

**Dads & Kids Book Club**  
**Leo the Late Bloomer**  
*Session Outline*

**Story Related Outcomes for Dads:**

1. Dads will understand the use of stories as a way to examine parenting issues.
2. Dads will understand the importance of celebrating their child's developmental milestones.
3. Dads will increase their awareness of the roles of patience and support in encouraging growth and development in children.

**Story Related Outcomes for Children:**

1. Children will understand differences in how people learn and grow.
2. Children will understand that learning to do new things can take time.

**Schedule of Activities:**

Warm-in Time (10 minutes)

- Welcome, name-tags
- Scavenger Hunt – Refer to the resource page for scavenger hunt activities

Large Group/Story Reading (20 minutes)

- Introductions
- Song – Refer to the resource page for song suggestions
- Introduce and read the book *Leo the Late Bloomer*

Dads & Kids Activity Time (30 minutes)

- Snack – Chocolate milk and animal crackers
- Dramatic Play – Animal puppet theater
- Craft – Leo tigers
- Science – Hard and easy – Test what is hard and what is easy to pick up
- Art – Rainbow markers – Draw or write like the animals in the book
- Literacy/Writing – Practice writing shapes, letters or words that you know

Dad's Discussion Time (25 minutes)

1. Parent Session for Dads
  - See Parent Session Plan
  - Hand out books and tip sheets for *Leo the Late Bloomer*
2. Early Childhood Session for Children
  - Children continue to work on projects – snack, art, etc.
  - Group story and song at the end

Closing (5 minutes)

- Thank yous, reminder for next session, goodbye

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Tips for Reading

**Helping your child to enjoy the story**

1. Read over the story and practice the rhythm and flow of the words.
2. Point out and talk about what Leo is trying to do in each picture, and talk about what the other animals are doing in each picture.
3. Point out the places in the book where Leo's dad is watching Leo and where Leo's dad is trying not to watch Leo.
4. Ask questions about Leo's feelings. How does he look on each page, happy or sad?

**Helping your child to understand the story**

5. Talk to your child about what it means to bloom. Talk about a flower blooming. Talk about what it means for children to bloom.
6. Talk about something your child is learning to do, and talk about something you are learning to do.
7. Share with your child some of the things you see your child doing now that he/she could not do when they were younger.
8. Talk about how Leo feels when he begins doing some of the things he could not previously do—when he blooms. Share your own feelings about being able to do something new. Ask your child how he/she feels when he/she has learned something new.

**Helping your child to learn new words**

9. Point out how each animal writes its own name, and use that page to match the written names of the animals to the animals.
10. Point out the sounds the animals make when they speak. Ask your child what sound Leo would make if he could speak.
11. Help your child to understand the word patience—relate it to a time when you were asked to wait for something or when your child was asked to wait for something.

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*Parent Session*

**Ice-Breaker/Introductions**

- How did the mother and father act differently in the story?

**Story Sharing** – Discuss the book

- Hand out books and recap the story - When everyone starts blooming, poor Leo is left behind. He can't read, he can't write -- he can't even eat neatly. But with the encouragement of his mother and the patience of his father, Leo proves that eventually everyone blooms.
- Share some of the ways you have seen your child(ren) bloom over the past year.
  - Were there times when your child was trying to learn a new task that you responded like Leo's father? Share an example.
  - Were there times when you acted like Leo's mother? Share an example.
  - What do you think was different about these times?
  - What makes it easier or harder for you to wait for your child to bloom?
- Why were the other animals in the story?
  - Do you find yourself comparing your child to others? In what areas of development?
  - As a child, were you compared with someone else? How did that make you feel?
  - When can comparisons be motivating to a child? When can they hurt?
- What can we do as parents to support our children as they are growing and blooming?
- Ask the dads to pair up with a partner and talk about ways to show patience with child(ren).

**Story Reading**

- What strategies did you notice the story reader using to get the children involved?
- How did they work with your child?
- Distribute and discuss "Tips for Reading *Leo the Late Bloomer*."

**Closure**

- Books such as *Leo the Late Bloomer* can be helpful to children - highlighting children's developmental struggles.
- Books such as *Leo the Late Bloomer* can also be helpful to parents - illuminating struggles some parents experience.
- Enjoy sharing your stories of blooming with your children.

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**Materials List**

**Cooking**

- Chocolate milk
  - Cups
  - Milk
  - Chocolate syrup
  - Spoons for stirring
- Animal Crackers
  - One bag or box of animal crackers

**Craft – Leo tigers**

- Picture of a tiger's face (drawn or photocopied) to put in the center of contact paper
- Contact paper – cut to the same shape as the tiger's face, two inches bigger around
- Pieces of orange and black yarn to put onto the contact paper to frame Leo's face
- Scissors for older children to do their own cutting

**Art – Rainbow marker pictures – Draw or write like the animals in the book**

- Drawing paper
- Markers
- Masking tape to tape three markers together – make several sets

**Science – Hard and Easy**

- One bag of cotton balls
- Fabric scraps
- Tongs for children to use to pick up items to see what is easy for them to pick up and what is hard to pick up

**Dramatic Play – Animal puppet theater**

- Various animal puppets
- Puppet theater

**Literacy/Writing Activity – Practice what you know – Practice writing shapes, letters, or words that you know**

- Paper
- Markers or crayons for writing