

Dialogic Book talk process

Have you ever read a story and had constant interruptions from the children about things in the story or pictures on a page? Children often want to talk about things that they have already had experiences about and know about. This enables children to make connections in their thinking and language skills by focussing on things that they already know about.

Dialogic book talk is talking about the book as it unfolds, allowing children to spend time on one page discussing the pictures or words and connecting them to their own lives. It gives practitioners the opportunity to develop language and thinking and not be concerned about finishing the story. It is a group activity in which adults and children together develop shared understanding of a book through talk. Both participants;

- use language for thinking
- make connections to things they already know
- ask questions of the book
- explore the book at different levels
- give reasons for what they say

Choosing a book;

- books can be fiction or non-fiction
- should be interesting to children and practitioner
- should make you think and ask questions
- must read the book several times over the course of a few days
- different things may emerge as the story becomes more familiar

Planning the session;

- without planning, the talk may be unfocused and unproductive.
- consider the developmental stage of the child/children.
- think about possible lines of enquiry.
- be flexible.

A planning format is available to look at and download.

Think about aspects such as;

- setting - where and when does the story happen? How do we know?
- characters - real or fantasy? What is their relationship with each other?
- events - could things have turned out differently? Are we really sure what happened

Dialogic book talk may begin with;

- reading the book to the children on a one to one or in a group
- talk based on entirely on the pictures
- ask questions about the story
- relate the story to children's experiences
- extend the children's vocabulary

During the session;

- allow pauses and thinking time
- try to use prompts
- be ready to move things on
- listen carefully to everything children say
- be prepared for the conversation to go in directions which you hadn't expected
- encourage children to go back to the book and re-read for them bits that they refer to
- stop when the children start to show that they have had enough

Use the format below to help you plan

4. Extend the children's vocabulary

Focus on some of the vocabulary introduced in the book and discussion:

5. Design follow-up experiences/activities to consolidate new vocabulary

Consolidate understanding and use some of the vocabulary introduced in the book: