Cassie Starts School

Author: Bette Chambers
Illustrator: Scott Mattern
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Cassie was curious and excited about starting school, but she was also a bit worried. Who will play with me? How will I find the bathroom? Will the teacher read me stories?

Cassie wondered what would happen.
“Cassie,” said her mother, “you are as curious as a cat. I think you will find the answers to your questions today. Before you know it, I’ll be back to pick you up.”

Cassie wondered what would happen.
In Cassie’s classroom there were lots of other children and things to do. They played a guessing game with a cat puppet called Curiosity and sang a song about school.

Cassie wondered what would happen.
Learning Lab time was the busiest time of all. Two children, building in the Blocks Lab, fought over some of the blocks.

Cassie wondered what would happen.
The teacher helped them share and build together.
Cassie had lots of fun painting at the easel. When she spilled some paint on the floor, the teacher did not get upset. She just said, “Accidents happen,” and handed Cassie a rag to clean up the paint.
The teacher read them a story called *Cassie Starts School.*
The teacher showed the children where the bathroom was.

When Cassie needed to go, she remembered just in time.
At Snack Time, Jamie spilled his milk on the table. He looked worried. Cassie said, “Don’t worry. Our teacher won’t get mad. She says, ‘Accidents happen.’ I’ll help you clean it up.”
Sometimes Cassie wondered what her mommy was doing while Cassie was at school. Was she talking on the phone? Was she cleaning? Was she buying food for supper?
Whatever she was doing, Cassie’s mother was thinking about Cassie and wondering what she was doing at school.
Before Cassie knew it, it was time to go home. Cassie told her mother all about school. She was excited about going back to school tomorrow to see her new friends and the curious little cat.

Cassie wondered what would happen tomorrow.
This is a story about Cassie, a little girl who is worried about her first day of school. Your child's teacher read and discussed *Cassie Starts School* on the first day of school. Reading and discussing this story with your child can help alleviate some of the fears that she or he might have about starting school. Research has shown that reading to children every day at home will help improve their success at school. Using some of the activities below can help reinforce what your child has learned.

**Before Reading**

- Take a look at the book before reading it to your child.
- Look at the front cover of the book and ask if your child remembers the book from school.
- Talk about the things your child can remember about the story, such as whom it is about, what happened, or what your child liked best about it.

**While Reading**

- Read the story with expression so your child will recognize both the excitement and worry that Cassie feels.
- Sometimes after you read the sentence, “Cassie wondered what would happen,” ask your child, “Do you remember what happened?”
- After you read the words on some of the pages, ask your child to tell you how what is shown in the picture is like what is in school.

**After Reading**

- Talk about how Cassie felt on her first day of school.
- Ask your child how he or she felt on the first day of school.
- If you can remember, tell your child about your first day of school.
- Talk about what your child liked best about school.
- Talk about what you and your child need to do to get ready for school the next day.
- Have your child tell the story as you turn the pages.
- Ask your child to draw a picture about how he or she felt on the first day of school. Children at this age usually scribble. This is a first step toward writing and drawing. Praise the picture and ask your child if he or she would like to tell you about it.
Cassie Starts School was written to help children feel more comfortable about separating from their families and beginning school. The story takes Cassie through her first day in Curiosity Corner, as she wonders what will happen in her new environment. Cassie is reassured that her classroom is a safe, welcoming place and that her mother is thinking about her.

Curiosity Corner is the Success for All Foundation’s preschool program. It is founded on the belief that all young children, regardless of their backgrounds, should enjoy rich, lively experiences. Curiosity Corner combines the best practices in early childhood education, engaging materials, family involvement, and staff support to ensure the success of your children.