

Read- Aloud Routine

for Building Vocabulary
and Comprehension Skills
in Early Childhood



Prepare

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

Extend

Weekly

Acknowledgments

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About This Tool

The weekly framework is an overview of what will take place over the course of reading the whole text.* The routine focuses on language, vocabulary, and comprehension development.

Adapted from: Hickman, P., Pollard-Durodola, S., & Vaughn, S. (2004). Storybook reading: Improving vocabulary and comprehension for English-language learners. *The Reading Teacher*, 57(8), 720–730.

Giroir, S., Grimaldo, L. R., Vaughn, S., & Roberts, G. (2015). Interactive read-alouds for English learners in the elementary grades. *The Reading Teacher*, 68(8), 639–648.

*See considerations on the back side of the Prepare page.

Prepare: Select a Text and Vocabulary Words

Select a text.

- Choose texts that are appropriately challenging but interesting. When possible, choose texts that convey new information and knowledge.
- Search for text that is both engaging and content rich.
- Select a text that is culturally and linguistically relevant, and meaningful to students.

Prepare.

- The text will be read over 2 to 4 days. Divide the text into chunks based on a stopping point that creates anticipation or suspense for the next day (100- to 150-word chunks). Increase the size of the chunks as the year progresses.
- Choose one to two vocabulary words per chunk of text.
- Think of nonlinguistic representations (e.g., object, picture, gesture) of each word to share with students.
- Create vocabulary cards with a student-friendly definition and a picture for each word.
- Display vocabulary word cards in literacy workstations or centers.

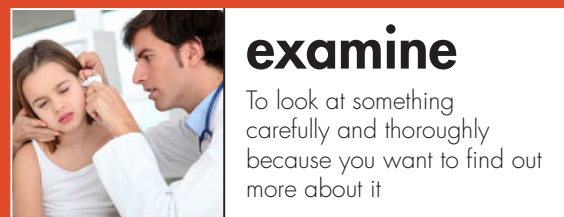
HELPFUL HINTS ON WORD SELECTION

- Focus on high-utility words that are used across contexts and content areas. Will students hear and see the words in math, science, social studies, and extracurricular activities?
- Use words that most students do not know.
- Use words that will help students connect to their own experiences.
- Definitions should use everyday language and be easy for students to understand.

Sample Books



Sample Vocabulary Card



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Read-Aloud Considerations

The read-aloud framework is designed to be flexible—implementation may vary based on program considerations, language considerations, and students' needs.

Options for Implementation

- The length of the entire daily read-aloud framework could vary, depending on the age of the students and time of year. As students advance, teachers can increase the lesson time per day.
- The components can be broken up throughout the day. For example, vocabulary words can be introduced in one sitting and the rest of the framework in a different sitting on the same day. For maximum benefit, it is important to implement all of the components.
- The components can be condensed into one reading if students do not have the stamina for two readings of the same text.

Different Prekindergarten Programs

- In a half-day program, the framework may need to be abbreviated due to time constraints. The chunks of text may be shorter, and it may take more days to complete the entire text.
- In a full-day program, there will be ample time to incorporate the entire read-aloud framework. The daily steps can be implemented in many mini-lessons throughout the day or in one sitting.

Language and Culture

- In a bilingual program, the framework can be used in the first language, English, or both to build vocabulary and comprehension.
- To increase student engagement, take students' culture, interests, and experiences into consideration when selecting texts.

Step 1: Introduce and Preview

Preview and activate background knowledge.

- Show and read the front and back covers of the text.
- Activate students' prior knowledge by making connections between what students know and what they need to know to understand the text.
- Have students predict what the text is about and briefly discuss concepts related to the topic.

Briefly introduce the new vocabulary words.

- Say and show each word and have students repeat it.
- Provide a student-friendly definition and share a nonlinguistic representation (e.g., picture, object) of each word.
- Introduce a gesture that represents the word and have students practice the gesture.
- Use the same definition consistently throughout the routine.
- Make the words visible by displaying them on a pocket chart, vocabulary word wall, or bulletin board.

Show the Front Cover



Display Vocabulary Words



Step 2: Read the Chunk of Text

Tell students to listen for the vocabulary words while you read and to show the gesture when they hear a word.

Pose a specific question before reading or tell students to listen carefully while you read because they will have to answer questions.

This technique sets the purpose for reading and increases student engagement.

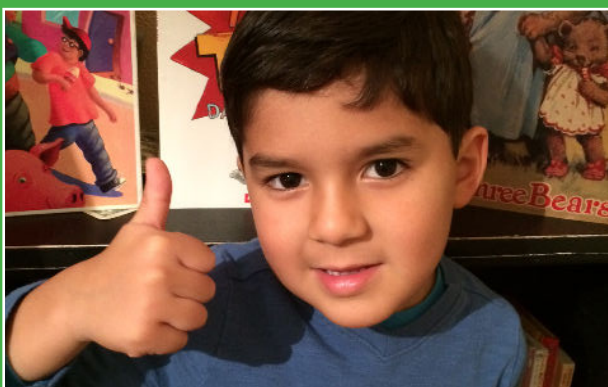
Read **WITHOUT STOPPING**, focusing on intonation and enunciation to provide a good model for students.

Reading the entire passage without interruptions allows students to focus on meaning.

Guide students in discussing and retelling the passage.

- Ask students to turn and talk with a neighbor to retell what happened in the chunk of text (focus on who, what, when, and where) or to answer the specific question given before reading.
- Provide a model sentence or use sentence stems with visuals as scaffolds, if necessary.
- Encourage students to use the new vocabulary words while retelling the story or answering questions.
- Use student responses to write a summary statement on the board.

Student Gesture



Turn and Talk



Step 3: Reread the Chunk of Text and Close the Lesson

Read the chunk of text a second time, focusing on vocabulary words. The rereading can be done at a different time of day.

- Before reading, review words and definitions with students.
- Tell students to show you the gesture when they hear a vocabulary word.
- While reading, stop at each vocabulary word.
- Guide students in creating sentences that use the vocabulary word or in explaining what the vocabulary word means in their own words.
- Provide a model sentence or use sentence stems with visuals as scaffolds, if necessary.
- Continue reading the chunk of text until all vocabulary words have been identified.
- As a group, have students talk about the text while connecting it to their own experiences. Use prompts such as, “Talk about a time when you have felt like the character.”

Summarize what students read and learned.

- Briefly review the title and author, main events and ideas, and new vocabulary words.
- Challenge students to listen for and use the new vocabulary words throughout the day.

Sample Sentence Stems

examine

I would like to **examine**

because _____

expert

A/An _____

is an **expert** at _____

Students Discuss the Story

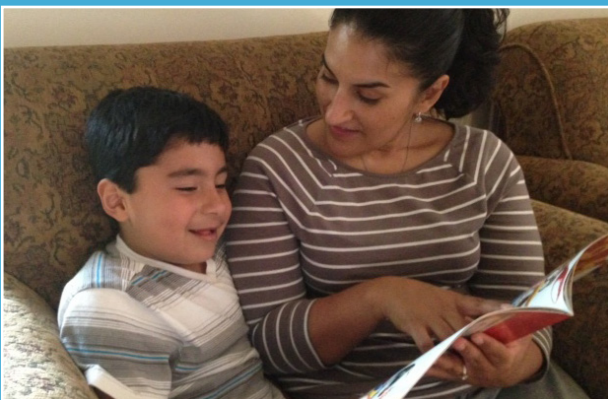


Extend Language and Comprehension

Ideas to Incorporate Throughout the Week

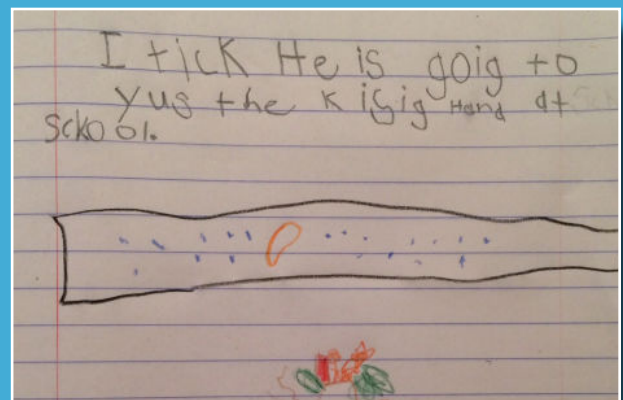
- Have students write and draw in a reader's response journal. Use prompts such as, "What do you think will happen next in the story? Write a prediction in your journal." This activity can also be done as a shared writing with teacher modeling.
- Create thematic play areas and centers for students to continue the story line, characters, or concepts in other ways.
- Act out or role-play the story and/or vocabulary words.
- Re-enact the story with puppets, props, or felt board characters.
- Extend the story into other content areas through cross-curricular activities (e.g., math, science, social studies).
- Look for times during the day to use the vocabulary words with students.
- Create original or alternate endings for stories.
- Provide story cards to assist children in sequencing and retelling stories.
- Have students create books with the class.
- Engage students in different vocabulary games (e.g., vocabulary cubes, vocabulary puzzles, vocabulary parade).
- Send words home to encourage a family-school connection.
- Collaborate with other teachers and share ideas for extending language and comprehension. Have fun!

Parent Read-Aloud Routine



www.elitetexas.org/resources-el/family-and-community

Using a Reading Journal to Make Predictions



"I think he is going to use the kissing hand at school."

WEEKLY FRAMEWORK

Introduction Day

Step 1: Introduce and preview the text.

Introduce one to two new vocabulary words from the day's chunk of text.

Step 2: Read the chunk of text without stopping.

Have students turn and talk to a neighbor to retell what the chunk of text is about.

Provide a model sentence or use sentence stems with visuals as scaffolds, if necessary.

Based on student responses, write a summary statement on the board for the day's chunk.

Step 3: Review the new vocabulary words.

Reread the chunk of text, stopping at each vocabulary word to review, turn and talk, and check for understanding.

Subsequent Days

Step 1: Review content and vocabulary words from the previous day's reading.

Introduce the day's new chunk of text.

Introduce one to two NEW vocabulary words from the day's reading.

Step 2: Read the chunk of text.

Have students turn and talk to a neighbor to retell what the chunk of text is about.

Provide a model sentence or use sentence stems with visuals as scaffolds, if necessary.

Based on student responses, write a summary statement on the board for the day's chunk.

Step 3: Review the new vocabulary words.

Reread the chunk of text, stopping at each vocabulary word to review, turn and talk, and check for understanding.

Wrap-Up Day

- Choose one or two vocabulary words from the previous days' lessons that were challenging for students or difficult to remember.
- Review the words.
- If time allows, read the entire text to students.
- Lead an activity that reinforces the meaning of the chosen vocabulary words, such as acting out the meaning of words through charades or using props.
- Place vocabulary words on a word wall and in dramatic play areas or centers and revisit their use throughout the day and in future days.