



SET 1: READING READINESS

Parts of a Book

Words vs. Letters & One-to-One Matching

Directionality & Return Sweep

Punctuation

PARTS OF A BOOK



What to Know:

- The basic parts of a book are the front cover, back cover, spine, pages, author, illustrator, words, and pictures.
- The author writes the words. The illustrator makes the pictures.

What to Say:

- “Before we read, can you point to the (spine, cover, title)?”
- “Do I start reading here (point to pictures) or here (point to words)?”
- “Okay, let’s start reading!” (hold book upside down and/or backwards for students to correct you)
- “The author’s name is _____. They wrote the words.”
- “The illustrator’s name is _____. They created the pictures.”

More Information:

- Handling books and talking about parts of a book are key pre-reading skills.
- While illustrations are very valuable, students need to be taught that the words we say when we read a book are the words printed on the page.
- Move on when students can correctly identify parts of the book.

WORDS VS. LETTERS & ONE-TO-ONE MATCHING



What to Know:

- Students need to practice matching one verbal word that is read with one printed word on the page. This is called one-to-one matching.
- Letters make up words. Words make up sentences. When we read, we only say the words that are printed on the page.
- Practicing these skills works best with a book that has large print and/or few words on a page.
- Students need to know the alphabet and how to count to ten before practicing this skill.

What to Say:

- “How many words are on this page?”
- Cover up the other words on the page and ask, “How many letters are in this word?”
- “Can you follow along with your finger- touching under each word as I read the story?” Point with them for extra support.

More Information:

- It takes time, instruction, and practice to understand that groups of letters form words.
- Move on when student can correctly touch and count letters in a word and words on a page with support.

DIRECTIONALITY & RETURN SWEEP



What to Know:

- In English, we read from left to right. This is called directionality.
- When we get to the end of a line, we drop down and return to the beginning of the next line. This is called return sweep.
- Read slowly and touch below each word while reading. Ask the student to turn the pages as you read a familiar book aloud.

What to Say:

- “Can you follow along with your finger, touching under each word as I read the story?” Point with them for extra support.
- “When I get to the end of the line, what word should I read next?”
- “I read the last word on this page. Where should I read next?”

More Information:

- Students will learn how to handle books before they learn to read the words.
- Help pre-readers by pointing out that you have read the last word on a page or in a sentence. Ask the students to turn the pages.
- Move on when students can correctly track the words and turn the pages while listening to a story aloud.

PUNCTUATION



What to Know:

- Punctuation tells reader how to say something: inflection, emotion, and pauses.
- A period means a sentence is ending. When readers come see a period they pause.
- A question mark means a sentence is a question. When readers see a question mark their voice goes up.
- An exclamation point means a sentence has a lot of emotion. When readers see an exclamation point, they read with feeling.

What to Say:

- “Can you point to a period?”
- “Can you show me a question mark?”
- “I see an exclamation point. How should we say this sentence?”

More Information:

- This skill takes a lot of practice to master.
- Move on when students can correctly identify basic punctuation marks.

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SET 2: FICTION COMPREHENSION

Story Elements

Making Predictions

Using Illustrations to Make Meaning

Connections: Text to Text, Text to Self

Book-to-Book Connections

Retelling/ Sequencing

STORY ELEMENTS



What to Know:

- Setting is where the story takes place: location, time of day, season, etc.
- Characters are the people or animals who talk and do things.

What to Say:

- “Who are the characters in this story? Who are the characters on this page?”
- “What is the setting on this page?”
- “Can you tell me where the characters are on this page?” “How do you know?” *Prompt students to use illustrations*

More Information:

- Some books lend themselves to discussing setting and characters. Preview the texts before reading. Illustrations (not the text) often show the characters and setting.
- Choose books that show settings students may know: parks, school, outside, the store.
- Choose books that have familiar characters: mom, dad, kids, cats, dogs, bears.
- Move on when students can name or show you characters and settings.

MAKING PREDICTIONS



What to Know:

- Model making your own predictions with reasoning and ask follow-up questions to elicit discussions about evidence for their thinking.

What to Say:

- “Before we turn the page, what do you think will happen next? What makes you think that? I think _____ will happen because in the story it says_____”

More Information:

- Move on when students can make a logical prediction with at least one reason that comes directly from words or illustrations in the text.

USING ILLUSTRATIONS TO MAKE MEANING



What to Know:

- Students should be able to identify and use illustrations to understand and reference what is happening at any given moment in the story.

What to Say:

- “Let’s go on a picture walk. Can you tell me what’s happening in the story here?” Flip through pages without reading, just looking at illustrations.
- “Before I read the words, look at the picture. What is happening? What are the characters doing?”
- “How do you think this character feels?”

More Information:

- Illustrations support reading comprehension. Have the students look at the pictures and discuss before reading the words.
- Using illustrations to make meaning will continue to be an important part of reading throughout elementary school. You’ll continue having conversations about illustrations all year.

CONNECTIONS: TEXT TO TEXT, TEXT TO SELF



What to Know:

- Relating to the plot and the feelings/traits of the characters supports comprehension.
- Help students use words and pictures to better recognize what the characters are experiencing.

What to Say:

- “Has this ever happened to you?”
- (Name characters’ feeling) Have you ever felt this way? Why/When?
- “I have a connection to this story. This part reminds me of a time in my life (describe).”

More Information:

- Connections are abstract, so students may need you to rephrase a story element. For example, ask:
 - Goldilocks destroys the three bears’ home, has anyone ever ruined your things?
 - How did you feel about that? How do you think the bears feel?
- Making personal connections to texts will continue to be an important part of reading throughout their life. You’ll continue having conversations about connections all year.

BOOK-TO-BOOK CONNECTIONS



What to Know:

- In Kindergarten noticing and recalling similarities between two books begins with simple elements, like types of characters or setting. Then builds to comparing non-fiction to fiction on the same topic and different versions of the same story (fractured fairytales).

What to Say:

- “Have you ever read a book about (the topic) before?”
- “What’s the same about these two books? Does this remind you of another story you’ve read?”
- Using a book about familiar characters “This book is about (characters). Have you ever read a book about these characters before?”

More Information:

- Have students look through the illustrations of two books to find connections if they struggle to recognize or recall stories.
- Making connections between different texts will continue to be an important part of reading throughout their life. You’ll continue having conversations about connections all year.

RETELLING/ SEQUENCING



What to Know:

- Have the student flip through the book and use the illustrations.
- Frame questions around Beginning, Middle, End or First, Next, Then, Last.

What to Say:

- “What happened to piglet at the beginning of the story? Then what happened? How did the story end?”

More Information:

- Sequencing events in a logical way is fundamental to reading comprehension and writing.
- Having discussions about timing of events in the student’s life, like daily routines, seasons, and schedule can support this skill.
- Move on when students can retell stories in the correct order with prompting and support.



SET 3: INFORMATIONAL TEXT

Fiction vs. Non-Fiction

Main Idea (Nonfiction)

Non-Fiction Text Features

FICTION VS. NON-FICTION



What to Know:

- Readers understand that non-fiction is about true events/things/people and fiction is writing about made-up events/ideas.
- Readers use clues from the book to identify and distinguish non-fiction from fiction texts (photographs, illustrations, magical elements).
- Books with animal characters lend themselves to discussing real vs. pretend.

What to Say:

- “Is this book fiction or non-fiction? How do you know?”
- Using a fiction book with animals “Do real bears talk? Do real pigs build houses?” etc.
- Using a non-fiction book “This is a non-fiction book. That means it teaches readers about real things.”

More Information:

- If you are reading realistic fiction, you may want to explain that some stories and characters seem real, like they could happen, but are made-up, so they are still fiction.
- Move on when the student can distinguish between real and pretend books with prompting.

MAIN IDEA (NONFICTION)



What to Know:

- Using text features (photographs titles labels) as well as words, students should be able to identify and name the main topic of a non-fiction text.

What to Say:

- “Let’s look at the cover and photographs inside this book. What do you think this book is going to teach us about?”
- “I wonder _____. Do you think this book will teach us about that?” (ex: I wonder where penguins live, I wonder what a panda eats, etc.)
- “What is this page I just read all about?”

More Information:

- A good time to practice this is when selecting a book to enjoy. Try picking up a book and asking your student tell you what it’s about before you begin reading. If you are reading a book about one topic (bears) versus many topics (forest animals) it will be easier for your student to identify the main topic.
- Move on when the student can name the main topic before or after reading.

NON-FICTION TEXT FEATURES



What to Know:

- Kindergarteners should be able to identify and name these important non-fiction text features: photos, captions, table of contents, and glossary. Name these features as you're reading together.

What to Say:

- “Photos are pictures taken with a camera, not drawn.”
- “Captions explain more about a photo.”
- “The table of contents shows a list of topics and what page we can learn about them on.”
 - “When we read nonfiction books, we don't have to read every part. We can use the table of contents to go to the section we want to read.”
- “A glossary is like a mini-dictionary – it lists important words and tells what they mean.”
 - “This word is in bold, let's see if the meaning is explained in the glossary.”

More Information:

- Not every nonfiction text will have every feature. You can explain to students that the author chose not to include that feature in their book and that's okay.
- Move on when the student can name and identify the features in a non-fiction text.