

Prompts to Help Get "Book Talk" Going At Home

Below are a list of questions that can serve as conversation starters with your children at home. The most effective conversations revolve around somewhat open-ended questions, rather than "quizzing" readers on the "who? what? when? of a book. Research shows that children benefit enormously from discussing books at-home, particularly when their "parent-partner" has read the books alongside them and can add on to their ideas or pose new ones.

Fiction

- ❖ What's happening in the story so far? What are you thinking about it?
- ❖ What seems special or a little unusual about the character/s?
- ❖ What are you thinking about the character/s? Why?
- ❖ Would you want to be friends with this character? Why/why not?
- ❖ Does the character ever have mixed feelings about something? What? Why?
- ❖ What is the problem in the story? Why is this a problem?
- ❖ Tell me about the different ways the character tries to solve his/her problem. Do you think these are good ideas? Why/why not?
- ❖ Usually, secondary characters either create a problem, make it worse, or make it better. What role do you think the secondary characters play in this story?
- ❖ How does the character grow/change in this book?
- ❖ Why did the author title the book (or chapter) _____?
- ❖ What message/life lesson is the author trying to send us? What does the main character learn about life that we can also learn?

Informational/Non-Fiction

- ❖ What kinds of information are you learning about _____?
- ❖ What seems to be really important about _____? Why?
- ❖ What do you find most interesting about _____? Why?
- ❖ Is there anything you find surprising about _____? Say more about that...
- ❖ Does _____ remind you of anything else you know a lot about? How?
- ❖ What does _____ really want/need? What gets in its way?
- ❖ Sometimes when I learn a little about something, it makes me have even more questions about it. What other questions do you have about _____? How could we answer these questions?
- ❖ How do you think the author feels about _____?



READING TOGETHER

Reading at home should be a vital part of your child's day. Here are a few helpful tips to help you get started.

When you are reading *to* your child:

- ◆ Talk about your book selection
- ◆ Use plenty of expression, reading in a natural speaking voice and emphasizing dialogue
- ◆ Encourage your child to make predictions, connections, and wonderings
- ◆ Look back in the text if it will help with your child's thinking about the story

When you are reading *with* your child:

Begin reading the story to your child at a speed your child is comfortable with. As you read, your child will begin to pick up the pattern of the story and read with you. Encourage your child to use strategies to help figure out difficult words or new vocabulary.

- ◆ Sound out the word
- ◆ Break the word into recognizable chunks
- ◆ Think of a word that makes sense
- ◆ Use the other sentences around the unknown word to figure out what it might mean

When your child is reading:

- ◆ Listen carefully and allow your child to read at a comfortable pace.
- ◆ Try not to interrupt, unless your child initiates it.
- ◆ After reading, ask your child to summarize the story and talk about your child's thinking about his or her reading