

# **Autism-Inclusive Early Literacy Program Plans**



The program plans in this resource are designed to be inclusive of autistic children with a variety of sensory needs and learning differences. These programs were co-designed with parents and caregivers of autistic children. This resource includes:

- [Basic Storytime Program Plan](#)
- [Virtual Storytime Program Plan](#)
- [Musical Storytime Program Plan for Sensory Seekers](#)
- ["All Activity" Program Plan](#)

# Basic Storytime Program Plan

Level: Toddler-Preschool

Length: 30mins

Theme: Colors

## Materials

### Program Materials

- Visual schedule
- Sensory kit
- Popsicle sticks with white, red, blue, and brown colors (each child gets one of each color)
- Book: Pete the Cat I Love My White Shoes by Eric Litwin
- Flannel board
- Pete the Cat themed felt cutouts

### Activity stations

- Crayons and markers
- Pete the Cat coloring sheets
- Lego/Duplo blocks
- Torn construction paper (various colors)
- Glue sticks

## Program Schedule & Lyrics

### 1. Introduction w/ inclusive expectations and ways to participate

- Highlight the inclusive nature of the program
- Offer use of sensory kit: highlight noise canceling ear covers and sunglasses
- Offer quiet space where kids can go to color/do a craft if overwhelmed
- Walk through visual schedule: “We have a visual schedule for our program today [show visual schedule]. First, we will\_\_\_, then we will\_\_\_, after we will\_\_\_, then we will say goodbye!”

### Sample introduction:

“Hello, and welcome to storytime! My name is\_\_\_. We’re very excited to have you here. Today’s storytime has been designed to include children with learning and sensory differences. We encourage children and adults to participate in storytime in whatever way suits them best. You do not need to sit down or sit still, we welcome all wiggles as long as they are safe for you and safe for those around you. If you want to make a noise, make a noise! If you want to jump, jump! We have noise-cancelling headphones and sunglasses available to help support sensory needs during the program. If you need to take a break at any time, please do, and know you are welcome back.”

# Program Schedule & Lyrics Cont.

## 2. Movement Activity & Rhyme

Activity: Stretch or get wiggles out

Color rhyme:

*Red, red, touch your head*

*Red, red, touch your head*

*Blue, blue, tie your shoe*

*Blue, blue, tie your shoe*

*Purple, purple, spin in a circle*

*Purple, purple, spin in a circle*

*Gray, gray, sign hooray (ASL hooray)*

*Gray, gray, sign hooray (ASL hooray)*

### Early Literacy Tip for Parents/Caregivers:

“Adults: rhymes, songs, and movement games all help children develop early literacy skills. If your child is sensitive to singing, rhymes can be a great way to go!”

## 3. Read Aloud: Pete The Cat, I Love My White Shoes (Visual Story)

Multiple methods of engagement and participation

- Ask questions that kids can answer by speaking, or by holding up colored popsicle sticks
  - What color do you think the berries will turn Pete’s shoes? You can answer with your popsicle stick or your voice.
  - What color are these blueberries? You can answer with your popsicle stick or your voice.
  - What do you think will happen next?
- Provide a flannel board or PowerPoint with images of Pete the Cat stepping in each item

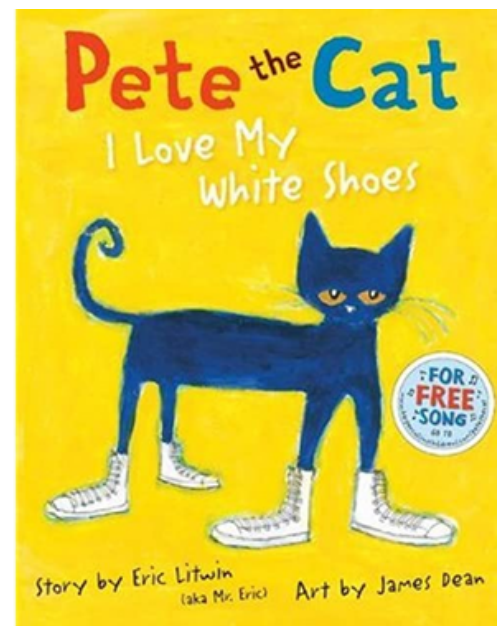


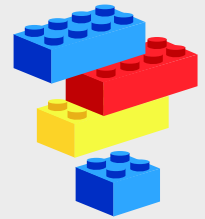
Image: Flannel Board Fun

# Program Schedule & Lyrics Cont.

## 4. Free Choice Learning Stations

### Block station

- Materials: Lego/duplos
- *Prompt:* “What does Pete step in next? Let’s build it with blocks!”



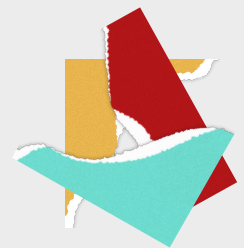
### Coloring station

- Materials: Coloring sheets, crayons, and markers
- *Prompt:* “What colors do Pete’s shoes turn next? Let’s color in Pete’s shoes!”



### Torn paper art station

- Materials: Coloring sheets, glue, torn construction paper
- Instructions: Choose a few torn pieces of paper and tear them to the desired size. Paste paper on top of the coloring sheet using a glue stick.
- *Prompt:* “What gets on Pete’s shoes next? Let’s do art and find out!”



## 5. Clean Up (place items from stations back in bins/boxes)

## 6. Goodbye Song “The More We Get Together”

Sing song using American Sign Language signs for “Together” “Happier” “Yours” and “Mine”

*The more we get together*

*Together, together*

*The more we get together*

*The happier we'll be*

*'Cause your friends are my friends*

*And my friends are your friends*

*The more we get together*

*The happier we'll be*

*Oh, the more we get together*

*Together, together*

*The more we get together*

*The happier we'll be*

*'Cause your friends are my friends*

*And my friends are your friends*

*The more we get together*

*The happier we'll be*

# Virtual Storytime Program Plan

Level: Toddler-Preschool

Length: 30mins

Theme: Colors

Mode: Over Zoom, YouTube Live, or Facebook Live

## Materials

### Program PowerPoint Includes:

- Visual Schedule
- Scanned picture book pages
- Song lyrics
- Activity instructions

### Activity Items (each family needs these)

- Pen or pencil
- Sheet of paper
- Shoe (for tracing)
- Toilet paper roll or paper towel roll
- Rubber band or tape
- Tissue paper/toilet paper

## Program Schedule & Lyrics

### 1. Introduction w/ inclusive expectations and ways to participate

- Highlight the inclusive nature of the program
- Show families how to use Zoom or selected program to participate virtually
- Walk through visual schedule: “We have a visual schedule for our program today [show visual schedule]. First, we will \_\_\_\_, then we will \_\_\_\_, after we will \_\_\_\_, then we will say goodbye!”

### Sample introduction:

“Hello, and welcome to storytime! My name is \_\_\_\_\_. This virtual storytime has been designed to be inclusive of children with learning and sensory differences. We encourage children and adults to participate in storytime in whatever way suits them best. You do not need to sit down or sit in front of your device. We welcome wiggles that are safe for you and safe for your technology. You can participate with your voice by unmuting, you can participate with your body in your video, or you can participate by typing in the chat box. If you want to make a noise, make a noise! If you want to jump, jump! If you need to take a break from your computer or device at any time, please do.”

## Program Schedule & Lyrics Cont.

### 2. Welcome Song (T-Shirt Song)

Call on each participant and have them tell you their shirt color. They can show it to you on screen, unmute and use their voice, or have an adult type it in the chat.

- **Script:** “For this song, I will read a name and you will tell me what color you are wearing. You can tell me with your voice by unmuting, or you can show me on your video. You can also have an adult type it in the chat.”

\_\_\_ has a (insert color) shirt,  
 (insert color) shirt,  
 (insert color) shirt,  
 \_\_\_ has a (insert color) shirt, and they're  
 here today

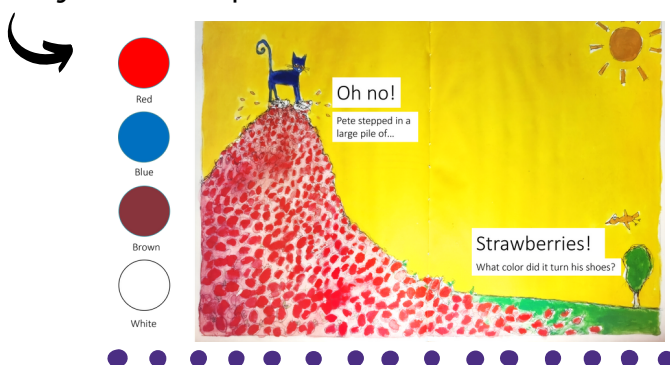
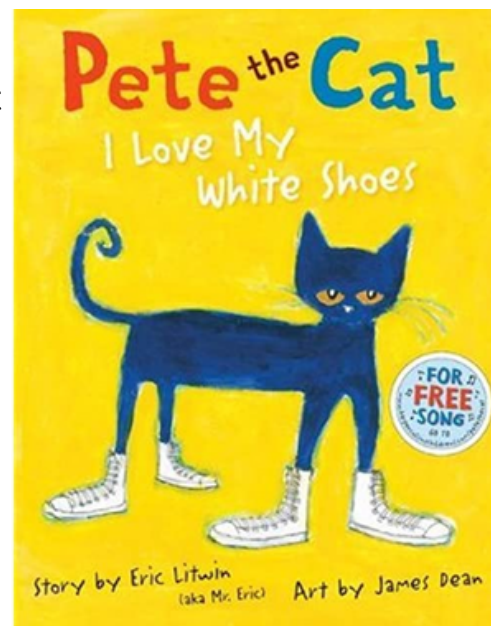
#### Early Literacy Tip for Parents/Caregivers:

“Adults: rhymes, songs, and movement games all help children develop early literacy skills. Try out a new song or rhyme every day!”

### 3. Read Aloud: Pete The Cat, I Love My White Shoes (Visual Story)

Multiple methods of engagement and participation

- Ask questions that kids can answer by speaking, by pointing to colors on the screen, or by typing in the chat
  - What color do you think the berries will turn Pete’s shoes?
  - What color are these blueberries?
  - What do you think will happen next?
- Provide full book pages in the PowerPoint presentation for the storytime
- *Tip:* Place color choices on the side of the slide that kids can point to when you ask a question



# Program Schedule & Lyrics Cont.

## 4. Free Choice Learning Activities (choice of 2)

Lead families on a virtual “scavenger hunt” to collect materials

1. Show an image on the screen of the materials families will need
2. Ask them to wave or type in the chat when they have found them all
3. Display craft instructions on the next slide for both options

### Choice #1: Kazoo

- Poke a hole in a toilet paper roll with a pen or pencil
- Cover one end with a square of tissue paper
- Secure the tissue paper to the end with a rubber band
- Prompt: “What music does Pete make next?”



### Choice #2: Shoe trace

- Place the shoe on a piece of paper or cardboard
- Trace around the shoe with a pen or pencil
- Color in your shoe outline with crayons or markers
- Prompt: “What does Pete step in next?”



## 5. Goodbye Song “The More We Get Together”

Sing song using American Sign Language signs for “Together” “Happier” “Yours” and “Mine”

- Display ASL signs and lyrics on PowerPoint slide

*The more we get together*

*Together, together*

*The more we get together*

*The happier we'll be*

*'Cause your friends are my friends*

*And my friends are your friends*

*The more we get together*

*The happier we'll be*

*Oh, the more we get together*

*Together, together*

*The more we get together*

*The happier we'll be*

*'Cause your friends are my friends*

*And my friends are your friends*

*The more we get together*

*The happier we'll be*

# Musical Storytime Program Plan

## for Sensory Seekers

Level: Preschool-Kindergarten

Length: 30mins

Theme: Colors

Some autistic children are sensory seekers and enjoy programs with strong sensory elements, such as movement and music, and physical play. While these elements are available in the Basic program plan, this program has been designed with sensory seekers in mind.

## Materials

### Program Materials

- Visual schedule
- Sensory kit
- Egg shakers and/or scarves
- Therabands (or scarves/lengths of rope)
- Presenter instruments (optional, choose an instrument to match the book)
- Book(s)

### Activity stations

- Crayons and markers
- Coloring sheets
- Empty Kleenex boxes
- Rubber bands
- Instruments (at least two choices, such as egg shakers and tambourines)

## Program Schedule & Lyrics

### 1. Introduction w/ inclusive expectations and ways to participate

- Highlight the inclusive nature of the program
- Offer use of sensory kit: highlight noise canceling ear covers and sunglasses
- Offer additional noise-canceling ear covers
- Offer quiet space where kids can go to color/do a craft if overwhelmed
- Walk through visual schedule: “We have a visual schedule for our program today [show visual schedule]. First, we will\_\_\_, then we will\_\_\_, after we will\_\_\_, then we will say goodbye!”

### Sample introduction:

“Hello, and welcome to storytime! My name is\_\_\_. We’re very excited to have you here. Today’s storytime has been designed to include children with learning and sensory differences who enjoy music and movement. We encourage children and adults to participate in storytime in whatever way suits them best. You do not need to sit down or sit still, we welcome all wiggles as long as they are safe for you and safe for those around you. We have noise-cancelling headphones and sunglasses available to help support sensory needs during the program. If you need to take a break at any time, please do, and know you are welcome back!”



# Program Schedule & Lyrics Cont.

## 2. Hello Song “Good Morning Song” (bring out scarves and/or egg shakers)

*Good morning, good morning.  
How are you today?  
Good morning, good morning.  
I’m happy let’s play.*

*Good morning, good morning.  
How are you today?  
Good morning, good morning.  
I’m happy let’s play.*

*Good morning, good morning.  
How are you today?  
Good morning, good morning.  
I’m happy let’s play.*

*Good morning, good morning.  
How are you today?  
Good morning, good morning.  
I’m happy let’s play.*

*Stretch up, stretch down.  
Spin your head, turn around.  
Move your shoulders, up and down.  
Stretch your arms and turn around.*

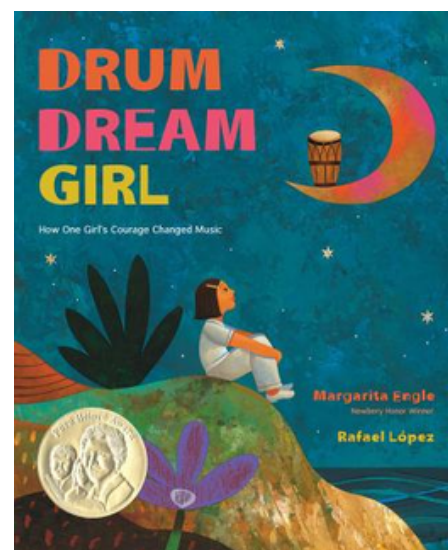
*Yeah, let’s play!*

## 3. Read Aloud: *Drum Dream Girl*, by Margarita Engle

- OR *Violet’s Music* by Angela Johnson (*Squeak, Rumble, Whomp! Whomp! Whomp!* By Wynton Marsalis is to make this a toddler level program)

### Multiple methods of engagement and participation

- Use instruments for different parts, have kids follow along w/shaker or scarf
  - Ask questions that kids can answer by speaking, or by holding up images of the instrument
  - What instrument is that?
  - Give all children bags with pictures of different instruments present in the picture book
  - Label each instrument
- Provide a flannel board or PowerPoint with images of each instrument



### Early Literacy Tip for Parents/Caregivers:

“Adults, asking fun or silly questions during shared reading can help engage kids in the story, and help them understand what’s going on in the story too.”

## Program Schedule & Lyrics Cont.

### 4. Movement song (w/therabands): “Row Row Row Your Boat”

Move the theraband like an oar, stretch up to the sky, stretch down low.

You can use scarves or rope if you do not have access to therabands

*Row, row, row your boat*

*Gently down the stream*

*Merrily merrily, merrily, merrily*

*Life is but a dream*

Repeat X4

### 5. Musical activity stations

#### Make an instrument

- Materials: Kleenex box, rubber bands
- Place 4-5 rubber bands across the empty kleenex box
- Children can strum the rubber bands or flip it to use as a drum



#### Instrument play station

- Materials: Shaker eggs, tambourines, etc. (choose at least two child-friendly instruments)
- Children can play with the instruments



#### Musical theme coloring station

- Materials: Crayons and markers
- Print out coloring pages of musical instruments used in the book
- Children can color the pages with the musical instruments

### 6. Clean Up (sing clean up song)

### 7. Goodbye Song "Goodbye to YOU" (with shaker eggs and instruments)

*Goodbye, see you next time everyone*

*Goodbye, see you next time everyone*

*Goodbye to you, goodbye to you, goodbye to you*

*Goodbye to me*

*Goodbye, see you next time everyone*

Repeat X4

# "All Activity" Program Plan

Level: Toddler-Preschool (*can add more complex activities for Kindergarten +*)

Length: 30mins

Theme: Activities

## Materials

### Program Materials

- Visual schedule
- Sensory kit
- Book display with books related to the activities

### Activity stations

- Items for sensory bins
- Coloring sheets
- Crayons and markers
- Items for a craft (optional)
- Lego/Duplo blocks
- Wooden/foam blocks

## Program Schedule & Lyrics

### 1. Introduction w/ inclusive expectations and ways to participate

- Highlight the inclusive nature of the program
- Highlight hands-on activities in the program
- Offer use of sensory kit: highlight noise canceling ear covers and sunglasses
- Offer quiet space where kids can go to color/do a craft if overwhelmed
- Walk through visual schedule: “We have a visual schedule for our program today [show visual schedule]. First, we will\_\_\_, then we will\_\_\_, after we will\_\_\_, then we will say goodbye!”

### Sample introduction:

“Hello, and welcome to storytime! My name is\_\_\_. We’re very excited to have you here. Today’s hands-on activity program has been designed to include children with learning and sensory differences. We encourage children and adults to participate in any or all activities today! We have noise-cancelling headphones and sunglasses available to help support sensory needs during the program. If you need to take a break at any time, please do, and know you are welcome back.”

# Program Schedule & Lyrics Cont.

## 2. Hello Song “Hello, Hello! Can You Clap Your Hands?”

Note: This song can be chanted rather than sung in order to support the sensory needs of your audience

*Hello, hello.*

*Hello, hello.*

*Hello, hello.*

*Can you clap your hands?*

*Can you stamp your feet?*

*Can you clap your hands?*

*Hello, hello.*

*Hello, hello.*

*Hello, hello.*

*Can you clap your hands?*

*Can you stamp your feet?*

*Can you stamp your feet?*

*Can you stretch up high?*

*Can you stretch up high?*

*Can you touch your toes?*

*Can you touch your toes?*

*Can you turn around?*

*Can you turn around?*

*Can you say, “Hello?”*

*Can you say, “Hello?”*

## 3. Activity Time (free choice of 3 activities)

### Activity #1: Sensory Bins

Materials: 3 bins, variety of items

- Fill one bin with squishy items (such as non-toxic water beads)
- Fill one bin with smooth items that can be scooped (such as beans)
- Fill one bin with crinkly items (such as crinkle-cut paper)

Include toys, and utensils such as scoops to play with the bins

Prompt: “This station has a lot of different things to touch and feel!”



### Activity #2: Coloring and Craft Table

- Materials: Coloring sheets, crayons, and markers
- Optional: Materials for a craft
- Prompt: “Let’s color and make things together at this station!”



### Activity #3: Block Play

- Materials: 2 different types of blocks (i.e., Lego/Duplo and wooden blocks)
- Prompt: “What can you build at this station?”



## Program Schedule & Lyrics Cont.

5. Clean Up (place items from activity stations back in bins/boxes)
6. Goodbye Song “See You Later, Alligator!”

Note: This short song can be repeated multiple times in different ways

*Goodbye, goodbye.*

*It's time to go.*

*Goodbye, goodbye.*

*I don't want to go.*

*See you later, alligator.*

*Bye bye bye, butterfly.*

*Goodbye!*