

# Talking About Stories

## Good Night, Gorilla

by Peggy Rathman

Good night! All the animals in the zoo are tucked into bed for the night. Or are they? You and your child can find out in this wonderfully illustrated picture book.

Even though *Good Night, Gorilla* doesn't have many words, your child will love to follow along with you as you share the pictures and story. Here are some activities you can try as you read the book together. Don't try to do all the activities the first time you read the book. Instead, follow your child's pace and use the activities to keep him interested in the story. Re-reading and talking about the same story is helpful for young children as they begin to explore the sounds of language and learn how books and print work.

So, let's get started!

*Good Night, Gorilla* is a nice, sturdy board book with thick, stiff pages that are perfect for little hands to hold and explore. Before you begin reading, let your child look through the book and turn the pages. Ask her about the things she sees in the pictures. What animals does she recognize? Can she tell what the animals are trying to do?

As you read the book together, tell the story to your child by looking at and describing

what's happening on each page. Ask your child about details in the pictures. "What color is the giraffe?" "He's yellow." "That's right, he's yellow with brown spots. What color is he?" "Yellow with brown spots." This kind of talk about books—using questions and asking children to expand on and repeat their answers—is a very helpful strategy to use as children begin learning to read.

Since there aren't many words in this book, be sure to talk about all the different animals you see. How are they different? How are they the same? "A gorilla has hands almost like ours. But an elephant can pick things up with his trunk. Can you pick things up with your nose?"

After reading, ask your child to look through the book again and find the mouse carrying a banana on each page. For a special treat, take a trip to the zoo, or visit the library to look for photographs of all the different animals from the story. Encourage your child to draw his favorite animal. Read the book again before bedtime.

If your child enjoys *Good Night, Gorilla*, look for these other books at your library or bookstore: *Time for Bed* by Mem Fox and *Moo, Baa, La La La!* by Sandra Boynton.



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