

Video Transcript: Asking Open-Ended Questions

[Link to Video](#)

Transcript

Speaker: Welcome to the New World's Reading Initiative. This video will highlight how to ask open-ended questions while reading with your child. Open-ended questions are questions with no single right or wrong answer. Instead, children have the opportunity to elaborate on their thinking.

Open-ended questions can be answered in a variety of ways and usually bring about a longer response from your child. Asking open-ended questions during reading promotes higher-level thinking and language development by encouraging your child to provide more than a yes or no response, motivates your child to look beyond what is right there in the text, and makes inferences based on their background experiences, helps your child make connections between the text and their own life to keep them interested in reading, and supports your child in thinking more deeply about the book and deepens their knowledge and comprehension skills.

Another benefit is that asking open-ended questions will promote a back and forth discussion between you and your child to help them build vocabulary knowledge and comprehend the text. You may be wondering how to ask your child open-ended questions while you read together. Here are a few tips to get started. Question starters can be used with any book you read and begin with prompts like, "why do you think...?" "How do you know...?" "What would happen if...?" "Tell me more about...." "What would you do...?" "What happened when...?"

Answering open-ended questions can be difficult for your child at first because they have to think about the text beyond what they see right in front of them. You can support your child in answering open-ended questions by providing wait time. Wait time is the practice of waiting a short amount of time before expecting an answer. Typically, adults are quick to jump in and provide an answer when the child doesn't respond right away. Allowing your child three to seven seconds of silence to think after you ask him an open-ended question will give them an opportunity to think about the question and give a response.

Watch the following video to see how a parent uses open-ended questions and provides wait time to have a conversation while reading with their child.

Parent: All right, so what are we going to read today?

Child: Bob's and Tweet's Scout Camp.

Parent: Bob's and Tweet's Scout Camp. OK. Chapter one.

Child: Chapter one, no Bobs on board.

Parent: Why do you think he's crying? So someone's homesick already. What would you do if you were away from home for such a long period of time?

Child: I would want to go back.

Parent: So maybe that's why he was crying. What would you bring if you were going to camp?

Child: I would bring a blanket and axe and that's it.

Parent: A blanket and an axe. OK. Awesome.

Speaker: The interactive reading guides that are available for each New Worlds Reading Initiative book will provide you with open-ended questions that you can ask your child.

Happy reading!