

# Words for Time

Use words about time such as *before*, *after*, or *next* when you talk with your child.

Words describing time help her begin to predict when events will happen.



*After your snack,  
it will be time  
for a story.*



## Why this is important

A child this age has no concept of time as it is defined by hours, weeks, and years. She can only relate time to her actions, such as when the blocks are put away, or to a part of her day that is routine, such as lunchtime. Words about time give your child a tool for sequencing events and predicting what will happen next. Understanding time is important for the literacy skill of recognizing the order of events in a story.

## What you do

- Use words that talk about time. *We will eat before we read a story together. After our story it will be time for a bath.* Do not expect your child to understand periods of time. She may recognize what is happening now, a little earlier, or a little later.
- Relate familiar events in her life by using specific language such as *the next time we go to the beach*, instead of *next summer*.
- Use time words throughout the day, such as when you go shopping, make dinner, or visit a friend.

## Another idea

When reading a book together, talk about the order of events. After reading a story several times, ask a question such as *Which pig's house did the wolf visit first?* or *What happened after it began to snow?* Your child may respond with simple words or by finding a picture in the book that answers the question.

### Let's read together!

*A Day With Nellie*  
by Marthe Jocelyn