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| **Story Stems Strategy** | **What the strategy looks like in the classroom:** | **Tips and tricks to share:** |
| **Family Talk Tree** | Teachers set the stage by placing a small fake tree near the sign-in book. A question, written in large print, would then be placed next to the tree. Families jot down their answers to the question on sticky notes (or another type of paper) and “hang” them on the tree.  Sample question: What was your child’s favorite thing to talk about this weekend?  Teachers can use this information to initiate conversations based on each child’s individual interests. | Use this strategy once or twice a month during the following times:   * Drop-off * Pick-up * Family events   Use the following UDL strategies to support all students:   * Learn how to communicate about this interest from parents. * Add a way to discuss this interest with children using alternative communication devices. |
| **Favorite Part of the Day** | Teachers set the stage by sharing their favorite part of the day and inviting students to engage and share their favorite part of the day.  This story stem is a natural way to engage students in conversation and provides a structure for students to recall and share stories.  Teachers might say*,* “Let’s do favorite parts of the day. My favorite part of today was seeing everyone arrive at school. I missed you all since it was the weekend and I didn’t get to see you for two days. Now it is Monday and I am excited you are at school again and we can play and learn together. What was your favorite part of the day? | Use this strategy during the following times:   * Small group (e.g, meal time) * Large group (e.g., closing circle time) * End of day/dismissal   Use the following UDL strategies to support all students:   * Point to the location of your favorite part of the day. * Hold up an object that represents your favorite part of the day. * Support students to share stories in their home language. |
| **Painting a Story in the Sky** | Teachers set the stage by inviting all students to imagine they have a huge piece of paper above their head in the sky, a large chest of art supplies with brushes and paint, and anything else they want at their feet.  Teachers lead students to take their pretend paint brush out of their pretend art chest and paint a picture in the sky.  Teachers should prompt children to continue the story by saying, “You may dip your brush in another paint color from your art chest.”  Teachers might say, “I am painting the story of the butterflies we saw eating pollen on the hibiscus flowers yesterday.”  Teachers and students should paint for two-three minutes. After time is up the teacher can invite students to share the stories they painted.  If this activity is done as a large group, invited students to share their story with a neighbor. | Use this strategy during the following times:   * Small group time (inside or outside) * Large group circle (inside or outside) * Choice time (with children who are interested)   If this strategy is used in a large group do not have all the children listen to all the stories. Use pairs or threesomes to share.  This strategy may be done as a team and students can paint together and share stories as they paint.  Remember to support students to share stories in their home language. |

**Optional:** Create two pieces of chart paper with the tips and tricks for each story stem. Then invite participants to share their own tips and tricks.