A boy and his dad start the day making pancakes together, but dad’s looming to-do list puts a damper on their shared fun. The boy alters the list, inventing imaginative ways he and his dad can complete the chores together. This book models a variety of ways that adults and kids can playfully interact during their daily routine.

Activity Ideas for Things to Do with Dad:

- In the book, the boy and his dad find interesting ways to perform a list of chores. Use simple pictures to illustrate each activity on a daily to-do list. Check off each activity after you and the child complete it together. Looking at pictures that represent words help kids realize that symbols have meaning. When the list is complete, ask questions about the day: “What did we do after breakfast? Do you remember what we did for our art activity?” Asking questions about all of the things that happened during the day can develop children’s sequencing and storytelling abilities.

- Explore playful ways to accomplish routines with children. Use a zany puppet to assist children in getting dressed. Have the puppet put the child’s shirt on their leg and ask, “Is that where shirts go? No! Shirts go over our shoulders, chest, and back.” Children absorb information about their world through play, the more they play and interact with the world around them, the more background knowledge they’ll have as a foundation for reading.

- Singing uses repetitive phrasing and rhymes which help improve children’s ability to remember—a skill they’ll need when learning to read. When children are brushing teeth, washing up for a meal, or combing hair, try singing This is the Way to the tune of Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush, and change the words to fit the task.

This is the way we brush our teeth, brush our teeth, brush our teeth.
This is the way we brush our teeth, so early in the morning.

The CLEL Bell Picture Book Awards are given to books that provide excellent support of early literacy development in young children. For more information and for other activity sheets, visit http://www.ciel.org and select the CLEL Bell Awards tab.

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