

BUILDING LANGUAGE AND LITERACY SKILLS THROUGH INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUDS



LEARNING GUIDE - MODULE 3

DIALOGIC READING: A SYSTEMATIC SHARED READING EXPERIENCE

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Building Language and Literacy Skills through Interactive Read-Alouds is a set of modules for adult learners. Designed for preschool teachers, caregivers, and families, the three modules can be used for self-study or with a group of adults for professional development. Based on the latest research, the modules provide step-by-step directions, implementation tips, templates, learning activities, photographs, videos, and additional resources. The modules align to the *Indiana Birth-Age 5 Literacy Framework* and the *FOUNDATIONS to the Indiana Academic Standards for Young Children from Birth to Age 5*.

The set of modules, *Building Language and Literacy Skills through Interactive Read-Alouds* provides targeted guidance to build language and literacy skills with young children. The set of modules includes:

- Module 1: *Reading-Aloud to Young Children: An Introduction*
- Module 2: *Intentional Instruction: The Interactive Read-Aloud Process*
- Module 3: *Dialogic Reading: A Systematic Shared Reading Experience*

All three resources (*Foundations*, the *Framework*, and the *Modules*) are supported by the Indiana Department of Education for use by early childhood educators, caregivers, and parents.

The *Modules* were developed by RMC Research Corporation of Arlington, Virginia, for the Indiana Department of Education.

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INTRODUCTION

The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children.

- *Becoming a Nation of Readers* (1985)
U.S. Department of Education

Reading aloud to young children is a precious gift of time that has a significant impact on language development and learning. The simple act of sharing a book with a child provides an emotional bond that translates to good memories surrounding reading and conversations about books. There is no cost involved; visit your public library to borrow books to read to your child(ren). Libraries offer hundreds of children's books and the librarian will be happy to help you select the "just right" book. Rather than buying the latest toy that is advertised on television, read aloud to your child (or students) instead. The new toy is soon discarded, but developing a love of reading provides a lifetime of joy. It begins in the first months of life. All that is needed is an engaging book, a quiet place, and a caring adult who takes the time to read aloud to a child.

The three modules of this series, *Building Language and Literacy Skills through Interactive Read-Aloud*, provide guidance to enhance the Read-Aloud experience. The third module presents Dialogic Reading, a systematic process for reading aloud to young children. Although Dialogic Reading was first developed to increase oral language skills with children from poverty homes, these research-based techniques work for ALL children.

Use the Learning Guide to deepen your learning and record your reflections.



Learning Activity 1: K-U-D Chart

DIRECTIONS: What do you KNOW and UNDERSTAND about Dialogic Reading?

When you complete this module, what will you DO? Will you implement the practice of Dialogic Reading with your child or students?

You will complete each section of the KUD chart (Activities 1, 3, and 6).

Activity 1: (See Slide # 7 for specific directions.)

Activity 3: (See Slide # 17 for specific directions.)

Activity 6: (See Slide # 35 for specific directions.)

K (KNOW) (Learning Activity 1)	U (UNDERSTAND) (Learning Activity 3)	D (DO) (Learning Activity 6)



Learning Activity 2: QUICK Read & Write

Directions: Read the article, *Dialogic Reading: An Effective Way to Read to Preschoolers*, by Grover Whitehurst (pages 7 – 10 in the Learning Guide).

After reading the article, record THREE things you learned about Dialogic Reading. Then, write a brief reflection indicating why early childhood teachers should understand the process of Dialogic Reading.

1.

2.

3.

Reflections:

Dialogic Reading: An Effective Way to Read to Preschoolers

By: Grover J. (Russ) Whitehurst (1992)

Dialogic reading works. Children who have been read to dialogically are substantially ahead of children who have been read to traditionally on tests of language development. Children can jump ahead by several months in just a few weeks of dialogic reading.

Over a third of children in the U.S. enter school unprepared to learn. They lack the vocabulary, sentence structure, and other basic skills that are required to do well in school. Children who start behind generally stay behind – they drop out, they turn off. Their lives are at risk.

Why are so many children deficient in the skills that are critical to school readiness?

Children's experience with books plays an important role. Many children enter school with thousands of hours of experience with books. Their homes contain hundreds of picture books. They see their parents and brothers and sisters reading for pleasure. Other children enter school with fewer than 25 hours of shared book reading. There are few if any children's books in their homes. Their parents and siblings aren't readers.

Picture book reading provides children with many of the skills that are necessary for school readiness: vocabulary, sound structure, the meaning of print, the structure of stories and language, sustained attention, the pleasure of learning, and on and on. Preschoolers need food, shelter, love; they also need the nourishment of books.

It is important to read frequently with your preschooler. Children who are read to three times per week or more do much better in later development than children who are read to less than three times per week. It is important to begin reading to your child at an early age. By nine months of age, infants can appreciate books that are interesting to touch or that make sounds.

What is dialogic reading?

How we read to preschoolers is as important as how frequently we read to them. The Stony Brook Reading and Language Project has developed a method of reading to preschoolers that we call *dialogic reading*.

When most adults share a book with a preschooler, they read and the child listens. In dialogic reading, the adult helps the child become the teller of the story. The adult

becomes the listener, the questioner, the audience for the child. No one can learn to play the piano just by listening to someone else play. Likewise, no one can learn to read just by listening to someone else read. Children learn most from books when they are actively involved.

The fundamental reading technique in dialogic reading is the PEER sequence. This is a short interaction between a child and the adult. The adult:

- **P**rompts the child to say something about the book,
- **E**valuates the child's response,
- **E**xpands the child's response by rephrasing and adding information to it, and
- **R**epeats the prompt to make sure the child has learned from the expansion.

Imagine that the parent and the child are looking at the page of a book that has a picture of a fire engine on it. The parent says, "What is this?" (the prompt) while pointing to the fire truck. The child says, *truck*, and the parent follows with "That's right (the evaluation); it's a red fire truck (the expansion); can you say *fire truck*?" (the repetition).

Except for the first reading of a book to children, PEER sequences should occur on nearly every page. Sometimes you can read the written words on the page and then prompt the child to say something. For many books, you should do less and less reading of the written words in the book each time you read it. Leave more to the child.

How to prompt children

There are five types of prompts that are used in dialogic reading to begin PEER sequences. You can remember these prompts with the word CROWD.

- **C**ompletion prompts

You leave a blank at the end of a sentence and get the child to fill it in. These are typically used in books with rhyme or books with repetitive phrases. For example, you might say, "I think I'd be a glossy cat. A little plump but not too _____," letting the child fill in the blank with the word *fat*. Completion prompts provide children with information about the structure of language that is critical to later reading.

- **Recall prompts**

These are questions about what happened in a book a child has already read. Recall prompts work for nearly everything except alphabet books. For example, you might say, "Can you tell me what happened to the little blue engine in this story?" Recall prompts help children in understanding story plot and in describing sequences of events. Recall prompts can be used not only at the end of a book, but also at the beginning of a book when a child has been read that book before.

- **Open-ended prompts**

These prompts focus on the pictures in books. They work best for books that have rich, detailed illustrations. For example, while looking at a page in a book that the child is familiar with, you might say, "Tell me what's happening in this picture." Open-ended prompts help children increase their expressive fluency and attend to detail.

- **Wh- prompts**

These prompts usually begin with what, where, when, why, and how questions. Like open-ended prompts, wh- prompts focus on the pictures in books. For example, you might say, "What's the name of this?" while pointing to an object in the book. Wh- questions teach children new vocabulary.

- **Distancing prompts**

These ask children to relate the pictures or words in the book they are reading to experiences outside the book. For example, while looking at a book with a picture of animals on a farm, you might say something like, "Remember when we went to the animal park last week. Which of these animals did we see there?" Distancing prompts help children form a bridge between books and the real world, as well as helping with verbal fluency, conversational abilities, and narrative skills.

Distancing prompts and recall prompts are more difficult for children than completion, open-ended, and wh- prompts. Frequent use of distancing and recall prompts should be limited to four- and five-year-olds.

Virtually all children's books are appropriate for dialogic reading. The best books have rich detailed pictures, or are interesting to your child. Always follow your child's interest when sharing books with your child.

A technique that works

Dialogic reading works. Children who have been read to dialogically are substantially ahead of children who have been read to traditionally on tests of language development. Children can jump ahead by several months in just a few weeks of dialogic reading. We have found these effects with hundreds of children in areas as geographically different as New York, Tennessee, and Mexico, in settings as varied as homes, preschools, and daycare centers, and with children from economic backgrounds ranging from poverty to affluence.

Dialogic reading is just children and adults having a conversation about a book. Children will enjoy dialogic reading more than traditional reading as long as you mix-up your prompts with straight reading, vary what you do from reading to reading, and follow the child's interest. Keep it light. Don't push children with more prompts than they can handle happily. *Keep it fun.*

Permission for this article was provided by Grover J. (Russ) Whitehurst, Ph.D., Director, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

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Video Notes: **Dr. Christopher Lonigan**
Doing What Works website

http://dww.ed.gov/learn/?T_ID=15&P_ID=31

Notes . . .



Learning Activity 3: K-U-D Chart

DIRECTIONS: What do you KNOW and UNDERSTAND about Dialogic Reading?

When you complete this module, what will you DO? Will you implement the practice of Dialogic Reading with your child or students?

You will complete each section of the KUD chart (Activities 1, 3, and 6).

Activity 1: (See Slide # 7 for specific directions.)

Activity 3: (See Slide # 17 for specific directions.)

Activity 6: (See Slide # 35 for specific directions.)

You completed reading an article by Dr. Grover Whitehurst that builds background knowledge and you watched a video that features Dr. Christopher Lonigan explaining the process of Dialogic Reading. As a result, you now have a deeper understanding of this instructional routine.

Go back to **page 5** of the Learning Guide. Under the “**U**” column, briefly write several **understandings** you now have about Dialogic Reading.



Dialogic Reading Planning Template

DIRECTIONS: Use this template to plan a shared storybook reading using the process of Dialogic Reading. Keep your completed planning templates for future reference.

Dialogic Reading: 5 PLANNING STEPS

Step 1: Select an appropriate book.

Book: _____

Step 2: Read the book. Reflect on the language skills of your students.

Step 3: Construct prompts (CROWD):

Level 1:

WHAT, WHERE, and WHEN questions:

Completion prompts:

Recall prompts:

Level 2:

Open-ended prompts:

Level 3:

Distancing prompts:

Make connections (self, text, world)



Resource 1: Getting Started with Dialogic Reading: Selecting an Appropriate Book

REMEMBER:

- Dialogic Reading is a systematic shared reading or Read-Aloud that intentionally focuses on building oral language through interactive conversation and intentional teaching of conceptual knowledge.
- Select storybooks that have large, colorful, illustrations.
- The text should be limited, but it should enable the teacher to converse with students: building language, expanding conceptual knowledge and making connections with the child(ren)'s world.

AN ABBREVIATED BOOK LIST:

- **A Chair for My Mother**** by Vera B. Williams
- **Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse**** by Leo Lionni
- **Blueberries for Sal**** by Robert McCloskey
- **Click Clack Moo, Cows that Type**** by Doreen Cronin
- **Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus**** by Mo Willems
- **Duck on a Bike** by David Shannon
- **Fables*** by Arnold Lobel
- **Freight Train**** by Donald Crews
- **Gossie** by Olivier Dunrea
- **Harry, the Dirty Dog** by Gene Zion
- **Have You Seen My Duckling?***** by Nancy Tafuri
- **If I Ran the Zoo**** by Dr. Seuss
- **Is Your Mama a Llama?** By Steven Kellogg
- **I Wanna Iguana** by Karen Kaufman Orloff
- **Kitten's First Full Moon*** by Kevin Henkes
- **Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale**** by Mo Willems
- **Make Way for Ducklings*** by Robert McCloskey
- **No, David!**** by David Shannon
- **Owen**** by Kevin Henkes
- **Rumpelstiltskin**** by Paul O. Zelinsky
- **Snow**** by Uri Shulevitz
- **Strega Nona**** by Tomie de Paola
- **Swimmy**** by Leo Lionni
- **Sylvester and the Magic Pebble**** by William Steig
- **The Little House*** by Virginia Lee Burton
- **The Three Pigs*** by David Wiesner
- **The Snowy Day*** by Ezra Jack Keats
- **The Stray Dog**** by Marc Simont
- **When Sophie Gets Angry-Really, Really Angry**** by Molly Bang
- **Where the Wild Things Are*** by Maurice Sendak



Look for books with the Caldecott Medal. This medal is awarded every year by the American Library Association to the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children.

<http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/caldecottmedal/caldecottmedal>



Video Protocol: *Fred Rogers Center*

As you watch this video clip, consider these questions:

1. How does the teacher interact with the children?
2. How does the teacher extend the students' responses?
3. How does the teacher build conceptual knowledge and/or vocabulary?
4. Did you observe the teacher using . . . (When?)

Level 1 Prompts

- Completion prompts
- Recall prompts
- What, where, and when question prompts

Level 2 Prompts

- Open-ended prompts

Level 3 Prompts

- Distancing prompts

5. Reflect on the process and interactive nature of Dialogic Reading.
Write your thoughts:



Video Protocol: *Florida Voluntary PreKindergarten Education Program (VPK)*

As you watch this video clip, consider these questions:

1. How does the teacher interact with the children?
2. How does the teacher extend the students' responses?
3. How does the teacher build conceptual knowledge and/or vocabulary?
4. Did you observe the teacher using . . . (When?)

Level 1 Prompts

- ___ Completion prompts
- ___ Recall prompts
- ___ What, where, and when question prompts

Level 2 Prompts

- ___ Open-ended prompts

Level 3 Prompts

- ___ Distancing prompts

5. Reflect on the Dialogic Reading lesson. Write your thoughts.



Dialogic Reading Technique and Prompts

A Bookmark Reminder

TECHNIQUE: Remember PEER

P = PROMPT the child to say something about the story (initiating a conversation about the book).

E = EVALUATE the child's response.

E = EXPAND the child's response by adding information

R = REPEAT the Prompt to reinforce the child's learning

PROMPTS: Remember CROWD

C = COMPLETION Prompts
(an oral fill-in-the-blank)

R = Recall Prompts

O = Open-Ended Prompts

W = What, Where, When questions prompts

D = Distancing Prompts (connecting to prior knowledge)

Corinne Eisenhart, Ph.D. (2008)



Learning Activity 6: K-U-D Chart

DIRECTIONS: As you complete Module 3, reflect on what you will **DO**.

Will you implement the practice of Dialogic Reading with your child or students?

You completed sections “K” and “U” of the KUD chart (Activities 1, and 3).

Activity 1: (See Slide # 7 for specific directions.)

Activity 3: (See Slide # 17 for specific directions.)

Now you will finish the K-U-D Chart. **(See Slide # 35 for specific directions.)**

Go back to **page 5** of the Learning Guide. Under the “**D**” column, briefly list what you will now **DO**. When, where, and how will you implement dialogic reading? What book(s) will you select?



Resource 3: Online Resources: Dialogic Reading

Center to Mobilize Early Childhood Knowledge (CONNECT). (n.d.). Module 6: Dialogic reading practices. Retrieved from <http://community.fpg.unc.edu/connect-modules/learners/module-6>

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Caldecott Medal: This award is given annually by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, to the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children.

(From: <http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/caldecottmedal/caldecottmedal>)

Comprehension: Understanding what is heard and read.

Conceptual Knowledge: A deep understanding of meaningful content based on experiences and mental constructs.

Dialogic Reading: A specific technique for reading books aloud that includes multiple readings of the book during which the adult uses a systematic approach to encourage children to become the storytellers.

Distancing Prompt: One of the five prompts or questions used during Dialogic Reading, the Distancing Prompt helps children connect the story to their own experiences in the real world.

Expressive Language: The ability to produce speech and communicate.

Intentional Instruction: Targets specific content that is taught with precise directions, using a logical sequence of modeling, guided practice, independent practice, and application of the new learning.

Interactive Read-Aloud: A teaching routine where students are actively engaged in the reading of a book through listening and responding to an oral reading of a story or informational text.

Open-Ended Prompt: One of the five prompts or questions used during Dialogic Reading, the Open-Ended prompt focuses children's attention on the illustrations in the storybook. These prompts encourage conversation about the story. Open-Ended prompts cannot be answered with a simple "yes" or "no" response. An example of an Open-Ended Prompt: "Tell me what's happening in this picture."

Oral Language: Includes both the receptive (that which is heard and understood) and expressive (that which is spoken to communicate meaning) aspects of language development.

Picture Walk: Reviewing a book or telling a story by discussing the illustrations rather than reading the text.

Prior Knowledge: Facts, skills, and strategies learned from previous experiences.

Prompt: In this module, prompts are questions that encourage children to listen to and discuss the oral reading of a story. Dialogic Reading systematically presents five questions (or prompts): completion; recall; open-ended; what-where-when questions; and distancing prompts

Read-Aloud: When an individual, usually an adult, dedicates time to explore, read, and discuss books with a child or a group of children.

Receptive Language: The ability to understand what is heard.

Scaffolding: Support that is provided incrementally at a level just above a learner's current skill level that pushes the learner to the next level of understanding and proficiency.

Vocabulary: Vocabulary encompasses all of the words we know and use when listening and speaking, as well as all of the words we know and use in print when reading and writing.

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