Sharing a Book

HELPFUL QUESTIONS AND PROMPTS FOR ADULTS

Keep it warm, relaxed and enjoyable

You do not need to ask every question. Choose one or two that suit the book and the moment. Sometimes the best response is simply to listen, laugh, wonder or enjoy the story together.

Before reading *look, wonder and connect*

Start with the book

- What do you notice on the cover?
- What do the title and pictures make you think?
- What kind of book might this be: a story, information, poetry or something else?
- Have we read anything by this author or illustrator before?

Invite a prediction

There is no need for a prediction to be correct. The explanation matters more.

- What do you think this book might be about?
- Where or when might it take place?
- Who might we meet?
- What makes you think that?

While your child is reading *support without taking over*

When a word is tricky

Use phonics first. Avoid asking children to guess a word from the picture.

- Give your child a little thinking time.
- Ask them to look carefully at the letters or graphemes.
- Say the sounds and blend them together.
- If the word is still difficult, tell them the word and continue.
- Reread the whole sentence so it sounds fluent and makes sense.

Keep the meaning alive

- What has happened so far?
- What do you think might happen next? Why?
- How is the character feeling? What gives you that idea?
- What does this word or phrase mean here?
- What can you see in the picture that adds to the words?

Small prompts that help

Notice

"I noticed…"
"Something interesting is…"

Think aloud

"I wonder…"
"This reminds me of…"

Invite evidence

"What makes you think that?"
"Can you show me?"

Talk about what you have read

Choose prompts that encourage a real conversation. Accept different answers when children can explain their thinking.

After a story *characters, events and ideas*

Remember and explain

- Who were the main characters?
- Where did the story happen?
- Can you retell the important events in your own words?
- What was the problem, and how was it resolved?
- Which part was most important? Why?

Think more deeply

- Why do you think the character acted that way?
- Did your opinion of anyone change?
- Were you surprised by the ending?
- What might happen after the story ends?
- What message or big idea might the author want us to consider?

After an information book *facts, features and reliability*

Find and organise information

- What new fact did you learn?
- Where would you look to find a particular topic?
- How do the contents page, index or glossary help?
- What do headings, captions, diagrams or labels add?
- Can you explain this section in your own words?

Question and connect

- Which fact interested or surprised you most? Why?
- How does this connect with something you already knew?
- Does the author seem knowledgeable about the subject? What makes you think so?
- Is there anything you would like to check elsewhere?
- What question do you still have?

Build a reading life *response, choice and enjoyment*

Share an opinion

- What did you enjoy most?
- Was there anything you did not enjoy?
- Who might like this book?
- Would you read another book by this author?
- How many stars would you give it, and why?

Make connections

- Did this remind you of another book, film, place or experience?
- Have you met a similar character or idea before?
- Did the book change your mind about anything?
- What would you like to read or discover next?

The adult's role

Encourage confidence and independence

- Praise effort, careful thinking and self-correction.
- Model expressive reading and keep reading aloud to your child.
- Let your child choose books, including familiar favourites, comics, poetry and non-fiction.
- Stop before reading becomes tiring or frustrating.

Remember

Reading together should strengthen connection as well as skill.

A calm ten minutes can be more valuable than a long, pressured session.