



Shared Reading

WHY

Shared reading mimics the lap book experience by showing print as well as pictures while the teacher's voice leads the reading. During and after the multiple rereadings of text, the teacher can explicitly model the strategies and skills needed to read increasingly complex texts, and students can participate in the rereading for different purposes.

WHAT

Typically, shared reading in classroom instruction uses a short piece or sections of text over several days, with a different instructional focus each day. The most common areas of focus are close reading and comprehension including fluency, vocabulary in context, text structure, and text features. Shared reading works in whole- and small-group classroom instruction for multiple readings of complex text. It is appropriate at all grade levels.

HOW

The teacher and students read together from text that is visible to all; this can be accomplished by using media including a document camera or digital projector. Every student joins the teacher to read at least a portion of the text in unison; the teacher chooses what to emphasize in the choral reading portion for the lesson focus such as determining importance. This enables every student, regardless of ability, to engage in the reading process and scaffolds the access to the text.

The text is usually at grade level or higher and uses a wide range of genres. Shared reading is an effective way to demonstrate how to read all types of text including functional materials; often, students face text types independently that they have never encountered before, including in testing situations. These text types are ideal for shared reading sessions and help students develop a strong mental model for independent reading. Shared reading supports independent reading, including transfer and application to new settings and situations.

With the emergent and early reader, a big book or shared digital text is usually read and reread over four or five days.

1. The first day of the reading, or “Text Encounter 1,” provides an opportunity for becoming familiar with the overall text for meaning and story elements, characters and setting, beginning-middle-end, and/or problem-solution, depending on genre.
2. “Text Encounter 2” provides opportunities to notice/locate concept of print features.
3. “Text Encounter 3” focuses on retelling and reviewing story elements and reading strategy instruction.
4. “Text Encounter 4” expands work on vocabulary, text features, and structure.

All of these encounters can include writing in response to reading. An additional rereading could involve simple dramatization and further practice of the reading for fluency and independence. After the session, all shared reading material should be available for students to reread independently.

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To learn more:

- Swartz, S. L., Shook, R. E. & A. Klein. (2002). *Shared Reading: Reading With Children*. Carlsbad, CA: Dominic Press.