

Read-Aloud Routine for Story Books

Reading aloud models fluent reading for your child; develops your child's understanding of text structures, features, and genres; builds vocabulary and comprehension skills; and fosters a love of reading. Use the information on these pages to create a read-aloud routine for you and your child at home. The steps that follow work for both fiction and informational (or nonfiction) story books. The steps and the comprehension questions provided are appropriate for children in kindergarten through second grade.

Follow these steps when reading aloud:

- 1. Introduce the book to your child.** Point out the title, author, and illustrator. If you've read other books by the author or illustrator, remind your child about these books. Talk about what kind of book it is—a fiction, or make-believe, book that is like real life; a fairy tale; an informational book about real people and events; a poem; or a play. Then discuss the title and cover illustrations and ask your child what he or she thinks the book will be about. Talk about any prior knowledge or experiences related to the book's topic.
- 2. Read with expression and appropriate pacing.** Use your voice to convey characters' emotions. Slow down when giving complex information. Give your child time to study pictures and think about what he or she is hearing.
- 3. Pause occasionally to discuss the text and pictures.** Check that your child understands who is speaking and what is happening in a story or the main ideas and key details of an informational text. Have your child make or confirm predictions and help your child understand vocabulary important to the text. Give opportunities for your child to ask questions, too. If your child has trouble answering questions, think aloud and explain how you would figure out the answer, for example, by rereading, looking at pictures, or thinking about what makes sense.
- 4. Discuss the book after you've read it.** Help your child make connections between different parts of the book. Also help your child make connections between the book and his or her own experiences, other books, and the world around you. See the next page for questions you can ask for fiction and informational (or nonfiction) texts.

Comprehension Questions

Choose any of these questions in blue to help your child understand and evaluate a book you read aloud. Modify the wording to include specific details from the book and ask your child to explain his or her thinking.

Fiction books

Summarize/Retell

What important events happened in the story?

Show pictures to prompt recall.

Recognize plot structure

What problem(s) did the character have? How did the problem(s) get solved?

Tell about the story's beginning, middle, and end.

Determine cause and effect

Describe an event from the story. Then ask:

Why did this happen?

Develop vocabulary

Reread a sentence with an interesting vocabulary word or idiom. Then ask: *What does this mean?*

If needed, give a child-friendly explanation and help your child use the word or phrase in another context.

Understand characters/Draw conclusions

Who is this story about? How did this character feel at the beginning of the story? Why? How did she feel at the end of the story? What happened that made her feelings change? What do you think about how the character acted? What lesson(s) about life does the story teach?

Connect text to self, the world, and other texts

Have you ever felt like this character or had something similar happen to you? Explain.

Are the characters in this story like any real people you know? Where does this story take place? Do you know any places like that?

Do the characters or events in this story remind you of another story? Explain.

Give and support opinions

Did you like the book? Why or why not? Tell about a favorite part. If you were the author, how might you change the story? Why?

Informational (or nonfiction) books

Identify main idea and retell key details

What was this book all about?

What important information did you learn from this book?

Review headings and pictures to help your child with recall.

Understand pictures, diagrams, and text features

What does this picture (or diagram) show? What more did you learn from the text? Where can you find information about _____?

Sequence steps in a process

What does this book explain how to do or make?

What happens first? Next? After that? Last?

Compare and contrast

Identify two or more people, events, or objects.

Then ask: *How are these alike? How are they different?*

Determine cause and effect

Tell about an event that happened. Why did it happen?

Why did someone do this action?

Develop vocabulary

Identify a concept word from the book. Then ask:

What can you tell me about this word? If needed, give a child-friendly explanation of it and help your child use it in sentences.

Understand an author's reasons

Restate an opinion or a point the author makes.

Then ask: *Why does the author think this? What reasons does the author give to explain his thinking?*

Connect text to self, the world, and other texts

Do you know anything else about the information in this book? What else would you like to know? Does this book remind you of any other books you know? Explain.

Give and support opinions

Did you like the book? Why or why not? What did you find interesting? If you were the author, how might you change the book? Why?

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