I can jump.

I can swim.

I can blow bubbles.

We can bounce.
Background Information

Children begin to read by imitating reading behaviours and by pretending to read. Through many experiences with various kinds of texts, they begin to understand concepts of print. Concepts of print include conceptual understandings such as: directionality (in other words, print is read from left to right and from top to bottom), recognizing the difference between a letter and a word, knowing where to start reading, and recognition of capital letters and punctuation. Children also learn to identify features of books such as the front cover and the back cover of a book, the title of a book, and the book’s author. Kindergarten literacy experiences include alphabet recognition, rhyme recognition, and an understanding of sound-letter relationships. Children need lots of opportunities to listen to stories and to respond to stories. The use of alphabet books and pattern books are common texts for reading instruction during the early years.

Note: You may wish to access the Kindergarten Literacy activities titled “Alphabet Recognition” that are also posted on this site.

Purpose

In this activity, children will be introduced to a pattern book. Reading a pattern book will provide children with an opportunity to practise concepts of print such as directionality (reading from left to right) and one-to-one matching of printed words and speech. It will also introduce some high-frequency words (e.g., I, we, can). Children will use interpretation of picture clues as a reading strategy. Reading a predictable, patterned text helps children to develop confidence as readers. Children will also make their own pattern books.

Activity

Read a Pattern Book

1. Show children the first photo and ask, What is the boy in the photo doing? (He is jumping.) Then read the sentence under the photo. Point to each word as you read it. Ask children to read the sentence with you. Say, Show me where we should start reading. Show me where we should stop reading. Children can use the photo to help them read the sentence out loud. After children have read the sentence out loud, ask them to find the word “can” and to “hug” it. They hug words by putting one index finger from each hand around the word. Ask, What does this word say? (can) Then have children read the whole sentence out loud again.

2. Now show children the second photo. Ask, What can the child in this photo do? (She can swim.) Encourage children to use the word “can” in their response. Read the sentence to the children out loud. They may join you as you read the sentence. Again, point to each word as you read it. You may wish to have children hug the word “I.” Then have children read the sentence out loud on their own.

3. Show the third photo to the children and ask, What can the child in this photo do? (He can blow bubbles.) Say, Now you read the sentence out loud. Have children point to each word as they
read the text. If they miss a word, remind them that they must say one word for each word that they point to. This is called one-to-one matching. Ask, How did you know how to read this sentence? (I know how to read “I can” from the other pages. And then I looked at the picture to help me know what the boy is able to do.)

4. Many pattern books have a “surprise” on the last page. This is an element of the patterned sentence that changes. To read the text that changes, children must look closely at the text and not just memorize the pattern from the previous pages. Ask, What can the children in this photo do? (They can bounce. They can jump.) Have children read the text out loud. If children read “I can bounce,” say, You said “I can bounce.” But look at the first word. Does it look like the word “I”? (No.) What letter would we see if it were I? (The capital letter “I.”) What letter do you see? (W) What might this word say? (We) Tell children the word if they cannot figure it out after prompting. Then read the sentence out loud again.

5. Repeat similar prompting if children read “jump” instead of “bounce.” Activate their prior knowledge of letter sounds at the beginning of a word. Say, You said “jump.” Yes, that makes sense when I look at the photo. If the text said “jump,” what letter would you see at the beginning of the word? (j) What letter is this? (b) What sound does the letter “b” make”? What word that starts with “b” would make sense here? (bounce). Tell children the word if they cannot figure it out after prompting.

Make Pattern Books
1. Select a predictable pattern. The pattern should contain some high-frequency words. Some good examples of predictable patterns are:
   • I am ....
   • I like ....
   • I see a ....

2. Provide three or four individual pages on which children can write each sentence of their own pattern book. You may wish to have children focus on a specific topic, such as food. Write the sentence pattern for them, e.g., I like.... Then have children finish the sentence and transcribe the word that the child says. You may wish to ask them how the word begins. Complete the sentence and read it out loud together with the child. Have them point to each word as they read it. They can then draw a picture to illustrate their sentence.

3. When children have completed their pages, staple or fasten them together to make a book. Have children create a cover for their book, add a title, and write their name as the author.

4. Reread the book often to reinforce directionality, one-to-one matching, and recognition of high-frequency words.