Ed Extras

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Reading Aloud to Build Comprehension

Children learn when they make connections between what they read and what they know. One method parents can use to help make these connections during shared reading time is called a *think aloud.* In other words, you talk through your thoughts as you read to them. Here are three ways to use *think alouds,* with examples from some of our favorite kids' books:

Think Alouds

1. Connect the book to your child's own life experience.

Example: *A River Dream* by Allen Say
"This book reminds me of the time my father took me fishing. Do you remember the time we went fishing?"

2. Connect the book to other books your child has read.

Example: *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe
"This story reminds me of *Cinderella.* Both stories are about sisters. Do you know any other stories about sisters? Let's keep reading to find out other ways the stories are similar."

3. Connect the book to big ideas/lessons.

Example: *Stellaluna* by Janell Cannon
"This story helps me understand that we are all the same in many ways, but it's our differences that make us special."

In these examples, you are "thinking aloud" many of the connections that good readers make naturally as they read. Modeling these types of connections will help young readers know how to do it when they read alone.

Adapted from *Reading Aloud to Build Comprehension* by Judith Gold and Akimi Gibson (2001).

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