

Interactive Read-aloud Protocol for Early Readers

The goal of an interactive read-aloud is to build their knowledge of content and vocabulary through their listening comprehension.

Please note that this protocol is written for projecting or screen sharing, but all ReadWorks passages can also be printed.

Before Read-aloud (3 min)		
Time	Teacher Activity	Sample Teacher Language
1 min	Review the purpose of reading today's ReadWorks passage.	"Today we're going to read a text about real-life _____ (animal). Over the next few days, we're going to continue to read passages on _____ (animal) to build our knowledge, which will help us grow as readers."
1-2 min	<p>For each student to listen and follow along, project or screen share the passage (or have print-outs for each student).</p> <p>Preview key academic vocabulary that are hyperlinked in the article.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Click the hyperlinked word to open the vocabulary widget. 2. Introduce one word by playing the human-voice pronunciation in the widget and have students repeat the word 2x. 3. Read the definition. 4. <i>Discuss the image if it appears in the widget.</i> <p>Repeat these steps for all vocab words that appear in the article.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Before we start reading, let's talk about some important words that we will see in the text. First is the word _____." 2. "Let's hear another voice say it [play the human-voice audio]. Now say the word _____ with me." "_____" [Teacher and students say the word.] "Now, say the word on your own." [Students repeat the word on their own.] 3. "So _____ means ..." [Teacher reads the hyperlinked definition or paraphrases it.] 4. "Notice how this picture shows what this word means..."

During Read-aloud (6 min)		
Time	Teacher Activity	Sample Teacher Language
4-5 min	Read the text aloud. When appropriate throughout, conduct think-alouds to model your own thinking when reading the text. When you encounter one of the key academic vocab words in context, point it out, ask students what it means, and prompt them to explore the word further.	<p>Potential sentence starters for think-alouds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Hm, this makes me think of...” • “I just learned that...” • “I notice that the animal...” • “I wonder about the animal’s...” <p>Potential vocab prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What does the word _____ mean again?” • “How does it connect with our topic on (animal)?” • “What is another example of _____?” • “How can you use the word _____ in a sentence?”
After Read-aloud (3 min)		
Time	Teacher Activity	Sample Teacher Language
1 min	Since further discussion will happen as part of the Knowledge Tree activity, do just a quick check for understanding by asking questions about key details. Use the question set as a guide if you need additional prompts.	<p>Potential questions to check for understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What did you learn about _____ (animal)?” • “What is one fact about _____ (animal) in the text?” Potential follow-up: the teacher points to where in the text the fact appears.
1-2 min	Ask a few additional questions to deepen comprehension and connection to students’ own experiences.	<p>Ask a higher-level question or make an inference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What should you do to take care of _____ (animal)?” • “What might a _____ (animal) do if you....?” <p>Connect the text to students’ lives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How would you take care of a _____ (animal)?” • “Have you seen a _____ (animal) in real life? When?”

Modeled example with the passage "[Cats Need Care](#)"

Before Read-aloud (3 min)		
Time	Teacher Activity	Sample Teacher Language
1 min	Review the purpose of reading today's ReadWorks passage.	"Today we're going to read a text about real-life cats. Over the next few days, we're going to continue to read passages on cats to build our knowledge, which will help us grow as readers."
1-2 min	<p>For each student to listen and follow along, project or screen share the passage (or have print-outs for each student).</p> <p>Preview key academic vocabulary that are hyperlinked in the article.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Click the hyperlinked word to open the vocabulary widget. Introduce one word by playing the human-voice pronunciation in the widget and have students repeat the word 2x. Read the definition. <i>Discuss the image if it appears in the widget.</i> <p>Repeat these steps for all vocab words that appear in the article.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> "Before we start reading, let's talk about some important words that we will see in the text. First is the word pets." "Let's hear another voice say it [play the human-voice audio]. Now say the word pets with me." "Pets" [Teacher and students say the word.] "Now, say the word on your own." [Students repeat the word on their own.] "So pets means animals you keep at home to enjoy and take care of" [Teacher reads the hyperlinked definition or paraphrases it.] <i>"Notice how this picture shows what this word means. You can see a cat in a basket."</i> <p>Repeat steps for "fur" and "whiskers"</p>

During Read-aloud (6 min)		
Time	Teacher Activity	Sample Teacher Language
4-5 min	Read the text aloud. When appropriate throughout, conduct think-alouds to model your own thinking when reading the text. When you encounter one of the key academic vocab words in context, point it out, ask students what it means, and prompt them to explore the word further.	Think-aloud with vocabulary prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After sentence 1: “Here’s our first vocabulary word: pets. What does the word ‘pets’ mean again?” • After sentence 3: “So I know I am going to learn about tips to take care of cats” • After sentence 5: “Ooo, for those of you who have a cat, give me a thumbs up if your cat eats twice a day or thumbs down if he doesn’t” • After sentence 10: “I see another vocabulary word: fur. How does fur connect to our topic on cats?” • After sentence 11: “I wonder why an adult needs to clip a cat’s claws and not a kid.” • After sentence 13: “We just read what whiskers are, which is our last vocabulary word. What’s another animal that has whiskers?” • After sentence 16: “So I notice that cats have to go to the doctor just like us!”
After Read-aloud (3 min)		
Time	Teacher Activity	Sample Teacher Language
1 min	Since further discussion will happen as part of the Knowledge Tree activity, do just a quick check for understanding by asking questions about key details. Use the question set as a guide if you need additional prompts.	Questions to ask to check for understanding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is one thing you learned about cats? • What is one tip to take care of cats?
1-2 min	Ask a few additional questions to deepen comprehension and connection to students’ own experiences.	Ask a higher-level question or make an inference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What might a cat do if you clip its whiskers? • What should you do to a cat’s fur? Connect the text to students’ lives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you take care of your cat? • If you don’t have a cat but have a different pet, how do you take care of it?