

What Does My Child do During Reading Time at School?

Your child spends a lot of time each day working on reading skills. In fact, we spend at least 60-90 minutes every day just focusing on reading. This is a combination of many activities:

Listening to read-alouds
Reading "I PICK" books
Reading with a buddy
Guided Reading with the teacher
Listening to books on tape/CDs
Reading poetry

Throughout these activities, your child is learning and using skills that good readers must know how to use. While we do work on phonics skills and fluency, the purpose of reading is comprehension. We do not use reading time to do worksheets or anything else that does not have us actively reading authentic literature. While those things can be valuable, we do them at other times that do not interfere with our actual reading time.

We do use some very powerful techniques to help us comprehend what we read. All of the children have been taught and can use reciprocal teaching, which is a proven way to monitor comprehension and understanding of the text. Reciprocal teaching is really our Fabulous Four Comprehension Friends: Paula the Predictor, Quincy the Questioner, Clara the Clarifier and Sammy the Summarizer. When readers use predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarizing before, during and after reading, they make meaning and really "get" what the text is about. These techniques are used when we read as a class, with a buddy, in small groups and by ourselves.

How to visualize a character, setting or situation has also been modeled. Good readers make a mental image of what is happening in the book and can "see it" in their heads. We often close our eyes while I read a portion of a text and the students let the words guide the picture that the author is trying to create.

During the 2nd Quarter, students will be learning how to use graphic organizers to understand the structure of a text. We will use Venn Diagrams, Storyboards, and Sequencing charts while we read. Students will also be taught how to make text connections to themselves, other texts and the world. In other words, we will be relating what we know already to what we are learning in the story.

My goal for your child in 2nd grade is to develop a love of reading with lots of practice, support and guidance. I hope you are starting to see this at home, as it is very rewarding to hear a child say, "I loved this book! Do you want to hear why?" (actual quote from a student last week!).

Mrs. Dipple