

## Interactive Read-Aloud Times: A Summary

Interactive read-aloud time is a distinct component of the HighScope daily routine when teachers gather with their small group at the same time each day for an interactive reading experience. Teachers carefully plan these experiences, selecting high-quality children's books in a variety of genres and using interactive reading strategies that support children's active engagement.

### What Is Interactive Read-Aloud Time

- A cozy reading time.
- A time to share of idea and experiences.
- An opportunity for conversations between adults and peers.
- An opportunity for exposure to a variety of high-quality children's books in a variety of genres.

### Why Is Interactive Read-Aloud Time Important

- Reading aloud with child is the single most important activity for children's later reading success.
- Supports the development of skills needed for formal schooling, including vocabulary, alphabetic and phonemic knowledge, print concepts, and comprehension strategies.
- Provides opportunities for discussions about a range of topics, expanding children's background knowledge.
- Builds children's comprehension and understanding of the world around them.
- Engages children in analytical thinking and conversation.
- Fosters social interactions, a love of literature, and a lifelong passion for reading.

### What Children Do at Interactive Read-Aloud Time

- Converse with adult and peers.
- Listen and observe.
- Sit in their own way (e.g., on adult's lap, next to a peer, lay on a pillow).
- Share ideas and experience of their own lives.
- Participate in the book reading (e.g., point to, repeat words, talk about pictures).

### Basics of Interactive Read-Aloud Time

- A daily component of the routine.
- 10–15 minutes in length.
- Full-day programs may choose to include several read-aloud times throughout the day.
- Children are divided into a consistent small group with the same adult.
- Takes place in a consistent location for each small group of children so children know where to meet each day.
- Reading locations are cozy spaces where all children in the small group are able to see the book and interact with the adult who is reading aloud.
- Children participate in conversations and actively engage with the book reading according to their own developmental levels of learning.

## Interactive Read-Alouds Checklist

- 10–15 minutes
- Daily (e.g., one or two times each day)
- Adults choose a high-quality children’s book.
- Adults prepare for the book reading ahead of time.
  - Study the story first to understand the book (e.g., characters, setting, plot, background knowledge, children’s previous experiences).
  - Identify vocabulary words to introduce.
  - Identify a literacy focus (comprehension, vocabulary, craft and structure, phonological awareness, etc.).
  - Choose stopping points in the text to ask open-ended questions, prompt children to make predictions, or make connections between children’s lived experiences and the storyline.

### Before Reading Aloud to Children

- Build anticipation by inviting children to predict what the book might be about by looking at the front and back covers or several illustrations inside the book.
- Introduce the title, author, and illustrator.
- Talk about why the book was chosen to model for children that they can be thoughtful about choosing books for different reasons or purposes. Provide context by:
  - Building upon children’s background knowledge by making connections between what you know about their lived experiences and the story.
  - Providing additional information about unfamiliar settings or concepts that will be introduced in the book.
  - Focusing children’s attention on a story or literacy idea.
- Be selective in choosing literacy ideas that are not overwhelming to children.

### While Reading Aloud to Children

- Use the predetermined stopping points to model comprehension strategies, including:
  - Thinking aloud about your own thoughts and questions related to the text.
  - Making predictions, stating what you think might happen next based on your current understanding of the text.
  - Recalling facts or actions in the story that are relevant to a current event.
  - Making inferences and drawing conclusions from information implied by contextual clues rather than explicitly stated in the story (e.g., talk about emotions depicted in the illustrations and relate them to your own experiences).
- Support vocabulary development.
- Pause at times to have children retell parts of the story.
- Acknowledge phonological characteristics of the text, such as rhymes and alliteration.

- Run your finger under words to illustrate concepts of print, such as directionality, and to identify starting points in a line of text.
- Plan opportunities for children's active engagement.
- Pay close attention to children's developmental levels of learning.

#### **After Reading Aloud to Children**

- Encourage children to reflect upon and discuss the book.
- Retell actions or events from the story and recall facts.
- Summarize events to uncover themes or messages presented in the book.
- Make connections between the story and personal experiences.
- Make connections between this story and other stories heard previously.
- Review literacy concepts introduced during the reading.
- Plan a transition to the next part of the day.