



The Smithsonian Institution's *Talk with Me Toolkits*: Digital resources for parents in adult education programs

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Agenda

- ▶ Introductions
- ▶ Partners in the project
- ▶ Talk with Me Toolkits (TMTs)
 - What we did
 - Objectives
 - Format
 - Introduction of two TMTs
- ▶ Using the TMTs in adult education
- ▶ Using TMTs for parent-child interactions
- ▶ Next time....

Introduce yourself....

Please write your name,
organization, and title in the chat

Please complete the poll

1. Does your adult education program work in ways to support parents

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ No, but I would like to learn more

2. Check all the types of programs that you work in.

- ☐ Adult education
- ☐ Family literacy
- ☐ Family engagement programs
- ☐ Parent education in a school
- ☐ Library programs
- ☐ Other parent involvement program
- ☐ None of the above

3. Does your program serve English Language Learners?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

This project was made possible in
part by a grant from the
Institute of Museum and Library Services



Project Team



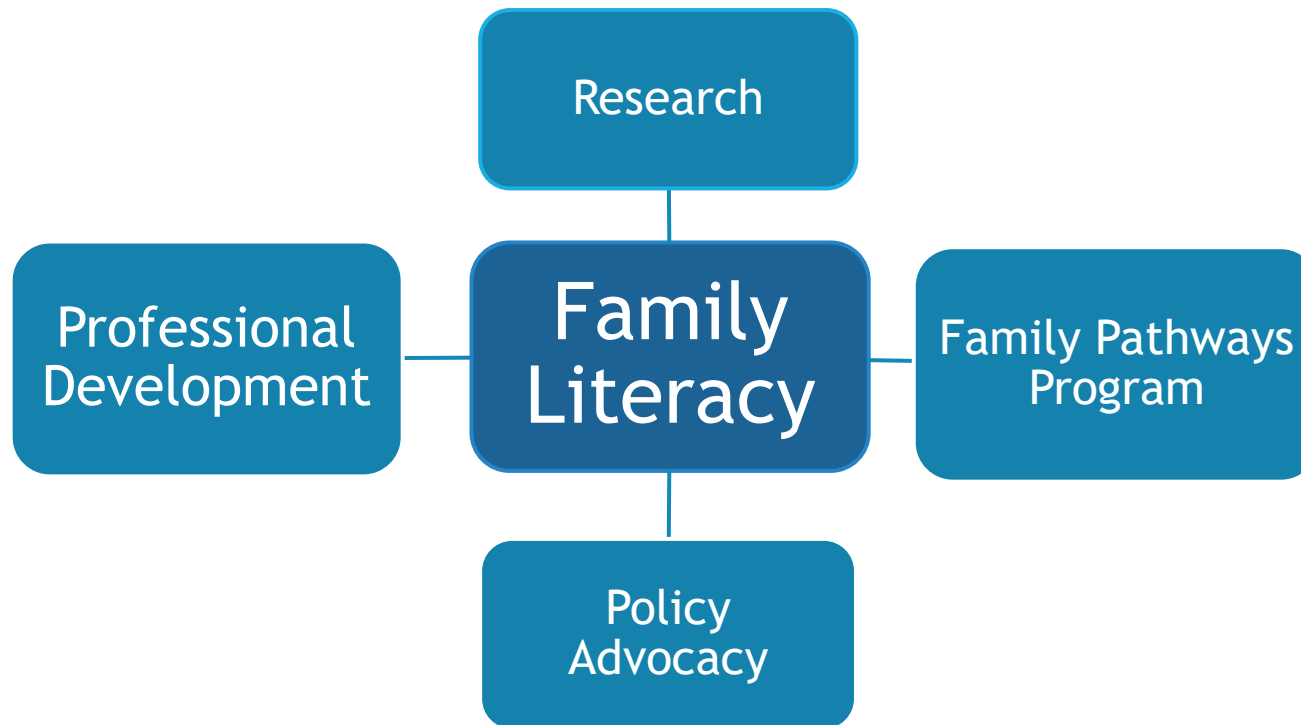
Family Place Libraries (FPL)

- ▶ A national program established by the Middle Country Public Library (MCPL) in Centereach, NY in 1997.
- ▶ A library initiative for early childhood information, parent education, early literacy, socialization, and family support.

Smithsonian Office of Educational Technology (OET)

- ▶ **Smithsonian Institution** is the largest museum system in the world with 21 museums and multiple research centers.
- ▶ **The Office of Educational Technology** connects educators and educational communities to the Smithsonian's ecosystem of digital educational resources.
 - **Smithsonian Learning Lab** - interactive digital platform where users discover, create, and share resources and collections of content with over 6 million resources.

Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy



<https://ed.psu.edu/research-grants/centers-institutes/goodling-institute>

IMLS Grant - What We Did

- ▶ Adapted and evaluated Smithsonian OET's free, online *Talk with Me Toolkits* for library engagement and family literacy efforts
 - Implemented 2 cohorts in 6-week consecutive sessions in 4 libraries: New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas
 - Learned what caregivers liked and did not like
 - Received input from librarians about how to use TMTs
 - Revised TMTs between cohort 1 and cohort 2 and after cohort 2 based on evaluation activities

Talk with Me Toolkit Objectives

- ▶ To foster and strengthen discussion between caregivers and children to promote children's language and literacy development.
- ▶ To introduce caregivers and children to an array of artifacts from the Smithsonian that includes captivating videos, real-world photographs, intriguing paintings, and other artworks.



Talk with Me Toolkit Format

- ▶ Title page
- ▶ How to use the TMT - information about icons and how to proceed through the TMT
- ▶ Look or watch - high quality artifacts, photos, and videos with vocabulary and question prompts
- ▶ Play - activities that include instructions and a list of supplies related to the activities
- ▶ Read together - 3 books related to the topic with question prompts
- ▶ Additional activities and books - related to the TMT topic to promote further reading and conversation about the topic

TMTs can be found at:

<https://learninglab.si.edu/org/talk-with-me-toolkits>

- ▶ Air and Space: Can it Fly?
- ▶ Art: Colors, Shapes, Lines
- ▶ Art: Light & Shadow
- ▶ Me and My World: My Neighborhood
- ▶ Music: Animal Tracks
- ▶ Nature: Who Lives in the Soil?



NATURE

WHO LIVES IN THE SOIL?

HOW TO USE

Each image on this page is a **resource**. Click a resource to view it in detail. As you view each resource, use these buttons to interact:

- Click the Paperclip button to close or open activity information. Closing this information will make an image or video larger.
- Click the Info button to learn more about the resource (who made it or where it came from).
- Click the Zoom button to make an image larger.
- Click the Arrow buttons in the bottom navigation bar to move forward and backward in the toolkit.
- Click the Grid button in the bottom navigation bar to go back to the full toolkit.

LEARN NEW WORDS!

DIRT / SOIL

WHAT'S THE DIRT ON... DIRT?

LOOK

LOOK CLOSELY

LOOK AND WATCH

LOOK, WATCH, AND TALK TOGETHER

WONDERFUL WORMS!

PLAY

GET OUTSIDE. LOOK DOWN!

WIGGLE LIKE A WORM

DIG IN THE SOIL

PAINT WITH MUD

MAKE A SEDIMENT JAR

MAKE DIRT OR SAND PLAYDOUGH

MAKE TUNNELS

MAKE CORNMEAL "SAND"

READ TOGETHER

READ TOGETHER

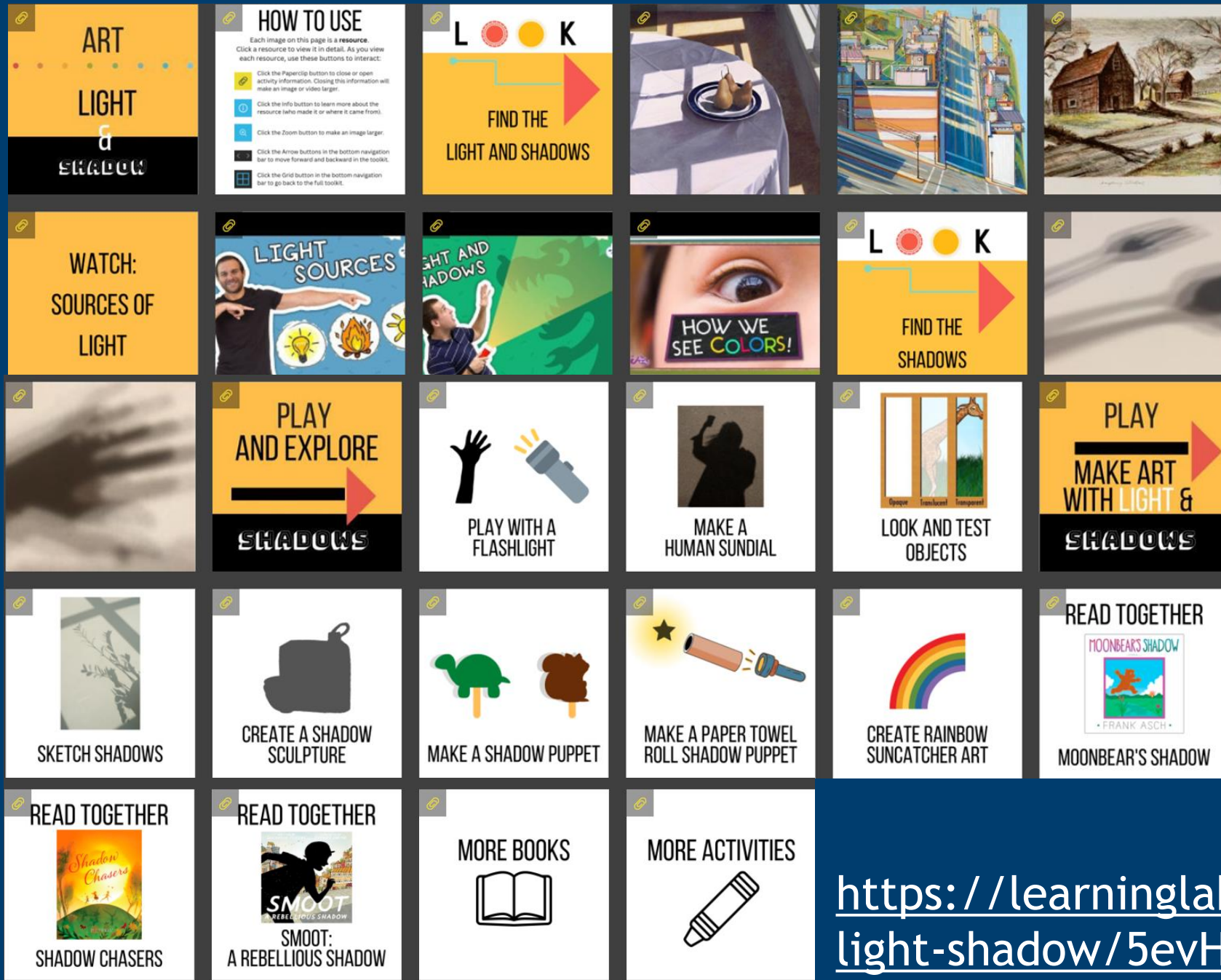
READ TOGETHER

MORE BOOKS

MORE ACTIVITIES



<https://learninglab.si.edu/collections/nature-who-lives-in-the-soil/0xeEBKIFi3S59ANH>



<https://learninglab.si.edu/collections/art-light-shadow/5evHENYkai7xS9T6>

Art: Light & Shadow



San Francisco West Side Ridge

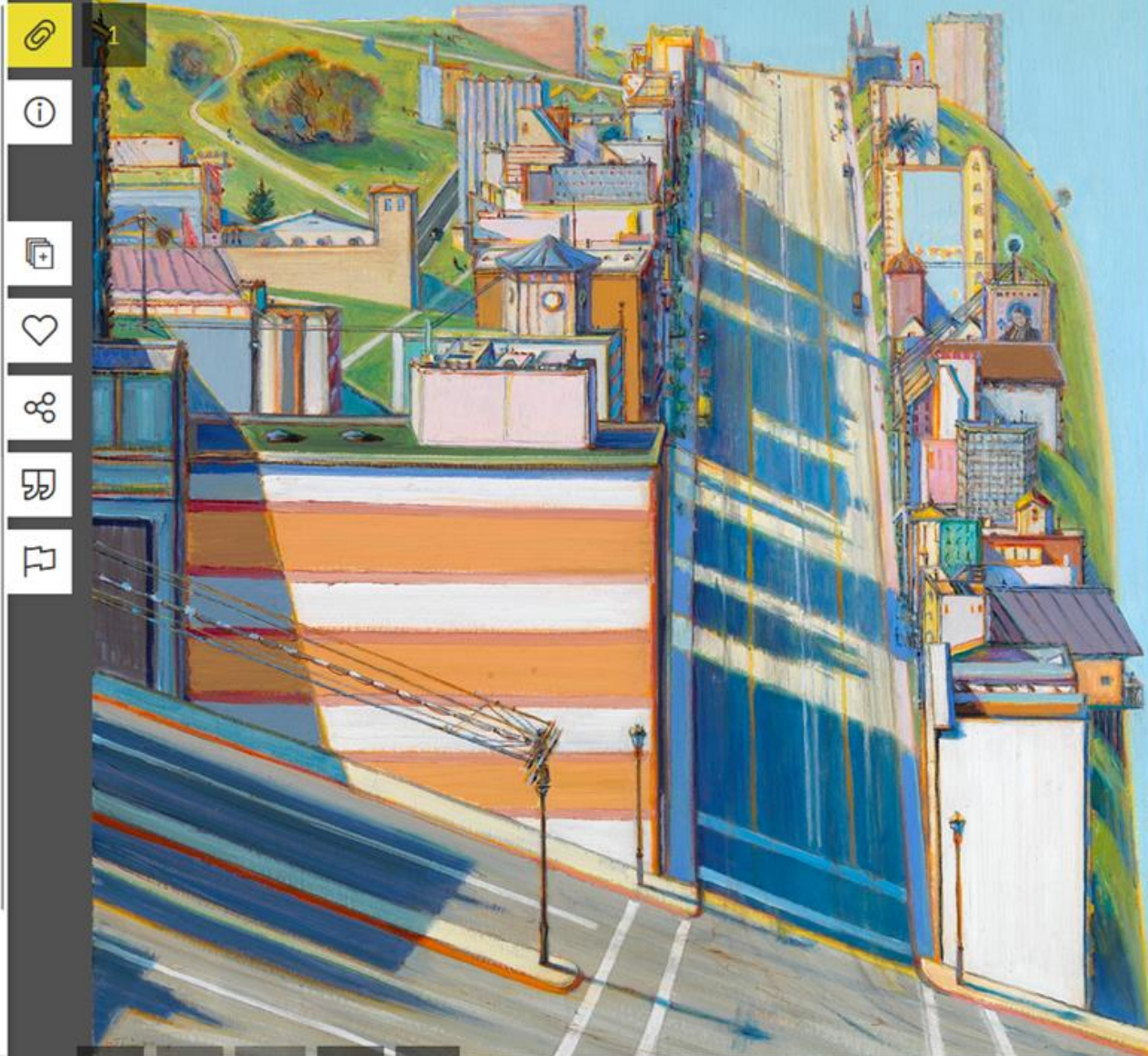
This is a painting of a street in San Francisco from a **bird's-eye view**. The artist is showing the **shadows** that are made from **rectangles**, squares, and other shapes. Do you also see the straight lines of the street and buildings?

Review and learn new vocabulary:

- **Light** - a form of energy, such as the sun or a lamp, that makes it possible to see things
- **Shadow** - darker part of a space where the source of light is cut off
- **Rectangle** - a shape with four right angles and four straight sides of two different lengths
- **Horizontal** - a straight line that is drawn from right to left or left to right, flat and level with the ground, rather than an angle
- **Vertical** - a straight line that runs top to bottom or bottom to top
- **Diagonal** - a line from one corner of a square or rectangle to the opposite corner of the square or rectangle
- **Bird's-eye view** - a view from above, like a bird would see if it was flying in the sky and looking down

Talk about these questions:

- Zoom in on the picture. Zoom in different places. What do you see? Do you see trees? A person on the balcony (look on the right)? What else do you see when you zoom in on the picture?
- Where do you think the **light** is coming from? Why do you think that?
- What different **shadows** do you see in the painting? Why does each building have a different **shadow**?
- Talk about how the **shadows** of the buildings make different lines and shapes. Can you find the **rectangles**? **Horizontal** lines? **Vertical** lines? **Diagonal** lines?



Art: Light & Shadow



Light and Shadows

Watch and talk together about how different lights cause different shadows.

Learn new vocabulary:

- **Light** - a form of energy, such as the sun or a lamp, that makes it possible to see things
- **Shadow** - darker part of a space where the source of light is cut off
- **Transparent** - almost all light goes through, and it makes almost no shadow
- **Translucent** - some light passes through it, but not all of it
- **Opaque** - no light goes through, and it makes solid shadows

Talk about these questions:

- Can you think of objects in your house that are **transparent? Translucent? And opaque?**
- As you watch, pause the video and guess the objects that make the **shadows**.



Art: Light & Shadow



Look and Test Objects

Test to see whether an object is transparent, translucent, or opaque.

Supplies:

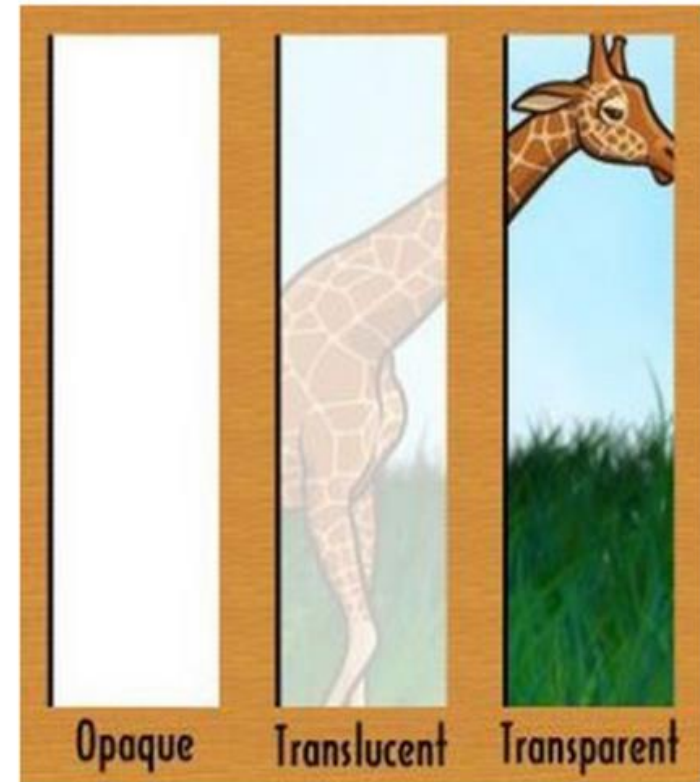
- Flashlight or flashlight on a phone
- Objects to tests -- gather all or a few!

Transparent	Translucent	Opaque
• Clear plastic wrap • Clear plastic cup • Spectacles (glasses) • Clean water • Clear glass windowpanes	• Wax paper • Tinted glass • Sunglasses • Colored liquid • Olive or vegetable oil	• Cardboard • Backpack or purse • Soccer ball • Pillow • Closed book

Steps:

- Gather the objects you want to test
- Put the object next to a wall and shine the flashlight through the object.
- Do you see the light on the wall? If the light is bright and clear, the object is transparent. If the light is not as bright, the object is translucent. If no light appears, the object is opaque.

Image: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/475059460672693480/>



LOOK AND TEST OBJECTS

Art: Light & Shadow



Read Together: Moonbear's Shadow

Learn more about shadows by reading this book with your child!

Talk about these questions:

- Why couldn't Moonbear outrun the shadow?
- Why couldn't Moonbear nail down the shadow?
- How did the shadow finally go away?
- When the shadow came back, why was it not in the water?

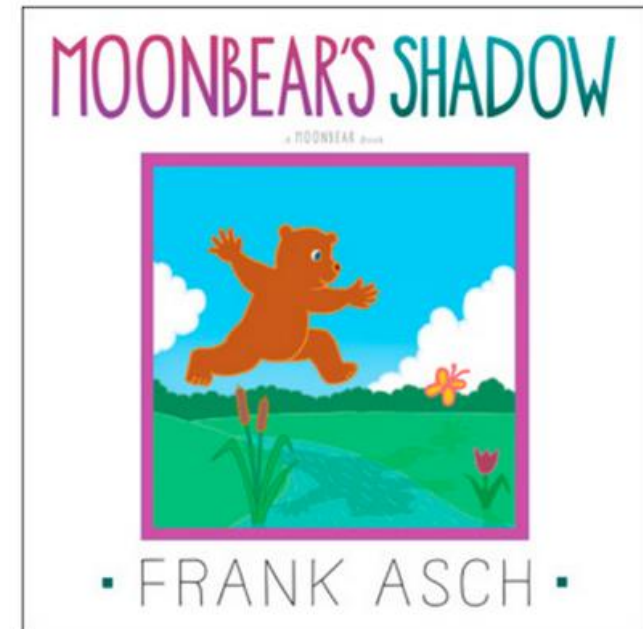
Asch, F. (1999). *Moonbear's Shadow*. Aladdin Paperbacks.



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READ TOGETHER



MOONBEAR'S SHADOW

Art: Light & Shadow



More Books

Want to learn more about light and shadow? Check out these books at your library!

3- to 4-year-olds

- Becker, A. (2019). *You are Light*. Candlewick Studio.
- Ferrie, C. (2024). *Optical Physics for Babies*. Sourcebooks eXplore.
- Townes, J., & Miles, N. (2023). *Groundhog Gets it Wrong*. Dial Books for Young Readers

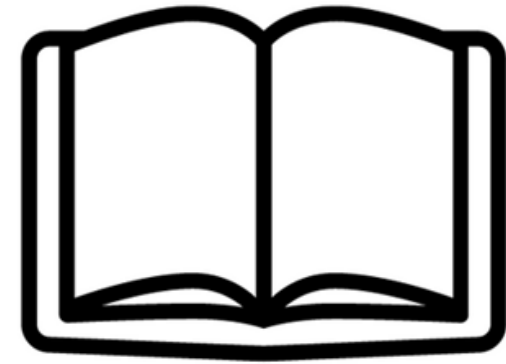
5- to 6-year-olds

- Breen, L. (2020). *I See a Shadow*. Feiwel and Friends.
- Hansen, G. (2019). *Light*. Abdo Kids Jumbo.
- Murray, J. (2019). *Light and Dark*. Abdo Kids Junior, an imprint of Abdo Kids.

7- to 9-year-olds

- Biedrzycki, D. (2019). *Groundhog's Runaway Shadow*. Charlesbridge Publishing.
- Files, S. & Le, K. (2020). *Flash and Gleam: Light in Our World*. Millbrook Press.
- Gaertner, M. (2020). *Shadows*. Cody Koala, an imprint of Pop!

MORE BOOKS



Benefits of TMTs to Caregivers

► Questions on slides/conversations

- *I could see things to ask her that maybe I wouldn't have thought of myself. And what surprised me more was that she would've an answer.*
- *Then he would come up with other questions as I was following up with other questions, so we were bouncing off each other.*

► Learning new vocabulary

- *I do think it helped with some of the vocabulary that I wouldn't have thought to teach him what that means.*
- *I thought the vocabulary was an incredibly great addition to things, lots of conversation about those words.*

► Caregivers learned new topics that interested their children

- *The black and white photo. I didn't know he would be so interested in that kind of stuff. So that helped me bring up a new topic.*



Using the Toolkit in Adult Education

- ▶ Great resource to use with your ESL population to help with talking, learning new vocabulary, etc.
- ▶ Strategies for using the Toolkit
 - Develop lesson plans based on TMT topics (e.g., learning about soil)
 - Print out the TMT questions and vocabulary to learn and review together (and to help with their interactions with their kids)
 - Explore how the website and TMT format work to support comfort with digital literacy

Using the Toolkit for Parent-Child Interactions

- ▶ Great resource - to bring kids in or as a take-home
- ▶ Strategies in AE to help with interactions
 - Provide examples of how the questions and prompts are meant as a springboard for deeper conversations
 - Read the book with the caregivers to model interactive reading (asking questions, talking about the book)
 - Talk about the activities they can do together
 - Encourage reading the books after going through the TMT to encourage further learning



Lesson plan example

Adult Education	Parent Education	Interactive Literacy Activity
▶ Find an article about light and shadow (e.g., https://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/einstein/light/revolution-light) ▶ Warm up activity - Do you know about Albert Einstein? ▶ Pick out vocabulary words and discuss ▶ Teach a reading skill ▶ Read the article	▶ Discuss that children's vocabulary development is an important reading skill ▶ Discuss the importance of questioning while reading (e.g., use of dialogic reading strategies) ▶ Practice asking questions while reading a book ▶ Introduce the TMT (digital learning)	▶ Introduce the TMT and how to navigate the slides ▶ Emphasize the slides with questions and vocabulary words ▶ Engage with the TMT

For next time:

- ▶ Take time to look at the other TMTs
<https://learninglab.si.edu/org/talk-with-me-toolkits>
- ▶ Pick one TMT and generate ideas and activities to use it with the population you work with in your adult education or family literacy class
- ▶ Bring your ideas to next meeting to share
- ▶ We will build a lesson together using your ideas

Part II

The Smithsonian Institution's *Talk with Me Toolkits*: Digital resources for parents in adult education programs

March 21, 1:00 to 2:30

- ▶ Is there anything you want us to focus on at our next session that we did not talk about today?
- ▶ Please put your ideas in the chat.



Contact Information

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Thank you!

We want your feedback. Please be sure to complete the evaluation.

Learn more about upcoming First Literacy Professional Development Workshops at www.firstliteracy.org/professional-development-workshops/

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