

08/05/2020

## Home Language Foundation Phase

Good day **Foundation Phase Home Language** colleagues,  
This weekend, think about building young children's comprehension skills by telling, reading and discussing stories of important religious and cultural events, like Easter, Ramadan or Pesach.

### STRATEGY 1: BUILD COMPLEX VOCABULARY

- It is important to expand young children's CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency). They will need this kind of language as they progress through school.
- Do this by introducing children to more advanced words as you share stories, give instructions or hold discussions.
- This is particularly important in Home Language. If children know about and understand a concept in their home language, they are much more likely to be able to transfer that understanding to another language.
- We have just celebrated Easter weekend, you may want to ensure that your young children know and understand the home language words for: *religion; event; church; celebrate; Christian; church; Muslim; mosque; traditional; ancestors; beliefs; prayer; symbol; symbolic; crucified; tomb; guarded; resurrected, etc.*

### STRATEGY 2: BUILD GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

- The more background or general knowledge children have about a topic, the more likely they are to deeply understand a written text about that topic.
- It is therefore very important to constantly be introducing children to new knowledge.
- Do this by reading to them, telling them stories, or watching documentaries on TV or on the Internet together.
- Also do this by building their knowledge of practical and everyday things. Show and explain to children how to do different things, like: cook a meal; repair something mechanical; grow a garden; make a shopping list and budget; understand the rules of a game.
- Help children to make links between a text they are reading, and what they already know.

### STRATEGY 3: EXPERIENCE STORIES TOGETHER AND MAKE CONNECTIONS

- Tell or read stories to children, and then show them how to make connections to what they already know.
- Point out **new vocabulary** that you may have discussed, or come across in a different context.
- Help children to make connections between **the story and their own lives**. Say: Doesn't this make you think of the time when...? / Do you remember when...?.
- Help children to make connections between **two different stories**. Say: Doesn't this make you think of the story of...? How is this the same?
- Help children to make connections between the **story and the world**. Say: Remember when we saw ...? These are the same ... / This is like that thing we saw on the news last night, where..., etc.

To those who celebrate, wishing you a peaceful and blessed Easter,  
**The NECT and DBE Team**