

## CONTENTS

**Getting Started with Shared Reading Conversations • 4**

**Planning for Shared Reading Conversations • 6**

**Ways to Organize Shared Reading Conversations • 7**

**Exchanging Ideas with a Partner • 12**

**Taking Control of Our Language • 13**

## Getting Started with Shared Reading Conversations

### What are the purposes of shared reading conversations?

- ✓ Facilitate complex thinking and talking about narrative and expository text over time.  
*Talk about the text in ways that demonstrates understanding and makes sense. Identify and explain what really matters in the text. Focus on what is important and be able to distinguish between what is relevant and what is not. Identify and explain the relationships in the text and how these relationships provoke thinking and emotions. Use the text to show evidence for what they are thinking. Apply what they learn in the text to themselves.*
- ✓ Facilitate the use of conversations to increase text understanding.  
*Ask questions and make comments that demonstrate both broad and focused understanding. Ask questions that deepen understanding. Try to maintain a line of thinking that help students connect ideas together and hold on to them throughout the conversation.*

### How does an SLP facilitate shared reading conversations?

- ✓ Know the talk opportunities in the classroom.
- ✓ Work with teacher to select texts that are appropriate to the student's cognitive and linguistic levels.
- ✓ Use the same text as the teacher when possible. SLPs can provide either the first read or subsequent readings in small groups or partnerships.
- ✓ Be responsive, child-focused and dramatic. Encourage the students to take the conversational lead but ensure that the discussion is close to the text.
- ✓ Prepare the lesson in advance.  
*How much support (modeling and coaching) will this text need?  
What do you want the students to understand?  
Where will you stop and talk and what will you say?  
What talk structures will you use (group talk, partner talk)?  
How will you wrap up the learning so they take an idea or strategy with them?*

## What and how does a SLP model during shared reading?

- ✓ Use natural intonation and rate when you read.
- ✓ Model your thinking, especially for the first read. Show them how you derive meaning from the text and use language as a tool to show your thinking.
- ✓ Initially, ask wide, open questions that do not have a right or wrong answer.
- ✓ Invite students to make comments and ask questions, as they are able. Discourage retells. Promote inferential thinking: *Think Between the Lines*.
- ✓ Help students find the meaning in the text to support their thinking. Show them how to be faithful to what the author says. Revisit places in the text often.
- ✓ Allow the pictures to serve the text but not usurp it.
- ✓ Become adept at chunking the text around the big ideas and making a comment or asking a question that stimulates thinking and talking about them.

## How does an SLP coach?

- ✓ Be explicit. Encourage the students to use your academic language and the language of the text.
- ✓ Establish the habit of thinking time. Pause.
- ✓ Encourage amateur speakers to respond.
  - "Tell me more. Keep going."*
  - Expand on what the student says (recast) and then encourage them to talk more about it.*
  - Ask two contrastive questions that do not have a right or wrong answer and then ask "why."*
  - Is this bear good or bad? Why do you think he's bad?*
  - Give choices and ask students to try the one that best matches what they are thinking.*
  - Ask students to repeat after you.*
- ✓ Do not accept retells. Redirect the student to the text and ask them what they are thinking. Say, "We have already read this part. We know what it says and now we want to know what it means."

## PLANNING FOR SHARED READING CONVERSATIONS

Process	Content
<b>Thinking and Speaking Objectives</b>	
<b>Title</b>	
<b>Big Ideas</b> What's worth talking about?	
<b>Introduction</b> How will I introduce the text and/or content? Remind students about their thinking and talking work. <i>Rehearse!</i> <i>Question!</i> <i>Detect!</i> <i>Lift!</i> <i>Infer!</i> <i>Discuss!</i>	
<b>Reading the Text</b> Where will I stop and what will I say? Pay attention to your emotional reaction. Prepare a few open questions.	
<b>Closing</b> How will I wrap-up the learning.	

## WAYS TO ORGANIZE SHARED READING CONVERSATIONS

**Setting 1: All Educators on the team work together.**

### **Teachers, Educational Specialist and Speech-Language Pathologist Share Text And Instructional Methods**

If SLPs are to effectively support students with language disabilities in the classroom, we must maximize the time and skills of all available professional resources including teachers, educational specialists and para-educators. Research and common sense suggest that we can accomplish in partnership what we cannot accomplish individually. By collaborating to meet classroom standards and IEP goals, educators leverage their limited resources. The joint goal is to build critical thinking, reading comprehension and academic language using a shared reading approach.

#### **THE BASIC PLAN**

Collaborators meet and map services for an extended period time. Using a shared reading approach, collaborators decide on the text, lesson frame, logistics and timeline.

#### **Preparation**

- ✓ Select narrative and expository texts.
- ✓ Agree on a few big ideas, questions, and Tier 2 vocabulary words for each text.
- ✓ Commit to ensuring that all students talk and that the talk is inferential and applied.
- ✓ Plan to read the text with the students of interest at least twice over a 5 school day period (three times over a 7 school day period is ideal). Try to make the text available for independent reading.
- ✓ Decide who will do the first, second and third readings. Read with the entire class or in small groups or both. Leading with the whole group gives the students of interest the advantage of hearing language experts talk about the text before trying the concepts and language in the small group. Leading with the small group gives the students of interest opportunities to rehearse talking about the ideas, which will make participation in the whole group more successful.
- ✓ Develop a timeline.

#### **Implementation**

- ✓ Each educator collects data and passes information to the next educator.  
Data include:
  - List of big ideas discussed.*
  - List of academic language used.*
  - Evidence of learning from the students.*

### **Common Adaptations to the Basic Plan**

The ideal collaboration occurs when all the students are reading the same book at the same time and the teacher(s)/educational specialist(s) agree to a genuine partnership. The following are practical variations of the ideal when one of these factors is weak or missing.

#### **Students Are In Different Classes, Can't Be Redeployed and Don't Share the Same Text**

- ✓ Select one text from each class. Plan on students reading each text at least twice with you or once with the educational specialist and once with you. This means all students will have a minimum of two opportunities to think and talk about every text and all students will talk about at least one text three times.
- ✓ Select excerpts of text from different classes and read more than one excerpt during a session. While less than ideal, this modification works better if you are the second or third reader.

#### **Teacher Or Educational Specialist Is Not Interested In Shared Reading Conversation Collaboration**

- ✓ Partner with the one who values the collaboration and follow the steps outlined above. Be sure to provide the educator who opted out with your progress data. Include samples of student work that illustrate the effectiveness of the approach and methods.

#### **Teacher or Educational Specialist Will Share Text but Needs Support Using Open Questions, Planning Lessons and Collecting Data**

- ✓ Ask teacher if you can 1) demonstrate the use of open questions and scaffolds for inferential thinking by leading a classroom lesson and 2) periodically collect language data during classroom lessons as evidence of IEP achievement, inferential thinking and academic language. You might engage the teacher by asking her/him to count and script your use of open questions or the students' inferential thinking.

#### **You Only Have Access To Students Once A Week**

- ✓ Consider block scheduling so you can provide more frequent intervention for short intervals with less time lapse between each reading.
- ✓ Arrange with collaborators to do the other two reads.
- ✓ Tape the first reading to include some 'wondering aloud' and ask the parent or teacher to provide a listening opportunity prior to your lesson.

### **A Word About Sharing the Same Theme**

The power of shared reading is in the **repeated reading** of the carefully selected text. This approach is the only one that naturally provides sufficient rehearsal opportunities required for thinking and language growth. The students' control

of the language builds with each subsequent read and discussion. While sharing a theme might help some students coalesce their thinking around a concept or message, it will not provide systematic practice in the construction of thinking and the language about a particular text.

## **Setting 2: Some Educators are willing to collaborate.**

### **Ways to Initiate Collaboration with Classroom Teacher or Educational Specialist**

Resistance to collaboration comes in many forms ranging from unfamiliarity with the practice to outright refusal to share responsibility for aspects of the instructional program. If you suspect reluctance, try to approach the situation with an open mind. Meet with the educator, briefly explain your intent and then ask for a commitment to collaborate. Sometimes we anticipate reluctance where there is none or the hesitation is easily overcome with clear and respectful communication. If the teacher is adamant against collaboration, then we must try to negotiate a workable compromise, do the best we can without the necessary support and report the educator's preferences to the IEP team. This reporting should be factual and respectful.

#### **The Basic Plan**

Our approach is to view the educator as a stakeholder in the students' academic success and assume he/she will want to join with us to accomplish the student's goals. We begin by explaining why and how we would like to work together to meet the goals and then ask for a commitment to collaborate.

#### **The Preparation**

Arrange for a 15-minute meeting with the teacher/educational specialist for the purpose of discussing implementation of the IEP language goals.  
Bring goals to the meeting.

#### **At the Meeting**

- ✓ Review the IEP goals
- ✓ Present the Rationale

*We both share responsibility for meeting the student's IEP goals and for his/her performance on district and state tests. The most effective way to meet this joint responsibility is to use the same content materials and instructional strategies, agree on essential concepts and vocabulary words and co-evaluate progress.*
- ✓ Ask for a Commitment

*Will you work collaboratively with me to meet these language goals? If the answer is "yes," then proceed to the ideas in the **Ways to Share Text** section of this article.*

If the answer is no, ask if there is any part of the collaboration in which the educator might be willing to participate or if she/he has an alternate plan that might accomplish the same goals. At the minimum, the teacher should be willing to share text titles and the student's classroom work.

### **Communicating Service Delivery to the IEP Team**

As a service provider, we are responsible for meeting the IEP goals. If the situational dynamics are such that you determine the absence of collaboration will undermine your effectiveness, it is important that you document your attempts at collaboration. We must show a good faith effort to provide effective services.

- ✓ Once you are satisfied that you have negotiated the best working relationship that you can for the moment, ask the educator how she/he would like for you to share the modified plan with the IEP team. You might want to rehearse the conversation with another SLP.

### **Setting: 3: SLP implements shared reading conversations without an educational partner.**

#### **Using Shared Reading During Direct Service Delivery**

If collaboration isn't a possibility in your current circumstances, think of yourself as the teacher of record and use the shared reading approach and instructional strategies as if you were the classroom teacher.

#### **The Basic Plan**

- ✓ Select language rich, age-appropriate text.
- ✓ Read the text several times and determine a few important concepts you want to talk about, the kinds of questions you might ask and where you will stop and talk.
- ✓ Schedule at least two readings over 1-2 weeks.
- ✓ Using open questions, rehearsals and contrastive statement/questions, show the students how to 1) ask thoughtful questions that will help them determine ideas that matter, 2) rehearse to craft a precise message and 3) deliberately use academic language.
- ✓ Assist students to identify instances of inferential thinking and academic language in self and peers.
- ✓ Ask students to hold each other accountable in positive ways for using inferential thinking and academic language. Facilitate development of self- and group-rating rubrics.
- ✓ Script a few examples of higher order thinking and language for evidence of progress.

#### **Variations That Increase The Opportunities For Rehearsals**

- ✓ Send the text and a few open questions home for the third reading.



- ✓ Record text and ask the teacher to put it in the classroom listening station, if there is one.
- ✓ Arrange for older students to read and discuss the text with the student of interest at recess, lunch or during the before/ after school program.
- ✓ Ask a SLPA or parent to conduct a reading during the week.
- ✓ Organize and facilitate an after school book club.
- ✓ Send exemplary student work (language that you script, video or audio tape sample, or a written product) to the classroom teacher.
- ✓ Allow students to dictate their opinion of the story or take a character's perspective and show how they use inferential thinking and academic language. They might also say what they learned and how they constructed the piece. In addition to being a culminating rehearsal activity, it would also provide evidence of IEP goal progress. (Perhaps the quality of the product might persuade the reluctant educator to learn more about your program).

### **Variations That Increase The Opportunities For Collaboration**

- ✓ Participate in site professional development opportunities and grade level meetings. Demonstrate the power of open questions and scaffolds to trigger inferential thinking and academic language.
- ✓ Prepare and share brief videos (2-3 minutes) that show students talking and thinking as a result of your work.
- ✓ Present parent workshops that explain shared reading conversations and its usefulness for growing thinking and language.
- ✓ Put a language tip of the week in the school bulletin or post on your door.
- ✓ As an incentive, agree to limited RtI activities in classrooms where the teacher agrees to collaboration.

## Exchanging Ideas with a Partner

How did we do thinking and talking about the text during our partnership?

	<b>Outstanding! Advanced 3</b>	<b>Skillful Proficient 2</b>	<b>Ordinary Basic 1</b>
<b>Thinking and Language Development</b>	As we talked, our thinking became higher level and stronger. Sometimes we changed our minds.	The more we talked about the text, the more our ideas and opinions grew.	Each of us shared our ideas by giving evidence from the text.
	We improved each other's thinking. We added to and challenged each other's ideas.	We tried to build on each other's ideas. We made a comment or asked a question.	We can tell you what our partner said.
	We came to a better/deeper understanding of the text and our own thinking about it.	We used each other's language and the text language to grow our own ideas.	We tried to use language from the text and the teacher
<b>Participation</b>	Our ideas flowed. We had a text conversation and exchanged ideas confidently.	We listened to each other and commented on our partner's ideas.	We listened carefully to each other. We turned toward our partners and paid attention to his or her facial expressions.
	Each of us contributed several new ideas to the conversation.	Each of us contributed several ideas to the conversation.	We were active speakers and shared our thinking at least one time.

**Taking Control of Our Language**  
*How did we do thinking and talking about the text?*

	<b>Outstanding! Advanced 4</b>	<b>Skillful Proficient 3</b>	<b>Ordinary Basic 2</b>	<b>Do Over Below Basic 1</b>
<b>Idea &amp; Language Development</b>	Our talk was confident and we developed ideas that really mattered in the text.	We showed we could really figure out what was going on in the text.	We needed the teacher's help to talk about ideas that mattered.	We got off track and talked about things that didn't help us understand the text.
	Our talk focused on the inside of the text: What the actors were thinking and feeling, why they acted as they did and how they related to each other.	We talked more about the inside of the text than we did about the action.	We mostly talked about the action in the text.	We just retold what we read.
	We stayed in the reading moment and developed one important idea at a time.	We mostly stayed with one idea but needed help to talk more deeply about it	We let the teacher guide the thinking and talking.	We jumped ahead and made predictions that didn't help us understand the text.
	We held onto several ideas throughout the entire text.	We held onto at least one idea throughout the entire conversation.	A few of us held onto one idea and helped the rest of us.	We depended on the teacher to help us hold onto an idea.
	We used book language and borrowed ideas and language from each other.	Sometimes we used book language without a reminder.	We used book language when the teacher reminded us	We didn't use book language.
<b>Participation</b>	We talked a lot. Ideas flowed.	There were places where we talked a lot.	We talked if the teacher asked a question.	We didn't talk much.
	We listened to each other and built on each other's thinking.	We often referred to each other's ideas when we talked.	We looked at the classmate who was speaking.	We just listened to and talked to the teacher.
	All of us volunteered our thinking.	We heard from several different students.	A few students did most of the talking/ thinking work.	No one was talking.
	We didn't need any help getting into the conversation.	We helped each other get into the conversation.	We knew how to take turns without raising our hands.	We depended on the teacher to make us talk and think.