



## RAR 98 – Introducing Kids to Foreign Languages Through Reading Aloud

**Sarah:** You're listening to the Read-Aloud Revival podcast. This is the podcast that helps you make meaningful and lasting connections with your kids through books.

Hello, hello, Sarah Mackenzie here. You've got episode 98 of the Read-Aloud Revival podcast. I'm really excited about today's show. It's a good one, and I had such a great conversation with today's guest. Do you have kids who you're hoping to teach a foreign language to? You're going to love today's show. We're talking about foreign language acquisition through reading aloud. It's a good one. So, before we get to the show I want to make sure you know you can text the word BOOKS to the number 345345 to get our free read-aloud book list. Or, if you don't text you can just head to [ReadAloudRevival.com](http://ReadAloudRevival.com), pop your email into the page there, we'll send you a book list for free. OK, let's get to the show.

So many of us want to share new languages and cultures with our kids but we don't know where to start if we're not bilingual ourselves. Well, today's guest has some ideas for us. Anne Guarnera has a BA in comparative literature from Bryn Mawr, and a PhD in Spanish from the University of Virginia. She's also got two sons whom she's educating bilingually at home where they live in Washington D.C. She runs a website called [LanguageLearningatHome.com](http://LanguageLearningatHome.com), and that site's goal is to help homeschooling families study foreign languages better while enjoying the process. One of her biggest recommendations are books, of course, and books are something we do really well here at Read-Aloud Revival, so I

can't wait to jump into this conversation. Anne, welcome to the Read-Aloud Revival.

**Anne:** Thank you, Sarah. I'm so excited to be with you today.

**Sarah:** I am too. I am really looking forward to this conversation. Before we start, do you want to give us a little, maybe background on how old your kids are, or when you started studying Spanish, or something fun like that?

### 2:20 Meet Anne

**Anne:** Sure. So, I was doing the math in my head today and I realized that I have been studying Spanish for 15 years now...

**Sarah:** Oh wow.

**Anne:** ... but I actually didn't start studying Spanish until I was in college, and I basically started studying it by accident. As a high schooler I had actually planned to major in French, and as a senior, when I got into college I signed up to live in the French language dorm, because I was so excited about this idea. But, when I arrived on campus and I took my college's proficiency exam, what I discovered was that, although I had taken French classes all through high school and I had done the assignments and learned the verb conjugations I actually was very, very incompetent at speaking the language. So, I scored really low and placed into the class that was known as Baby French, and so ...

**Sarah:** That's a boost for your confidence right at the beginning.

**Anne:** ... I know, I know. So, my 17 year old self took that and said, "Never mind. I'm going to major in Spanish," which I had not really studied.



**Sarah:** So, you had never studied Spanish in high school or anything before that?

**Anne:** I had taken one year as an elective as a senior.

**Sarah:** OK.

**Anne:** My choice was between taking an additional AP science or taking Spanish...

**Sarah:** Oh yes, so that's a no-brainer.

**Anne:** ... right. So, that was the extent of the exposure that I had to it, but I started in Baby Spanish in college, and it was actually a wonderful experience because starting over in learning a foreign language helped me to realize that I really needed to understand how to learn a foreign language.

## 4:12 Like learning an instrument ...

So, what I discovered over studying Spanish throughout college was that so much of language proficiency and learning to become fluent in another language is like learning to play a musical instrument. So, at the beginning you're learning individual notes and how to read music. In the case of language learning, that would be something like vocabulary words or verb conjugations, and it takes a lot of deliberate and repetitive practice to be able to put those things together, to actually make music, or for language learning, to actually be able to communicate in that language. And, that's what I didn't understand as a high school student but discovered as a college student. So, I was really grateful for that impulsive decision to start over and learn another language because it taught me so much about the process of language learning itself.

**Sarah:** This is really interesting to me, because I think what I hear you saying is basically, you have a unique perspective because you could almost side-step that whole cursive knowledge that most of us suffer under once we've learned how to do something well, we almost forget how hard it was to begin it, but because you began it as basically a young adult you have that experience in the not too distant past of what it feels like to be at square one and then figuring out what it's going to take. And, I think that's really cool because I think that gives you a helpful perspective on where our kids are when they're starting basically at square one as well.

**Anne:** Absolutely. And, I think learning languages as an adult has definitely given me a unique perspective on what students can do to make themselves successful, because I had to really think through that process in this sort of meta-cognitive way, about figuring out, 'OK, how do I study this subject?' which, to be honest, I think learning to study a foreign language taught me how to study many other subjects well also.

## 5:57 Spanish at home

**Sarah:** That's interesting. I could see that. Now, you speak Spanish at home with your kids, right?

**Anne:** I do.

**Sarah:** And, your husband? He speaks Spanish?

**Anne:** He does. He was a French major, so that was part of my interest in French. We're high school sweethearts.

**Sarah:** I love it. The tale gets juicier.

**Anne:** So, we're high school sweethearts. We had discussed studying abroad in Paris together as college students. We went to different colleges. I went to an all women's school, but we



thought maybe our junior years we'll meet up in Paris and we'll become this dream team of French speakers. I jettisoned that plan pretty quickly.

**Sarah:** Everything changes, honey.

**Anne:** Everything changes. With that said, so languages are our passion in our family and my husband and I also both speak Portuguese as well, so languages are a big thing for us.

**Sarah:** Yes. So, how old are your kids?

**Anne:** They are 4 and 1, so we are just starting our parenting journey.

**Sarah:** OK, and I am looking at a picture of them right now on your website, LanguageLearningatHome.com, and they are adorable. Boys, right?

**Anne:** Thank you so much. Yes, two boys. Their names are Javier and Felix.

**Sarah:** Oh. And, so do you, when you're speaking with them at home do you transition between Spanish and English and Portuguese too? Or, do you primarily speak one or another? Or French? I guess, your husband speaks French. Do you speak French at all now?

**Anne:** I had to go back and learn French as a graduate student in order to complete my PhD, so I do read French but my pronunciation is awful, so we don't speak any French in the home.

**Sarah:** Got it.

**Anne:** I speak exclusively in Spanish to the boys, and my husband speaks probably about 50% Spanish, 50% English.

**Sarah:** Wow. This is so fascinating to me.

## 7:36 How books can help foreign language learning

So, of course, at the Read-Aloud Revival we love books. So, we're always talking about books. Can you talk to us a little bit about how books can help our kids learn a new language?

**Anne:** Absolutely. In terms of language learning reading aloud in a foreign language offers all of the same benefits that you would get from reading aloud in a child's native language; like, familiarizing children with complex grammar and vocabulary, and helping them to become fluent in their speech and reading of that language. And, interestingly enough, Sarah, all the research that we have on language learning tells us that adding a foreign language to your child's study does not take away from their development in the first language. And, the research we have on the brain shows us that multilingual children actually become more verbally adept than monolingual kids because learning a second or third language adds to the brain's verbal processing skills. It doesn't take away from that ability. And, I think, obviously, books are a very important part of getting kids to acquire that second language. I think that there's two special advantages that reading aloud in a foreign language gives to children beyond those kinds of linguistic supports of learning the language itself.

**Sarah:** OK.

**Anne:** The first is that reading aloud to children in a foreign language maximizes the development of their emotional intelligence by teaching them to make meaningful comparisons across cultures and languages. So when children read books in another language they learn to see how cultures and languages differ and how they're the same. And, those meaningful comparisons ultimately



brought in children's perspectives on a world. And so, I have some examples of that, that I think will flesh out for your listeners what that looks like.

**Sarah:** Yeah, yeah, give me some examples – that would be helpful.

**Anne:** Sure, OK. So, let's talk about how this may work on a linguistic level. There are instances in the translation of a particular word that when children understand those differences they can see multiple viewpoints of the world. So, in French, for example, the word goldfish is actually poisson rouge, which translates literally to red fish.

**Sarah:** That's so fun, and actually so beautiful, too. I kind of what you to say it again.

**Anne:** I apologize to any native French speakers who are listening.

**Sarah:** Well, I just thought it sounded gorgeous, but I don't speak French.

**Anne:** So, let's think about that for a second. I mean, that brings you up to the question, what color is that fish? Is it gold or is it red? Or, maybe it's kind of a red gold and neither language is capturing that color perfectly. And so, that leads you to think is our perception of color tied to the language that we speak? So, just that one example of single word from French brings us to some pretty deep, philosophical considerations. And so, that's one of the really interesting ways, one of the kind of meaningful comparisons that kids can make when they speak more than one language.

## 10:35 Broadening kids' perspectives

And another one is that knowing another language can broaden our children's perspective on the world from an even deeper level. So, there are some words in other languages that have no clear translation into English. One of my favorites is the word saudade in Portuguese. So, saudade means something like a melancholy nostalgia, and when you say that you have saudede it means that you're missing something that you know you'll never get back, so you're longing for this thing in like a bitter-sweet way. And, as you can just tell from my explanation it took me a lot of English words to describe this very complex idea that's represented by a single word ...

**Sarah:** One word. Right.

**Anne:** ... in Portuguese. One word. But here's the even cooler thing. I think when a Portuguese speaker says they're experiencing saudede they're experiencing an emotion that doesn't exist in the English language.

**Sarah:** That's right.

**Anne:** So, when our kids learn other languages and learn to relate to the world through other languages they're getting access to a whole range of emotions and experiences that they otherwise wouldn't have known if they were to remain speakers of only one language.

**Sarah:** Yeah, I can totally see that. I can see how then whether they're learning the word goldfish or learning this other Portuguese word that I'm not going to try and pronounce, it kind of breaks you out of thinking that they way I see things is the way things are. You know? Like, that very narrow-minded thinking that we have about the world exists as I see it, and from my one perspective is



the one true way to see it. Kind of, broadens our children's horizons to realize that there are infinite number of ways to experience the world or to see the world that this just, sort of, in the very concrete way shows that not everyone sees that goldfish and thinks gold fish. Right?

## 12:45 Parenting differently

**Anne:** Right. Absolutely. And, for me actually, knowing another language and traveling to different countries and living there, one of the best things for me about that process and those experiences I've had is that it's helped me, like you say, from becoming too fixed in one ideological camp, and one place in my life in which it's made a big impact is in my parenting because I have lived in five different countries now, and I see how parents do things differently in those places, and what it made me realize is that a lot of the things that we think are like essential parenting practices are actually really culturally determined. And, that's like from big picture to small picture. For example, all our friends in Mexico – their kids don't go to bed, their babies don't go to bed until 10pm.

**Sarah:** Oh my goodness. Wow, and we're all counting down – it's like 6:30pm and we're looking at the clock.

**Anne:** They're pretty much horrified when we leave a dinner to put our kids down to bed at 7:00pm, they're like, "What's wrong with you?"

**Sarah:** Oh my goodness, right.

## 13:51 The Read-Aloud Family

We'll get back to today's episode in just a moment. But, I wanted to take a minute to make sure you know that the brand new book, *The*

*Read-Aloud Family: Making Meaningful and Lasting Connections with Your Kids* is available now. This is a brand new book I wrote just for you because I know that you'll never regret the time you spend reading to your kids. I also know that connecting deeply with our families can be really difficult in our busy, technology-driven, loud world, right? Reading aloud is one of the best ways to be fully present with our kids even after they can read themselves. In the book, *The Read-Aloud Family* you're going to find the inspiration you need to start a read-aloud movement in your own home. You'll discover how to prepare your kids for academic success, and develop their empathy and compassion through books. You'll find out how you can find time to read-aloud even in the midst of your busiest days with school, sports, dinner dishes. You'll learn how to choose books across a variety of sibling interests and ages. And, you'll learn how to make reading aloud the very best part of your family's day. *The Read-Aloud Family* offers some age-appropriate book lists; I've read every single book from cover to cover that's in this book, and there's almost 400 recommendations, I believe, at last count. From a toddler's wonder to your teenager's resistance, you're going to find practical strategies and the book recommendations to match so you can making reading aloud a meaningful family ritual in your home. I believe reading aloud not only has the power to change your family, it has the power to change the world. The book's available now wherever books are sold or you can head right to [TheReadAloudFamily.com](http://TheReadAloudFamily.com) to grab your copy today.



## 15:37 Two resources

**Anne:** Part of my work at Language Learning at Home is to encourage families to pursue language learning and give them the tools that they need to do that even if the parents don't speak another language themselves.

**Sarah:** OK.

**Anne:** So, the good news that I have, Sarah, for you and for anyone else who may be listening, is that we are in a moment technologically speaking in which we have so many resources that can help you. And, the two that I would really recommend to families are first, audio books...

**Sarah:** Yes.

**Anne:** ...yes, it's actually a strategy that I have used with my children inspired completely by your show.

**Sarah:** Oh, that's awesome.

**Anne:** I had never listened to audio books before I started listening to the Read-Aloud Revival and I had never considered teaching my children how to listen to them before I started listening to the Read-Aloud Revival, and luckily, you started doing this podcast when my older son was about 6 months or 7 months old...

**Sarah:** OK.

**Anne:** ... So I remember listening to your first shows with him in the bath and thinking, 'Wow, I could do this.' But audio books in a foreign language are a great tool for families who don't speak a foreign language because they give kids lots of exposure to real language in the target language, they give kids exposure to native speakers who have, generally speaking, neutral accents. So, the narrators who are chosen for audio books are generally very easy to

understand. And, they're just convenient for a modern lifestyle because you can listen to your audio books in the car or your kids can listen to them on the iPad during rest time, or something like that, and so, they're something that you can use in many different settings. And, the other resource that I would recommend highly, which is very similar, for parents who don't speak a language, is to look up foreign language read-alouds on YouTube.

**Sarah:** Oh, I've never even thought of that!

**Anne:** There are so many; thousands and thousands that have been uploaded by native speaking parents. Some of them are videos of the parents actually reading the book, and some are more like technological versions of read-alouds where, for example, the words will track on the page, almost like subtitles as the narrator reads them. So, those are excellent because your child can see what word is being read, since it's being highlighted as the narrator reads it, and going through this story and getting the support of having images in front of them as well, which is actually what research shows us the best way to learn vocabulary in foreign language is to connect new words to images.

**Sarah:** Oh, is that right?

**Anne:** It is. And, when you think about it in terms of language, your native language development, when you say "cat" to your child in English, if you're an English speaker, they probably see a picture of a cat in their mind. And so, that's what you want to go for in foreign languages as well, instead of having your child immediately go to the translation you can help them develop that image in their mind by attaching it to pictures, like in these pictures books that are read-aloud on YouTube.



**Sarah:** I had never thought of that, but that makes so much sense. I think on episode 83 of the podcast ([ReadAloudRevival.com/83](http://ReadAloudRevival.com/83)) Kortney, who's our Read-Aloud Revival Community Director talked about how her daughter found the book *¡Corre, perro, corre!* from (I'm sure you're cringing at my Spanish pronunciation there – let me try that again), she found the Spanish version of *Go, Dog, Go!* by P. D. Eastman at the library and then when she's at home, just for fun, she puts the Spanish and the English versions next to each other and because it's really easy for her to decode and read in Spanish that way. I had never thought of that either. So, I could see how picture books especially would be really useful either as read-alouds on YouTube or getting a different language from the library or wherever and being able to compare it with the picture book you have on hand at home, and that could probably be useful no matter what age your kids are, right?

**Anne:** Absolutely. Picture books, older children will go through them faster but they're an equally useful pedagogical tool, in terms of helping kids develop vocabulary. So, they are something that can be used with any age group.

## 19:42 Order of learning

**Sarah:** So, would you recommend a certain order of learning, as far as first teach your kids a certain amount of vocabulary or grammar syntax and then move into reading aloud or would you recommend having them watch YouTube videos, let's say, or listen to audio books of stories that they're already familiar with in a different language, or how would you recommend going about that?

**Anne:** I think that the latter situation that you described is what I would generally recommend

to parents. I recommend starting with a picture book that your child is already familiar with so that they can focus on the language and not so much the narrative.

**Sarah:** Oh, that makes sense.

**Anne:** So, they will be able to pay more attention to what's being read. If you, yourself, don't speak that language then you can follow along with an audio book. So, oftentimes libraries like ours will have these bags that include an audio book and the picture book in a foreign language so you can check out the whole kit and very easily listen to the book, the audio book, while you're following along in the picture book, or even in the board book. They have board books available. So, starting with those classic books that were your kids' favorite and using those as your entry way into foreign language read-alouds is a great strategy.

**Sarah:** I can see that being a really quick way to get vocabulary, too, because you've got the images like you were saying, you've got the images right there in front of you as well.

**Anne:** Absolutely. And, you know, you can make that, you can extend that audio book or reading or read-aloud as much as you want, that can be your basis for creating vocabulary flash card review or for making like a memory game within the image of a fish in the target language, so you can do more based off of that book to reinforce what they have heard through their read-aloud.

## 21:53 Help for single language learners

**Sarah:** So, I guess, my next question that's just popping up now is do you think there's a benefit to doing this if you aren't intending or if you don't



feel like you have the skill necessarily to let's say, teach your child to be completely fluent in another language. Is there a benefit to reading, or to exposing them to these books in other languages even if it's not necessarily your goal to help them be fluent in that language, or even what you think is your ability, may be more accurate?

**Anne:** I do think there is a value to doing that, and I think that that goes back to what I was saying earlier about teaching your kids to make meaningful comparisons.

**Sarah:** Yeah.

**Anne:** Because, by reading foreign language books and helping your children to see the differences between your native language and whatever the language that you're reading in is, you're also teaching them about the way that their first language works, which, I think for most of your listeners is probably English. So, there's a kind of language learning process that goes on that also helps them understand grammar and vocabulary in their native language.

**Sarah:** Yes.

**Anne:** So, there's a lot of value to learning a foreign language for that purpose and, I think that, this is something particularly with the homeschool community has caught on, in terms of learning Latin.

**Sarah:** I was just going to mention that.

**Anne:** And, I think you're starting studying Latin, right?

**Sarah:** We have in the past, we're not doing it currently. My daughter did four years of Latin and pretty much learned everything she knows about

grammar and sentence structure because of Latin not because of English grammar.

**Anne:** Ah, yes. And you know what? I learned English grammar through studying Spanish.

**Sarah:** That makes so much sense.

**Anne:** Yes.

**Sarah:** I took Spanish in high school and I remember being completely baffled by this idea of conjugations. And yet, my daughter who has been doing Latin declensions and conjugations since she was quite younger, when we're approaching high school level foreign language studies now, it's so much simpler. She doesn't have the same level intellectual hurdles I had to jump because she understands the way language works better because there's so much of that that crosses over regardless of what language you're studying, right? It's just the basic understanding of how language works and how it changes based on how the words are used in the sentence.

**Anne:** Absolutely. So, I think giving kids that kind of framework is great and also, I think, we don't know what our children will grow up to be, we don't know what they'll be called to do, but knowing a second language is a skill that can be used in almost any profession, and including, if your child never leaves their hometown, they may encounter speakers of other languages whom they want to befriend or whom they'll be working with or whom they'll be serving in some capacity. So, I think there's a lot of value to exposing kids to foreign language in order to give them the confidence that if they are in a situation in which they want to improve their language proficiency that they have the basic tools and methods with which to do that.



**Sarah:** Yeah, I don't know, especially in the way that our world is set up now and how we operate on this global economy, anyone's going to say that was time wasted ...

**Anne:** Yeah, right.

## 24:43 The reason to expose kids to languages

**Sarah:** ... learning another language. You say this on your website, you said, "I want my kids to feel "at home" in both languages—not so that they can check a box on college admissions paperwork or gloat over their bilingualism, but so that they can befriend people from many different cultures around the world. It is my hope that their experience of language learning and cultural education will give them a rich understanding of our beautiful, diverse world, and a humble desire to learn from and serve others. And that right there is, I think, all the reason that I need, as a parent, to want to expose my kids to other languages because that's the same thing I want for my kids by exposing them to all these books, is this diverse understanding of our beautiful world and all the different perspectives and the ways people live and how we can love each other. It's eye-opening and it's heart-rending, and I think foreign language can do that in the same way a book can, and the fact that we can help them learn another language through books just makes it all the sweeter.

**Anne:** Absolutely, Sarah. I'm completely with you.

## 25:41 Tips for finding foreign language books

**Sarah:** OK, so can you share some tips for helping us find good foreign language books?

This is a question we hear, I don't know how often. Very, very often. People say, "I want my kids to find books in Spanish," (that's one of the most common requests that we see in email) and we don't know where to turn them, so I'm hoping that you can help us.

**Anne:** Absolutely. Well, for families who are specifically looking for resources in Spanish I would be happy to have you visit the Resource Library that I have available on my website which contains dozens and dozens of books, CDs (music), and audio books and podcasts in Spanish, that are ranked by proficiency level and that have descriptions that will tell you a little bit about what they're about so that you can match them to your child's interests.

**Sarah:** OK, that's fantastic. That's at LanguageLearningatHome.com, right?

**Anne:** That's right.

**Sarah:** OK, perfect. And we'll make sure we put a link to that in the Show Notes so head to ReadAloudRevival.com/98 if you want a direct link or you can just head over to LanguageLearningatHome.com to find that. OK, I'm going to check that out, too.

**Anne:** Great. Beyond that, I have a few other resources that I have found helpful. Our family's number one resource has been the library. And, that sounds almost cliché but our children's education has been so deeply enriched by the books that we have found there.

**Sarah:** Yeah.

**Anne:** So, I recommend that parents first get acquainted with their library's foreign language collection. And, in doing that, you may have to be a little more proactive than normal.



**Sarah:** OK.

**Anne:** So, like one thing you could do is to ask your library staff if they have anyone who works there, who's a native speaker of that language, and of course, don't forget that even if your library doesn't have a huge collection of physical books, they may have a great collection of foreign language titles available through their electronic services. So, we have actually checked out a lot of our Spanish audio books through both Hoopla and Overdrive. So, if your library has subscriptions to any sort of services like that be sure to check them, because they often have resources available that are simply either too expensive to purchase as physical copies or out of print or something like that, but they would have on those electronic resources. Even if your local library doesn't have a particularly extensive collection there is an online resource called The International Children's Digital Library and they offer over 4,000 books in 59 different languages that you can read online for free, so that can be another great resource for you to find something, particularly if your children are studying a language other than Spanish or French or the big romance languages.

**Sarah:** OK, this reminds me, we had Amy Commers on an earlier episode of the podcast, I can't remember which episode it is now but we'll link to it in the Show Notes ([ReadAloudRevival.com/65](http://ReadAloudRevival.com/65)), she's a Youth Services Librarian and we were talking about how we, as parents, can make better use of our libraries, and one of the things she said was the digital collection or the digital offerings your library has, libraries are spending a lot of their resources on getting these great digital offerings for us, but because we don't see them when you walk into the library, it's not there on the shelf,

sometimes we don't know they exist, so don't forget the whole digital collection or resource collection. I didn't even know about the one you just mentioned. What was that one called again?

**Anne:** That one is called The International Children's Digital Library.

**Sarah:** Cool. OK.

**Anne:** My final suggestion would be that if you have money to invest in purchasing some foreign language books, it may be easier for you to purchase them directly from children's publishers who specialize in publishing books in that language, because they often have their sites arranged in ways that are more intuitive for parents to use. So, instead of wading through a huge collection of books that may be at all different levels of proficiency or age-appropriateness, you can sort their books by age, or the age of difficulty of the book as well as by theme or genre. So, I have a post on my blog actually, about where to find those children's publishers so that you can get easy access to foreign language books because that's something that we, as a family, have had to exert a little more effort in to being able to find the high quality literature that we want to purchase but that we also want to make sure is within the interest of our son.

**Sarah:** OK, that's perfect. And I'll make sure we have a link in the Show Notes to that blog post so everyone can find that because that sounds really helpful.



## 30:03 Favorite books for getting started

Can you tell us what some of your favorite books are for getting started with language learning at home?

**Anne:** Absolutely. So, like I said earlier, for beginning language learners I love starting with simple picture books. So, think back to those first board books that you read with your kids; things like *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* Just like those are excellent for teaching the rhythm and vocabulary and grammar of the English language to your child, reading those in a foreign language will reinforce all of those things in the new language as well. And, most of Eric Carle's books, in particular, are available in many different translations so those are a great one to start with. In addition, many of his books are available as audio books, so that's a great support for parents who don't speak the language that their children are studying.

**Sarah:** I didn't realize that.

**Anne:** And, I also love to start kids with books of simple children's poetry, like nursery rhymes or more like simple nature focus poetry or animal poetry. Things that will help your child become more comfortable with the language. So, for Spanish learners the author José-Luis Orozco is a classic in kid's literature and kid's music in Spanish, and he has a book of traditional songs and poetry that's called *De Colores* and it's beautifully illustrated and has a CD that accompanies it as well, so you can hear him read the poems that he has written as well as the music that he has written.

**Sarah:** That's fantastic.

**Anne:** That's a really good entry point for any Spanish learner.

**Sarah:** Yeah, sounds like it. And then you can put it in the car, too.

**Anne:** Absolutely. And there's a similar book, it's for French learners. It's called *Un Deux Trois: First French Rhymes* ...

**Sarah:** OK.

**Anne:** ... which is a good introduction to that language, which has the same kind of genre of nursery rhymes and simple children's poetry to get kids used to the sound of the language and help them to have that first exciting experience of listening to something in the foreign language and realizing, 'Hey, I understand this!'

**Sarah:** Yeah, yeah. I can see that. And then it just takes down the whole intimidation factor, right?

**Anne:** Oh, absolutely. For intermediate level students, so children who have been studying language for maybe two years and have tried to consistently practice that language, you could go for more sophisticated picture books, like translations of *Love You Forever* or *Harold and the Purple Crayon*. Those have the benefit of using a text that your child is familiar with and with pictures to support their comprehension but uses more sophisticated grammar and vocabulary. So, they are being challenged but they don't feel completely out of their element with that kind of read-aloud.

**Sarah:** Perfect. Especially if it's something they're familiar with, like you said ...

**Anne:** Yeah.

**Sarah:** .. because like you said, you're not getting distracted or caught up in the narrative, you know



that, so now you get to just focus on the actual language.

**Anne:** Absolutely. And, for advanced language learners, so if you have children who have studied language for awhile, there are *Magic Tree House* books ...

**Sarah:** Oh yay.

**Anne:** Mary Pope Osborne has been translated into more than 30 languages.

**Sarah:** That's amazing.

**Anne:** So, we actually listened to those in our house. I'm undertaking an extremely long project of recording those books in Spanish for my son to listen to during his rest time.

**Sarah:** Oh wow.

**Anne:** It's a little intense but he loves, he's obsessed with those books. So, I want to capitalize on his love of them and really get him the maximum language input by doing that. So, I've been working on my Annie and Jack voices and I think they're pretty good at this point.

**Sarah:** That's awesome. We never get tired of Annie and Jack at our house.

**Anne:** They're so amazing. And, for language learners, the books are really neatly arranged because they're so thematic, so your child will learn so much about vocabulary related to the middle ages by listening to *Christmas in Camelot* or by reading the *Christmas in Camelot* book in the foreign language. So, I think that's really nice that those books are arranged in that way.

**Sarah:** Well, that makes a lot of sense because then you have a lot of Christmas-y vocabulary that naturally occurring in the story, right, without having to do – so much more interesting than just

giving a student a list of vocabulary words without the context for making it matter, right?

**Anne:** Absolutely, absolutely.

## 34:48 Where to find Anne

**Sarah:** OK, well I'm totally inspired, so I'm going to be going to my library, talking to my librarian. If people want to explore Language Learning at Home more after listening to this episode where are the best places to find you?

**Anne:** The best places to find me are on Twitter and my handle is @langsathome (on Twitter) and you can also either follow my Facebook page which is LanguageLearningatHome to keep you updated on the latest blog posts, or you can join the Facebook community that I've started which is called The Language Learning at Home Community. And, we have a group of parents there who are learning all different languages from Chinese to Mandarin to Vietnamese, and sharing tips and resources about what they have found that's worked for them to educate their children in the foreign language at home.

**Sarah:** This is all so helpful. Thank you so much for taking the time to come talk to us. We'll make sure we visit your site. I'm inspired to put some books on hold at the library and visit your resources and start bringing in some more books in foreign languages to my home. I think this is going to be fantastic and I hope our listeners are inspired, too. Thanks again.

**Anne:** Thank you so much, Sarah.

## 36:02 Let the kids speak

Now, it's time for Let the Kids Speak. This is my favorite part of the podcast where kids tell us



about their favorite stories that have been read-aloud to them.

**Child1:** My name is Melissa and my favorite book is *Peter Rabbit*. I like it because he always gets into trouble.

**Child2:** My name is Diego, and I am 12 years old. And I live in the state of Minnesota. And, my favorite book is *Eragon* by Christopher Paolini. And, my favorite part is when Eragon's big jewel turns out to be a dragon's egg and when he kills the Urgals.

**Child3:** My name is Truman and I'm 9 years old and I live in Minnesota. My favorite book is *The Hobbit* and I like about it when Bilbo Baggins tricks Gollum with the riddles and gets the magic ring.

**Child4:** My name is Jamie and I am 6 years old and I live in Minnesota and my favorite book is *Charlotte's Web*.

**Child5:** My name is **[\*\*inaudible\*\*]** and I'm 4 and I live in Minnesota and I love *Puss in Boots* because the cat told the ogre [mom: the ogre] is that the little kid [mom: oh, are you talking about John?] yeah [mom: oh, ok. So, the cat told John ... what?] he said bathe. And then he said, "Why? Go ... go ... [mom: he told him to go to bathe in the river.] Mm-hm. [mom: is that your favorite part?] yeah.

**Child6:** [mom: what's your name?] Carson. [mom: how old are you, Carson?] 3. [mom: 3. And, where do you live, Carson?] **[\*\*inaudible\*\*]** [mom: and what is your favorite book?] *Pooh*. [mom: why is *Pooh* your favorite book?] **[\*\*inaudible\*\*]** [mom: who's your favorite?] *Pooh*. *Pooh's* my favorite.

**Child7:** My name is Kenley. I'm 6 years old. I live in Batavia, Illinois. My favorite book is *Treasure of*

*the **[\*\*inaudible\*\*]*** because Daniel's leg got healed.

**Child8:** My name is Caleb. I'm 9 years old. I live in Batavia, Illinois. My favorite book is *The Green Ember* because of the sword fighting and hero deeds.

**Child9:** Hello, my name is **[\*\*inaudible\*\*]**. I am 5 years old and my favorite book is *Dick and Jane* because Jane's brother steals her blue pack and hides it in down a tree.

**Child10:** Hi, my name is Chloe and I'm 5 years old and I live in Missouri, and my favorite book is *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe* and one of my favorite parts is these kids live in this house and them discovered this wardrobe and the wardrobe has this town called Narnia and the discovered a lion, his name was Aslan. Bye.

**Child11:** My name is Ellie. I am 8 years old. I'm from Kyle, Texas, and my favorite mystery, well, audio book, is *The Boxcar Children: The pizza mystery*. I recommend it because of the song and because of the ending. And my favorite character is Jessie. It's just so good. And I recommend it to kids because of that.

**Sarah:** Alright, that's awesome. Thank you, kids, I always love hearing your recommendations and I love hearing your voices. If your kids would like to be featured on the Read-Aloud Revival podcast, go to [ReadAloudRevival.com](http://ReadAloudRevival.com), scroll to the bottom of the page and you'll see where they can leave a message. We actually play every message that we receive there in the order it's received. You can coach your kids through it, you can help them, you can tell them what to say if they're really little, or your kids can write it all out and read it, it's totally fine. We can clean it up in editing, and we love to hear from your kids. Don't forget to snag your free book list at

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