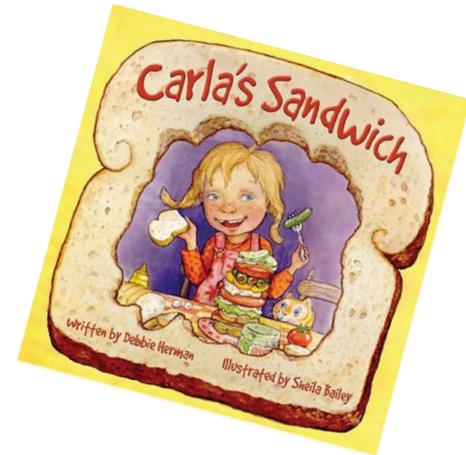


Reading with children can improve their language, literacy, and social-emotional skills, increasing their knowledge of the world around them. With the right book choices, reading can introduce children to healthy eating habits too!

CARLA'S SANDWICH by Debbie Herman

What It's All About

Carla's sandwiches are always unusual. Her sandwiches repulse her classmates! When her teacher decides to take the class for a picnic, the other children tease Carla about her sandwich tastes... until one classmate decides to try Carla's creative sandwich.



Discover a World of Words

Throughout the story introduce new vocabulary words using gestures, tone of voice, pointing to illustrations, or providing brief explanations. Examples include:

- *Announcement*: a short message with news about an event
- *Bon Appétit*: a French saying for right before you eat, meaning enjoy your meal
- *Rummaged*: to search through carelessly
- *Snickered*: a partly suppressed laugh



Dig into the Story

Develop children's comprehension of the story by discussing higher-level information (e.g., link characters' feelings to their actions and/or events in the story, predict what might happen or summarize chunks of text). Use prompts throughout the story, such as:

- How does Carla feel when her classmates tell her that her sandwiches are gross, weird, or sick? How could they make her feel better?
- Why don't Carla's friends sit next to her at lunch?
- Why didn't Buster want to share Carla's sandwich at first? Why did he change his mind?

Make Connections Beyond the Book

After reading the story, make connections to an aspect of the child's real-life by:

- Encouraging your child to bring an extra sandwich or snack to share at school.
- Discussing some things your child could have said to Carla when she offered to share her sandwiches.
- Discussing some unusual or surprising flavors that are delicious together. Do you and your child agree about foods that go together well?



Jumpstart

Jumpstart is a national early education organization working toward the day every child in America enters kindergarten prepared to succeed. Learn more at jstart.org.

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Some definitions taken from Biemiller, A. (2010). *Words worth teaching: Closing the vocabulary gap*.

Together Time Activity

BUILD A SANDWICH AS UNIQUE AS YOU

Invite your child to dream up a new kind of sandwich. Encourage them to be creative and make their own choices. Later you can talk about whether the choices worked out well or not.

This exercise demonstrates how a sandwich can provide all the building blocks of a balanced meal — including a whole grain, a protein, and some fresh veggies or fruits — while also giving them a chance to express their creativity and individuality.



- 1** Make a brainstorming list of interesting sandwich ingredients, including whatever will hold it all together. (Hint: Think beyond bread! A sandwich can also be held together with crackers, a whole grain tortilla, or a lettuce leaf.)
- 2** Sort the list of ingredients into different food groups (to find out which group each food belongs in visit, www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups).
- 3** Now choose just five of the ingredients to make your sandwich. Try to pick at least one from each food group, including an ingredient that grows in the garden and an ingredient you've never had on a sandwich before.
- 4** Gather your sandwich ingredients and build it!
- 5** Taste and talk about your sandwich. What are the positive attributes of each ingredient? Are all the food groups represented on this sandwich? Do some ingredients add more nutrition than others? Do some just provide flavor or texture? Are they different colors? Do you prefer the ones that are crunchy, smooth, or a mix of both? What do you think would make your sandwich healthier?

Note to parents: Feel free to offer guidance, but also let your child experiment with a wild and wacky combo if they wish.

Talking Points:

As the story of Carla's Sandwich demonstrates, peer pressure can have a powerful influence on kids' food choices. Talk with your child about what kinds of foods are most popular in their school cafeteria. Find out what your child orders in the lunch line. Ask what kinds of foods their friends bring in their lunch boxes. Ask what new lunch foods your child would like to try. Talk about your family's values around food and make some decisions together about what makes a good lunch. Discuss the importance of respecting others choices even if they differ.