

# Pam Allyn's 20 Questions to get Kids Talking About Books

OPEN  
a WORLD of  
POSSIBLE

 SCHOLASTIC

open a world of possible

# Engage, Motivate, Connect: Top 20 Super Reading Conversation Starters

## By Pam Allyn

Talking about books, stories, poems, articles, blogs, backs of cereal boxes, comics and just about anything and everything children read in the world deepens our bond with our children. We can learn about them not just as readers, but as human beings, and at the same time we will help them increase their reading skills by inviting deeper, richer conversation about what they read. By asking thought-provoking questions of our children as readers, we help them soar beyond the page, developing important muscles of comprehension and depth of thinking that inspire them to become "super reader" strong.

When we ask our children open-ended questions, we construct an environment for them to practice sharing their ideas about reading. By sharing ideas with us, they are getting their super reading strengths going in a way that builds their confidence and courage as readers. All this translates back to school where it is much harder to speak in front of many other children. You can be the sounding board for safe reading conversations. By asking questions that don't have one specific answer, we model that we seek to understand our children more deeply through reading and that we are not judging or determining "right" or "wrong" answers. Rather, we become our children's best "close listeners," leaning in to the magic and joy of their percolating ideas.

Here are twenty "super reader" questions to boost your child's reading life, and to foster a deeper, more profound relationship between you and your child. You can alternate asking these questions depending on what kind of reading your child is doing on that day, and you can invite your children to ask each other (and you!) similar questions so that the conversations become ongoing and familiar.

1. What are you picturing in your mind as you are reading?
2. What do you think might happen next?
3. Is there something you are getting curious to learn more about as you are reading?
4. Would you want to be a part of this story?
5. What are your hopes and dreams for yourself as a reader today, tomorrow, this month, for the year?
6. What have you learned from this book (magazine, blog) so far?
7. What are you wondering more about as you are reading?
8. If you had to describe what you are reading in five words, what would you say?
9. Do you agree or disagree with what the author is saying or showing?
10. Would you recommend what you are reading to someone you know?

11. Did this book change your mind about something?
12. What will you want to read next?
13. Can you say what you are thinking about the illustrations?
14. Is there anything in what you are reading that makes you want to change the world?
15. What plans can you make as a reader when you finish this book?
16. As you are reading, can you make connections to other books we have read together, or that you have read on your own?
17. Is there something special you will keep thinking about even after you finish reading?
18. What kinds of things can we make and create to share about what you are reading?
19. Are there other books you'd want to read by this same author?
20. If you were a character in this story, would you make the same decisions?