



Reading 'with' children: Questions to ask during a picture book read-aloud.

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We can increase the benefits of story time for children by making it interactive and asking open-ended questions as we read a picture book together. We want to help children to think critically and imaginatively about the content, design and pictures in the books, so here is a list of potential questions. The experience is definitely richer and more engaging if the children are thinking and discussing things with each other, but don't use them all these questions in one session and depending on your students, decide whether asking in English or Japanese is more appropriate.

1. Questions to ask before you read

Children can be guided by questions to notice details in the cover pictures and end papers, or find hints in the title to help them construct ideas about the story;

What are you wondering about as you look at the cover and back of the book?

(Predicting/Imagination)

Can you look at the front (and back) cover illustrations and predict what will happen in this book?

(Predicting/Imagination)

What do you think this book will be about? (Predicting/Imagination)

What makes you think that? Why do you think that? (Reasoning)

What characters do you think might be in our story? (Predicting/Imagination)

What do you know about the topic of this book? (Activating knowledge)

Does the topic/story relate to you or your family? How? (Connecting/Personalization)

Do you think there will be a problem in this story? Why or why not? (Predicting)

What questions would you like to ask the author before you read the book? (Questioning)

2. Questions to ask during the reading

These questions can be used to check general comprehension, encourage increased attention and show remembering the story in detail is important;

Is there any part you want to read again? (Monitoring Comprehension)

Is there any word/part you don't understand? (Monitoring Comprehension)

What's going on here? (Monitoring Comprehension)

Do you want me to slow down? (Monitoring Comprehension)

What was the character's name again? (Checking knowledge/Memorization - If they know this they can answer more detailed questions later.)

What word should come next? "The very hungry ..." (Checking knowledge)

In a story with rhyming words; What word rhymes with bat...? (Activating knowledge)

What can you tell me about the story so far? (Reflection/Checking knowledge)

What do you think will happen next? Why? (Predicting/Imagination)

How will the character handle the situation? (Predicting/Imagination)

Can you predict how the story will end? (Predicting/Imagination)

Which words best describe this character? (Consideration)

Why do you think the character did _____? (Inferring)

What will this character do next? (Predicting/Imagination)

What emotions are the characters feeling now? How do we know? (Inferring)

What would you have done if you were the character? (Predicting/Imagination/Connecting)

How would you have felt if you were the character? (use different characters)

Do you know anyone like this character? (brave, sympathetic, kind) (Connecting/Personalization)

Has anything like this ever happened to you? (Connecting/Personalization)

Does it remind you of anything? (Connecting/Personalization)

As I read _____, it made me picture _____ in my head. What pictures do you see in your head? (Visualizing/Imagination)

If you were in the story, what would you hear, taste, smell or feel? (Visualizing/Imagination)

Can you put what you've just read in your own words? (Summarizing)

What are the most important things that happened in order of how they happened? (Summarizing)

As you read, what are you wondering about? (Questioning)

What questions do you have for the character? (Questioning)

3. Questions to ask after reading

Through asking the right questions, children can develop the skills necessary to reflect on the story deeply and can also be very creative making their own ending, sequel or reenactment of the story;

Is there any part you want to read again? (Monitoring Comprehension)

Is there any word/part you don't understand? (Monitoring Comprehension)

If this book had a sequel, how would the story continue? (Reflection/Prediction)

Can you make up a different ending to this story? (Reflection/Prediction)

How might this story be different if told by another character's point of view? (Reflection/Prediction)

If you were _____, how would you have felt? (Reflection/Prediction)

Can you remember the title? (Reflection/Checking knowledge)

In your opinion, was it a good title for this book? Why or why not? (Consideration)

What is the main message of the book? (Consideration)

Why do you think the author wrote this book? (Inferring/Interpretation)

What is the most important point the author is trying to make in his writing? (Choice/Consideration)

What did the author want you to think about? (Interpretation)

Were your predictions about the story correct? (Reflection/Consideration)

If there was a problem, did it get solved? (Reflection/Consideration)

What happened because of the problem? (Reflection/Consideration)

What was your favorite part of the story? (Reflection/Consideration)

If you could change one thing in the story, what would it be? (Reflection/Imagination)

Can you retell the story in order? (Summarizing)

What is the most interesting situation in the story? (Choice/Consideration)

Is there a character in the story like you? How are you alike? (Inferring)

Did you like this book? Why or why not did you like this book? (Consideration/Reasoning)

Do you have any questions about the story or characters? (Questions)

Does the topic/story relate to you or your family? How? (Connecting)

What questions would you like to ask the author now? (Questioning)

What new thing did you learn about the topic of this book? (Checking knowledge)

Book-List from the Picture Book Forum @ JALT 2019

① Picture books

YES HUG TALL Washing Line	Jez Alborough
My Five Senses	Aliki
Little Green Peas	Keith Baker
Journey	Aaron Becker
My Day	Emiliano Bermejo
How Do You Feel?	Anthony Browne
Knock, Knock, Who's There?	Sally Grindley & Anthony Browne
Dear Zoo	Rod Campbell
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear? (Series) Have you seen my cat? The Very Hungry Caterpillar From Head To Toe Does A Kangaroo Have A Mother, Too? Dream Snow	Bill Martin Jr & Eric Carle Eric Carle
Skip through the Seasons	Stella Blackstone & Maria Carluccio
How Many Bugs in a Box?	David A. Carter
Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed (Series)	Eileen Christelow
Skeleton Hiccups	Margery Cuyler
Pete the Cat I Love my White Shoes Pete the Cat and his Four Groovy Buttons (Series)	Eric Litwin & James Dean
Go Away, Big Green Monster!	Ed Emberley
Where is the Green Sheep? Possum Magic	Mem Fox
Red My Heart is Like a Zoo Perfect Square	Michael Hall
Shhh...We Have a Plan A Bit Lost	Chris Haughton
The Doorbell Rang Rosie's Walk	Pat Hutchins
Where's Spot? (Series)	Eric Hill

The Heart and the Bottle	Oliver Jeffers
Those Shoes	Maribeth Boelts & Noah Z. Jones
The Good in Me from A to Z by Dottie	Lisa Blecker & C. Aaron Kreader
All Are Welcome	Alexandra Penfold & Suzanne Kaufman
I Want My Hat Back (Series)	Jon Klassen
See You Later, Alligator!	Annie Kubler
What's The Time, Mr Wolf?	
Library Lion	Michelle Knudsen
This Is How We Do It: One Day in the Lives of Seven Kids from around the World	Matt Lamothe
Buzz! Buzz!	Marian Lim
Is it Winter Now?	Marian Lim and Christine Ling
A Color of His Own	Leo Lionni
Fish is Fish	
Frederick	
Froggy Gets Dressed	Jonathan London
Julian is a Mermaid	Jessica Love
Not Now, Bernard	David McKee
Elmer	
How Many Jelly Beans?	Andrea Menotti
Milkshake Shake	Patricia Daly Oe and Mari Nakamura
Lily and the Moon	
Elphee's Walk	Hiroataka Nakano
We're Going on a Bear Hunt	Michael Rosen & Helen Oxenbury
It's Okay to be Different	Todd Parr
Yummy YUCKY	Leslie Patricelli
Perfectly Norman	Tom Percival
I Don't Want to Be a Frog	Dev Petty
The Lion and The Mouse	Jerry Pinkney
Yo! Yes?	Chris Raschka
Ish	Peter H. Reynolds
The Dot	
Tadpole's Promise	Jeanne Willis & Tony Ross
Mr. Putter and Tabby	Cynthia Rylant
Lemons Are Not Red	Laura Vaccaro Seeger

What's in the Witch's Kitchen? Ketchup on Your Cornflakes? Just Imagine Foggy Foggy Forest	Nick Sharratt
Brave Irene	William Steig
Me on the Map	Joan Sweeney
They All Saw A Cat	Brendan Wenzel
Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus Should I Share My Ice Cream?	Mo Willems
The Napping House	Audrey Wood

② Other resources;

Tell it Again! The Storytelling Handbook for Primary English Language Teachers	Gail Ellis and Jean Brewster
Reading Magic	Mem Fox
Reading Picture Books With Children	Megan Dowd Lambert
Children's Literature in Second Language Education	edited by J. Bland and C. Lutge
The Read-Aloud Handbook	Jim Trelease
PEPELT https://pepelt21.com . (Picturebooks in European Primary English Language Teaching).	
celejournal.org (Children's Literature in English Language Education, open access journal).	
Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, Website/Facebook page has articles and recommendations.	

This list was compiled by Alison Hasegawa, Chiyuki Yanase, Karen Masatsugu and Lesley Ito. It also includes suggestions from the participants in the forum.

Happy reading everyone!

