

# Teaching with Children's Literature

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## Methods of Teaching with Storybooks

- Methods of Reading Children's Literature in Classrooms
- Interactive Read-Alouds
- Teaching English Language
- Teaching other subjects through children's literature

## Methods of Reading

- **Teacher read-aloud:** Teacher reads the book aloud while discussing the story
- **Shared Reading:** Teacher reads aloud as children participate in reading
- **Guided Reading:** Small groups of children read together with the teacher
- **Partner Reading:** Child reads with another child either in unison or taking turns
- **Independent Reading:** Child reads book by him/herself

## Interactive Read Alouds

- **Goal:** Improve children's comprehension and oral language skills by engaging children in the reading before, during, and after the story
  - **Before:** Activate children's background knowledge related to the story
  - **During:** Engage in a conversation about the story by pausing to ask open-ended questions about what has been read
  - **After:** Children respond to the book

### Before: Activate Background Knowledge

- The more children know about a topic, the better they will understand the story
- Read the title and ask children questions to stimulate what they know about the title
- Give a brief summary of the story and ask questions about things children know related to the summary
- Introduce 3 to 5 vocabulary words that are important to understanding the story. Ask questions related to the vocabulary words

### During: Conversations about the book

- Ask open-ended questions that promote discussions after every page
  - **Print:** Name letters, words, or where to start reading
  - **Vocabulary:** Discuss an unknown word
  - **Pictures:** What is happening in the picture?
  - **Understanding:** What just happened in the story?
  - **Emotions:** How does this character feel about what just happened?
  - **Motivation:** Why did this character behave as they did?
  - **Prediction:** What do you think will happen next?
  - **Connection:** Ask a question that makes a connection between the story and the children's lives

### After: Children's Reactions

- Ask questions to help children understand the story
  - What was the setting in the story?/Where did the story take place?
  - Who were the characters in the story?
  - Describe the story: What happened first in the story? What happened next?
  - What can we learn from this story?
- Ask reflection questions
  - What part of the book did you like the best?
  - What part about the book did you dislike?
  - Which character did you like the best? Why?
  - Ask questions that make connections between the story and children's lives

### REVISION: Foundational Skills for Successful Reading

- **Oral language:** Ability to listen and speak
- **Interest in Reading:** Value and enjoy reading
- **Print awareness:** Understand the nature of print (e.g., title of a book, read left to right)
- **Vocabulary knowledge:** Understand the meaning of words
- **Comprehension strategies:** Understand the meaning of a text
- **Reading Fluency:** Read a text quickly and accurately
- **Phonemic awareness:** Ability to recognize sounds (phonemes) in spoken words
- **Phonics:** Identify the relationship between letters and sounds
  - Phonics is best taught by a systematic phonics program like *Jolly Phonics*

### Teaching English Language: Reading Skills

- **Oral Language.** Reading storybooks gives children practice listening and speaking.
- **Interest in Reading.** Reading fun and engaging storybooks helps children become interested in reading.

### Teaching English Language: Reading Skills

- **Print Awareness:** Ask children to point out various aspects of the book
  - Point to the title
  - Point to the author
  - Turn to the first page
  - Where do I start reading on this page?
  - Point to specific letters
  - Point to high frequency words
  - When I finish reading this page, what do I do?
- **Vocabulary:** Discuss 3 to 5 words from the story that children might not know
  - Define the word and give synonyms
  - Discuss children's experiences related to the word

### Teaching English Language: Reading Skills

- **Comprehension** instruction consists of a teacher demonstrating, modeling, and guiding children in reading comprehension strategies
- Examples of Comprehension Strategies (there are many)
  - Re-reading something that is not understood
  - Summarize what has been read
  - Make predictions about what might happen next
  - Ask questions about a text
  - Identifying the story structure (e.g., plot, characters, setting)
  - Make connections between what is read and children's experiences

### Reading Fluency 100 High Frequency Words

Umolu & Mallam (1985)

a	dog	is	rat	they
about	eat	it	said	this
after	father	kill	saw	time
all	feed	king	say	to
and	flower	let	school	told
are	for	lion	see	tortoise
big	friend	live	she	tree
bird	from	man	snake	two
book	go	me	so	upon
boy	going	meat	some	want
brother	has	monkey	stone	was
bush	have	mother	story	we
buy	he	my	table	went
came	her	no	take	what
can	him	not	that	when
cat	his	of	the	who
children	home	on	their	will
come	house	once	them	with
day	I	one	then	woman
do	in	our	there	you

### Teaching English Language: Reading Skills

- **Fluency:** Choose a few lines of the book – or a child's response to the book – and write it on the board
  - While pointing to the words, ask children to read the line together
  - Demonstrate techniques for identifying unknown words such as sounding out the word
- **Phonemic awareness:** Ask questions to help children identify sounds in key words from the story
  - What is the first sound in the word Rain?
  - What are other words that start with the same first sound as in rain?
  - If you take away the /r/ sound from the word *rain* and add the /g/ sound, what word do you get?
  - What word do you get when you combine the sounds /d/ /r/ /y/?
  - What words rhyme with *dry*?

### Teaching English Language: Reading Skills

- **Question and Answer:** Ask questions that require children to think beyond the story
  - What are things that you like about the dry season? Rainy season?
  - What are things you don't like about the dry season? Rainy season?
  - Zebras said they can see the rain. What are some things you see when it rains ?
  - Baboon said he can hear the rain. What are some things you can hear when it rains?
- **Story structure:** Ask questions regarding the characters, setting, and plot.
  - Who are the people/animals in the story? These are the characters of the story.
  - Where does the story take place? This is the setting of the story.
  - What happens first/next in the story? These events make up the plot of the story.
- **Summarization:** Children should repeat the key points of the story

### Teaching English Language: Repeated Read Alouds of the Same Books

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<b>Interactive storybook reading</b>	Review	Review	Review	Review
	Print Awareness	Phonemic Awareness	Phonemic Awareness	Phonemic Awareness
	Vocabulary	Vocabulary	Vocabulary	Vocabulary
	<b>Read the storybook</b>	<b>Read the storybook</b>	<b>Read the storybook</b>	<b>Read the storybook</b>
	Fluency	Fluency	Fluency	Fluency
		Comprehension: Q&A	Comprehension: Story structure	Comprehension: Summarization

### Review

- Ask open-ended questions to help children remember what they learned about the story from the day before
  - Review the content of the story: title, plot, characters, setting
  - Review vocabulary words from the day before

## Teaching Other Subjects with Children's Literature

- Children's books – both fiction and nonfiction – can be used to teach other subjects in several ways
- Some children's books are explicitly related to other subjects (e.g., Science, Maths, Social Studies)
- Other children's books lead to discussion of other subjects (implicitly related to other subjects)
- The themes of other books can be used in teaching other subjects
- Children's Literature can be used to:
  - Introduce a new topic
  - Make the subject more interesting and engaging
  - Provide facts in an interesting fashion
  - Demonstrate real-world applications of the topic
  - Spark a discussion about the topic