

Notes on Reading

Reading with a child is an easy activity; it requires very little set up and allows you to engage the student in material that he/she likes. These are some easy, simple guidelines:

- Read the book all the way through before you read it aloud. Like the books that you read.
- Read with expression and voices.
- Let the child attempt to read a sentence or two, even if she isn't able to read the whole book.
- Ask questions about the pictures. Especially point out the cover and the clues it holds about the contents of the book.
- Make sure the child can see the pictures and the text as you read. Have her sit next to you.
- Use your finger to follow along as you read.^{lxii}

Reading Strategies

In elementary school, students are learning to respond to a text critically just as much as they are learning to read. Because their conversational skills are better developed, students can understand and discuss texts that are above their writing level or independent reading level. Through asking children about the books they read, adults can make sure that they are still developing their analytical skills along with their technical skills. One way to do this is by turning the book into a discussion as it is read, a method called dialogic reading. At its core, these are four basic steps, which are represented by the acronym PEER:

P: adult *prompts* the child to say something about the book.

E: adult *evaluates* the response.

E: adult *expands* the child's response.

R: adult *repeats* the response.

A sample discussion might look like this:

ADULT: Why can't Sally and her brother go out? (**P**)

CHILD: It's raining.

ADULT: That's right (**E**), it's raining and their mother isn't home (**E**). Look at all that rain (**R**).

This method groups possible questions into the following five categories, with the acronym CROWD:

Completion: Offer a sentence with sound and context clues and let the child finish it.

Ex. "I do not like them in a house. I do not like them with a _____."

Recall: Ask about something that happened earlier in the text, or later if this is a second reading

Ex. "Where does he eat the eggs?"

Open-Ended: Ask a question is generally related to the pictures or text:

Ex. "Why do you think Sam wants him to eat the eggs?"

Who/what/where/when/why/how: Ask an interrogative question about the general story.

Ex. "What is Sam wearing?"

Distancing: Ask a question that relates to the child's life or other books.

Ex. "Would you eat green eggs and ham?"

Not every book needs to be read with this kind of formal structure. This is just a tool to help the child engage with the text. Generally, it is just important that you interact with the child while reading, rather than passively reading and turning pages.^{lxiii}

Matching Activities with Books

Books and activities often go hand in hand. You may find the topic of a book begs for more exploration. Or you may want to explore an activity through literature or nonfiction. If you have an idea, go for it! There are several databases where you can look for a related book on the topic, or you can ask the school librarian. This can sometimes be easier, especially if you have a hobby or an interest that you'd like to share with the child. The following list of books was specifically created with the activities in this manual in mind, and it lists the title and the section of each activity.

Sample Book-Activity Matches

- Color Me (Caring), Homemade Charades (Character), and/or Mood Meter (Caring) with *Today I Feel Silly* by Jamie Lee Curtis and Laura Cornell or *The Way I Feel* by Janan Cain
- Dance Party (Confidence) and *The Twelve Dancing Princesses* by Ruth Sanderson
- Friends Forever (Caring) or Paper Chain (Character) and *I Like the Way You Are* by Eve Bunting

- I'm Just a Bill (Character) and *Woodrow for President* by Peter W. Barnes and Cheryl Shaw Barnes, *Grace for President* by Kelly S. DiPucchio and LeUyen Pham, or *If I Ran for President* by Catherine Stier and Lynne Avril
- Goal Cards (Character) and When I Grow Up (Character) and *The Little Engine That Could* (Imagination Library) by Watty Piper
- Map-Making (Competence) or Which Way to the North Pole (Competence) and *Follow the Drinking Gourd* by Alfred A. Knopf or *The Polar Express* by Chris Van Allsburg
- Origami (Competence) and *Sadako* by Eleanor Coerr and Ed Young, or *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr and Ronald Himler
- The Monster Under My Bed (Connection) and *Switch on the Light* by Ray Bradbury, Leo Dillon, and Diane Dillon
- Pause (Character) or Sun Salute (Character) with *A Boy and a Bear* by Lori Lite
- Penguin Walk (Connection) with *The Emperor's Egg* by Martin Jenkins and Jane Chapman or *And Tango Makes Three* by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell
- Superhero for a Day (Caring) and *Ladybug Girl and Bumblebee Boy* (Imagination Library) by David Soman and Jacky Davis or *Superhero* by Marc Tauss
- Toes, Knees, Shoulders, and Head (Character) with *Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes: And Other Action Rhymes* by Zita Newcome and *One Foot, Two Feet* (Imagination Library) by Peter Maloney and Felicia Zekauskas
- Quilt-Making (Character) and *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* by Deborah Hopkinson
- Where in the World? (Connection) and *Rhymes Round the World* (Imagination Library) by Kay Choro