



## Reading to Children

Research tells us that the more we read books to children, and the more we talk to them about the books *and about mathematics* using complex language, the more likely they will become good readings themselves.

- Encourage children to look carefully at the book itself: cover, the end papers, and the title page.
- Be sure to note the dedication page and the names of the author and illustrator.
- The first reading of a book should be done without interjecting questions or comments. This helps children develop a sense of narrative.
- Take time to introduce a new book to children. Ask children to predict who or what the book will be about based on the cover or title page.
- Begin with a movement or finger play exercise related to the story. You could also take a picture walk through the book before reading the words.

- For additional readings:
  - Ask prediction or “what if?” questions before or during the second reading.
  - Feel free to interrupt stories with questions and comments, as long as they are relevant to the story. Research shows that they help children maintain attention and understand and learn from the story.
  - Help children make connections between stories and their own experiences.
  - Ask open-ended questions to keep listeners involved with the book: What do you notice about this illustration? How did that page make you feel? Why do you think she/he did that?
  - Build vocabulary by discussing one or two words that might be new to children.
  - Hearing stories repeatedly helps children understand them more deeply and learn how to relate them to their lives.



- Occasionally point out key features of print (left-to-right/top-to-bottom progression, spaces between words, punctuation) as you read to children.
- Vary the size of the group when you read to children.
- Sit so that all children are comfortable and can easily see the illustrations.
- If you have extra copies of the book, share these with the group.

### **Tone and Pace**

- Read slowly and smoothly.
- Be dramatic! Be silly!
- Play with different voices, make funny sounds, shout, whisper, or pause dramatically.
- Speed up when there's a lot of action and slow down at the end of a book.

- At the end of a book, thank children for being good listeners.
- Get to know books before sharing them with children.