

How can you be a good reader-alouder?



Reading aloud is an important part of kickstarting every child into a lifetime love of reading.

At Gecko Press, we read aloud whenever we are close to finishing a book, to check how it feels in the mouth and the ear. This year we have started reading books aloud often, just for fun.

When we are choosing a book, we read it aloud too, even when it is a translation-language.

Training phase

- Find a very good picture book with a good balance between text and images
- Read and look at the book again and again to really feel comfortable with it
- Read it aloud and record yourself
- Read it in front of a mirror to observe what you look like

Voice and diction

- Take your time and articulate well
- When it's a long sentence, remember to take some breaks to breath
- Don't hesitate to pause for 1-2 seconds to give emphasis to the text and to test the audience's reaction
- Read the book out loud again and again until it flows

Sitting

- Put the book on a table to the side so you can easily see the page
- You can also sit on a little chair (best with little children) and put the book on your lap – look at the pages from above
- Turn the pages slowly – give the children 5 to 6 seconds of observation time
- When the story is over, close the book and put a finger to your mouth (shhhhh). Then let them talk about what they've seen, understood, felt ...

Standing with the book in front of your face

- Print the text of the book on an A4 sheet of paper – space out the sentences so you don't get confused
- Stick the sheet of paper on the back cover of the book
- Read the title, then put the book in front of your head (you have to be hidden behind it)
- Practise page turning without looking – it has to become automatic so you can focus on the text
- Shake the book if it's scary, wave the book (sea, waves, etc.), swing (flying bird), jump (character in a hurry)
- Move if the main character moves
- Play with your body but stay always hidden behind the book
- Play with your voice (loud, quiet, deep, cute)
- Be creative and don't be afraid of being ridiculous!
- At the end, poke your head out one side of the book ...
If you did a good job, the children have forgotten you were there!

Standing (you'll need strong arms!)

- Use your dominant hand to turn the pages and to hold accessories (finger puppets, decoys, rain sticks... hide them in a box)
- Look at the pages from above

Tips from Thérèse Tillard, librarian and storyteller for thirty years

Gecko Press is a Wellington-based publisher of curiously good books for children. Every year we choose around 15 books, hand-selected from among the best books published anywhere in the world, often by internationally award-winning authors and illustrators.

"I am looking for an indefinable curiousness that champions the small absurdities of the human condition.

We choose books to kick start a lifetime of reading, and books that tickle our funny bones. Sometimes we choose books that ask big questions, books about friendship, and books with a lot of human nature in them. We choose books by writers and illustrators we love.

We promise our books will surprise and delight you—and all the curious readers you share them with."

Julia Marshall, Publisher

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