

## Reading with Your Child

Renee Wiley

Title I Resource & Family Engagement Liaison

We all know that reading with children benefits them academically and emotionally. Reading introduces patterns and new ideas and strengthens relationships with others. Here are a few ideas to put into your reading routine.

### Make it Fun! Make it Daily!

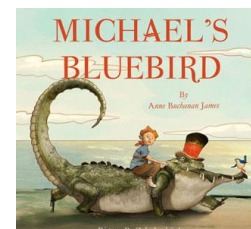
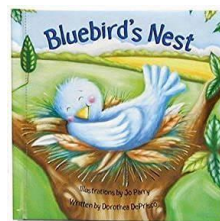
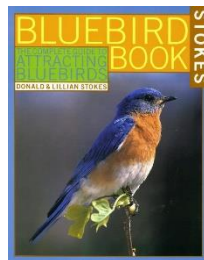
Fun first, daily second. Reading with your child should be a fun time, something you both look forward to doing. If reading together has become a chore/struggle change it up! Is the time right? Is bedtime/after school/after dinner too busy? Change the time you read together or change the time the routine starts. Change the location! Reading on the couch every day? Try reading in bed, in a blanket fort, under the table, or in a tent. You can add fun to reading by reading in different voices and/or rhythms. Be silly! Be dramatic! Be scary! Be sad! Be slow, fast, or rap! Let your child try too!

Get caught reading! Let your child see you reading. You may not realize how much they watch you and model their actions after you. If they see you reading, they will be more likely to pick up a book on their own (no guarantees!). If you read every day there is a great chance your child will too. There may be days you read together, side by side, in your own books and other times you read aloud together, sharing the same book.

### Before You Read

Talk about the book before you begin reading – especially if it is a new story. (BTW, rereading the same book over and over and over and over and over benefits your child. They get something new from it every time it's read and they build confidence, even as you slowly go insane.) When you talk about the book use the cover and topic as starters.

- What do you know about bluebirds?
- Who do you think is in the story?
- What clues or ideas does the cover give us?
- What made you choose this book? Or I chose this book because...
- Where do think this story takes place? Where do you think bluebirds live?



## While You Read

Talk about the images you see in your own thinking as you read. Model your thinking aloud so that your child can know what is happening in your mind. Encourage them to share the images their mind creates from the words on the page. This helps to build comprehension skills and verbal skills.

Ask questions as you read. Ponder together what you think will happen next or how the challenge might be solved. Model not knowing what a word means and use the text to figure out its meaning, use a dictionary, or ask Siri. 😊

If you or your child reads something that makes either of you happy, angry, confused, or curious pause to talk about it. These short conversations help strengthen a child's thinking. Children need opportunities to think and share aloud with others. Think of it as strength training for the brain.

## After Reading

Sometimes, after reading, you have a sleeping child. TIPTOE AWAY! If not, talk about what you read. Ask questions. Let your child ask you questions.

- What was your favorite part of the story? Tell me about it.
- What might have happened if (change an action in the story)...?
- What could the (main character's name) have done differently? Better? Worse?
- What fact did you find most interesting? Surprising? Shocking?

You might even consider a family field trip that coordinates with the book. So in the example of bird books, you might want to go Cedar Point in Englewood to bird watch or to the Bird Sanctuary in Ponce DeLeon Park, Punta Gorda where they rehabilitate birds and other wildlife. You might want to take up cooking or crafting after reading. Whatever the topic, occasionally follow up with an activity or go somewhere – it's NOT a necessity, just a nicety. Make it something special and enjoyable.

## Vocabulary

Vocabulary!!! All the words a child knows are important to success in school! The more words a child knows (not able to read, but knows what they mean) the more success they will have. While a student is learning to read it helps them to know what the words mean. They are working on learning reading skills. It is hard to decide if a word or sentence makes sense if your child doesn't know what a word or two means. Reading, talking and playing games with your child helps to build vocabulary (along with social skills, confidence, and strengthening relationships). Talk with your child while you are shopping. Expand their vocabulary and put them to work finding items you need. Use your daily outings together as a chance to grow your child's mind.

Remember, YOU are your child's FIRST Teacher. You can do this!