

Speech Corner

Cloze statements

Cloze statements are an excellent method to encourage speech production in children. A cloze statement involves saying a familiar phrase and leaving out a word, then waiting for your child to fill in the blank.

Familiar nursery rhymes, songs, and poems are perfect for this activity. For example, you can sing “Twinkle, twinkle, little ____.” Wait two or three seconds so your child has time to say “star.” Even the Spongebob Squarepants theme song would work: “Who lives in a pineapple under the ____?” Children love to feel like they’re participating in the conversation and this gives them the perfect opportunity to do so.

Listen to the following book with your child: “Pete the Cat -Pete’s Big Lunch.” Once your child is familiar with the story (you have read it several times together), try using the cloze statement approach. Turn off the sound and you read the words. Leave off a word and allow your child the opportunity to fill in the blank.

This book stresses vocabulary within the food category. A great follow-up activity might include finding some of the same foods in your house or making your own sandwich! Use cloze statements as you create (“Your sandwich needs a ____.”)

Have fun!