



Tips For Parents

- As you read with your child, ask questions that lead to comparisons and contrasts:
 - Does this story remind you of another story we've recently read? Why?
 - How is the Paper Bag Princess different from other princesses?
 - Which of the Ramona books do you like best?
 - Do you think Templeton the rat is a good guy or a bad guy?
 - How else could this story have ended?
- Make your child's favorite characters part of your daily life. Ask, "How would the Cat in the Hat go about cleaning up this messy room? What do you think Harriet the Spy would be writing in her notebook right now? If you two don't stop squabbling, I'm going to call Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle for a cure!"
- Play Before and After. Choose a magazine picture or point out an activity on the street that suggests some previous action: a dripping wet dog, a crying child, a teenager fixing a bicycle tire. Ask your child to imagine what happened just *before* the picture or activity. Perhaps the dog chased a duck into a pond, was just given a bath, or ran through a sprinkler. Or imagine what will happen *after* the event: "Watch out, that dog's going to shake water all over us!"
- Let your child read ahead of you and fill you in on what happened in the story. You may already be finding that bedtime reading no longer ends when you leave your child's room at night. Perhaps you left the book at Chapter 4 last night, but tonight your sneaky little reader is somehow already on Chapter 6! "Jumping ahead," with its faint taste of one-upmanship, is one of the great joys of learning to read independently. Though you may complain loudly about missing good parts of the story, never stop your eager beaver from reading ahead.



Rather, demand a recap of what you missed -- especially if s/he's managed to finish the book!

- As your child's skill in reading increases, so will her joy in discovering new words. Always be on the lookout for interesting words. Keep a small notebook handy so that you can write down wonder words that you come across on errands or in your reading:

"'Pumpernickel?' Wow! What a great word! That's a keeper!"

"'Murophobia?' I don't know what that means. Let's write it down and see if we can find out."

- Try using a method called "think aloud" when reading to your child. This is a method in which you model comprehension strategies for them. For example, the words on the page of a story might say, "Sammy looked at James and began to laugh." After reading those words aloud, you could say: "The picture doesn't show James. I wonder why Sammy is laughing? On the last page it said that James had a surprise for Sammy. The surprise must be something funny or unusual for Sammy to be laughing so much. Maybe it's a funny costume. I think we may find out what is making him laugh on the next page."

Children need models to follow when learning a new skill. Perhaps this method, which has been found to be very effective in teaching comprehension strategies to young children, will give your child a more concrete model to follow when trying to employ comprehension strategies on their own, especially the more abstract concepts like prediction.