

# Tip Sheet: Ask Open-Ended Questions During Read Alouds

## FOR PRESCHOOL PARENTS

For additional support on this topic, visit <https://bit.ly/QTOpenQ> to view a short video.

### WHY?

Encourage your child's higher-level thinking skills by asking them **open-ended** questions during a read aloud. Answering open-ended questions:

- Encourages children to think more deeply about the book.
- Keeps children interested in the read aloud by giving them a reason to engage with the book.
- Encourages longer responses, which promotes children's oral language development.

### WHAT?

Questions can be open or closed.

- **Closed questions** have a limited number of possible answers and are answered with one word or a simple phrase. For example:
  - Parent: "**What are the children in this book eating?**"
  - Child: "**Pizza.**"
- **Open questions** are answered in a variety of ways and usually encourage a longer response. For example:
  - Parent: "**Why do you think they ordered pizza for the birthday party?**"
  - Child: "**Pizza is delicious! I like pizza! I bet those kids like pizza, too.**"

### HOW?

Before you read a book to your child, look through it and pay attention to what you notice. Consider any place in the book that surprises you. Where might you make a prediction about what will happen next? Is there a place where you could make a guess about what a character might be feeling? These are good places to pause and ask your child a question. You can also share what you thought about to model for your child how mature readers think about a book. Here are some open-ended question starters:

- Why do you think...?
- How do you know...?
- What would happen if...?
- Tell me about...
- What would you do....?
- What happened when...?
- What do you think will happen next?