



Reading Alongside Children

Margaret F. Quinn, Ph.D.

Presented at East TN Freedom Schools' Parents Night

7/13/21

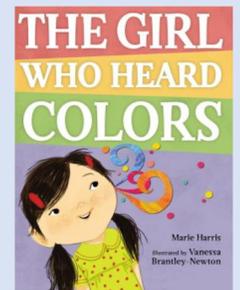
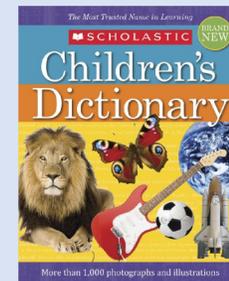
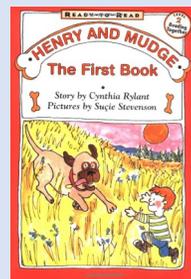
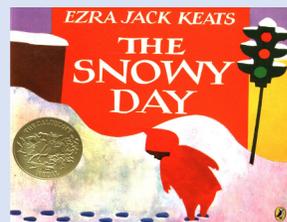
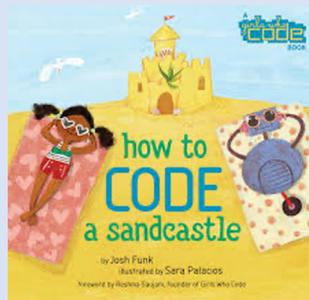
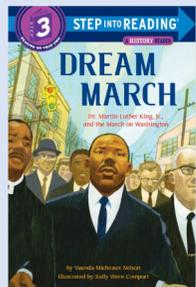
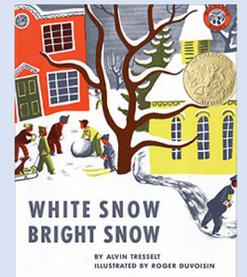
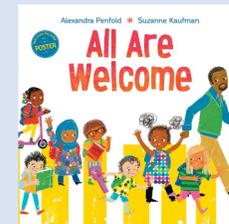
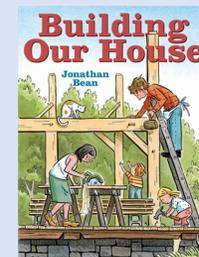
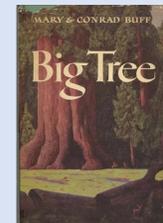
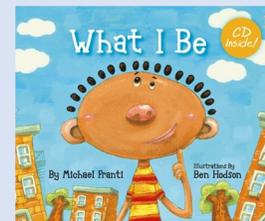
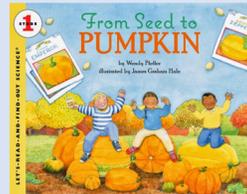
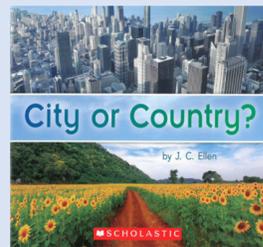
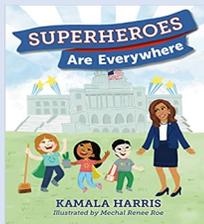
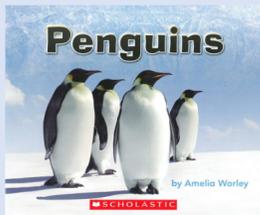
About Me: Margaret Quinn

- Assistant Professor in Child and Family Studies
University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- Early Literacy Researcher
- Mom of 1
- Former Preschool Teacher



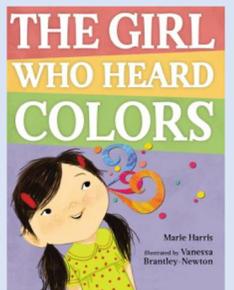
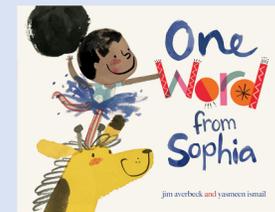
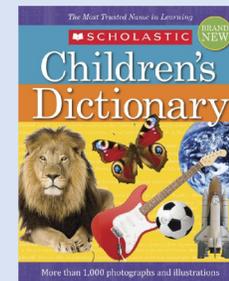
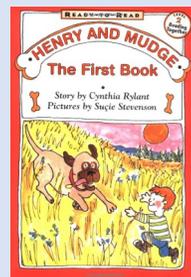
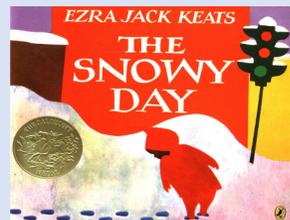
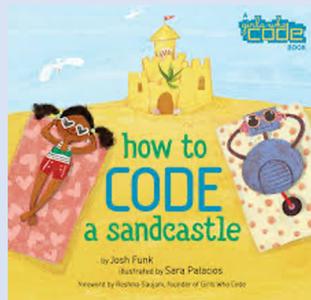
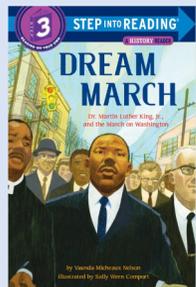
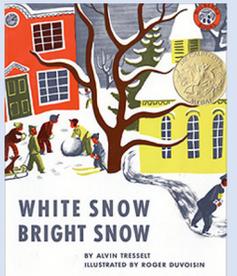
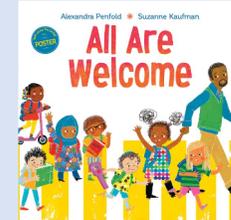
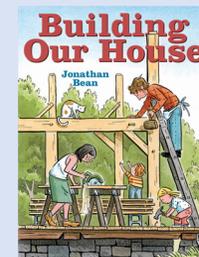
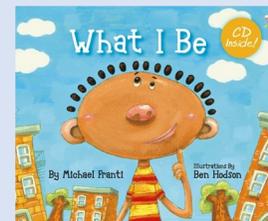
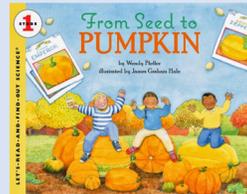
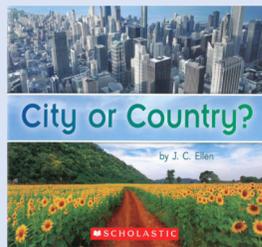
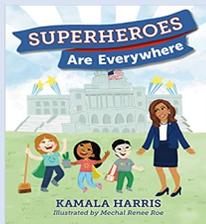
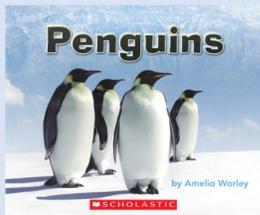
ACTIVITY/DISCUSSION

- Take a look at these books.
- Which ones jump out most?
- Why?
- Reflect on your favorites.



ACTIVITY/DISCUSSION

- Do these look like books you think your children would like now or in the past?
- Why or why not?

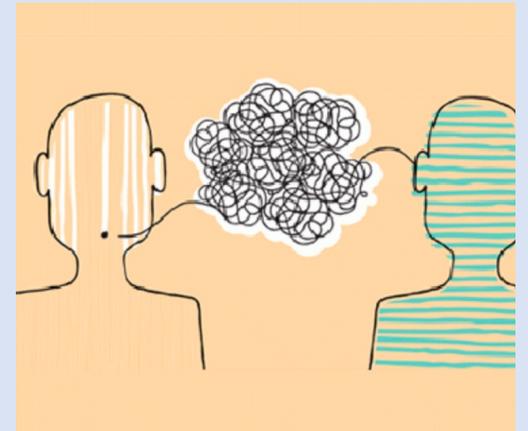


Literacy is understanding, evaluating, using, and **engaging with** written texts to **participate in society**, achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential

Organization for
Economic
Cooperation and
Development, 2016

Literacy in a nutshell

- Dynamic, complex, shifting (UNESCO, 2006)
- Decoding and encoding
- Culturally- and contextually- influenced
- Huge implications for
 - School success: particularly important for later grades (85% of learning relies on being able to read)
 - Employment: reading tied to pay and job quality
 - Health: reading tied to adverse health outcomes
 - Life: literacy and self-esteem/self-efficacy



Power of read alouds

Reading out loud to children has long been considered the single most important thing we can do to build children's knowledge and prime them for later reading (Anderson, 1985)

But why? What is it about reading aloud to children that helps them learn to read?

If we want children to be able to read, why are we reading to them?



Why read alouds?

Some possibilities:

- *“If we have to talk to children in order for them to learn to talk, what does that say about reading?”*
- Book language vs. spoken language
- Comprehension, making connections, new words
- Modeling “what readers do”
- Develop listening skills (activating the same part of the brain as reading)
- Build attention and concentration
- Fosters connection and shared interests

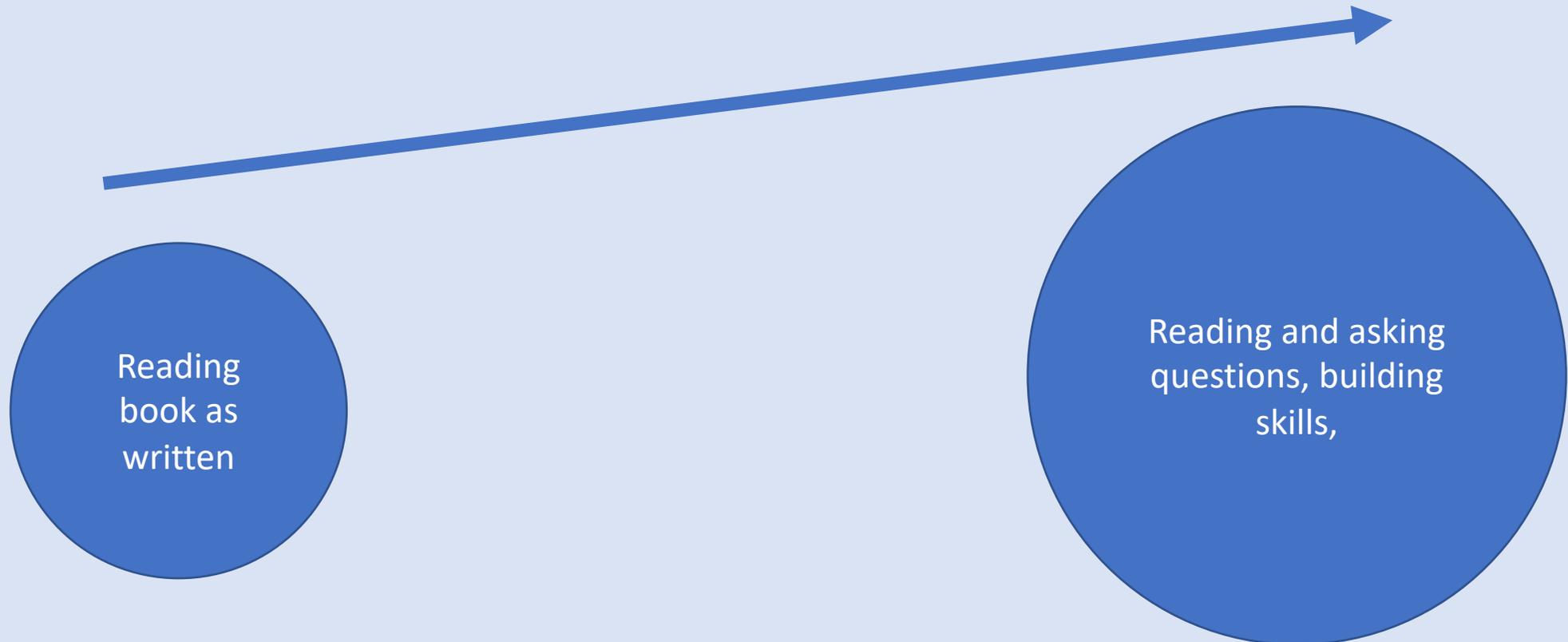
Read alouds (who, what, where, when)

We know *why* read alouds might be important... but who should read aloud and to whom? What should read alouds include? Where should they occur? When?

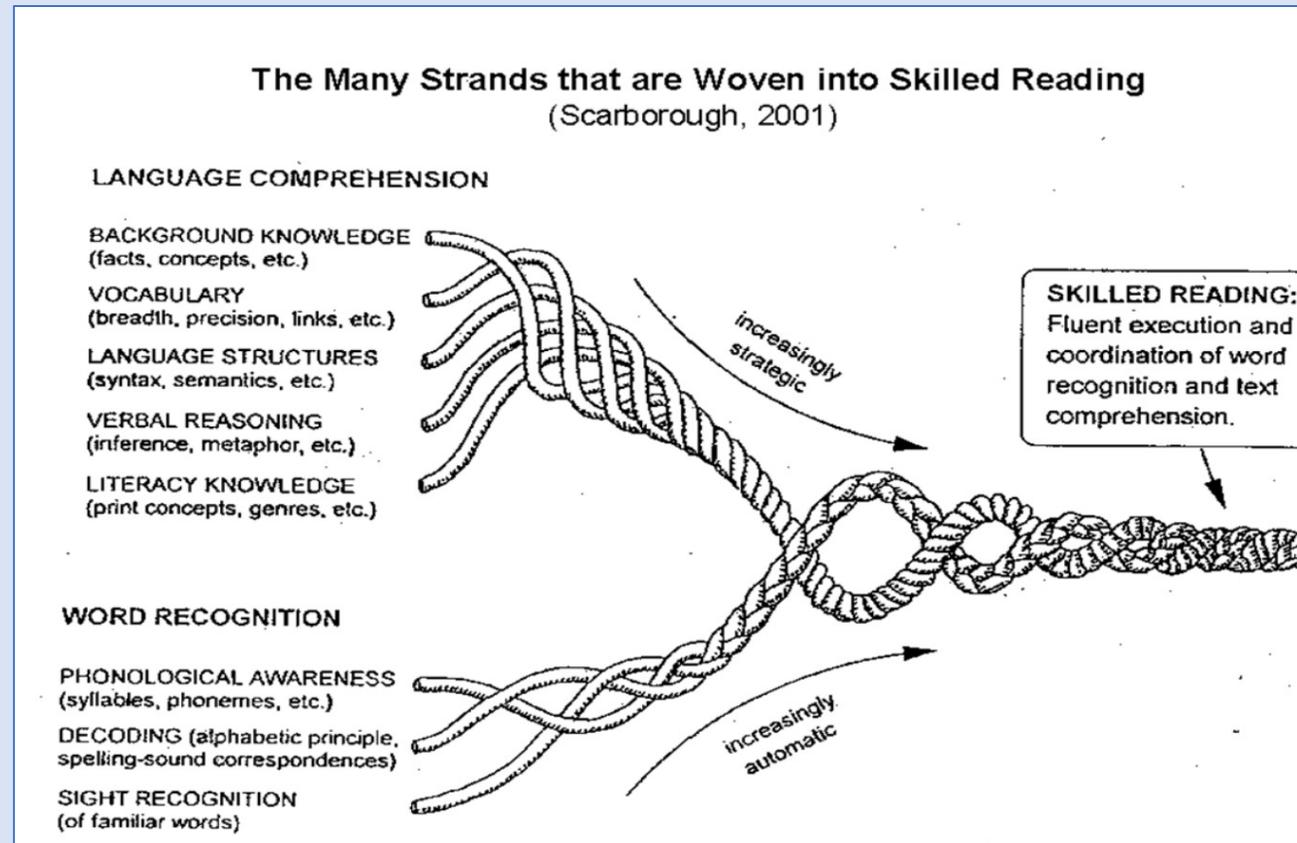
- **WHO:** anyone! Parents and other caregivers, relatives, friends can read to children of any age.
 - 83% of children aged 6-17 who are or were read to reported that they love/loved it (Scholastic, 2015)
- **WHAT:** text is important – books are most approachable but can also use song lyrics, poems, simple articles (especially to help discuss a current event, etc.). Ideally include reading the text as well as talking about it. Can read in segments.
- **WHERE:** anywhere
- **WHEN:** any time that makes sense for your family. While we want it to become a part of routine, we avoid calling it a routine (chore) – building it in to rituals.

Approaches to reading aloud

- Increase the potency or impact of reading aloud



Understanding impacts of reading aloud



Without additional prompting or questioning, read alouds may IMPLICITLY...

Language-based skills

- Expose children to new vocabulary
- Build an understanding of story/book structure
- Build background knowledge on a particular topic
- Build an understanding of different types of books
- Build an understanding of inference or what is going on that is not being explicitly stated

Word-based skills

- Expose children to new words
- Build an understanding of how words are read or what certain words look like
- Build an understanding of the sounds of language

If we add in additional prompting, read alouds may EXPLICITLY...

Language-based skills

- Provide specific comprehension strategies
- Build better vocabularies and word knowledge in context
- Ask questions that develop understanding of genre, help make inferences
- Build background knowledge

Word-based skills

- Prompt children to do more decoding, recalling sight words
- Prompt children to think explicitly about the sounds of language and the way print is read

An example - Vocabulary

- Let's pretend I am reading aloud to you...

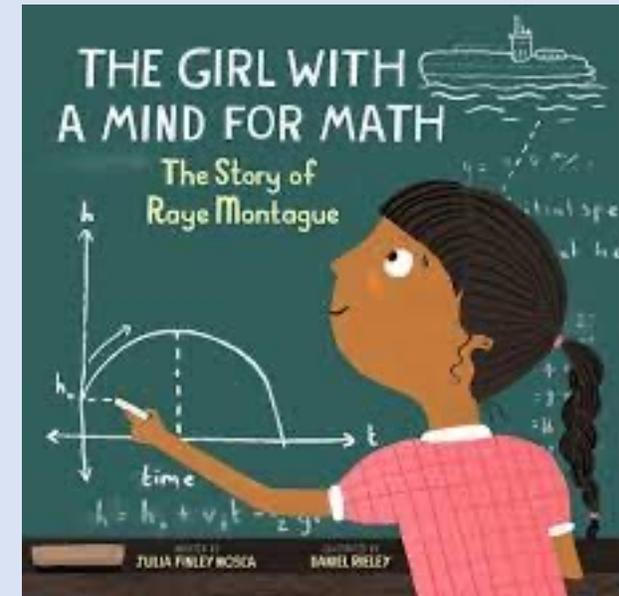
“A real POBREE!” she said. Her eyes opened wide. ‘Who made it?’ she asked as they followed the guide. ‘WILLIPS,’ said the man giving her head a pat.”

What does it mean? Can you make sense of it?

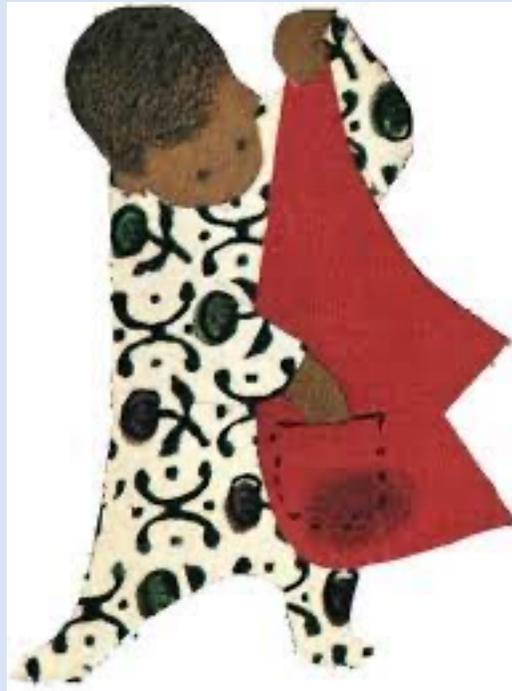
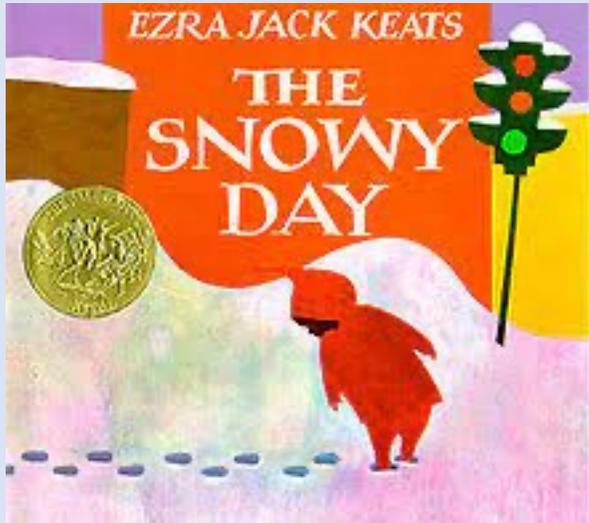
- What if I provide definitions to help you...

“A real POBREE!” she said. [A pobree is a big metal boat that travels completely under water]. Her eyes opened wide. ‘Who made it?’ she asked as they followed the guide. ‘WILLIPS,’ said the man giving her head a pat. [Willips are people who design, build, and maintain things like machines or buildings]”

Now does it make more sense?



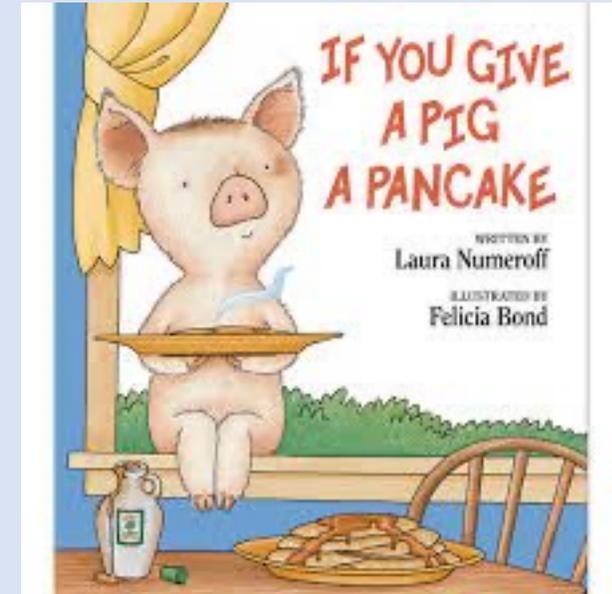
An example - Inference



- In *The Snowy Day*, Peter puts a snowball in his pocket and goes inside.
- After his bath, he checks his pocket and the snow ball is gone.
- Questions to ask: What happened? Where did it go? Why is Peter surprised it's not there? Why would Peter put a snowball in his pocket?

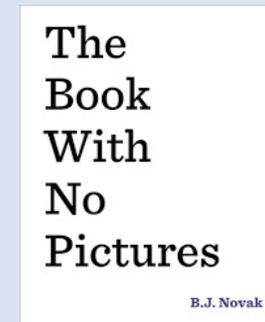
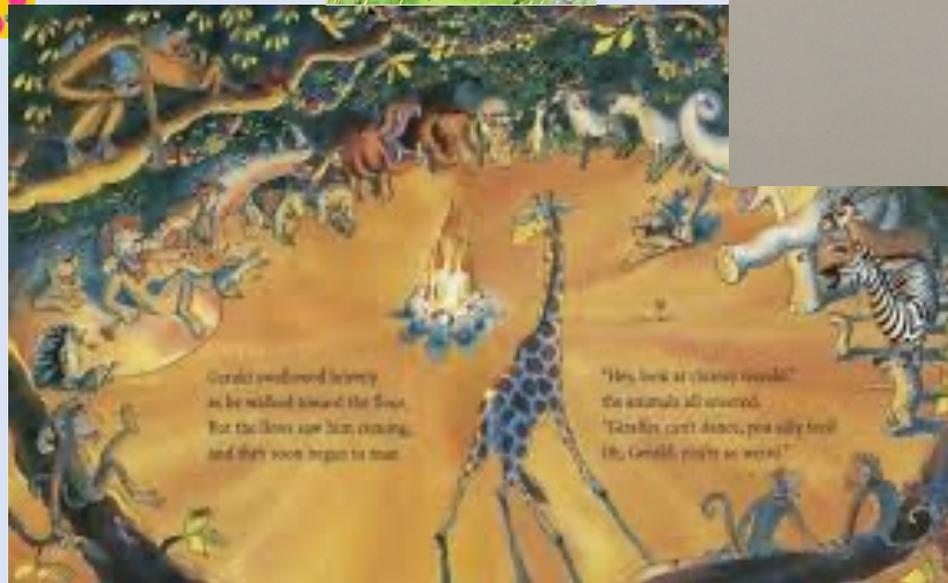
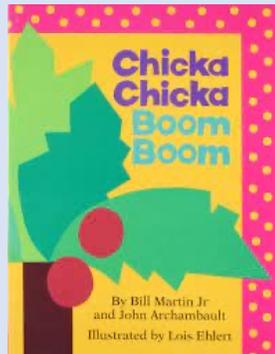
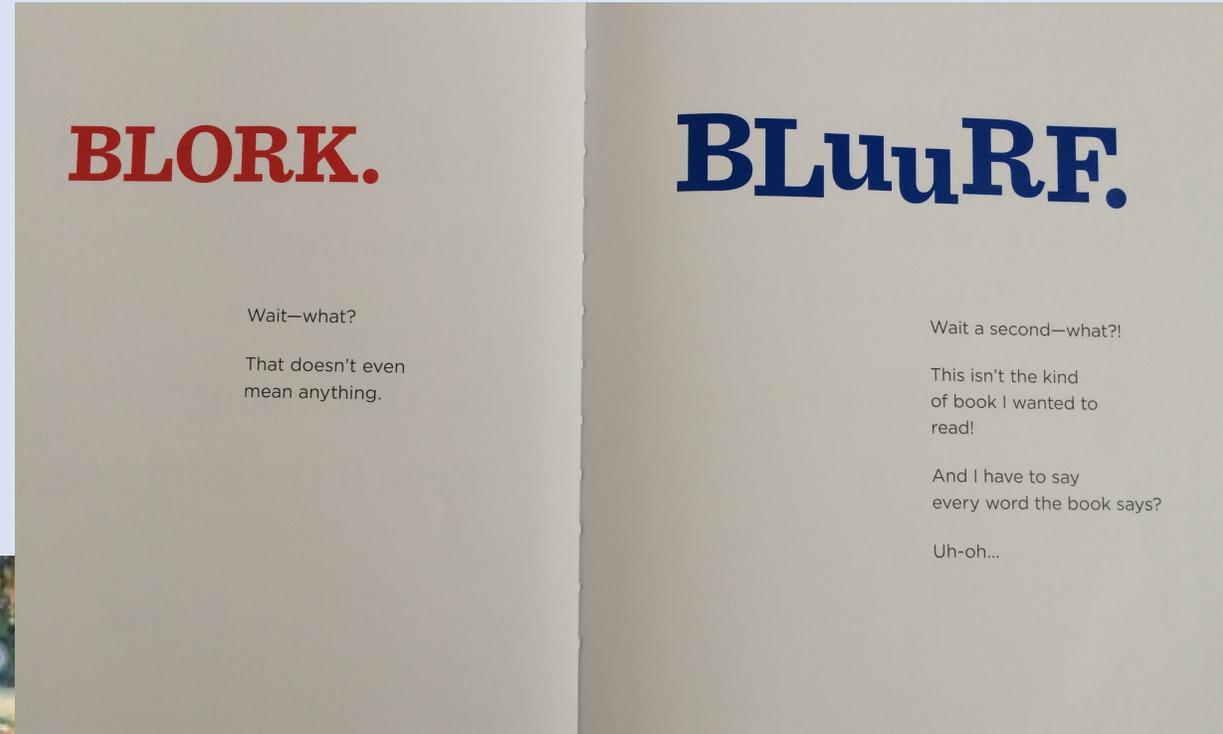
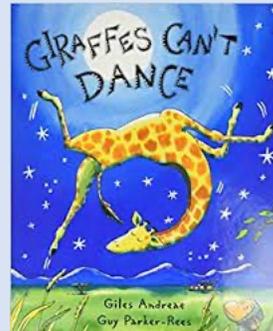
An example - Comprehension

- Ask questions to connect to own lives, other books, or things happening in the world
 - “The pig feels homesick and misses his family. Have you ever felt that way?” “This book reminds me of another book we read called *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*”
- Make predictions about what will happen
 - “The pig is thinking about maple syrup...I bet that means she will also be thinking about pancakes. This will start all over again.”
- Retell or summarize what was read
 - “Let’s try to remember the sequence of what happened. First the pig had a pancake, then...”



Basically, try to show externally what readers must do internally

Word-based skills



Word-based skills

- Point out when words rhyme or sound funny
- Ask child to identify letters, specific words, where to start reading and where to go next, what specific punctuation might mean.
- Ask child to help you read parts or sound things out

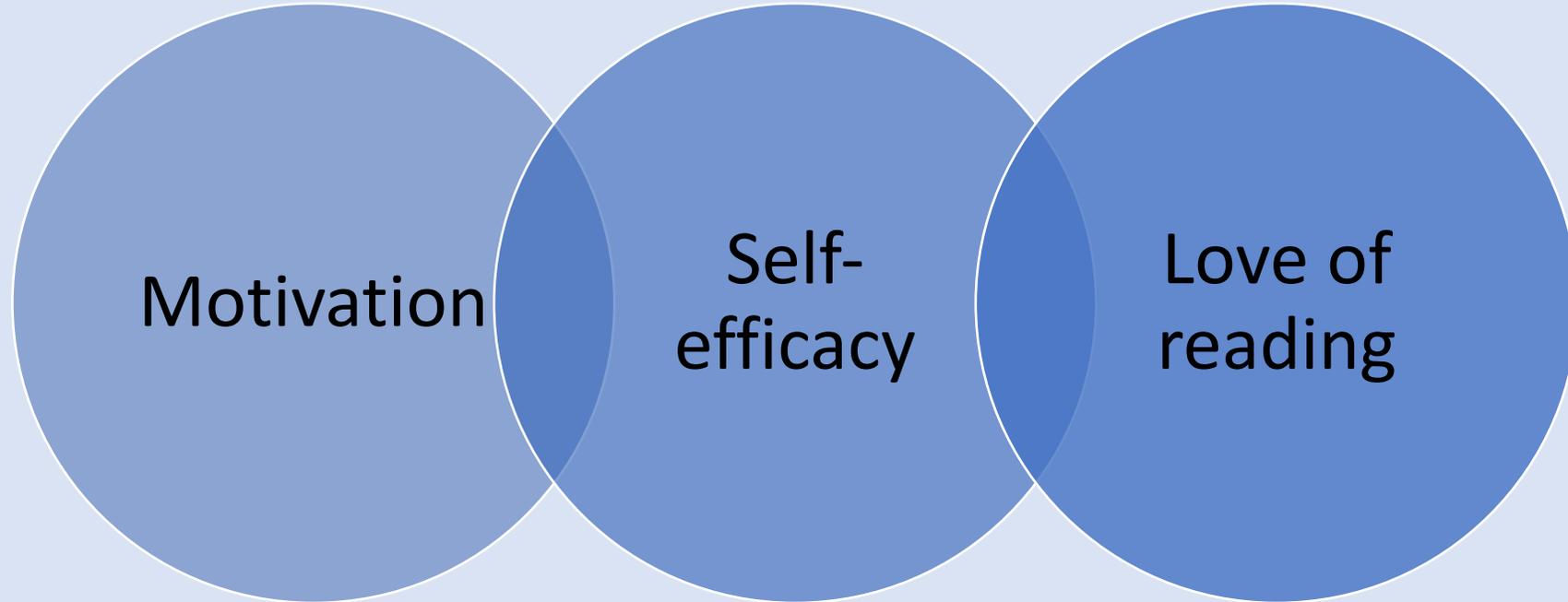


In summary...

- Ask questions before, during, and after reading a book.
 - Some simple questions I like to use that work for most fictional books are questions like:
 - Before: What do you think will happen? (or if you've read it before) Do you remember this book, what is going to happen?
 - During: "What is happening on this page?" "What do you think will happen next?"
 - After: "What was the most important part?" "What do you think could happen after the story to the character(s)?"
 - Book-specific questions also are helpful
- Ask questions or make statements that help your child understand the subtext (make inferences)
- Define words they may not know (even better if you can use these words at other times)
- Ask questions and prompt children to think about print – (words, letters, sounds, punctuation) while reading. You don't have to spend a lot of time on this but providing these opportunities can support reading skills.
 - What letter/word is this?
 - Do these words sound the same?
 - Can you read this part/word?
 - Can you show me where to start reading? Where do I go next?
 - What does ! mean?

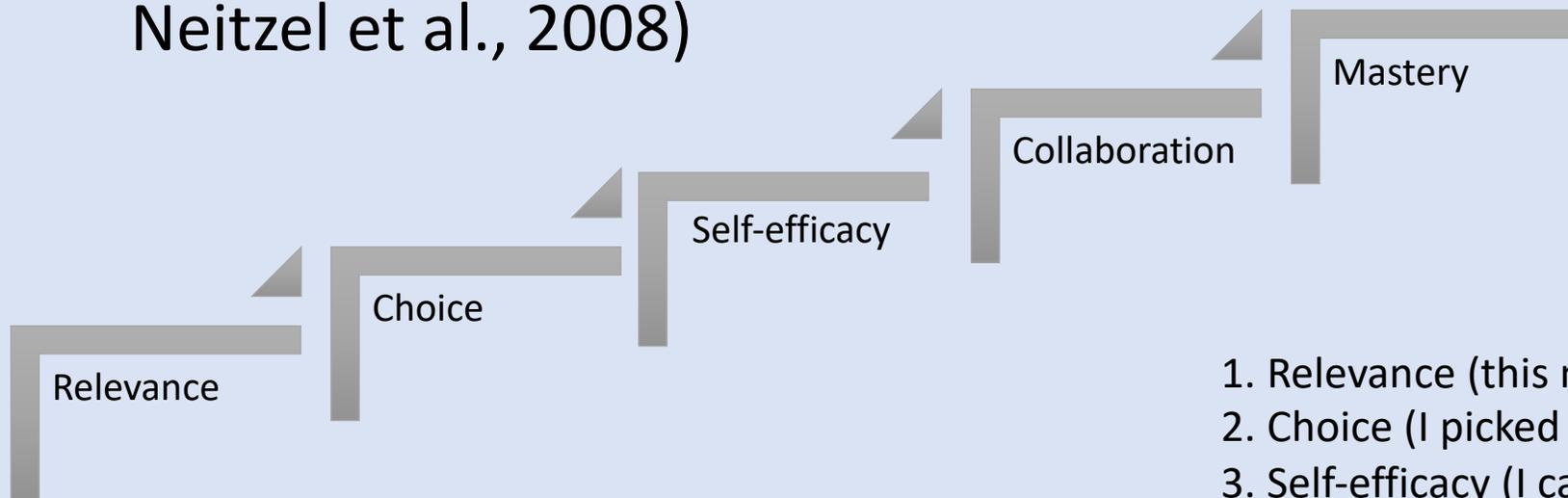
That's not all!

- Read alouds can do much more than support skill development...



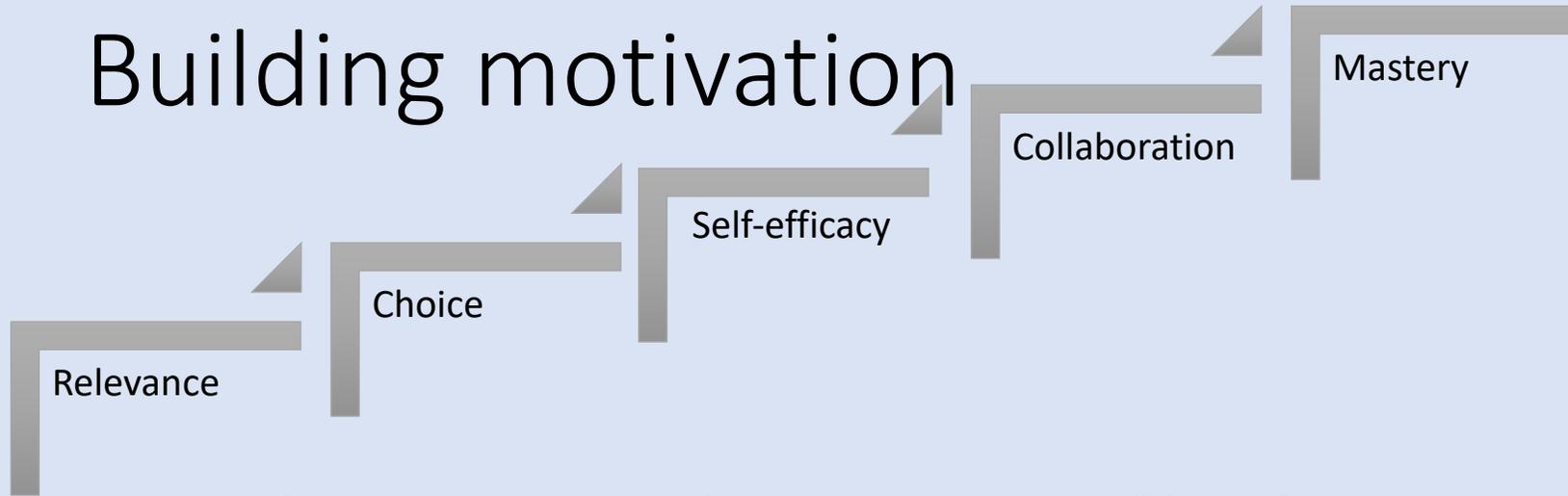
Building motivation

- What we know is that interest and motivation matter. Children are more likely to persist at something difficult if they are motivated, have control over choice, and are interested in it (e.g., DiCarlo et al., 2016; Neitzel et al., 2008)



1. Relevance (this matters to me!)
2. Choice (I picked this!)
3. Self-efficacy (I can do this!)
4. Collaboration (I can talk to my friends about this!)
5. [Subject/topic] Mastery (I want to learn about this!)

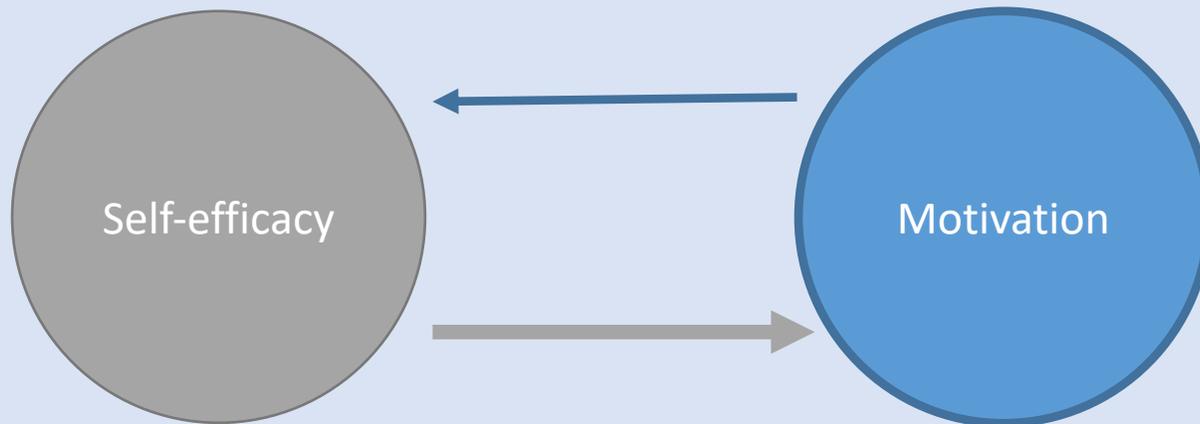
Building motivation



- This means reading a variety of books in a variety of topics that are interesting and relevant
- Showing how you use reading to find information or learn more about something
- Honor all types of texts. This means reading books, telling stories, reading articles, whatever is of interest

Building self-efficacy

- Related to motivation is self-efficacy, that is your perceived ability level.
- We are more motivated to do things we are good at; we are good at things we are more motivated to do.



By reading aloud, we can lessen the challenges associated with reading on one's own
But by providing additional prompting questions and opportunities to express knowledge, we can build child's self-efficacy in reading.

Building a love of reading

- Most importantly, reading aloud can foster a love of reading in children – 83% of children (6-17) love or loved being read to (Scholastic, 2015)
- Reading enjoyment is associated with academic success (Whitten et al., 2016)
- There is a steady decline in reading habits as children age –
 - 54% of 9-year olds read “for fun”
 - 30% of 13-year olds
 - 22% of 17-year olds

Finding time and finding books

- Build a reading ritual (as little as 5-10 minutes)
 - Specific setting (e.g., reading spot or time)
 - Specific aspects of the ritual (e.g., who chooses, other props)
 - Beginning and ending
- Alternative: visiting library or bookstore
- Alternative: listening to kid-friendly audiobooks during commutes or other family times
- Little Free Libraries
- Knox Co. Public Library (in person and online through Libby)
- Ebooks through app store
- School libraries and resource centers
- Used bookstores like McKay's or online Thrift books, Book outlet, Abe books
- Library sales
- Youtube

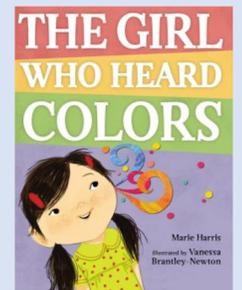
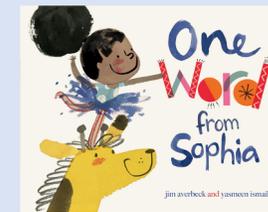
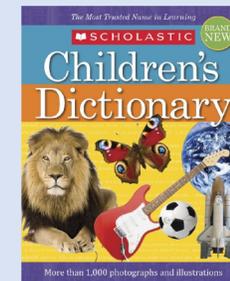
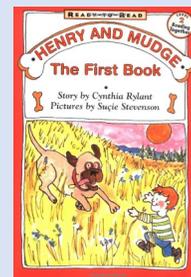
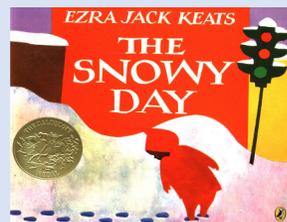
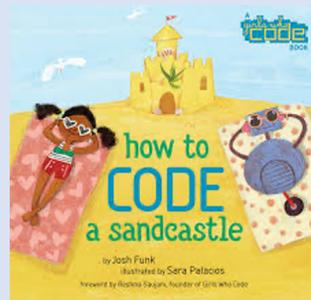
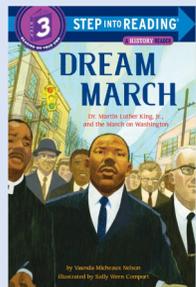
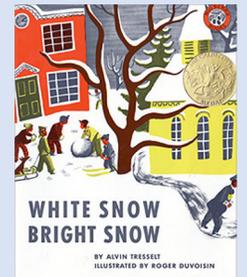
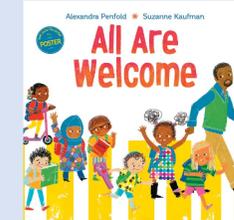
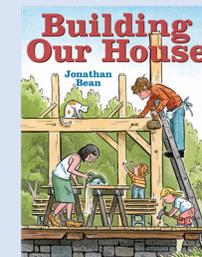
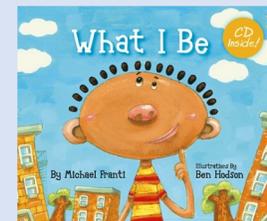
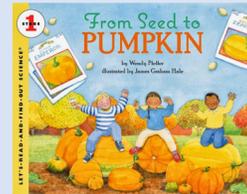
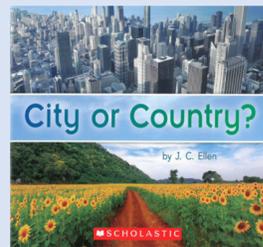
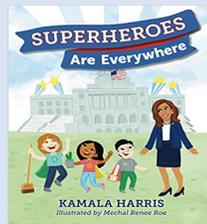
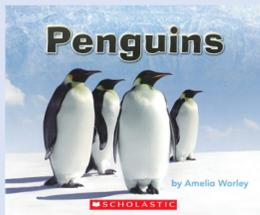
Key take-aways, questions, ideas

- Reading aloud is essential but what that looks like differs from family to family and child to child.
- Supporting skills – both comprehension-based skills and word-based skills – is an important effect of reading aloud
 - Explicit strategies like asking questions, modeling strategies of comprehension, defining words, or prompting child to identify or read things will be more effective likely than reading alone
- Reading aloud may support motivation, self-efficacy, and love of reading which are critical for successful reading.

Thoughts or questions...?

Now...

- Given all we have discussed, do you think about these books differently? How so?
- Did the ones that jump out to you change?



Thank you so much for having me!

Contact for questions or follow-up –

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