

Three Reads

Engaging Children in a Storybook

Target books should be read at least three times, over a short period of time, to build children's understanding, background knowledge, and ability to retell the story (Paulson & Moats, 2010, 2018).

Before the First Read

Introduction. As you select your storybook, you will need to create a plan for learning outcomes. Prior to reading with your children, select the vocabulary and determine the questions that ensure you meet those learning goals.

Reading Plan

1. **Main concept or theme of book.** Preview book for complexity, learning value, and particular points of interest.
2. **Vocabulary.** Create child-friendly definitions of new vocabulary. Include a gesture and pictures illustrating the word in other contexts.
3. **Difficult concepts.** Identify points in the story that children may have difficulty understanding and plan how you will explain them.

Vocabulary—Teach by PAT. Pre-select 8 to 10, Tier 2 words you will define using the **PAT** strategy. **P**oint to the picture of the word, **A**ct out the word and encourage children to act it out, **T**ell a child-friendly definition of the word. **(EI 7.3a Concepts of Print)**

Tier 1 words are frequent, familiar, and used in everyday conversation and written text (e.g., night, daddy, food).

Tier 2 words are high-utility vocabulary that help with conceptual understanding and are used across settings and situations but not in everyday conversations (e.g., balcony, complex, mischief).

Tier 3 words are highly specialized vocabulary related to a specific topic and are rarely used in everyday conversations (e.g., photosynthesis, isotope, economics).

First Read (Day 1)

Introduction. This initial reading will help children gain an overall understanding of the book. During this read, you will practice out-loud thinking to show how to make inferences in a story.

Reading Plan

1. **Main concept or theme of book.** Introduce the characters, the relationships, and what *might* happen in the plot.
2. **Before reading.** Provide a hook question to give the children something to ponder and make predictions as they listen.
3. **During the read.** Highlight the main idea, summarize, and think aloud. Ask literal questions to help children gain a basic understanding of story. Provide child-friendly definitions when you come to selected vocabulary words and turn back as needed to model how to confirm your thoughts. **(EI 7.2 Comprehension)**
4. **After the reading.** Ask a BIG question that is linked to what happened in the story; you will revisit this question during subsequent readings. **(EI 5.2 Listens to Conversations/Directions; 6.1 Converses Effectively)**

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Second Read (Day 2)

Introduction. During this second reading, point out concepts and vocabulary that children may not know and provide opportunities to use language for thinking and learning.

Reading Plan

1. **Before reading.** Connect back to the 1st read. Ask leading questions. What do the children remember and what did they have questions about? Help the children connect aspects of the story, so it is a cohesive whole.
2. **During the read.** Clarify points in the story and scaffold by asking related questions. Focus on the selected vocabulary words.
3. **After the read.** Revisit the BIG question to see if the children are making connections. **(EI 7.2 Listens to Stories)**

Third Read (Day 3+)

Introduction. The purpose of this third reading is to reinforce story comprehension, expand on what children know, and help them make connections to their own life.

Reading Plan

1. **Before reading.** Ask your children to recall the title of the story, the characters involved, and their feelings and motivations. **(EI 7.2 Listens to Stories)**
2. **During the read.** Make connections and have children use story words as they make those connections. **(EI 5.1 Listens to Conversations/Directions)**
3. **After the read.** Discuss story elements and sequencing. Share connections. Ask follow up questions to encourage more comments. **(EI 5.1 Listens to Conversations/Directions; 5.3 Phonological Awareness; 6.1 Converses Effectively; 7.1 Enjoys Books; 7.2 Listens to Stories)**

Reading the same book for several days in a row is also a great way to provide opportunities for preschoolers to develop their social-emotional skills, such as the ability to sit, listen, and be attentive (Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, 2018).

References:

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html>

Paulson, L. H., & Moats, L. C. (2010). *LETRS for Early Childhood Educator*. Boston, MA: Cambium Learning.

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