

## **Tips for Read-Aloud**

*An important component of our HOPES After School program is the daily read-aloud. Each enrichment activity has a book that accompanies it. We encourage our volunteers to take turns reading the books! Here are a few tips to help you prepare for that.*

### **General Tips:**

- Practice reading the book to yourself before you read it aloud. Think of questions you might ask, words you may need to define, etc.
- Set expectations for the read aloud. Make sure students are seated and listening. Do not read over students' voices.
- Introduce the book to the students. Ask students to make predictions about the book. Provide students with any necessary background knowledge.
- Slowly walk around while you read. This will keep students interested, help you manage behavior in the room, and allow students to better see the pictures.
- Read clearly and slowly so students have time to take in the story and look at the pictures.
- Read with expression, but keep it simple. Don't worry about using different voices if you think you'll have trouble keeping them in mind.
- Ask questions before, during, and after reading. Answer any questions that children have as they come up.
- If necessary, pause and summarize the story to make sure all students are comprehending the content. You can ask a student to provide a summary, or quickly do it yourself.
- If the story is long or students are disengaged, do not feel the need to read every word on the page. Instead, summarize the page or even skip pages.

### **Sample Questions to Ask While Reading:**

- What do you think the story is about? What makes you think that?
- What do you think will happen next?
- What can you tell me about the story so far?
- Can you predict what will happen next?
- Why do you think the character did that?
- What would you have done if you were the character?
- How would you have felt if you were the character?
- What did you learn from the book?
- What was your favorite part of the book?

## Tips for Reading with Children

### *Working with Children*

- Introduce yourself. Tell the child a few things about yourself, including your love for reading and/or what kind of books that you like.
- Have the child introduce him or herself. Make sure you can correctly pronounce and spell the child's name. Ask about his or her favorite things. Before each session, be sure to ask how he or she is doing.
- Don't make assumptions about the child. They may not have a background you are familiar with. Try to become more informed about the child's culture.

### *Choosing a Book*

- Present books to the child that are at their guided or independent reading levels.
- It might be overwhelming for the child if you bring the entire bucket of books. Instead, pre-select 3-5 books at their level for them to choose from.
- Find out what the child is interested in and select books that involve those interests.
- Have the child flip through a few pages of the book to see if they think they would be interested in the story.

### *Introducing a Book*

- If possible, read the book to yourself before reading with it with the child. This way you'll have talking points prepared and know if there are any difficult vocabulary words that you can discuss with the child beforehand.
- Look at the cover with the child. Discuss the picture, read the title together, and point out the author and illustrator. Ask the child to predict what the story is about.
- Page through the book together. Discuss the pictures. Encourage the child to figure out the plot based on the pictures. As the child is looking through the book, take note of any vocabulary words that you think the child may struggle with. Introduce those words to the student before they begin reading the book.
- Have the child read the book, discussing whether the story is the same as you had discussed looking at the pictures.
- After reading, encourage the child to summarize and discuss the story.
- Go back to trouble spots that may have been misread and temporarily ignored.
- If the child is willing, have him or her read it again (especially for younger students). This repetition of the now familiar book builds confidences, increases the likelihood of recognizing the words later, and shows the child how much he or she has improved in a short time.

- Don't always walk through the book first; some stories have great surprise endings!
- Encourage critical reflection. Ask questions and help the child ask questions.

### *Working on Difficult Words*

For words that are not familiar, use the following strategies:

- Sounding it out. Break up the words into parts, showing how the letters work together. For small words, you may have the child tell you what the letters are. Ask what sound the first letter(s) make. Point out suffixes (endings like –ing, ed, etc.)
- Point out the pictures or recall the plot and ask the child to use context clues to figure out what the word could be.

### *Correcting Errors*

- When there is an error, WAIT a moment – perhaps the child is thinking. Give him or her a chance to problem solve before you step in. Let the child figure things out, but if it seems to be getting stressful, help him or her out.
- Don't point out every mistake. This disturbs the flow of reading and can be disheartening. You can always return to those parts when the book is finished.
- Have a pencil and paper available to write down notes about words that are difficult for the student so you can go back later and review with him or her, without interrupting the reading.
- Ignore errors that don't change the meaning:
  - Ex: I saw a lion (child), I saw the lion (text)
- If the child is making too many mistakes or having a lot of trouble sounding things out, the book is too difficult. Try sharing the reading or take over the reading.

### *Strategies to Try When Reading is Difficult*

When reading is slow:

- Praise the child for his/her hard work
- Be patient and give the child time to think about the word and the meaning of the story
- Express your appreciation of the child's reading

When the story is too difficult or long:

- Read the story to the child and talk about it
- Choose another book.
- Take turns reading a page, paragraph or sentence.
- Read aloud together.

- Read at the same time: make your voice louder or softer according to how much support the child needs.
- You read and pause at words you think the child knows and can fill in.
- Decide with the child on stopping points during the reading to take a break and discuss it. Together decide on places in the text that are: confusing, interesting, funny, exciting, etc.

When the child is not very interested in the story:

- Read the first pages together and make guesses about what will happen.
- Relate personal experiences to events and characters in the story.
- Help find a more interesting story.