

Read Aloud Guide

Studies show that literacy is the foundation for emotional and physical well-being, intellectual growth, and economic security. Furthermore, reading aloud improves listening skills, vocabulary acquisition, and the understanding of common story themes and structures that will factor into children's future success. Use the tips below to create a powerful, memorable read aloud experience.

- Read the book beforehand to familiarize yourself with the story. Make note of places you want to stop and ask questions.
- Be animated! Change your voice during the read aloud to match the expressions of the characters and emotions of the story; this will truly bring the text to life.
- Use different voices for different characters so that children come to recognize dialogue within a text and individual character traits.
- If your book has a lot of text, try a story walk instead of reading every word. A story walk is when you summarize what is happening on each page while pointing to the illustrations to help explain the action.
- Ask questions out loud as you read. Ask listeners to predict what will happen next, how they would feel if they were in the story, or the meaning of a vocabulary word that might be new. Limit your questions to one or two so they do not disrupt the flow of the story.
- After you finish the story, have a conversation that focuses on connecting the text to the listeners' lives and experiences. Browse our 7 Strengths Discussion Prompts for ideas.