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Ideas for Using Books and Other Texts to Build Reading/Listening Comprehension Skills at Home

Discussing books and other texts is a great way to work on developing vocabulary, comprehension, language, retelling, and discussion skills

Choose something to read and discuss. This could be from a book, text from a teacher, article, or anything that interests the student.

Present activity and preview what you will work on. You can say...

- o We are going to read a book/passage/paragraph/article about_____.
- o I want you to read to me OR listen and follow along with me OR read with me.
- o Remember to listen/read carefully and pay attention.
- o We will talk about what we read to make sure we understand.

Read to/with student or have them read to you. Then talk about it.

Depending on individual needs, you can talk about the text after a few sentences, a few paragraphs, or wait until the end.

- o Ask the student if they have any questions or did not understand specific words.
- o Ask a variety of "WH-" (who, what, where, when, why, how) questions.
→ *When, Why, and How questions may be more difficult.*
- o Give clues for answers if needed.
- o Give reminders and models to help the student answer in complete sentences.
- o Wonder/think aloud about the text.
→ *"I wonder why..." "I predict..." "I think that means that..." "I'm confused about..."*
- o Help the student make connections to what was read.
→ *Does the text make you think about a personal experience, another book, a movie or TV show, or something you know about the world?*

These suggestions can also be used to discuss movies and TV shows!

Example: Practicing comprehension skills with a simple text

Jack and Jill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water
Jack fell down and broke his crown
And Jill came tumbling after

- o Ask the student if they have any questions or did not understand specific words.
What does "pail" mean? Can you think of a synonym? A pail is a bucket.
- o Ask a variety of "WH-" (who, what, where, when, why, how) questions.
→ *When, Why, and How questions may be more difficult.*
Who climbed the hill? Jack and Jill climbed the hill.
What did the children need to get? The children needed to get some water.
Where did they go to get the water? They went to the well at the top of the hill.
When did Jill fall? Jill fell after Jack.
Why did they take a pail? They took it because they needed a pail to hold the water.
How did Jack hurt his head? He hurt his head when he fell down the hill.
- o Give clues for answers if needed.
Why did they take a pail? Hmm...they needed water. How would they take it home?
- o Give reminders and models to help the student answer in complete sentences.
Remember to use a complete sentence. AND/OR Start your sentence with, "They took..."
- o Wonder/think aloud about the text.
I wonder why they needed the water. Maybe they were thirsty.
I predict that the children will have to go up the hill again to get more water.
I think that means there must be a well at the top of the hill.
I'm confused about how you get water out of a well. Let's find a video online.
- o Help the student make connections to what was read.
→ *Does the text make you think about a personal experience, another book, a movie or TV show, or something you know about the world?*
They went to a well for water. How do we get our water? Yes. We use the faucet.
I remember there was a well in the book *Tikki Tikki Tembo*. Did someone fall in?
Remember when Daniel Tiger took a pail to the beach? What did he put in it?
Do you think people still use wells? Let's find some more information.