

## A Parent's Guide to Read-Alongs

### What is a Read-Along?

A Read-Along is a planned time to read a book out loud to a child or group of children that is related to a topic that interests them. It is one of the most effective ways to prepare children for learning to read and to keep them interested in reading as they grow.

### Preparing for Read-Alongs:

- Make time in the schedule for read-alongs at least once daily.
- Create a read-along area that:
  - Has sufficient, well-lighted space for you and your child to rest or sit comfortably; and
  - Is cozy and has a variety of books to choose from that are age-appropriate.

### Steps to successful Read-Alongs: (*Consider the age of the child when doing the following activities*)

#### Before Reading:

- Select a book to read, and, when possible, allow your child to select the book;
- If possible, read the book before doing the Read-Along to see if there are any unusual words that you can tell your child to be listening for; and
- Talk to your child about what the book might be about, who the characters might be and what they might do in the story; when possible, let your child predict what will happen before the story is read.

#### During Reading:

- Hold the book so that your child sees the pictures as you are reading; when possible, hold your child in your lap or very near you as you read;
- Be enthusiastic, and let your voice be filled with expression as you read;
- Read the book while sliding your finger under the words to encourage your child to attend to the written words on the page; and
- Involve your child in “reading” along with you, particularly if this is a familiar story he/she has heard before.

#### After Reading:

- Briefly describe what the book was about and recall important events or characters;
- Ask your child if he/she heard any of the unusual words mentioned prior to reading the story;
- Encourage your child to ask questions, re-tell parts of the story or tell about his/her favorite character or event in the story;
- Ask your child to tell what he/she liked or did not like about the story; and
- Ask your child if anything in the story reminded him/her about something he/she has done or would like to do.

*Adapted from Louisiana Department of Education*