



What can parents do to help prepare their child for school? Shared Storybook Reading is the most effective and developmentally appropriate method of preparing young children for formal reading.

Reading Strategies

1. Paired reading – adult reads part of a phrase and the child takes a turn and “reads” another. Books need to be high in repetition and predictability. Use pausing and inflection to cue child that it is his/her turn.
2. Questioning – Avoid asking scary and direct questions. You can do this by phrasing questions as “How would you feel if....? Who might be...? What do you think...?” Be willing to accept all answers and give praise for the response.
3. Make stories interactive by using puppets and allowing children to act out stories.
4. Using wordless book encourage children to tell their own story. You can write and re-read their story back to them.
5. Use print-referencing of verbal and non-verbal cues. Verbal cue: “Look, the bee says, bzzz”. Non-verbal cue: pointing to print and tracking print as one reads.
6. Rad a story many times – as often as the child requests it.
7. Do not force a child to listen.

Criteria for Good Children’s Books

1. Rhyming
2. Repetitive dialogue
3. Large print
4. Print embedded in pictures
5. Humorous and relevant to child
6. Bright colors
7. Not too much text on page
8. Books that lend themselves to simple questions

Early Reading Skills

Print Awareness

1. Understanding that print goes left to right
2. Understanding that print goes top to bottom
3. Understanding the front and back of the book
4. Understanding the correct orientation of the book by the pictures, upright vs. upside down.
5. Understand the abstract terms that refer to reading (ex. Read, write, spell, word).

Phonological Awareness

This is an auditory or listening skill, whereas phonics is the sound-to-symbol relationship (visual to auditory).

1. Animal/environmental sounds: understand same and different sounds, count or clap out number of sounds
2. Word awareness: Count or clap out words in a short sentence or phrase (big, bad wolf [3])
3. Syllable awareness: Count or clap out the number of syllables (cow [1], monkey [2]). This skill is late Pre-K.
4. Speech sound awareness: Count sounds in a word, can tell if first sounds in word are same or different (alliteration), can blend (/m/ + /e/ = me) and segment (dog is made with sounds /d/, /o/, /g/). Speech sound awareness is a kindergarten and later skill. However, one should participate with children in word sound play and rhyming activities from toddler age.

Vocabulary and Language Concepts

1. Picture and object identification
2. Use action words (run, jump)
3. Uses possession words (Daddy shoe, mine)
4. Use recurrence words (more, again)
5. Use descriptive words (little car, pretty doll)
6. Use time words (now, in a minute, before)
7. Use place or position words (down, up)

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