

Shared Reading

Shared Reading is a link in helping students become independent readers. It allows the teacher to model and support students using prediction and confirming skills. It allows less confident students the chance to share stories/articles/poetry in a non-threatening situation. It focuses on the meaning, fun, enjoyment, characters and sequence of a story and allows them to relate it back to their own experiences. It promotes discussion, problem-solving and critical thinking by students.

Shared Reading is an interactive reading experience. An integral component of Shared Reading is an enlarged text that all children can see. Children join in the reading of a big book or other enlarged text such as songs, poems, charts, and lists created by the teacher or developed with the class through Shared and Interactive Writing. During the reading the teacher involves the children in reading together by pointing to or sliding below each word in the text. The teacher deliberately draws attention to the print and models early reading behaviors such as moving from left to right and word-by-word matching. Shared reading models the reading process and strategies used by readers.

In the shared reading model there are multiple readings of the books over several days. Throughout, children are actively involved in the reading (Yaden, 1988). During the initial reading, the teacher:

- Introduces the book (shares theme, examines title, cover, illustrations, and makes predictions)
- Relates prior experience to text
- Concentrates on enjoying the text as a whole
- Encourages students to use background knowledge to make predictions
- Encourages spontaneous participation in the reading of the story
- Discusses personal responses to the book

Texts are usually read multiple times over a period of days or weeks. The first reading emphasizes reading for enjoyment. Subsequent readings aim to increase participation, teach about book characteristics and print conventions, teach reading strategies, help develop a sight vocabulary of high frequency words, and teach phonics. During subsequent readings, the teacher:

- Directs children's attention to various aspects of the text, and reading strategies, and skills.
- Identifies vocabulary, ideas and facts,
- Discusses author's style
- Experiments with intonation and expression
- Discusses colorful phrases or words.

Students participate by:

- choral reading
- dramatization
- masking activities
- word work such as "Be the Words" or sorting the words

Through repeated readings and the predictable text, children become familiar with word forms and begin to recognize words and phrases (Bridge, Winograd, & Haley, 1983; Pikulski & Kellner, 1992).

During Shared Reading...

- Rich, authentic, interesting literature can be used, even in the earliest phases of a reading program, with children whose word-identification skills would not otherwise allow them access to this quality literature.
- Each reading of a selection provides opportunities for the teacher to model reading for the children.
- Opportunities for concept and language expansion exist that would not be possible if instruction relied only on selections that students could read independently.
- Awareness of the functions of print, familiarity with language patterns, and word-recognition skills grow as children interact several times with the same selection.
- Individual needs of students can be more adequately met. Accelerated readers are challenged by the interesting, natural language of selections. Because of the support offered by the teacher, students who are more slowly acquiring reading skills experience success.