

PURDUE
UNIVERSITY

Developed by
Youli Mantzicopoulos
& Helen Patrick
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Shared Book Reading Strategies

Program Guide



www.purduescientificliteracyproject.org

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Overview

It is well established that reading with young children benefits their language and conceptual development. Research shows that children’s learning improves most when the reading program promotes instructional conversation between children and teachers during and after shared-book reading.

Research also suggests that the content and type of text influence children’s learning. Evidence shows that factual, informational text written in developmentally appropriate language is both interesting and motivating to young children.

Shared-book reading is an important component of the Scientific Literacy Project (SLP). The strategies emphasized in the SLP are research-based and are intended to promote children’s linguistic and conceptual development through **active participation in the reading process**.

The sets of books selected for each SLP unit are **developmentally appropriate, informational science books** and are expected to promote language learning while children also learn science. By using science presented in literature, teachers can capitalize on children’s natural interests, reinforce science concepts learned during classroom activities, and enhance learning for all children.

Strategies Used in the Shared Reading Activities

SLP is intended to promote the use of strategies that are central to the process of inquiry. These strategies include questions that build on the child's prior knowledge and invite him/her to:

- (a) focus on relevant variables;
- (b) generate, organize, and interpret evidence; and
- (c) think about causal processes and mechanisms.

Several strategies that have been supported by research on effective reading interventions are emphasized. These include:

- Various **levels and types of prompts**
- **Means for assisting** (scaffolding) **the child's performance** during reading
- Promoting children's **story retelling skills**

Levels and Types of Prompts

In shared book reading, the SLP emphasizes the use of different **types of prompts** (e.g., open-ended questions, recall questions, completion prompts) to actively engage the child in the reading process. As shown on page 7, these prompts may vary in the complexity of the cognitive demands that they place on the child. Prompts used at various **levels of complexity** (e.g., simple prompts vs. higher level prompts) expand children’s scientific vocabulary, knowledge, and thinking skills.

Initially, simple prompts (e.g., what is happening in this picture?) will help children’s language production through labeling and describing information. More complex prompts (e.g., what do you think would happen to polar bears if oil spilled from an oil tanker and killed all of the fish?) are used to promote children’s skills in sequencing events, inferring consequences, or extending the information.

Types of Prompts

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Recall (ask what happens at various points in the story or a story sequence)

Open-ended (ask the child to talk about an event or series of events)

Wh-prompts (What, Why, When, Where questions)

Repetition prompts (ask the child to repeat new words)

Completion prompts (ask the child to complete part of a sentence or parts of the story)

Levels of Prompt Complexity

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Simple prompts call for the child to:

- label, define, produce information, or observe

Intermediate-level prompts ask the child to:

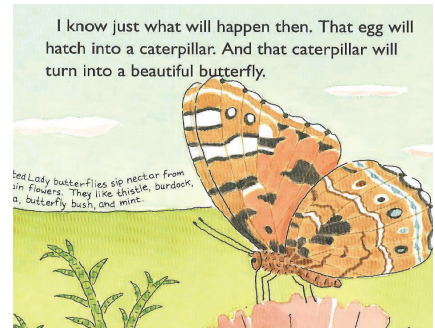
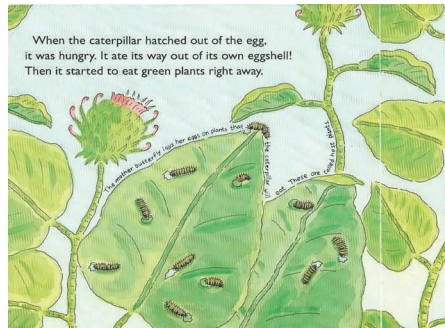
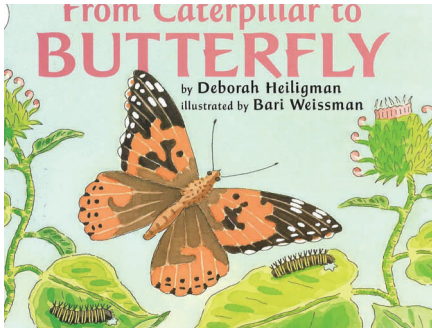
- sequence events
- classify
- estimate
- describe and infer similarities and differences

Higher level prompts call for:

- evaluating consequences
- inferring cause–effect relationships
- generalizing, transforming, planning, or creating alternatives

Examples of Prompt Strategies

Used in Reading *From Caterpillar to Butterfly* by Deborah Heiligman



Strategy	Examples	Skills
Simple Prompts	<p>Open-Ended Prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me, what do you see in this page? <p>Wh-Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where are the antennae? How many antennae does the butterfly have? Where are the wings? What colors can you see on the butterfly? <p>Completion Prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The title says "From Caterpillar to _____." 	<p>Define</p> <p>Label</p> <p>Observe</p> <p>Provide Information</p>
Intermediate Level Prompts	<p>Wh-Prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why is the caterpillar on the leaf? What happens when the caterpillar is too big for its skin? <p>Recall Prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the caterpillar start out? Is the caterpillar the same size when it starts out and when it's ready to turn into a chrysalis? Do all butterflies grow in the same way? 	<p>Sequencing</p> <p>Comparing</p> <p>Inferring Similarities</p>
Higher-Order Prompts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do other insects grow and change in the same way? Does this happen to us? Do we grow and change in the same way? 	<p>Making Connections</p> <p>Extending the information to the functioning of other organisms</p>

Assisting the Child's Performance

Listen to the words that the child is using.

Assess what the child is saying — Is his/her understanding correct?

Model and **expand** beyond what the child is saying to add more information.

Provide feedback and **corrective statements** as needed.

Encouraging Story Retelling

In story retelling children reconstruct, relate, and reflect upon the reading material. Story retelling encourages children to use new vocabulary and allows them to build their reasoning abilities by connecting and sequencing the story events in a meaningful way. Retelling can be facilitated during and after shared-book reading through a combination of **prompts** and **concrete materials**, including **inscriptional tools** (e.g., materials that allow children to record their statements through drawing, writing, pasting pictures, or manipulating printed materials).

Suggested Book-Reading Routines

- We recommended that shared-book-reading activities are done in **small groups**. However, book readings can be done in a large group (during circle time) initially.
- It is preferable for groups of children to **read the same book a couple of times** during the week. This practice will provide increased opportunities for the children to be actively engaged in the reading and to talk about the book's content after having some familiarity with it.
- If the first book reading is done in a large group, we recommend that children participate in subsequent readings of the same book in small groups.

Considerations Guiding the Selection of Science Books

In selecting children’s books for each SLP unit, we gave careful consideration to the following:

- Balance between informational and narrative text
- Match of the book content to national and state language arts, math, and science standards
- Coherence within the set of books for each unit
- Coherence of the books with the classroom inquiry activities

Each book was further evaluated by the following criteria:

- ◇ Accuracy of content
- ◇ Quality and currency of content
- ◇ Quality of illustrations
- ◇ Distinguishability of facts from fantasy
- ◇ Accurate portrayal of time
- ◇ Race and gender equity