

## Weaving Wonderful Tales



### What is the practice?

Shared reading is reading with young children, two to three years of age, for 5 to 15 minutes at least three times a week, using specific strategies designed to encourage conversation. These easy-to-follow strategies offer a step-by-step way to build children's early literacy skills.

When practiced consistently, shared reading can help young children become better prepared for school.

### How do we do it?

Promote a 2- or 3-year-old's language development during one-to-one, **shared reading** times (or with a small group of no more than three or four children) by:

- 1 Asking the child "what" questions** ("What is the little girl looking at?") and **repeating what the child says** ("Great! She is looking at the balloon flying away!"). **Offer help when needed** ("Do you think she is looking at the balloon flying away?") and **follow the child's answers with additional, related questions** ("Yes, she is looking at the balloon flying away. What color is the balloon?").
- 2 Following the child's interests.** Every child will show special interest in different forms of **reading materials** (pages with colorful pictures, letters of the alphabet or numbers, photos of favorite animals and activities, or perhaps maps of water and land). A valuable shared reading experience can be focused on **sections or pages that spark conversation with a child** ("What animals do you see on this page?" or "What is the little boy doing that you like to do too?").
- 3 Allowing the child enough time to respond to your questions** (a good rule of thumb is to count to 10 before offering help).

As young children begin to talk more and more about a story, help them become even more expressive by:

- **Asking open-ended "why" questions** ("Why is the puppy happy?")
- **Expanding what the child says** ("Good! The puppy is happy because she is going for a walk. What is the puppy looking for?").

Remember to **praise and encourage the child as often as possible for offering answers and participating in the conversation** ("Wow! What a wonderful answer!").

And remember...**have fun** in ways that will encourage young children to want to read more...and more...and MORE!

### See it happen

**Shared reading** can be done before nap time, at bedtime, while waiting for a doctor's appointment, or for your food to arrive at a restaurant! There are many opportunities to sit down with your child every day to "read" a book, magazine, piece of mail, menu, and so much more!

Enlist the support of all the important adults in your child's life. Grandmas, grandpas, caregivers, and other adult friends make terrific shared reading partners! Invite them to watch while you demonstrate the shared reading techniques in "How do we do it?"



### Is it working?

- Has the amount of time the child spends talking with others increased?
- Has the child's vocabulary become larger and more varied?
- Has the child become the storyteller during shared reading times?
- Has the child shown increased interest in reading?

