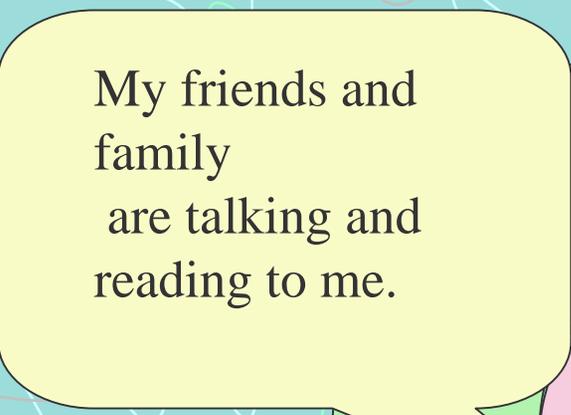




Early Literacy for the Early Interventionist

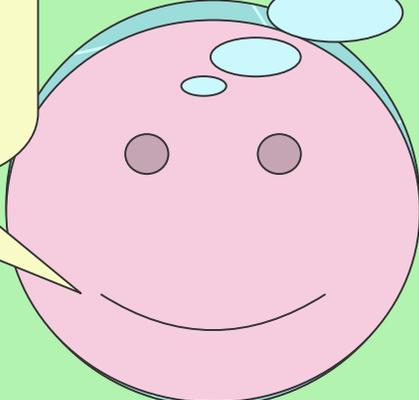
Remember there are several elements that provide a sound basis for literacy.



My friends and family
are talking and
reading to me.



conversation



My environment



How does that play out? Books are important. There are many ways to make or create books individualized for the child's interest.





Some examples might be:

- Make a mat board book with glues on pictures from a magazine held together with a ring.
- Make a cloth book with “stitch witchery” from the fabric store and pieces of cloth cut in shapes ironed together or colorful fabric with identifiable designs.
- Try Realewriter.com for a free download of a book template with many fonts and your importable pictures.
- Use an app on an Itouch or Ipad. such as *Animoto* or *Sonic Pics* or others that can help involve the child in a story about him/herself and their family.



There is a progression in early literacy. A generalization of steps along the way which helps us see these developments in young children. This is based on the work of Dr Lea McGee, U Alabama.

- **First Phase- *awareness and exploration***

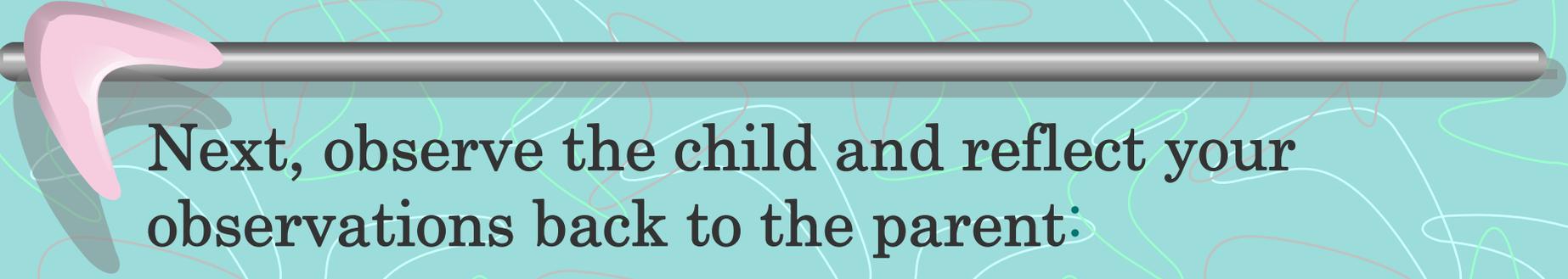
1. Finding out that books open and close, and have a right side up
2. There is meaning in a book
3. Print says something and can be repeated when a book is read over and over
4. Notice curves and lines in print
5. Develop a concept of print-how it is formed
6. Learn alphabet names
7. Track print
8. Develop phonemic awareness-hear the sounds that make up words
9. Use the power of print-as in their own writing or drawing
10. Try reading and writing



This is a progression but, remember, children grow and develop at their own pace.



- Your observations of these skills help parents see their child's early literacy developing.
- Any of these may happen out of this sequence.
- What do you see here?

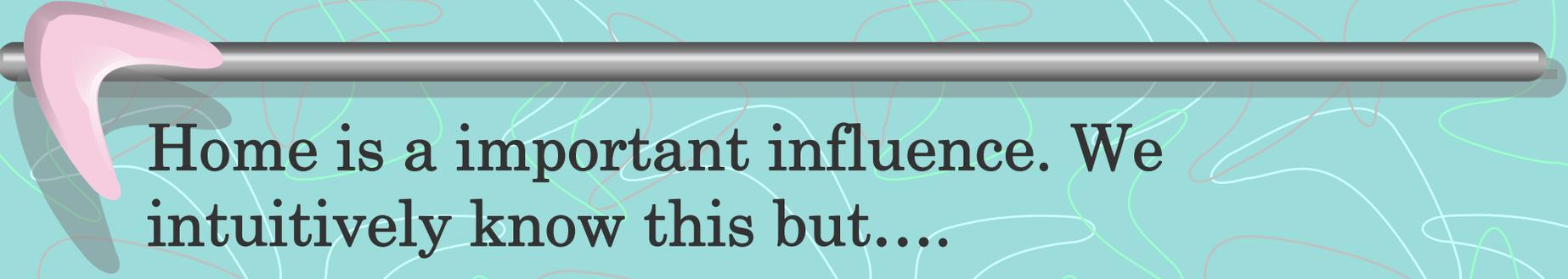


Next, observe the child and reflect your observations back to the parent:

You are doing this in your evaluations but

What is this child's style of learning?

- Can you say he/she is visual, auditory, or kinesthetic?
- Is there an artist there? A scientist? A designer? A talker?
- You, as an observer of the child, as part of a team, have lots to offer. Your observations will help the parent find the child's interests and through those interests, early literacy skills.



Home is a important influence. We intuitively know this but....

- There is evidence to suggest that there are specific items in our homes that relate to the development of young children's literacy. In other words, through a longitudinal study, children with most of the following home characteristics were reading at grade level or above in third grade. This study was done by BH Caldwell and RH Bradley at U Arkansas in 1984.



Here are specifics found in those homes. You may look for these or encourage their presence by bringing representative toys.

- ✓ Things that require visual discrimination- like pegboards, hidden face games, color discrimination games or objects?
- ✓ Three or more puzzles
- ✓ A way to hear stories or music- cd, tapes, records,
- ✓ Toys or games for number learning- blocks, books with numbers, legos with diagrams
- ✓ Ten or more children's books in the home, even library books will count
- ✓ Go to the library at least 1x each month
- ✓ At least 10 other books in the home- cookbooks, gardening, novels, whatever parents like to read or use.
- ✓ Have an outside play area that is safe, free of hazards
- ✓ Encourage the child to count- as in counting out cookies, crackers, game pieces



And further-some relate to interactions and some to the environment

- ✓ Special places for a child to keep treasures
- ✓ Display the child's artwork? That is anything the child makes
- ✓ The house is quiet without lots of competing noises
- ✓ Monitor the use of the TV...watch it together and comment on the shows
- ✓ Keep the curtains open to allow the house to be light filled?
- ✓ The rooms of the house have areas to walk around in
- ✓ All rooms are reasonably clean and uncluttered
- ✓ Use correct grammar and pronunciation
- ✓ Keep speech clear, distinct and audible
- ✓ Answer the child's questions verbally
- ✓ Respond to the child's talking
- ✓ Spontaneously praise the child's appearance or behavior every day
- ✓ Adults use complex sentence structure and some long words in conversing
- ✓ Use a positive voice or convey a positive feeling when speaking of or to the child

These are attributes and give you an extra lens to help you as an observer.



- Is there something you can bring to help this child in this environment develop the skills he/she needs? Can you encourage new activities?



Since reading together is great fun....

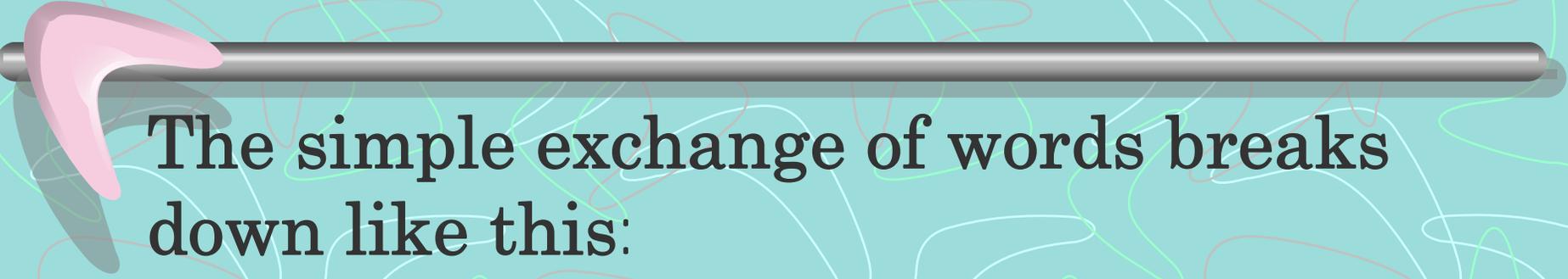
- Can you help the family develop some strategies to create reading pleasure for the child and the parent too? These are proven techniques that encourage a love of reading. Teachable too.
 1. Does your child sit on your lap or next to you?
 2. Do you use voices or animate your voice for effect? Do you capture your child's attention?
 3. Do you direct your child's attention to the book? See the pictures? Or create visual imagery with your descriptions?
 4. Do you give your child the opportunity to hold the book? Turn the pages? Ask questions?

Remind parents that these simple tools help create a love of reading. These techniques are also based in years of study.



Most important-another research study....

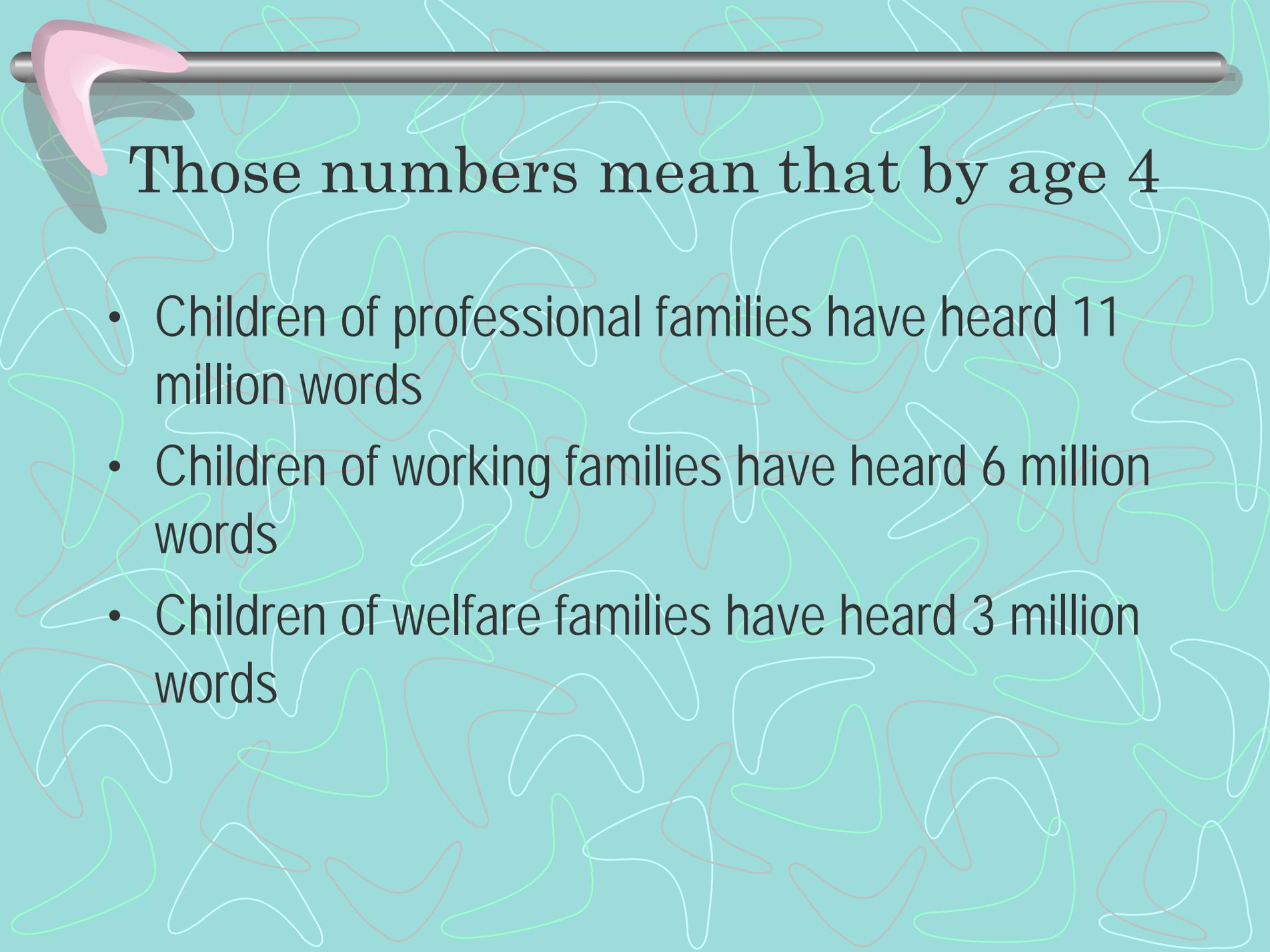
- Betty Hart and Todd Risely analyzed the daily conversation of a mixed group of families and found that there were huge discrepancies in the number of words young children heard as well as the quality of the words exchanged. Their research has profound implications for all young children.



The simple exchange of words breaks down like this:

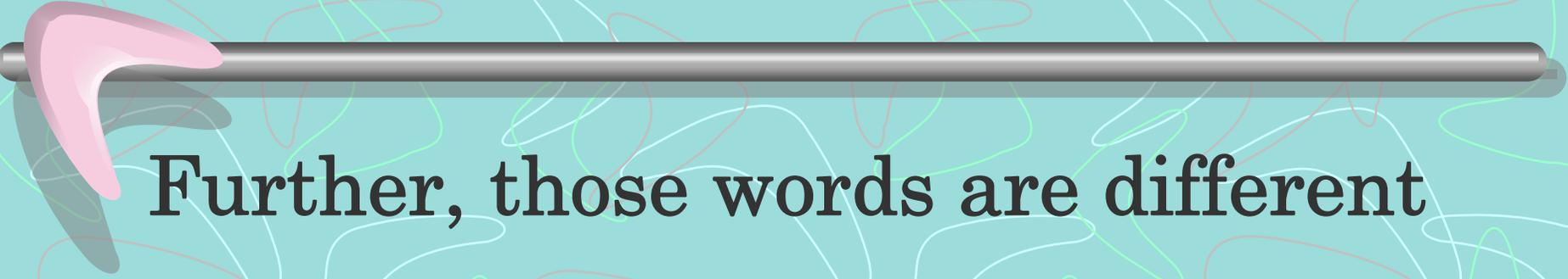


- The children of professionals hear 2153 words/hour
- The children of working families hear 1251 words/hour
- The children of welfare hear 616 words/hour



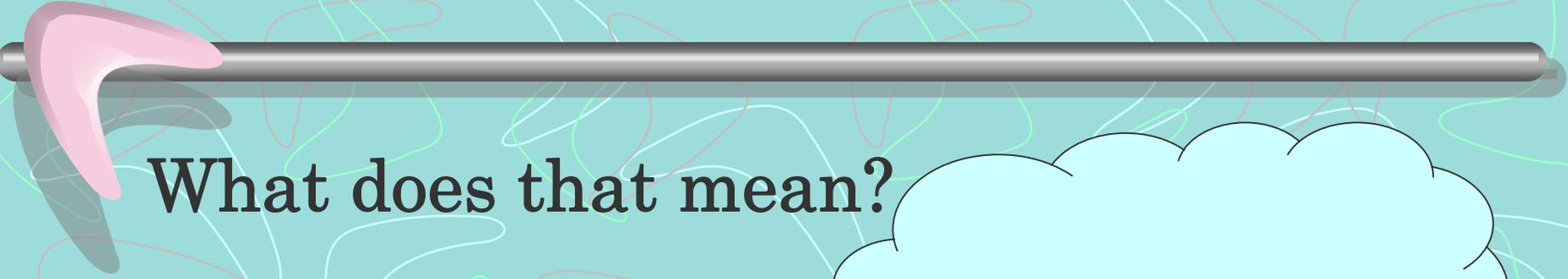
Those numbers mean that by age 4

- Children of professional families have heard 11 million words
- Children of working families have heard 6 million words
- Children of welfare families have heard 3 million words



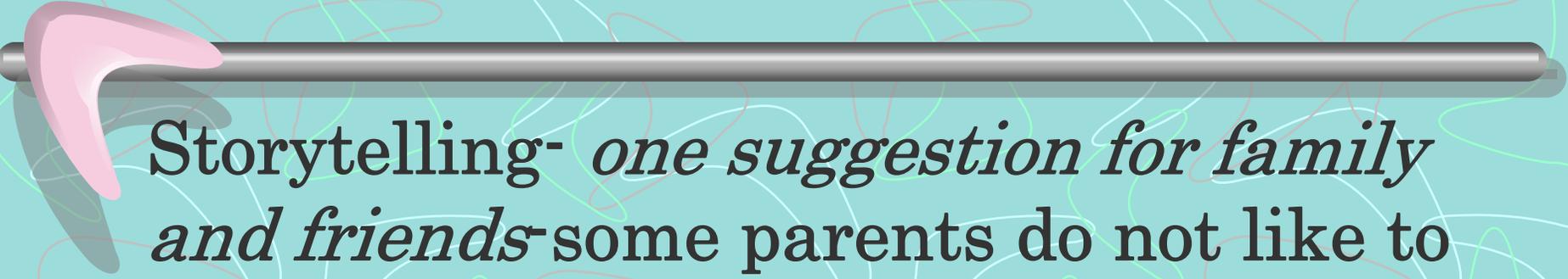
Further, those words are different

- Professional families engage in conversation and exchanges
- Welfare families are more likely to be using prohibitions or directives
- **Interestingly**, these findings can hold true in child care settings and school classrooms, regardless of economics.
- There are teachable strategies here to encourage conversation which is one of the pleasures of the company of young children..



What does that mean?

- 
- Vocabulary is a key to early and later literacy
 - It is tied to conversation
 - The more we can engage a child in conversation, we are developing their early literacy skills. They need to think of the words, express themselves, sequence a story, ask a question, listen. Here friends and family play an important role. This too is teachable.



Storytelling- *one suggestion for family and friends*-some parents do not like to read but can tell a marvelous story

- Encourage those stories.
- Use wordless books to tell a story
- Relate life experience in a story
- What happened earlier today can be fascinating
- What are we planning *with emphasis*



Even here, research bears us out

- Fundamental processes of learning take place as we bond with people we care about. My attachment to you means I am more likely to care about what you care about and therefore I will learn from you.
- Read the Growth of the Mind by Stanley Greenspan when you get a chance.



A balanced approach across the domains of development will best prepare children for school success.

