

Early Literacy Tips for *Penguinaut!* by Marcie Colleen, illustrated by Emma Yarlett

On the left in blue boxes, there are sample activities you can do with kids in storytime. On the right in purple boxes are sample early literacy tips for parents (select 1-3 tips per storytime). Of course there are plenty of other options; use what works best for you! And most of all, have fun!

Name something that's bigger than you are!

What's the giraffe doing in the picture?

A catapult is a tool that flings something into the air.

Let's all flap our wings along with Penguinaut!

Orville was small.

His friends were BIG.

And their adventures were BIGGER.

Orville longed for *big* adventures, too.

One day, he announced his plans for the biggest and best adventure yet.

Orville's BIG ADVENTURE to the MOON. TA-DA!

Option 1: Learn to fly!

Option 2: Ladder

Option 3: Catapult

Option 4...Make an Option 4!!!

Orville flipped out. "I can do this myself!"

Giraffe: All the way up there?

Lion: But Orville, you're so small...

Alligator: Is that a good idea?

Cat: ...And the moon is so far away!

He tried to flap – KERPLOP!

He tried to climb – WHACK!

He tried to catapult – fa-LING!

...and landed in the reptile house.

Use your hands to show the difference between small, big, and bigger. Combining opposites with motion builds vocabulary and brain connections and helps kids understand difficult concepts in a visual way. Check out <https://www.storyblocks.org/project/big-big-big/> for more.

Books with a few big words, like catapult, are a great opportunity to use reading time as vocabulary building time! Take a moment from reading the story to explain unfamiliar words to your child.

Use different, silly voices for each animal. This makes the book more fun and engaging, and helps kids follow the story.

Orville was pretty sure the boa constrictor was not trying to hug him.

Still Orville kept trying.

He borrowed from the zookeeper. He nicked from the trash cans. He built and built.

Let's all shake our shaker eggs (or other shaken noisemaker) to help Penguinaut launch!

And with a shake, shake, shake of a half-filled soda bottle, the ship was ready for liftoff.

It was perfect. And perfectly penguin-sized.

How do you think Penguinaut's friends feel? Why do they feel that way?

With a trembling flipper salute, he took his place at the controls.

3, 2, 1...

"I can do this myself!"

BLAST OFF!

WHOOSH! The ship zipped through the night sky, through clouds, over stars, and straight to the moon.

Orville landed.

Queasy is when your stomach feels a little sick.

His stomach felt queasy. His spacesuit felt squeezezy. Now that he'd made it, what would he do?

He took a small step.

He hopped. Did a little dance. And tripped.

TUMBLE BUMBLE BA BOING!

He somersaulted with stars, cartwheeled over craters, and giggled for all the galaxy to hear. It was the BIGGEST and best adventure yet.

"I'm doing it myself!" he cheered, but his tiny voice was swallowed up in the starry blackness. Orville stopped.

Ask your child if she thinks the penguin will make it to the moon. This helps engage her in the story and make predictions about what will happen next.

Rhyming words, like queasy and squeezezy, help children recognize sounds that are the same and different, and they're fun for kids!

He was all alone.

His stomach grew queasier. His spacesuit grew squeezier. He shivered and a note fell out of his pocket.

See the stars in the picture? Some stars make pictures in the sky. They're called constellations. See if you can find some in the sky on a clear night.

You're OUR Penguinaut! We know you can do this!

He missed his friends. So Orville closed his eyes tightly and imagined they were there.

When he was safely back in his ship, he looked toward home. He couldn't wait to tell everyone about his big adventure.

Sure, Orville's friends were BIG. Now the proud Penguinaut felt BIG too.

You're our hero! Our incredible Penguinaut.

But BIGGEST of all?

Being together was out of this world. 3, 2, 1...

Ask your child if he'd like to go into space someday. Why, or why not? Open-ended questions let kids explore their thoughts and feelings, practice having conversations, and build vocabulary.

Extension activity: Have kids be creative and use some STEAM skills! Set out blocks, boxes, soda bottles, crayons, tape, and other craft materials and invite them to build the spaceship of their dreams!

Does your child want to hear you read the same book over and over? That's great! Every time you read the same book, your child gets something new out of it. Repetition is necessary and good.

Extension activity: After reading Penguinaut, have paper and crayons out and invite your child to draw a picture of the spaceship or space suit she would build for herself. Whenever preschoolers draw, they strengthen their hand muscles and improve their coordination. This practice helps get them ready to learn to write in kindergarten!



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