



Slideshow

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

## A Three-Level Framework for Dialogic Reading

Syracuse City School District, New York • June 2007

**Topic:** Preschool Language and Literacy

**Practice:** Use Interactive and Dialogic Reading

### Highlights

- Understanding dialogic reading
- Using a three-level framework to develop oral language skills and build vocabulary
- Value of multiple book readings
- Step-by-step description of questions and prompts to use at each level of the framework
- Asking Level 1 “wh-” questions focused on pictures to assess vocabulary and build language
- Tips on using Level 2 expansion techniques and open-ended questions to get children talking more
- How to use Level 3 questions to focus more on plot and extend conversation beyond the story
- At Level 3, the importance of using all three levels of questions, prompts, and expansions to build oral fluency and encourage children as storytellers

### About the Site

Syracuse City School District  
Syracuse, New York

#### Demographics:

- 93% Children living in poverty
- 79% Non-Caucasian
- 22% Special Needs
- 15% English Language Learners

#### Site Highlights:

- Developmental continuum of phonological awareness that guides planning and differentiation of instruction based on children's skill levels
- Phonological awareness instruction integrated throughout the day into classroom activities, routines, and thematic units
- Explicit and contextualized instruction
- Teacher training in interactive and dialogic reading focused on increasing vocabulary, oral language, and comprehension
- Intensive and ongoing professional development with on-site mentoring by literacy coaches and a focus on individual class needs
- Coach-teacher partnerships that involve teachers in a feedback process focused on inquiry and improvement based on classroom observations and self-reflection

### Full Transcript

#### A Three-Level Framework for Dialogic Reading

Learn how to use all three levels of a dialogic reading framework to develop young children's oral language. Download the *Preparing a Dialogic Reading Lesson* handout to see how to apply the framework to the book; the handout provides examples of adult-child dialogue at each level.

### Slide #1: Dialogic Reading Defined

Dialogic reading is a systematic way to engage children in conversation about a storybook to build children's language and vocabulary. The adult works with only a few children at a time so that each child can see the pictures in the book. Because the goal is to maximize oral language practice, each child should have the opportunity to talk.

### Slide #2: Multiple Book Readings

The adult selects a book rich in varied and detailed pictures. The book will be revisited many times in the dialogic reading process. With each "reading" of the book, children do more of the talking. On first "reading," children label objects and later progress to describe what's happening in the pictures. Eventually after many readings, children retell parts of the story and describe the plot.

### Slide #3: Purpose of Framework

The framework is a guide that helps adults "build up" children's vocabularies and oral language skills. At levels 1 and 2, adults ask questions and repeat and expand children's responses. The adult conducts repeat "readings" with levels 1 and 2, especially for younger children, to ensure they are comfortable using new vocabulary. By level 3 children are retelling the story plot and connecting the story to their own experiences.

### Slide #4: Level 1 Goal: Develop Vocabulary

The purpose of level 1 is to get children talking, using the vocabulary of the book to comment on the pictures. The goal is to establish labels for objects and actions and elicit details about the pictures. Because all children should have the opportunity to use the new words, the adult should ask the group to repeat responses.

### Slide #5: Asking "Wh-" Questions

The adult uses simple "wh-" questions (*who, where, what*) to assess children's vocabulary, building language by repeating what the child says and expanding on the child's comments (*Yes, they tug... the sheep are tugging a jeep*). The adult takes advantage of children's interest in picture details

to ask follow up questions and build oral language (*What is this part called?*). Children's language attempts are praised.

See more dialogue in the handout related to this page of the book.

### Slide #6: Level 2 Goal: Prompt Descriptions

Once children are comfortable using the book's vocabulary, the adult moves to level 2. The purpose of level 2 is to get children talking more and using longer phrases. The adult prompts children to describe in their own words what is happening in a picture.

*"What's happening?"*

*"Tell me what's happening on this page."*

### Slide #7: Level 2: Expansion Techniques

At the second level, the adult asks open-ended questions and responds with brief expansions to fill in relevant information. The adult's expansions should be short and simple (*Child: They fell over. Adult: Yes, you're right. They did fall over. Now one is upside down.*).

The child should be encouraged to repeat the adult's expansion. Praise for responses encourages more talk.

See more dialogue in the handout related to this page of the book.

### Slide #8: Encouraging Conversation

Some tips for adults on encouraging children to talk:

- Make comments about a picture in simple language similar to words the children might use. Then pause for comment.
- Say part of a sentence and pause so that children fill in the last word or two.
- Say something about the picture that is obviously incorrect or silly, and let the children correct you.

### Slide #9: Alternating Levels 1 and 2

The adult continues with level 1 and 2 questions and comments for many “readings” of the book, typically alternating levels to build vocabulary and encourage use of new words. Alternating between level 1 and 2 should be fluid and keyed to children’s responses. For example, the adult might ask a wh- question to a child who isn’t yet ready for an open-ended question.

### Slide #10: Level 3 Goal: Encourage Retelling

Level 3 is used only after children are very familiar with the book. The purpose of level 3 is to build oral fluency so children are encouraged to use the vocabulary of the book to retell the story. The conversation at level 3 is less focused on pictures and more on the story plot. The adult may also prompt children to apply the new vocabulary in conversation that goes beyond the book.

### Slide #11: Children as Storytellers

At level 3, the adult uses all three levels of questions and comments to encourage children to tell the story. An adult might ask recall questions, encourage children to act out or demonstrate parts of the story, or extend conversation beyond the story plot. Extension might involve making connections between parts of the story or talking about personal experiences (*Has your family’s car ever gotten stuck?*).

See more dialogue in the handout related to this page of the book.

### Slide #12: Three Levels of Fun

The three-level dialogic reading framework guides adults in helping children become storytellers. It’s helpful to remember to use the framework flexibly, take time and don’t rush through the levels, and alternate levels to individualize. Don’t forget that praising children’s attempts will encourage them to talk. Most important, remember to have fun!

Download the handout and review examples of adult-child dialogue for each level of the framework applied to the storybook.