

Family Activities



Readiness Skill: Listens to and responds to stories read to them

Research shows that the number one thing an adult can do to help a child learn to read is to read to him or her every day. However, simply listening to a story is not enough. Children must have ample opportunities to respond to the stories that are read to them.

Making Predictions



Before reading a story, invite your child to take a look at the cover illustrations of the book. Ask him or her questions about what they notice on the cover of the book such as: “What do you see on the cover of this book?” “What is happening in the pictures you see?” “What do you think this book is going to be about?” Give him or her plenty of time to answer your questions and then read the story together to see if his or her predictions were true.

Picture Walk

Go on a picture walk through a book before reading it to your child. A picture walk is simply going through one page at a time and inviting your child to look at the illustrations without any regard to the words and text. It gives your child time to process what may be happening in the story before it is read so that once you are reading the story he or she will be able to focus more on understanding the content of story as opposed to the details in the illustrations. As you go on the picture walk be sure to ask your child questions such as: “What do you see on this page?” “What is happening on this page?” “What do you think you will see on the next page?” Once the picture walk is complete you may then read the story with your child.



Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How

Many times it may be tough to come up with questions to ask your child about the stories you are reading or have just read. A simple way to practice responding to stories is by asking your child who, what, when, where, why, and how questions. Examples include: “What happened at the beginning of the story?” “Who were some of the characters in the story?” “When did the story take place- in the daytime or nighttime?” “Where is this story taking place?” Try not to ask too many questions in one sitting and remember to give him or her plenty of time to think about the responses to the questions you’ve asked.



Draw a Picture

After reading a story to your child, invite him or her to tell you about his or her favorite part of the story. Provide him or her drawing materials such as crayons, pencils, markers, and paper to draw a picture of their favorite part of the story. Invite your child to tell you about the picture he or she has drawn.



Books

Below is a suggested listing of books that are great for sparking great conversations with and eliciting responses from your child. Check them out at your local public library.



Chica Chica Boom Boom by Bill Martin Jr.

Cat in the Hat by Dr. Seuss

Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss

Silly Sally by Audrey Wood

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See? by Bill Martin and Eric Carle