



Helping Your Child with Reading

- Some Questions to ask about a book

Here are some questions to support you when you are enjoying reading and selecting a book with your child. It is not an expectation that every question is asked every time that you read together. Asking your child two or three questions before, during and after the reading will support their understanding of what they read. The aim of regular reading is to improve ability to read and most importantly enjoyment of reading. These questions can be adapted to any text that your child is reading (eg. comics, newspapers, leaflets, or common information on signs)



Choosing a book:

- What could this book be about?
- Why did you choose this book?
- Did you like the picture on the front?
- Have you read other books by this author?
- Did you choose it because it is about ... (eg. Trains, cats, etc)



Before reading a book:

- Can you point to the title? or What is this?....as you point to the title
- What do you think this story will be about? What might happen in the story?
- What do we call the writing on the back of the book? (Blurb)
What does the blurb tell us?
- Talk about the different parts of the book (eg. Front and back covers, title, author, illustrator, blurb, the bar code, publisher marks)
- If you are reading an information book ask where you will find out about something specific (eg. Can you use the 'contents' page or the Index to locate information?)



During the reading of the book:

- Tell me what is happening in the pictures?
- What has happened so far? Is it what you expected to happen?
- What might happen next? How do you think the story might end?
- What sort of character is....? Is he/she friendly/ mean/ nice...?
- Ask children about events in the story: How would you feel if you had been that character? Has anything like that happened to you? Would you like that to happen to you?
- If reading an information book: What facts have you read? Have you learnt anything new? What does this page tell you about? Is there anything that interests you on this page? Where would you go to find information about....?

At the end of the book:

- What was your favourite part? Why?
- What was the most interesting/ exciting part of the book? Can you find it?
- What sort of character is....?
- Why did that character do ... (give a situation/ event from the story)?
- What happened in the story?
- Are there any words or phrases that you enjoyed?
- Did the pictures help you to understand the story better?
- Would you still read this book if it did not have pictures? Why?
- Are there any parts of the book that are repeated? Why do you think that the author did that?
- Who are the main characters in the story? What character would you like to be?
- Why are some words written in capital letters? Italics? Bold print? Different colour?
- Do you think this book has helped you to understand.....better?
- Would you like to read another story by this author or illustrator?
- Have you read any other books like this one? Is it happy/ sad/ scary/ exciting? Why do you think this?
- Does this book remind you of any other stories, TV programmes/D VDs?



- Does this story remind you of anything that has happened to you?
- Tell me about some other books that you have read recently.
- Did you like this book? Why? (Encourage your child to develop their opinion about books by encouraging them to explain their reasons.)

Some key words to use when you are discussing a book with your child:

Story	Information
Book	Page
Character	Bold
Setting	Italic
Plot	Under-lined
Author	Pictures/ illustrations
Illustrator	Predict
Title	Front cover
Contents	Back cover
Index	Publisher
Glossary	
Headings	
Sub-headings	
Blurb	
Beginning	
Middle	
End	
Fiction	
Non-fiction	



Tell me the things I did
that were good.

When I read to
you please...



Let me continue if what I read
makes sense and fits the text.

Give me time (10 seconds) to
work things out for myself.

Talk about the pictures and
hard words first.

Let me hold the book.

PARENT PAGE

Talking About Books at Home

Dear Parent,

One of the best things we can do to assist our children with reading is to engage them in talking about the books they read. Talking stimulates language development and helps children improve their comprehension.

As you get ready to share a book with your child, you might ask your child to talk about the cover, the title, and a few of the pictures in the book. This "before-reading" conversation will help your child to build the expectation that stories make sense. This is also a good time to help your child connect personal experiences to the reading. If there is a picture showing a picnic, for example, this would be a perfect time to talk with your child about a picnic you enjoyed together.

You can also invite your child into conversation during the reading by stopping now and then to ask, "What might happen next?"

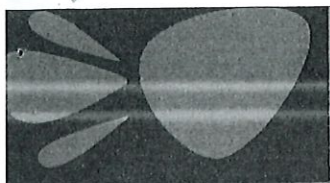
As you know, children love to share their opinions. After reading, you might get your child started with questions such as:

- * What did you notice?
- * What did you like?
- * How did it make you feel?
- * Did this remind you of any experiences you have had?
- * What parts of the story were your favorites?

Just choose one or two questions so that it feels like a conversation instead of a test. Happy reading!

Sincerely,

Your child's teacher



Parent Page: The Story Star

Retelling stories helps children understand books better. Please take a few minutes to invite your child to retell a story that you have shared together. As your child talks, you might want to be looking at the Story Star on page 109 to give your child clues about story components that may have been omitted. As your child gains confidence, you might ask your child to use the Story Star to plan a retell for you and/or the family, then "perform" when he or she is ready.

Types of Questions

***Aesthetic:* Expressive responses that invite learners to share their thinking.**

What was your favorite part? Why?

Which character did you find most intriguing? Why?

If you were the author, which part of the story would bring you the most pride?

Are there any parts of this selection that you would change?

At which points were you best able to visualize or "see" the action?

What did the author do that helped you connect to this selection?

***Efferent:* Unpacking the facts of the text.**

Who, what, when, where?

In what order?

Which character was central to the story?

Describe the climax.

From which point of view is this selection written?

If we were to identify the most important ideas, what would they be?

Compare the events in this story with the events in _____.

***Critical/analytical:* Students interrogate the text, the author, the issue, and the purpose.**

What important issues were addressed in this selection? Why are these important?

What does the author want you to believe or understand? What is the author's point of view?

How might we verify the accuracy of this selection?

If we were to evaluate this selection, what criteria might we consider?



TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT READING

Predicting and Activating Prior Knowledge

Readers make links with their own life and prior knowledge to predict events, characters, text type etc. This can help them make connections with the text.

- From the picture on the cover I think the story will be about...
- I have read this author's work before so I think....
- The music made me think that would happen.

Inferring

Readers take clues from the text and add their own ideas to make inferences. They go beyond the literal text.

- I think the boy is lonely because....
- The character probably feels because ...
- I think it must have been raining because.....
- I think the family is rich because the text mentions silk and leather materials.

Visualising

Readers create pictures or images in their minds as they read.

- The character looks like...
- I imagine that
- In my mind I can see, hear, smell, feel
- I can picture
- The movie in my head shows...

Determining Importance

Readers ask themselves what is most important. They identify concepts, key words, phrases sentences and supporting details.

- I can see subheadings.
- I notice bold font.
- The author is saying....
- The key words are....
- Based on my goals, what is important?
- What does the author think is important?

Making Connections

Readers make links between their prior knowledge and texts.

One can connect to own experiences, between texts and from texts to world events and issues.

- This reminds me when I
- This story is similar to ...
- This is like what is happening in ... at the moment.

Questioning

Readers ask questions before, during and after reading to help clarify specifics of text.

- I wonder.....
- What do I know about this?
- Are there questions I need to have answered?

Summarising and Synthesizing

Readers combine strategies and put together information from texts with background knowledge to create new knowledge and deeper understanding.

- What is the main message or big idea?
- What do I understand from this?
- The purpose of this text is.....
- I now think that.....
- How can I use this information?

Monitoring and Clarifying

Readers continually reassess their thinking and understanding before, during and after reading.

- Does this make sense?
- What's confusing me?
- What fix up strategies can I use?
- What was this about?
- What else do I need to know?
- What does this word mean?

Types of Questions to Ask

- **WHAT happened? and WHO it happened to?**

will be the easiest parts of the story to read. These questions are important for early readers.

- **When? and Where?** questions alert readers to parts of the text they may not have noticed and can lead to an understanding of how the text is organised.
- **How? and Why?** questions can lead to interesting discussions and greatly increased understanding. These may be the only things you need to discuss with more competent readers.

THREE GOLDEN RULES FOR PROMPTING

The aim of prompting is to help your child read for meaning independently.

1. Wait

Give your child the space to solve the problem.

2. Use a Prompt

- **Try That Again**

Ask your child to re-read from the beginning of the sentence.

- **Read On** (Not for younger children)
- **"Did that make sense?"**

3. Avoid unnecessary interruptions

Do not think that you must always respond 'in the flow' of the reading.

Praise specifically after the reading

e.g. "I liked the way you went back to the beginning of that sentence and corrected this word."