

Shared Reading is an interactive reading experience that occurs when children join in or share the reading of a text while guided and supported by a teacher.

Shared Reading is a practice that has been around for a long time, mostly in kindergarten and 1st Grade classrooms. Shared Reading was developed in the 1970s by New Zealand educator Don Holdaway who wanted to simulate for children the “lap reading” experience of home in the school setting. Shared Reading was designed to be an emotionally comfortable, risk-free time to read together, practice accuracy and fluency, and participate in the pleasure of reading aloud.

These days, the definition of Shared Reading has expanded to include the shared experiences and conversations children and teachers have with texts that go beyond just the shared poems and big books in K-1 classrooms. It is an instructional-dense practice used to teach younger and older children reading skills, strategies, and behaviors.

In Shared Reading, children and teacher share in the work—the work of both the reading AND the making meaning of the text. They collaborate together to grapple with the challenges presented in the text.

Shared Reading is a versatile practice. How we implement it can change depending on:

- Genre, or form, of the text
- Demands and challenges of the text
- Standard, skill, or strategy you are teaching
- Reading stage of the children
- Grade of the children

| Shared Reading ALWAYS Includes | Shared Reading NEVER Includes |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children have access to the text • All children are engaged and able to participate in the reading and the lesson • Children are doing the problem solving with support from the teacher • Children are discussing and making meaning from text • Children are actively participating in working out the challenges of the text • All children feel successful | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children lost along the way, unable to keep up or barely stumbling through • Round robin or popcorn reading • Independent reading • Teacher talking more than children talking • Listening to tapes or CDs • Children passively listening |