

Nifty Tips for Reading Aloud

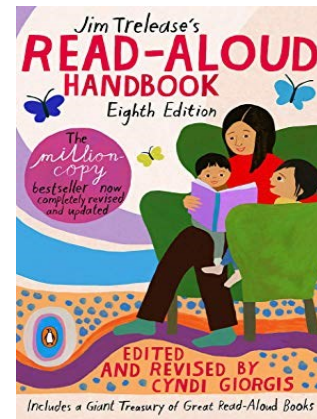
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Why Read Aloud?

We read to children for all the same reasons we talk with them: to reassure, to entertain, to bond, to inform or explain, to arouse curiosity, and to inspire. In reading aloud, we also

- demonstrate the pleasure that books offer,
- build vocabulary,
- create background knowledge,
- provide a reading role model, and
- instill the desire to read.



Reading Aloud to Children & Adolescents

As you begin

- ⇒ Read to children as soon as possible, even before they are born.
- ⇒ Use Mother Goose rhymes and songs to stimulate an infant's language and listening.
- ⇒ Include predictable and rhyming books containing repetition when reading aloud to infants and toddlers.
- ⇒ Start with picture books with a few sentences on a page then gradually move to books with more text.

As you select books

- ⇒ Vary the length and subject matter of your readings by selecting fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.
- ⇒ Occasionally choose books above children's intellectual ability to challenge their minds.
- ⇒ Know your listeners and tap into their interests.
- ⇒ Honor kids' choices of books even if it has been read before.

- ⇒ Try books with different writing styles or formats such as novels in verse, graphic novels, comic books, etc.
- ⇒ Remember, everyone enjoys a good picture book, even a teenager.
- ⇒ If you start a book and it turns out to be a bad choice, then let it go and choose another.



As you prepare

- ⇒ Read the book ahead of time. This will offer you the opportunity to read with expression and to identify new vocabulary.
- ⇒ Bring the author and illustrator to life by reading information about them on the dust jacket.

And remember

- ⇒ Reading aloud comes naturally to very few people. To do it successfully and with ease, you must practice.
- ⇒ In addition to the time you have set aside for reading aloud each day, find additional opportunities such as during bath time, at meals, or in the car.
- ⇒ Set aside at least one consistent time each day for a story.

- ⇒ Allow listeners a few minutes to settle down to enjoy the story.
- ⇒ If reading a chapter book, review what has happened so far.
- ⇒ Provide active children paper, crayons, and pencils to keep their hands busy while listening.

As you read aloud

- ⇒ Say the book's title and the author and illustrator's names—no matter how many times you've read the book before.
- ⇒ Discuss the cover illustration. Ask, "What do you think this story is about?"
- ⇒ Invite the child to turn pages to encourage involvement.
- ⇒ Ask occasionally, "What do you think is going to happen next?" or "What do you like about the story so far?"
- ⇒ Use expression when reading. Change your voice to fit the dialogue and adjust your pace to fit the story.
- ⇒ When reading a picture book, make sure children can see the pictures as you read.
- ⇒ Allow time for discussion (not quizzing) after reading a story.

In 1985, the Commission on Reading, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, examined school scores and issued its report, *Becoming a Nation of Readers*. Among its primary findings, two simple declarations rang loud and clear:

"The single most important activity for building the knowledge for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children.

It is a practice that should continue throughout the grades."