

Especially for practitioners working with preschoolers!

Read and Repeat

Reading and Print Awareness

Children love to hear their favorite books read over and over again. Repeated readings help young children master the storyline, ideas, and language of a story.

What is the practice?

Repeated reading helps children become familiar with the vocabulary, repeated themes, and the language in the story. You can use repeated story readings to help preschool children understand, talk about, and be part of the story. Many young children, especially those with speech and language delays, are not able to grasp an entire story on the first reading. Having books read a number of times helps children understand and notice new things.

What does the practice look like?

When you read a story to a child over-and-over, she will figure out what an unfamiliar word means by the other words that she hears. Repeated reading gives the child opportunities to notice the same sound patterns. Point out some letters and words as you re-read the book. This will help her pick out specific words that are easily recognized and specific letter-sound relationships.

How do you do the practice?

Here are some ideas that will help you make repeated readings interesting and engaging to a preschool child.

- Encourage the child to take an active part in repeated book readings. Provide chances for him to interject, predict what's next, and ask questions.
- Repeated readings are valuable because they allow preschool children to become familiar with a book. They will start to understand the story better and think more about it. A great place to start is by reading a child's favorite book. Ask questions about it as you read and help him make connections between the story and his own life.
- Let the child pick the story. Preschool children will often choose the same book over and over on their own.
- Be excited about the story even when you're reading it for the umpteenth time. Reading aloud involves much more than saying words and turning pages. When you show excitement about the pictures, story, setting, and characters, you will excite the child, too.
- Let children "read" or tell the story to you. Children get to know the words or plot to a story that has been read to them many times. They enjoy saying the words and turning the pages, just as if they were reading the book.



How do you know the practice worked?

- Do the children bring the same book to be read over and over?
- Do they seem to have "picked up" new vocabulary words or an understanding of the story?
- Do the children share comments about the story or tell what's going to happen next?

Take a look at more repeated reading

From Listening to "Reading"

Ms. Nelson's 3-year-old class is fascinated by the caterpillars that they find on the playground. During circle time one day she reads *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, taking time to let the children enjoy each picture. When they reach the end of the story, one of the children asks Ms. Nelson to read it again. She opens the book to the first page. She begins reading to the group of children who are eager to hear the story again. This time she points out new things in the pictures. The next day, the children are happy when Ms. Nelson gets the book out. They quickly join her on the circle time rug. She reads it to them again, pausing at the end of each page to let the children enjoy the pictures. They talk about what is happening in the story and about "their" caterpillars on the playground. After a few days, Ms. Nelson hears some of the children "reading" the book aloud to each other or to themselves.



A Clear Favorite

Four-year-old Zara finds a book about a bear in the reading center of her classroom. She sits among the soft pillows on the rug and begins to look at the book. Noticing her interest, a teacher's aide in the classroom joins her. They look at the book together, with Zara "reading" the book to the aide. When they reach the end of the book, Zara hands the book to the aide. "You read it," she requests. The aide reads the book to Zara. She asks questions about the bear's adventures and points out interesting things in the pictures. When they are finished, the aide places the book on the shelf where it is easy to see. This helps support Zara's interest in reading the book again. They read the book together almost every day. With each reading, Zara remembers more details and takes over more of the "reading."

The Sign Says...

Three-year-old Jenny has severe language delays and uses signing to communicate. Jenny has a book about trains, and lately it is the only book in which she is interested. Jenny brings the book to her early interventionist, Ellen, while she is at their home visit. "Do you want to read the train book again?" Ellen asks as she makes room for Jenny next to her on the sofa. Jenny's mother begins to read. As she reads, she points to the pictures and engages Jenny by asking, "What is that?" Jenny smiles and gives the sign for "train." "Yes, that's the train," Ellen says, while signing and carefully articulating the sounds in the word. When they have finished the book Jenny signs, "Again!" This time, Ellen reads the story, asking other questions that Jenny can answer by signing.

