

USING PICTURE BOOKS TO SUPPORT AT-HOME LEARNING

Helping your students excel academically doesn't only have to only include assigned work! After you read a picture book to your child for pleasure, consider adding in some of these learning moments.

Figurative Language

Scour the book for examples of **figurative language** and talk about what the figurative phrases mean. Look for similes, metaphors, personification, hyperbole, onomatopoeia, and alliteration.

Vivid Word Choice

Picture books have some of the most vivid vocabulary of them all! After you've read your book, pick a few pages to examine for colorful word choices. Look for **vocabulary words** your child doesn't already know, look for **descriptive words**, look for words that help **define the setting**, look for words that **describe characters**. Talk about why an author chose a specific word in the text or find a **synonym** that could have been used in place of more bland words. Take it a step further, and talk about **antonyms** for vivid words the author chose!

Flip the Story

Talk about all the main elements of the story, including the **main characters**, the **primary setting**, the **main problem** the character is facing, and what the **resolution** to the story is. Take it a step further by selecting one story element and changing it. What would happen if the setting was the city instead of the country? What's a different way the problem could have been resolved?

Reading Fluency

Choose a page or two to have your child read back to you or chorale read the page out loud together. Pay special attention to **punctuation**. Be sure there's a full stop at periods, excitement at exclamation marks and wonder upon finding question marks. Have them read the same page a few times to practice fluent, smooth reading.

Lessons Learned

Most picture books have a great lesson to be learned! Chat about the **theme** of the story, or what lesson it can teach us as the reader or what lesson the main character in the story learned. Chat about how you and your family might apply this to your own life.

Visualize It

This one needs to be done **BEFORE** you read the book for the first time. Read a page or two from the book out loud. Have your child draw what they imagine the scene to look like. Then compare what they drew to the actual pictures.

Making Connections

Does this book remind you of anything? Does it make you think of an event that you've encountered in your life as an adult or in your kids' lives? Is there another book you've read that has similarities?

Picture This!

This one also needs to be done BEFORE you read for pleasure! Use sticky notes to cover up the text of the book. Then take a “picture walk” through the book and tell the story together. When you’re done, take the sticky notes off and see how closely your story matched the real tale!

Reading Skill Walk

Here are a few basic reading skills that your child works on every day in school. Talk about how these skills show up in your books.

- **Cause and Effect:** What is the effect of a character’s action? What caused them to act that way?
- **Compare and Contrast:** Think about the differences and similarities between two characters, books, or settings in the story.
- **Inference:** Are there parts of the story that require you to “read between the lines?” in order to understand them?
- **Main Idea:** Try to give the summary of the story in one sentence.
- **Sequencing:** Do a quick retell of the story together (try to do it without looking back in the text!) using words like first, next, after that, then, finally, etc.
- **Fact and Opinion:** Pick out lines of the text that are facts and others than are opinions. If you find opinions, chat about whether you agree or disagree with them.

Who, What, Where, When, Why

After you read, take turns asking each other basic comprehension questions that start with “Who, What, Where, When, Why, or How?” Here are some sample questions...

- “**Why** did the character _____?”
- “**What** happened right after _____?”
- “**Who** solved the problem in the story?”
- “**Where** did the story take place?”

Movie Comparisons

While most people agree that the book is always better than movie, it’s still a great skill to teach our children to compare the two! Chat about the similarities, differences, and how the movie made you feel compared to how the book made you feel. There are many picture books that have been made into short films or movies. Here are a few suggestions...

- Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs
- Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day
- Mars Needs Moms!
- Jumanji
- Where the Wild Things Are
- Paddington

Social/Emotional Learning

Many picture book characters face the same or similar challenges as our children do. Look for moments where the characters display empathy, navigate tricky friendship problems, manage their emotions, solve problems, show perseverance, or display a different perspective than others.

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE FOR PARENTS

STORY ELEMENTS

Every fiction story has the following pieces or parts that make a story.

ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION
CHARACTER	The people or animals who are important to the story.
SETTING	The time and location where a story takes place.
PROBLEM	The main issue, struggle, or conflict that the main characters are up against.
KEY EVENTS	The important events or actions that occur during the story.
SOLUTION	The way the characters solve the problem.
PLOT	A combination of the problem, events, and solution that make up the story.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

When words mean something other than their LITERAL meaning.

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
SIMILE	A comparison of two unlike things using LIKE or AS.	My <u>brothers</u> are as loud as <u>cymbals</u> clanging together.
METAPHOR	A comparison of two unlike things that says one thing is another.	The new <u>baby</u> was a <u>bundle of joy</u> .
HYPERBOLE	An EXAGGERATION that can't possibly be true.	It felt as if I had <u>walked a million miles</u> to school.
PERSONIFICATION	Giving human qualities to nonhuman things.	The morning <u>sun smiled down on me</u> as I walked to the bus.
ALLITERATION	The repetition of the same initial consonant sound.	<u>H</u> e <u>h</u> elped <u>h</u> er <u>h</u> urt <u>h</u> ead <u>h</u> eal.
ONOMATOPOEIA	Words whose sounds suggest their meaning.	A snowball <u>WHOOSHED</u> past my ear during the snowball fight.
IDIOM	A group of words whose meaning isn't understood from their literal meanings.	After we won the soccer game, my team was on <u>cloud nine</u> .
OXYMORON	A phrase whose words contradict each other with opposite meanings.	The old, green couch was really <u>pretty ugly</u> .