

Why Use Book introductions?

- ✓ Prepares children to read a story by creating a supportive context for building meaning
- ✓ It relates the story to the children's personal experiences
- ✓ Invites them to make predictions about the book based on the pictures
- ✓ Identifies the author, illustrator and title
- ✓ It helps the children build meaning by giving a brief overview of the story
- ✓ Exposes them to structure they may not be familiar with
- ✓ Locates known words (let the children show initiative and do some reading work)
- ✓ Locates unknown words (letting the teacher learn what kind of cues a child uses to find a word)
- ✓ Takes away the anxiety of the unknown, perhaps unfamiliar text, allowing a child to have fun and enjoy reading, rather than be apprehensive of it
- ✓ Book introductions will become less teacher-supported as the child becomes a more fluent, self-regulated reader
- ✓ The goal of early reading is to provide as much independence as possible
- ✓ Without the fear of failure that often a new reader feels, an introduction to what they will read with some teacher support, allows the child to put together those few responses they have already learned and frees them to search in areas they have not yet explored and learned
- ✓ Book introductions help children use their already learned strengths while attempting new, unseen texts
- ✓ The teacher models during the book introduction how to search the picture for meaning, any unfamiliar language structures and fluency
- ✓ Book introductions support and spark independent problem solving that helps young readers build self-extending systems
- ✓ Supported book introductions will make a challenging text more accessible to a group of hesitant readers
- ✓ As time goes on, less teacher support is needed, and the book introduction shifts to the reader to do himself
- ✓ This is a time when a teacher can make a teachable moment for a newly introduced reading strategy
- ✓ According to Marie Clay, "This is not a case of telling the children what to expect, it is a process of drawing the children into the activity before passing control to the children and pushing them gently towards problem solving the whole first reading of the story for themselves" (Clay, 1991b, p.265).

(Tonia Harris, 2005)

