

Over and Over and Over.....

We have all been asked by an eager young child, to read a favourite story again...just one more time. After the umpteenth reading, those favourite stories seem to get longer and longer, and occasionally, dare I say it, even boring!

Is it possible that as adults, our favourite songs follow the same pattern? After all, we want to hear the song over and over again and to learn the words so we can sing along in the car or shower. We bore others with our obsession. And finally, we get over it and move on to a new favourite tune. To learn something new, it is very effective to do it repeatedly. If it's a song, by hearing it over and over again we learn the words. We also learn about the rhymes and the rhythms.

The same is true for language learning and reading. Carleton University reading researcher, Monique Sénéchal has proven that young children learn and remember more about language and story structure if a picture book is read aloud to them three or more times. Ms. Sénéchal has also shown that this learning, which starts during the preschool years, is very beneficial for children when they learn to read in the primary grades.

So the moral is; read good picture books to your children, at least three times. And yes, there will be some stories that they will want over and over again. That's a good thing!

For more information about Monique Sénéchal's work, visit the following website.

<http://http-server.carleton.ca/~msenecha/research.html#AOV>

Ontario Early Years Literacy