those books in there, but it can be so hard when you have a group of wiggly preschoolers and they won't sit still to listen to the story and actually do the therapy activities you have planned. So, the first tip we're going to share today is incorporating gross motor activities into our sessions. So, Lisette, you have a classroom specifically for children with speech and language delays and you do these groups a lot. So, tell me, tell me how that gross motor piece plays into your sessions.

**Lisette**: Well I have up to 10 children in a group and I have para who helps me. So, we have a lot of little guys on the carpet. Anytime we're going to a sit-down activity, I want to get them up and moving before we sit down and do that cause that helps just a whole lot. If you're lucky enough to have a smart board, which I have, it's fabulous. Sorry, the cat just jumped up...hahaha. Or you can do this on your computer, that's not a problem. I sometimes go to YouTube. And some of my favorites on YouTube, if you've never seen Patty Shukla videos, hers are awesome. Her jump video will get me winded. We are all jumping and we're dancing. I also like the learning station. And there's lots of different videos on there and you can search. There's many more, but I really like those movement ones for my preschoolers and they love them too. And then we sit down and we're ready.

**Carrie**: Perfect. When I put this video over on the [Speech and Language website](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/), I will include links to those YouTube channels. The Skukla's videos and the learning station. So, we have those on there. If you are watching live though and you have a favorite motion movement song that you do with your preschoolers, go ahead and type it in so that we can have a good list in the comments here of the movement activities that you guys use. And I love this because my son has sensory processing disorder and that strategy of getting movement in and getting some heavy work done before he sits down to do something that he has to focus, it's like magic. And I know it works for every other kid in the classroom too.

**Lisette**: It really does.

**Carrie**: Yeah, so that's great! Alright, ah, Madeline says 'all SLP friends live Facebook video chats'. I'm not sure what that one means. You'll have to clarify on that one Madeline. Ok so our first tip then is to incorporate some gross motor activities before you sit down and then our next tip is to pick sound loaded books that have repetitive text and simple relatable storylines. So, tell us Lisette how you work that in when you are choosing your books.

**Lisette**: Well in my program, I like to choose a particular target for the week and some of these kids in articulation. Some of these kids may need it. This week we're doing -shh on the end. Some of them may have that sound but we still focus and that builds sound awareness building that particular sound. Then when they come to me individually, we work on specifically what they need. So, I need books that are loaded with a particular sound that we are doing for that week. It's not easy to find because they are not listed that way in the library. You type something that's got fish in it and then you look through the text and it doesn't repeat it very much at all. So, my coworker and I, because both of us do this program, she does it at another school, we spend a lot of time in the library hunting books, looking through lots and lots of books and we developed our go to list. So, I'm looking for that. I'm looking for sound loaded books. I love books that have repetitive text. The kids really, really enjoy that and it really helps them with that story retell and it helps engage them. Because when you repeat that text over and over, they all want to chime in.

**Carrie**: Absolutely

**Lisette**: It's great stuff, so we developed a go to list and that's a freebie that's available to everybody at my store on Speech Sprouts on Teachers Pay Teachers.

**Carrie**: Ok, so if they go to your teacher pay teacher store, they can find a link to that list of sound loaded books, right?

**Lisette**: Yes, sound loaded books.

**Carrie**: And I'm going to add that to the show notes over on the [Speech and Language Kid’s website](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/) later and maybe we can get it on the Facebook comments as well so that everyone has access to that. That's perfect. I know that I've tried to find books before and have just been frustrated.

**Lisette**: It is. You just really have to look through a ton of books. Yeah that's a couple years in the making for that list.

**Carrie**: Yeah, you've saved everyone a ton of time, that's great! Alright Darla says 'Hi Lisette and Carrie', Hi Darla welcome. Ok so if you are just joining us, we are talking about how to keep those wiggly preschoolers engaged during a storybook activity. And we just talked about using gross motor activities to start and then using some sound loaded books and repetitive texts to choose some books that are really going to be engaging for those preschoolers. Lisette just shared that she has a list of books that are specific for each sound and Madeline say's that it's a great list so she must already have it. And you can get that over on the Teachers Pay Teachers store. Tina can't wait to get her hands on the list also. Awesome. Ok the next tip we're going to share with you guys is how to discover the book together as you read. Lisette, tell us how this looks in your sessions.

**Lisette**: Well you know when we are reading with a story we want to incorporate all of those goals. We want to work on those -wh questions. We're working on all kinds of things, categories, etc., etc. But I find that if you are reading through the book and you are reading through the page and you go ok so who, whatever it was, in the case of one of my favorite, Smiley Shark, who ran away. Who swam away. Well you get a one word answer. So, I like to use an "I wonder" statement.... I'm wondering why the star fish swam away. And their eager to tell you because they want to help you out. It's more of a conversation and you can work on view and building those sentences and syntax because you are getting longer sentences and you are eliminating that one word response you get when you are quizzing children. So, I do a lot of observation. That's what I mean by discovering those books together. Like Ah, look at that, I wonder what that is! Hmm I wonder how he gets there or I wonder what's going to happen next or ah did you see that. So, we're really commenting on the story and on the pictures and we're wondering out loud together and really engaging the children.

**Carrie**: Yeah that's wonderful. I love the idea of encouraging the children to engage with the book as opposed to just drilling them. Because I feel like our children know that. They know when they are being quizzed. They know when someone is trying to figure out if they know the answer. But if you're all just enjoying a book together and are just oh wow, I wonder what's happening next. Or wow what do we notice about...phone call come in... hopefully...there we go we're still going...So yeah, I just feel like that's a really good way to engage kids. And it's just more natural too.

**Lisette**: It really is. And they don't feel like they're being put on the spot and quizzed. Their just all chiming in the conversation. You are having a conversation about this great book.

**Carrie**: Absolutely. That's wonderful. Ok we have Monet who is asking "can we get access to the list if we are not teachers". She's talking about the sound loaded book list and yes you can. You just have to go onto a website called [teacherspayteachers.com](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/). And you will have to sign up for a free account, but it is free and then the book list is free. So, you could just find the book list and you'll buy it, but it's free, and then you'll just download it to your list and then you have access to it. So yes, you do not have to be a teacher to get that. Ok if you guys have any other questions, please type those in the comments and we'll be answering those as we go along. Also stay tuned. We're going to be doing some giveaways here in just a moment. We have two more tips to share with you. Ok the next tip then will be using props. So how do you use props Lisette for your group activities?

**Lisette**: I love to use props because that really draws those kids in. For a lot of reasons. So, we have, I like to use puppets. I like to use magnet board pieces. Sometimes if we are doing say Goldilocks, I may be bringing in three bowls and some spoons and we're going to pretend. But they are items that the kids can manipulate. It engages them in a story. And I also like to get the kids up off the carpet and up off their chairs. We're usually down on the carpet in a circle. And they come up front and engaging with whatever is going on. So again, we're getting the movement and their relating to the objects that we are using. So, I do a lot of turn taking, hey would you come and help me with this and you come and help me with that. We act it out. We use lots of silly voices. You know when I am doing the monkey swinging in the tree, I've got a crocodile puppet and that that crocodile likes to try to snap each child. And they are so into it, it's amazing.

**Carrie**: That's fun. Now do you recommend reading the same book multiple times and maybe having it sometimes with props and sometimes without?

**Lisette**: Absolutely. When we repeat those...a lot of people will read one story and they they're done and they are moving onto the next book for the next session. Again, research is showing us that repeated storybook reading is very powerful for learning language. You notice your children are always asking for their favorite books. They really enjoy that repetition. When you are re-reading it with them you can discover new things each time. It keeps them engaged even more because they know the story. And you can work on more things like predictions because they know what's coming next. And you go "ooh I think he's going to..." and then they're so proud they know the answer. So, they are working those prediction skills. You can take turns telling the story so they're working on those narrative skills. It really helps those kids that struggle with those -wh questions because they are familiar with the story. So, it gives them that success while they are answering those questions. It's really great stuff.

**Carrie**: Yeah, I am nodding along because I have read the same books to my three-year-old a million times. But he loves them and I feel like he is learning more each time because he's able to build on the knowledge from the first reading, the next time we read it. So yeah, I'm there with ya.

**Lisette**: I would say read it a minimum of twice with your children. Sometimes even three and four times is great. And look at it this way, your therapy planning is simplified because you've already got that theme and it's really going to be powerful for your kids.

**Carrie**: Absolutely. Well and I like the strategy I have heard for children with hearing impairment. I like this for all children, but they talk about presenting information orally first, then presenting it visually, and then presenting it orally again. And so, what that does is that gives the children a chance to learn just the language piece to form images in their mind of what's happening. But then if they didn't get it, you support them with using props or acting it out, so that they can really understand it. And then you present it without those props again for the third time and that gives them a chance to rehearse what they just saw, what they just learned. You kind of make a sandwich out of it so that they get that support while learning to use that information that's coming in auditorily. So, I like that strategy a lot as well.

**Lisette**: Definitely. I also like to follow up with related activities. You know we often do an art activity that goes along with the story book. We like to make little books so they can draw out the pictures and take those storybooks home and rehearse it again with their parents.

**Carrie**: Yeah, any way you can get them to connect to that material in different ways and that story, that's going to build more connections in the brain and help solidify whatever you are working on so that's wonderful. Alright let's see. We have a question from Tanika. She asks "How do you manage behaviors when they arise during story time?" Do you want to talk for a minute about how that looks in your group of ten?

**Lisette**: Well I do have a para-professional that helps me. So, she is behind the children and if someone is a little too wiggly or not attending, she redirects them quietly. I find that with the storybook, and you really have these guys engaged, there is not a lot of behaviors. I may have some kids that are shouting out a little too much to the point where other children are not able to hear. We kind of settle them down and I close the book for a minute and we say "whoops, we couldn't hear" So everybody get back in place. I keep them engaged and like I said we're on the carpet and the story may take 20 times but I'm getting them up and down during the story also. Come look at this and come show me that. When we are reading I'm also working on the literacy piece. I make sure every time we are reading a book, I go ok here's the title, and point it out. This is the author. This is what the author does. This is what the illustrator does. And then when we're working on a specific sound, we write the letters that go with the sound. This morning it was -sh on the board. Look at these two letters, the sh. Now I need someone to come and look at this page and find the -sh for me. And when they find it we practice the word. So, you're getting those literacy skills in and getting them up and down. It's awesome.

**Carrie**: Yeah to build on that when I've seen, in group sessions that I've done, when I start to see a lot of behaviors, if it's like everyone starting to have behaviors, that's a really good indication that maybe I'm not engaging enough. Or maybe we're not moving enough. And so that might be a really great time to say, ok we are going to jump up and we're going to act out this scene in the book. Because you realize that you are losing them and you've got to try to bring them back somehow. Or if you are specifically seeing a problem with one student and it's a repetitive thing. So, Johnny is always having trouble sitting through your circle time activities and he's the only one losing it, so you know it's not the activity. Then you may want to look at what other supports can we add for Johnny. Does he need a wiggle seat, like an inflatable cushion that gives him a little movement? Does he need a cube chair so he has some boundaries, some physical boundaries? So, you can work with your occupational therapist. You can look at other ways you can support that child to be able to really focus on what you are doing and engage with you, if they are not able to do it without some extra supports. So, a few extra ideas there.

**Lisette**: Proximity can make a big difference for that little one. Sometimes while I'm reading I will just tuck that little one between my knees and I'm still engaging that child, but being with me now we are focused.

**Carrie**: Yeah and that gives them the proximity plus that feeling of something on your body. Some kids just need to be kind of tight and cozy in order to focus. Yeah that's my son. My son likes to be tight and cozy. Alright, Madeline says little books are great for carry over. Absolutely, we were talking about that as well. Ok we have one more tip and then we are going to get to our giveaways and our fun resources. So, the last tip is don't re-shelve the book when you are done. Talk about that.

**Lisette**: Right. And to go along with what we were saying before, do those repeated storybook readings. Get that book out and get the children to retell the story to you. Engage in that. The second or third reading you may be acting it out. You may be doing some new things with it. You may read it again and expand on it each time so that you are bringing in all of those goals. It's magic to be able to use those storybooks. I hear people who struggle with mixed groups. It's wonderful for that. So, you are bringing in all of those things at once and each time you repeat it, you're learning more.

**Carrie**: Absolutely. Wonderful. Alright, those are our five tips for today. We're going to share some fun resources that are going to help you out and make this even easier. So, Lisette, tell us about your favorite resource for your big groups and your preschoolers. What's your resource today?

**Lisette**: Well I do really enjoy doing some book companions that go along with some of my favorite books. Because we've just been focusing on some of our fish, one of my favorite stories. This one is loaded with -sm, Smiley Shark. I have this little guy over here. If you have not read this one, Smiley Shark is awesome. This is a sample of some of the story books that I'm talking about. It repeats smiley over and over again in the book so we can work on those -sm clusters. So, I really, really love that story. And it's a fun story about a little fish that you know he was lonely but soon everybody expected him for who he was because he helped out everyone and now he has friends. So, it's got a great moral and the children really relate to the story when it's got those simple story lines. I tend to avoid stories for the little ones that have way too much text. We want something simple. I have a book companion for Smiley Shark and to go along with the ocean theme I also made a little reader that focuses on who questions and I call that one Diver Diver. So, I'll bundle that on together and I'd like to giveaway the bundle today. So, the ocean is a fun bundle and my store has Diver Diver and the Smiley Shark book companion with lots and lots of activities.

**Carrie**: Perfect. Ok so that is the first giveaway for today and that is the Oceans of Fun bundle that comes with the story companion for Smiley Shark. And if you would like to get access to that and you are not our winner today you can go over to the Speech [Sprouts Teachers Pay Teachers store](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Speech-Sprouts) and I'll make sure to put links to that in the show notes to this video as well as the comments for Facebook. And the second giveaway we are doing here today is for two free months in my membership program, the Speech Therapy Solution. And if you are not familiar with that, that is my exclusive program just for speech language pathologists. You pay a monthly fee and in exchange you get access to over 300 different training videos on all different topics, anything you are asking about. We've got something in there for it. We've got over 100 different worksheets that you can print and use right away in therapy. Plus, we answer your questions. We help you with your tough cases. We have webinars once a month, so all kinds of fun in there. The second person to respond to my question here in just a sec is going to get two free months in that and you can check that out over at [speechandlanguagekids.com/join](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/). Alright so here's the question. I'm going to ask you a question and the first two people to respond are going to win. First one wins the oceans bundle and the second one wins my membership. So here we go. Type in, in the comments, your favorite book for preschool therapy. And I want to see how many books we can get. We are doing this giveaway here on Facebook live so if you are watching the recording on the blog later, you can't participate. You have to be on Facebook live to win. Alright Darla Gardner says Brown Bear. That's a wonderful one, I love that one. So, Darla you are going to win the Oceans bundle. So, Lisette, how would you like her to contact you to get that?

**Lisette**: Darla can email me at speechsproutstherapy@gmail.com.

**Carrie**: Perfect. Alright they are going so fast I can't even see. Hang on. Let's see, Heather Kelly McCay, you got Hungry Caterpillars, that was your favorite book. Wonderful. You are going to get two free months in my membership. I can't remember if you are already a member or not. If you are we'll just add two free months to your membership. Or we'll start you out with two free months of your not already in. So, you can reach me at Carrie@speechandlanguagekids.com and my assistant Kena will get you all set up with those two free months. Alright we also have another Very Hungry Caterpillar. If You Give a Mouse a Cookie, I love that one. Gruffalo, I don't know Gruffalo, that sounds fun, though. We got Split Splat and Darla says, yay, thank you. Alright perfect. Everybody keep typing in your favorite books. We'll have a nice list of good preschool books by the time this Facebook video has circled the internet for a while. So, thank you all so much for participating in our giveaway and thank everyone for coming and watching us today. And Lisette, thank you for coming on the show.

**Lisette**: You're Welcome! Yeah, I'd like to mention that on my blog I do review different books. So, some of those may be new and not necessarily on the list if you want to find some fresh new books, check out the blog. There's a lot of good ones on there.

**Carrie**: Perfect. And that's [speechsproutstherapy.com](http://www.speechsproutstherapy.com/) right?

**Lisette**: Yes

**Carrie**: Wonderful. So, you can check out all kinds of different preschool books. Alright we hope that helped you with your tough cases, your tough wiggly preschoolers. If you need help with your other tough cases head on over to [speechandlanguagekids.com/join](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/) and check out the Speech Therapy Solution membership. We'd love to have you inside. And Lisette tell us a little bit more about where we can find you and everything you've got going on.

**Lisette**: Well as I mentioned I do have a blog [www.speechsproutstherapy.com](http://www.speechsproutstherapy.com/). I'm also on Instagram and that's @speechsprouts and my Teacher Pay Teachers store is [Speech Sprouts](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Speech-Sprouts). So, easy to find me and I hope to see some of you.

**Carrie**: Wonderful, well thank you so much Lisette, we'll see you later and thank you to you, we'll see you next Monday. And I don't remember what we are talking about next Monday so it will be a surprise. Alright thank you, bye for now.

Thank you for joining us today on The Speech Show. We hope today’s tips have helped you feel a little less stressed and a little more confident about your work. If you’re looking for more stress busters and confidence boosters, we’d love to have you join us in The Speech Therapy Solution, where you’ll get access to a huge library of premium training videos and another library of print and go therapy materials. You can also get help with your tough cases by Carrie on the weekly Q&A calls, or by posting in the exclusive Facebook group. Plus, group members can join us for a monthly webinar that can be used for a continuing education credit. Head on over to [SpeechandLanguageKids.com/join](https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/become-a-member/) to check out all the amazing benefits of the speech therapy solution membership. Bye for now.