

***This unedited transcript of a AudiologyOnline webinar is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility for the viewer and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings. This transcript may contain errors. Copying or distributing this transcript without the express written consent of AudiologyOnline is strictly prohibited. For any questions, please contact [customerservice@AudiologyOnline.com](mailto:customerservice@AudiologyOnline.com).***

## Guiding Spanish-Speaking Families in Promoting Early Literacy

September 2nd, 2020

Presenter: Marianna Rivera

AudiologyOnline.com Course #35192

Partner: Advanced Bionics

- [Eva] Before we get started, I have a few housekeeping items. If you need technical support throughout this webinar, please contact AudiologyOnline at 1-800-753-2160. Any opinions of non-AB employees are their own, and not those of the company. This webinar is being recorded. So I want to first start off by welcoming everyone to our live webinar. This webinar is to help support professionals who work with Spanish speaking families, either in person or virtually, With social distancing, we have real need to keep you connected with your patient. We know that you're doing the best right now to support these families in their home setting and AB wants to help them. My name is Eva Lopez. I'm an audiologist and a bilingual cochlear implant consumer specialist with advanced bionics. I have been with AB for about two years, and I'm based out of Chicago supporting the Great Lakes region. I'm really excited to introduce our guest speaker for today, Marianna Rivera is joining us from Chicago. And she is a bilingual speech language pathologist. She's certified with ASHA and her professional interests include bilingualism, literacy based therapy, Spanish influenced English, and she loves collaborating with clinicians and caretakers. And with that, I will hand it over to Marianna.

- [Marianna] Hi, everybody. This is Marianna Rivera. Like Eva said, I'm a bilingual SLT based out of Chicago. Before we get started, I want to very briefly thank Advanced Bionics and AudiologyOnline for having me here today. Thank you for inviting me and allowing me a platform to speak on something that I'm so passionate about and thank you all for tuning in today. I hope you all are able to walk away from this having learned something new. So just some disclosures to get out of the way before we get started. I'm currently employed by Health Pro Heritage in their pediatrics division. I'm an invited speaker for this webinar by Advanced Bionics. And I'm volunteering my time today to be here with you all. So just to set forth an agenda for what we're gonna be discussing today, we're gonna start by talking about why reading is important, especially in the early childhood stage of life. Then we're gonna look into some practices surrounding

literacy that may vary from culture to culture that we all should be familiar with as clinical professionals. We're gonna take a look at some early book handling skills and early print awareness skills. And I want to talk how to choose a book that's appropriate for a family, and for that child. We're gonna go over some different strategies that I would encourage you to promote within your Spanish speaking families. And then I'm gonna provide you all some recommendations for some books that I personally love using in my therapy sessions. And then to close off, we're gonna discuss how we can continue to empower our parents, even when we are at home. And maybe we're unable to stick to our normal schedule of seeing our clinical professionals in person. Okay, so let's get started. Why reading? Why is reading something that we should be considering in early childhood? Well, there is a ton of research that tells us some of the advantages and some of the benefits that come with early book reading. I'm happy to say that there isn't really much, there isn't really anybody disputing these things. These are pretty well accepted. The evidence shows us that shared book reading increases a preschooler's vocabulary development earlier on in life. Shared book reading helps to develop oral language skills earlier in children. And it also helps the development of abstract language. So abstract language is language that isn't very literal. So this includes things like metaphors and jokes for example. Book reading also helps to improve later literacy development, and it also just instills a love of learning in our children. So when you are discussing these, these benefits to shared book reading in early childhood with your Spanish speaking parents, I really urge you to remember, to use easy to understand language, when you're speaking with these parents. Of course, we want to avoid any jargon, and we don't want to assume that our parents are familiar with any clinical verbiage. So for example, words to me, you know, words like vocabulary or abstract language, these are things that I don't even think about anymore, but, you know, I don't really, in my mind, I feel like everybody understands these words, but not everybody does. And this is especially true if we're speaking to somebody who isn't coming from a clinical background or who maybe isn't involved in much early education. So we really want to make sure that when we're presenting any

research findings to our parents, that we're presenting it in a way that's a little bit easier to understand, a bit more bite-size if you will. So instead of talking about, you know, book reading increases pre-school children's vocabulary development, say something more, just like it's gonna teach the child more words. Helps develop their oral language skills earlier. I would phrase that as it helps the child put together their sentences sooner. Helps in the development of abstract language. I would just call that more complex language, or it helps the child use language in a more complex way. Improving later literacy development. I would just say that this is gonna help the child become a stronger reader in the future, and then instilling a love of reading. I would just say that this encourages the child to read for fun. In my own clinical experience, I've also noted that book reading has a ton of other benefits. It can be really helpful in establishing routines in the home. So for example, you know, your bedtime story right before bed, or maybe like an afternoon book. It can also be really helpful for speech therapists as well, like early intervention speech therapists. Maybe they like to begin each session with a book, even if it's just five readings, or maybe they finish off the session with five minutes of a book. So it really helps that child establish a routine so they can follow along more easily. Book reading can also help teach rote phrases and core words. So, especially with children who are less verbal, maybe they're just starting to put together some core words, teaching things like all done, or stop or next page, or help me. Book reading is a really great opportunity to teach those phrases to our children. And it's also an excellent opportunity to introduce more words in a day to our students and to our children with hearing loss, because we know that these children need more hours in a day of listening to language to reach their hearing peers, and to reach that language proficiency that their hearing peers have. And book reading is also a really wonderful opportunity to create cultural and linguistic connections, which I'll be going into a little bit more in detail later on when I give my recommendations on books. You may be wondering why book reading is such a recommended activity. Like, okay, we know that book reading is wonderful, but why, right? What makes it so magical? So I apologize, I don't have this on the slide. I forgot

to include it, but this is an article put forth by some researchers, David Dickinson, and Julie Griffith on why book reading, it's so, it's such a big bang for your buck essentially, right? So they say they put forward that there are six conditions that when met really promote language learning. So you guessed it. Book reading is an activity that kind of meets those six conditions in a really seamless way. So by reading to your child often, you're gonna, you're gonna build their vocabulary. Books can motivate a child to communicate, especially when the parent is being responsive to what the child is interested in. I would encourage you to, when you read a child with a book, abandon your agenda and, you know, just follow along with whatever the child is interested in, and that's gonna make it a much more motivating activity for them. And reading books with children exposes them to new words embedded in grammatical sentences. So I encourage you to, I won't go into this much further just for the sake of time, but just a little bit more background on why specifically book reading is so great. Okay. So just as important as understanding the benefits of book reading, it's also really important that we understand that my culture regarding reading might be different from your reading culture. And our reading culture together may be wildly different from the reading culture of our clients or our students, okay? As a clinical professional, you cannot assume that your Spanish speaking families or Latinos, and especially in my experience, Latin American immigrants hold the same reading culture that you do. So I have found in my practice that a lot of my Spanish speaking families have a really narrow definition of what literacy and reading is. I've had many conversations with parents who think that reading is just when you go to school and your teacher assigns you a book and you have to read the words, right? And you have to like blend the sounds together, right? And so that's, that's what they think that reading and literacy is. And that's a really narrow definition, unfortunately. So we really want to open their minds to everything that literacy encompasses. I've also had some parents tell me that, unfortunately, they don't think that reading a book with a small child is very, very worthwhile. I've had parents tell me, well, you know, my son is only four months old. They don't know what I'm saying. They can't talk yet. They don't know what I'm

saying. Why would I read them a book? A lot of the times our parents may not be avid readers themselves. So we know that for a child to grow up with a positive opinion on reading and to become readers themselves, it really helps when they see the adults in their lives around them reading as well. So if our parents aren't really readers, then we can't really expect for them to make readers out of their children. And there also might be a tendency to view teachers and other educational professionals as responsible for being the ones who teach literacy, kind of similar to what I said earlier about how a lot of parents hold a really narrow definition of what literacy is. They may think to themselves, well, you know, home is for, you know, just socializing with your brothers and sisters, watching TV, helping around the house, learning to read is something that you do in school. And I don't know how to teach you how to read, your teachers are gonna teach you how to read. And so, unfortunately, a lot of the times our parents may not take on a very active role in teaching literacy to their children. We know that Latino children are less likely to have a family member read to them in early childhood. And this does unfortunately contribute to disparities later on in their life in regards to their reading performance. And of course we know that literacy experiences are connected to our culture and are really dependent on the parents and the child's interaction within that culture. So among Hispanic families, research has shown that adults in Hispanic families don't always translate their actions into words. So for example, you know, we see a lot of parents kind of talking to their child, talking to their baby, maybe like, as they're changing their diaper or as they're on the playground. And oh, you're going up and you're coming down and hold on tight. And so a lot of the times our Hispanic families don't really do that. They're not translating actions into words. They're not narrating. Sometimes these adults don't consider children to be equal conversational partners. And unfortunately they see play routines as something that isn't very significant. So they oftentimes don't don't think that play is a good vehicle for learning. Children and our Spanish speaking families may be cautioned not to interrupt when an authority figure such as a parent or a grandparent is speaking. So as a result, children may converse more with their peers or with their siblings. So these are all things that

we want to keep in mind because you can't just tell the parent, well, you know, of course, we're gonna want to read to your child. Everybody knows that reading is so important, because a lot of the times your patients or the parents of your students, aren't gonna hold these same beliefs around reading. Just a quick word on socioeconomic status and how that contributes to reading culture. I will say that there is a major gap in the research on the interactions between Latino parents and their children during reading time. In fact, most of what we know about literacy practices in Latino families comes from studies of families of a low SES background. So, you know, please take this with a grain of salt. It's not truly representative of the entire community, of course, but what we do know is that mothers of a middle class background, when they read with their children are more likely to discuss more complex concepts. They're also more likely to elicit more words and to emphasize the content of the story. Mothers of middle class backgrounds use fewer directives. So they're ordering your child to do things less and they're kind of letting the child pick. And mothers of middle class backgrounds are more likely to use a more elaborate and a more varied language. So, unfortunately we're not only seeing that some families read more with their children, but we're also seeing that the quality of these experiences are quite different. Okay. So hopefully, you know, you'll be able to sell to your Spanish speaking parents, okay, you know, this is reading and reading is so great. It really helps your child with X and Y, and Z. And you know, we're gonna present it to them in a way that's easy to understand and bite-sized. And you know exactly how to talk to them about it because you're culturally competent, you know that their reading culture might be different from yours. Okay, so hopefully we're able to engage our parents and teach them, you know, this is something that you're gonna want to do. So the next step would be to really empower them and make them feel that they have something that they can teach the child. Like I said earlier, a lot of parents think that, you know, reading is a very, that hold a very narrow definition of what reading is. And they may not think that they're qualified to teach it. So I would encourage you to really stress the importance of early book handling and print awareness is gonna be really

crucial for our really little guys, okay? So there are a lot of milestones of early literacy and print awareness that a lot of people aren't really aware of. So these include things like reaching for a book, holding a book in your lap, knowing the orientation of the book. So for example, if you give a child a book that is upside down and you know, the back cover is facing up, okay, does that child know to hold the book in front of them? And do they know how to turn the book around so that the front cover is facing them? And then do they know how to turn it so it's not upside down anymore? Okay, that is a big milestone to reach. Does the child know how to turn pages? Do they know that when you turn a page, you put your hand on the right side, on the bottom right side, most of the time, and then you bring it over to the left? Is the child pointing to illustration? Are they showing some communicative intent? They're showing, you know, maybe they're pointing to a picture of a dog because they have a dog. Maybe they're trying to tell you that it looks like their dog. Does the child engage in pretend reading? There are tons of videos on YouTube of children pretend reading, and it is so adorable. It's exactly what it sounds like, it's a child's like sitting on the floor most of the time. And they're just kind of going off, pretending that they're reading. Does the child understand the concept of a word? You know, our sentences are, our speech is composed of many words put together. And so do they know that on a page there's many words that together have meaning? And does the child understand directionality of text? So in English and in Spanish, our text goes from the left side to the right side. And when it's printed of course. And it also goes from the top of the page to the bottom of the page. Okay, so I have found that when you teach parents about these early, early, you know, building blocks to reading, I think they feel much more willing to take an active role in teaching early literacy to their children. So how are we gonna really coach our parents through this? I would tell the parents that, for example, they can hold a book in front of the child. Maybe when the child is younger, they just have to hold the book right in front of them, on the floor, if they're little, and then maybe when they're a little bit older and they're old enough to hold it, they can hold the book on the left. Okay, that's gonna teach the child orientation of the book. A book is



something that you generally hold in front of you. Encourage the, encourage, the parent to encourage the baby, to turn the pages along with you. So when you're done looking at a page, say, okay, let's look at the next page and then put your hand on that bottom corner and you can encourage the baby to put their little hand with you, and then turn the page together. It's a really simple thing to do. Parents may not think much of it, but that's actually teaching them the page turning directionality. Okay, so training books goes from the right side to the left side. When you're reading the book, I would encourage your parents to use their finger either to trace the words and like in a line, or to point to every individual word as they go. That's going to teach directionality of the text, right? Like I said, earlier, texts in English as well as in Spanish, goes from the left side, to the right side. And then occasionally pointing to individual words. So if there is like a tree on one of the pages then you can point to that tree and then find where the word is for tree, and point to it and say, this says tree, tree. And that's gonna start to teach the child the concept of a word. So, like I said before, these are pretty simple things. You know, I think that oftentimes when our parents feel like they aren't qualified to teach reading or literacy, I've often found that just by telling them, hey, your child, you can tell, you can teach your child these early building blocks. They feel more empowered and more able to do that. Okay, so choosing a book. Hopefully we've already, you know, convinced their parents that reading is something important to do, and we've empowered them to take the time to, you know, to read books with their children in a way that's culturally appropriate, right? So how do we help them choose a book that's gonna be appropriate for their child? So there are four different types of, generally four types of books. We start off with sensory books, we move on to picture books and then early and easy reader books. And then lastly, chapter books, okay. So we'll start off talking about sensory and board books. Sensory and board books are a lot of fun. They generally have a pretty low number of pages and they're pretty big and they're pretty sturdy. So you'll oftentimes see at the store, books where like the pages are really, really thick. And so, you know, they'll be able to withstand getting wet for example. Sometimes there are felt books, like the one you see here on the left on there,

like very soft pages. So board books are meant to be explored, there typically isn't very much of a plot. A lot of the times they're like these first 100 books, and usually they're filled with familiar pictures or household items that kind of reflect the baby's life. And oftentimes they have really big and colorful images. Eventually we move on to board books. These are gonna tend to be bigger and a little bit harder to hold. So our really little guys might have a little bit more difficulty holding onto these. You might have to hold onto it for the child. I will say, picture books have pages that can rip. So you will want to definitely, you know, read this book with the child and maybe not leave them alone with it. Picture books are slightly longer and they tend to have more developed stories. Picture books have some really beautiful illustrations that are very, very captivating for the child. And oftentimes are very motivating for them. A lot of the times picture books have a lot of repetition, and this is especially for our younger kids. So for example, here on the left side, we have the famous "Brown Bear, Brown bear, "What Do You See?" book. So these are gonna have a lot of repetition, right? We all know the, I'm sure we all know the basic gist of this story. Every page is a different animal, so you name the different animal and you end it up with, "What do you see?" Other picture books can be a lot more complex. For example, this book on the right, "Room On The Broom." One of my favorites, I love using this during Halloween time. They have really complex stories. A lot of the times they include framing. Eventually we move on to early and easy reader books. So a lot of the times at the store, you might see books that have like something on the corner that says like "I can read" or, you know, "step into reading" or "early reader." And so oftentimes these books are divided into different levels. So these are meant for children who are starting to read by themselves right, independently. And they're often full with a lot of high frequency words. High frequency words may also be called sight words or some schools call them Dolch words. So these are words like can, go, but, the, do, play, not, like. So if you imagine some of the Dr. Seuss books, right, like "Green Eggs and Ham" or "Cat in the Hat," these books are really repetitive. And they're just, they're full of these sight words. Or these beginning words, you know, if you just think of "Green Eggs and

Ham," right. I do not like them. I do not like them, Sam, I am. I will not eat them, right? They're very repetitive. But what I've found is that children really, really love the feeling of accomplishment, right? Of being able to say, wow, I read this whole book by myself. I read all the words on that page. And it's a lot of repetition. And there are a lot of, like I said, those early sight words. And I think kids really love being able to say, I read this whole book by myself. I was looking a couple of weeks ago at yeah, "Green Eggs and Ham." "Green Eggs and Ham" has 62 pages in it. And it's a lot of repetition, but I, you know, again, I have found that these are very encouraging for children. And like I said, they are all pretty long. A lot of the times these will be read in school as well, for like different reading levels. Eventually we get into the board books, I'm sorry, chapter books. So chapter books these days, we all know they're a little bit longer. And oftentimes they gather around a character, right. So if you think back to like Arthur books, so the Arthur chapter books, nowadays, we have the series on the "Princess in Black" or "Charlotte's Web" right? You can also think back to like "Captain Underpants" or "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" or the "Ramona Quimby" books, right? So these oftentimes gather on the character and all of the adventures that they face, right? So they're gonna have longer stories, they're gonna be a bit more complex. However, oftentimes they do still have a lot of visuals or illustration. So I would encourage you to take the time to kind of coach your parents over the different types of books that are out there, and which ones may be more appropriate for the child. And, you know, depending on a lot of factors, of course, this is all a general, this is a general guideline. So the types of books that a child is gonna enjoy reading is always gonna depend on, you know, their experiences with reading in early childhood, their print awareness, their current reading level in school. And of course their own personal interests. So this is just a guideline. Of course, if you have a four year old that wants to like take an actively tougher book, that's totally fine. If you have an eight year old who's still looking at picture books, of course, if that's what they're interested in, that's where their reading level is currently at. I would always encourage you to let them read what they are interested in. This is available in a handout that is provided to you all. And we don't

want to forget that there's what I like to call special books out there. So these are things like popup books, flat books, hidden image books, and wordless picture books. So pop up books are a lot of fun. I don't encourage you to leave a very small child alone with them, but I have found that they're very, very motivating. Flap books are a lot of fun as well. I'm sure you all are familiar with, these are the books that have like little images hidden underneath and you have to flip it up to see what's hiding. Hidden images books are a load of fun. They oftentimes, if when you're looking at the page, they oftentimes look totally white, and like, there's nothing there, but they'll frequently come with like a special flashlight that you can shine onto the pages. And then you get to see like all the hidden images. I actually own this book right here, "Boo, I see you." And I mean, it's a very simple book, but even my, like my second graders love it. And then also wordless picture books, Wordless picture books are wonderful. They are picture books that don't have any words in them. So for example, this book here, the top right side, "Tuesday," it does not have a single word. It's just full of really vibrant illustrations and kind of like a kooky story. And my children love to look at this book. This is something that I would especially encourage maybe with like grandparents. I know a lot of grandparents maybe don't have like the best reading skills or they can't look at small print or they, you know, like I said, they may not feel like they're very capable of reading a book with a child, but oftentimes these wordless picture books are great, 'cause they're just something to discuss. And like I said earlier, something, an opportunity for you to let the child lead. Okay, so hopefully we have helped our parents to find a book that is appropriate. They see the value in early book reading and they're ready to do it themselves. You've helped them out in picking out an appropriate book for the child. Now what are some strategies that we want to help teach our Spanish speaking families? Okay, so how are we gonna make sure that this book reading time is really, really meaningful for language learning? So I always say that if the child is younger, well, first of all, we're gonna check that the child's hearing aid or cochlear implant is turned on. This is something that is often overlooked unfortunately in a lot of our children with aids or cochlear implants. Always make sure that everything

is turned on. I know it's very simple, but please keep this in mind. I always tell parents to let the child, if they're younger, taste the book, smell the book, if that is their form of exploring it, and showing interest in it, let them go at it. We're gonna respond to any vocalization from the child or from the baby. So if you are looking at the pages and maybe the baby just kind of sees something that they don't like, like if they're scared of dogs or something and they see a dog and they kind of make a grunt, we can respond to that vocalization. Even if it's just a little sound. You as the parent can interpret that as a conversational turn and say, oh, you didn't like that? Are you, are you scared of that dog? Or similarly, if the child sees something that they really like, maybe right now, they're really into horses or trucks and they make some sort of vocalization to let you know that they're happy, we can interpret that as a conversational trend. We can respect that, and we can interpret that as them trying to communicate something to us. This is gonna help teach the back and forth nature of a conversation. If the child is working on first words, always encouraged the parent to label. So label everything that they see on the page. You know, oftentimes it's just gonna feel like it's the parent talking and talking and talking, but really what you're doing is modeling. You're modeling and modeling and modeling. So if you are looking at a page and it's like a playground scene, just label everything that you've seen. Sometimes I will say though, clinical professionals have a strong preference for nouns and we can kind of get away, I'm sorry, get carried away with just labeling everything. Don't forget about verbs. Verbs are very important to include in your, in your modeling and in your commenting of a book. So if you see like a dog with a ball, right, dog chases or dog would run, make sure that you're including that subject and that you're including the verb as well. If you're working on expanding the utterance of a child, take what the child says and then add onto it a little bit. So a lot of the times the child may say something simple. They'll say something like girl crying, or girl cries. So you're gonna take what the child says, and you're just gonna add onto it a little bit. So if the child says girl crying, you can say, yes, the girl is crying. The girl is crying because she is so sad. The girl dropped her ice cream and now she's crying. So take whatever that child says and just

add onto it a little bit more. With our older children, of course, we're gonna check again that their hearing aid or their cochlear implant is turned on before we start anything, if they have one. And I would encourage you to discuss the cover before you start reading, right? So say, hey, look at the cover. What do you think? What do you think this book is gonna be about? What do you think is going to happen? Or, what makes you think that? I would encourage you to point to a word and then point to a picture. Like we said, that's gonna help teach concept of a word. You can even start making some connections between what are the letters in this word. And you can stop and discuss what you're currently reading. You don't have to just read everything with no interruptions, right? You can stop and you can discuss, what do you think is gonna happen next? What do you think we're gonna see on the next page? Or, what would you do if you were the main character in this book, would you do something differently? Of course you can always let the child explain what's going on before reading or use the illustrations as you're reading, to let the child describe everything to you. And then I can tell you the school where I work, our kindergartners are always asked, are always practicing, for example, sequencing, right? Practice some of the following skills, sequencing. When, in kindergarten, we often see teachers asking the child, can you tell me what happened first in the book? What happened in the middle of the book? And then what happened at the end of the book? So you can practice some of these skills, still at home. What happened at the beginning, middle and end? You can practice summarizing the story, or maybe what you learned from the story. So when you're all done say, well, you know what the story taught me, you know what this book taught me? This book taught me that I should always tell the truth. Okay? You can discuss critical features of the book. So critical features include things like where the story took place, who was in it and you know, what was the problem? What was the solution? And you can also just ask the child to describe how they know certain things. So if you're asking like little basic comprehension questions, you can say, yeah, you're right. How do you know that that's going to happen? I can tell you, these are all skills that we practice in schools as early as kindergarten. So I wouldn't make this, you

know, something super rigorous for the child. You know, I wouldn't tell them no, you're wrong, here, why don't you know, let's go back to the book and I'll show you. Yeah, just practice this. Or even if you don't ask the child, can you tell me what the problem and what the solution was, you can talk about that yourself and model that to the child. Literacy doesn't have to stop as soon as we've finished the book. After the book, there's a ton of stuff that you can do to kind of keep the language learning going. I would encourage you to maybe watch a video afterwards. If it's a popular book, for example, "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" has a ton of videos or one of the books that I talked about earlier, "Room on the Broom," there's a video to accompany that, and you can talk about, hey, do you want to watch the video for it now? Let's see if it's different or let's see if it's the same. And I would also encourage you to do a craft afterwards. For example, I was recently reading a book about the Chinese New Year. And so then afterwards with my students, we did, we folded up some red envelopes, just like the envelopes that the characters had in the book. So I would encourage you to not stop the language learning once you're done with the book. Do something afterwards too, to really solidify what we've learned. So, just as important as strategies that we do want to do, there's also a lot of stuff that we don't want to do when we're, when we're reading books with our, with our little ones. So oftentimes I have found that parents think that they have to read every single page exactly how it's written, right? Or that they have to read every single page of the book. And this isn't the case. Please tell the parents that you're working with, you don't have to read every single page and you don't have to read it exactly how it's written. Say it your own way. You don't have to finish the book in one sitting. You know, if you have completely lost the child's attention, maybe the child can only sit and attend to the task for, you know, five or eight minutes and you still have a long way to go, that's okay. Put the book away and we'll finish it later. Encourage your parents that they don't have to be the only one reading. Encourage the child to say the story as best as they can. And this is a really big one. Don't think that you cannot read a book just because it's in English and maybe the parents or the grandparents don't speak English, okay? Lots of pictures



guide you. And don't be afraid to, like I said, not read the book exactly the way that it's written. Another one that is really important to me, don't be afraid to code switch. So code switching is typically when we, between English and Spanish, code switching would be when you maybe mix a little bit of English in your sentence, and then you add in a word in Spanish and then you switch back and forth, right? If this is what comes naturally to the parents, to the family, as a whole, don't be afraid to code switch while you're reading. We never want to encourage families to suppress one language and to only stick to one. Don't force the child to be quiet and not to interrupt you while you're reading, it's okay to take pauses. And don't reject books that are based on TV shows or movies. So sometimes I hear parents say that, like, they don't want to read like "The Incredibles" book or a book, you know, based on like, like the "Frozen" movies, for example, because well, my child already knows what's gonna happen in it, so what's the point of reading it? Well, a book is still a book. And if this is what the child is interested in, I would definitely encourage you to read it with them and allow them to look through it. You could even take this as an opportunity to discuss how the book is different from the movie or how the book is the same. You know, sometimes a movie is really long and a book has to be shorter, so they cut out some pieces. You know, will your child be able to tell you, hey, the book didn't, they didn't include the part where, you know, fill in the blank. Please don't forget non-fiction books. There is a tendency to stick to fiction books and fantasy books, when we're reading with our children and non-fiction books and science books are just as important. This is personally something that I'm also trying to work on. And don't reject graphic novels or manga or comic books. These are books. They're just as much a book as any other book. And like I said, if this is what the child is interested in, please let them go ahead and explore it. Okay, so this is a very fun, but also very difficult part of the presentation for me. I wanted to give you all some recommendations on some books that I personally love using in my therapy and in my session. So I did my best to narrow it down. And I mean, I could talk about this all day, but here are just a couple. This is available in a handout for you all. So some specific book series and some specific authors, I really enjoy are



the "Lil Libros" series, the "Pete the Cat" series. Other series include the "Llama Llama" series, "Little People, Big Dreams," and "Little Critter," and some authors that I specifically love are Tomie dePaola who unfortunately just passed away a few weeks ago. Duncan Tonatiuh, I'll go into him in just a little bit. And Eric Carle, who I'm sure many of us will be familiar with. And some specific books that I love that I really recommend you try out include "La Tortilla Corredora," "What Can You Do with Paleta?" "Alma y Como Obtuvo su Nombre," this one is also available in English. "Too Many Tamales," "T'was Nochebuena," "I Love You Saturdays y Domingos," "Mango, Abuela and Me," and "Day of the Dead." Okay, so I'm gonna go through a couple of these. So you will have some specific picks that you can walk away with. So the "Lil Libros" series is a wonderful series for our younger readers. These are very simple board books. They're just a couple of pages. They're very thick pages, and these are entirely bilingual. So these are usually surrounding a specific concept. So for example, "Loteria," over here is all about first words. I noticed that the "Zapata" series is all about colors. The "Lucha Libre" series is about body parts. "Cuauhtemoc" is all about shape and "La Catrina" over here, referencing Dia De Muertos, it's all about emotion. And then also we have the "Frida" book, the "Celia Cruz" book, and "Cantinflas" book. And these are a bit more biographical in nature. So they're gonna talk about each character a little bit more in depth. We also have Duncan Tonatiuh, this is an author who I really, really, really love. So these are picture books. They're a little bit more complex. They have these really beautiful illustrations that are inspired by pre-Hispanic art. And a lot of the times they are based on Mexican legends or on Mexican historical figures. So for example, in Mexico city, there are two very prominent mountain ranges. And so there, this book teaches you the, kind of the legend behind those two mountain ranges. "Pete the Cat" is wonderful. These are very simple stories. They follow a pattern most of the time. So for example, this one is "Pete the Cat "and the Missing Cupcakes." So on every page, you know, Pete the Cat finds that there are cupcakes that are missing. And so, but each page also shows a clue of who took the cupcakes. So I find that these are really fun for children and really motivating because, you know,

they'll see the clue, like they'll see the, the footprints for example, and they'll say, oh, it was a frog or it was the elephant. And oftentimes there's a simple rhyme, on each page. I have found that these are really, really great for facilitating language with our younger kids. We also have the "Little People, Big Dreams" series. So these are also picture books, they're a little bit more complex. I would probably say that these are appropriate for second and third graders. They're very detailed, but they're also very, they have very simple and straightforward sentences. So for example, we have a book here on Marie Curie, Frida Kahlo, Amelia Earhart, Coco Chanel. And so I have found that these books have really, can have very complex storylines, that they have these very straight, detailed, easy to understand sentences that I think are really wonderful. I recently read the one on Anne Frank, and I mean, the illustrations themselves are beautiful, but I think they do a really great job of explaining, you know, complex and oftentimes difficult topics in a way that's very appropriate for like a second and a third grader. Okay, so this is a specific book that I really love. It's called "Alma y Como Obtuvo Su Nombre" and I know that there's an English version as well. So this book is about a little girl named Alma, and she has a very, very long name, right? So one day she goes to her father and she says that she just doesn't like her name, right? She says, it's too long and it's ugly. So throughout the book, her dad tells Alma, you know what all of her names are and actually explains that each one of her names is in remembrance of a family member from the past. And then Alma, the protagonist learns that she has something in common with each family member. This book has really, really beautiful illustration. Okay, this book is an oldie, but a goodie. It's a Christmas book. And I use this every year with my students. So this is all about a girl who tries on her mother's ring while she's making tamales. So when her mom's not looking, our protagonist Maria puts on her mother's ring and then the mom walks away and she continues making the dough. But then hours later, our protagonist realizes that the ring that she put on her finger isn't there anymore. So then our protagonist has all her cousins here and she says, you guys have to help me find this ring. It must be inside the tamales, right? But there's too many tamales. I think there are like 24 of them. What

are they gonna do? How are they gonna find the ring? So I think you guys can guess what approach they take. This is a really fun book. There's also, "I Love Saturdays y Domingos." This is a picture book. All about a bilingual and bi-cultural little girl who spends her weekends with her grandparents, but then she also spends it with her abuelito, okay. So she talks about the different traditions that she has with her, with each set of grandparents and how she speaks English to some of them, but then she speaks Spanish to, to other grandparents. So this is a really beautiful book. And lastly, we have "La Tortilla Corredora," this is a really fun book. This is very similar to the gingerbread man. So I've seen many times that older children can kind of make that connection, and they'll say, hey, this is kind of like the gingerbread man. You know, he's running away too. But I will say it is different in a couple of different ways. So I think it's really fun to compare and to contrast, right? How is this the same and how is this different from the gingerbread book? Lastly, I'd like to give some advice on how we can continue to encourage our parents and empower our parents at home, to continue with, you know, empowering their children, to develop their language and literacy skills. This is being presented during the coronavirus pandemic. And so unfortunately many of us are unable to leave our homes and to continue our normal therapy sessions and schedule. So what can parents be doing at home with what they have already? So I would tell your parents right now to definitely explore some free apps that offer virtual books. So, I mean, the first ones that come to me off the top of my head are TumbleBooks and the Epic app. These are wonderful. I mean, if you have a tablet, you're gonna have like hundreds of books at your fingertips and you don't have to fill up your living room with a bunch of books. So I would definitely encourage you to tell parents about this, the TumbleBooks and Epic I know for sure have a lot of books in Spanish as well, if this is what the family would prefer. And then also keep in mind that we will still find a lot of literacy opportunities beyond books, okay? So for example, if you go outside on a walk, you know, take the time to just look at the street signs all around you. This big red one says stop, or this one says you know, no turn on red, for example, what does that mean? You can discuss the letters that you see there

and what they're trying to communicate to pedestrians. You can also look through things that come in through your mail, like grocery ads, you can look at what's on sale this week, and what does it look like, and what is this called and how much it costs. And then change it up right, every week as new ones come in. If your family is anything like mine, you probably have a bunch of photo albums laying around your house. So you can definitely take that as an opportunity with your child to look through these pictures and say, you know, this is what you look like as a baby, or this is what it looked like when, when your parents got married and this is how the house used to look, or this is what you love doing when you were a child. And, you know, really take that as an opportunity. Even if you don't have books, use what you have around you. And there's also something really fun called experience books. So experience books are something that you can make yourself with your child. Say you go out on a walk and you just kind of take this as a time to explore and, you know, see what's really all around you in your neighborhood. You can come back home, maybe with like a little, like a leaf, right? A leaf that you found or some grass that you picked or a flower, or if there's like a piece of garbage that you saw, you can bring that back with you and then you can encourage your child to make a book themselves. So now you're actually encouraging the child to be an author. Or you can tell them, you know, draw a picture and then tell me what you want me to write. And you can write a little caption or a little sentence describing what they drew in their picture and then put it all together. And you know, that child just made their first experience book. And also keep in mind that oral storytelling is also a very powerful tool. This can be really powerful with, like I said, the family photo album. You can take this as a time, maybe you have like a photo album with many pages, like on their first birthday, on their child's first birthday and, you know, engage in some oral storytelling. Oh, let me tell you the story about what happened on your first birthday. Well, we went to the bakery and they didn't have your cake ready. And then the guests started to arrive and the food wasn't ready, but you looked so cute in the outfit that we got for you. And, you know, make that a whole session. You can also do this by encouraging the child to draw or to produce their own

art. And there are a ton of resources out right now on how to discuss covid-19 specifically with our students and with our children. I know that there's a lot of social stories out there on, you know, what is the coronavirus? How can I stay safe? Why aren't I in school? Or why are so many people wearing masks? And these are oftentimes free. One that I really love specifically is called "My Coronavirus Story" by Easterseals, Chicago. So I would definitely encourage you to, like I said earlier, really encourage your parents and your clients to utilize what they have at home, during this time. Advanced Bionics also has some really excellent resources on this topic. I won't go into them too in depth, just for the, in the interest of time. But some of my favorite ones that they have to offer are the tools for toddlers literacy strategies. They also have a resource on good and not so good sounds. And they have a really cute social story coloring book called "Las Aventuras de Bonnie Bionico." This is like a, I believe a little monkey who's getting fitted for a cochlear implant. So it's adorable. If you enjoyed my presentation, and if you'd like to continue the communication on this, I encourage you to follow me on social media. I am on Instagram as @enmispalabras\_speech, and so I'm here, I post a lot of therapy ideas for bilingual speech and language therapy. I give a lot more book recommendations and toy recommendations as well. Sometimes I give some recent research findings and I do also really make it a priority to have a lot of information geared towards parents, that you can use to provide to your parents. So if you're interested, I encourage you to go follow me on there and I'm more than happy to continue, continue the conversation. Thank you so much.