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Communication is one of the most important skills you can teach your child. Whether it to help articulate their thoughts or help understand yours and yet it is one of the hardest things to teach.

This is where storytelling can play a huge role in developing better communication skills.

Most people think that storytelling helps build reading skills and vocabulary but it can do so much more such as:

- Build concentration
- Understand cause and effect
- Develop logic
- Open up imagination
- Create global context
- Develop empathy

But to truly be able to help your child develop these, it is essential that you don't stop at simply reading the book out loud but create activities around the stories that the child is reading. Below I have suggested some ways to do this:

1) Pick a few books that your kids love and respond to. This will allow them to be more participative in the storytelling.

2) Read the same book for at least 1-2 weeks continuously and keep circling back to them ever so often. The repetition helps them remember cause and effect and focus on things like the character, the illustrations and the vocabulary.

3) Rotate between the activities below each time you read the book:

a. Ask your child 3 questions about the book after they have finished reading. This will ensure that they were paying attention to the details.



Tell me a story!

b. Ask them to tell the story back to you. This will help build their memory and logic skills.

c. Ask them to assign a character to you and other members of the family and re-enact the story. This will help them develop empathy as they explain the characters and their actions to the family members

4) Assign feelings or emotions to the character of a book, eg: "What do you think Red Riding felt when she saw the wolf dressed as her grandmother?". When the child answers, ask them which situations make them feel the same way and tell them which situations make you, the parent, feel the same way. This not only helps the child understand the book more deeply but helps process, understand and explain emotions.

5) Play games such as "What's Next?" and "StoryTelling" which help build logic and concentration skills and encourage use of vocabulary.

If you would like book recommendations, please email me on pathshala@lokmat.com with your child's age.