

Read Aloud and Storytelling Tips

Public Libraries and Schools: A Natural Partnership for Student Success

Read Aloud Tips

1. Read books that are appealing to you.
2. Before your reading day, read your story aloud several times so that you are comfortable with it.
3. Sit in a low chair to be slightly elevated above the children seated on the floor. If they are at desks, stand.
4. Introduce stories by asking questions that will relate the stories to the experiences of the children. Puppets are useful for this with young children.
5. Speak slowly and clearly.
6. Hold the book so everyone can see the pictures.
7. Maintain eye contact.
8. If possible, change tone of voice to fit the dialogue and use various voices for different characters.
9. **BE FLEXIBLE!** Adapt to the reactions of the children. Be prepared to cope with interruptions.
10. Occasionally read above children's intellectual level to challenge their minds.
11. Find an area to read in with few distractions. Do not read in front of a brightly lit window. Backlighting strains the eyes of your audience.
12. Encourage children to read by themselves. The benefit of the read-aloud experience is extended when children are motivated to read.

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Storytelling Tips

Get kids excited about stories by having them tell their own. The following techniques are fun, easy, and effective ways to get kids started! *Techniques shared by Kevin Cordi, Storyteller*

1. Storytelling Gossip

Tell a story pretending you are around a huge gossip vine. Start a story with a rumor about a famous character in a story the kids will know. Folk tales work great for this activity. Example:

“I heard that the Rabbit wasn’t really late; he just didn’t want to talk to Alice because she had done something really mean the day before. She...”
Everyone should have a chance to add to the gossip story.

2. Alphabet Tell

Either using the student’s first or last name, have the students tell the story in a circle or small group. Students can stop mid story. If the story breaks on a word that starts with the same letter as one of the students’ name, that person continues the story.

3. Rhyme Tell

Have a small group tell a story, each child telling a portion. The only rule is the story must rhyme. Example:

Student One: “The dog ran down to the river, because he smelled a smell.”
Student Two: “He found an ancient object there—just what he will not tell.”

Continue on until each child has had at least one turn.

4. Animal Telling w/Noises

Divide children into small groups. Assign each child in the group an animal. Tell an animal story using the assigned animal names, using the gossip technique. Whenever an animal is mentioned, the child with that animal must make its animal sound.

5. Magic Wand Creation Story

You have just found a magic wand that allows you to change three school or home activities. You can change anything you want. Tell the story of those changes.