Read-Alouds

First Grade Teacher Reading Academy

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## Observation Form: Addressing Student Expectations During Read-Alouds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Expectation</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
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**Answers for Addressing Student Expectations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Expectation</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Print Awareness 1(A): Recognize that spoken words can be represented by print for communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Print Awareness 1(G): Identify different parts of a book (title page)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Model the reading process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Print awareness 1(C): Demonstrate the one-to-one correspondence between a spoken word and a printed word in text</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Print Awareness 1(F): Hold a book right side up, turn its pages correctly, and know that reading moves from top to bottom and left to right</td>
<td>Teacher modeled and students did this when they “pretend” read other big books.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Print Awareness 1(G): Identify different parts of a book (title)</td>
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Effective Read-Aloud Sessions

Before reading:

• **Schedule time for read-aloud sessions.**

  Plan to read to students several times each day.

  Invite parents to come and read books and to attend read-aloud sessions.

• **Use a variety of grouping formats including one-on-one, small groups, and whole class.**

  Research strongly supports the effectiveness of reading aloud to students in small groups.

  Small-group experiences assure that everyone has an opportunity to participate and engage in discussions about books.

• **Select different types of books.**

• **Read a wide variety of books one or two levels above the students’ grade placement to expand and deepen students’ background knowledge, vocabulary, and improve their listening comprehension.**

  Include literary and informational texts.

  Narrative texts tell stories that usually follow a familiar story structure.

  Informational texts present and explain information in different and less predictable ways.

  Experiences with informational texts provide a framework for students’ comprehension of the content-area textbooks they will read later in school.

  The reading aloud of different types of texts enhances students’ abilities to understand and make sense of a variety of written materials.
Consider the following criteria when selecting books for read-aloud sessions:

- Include stories and books that represent a variety of subjects, genres, and levels of difficulty. Select stories with intriguing plots and informational books that stimulate inquiry and discussion.

- Choose books that are personal favorites, books that other kindergarten classes have loved, and students’ classics. Favorite texts may be reread many times.

- Choose books that provide a context for building and extending students’ language through new ideas, new vocabulary, and more elaborate syntax by choosing book one to two levels above grade placement.

- Include books that reflect our diverse society by presenting a variety of experiences, cultures, and role models. Help students identify with the characters and settings of the books.

- Look for books that contain unique presentation styles, formats, illustrations, or perspectives.

- Select books that help students make connections across the curriculum. Relate read-alouds to topics in social studies, science, and math as well as to curricular themes or units of study.

- Read different books by the same author. As students become familiar with an author’s style and characters, they begin to recognize patterns. The recognition of patterns can be used as a springboard for predicting or comparing and contrasting.


- **Activate and build background knowledge.**

  Help students make predictions about a book’s content based on its title and illustrations. Discuss what students already know about the topic and relate the content of the story to students’ personal experiences.

  Include multicultural literature.
Consider the following criteria when selecting multicultural literature:

Does the book or story . . .

• . . . accurately reflect different groups and their cultures: e.g., African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanics?

• . . . address the diversity of the students in your classroom? Does it create realistic, positive images of your students and their families, community, and culture?

• . . . offer varying perspectives and make a difference in the way young students view the world?

• . . . encourage an appreciation and respect for diversity both within and across social groups?

• . . . credibly represent different ethnic groups through the storyline and descriptions, rather than only by illustrations?

• . . . accurately depict characters in their physical appearance, behaviors, attitudes, values, language, beliefs, and way of life?

• . . . help correct misconceptions and eliminate stereotypical thinking?

• . . . focus on diverse groups and cultures that have historically been distorted, patronized, or excluded from the curriculum and from literary genres?

• . . . include background knowledge and explanatory notes in a preface or afterword about the author and literary traditions of a particular group or culture?

• . . . promote critical discussion and prompt students to ask questions about their heritage and past, who they are today, and their future?

• **Teach new words and concepts.**
  Before reading aloud, discuss new concepts and new words and their meanings.
  Link the new words and concepts to students’ background knowledge.
  Have students say the word and attend to the sounds in the word (e.g., What sound does *quarrel* begin with?).
  Ask questions about examples and nonexamples of the word (e.g., If you help a friend, are you quarreling?).

**During reading:**

• **Stop a few times for reactions, comments, predictions, and questions to keep students actively engaged.**
  Avoid long discussions that interfere with the flow of the story.
  Asking too many questions during a read-aloud session is not as effective as interactions with students before and after reading.

• **It’s the talk that surrounds (before and after) the reading aloud of books that is so important in enhancing students’ oral language, vocabulary development, and listening comprehension.**
  When you read with expression, you are modeling fluent reading.
  Be sure the book can be seen by everyone in the group when showing pictures or reading big books.

**After reading:**

• **Engage students in discussions that go beyond literal comprehension.**
  Ask questions that require more than one-word answers and invoke thinking and problem solving. These questions often begin with *how, why,* and *what if.*
  Reduce teacher dominance of discussions and increase students’ talk about the story or informational text.
  Encourage students to ask questions of the teacher and each other.
  Encourage students to use the book language they have heard read aloud.
  Provide feedback and ask for clarification of meaning whenever possible.
Prompt students to elaborate on their initial response (don’t always extend it for them).
Link books to one another and to students’ experiences.

• **Focus on rare and challenging words.**

Discuss words in context and their meanings to assure that students have an adequate understanding of new words.

Reread parts of the story and use the cloze procedure to prompt students to use new vocabulary. Deliberately pause and allow time for students to supply the word.

For example: “Some of Jerry’s ________ came to visit.”

Add pictures or discuss other books or stories that contain similar vocabulary words.

Use graphic organizers to help students make connections among words.

Semantic maps and word webs provide a visual representation of how words are related to one another.

• **Repeat-read favorite books.**

Reading books several times gives repeated exposure to new and challenging words and concepts.

Rereading also helps students develop an understanding of story structure.

• **Provide opportunities for story retell and dramatization.**

By retelling stories students can improve their narrative skills. Students can learn to introduce a story with its setting and characters and sequence the events in the story.

Story retells reveal students’ comprehension of story details and their ability to make inferences and interpretations.

Begin by modeling how to retell a story and demonstrate how to use props, such as flannel boards and puppets.

Have students take turns retelling different parts.

Provide scaffolding as needed.

Create opportunities for students to practice retelling stories using props, flannel boards, or puppets.
**Extending talk about books at home**

- Encourage parents and caregivers to talk to their children about books that they read aloud.
  
  Emphasize the value of reading aloud with their kindergarten children.

- Offer suggestions for how to read and talk about books.

- Send notes home announcing and describing thematic units and new books.

- Circulate books between school and home.

## Elements of Storybook Read-Alouds

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<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Time (approximately)</th>
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<tr>
<td>I. Preview story and teach three new vocabulary words</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>II. Read aloud first section and conduct guided comprehension discussion</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
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<td>III. Review vocabulary words and reread section focusing on vocabulary</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
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<td>IV. Extend comprehension of vocabulary and story by providing meaningful dialogue opportunities</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
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<td>V. Summarize</td>
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**TOTAL TIME**

30 minutes
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<tr>
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<td>Words:</td>
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<th>1TRA: Read-Alouds</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Words to review:</td>
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<td>Games/Scaffolds to use</td>
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References


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