



Importance of Read-Alouds For Families

Read-Alouds provide an emotionally satisfying experience for children and can be a source of enjoyment for them. Read-alouds have the potential to enrich vocabulary and oral language skills for children by providing exposure to new language and contexts. Read-alouds promote phonological awareness because children's books tend to focus on the sounds of words through alliteration, rhyming, and various language patterns. Children are also provided opportunities to see how print conveys meaning and understand the differences between written and oral language. Children begin to understand that letters can be grouped together to form words and those words have meaning! Children also learn how to listen and understand which assists in developing their comprehension skills. The opportunity for them to hear an adult fluently read allows for them to understand how written language can actually communicate feelings!

How to Begin

- Try to make time for at least two read-alouds per day in your daily schedule.
- Create a space where children are comfortable.

How to Choose Good Books

- Choose topics that are interesting to your child/children.
- Choose books that relate to your children's experiences.
- Choose books with stories and illustrations that relate to diverse backgrounds and cultures.

Strategies for Effective Ways to Read-Aloud

- Practice reading the book aloud before reading it in front of your child.
- Try to make personal connections for your child to give them a reason to read the book, explore their wonderings.
- After reading, discuss the story with your child/children.

Can we read the book more than once? YES!

- Research shows this method increases children's comprehension skills and vocabulary
- ***Four Components of Repeated Read-Alouds:***
 - **Book introduction:** Read the title and introduce the cover, introduce the main characters and discuss the problems the characters are facing.

- **Vocabulary:** Select a few words you would like to highlight and define to the children. As you read you can define the words through your facial expressions or tone, by using the illustrations, or by providing very brief definitions.
- **Comments and Questions:** Make comments to assist the children on how to think about the characters and ask questions to promote higher-level thinking.
- **After-Reading Questions:** Ask 2 or 3 open-ended questions that have the children think about the characters' problems and interpret their behaviors.

First Read:

- Introduce children to new ideas and ways of thinking
- Introduce characters and problems
- Comment on what the main character may be doing, thinking, or feeling
- Comments are intended to extend children's thinking
- Pose the after-reading questions at the end of the story

Second Read:

- Should occur 1-2 days after the first read
- Includes same components as the first read
- Have children recall some of the details and ideas before reading
- Assist children in naming the characters and problems before reading
- During reading, ask questions about the characters and make comments to help children understand the characters' behavior, thoughts, and feelings
- Continue to define the words with more verbal explanations by pointing to illustrations or dramatizing
- Pose after-reading questions and prompt children to answer with more detail

Third Read:

- Should occur within a week of the second read
- Children should be able to retell the story with your support
- You can use illustrations to assist children in retelling the story
- Prompt children for more details about how characters are behaving, feeling, or thinking by pointing to the illustrations
- Encourage children to use the new vocabulary terms
- You can read some of the pages to maintain interest, but children should primarily be retelling the story
- Pose after-reading questions and have children reflect on each other's responses

Conversational Reading

- Appropriate for verbal or nonverbal children
- This is also known as an early version of interactive reading.
- It has conversational exchanges and should be done with only 2-3 children at a time.
- **See:** point to, talk about, and name the pictures in the book, run your fingers under the words, track what children are doing, be sure you can see what their eyes are focused on

- **Show:** Instead of pointing, give detailed instructions on what to do, “Point to the boy’s hat”, watch children’s motions
- **Say:** As you read, ask questions like, “What’s this?” or “What is the girl going to do next?”

More Tips for Adding Read-Alouds to your Daily Routine

- Surround your child with books. You can check them out at the library or collect some at a neighborhood yard sale!
- Choose books that you and your child both enjoy. Tell them how much you enjoy reading together. Feel free to re-read your favorites!
- Let your child choose which books to read. It will allow for the reading to be more meaningful and enjoyable.
- Choose books in your first language if that is what you speak and read best.
- You can borrow books from the library that have audio recordings if you are uncomfortable reading aloud. You can also utilize apps that highlight words as they are read to children.
- You can also choose wordless books if you are uncomfortable with reading aloud. The stories are told through the pictures!
- Find a comfortable place and make your book-sharing time special.
- Use gestures and facial and vocal expression as you read.
- Talk about what is happening in the story, and when possible, how the story relates to your child’s life.
- Ask your child questions and give him or her time to respond. Point out details in the illustrations.
- Let your child ask questions. Stop and answer, even if it interrupts the story!
- Occasionally run your fingers under the words as you read. Point out how words are left to right, top to bottom (or whatever is customary in your home language). Explain that words are separated by spaces.
- Take books with you in the car or on the bus!
- Let your child tell you the story or take a turn “reading” the book to you.