

Read Aloud

Why Read Aloud?

- Models effective, fluent reading
- Youth engagement in comprehension strategies can be done on a whole group level
- Development of listening comprehension skills
- Provides an opportunity for discussion and engagement with different kinds of books
- Allows youth to be exposed to text that is above their reading level
- Listening to stories reinforces story elements (character, plot, theme, beginning, middle, end), especially when accompanied by discussion
- Provides an opportunity to model comprehension skills and metacognitive strategies
- Stories provide exposure to different kinds of people, places, and time periods that kids might otherwise not have been exposed to
- Kids hear a wider variety of words and they hear those words in context

Picture Books and Chapter Books

- Model Thinking While Reading

- Stop at a difficult word and define it or ask the group about the definition
- Voice your thinking aloud as you read: if a word is hard to pronounce and you are thinking “Wow, this word is tricky,” say that aloud. Then reread the sentence again to build fluency.
- Self-Correct. Model that good readers reread so the words make sense
- React to the story. If a passage is exciting, confusing, or relatable, say so. This shows you are thinking.

- Have kids write down their thoughts while reading (!! ?? →)

- !! is the code for something they found interesting, exciting or important to the story
- ?? is the code for a question about the story, character, word, or something they wonder about
- → is the code for a connection. A connection is when the book reminds them on something else. This could be a text to self, text to text, or text to world connection.

- After reading, share some of these thoughts and discuss them. As students become more proficient at questioning, they could write comprehension questions to stump the group/teacher or start a discussion.

- Choose a vocabulary word or key word related to the theme: display that word and reference it everyday while reading. Talk about the definition of the word and how it relates to the story. Talk about how the word relates to youth (ex: if it is self-esteem, discuss how the youth displayed self esteem that day)

- *Ask Questions*. During or after reading each chapter or section, ask questions about the plot,

characters, setting, vocabulary, and so on. Simple comprehension questions are important to make sure everyone understood the story. Open-ended questions promote higher thinking skills, lead to discussion, and assist in deeper comprehension. Simple comprehension questions are good to ask during or after reading, higher-order questions should generally be left until after reading, as to not interrupt flow and fluency.

- *Summarize.* Model an effective summary and help youth summarize what happened in a story or chapter. When you come to an important point while reading, after reading ask a question like “What important thing just happened?” or “What just happened to [character]?” Ask for a summary of what the youth heard after reading. The frame “Somebody, somewhere wanted a problem to be solved” as a model for summaries.

- Provide a way for youth to respond reading while you read. For young kids this might mean touching their ear every time they hear a rhyming word. For older kids it might be writing down a question, connection, and interesting point as they listen. Drawing a picture of what is going on in the story is a response that works for many age groups. Consider group management and how to handle off task behavior during these types of responses.

- Many different types of response activities can be done after reading. These provide youth with a way to respond to, and extend meaning of books. They can be written, verbal, artistic, or interpretative. It might be a letter to a character, journal entry, what youth would say if they were that character, an alternate ending, a sequel, retelling the story through art or movement, creating a project around the book, and the possibilities go on and on.

- Keep track of the new vocabulary words learned during reading. Youth could record these in a journal and look up the definitions. A Word Wall could be created to provide a visual reference and could continuously grow. Focusing on at least one word (but no more than 5) each day provides a good base for vocabulary acquisition.