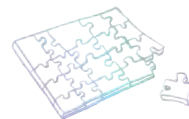


**Research findings show that shared book reading can help young children learn to talk more, using an increased number of words. This practice can also help young children become ready for school.**

The early childhood practice described in this brochure is based on findings presented in a practice-based research synthesis conducted at the Research and Training Center on Early Childhood Development by P. A. Cutspec (2003). Influences of dialogic reading on the language development of toddlers. *Bridges*, 2(1). Visit [www.researchtopractice.info](http://www.researchtopractice.info) to read or download the complete research synthesis and/or a user-friendly, illustrated summary, *Bottomlines* 2(1). Printed copies are available from Winterberry Press ([www.wbpress.com](http://www.wbpress.com)). All opinions expressed are those of the Research and Training Center on Early Childhood Development and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Research to Practice Division, funder of the work of the RTC (H324K010005).



#### **Evidence-Based Practice Guides**

Additional practice guides are available from the RTC for this and other important early childhood topics.

Related materials also are available as part of *Solutions* evidence-based tool kits.

Please see descriptions of these resources and information for ordering under “Products” at

[www.researchtopractice.info](http://www.researchtopractice.info)

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*Cornerpiece*

# **Shared Reading**

**Building a child’s expressive language through reading and talking about stories**

*An exciting, reading-based boost for early language development*

**An Evidence-Based Early Childhood Intervention Practice**

# Shared Reading

strengthens children's early language development

## What is the practice?

Shared reading is reading with young children, two to three years of age, for 5 to 15 minutes at least three times a week, following specific strategies designed to encourage conversation. These easy-to-follow strategies offer a step-by-step way to build children's expressive language.

When practiced consistently, shared reading can help young children become better prepared for school.



## How do we do it?

Promote a 2- or 3-year-old's language development during one-to-one, **shared reading** times (or with a small group of no more than three or four children) by:

- 1 Asking the child "what" questions** ("What is the little girl looking at?") and **repeating what the child says** ("Great! She is looking at the balloon flying away!"). **Offer help when needed** ("Do you think she is looking at the balloon flying away?") and **follow the child's answers with additional, related questions** ("Yes, she is looking at the balloon flying away. What color is the balloon?").
- 2 Following the child's interests.** Every child will show special interest in different forms of **reading materials** (pages with colorful pictures, letters of the alphabet or numbers, photos of favorite animals and activities, or perhaps maps of water and land). A valuable shared reading experience can be focused on **sections or pages that spark conversation with a child** ("What animals do you see on this page?" or "What is the little boy doing that you like to do too?").
- 3 Allowing the child enough time to respond to your questions** (a good rule of thumb is to count to 10 before offering help).

As young children begin to talk more and more about a story, help the child become even more expressive by:

- ◆ **Asking open-ended questions** ("Why is the puppy happy?"), and
- ◆ **Expanding what the child says** ("Good! The puppy is happy because she is going for a walk. What is the puppy looking for?").

Remember to **praise and encourage the child as often as possible for offering answers and participating in the conversation** ("Wow! What a wonderful answer!").

And remember...**have fun** in ways that will encourage young children to want to read more...and more...and more!



## Take a look!

**Shared reading** can be done before naptime, at bedtime, while waiting for a doctor's appointment, or for your food to arrive at a restaurant! There are many opportunities to sit down with your child every day to "read" a book, magazine, piece of mail, menu, and so much more!

Enlist the support of all the important adults in your child's life. Grandmas, grandpas, caregivers, and other adult friends make terrific shared reading partners! Invite them to watch while you demonstrate the shared reading techniques in "How do we do it?"

## Is it working?

Has the amount of time the child spends talking with others increased?

Has the child's vocabulary become larger and more varied?

Has the child become the storyteller during shared reading times?

Has the child shown increased interest in reading?