

How to Say Hello to a Worm: A First Guide to Outside

The 2023 CLEL Bell Award Book for TALK



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ISBN-13: 978-0593226797
Rise x Penguin Workshop, 2022

A group of curious children ask questions as they learn to plant and harvest a garden, with lots of play along the way! *How to Say Hello to a Worm* models the back-and-forth conversations that build vocabularies and comprehension skills.

Activity Ideas for *How to Say Hello to a Worm*:

- Playing in the mud is a classic childhood pastime – with good reason! In addition to being just plain fun, it encourages imagination and pretend play, helping children understand the world around them. Support your child’s play by letting them use different objects to explore, such as gardening tools, washable toys, or kitchen utensils like spoons and measuring cups. Ask the children to describe what they are doing with the mud and the tools, which will give them a chance to use the words they know, and practice saying new words.
- Take a quiet moment with your child to observe an animal or insect in your yard, neighborhood, or community garden. Make up a story together about what the creature is doing. Ask your child background questions like, “Where does this creature live?” or “What is its family like?” and action questions, such as “What is the creature doing now?” or “What might happen next?” Let them take the lead as they make their story as silly or serious as they want all while building confidence and storytelling skills.
- Grab a shoebox or other small container and go on a walk with your child around your neighborhood or local park to collect nature items like leaves, acorns, and twigs. Ask your child to group items by color, size, type, or any way that makes sense to them. Sorting by similarities and differences is good practice for future readers as it will later help them identify patterns in letters and words.

The CLEL Bell Picture Book Awards are given to books that provide excellent support of early literacy development in young children. For more information and for other activity sheets, visit <http://www.clel.org> and select the CLEL Bell Awards tab.



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