Chapter 9 Notes

I. Introduction
   a. Books play an important role in language development
      i. Seeing, touching, and interacting with books is part of a good-quality program in early childhood education
   b. When handled with care, reading experiences at home and at school can create positive attitudes toward literature and help motivate the child to learn to read
      i. Attitudes toward literacy are most easily established early in life
   c. Many families read to their children at home, while others do not
      i. Children from many low-income families are more dependent on school experiences for their literacy development than middle-class children
      ii. Many believe that next to hugging your child, reading aloud is probably the longest-lasting experience that you can put into your child’s life
         1. Goes on to say that reading aloud is important for all the reasons that talking to children is important to:
            a. Inspire them
            b. Guide them
            c. Educate them
            d. Bond with them
            e. Communicate your feelings, hopes and fears
   d. Teachers know that book sharing is an opportune time for teachers to help children build vocabulary, extend phonological awareness, and develop familiarity with literate forms
      i. Believe that reading books aloud to children exposes them to grammatical forms of written language and displays literate discourse rules in ways that conversation cannot
      ii. Discussions can encourage children to analyze the text
         1. Can have a powerful effect on the development of complex oral language, vocabulary, and story understanding
   e. Early childhood teachers agree that book-sharing sessions are among their favorite times with children
   f. What, exactly, do picture books offer young children?
      i. They open the door to literacy and create the opportunity to:
         1. Influence attitudes
         2. Broaden understanding
         3. Savor diversity
         4. Vicariously experience drama
         5. Expand the imagination
         6. Gain vocabulary and information
         7. Hear the rhythm of language and words
         8. Enjoy the visual and aesthetic variety in illustrations
g. Another advantage is that young children learn to respond to the messages in children’s stories which are told or read to them and in doing this they use the kind of language and thought processes that they will use in learning to read

h. Story structure and form is a cultural universal
   i. Help us remember by providing meaningful frameworks
   ii. Make events memorable

i. A special kind of language is found in books
   i. Oral language differs from written language in important ways
   ii. Although many young children communicate well and have adequate vocabularies, they do not construct sentences in the same manner found in their picture books
   iii. Knowing the way books “talk” makes them better predictors of words they will discover in their early reading attempts

j. Each child gets his own meaning from picture-book experiences
   i. Books cannot be used as substitutes for the child’s real-life experiences, interactions, and discoveries, because these are what help make books understandable
   ii. Books add another dimension and source of information and enjoyment to children’s lives

k. Although most teachers believe reading books in a preschool classroom is an important classroom literacy activity, Dickinson’s research found that children in about one-third of the preschool classrooms studied listened to books read in a large group for 25 minutes or less each week
   i. In only about 25 percent of the classrooms did children listen to stories in large groups for more than 50 minutes a week each week
   ii. Reading to children individually and in small groups was also rare

II. Age and Book Experiences
   a. Careful consideration should be given to selecting books that are appropriate to the child’s age
      i. Children younger than three (and many older than this age) enjoy:
         1. Physical closeness
         2. Visual changes of illustrations
         3. Sound of the human voice reading text
      ii. Rhythms and poetry of picture books intrigue them
      iii. Experts point out that very young children’s “syntactic dependence” is displayed by their obvious delight in recognized word order
         1. Sounds of language in picture books may be far more important than the meanings conveyed to the very young child
2. Teachers of two- and three-year-olds may notice this by observing which books children select most often.

3. Four-year-olds are more concerned with content and characterization, in addition to what they previously enjoyed in picture books.

4. Fantasy, realism, human emotions, nonfiction, and books with a variety of other features attract and hold them.

III. Brief History of Children’s Literature
   a. Idea that children need or deserve entertainment and amusement is a relatively new development.
      i. Until the mid-eighteenth century, books for children instructed and aimed to improve young children, particularly their moral and spiritual natures.
   b. Folk tales were sung and told in primitive times, and stories of human experience were shared.
      i. Storytellers often attempted to:
         1. Reduce anxieties
         2. Satisfy human needs
         3. Fire the imagination
         4. Increase human survival
      ii. Orally handed down tales appeared in most of the world’s geographical locations and cultures.
         1. Much of today’s fiction reflects elements of these old tales and traditional stories.
   c. Early American children’s literature was heavily influenced by English and Puritan beliefs and practices.
      i. Books that existed before William Caxton’s development of printing in fifteenth-century England were hand-copied adult books that children happened to encounter in private wealthy households.
      ii. Caxton translated Aesop’s Fables (1484) from a French version and printed other adult books that literate English children found interesting.
         1. Aesop’s Fables is considered the first printing of talking animal stories.
      iii. Themes of other books in Victorian England included:
         1. Romances of chivalry and adventure
         2. Knights in shining armor
         3. Battles with giants
         4. Rescue of lovely princesses and other victims of oppression.
   d. Victorian families read to their children, and minstrels and troubadours were paid to sing narrative verses to the families of rich patrons.
      i. English Puritans were dedicated to a revolution founded on the deep conviction that religious beliefs form the basis for the whole of human life.
ii. Writers such as Bunyan, author of *A Book for Boys and Girls* (1686), were intent on saving children’s souls

e. Chapbooks (paper booklets) appeared in England after 1641
   i. Initially, they were intended for adults, but eventually, they fell into children’s hands
   ii. Included tiny woodcuts as decoration, and later woodcuts were used to illustrate the text
   iii. Salesmen (chapmen) traveled England selling these small 4x21/2 inch editions to the less affluent
   iv. Chapbooks written to entertain and instruct children followed, as sales and popularity increased
   v. Titles included The Tragical Death of an Apple Pie and The History of Jack and the Giants

f. John Newbery and Thomas Boreman are recognized as the first publishers of children’s books in England
   i. Chapbooks, although predated, are considered booklets
   ii. Most of these newly printed books were instructional (Nelson, 1972), but titles like *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book* (Newbery, 1744) were advertised as children’s amusement books
   iii. In 1765, Newbery published *The Renowned History of Little Goody Two Shoes, Otherwise Called Mrs. Margery Two Shoes*
      1. Chronicles Goody’s rise from poverty to wealth
      2. Newbery prospered and other publishers followed with their own juvenile editions, many with themes designed to help children reason and use moral judgment to select socially correct courses of action

g. During the earliest years of our nation, many children had no schooling and could not read
   i. Those few who could read often read works intended for adults, such as Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726)
   ii. Reading was considered unimportant for children in agricultural society
      1. Only the need for a literate workforce in the new industrialized society of the 1800s caused time to be set aside for children’s education and more attention to be paid to books intended for children

h. Books used as school readers in early America contained subject matter of both a religious and a moral nature

i. By the mid-1800s, adventure stories for older boys gained popularity with Mark Twain’s *Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, published in 1876
   i. Louisa May Alcott had created *Little Women* in 1868 as a girl’s volume

j. Picture books
   i. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, some picture books became artistic

2. Books of Randolph Caldecott, Maurice Boutet de Monvel, and Kate Greenway had captivating drawings that overshadowed the drab and homely illustrations that were typically found in American picture books.

ii. Although not intended or recommended for children, comic picture sequences, like those of A. B. Frost, appeared in American magazines from 1880 to 1890.
   1. Their humor was shared by families.
   2. Two American picture books resembling Frost's slapstick humor gained acceptance from American librarians:
      a. Gelett Burgess's New Goops and How to Know Them (Lippincott, 1928)
      b. Palmer Cox's Brownies (1927).

iii. E. Boyd Smith, an American, created illustrations for The Story of Noah's Ark (Houghton Mifflin, 1905), which are described as both artistic and humorous.
   2. Librarians speaking of Smith's illustrative work described it as honest, true, “better than any done by an American artist”.
   3. Cost of full-color printing escalated, and illustrative color in picture books was not to reappear in the United States and become widely affordable until the later 1920s and 1930s.
      a. Little Golden Books became popular, and European books with colorful illustrative art were imported to the United States for those who could afford them.

   1. State that by the 1920s, a class of professional writers devoted solely or almost solely to writing literature for children (as opposed to moral reformers, teachers, and clerics as authors) produced a larger quantity and better variety and quality of children’s books than had been seen to that point.
      a. This development was hastened by the establishment in 1922, under the auspices of the American Library Association, of the first of the great American children’s book awards, the Newbery Medal.
      b. In 1938, with the establishment by ALA of the Caldecott Medal for illustration, more and better.
artists were encouraged to enter the field of children’s books as well
c. For the remainder of the 20th century, book award programs were effectively used to create interest in children’s books generally and to promote awareness of specific types of books
d. Competition for the most prestigious awards resulted in better, more original works

v. Extraordinary black-and-white illustrations drawn by Wanda Gág in *Farm Sale* (Coward- McCann, 1926) and *Millions of Cats* (Coward- McCann, 1928) and a lithographic technique used in her other books captured both children’s fancy and book reviewers’ praise
   1. Her drawings complemented and reinforced her text
   2. Together, the effect was polished and eminently suitable for her folk tales

vi. American picture books for children began to reflect a worldview of children’s literature
   1. Colorful illustrations appeared in school readers
   2. Stories for young children set in foreign countries were widely acclaimed during the 1930s
      a. *Madeline* (Simon & Schuster, 1939), by Ludwig Bemelmans, is still found on most suggested early childhood reading lists

vii. The child-study movement and research at numerous universities and institutions during the late 1920s and 1930s led some well-known researchers to believe small children’s interests focused on “the-here-and-now”
    1. Was translated as home objects and environments, community settings, airplanes, trains, local workers and professionals, and “everyday matters”
    2. Approved and recommended book lists guided parents’ selection of preschool books as early as 1913

viii. It is thought that Russian information and “how-to” books of the 1940s and 1950s increased nonfiction picture-book production in the United States
    1. Books concerning machines and how they worked, insects, and science concepts became abundant. Illustrations included photographs

ix. Some of the changes in picture-book publishing during the 1960s occurred because several individuals spotlighted the lack of African-Americans in story lines and illustrations
    1. Civil rights movement affected the social consciousness of many teachers and families

x. Only a few research surveys conducted in the 1970s and 1980s attempted to pinpoint the numbers of picture-book
representations for Mexican-Americans, Asian-Americans, or Native Americans
1. Reasonable to say they were minimal in number

xi. Although published multicultural literature for young children increased and became an important part of language arts education, cultural accuracy that helps young children gain a “true” sense of the culture depicted (a so-called insider’s view) is a relatively recent development
   1. This type of picture book is eagerly sought by most early childhood educators

xii. Current trend toward publishing more multicultural literature to compensate for the almost total absence of it as recently as 35 years ago will continue as schools become more diverse and society becomes more accepting of different voices and viewpoints

xiii. Picture books dealing with the reality of young children’s daily lives, their families, and living problems (such as stress, fear, moving, and appearance) began appearing in larger numbers in the 1970s and 1980s, broadening subject matter believed appropriate and of interest to children
   1. These books, many classified as “therapeutic,” often attempted to build self-esteem or help young children cope in difficult situations
   2. Characters in picture books always had problems to be solved by creative thinking and self-insight, but these new stories dealt more frequently with life situations children could not change themselves

xiv. Literacy concerns and the whole-language movement (1980s to 1990s) have dramatically increased educators’ ideas of the importance of quality literature in early childhood curriculum
   1. More and more activities are based on children’s reactions to books and language arts activities offered by their teachers

xv. Creative technology has entered the children’s book field with glitz, bang, and flashing color
   1. Computerized picture books have voice, sound effects, and interactive features not previously thought possible.
   2. There are an amazing number of book-technology products that capture attention, hold attention, and attempt to teach and entertain preschoolers
      a. Many young children treat them as novelties after a short period and seek traditional read-alouds with the special people in their lives

IV. Where to Start
   a. Textbook contains a list of recommended picture books
b. Librarians and bookstore salespeople can also offer valuable suggestions and advice

V. Quality
a. Judging quality means reading and viewing a picture book to find out whether it contains something memorable or valuable
   i. For every good book you discover, you may wade through a stack that makes you wonder whether the authors have any experience at all with young children
   ii. Appropriate material for a four-year-old may not suit a younger child
b. Partial listing of desirable and valuable features:
   i. Character development (such as *Madeline* by Ludwig Bemelmans, the wolf in *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, or *Beady Bear* by Don Freeman)
   ii. Color (*Little Blue and Yellow* by Leo Lionni)
   iii. An example of human courage, cleverness, or grit (such as *Peter Rabbit*, created by Beatrix Potter)
   iv. Aesthetic appeal (*Rain Rain Rivers* by Uri Shulevitz)
   v. Word play (*Tikki Tikki Tembo* by Arlene Mosel)
   vi. Listening pleasure (*Make Way for Ducklings* by Robert McCloskey)
   vii. Nonsense (*What Do You Do with a Kangaroo?* by Mercer Mayer)
   viii. Onomatopoeia (the naming of a thing or action by a vocal imitation of the sound associated with it, as in buzz and hiss)
   ix. Suspense (*Deep in the Forest* by Brinton Turkle)
   x. Humor or wit (*Nothing Ever Happens on My Block* by Ellen Raskin)
   xi. Fantasy (*Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak)
   xii. Surprise (*Harry the Dirty Dog* by Eugene Zion)
   xiii. Repetition (*The Little Engine That Could* by Mabel Bragg)
   xiv. Hope (*The Carrot Seed* by Ruth Krauss)
   xv. Charm (*George and Martha* by James Marshall)
   xvi. Sensitivity (*The Tenth Good Thing about Barney* by Judith Viorst)
   xvii. Realistic dialogue (*Can I Keep Him?* by Steven Kellogg)
   xviii. Cultural insight (*On a Hot, Hot Day* by Nicky Weiss)
   xix. Action (*Caps for Sale* by Esphyr Slobodkina)

c. A book can excel in many different ways
   i. An outstanding feature of many good stories is that they can cause the reader or listener to smile with recognition and think, “life is like that” or “I’ve been there myself”
      1. Promotes a positive feeling of connectedness

d. You will be looking for fascinating, captivating books
i. Some captivate by presenting believable characters
   1. Character-drawing is like a tremendous, complicated conjuring-trick
      a. Appealing to imagination and goodwill, diverting attention by sheer power of technique, the writer persuades us (for the period of reading and sometimes for long afterwards) to accept the identity of certain people who exist between the covers of his book

   e. *The Cat in the Hat* by Dr. Seuss (Theodore Geisel)
      i. Virtually everyone in the English speaking world who learned to read in the last 50 years is familiar with the book
      ii. Freeman believes it may be another 50 years or more before a similarly two-sided genius (artist and educator) comes along to fashion a story so very easy to read and so very hard to put down.

f. Some picture books fascinate to the extent that worries are forgotten, and the child lives in the fantasy world of the story during its reading and beyond

g. Teachers need to watch for stories that:
   i. “Catch on”
   ii. Fulfill some deep understanding of human intentions
   iii. Express a developmental concern
   iv. Arouse our curiosity

h. You will want to choose classics so that from the very beginning, the child has a chance to appreciate literature
   i. Not everyone will agree as to what is a modern-day classic

i. Knowing about family lifestyles, home language, and community individuality aids book selection and planning
   i. Some schools order 50 percent of their books in the children’s home language
   ii. Relevance of a farm book is bound to be different for farm children, yet the human universality depicted may make it an attractive choice for inner-city, urban children

j. Many early childhood classrooms and child care settings across all geographical boundaries and income levels do not have the resources to build libraries with sufficient numbers of quality books for young children
   i. Far too much reliance is placed on the generosity of parents and community members to supply additional quality literature for classroom libraries
   ii. Families may need guidance or suggested book lists because some don’t realize grocery store books and some mass produced paperback books lack quality

k. Award-winning books
i. Each year, the Association for Library Services to Children (American Library Association) recognizes the artist it believes has produced “the most distinguished American picture book for children” with the Caldecott Medal and Honor awards

ii. Other awards given to books include:
   1. Newbery Medals
   2. International Reading Association Children’s Book Awards
   3. The Parent Choice Awards
   4. Coretta Scott King Awards
   5. National Jewish Book Awards
   6. Catholic Book Awards
   7. The Children’s Africana Book Awards
   8. Newspaper awards
   9. Magazine reviews and recognitions found in Book Links (American Library Association) and Language Arts (National Council of Teachers of English)
   10. Local public library awards or recognitions

I. Illustrations
   i. In many quality picture books, the story stands well by itself
      1. Illustrations simply visualize what is written
      2. In others, illustrations play a dominant role and are an integral part of the entire action
      3. Picture books can be defined as “those books that rely on a combination of illustrations and narrative with both being integral to the complete work”
   ii. Justice and Lankford point out that about 95% of children’s visual attention during storybook sharing is focused on the book’s illustrations
   iii. Young children may or may not have grasped the idea that book illustrations are drawn, created, or photographed by real people
   iv. Wide range of artistic styles exists in picture-book illustration, including:
      1. Line drawings
      2. Woodcuts
      3. Water colors
      4. Collage
      5. Crayon
      6. Pastels
      7. Oil paint
      8. photography
   v. Style of art can be representational, impressionistic, expressionistic, cartoon, abstract, stylized, surrealistic, or a style that defies categorization
1. The true artist is one who is able to enter the realm that his work evokes and move as freely there as if it were the kingdom of his birth
   a. As a consequence, the artist can show us things that we would not have seen as mere visitors

vi. Illustrations help give words reality
   1. For young children, illustrations promote visual literacy
   2. Additional benefits include:
      a. Provision of pleasure
      b. Nourishment of the imagination
      c. Promotion of creative expression
      d. Development of imagery
      e. Presentation and exploration of various styles and forms for the communication of ideas
      f. Awareness of the functions of languages
      g. Acquisition of metalinguistic awareness (defined as a sense of what printed language is all about)

vii. Picture-book illustrations are often familiar objects in lifelike settings, and publishers are careful to emphasize figures rather than backgrounds
   1. In addition to the simple, true-to-life depictions preferred by young preschoolers, illustrations of pure fantasy and illustrations that contain more detail appeal to older preschoolers

viii. Many teacher interactive behaviors research has identified in read-aloud activities are:
   1. Questioning
   2. Scaffolding dialogue and responses
   3. Offering praise or positive reinforcement
   4. Giving or extending information
   5. Clarifying information
   6. Restating information
   7. Directing discussion
   8. Sharing personal reactions
   9. Relating concepts to life experiences

m. Format
   i. A book’s format is defined as its overall and general character, that is, the way the book it is put together
      1. Decisions concerning format by book publishers and author/illustrators include:
         a. Size and shape of the cover and interior pages
         b. Paper quality
         c. Printing colors
         d. Typesetting
         e. Content of each page
         f. Binding
2. A book’s format can enhance its narrative, appeal, and subsequent enjoyment, or it can confuse, frustrate, and alienate the reader.
3. A book can reflect a thoughtful attempt to create a classic volume of enduring worth and value or represent a sacrifice of quality for the sake of quick profit.

ii. Genre, another way of categorizing books, concentrates on a book’s content:
   1. Narrative is either poetry or prose
   2. Prose can be further classified as fiction or nonfiction
   3. Category of fiction includes excursions into sheer fantasy as well as more plausible stories about people or situations that could be, could have been, or might be.
      a. Latter group is classified as realistic fiction.

VI. If Only They Would Choose Books and Book-Related Activities
   a. Many early childhood teachers are worried that busy parents and money-tight families do not have the time or resources to make books part of children’s lives.
      i. As a result, they expend extra effort and attention to books and book-related activities.
      ii. Emergent literacy research has alerted educators to the idea that preschoolers who are read to and who are interested in stories and books are more successful students in the beginning years of elementary school and in accomplishing reading.
      iii. Educators monitor how many children select classroom book-related activities and library areas and also monitor the amount of time each child is so engaged.
   b. Teacher planning and thoughtful analysis can increase child interest:
      i. Thinking of classroom schedules and book-reading times more critically can initiate change and creative and imaginative presentation of activities.
      ii. Time spent reading to children can be viewed as only one part of a book’s introduction.
         1. What precedes and what follows are equally important.
      iii. Practitioners need to ask themselves:
           1. How is this book relevant to children’s lives?
           2. What can I do to increase child involvement and interest?
           3. What will make children eager to be part of story times?
           4. How can I discover child thoughts about what has been read and then build in further experiences?
           5. What can follow this story time, and will children give me clues?
              a. In other words, how can this book become part of their lives and at the same time be highly enjoyed?
After attempting to answer these and other teacher questions, one can see that simply reading to children may not be enough to reach a teacher’s true goals.

Teachers also spend considerable time in the classroom library (book center) themselves.

One teacher technique is to introduce a new book or other printed material every day, and think seriously about book variety, availability, child comfort and adequate lighting. They determine a plan to “sell” the books they introduce.

VII. Reading Books to Young Children

Because children can gain so much from books, the teacher’s way of presenting them is very important.

Primary goal of a read-aloud event is the construction of meaning that develops in the interactive process between adult and child and the development of children’s positive attitudes toward the activity.

Becoming this type of teacher requires the teacher to view children as active, individual learners.

In previewing Tomie de Paola’s picture book *Strega Nona* (Prentice Hall, 1975) for a group reading, a teacher might think as follows:

1. What past experiences has this group had with pasta?
2. What follow-up, extending activities could be planned?
3. What teacher questions would guide a discussion that probes children’s feelings and ideas?
4. How can I make the “overflowing,” “too much,” concept a real experience?

Teacher’s goal should be to lead each child to understand that books can:

- Be fun and interesting
- Hold new experiences
- Be enjoyed alone or in the company of others

Children who enjoy read-alouds usually seek out other books.

Preschool teachers should think of the preschool years as a critical period for becoming addicted, the time when urges are felt as irresistible and objects that gratify the urge are also experienced as irresistible.

The educator who wishes to capture a young child needs to insure that early and repeated gratifications from book reading times exists.

Books you may review and reject you will recognize as inappropriate or missing their appeal with young children.

You may judge them:

1. As having no redeeming social value
2. To be dull and uninteresting
3. To contain violence, unfortunate representations, unclear messages, or poor models of behavior
   ii. Book’s construction and format may be undesirable
   iii. Of the more than 90,000 children’s books currently in print, many will not meet the quality standards you set

f. Most educators are eager to learn more about new children’s books and are already quite knowledgeable
   i. Picking books for a specific child’s interest and then selecting books to suit some unique classroom situation or event are ongoing teacher tasks

g. In a diverse society, offering multicultural and ethnically representative literature is a must for young children
   i. Although age-recommended lists are available, most teachers actively pursue additional publications
   ii. Librarians, publishers, and children’s bookstores are excellent resources
   iii. Anti-bias themes and sex-equity themes are also eagerly sought to ensure book models give young children every chance to value themselves as individuals

h. Sales of children’s books to affluent parents, who want to give (perhaps literally) their child every educational advantage, are growing
   i. Hopefully, they are actually taking the time to share them with their children

i. Teacher’s responsibility to encourage the children’s interest because not every child in preschool is interested in books or sees them as something to enjoy
   i. Children cannot be forced to like books, but they can acquire positive feelings for them
   ii. Part of the positive feelings depends on whether children feel successful and competent during reading time
      1. This, in turn, depends on how skillfully the teacher acts and reacts and how well the book sessions are planned
      2. Key is to draw reluctant children into the story by making story times so attractive and vital that children simply cannot bear to stay away

j. Important additional goal in reading books to children is the presentation of knowledge
   i. Books can acquaint the child with new words, ideas, facts, feelings, and happenings
   ii. These are experienced in a different form than spoken conversation. In books, sentences are complete
      1. In conversation, they may not be
   iii. Stories and illustrations follow a logical sequence in books

k. Teachers ought to be concerned with whether the child comprehends what is read
i. To ensure comprehension, the books must offer significant content, something that relates to the child’s everyday experience  

ii. Comprehension is aided by open discussion  
   1. Children should be free to ask questions that will help them connect the book’s happenings to their own past experiences  
   2. The more outgoing and talkative children often clear up misunderstandings of the whole group when books are discussed  
   3. Those who work with young children often notice children’s innate tendency to try to make sense and derive meaning from the happenings in their lives  

I. Teachers can show that books may also be used as resources  
   i. When a child wants to find out about certain things, teachers can refer to dictionaries, encyclopedias, computers, or books on specialized subjects  
   ii. Teacher can model the use of books to find facts  
      1. When a child asks the teacher a question about some subject of special interest and the teacher says, “I don’t know, but I know where we can find out,” the teacher can demonstrate how books and other resources can be used for finding answers  
      2. Teacher tells where to look and follows through by showing the child how the information is found  
      3. Joy of discovery is shared, and this opens the door to seeking more answers  

m. In contrast, “pressure-cooker” programs, which promise to have four-year-olds reading before kindergarten, often feature drill sessions designed to develop technical reading skills (such as decoding words)  
   i. When these drill sessions, which are usually meaningless and boring to young children, are connected to picture-book readings, they could endanger the young child’s budding love affair with books  

n. Many children pick up reading knowledge and reading skills as they become more familiar with book features  
   i. They will see regularities and differences in the book’s illustrations and text that will aid them in their eventual desire to break the code of reading  
   ii. Early type of reading has been witnessed by all experienced early childhood teacher  
      1. It is called “imitative reading,” and is defined as the child’s behavior as “reading the story from pictures, and sometimes speaking remembered text”  
   iii. Certain techniques can be used to encourage imitative reading, including:
1. Reading picture books to children daily
2. Planning repeated reading of new and old favorites
3. Reliving enjoyed parts in discussions
4. Being attentive to children's needs to be heard "reading"
5. Issuing positive encouragement about your enjoyment of what the children have shared
6. Expecting some creative child deviation from the actual story
7. Suggesting or providing additional ways children could "read" a book (for example, into a tape recorder)
8. Viewing the children's activity as emerging literacy and behavior to value as a milestone.

o. Some preschoolers may begin to understand the teacher is not telling a story or just reading illustrations but instead the teacher is reading the print (marks) in the book from left to right
   i. Print may first look like strange rows of marks
   ii. As knowledge of the marks expands, the child may learn the marks are single or grouped alphabet letters forming words, and that those words have spaces between them
   iii. Eventually the idea that alphabet letters represent sounds may become clear and then children may realize that the reader (teacher/adult) knows these sounds and can therefore 'read' and speak words aloud
   iv. Many preschoolers recognize single words in books, particularly those that have been read and reread to them often such as their favorite titles
   v. Some preschoolers develop a small sight word vocabulary and a few become actual readers of simple text
   vi. Eventually children come to know readers use different parts of the text – such as words, photographs and illustration, graphs, visual images, and the context of reading to discern meaning

p. Educators encourage children to learn how to care for books and where and how they can be used
   i. Attitudes about books as valuable personal possessions should be instilled during early childhood
   ii. Number of emerging behaviors and skills will be noticed as children become fond of books
   iii. Learning to read is a complex skill that depends on smaller skills, some of which children develop during story times and by browsing through books on their own

q. Using literature to aid conflict resolution skills
   i. Concerned with rising levels of violence in our society, early childhood teachers are attempting to use picture books and stories to help children identify and define problems, a first step in conflict resolution
ii. Books can be a valuable tool. Illustrations and book text may help child visualization, build empathy, provide nonviolent resolution to story-line disputes, portray different types of conflicts, and give examples of peacemaking at work.

VIII. Book Selection
   a. Teachers are responsible for selecting quality books that meet the school’s stated goals
      i. Often, teachers are asked to select new books for the school’s collection
      ii. Book selection is not an easy task for teachers
         1. Educators have the responsibility to select each book with much thought to its content and relevance to particular children
            a. Must be sensitive to how children might personalize a story
            b. Are aware of family situations, cultures, religions, and social biases when they select
   b. Some books may fill the needs completely, while others may only partially meet the goals of instruction
      i. Local library offers the opportunity to borrow books that help keep storytelling time fresh and interesting, and children’s librarians can be valuable resources
   c. Even when careful thought has been put into selecting a book, one child may like a book that another child does not
      i. Some stories appeal more to one group than to another
      ii. Stories that are enjoyed most often become old favorites
      iii. Children who know the story often look forward to a familiar part or character
         1. Selected books should match the children’s needs.
   d. Professional books and journals abound with ideas concerning the types of books that children like best
      i. Some writers believe that simple fairy-tale picture books with animal characters that possess lifelike characteristics are preferred
      ii. Others mention that certain children want “true” stories
      iii. Most writers agree that the success of any book for young children depends on its presentation of basic human tasks, needs, and concerns based upon children’s perceptions and at a level at which they can respond
         1. Condescending books, which trivialize their concerns and efforts, and which present easy answers to complex problems are discarded for meaningful ones
         2. Rather, young children need adults and books, and other materials which support their right to be children, their efforts to meet both their common and their individual needs, and their efforts to create meaning in the world.
e. Many writers provide a list of selection criteria that are sensitive to inter-generational representation in picture books
   i. Recommendations:
      1. Characters should be portrayed realistically, and have experiences and emotions with which children can immediately identify
      2. Story should unfold sequentially
         a. Should be tension or conflict to be reduced or resolved
         b. Simple plot necessitated by the length of a picture book allows young children to become involved immediately in the action, discover the problem, and understand the resolution
      3. Theme should relate to children’s needs, understandings, and interests
         a. Even a simple story can develop a significant theme
      4. Story should establish time and place
         a. Older people are present in all cultures
      5. Style involves rhythm, repetition, and a careful choice of words
f. Many parents and educators have concerns about the violent nature of some folk and fairy tales
   i. Others believe children already know the world can be a dangerous and sometimes cruel place
   ii. Many old stories involve justice—good things happening to people with good behavior and bad things happening to people with bad behavior


g. Individual teachers and staff groups may decide that some folk tales are too violent, gory, or inappropriate for the age or living circumstances of attending children
   i. Each book needs examination
   ii. Likely that, at times, staff opinions will differ

h. Some beginning teachers worry about book characters such as talking bears and rabbits
   i. Make-believe during preschool years is an ever-increasing play pursuit
   ii. Most educators are not concerned if bears talk if the message of their speech is something with which children can identify
      1. On the other hand, they will reject stories that seem realistic if the problems the characters face have little to do with children’s emotional lives

i. Clear-cut story lines in many folk and fairy tales have stood the test of time and are recommended for a teacher’s first attempts at reading to preschoolers
i. Good literature has something of meaning to offer any reader of any age, although on different levels of comprehension and appreciation

ii. Each child will interpret and react to each book from an individual point of view, based on his unique experience

j. Early childhood educators should include books depicting people with disabilities so that children can understand and accept people with varying abilities

   i. This group of individuals has been as overlooked and inadequately presented in children's books

   ii. Prudent to be on the lookout for this type of picture book

k. Kinds of books

   i. Children's book publishing is a booming business

      1. Many types of books are available
      2. Many books do not fit neatly into a single category; some books may fit into two or more categories

   ii. A vast and surprising variety of novelty books are also in print:

      1. Floating books for bath time
      2. Soft, huggable books for bedtime
      3. Pocket-sized books
      4. Jumbo board and easel books (Scholastic)
      5. Lift-the-flap books; flipbooks (Little, Brown & Co.)
      6. Books that glow in the dark
      7. Sing-a-story books (Bantam)
      8. Potty-training books (Barron's)
      9. Books within books

l. Oversized books (Big Books)

   i. Big, giant, and jumbo (24 x 36 inches) are descriptors used to identify oversized books

      1. Publishers are mass producing this size book because of their increased popularity with both early childhood educators and whole-language curriculum advocates

   ii. Because they are easily viewed by groups of children, oversized books have been added to teacher curriculum collections

      1. New and classic titles abound
      2. Because the text is large, it is not overlooked by young children
      3. Found in soft and hard cover versions with brilliant-colored illustrations, some have accompanying audio tapes and small book editions
      4. Teachers use chalkboard gutters or art easels as book holders

   iii. Enlarged texts (Big Books) allow groups of children to see and react to the printed page

   iv. Active participation and unison participation can be encouraged
1. Using a hand to underline words while reading, the
teacher can focus attention on print and its directionality

m. Alphabet books
   i. Singing and learning the “Alphabet Song” is often a child’s first
      introduction to the alphabet, one that precedes and promotes
      interest in alphabet books

n. Nonfiction books
   i. Teachers may encounter and share nonfiction books that
      answer child questions, are related to a curriculum theme, or
      serve another teaching purpose, such as providing pictorial
      information
      1. Nonfiction books can teach concepts and terms
         associated with various topics, people, places, and things
         children may never encounter in real life
      2. Nonfiction may be perceived as more appropriate for
         older grades, and a real revolution has occurred in recent
         years in the writing and production of nonfiction books for
         young children
   ii. Duke notes:
      1. Using nonfiction reference materials in the classroom
         allows children to see one important and common reason
         that people read
      2. For some children, reading nonfiction reference materials
         may be an especially compelling reason to read
      3. Reading nonfiction reference materials may help deepen
         concepts of print and genre knowledge
      4. Reading nonfiction reference materials provides a forum
         for building computer literacy
      5. Reading nonfiction for reference provides another tool for
         developing comprehension and world knowledge
   iii. Teachers may ignore informational picture books, believing they
      will not hold children’s attention
      1. May not know that many are related in cumulative story
         form, some are wordless, and others have rhythmic
         features or include poetry
      2. Most cover interesting topics, pique curiosity, and offer
         scientific or precise vocabulary
   iv. Teachers realize that photographs, realistic drawings, paintings,
      collages, and other images should be accurate because young
      readers attend most directly to illustrations
      1. If informational books sacrifice this, reject them
   v. Teachers doing computer searches and selecting books or
      other reading material for the classroom consider the necessity
      that they may have to emphasize to children just because
      written material is found in print it may not necessarily be true
      and factual
1. Nonfiction book may be one or more people’s opinion rather than widely accepted fact
2. Elementary school teachers purposely offer conflicting readings to promote discussion and critical thinking
3. At preschool level, critical analysis is more commonly promoted during oral discussions

vi. Given a choice of reading materials, young children are as likely to state a preference for informational picture books as for fictional
   1. Effects of immersing young children in nonfiction picture books are not fully documented in research
   2. Most practicing teachers know children readily use and consult them

vii. Examples of classroom nonfiction books include:

o. Story songs
   i. Growing number of favorite books put to music and favorite songs published as books are available
      1. An adult sings as pages are turned
      2. Teachers can introduce this literary experience and encourage children to join in
      3. Added advantage of visual representations helps induce child singing
      4. Novelty of a teacher singing a book also offers a possible incentive for the child to select this type of book because of his familiarity with an already memorized and perhaps enjoyed song
      5. Word recognition is sometimes readily accomplished
   ii. Popular books of this type include:

p. Interactive technology
   i. Technology and young children’s books have been combined by companies like LeapFrog, Fisher-Price (PowerTouch Learning System), and Publications International (ActivePAD)
1. With a touch of the finger or a stylus, a young child can:
   a. Flip pages
   b. Hear any particular word pronounced
   c. Hear a book read by a clear voice
   d. Select the reader’s pace
   e. Play games
   f. Hear word definitions
   g. Take quizzes

2. Some models:
   a. Have light attachments and a microphone
   b. Teach phonics
   c. Encourage children to pronounce phonemes, words, and sentences
   d. Prompt children to record their names, which are then put into stories
   e. Focus on writing skills
   f. Enable children to trace alphabet letters, work mazes, or engage in dot-to-dot activities or handwriting exercises

3. Individual companies have developed over 70 children’s book titles
   ii. Families are lured by educative features, and some preschools are adding electronic books to their book collections
      1. Prices vary, but they usually are not prohibitive for the average center
   q. Criteria for read aloud book selection
      i. Consider the attention span, maturity, interests, personality, and age of children you are targeting when selecting books
         1. Developing broad literary and artistic tastes is another important idea
      ii. Series of questions a teacher could use when choosing a child’s book to read aloud:
         1. Could I read this book enthusiastically, really enjoying the story?
         2. Are the contents of the book appropriate for the children with whom I work?
            a. Can the children relate some parts to their lives and past experience?
            b. Can the children identify with one or more of the characters?
         3. Does the book have directly quoted conversation?
            a. If it does, this can add interest; for example, “Are you my mother?” he said to the cow.
            b. Will the child benefit from attitudes and models found in the book?
4. Many books model behaviors that are unsuitable for the young child
   a. Consider the following questions when analyzing a book for unfavorable racial stereotypes or sexism:
      i. Who are the “doers” and “inactive observers”? 
      ii. Are characters’ achievements based on their own initiative, insights, or intelligence? 
      iii. Who performs the brave and important deeds? 
      iv. Are value and worth connected to skin color and economic resources? 
      v. Does language or setting ridicule or demean a specific group of individuals? 
      vi. Are individuals treated as such rather than as one of a group? 
      vii. Are ethnic groups or individuals treated as though everyone in that group has the same human talent, ability, food preference, and hairstyle, taste in clothing, or human weakness or characteristic?
      viii. Do illustrations capture natural-looking ethnic variations?  
      ix. Does this book broaden the cross-cultural element in the multicultural selection of books offered at my school? 
      x. Is the book accurate and authentic in its portrayal of individuals and groups? 

5. Was the book written with an understanding of preschool age-level characteristics? 
   a. Is the text too long to sit through? Are there too many words? 
   b. Are there enough colorful or action-packed pictures or illustrations to hold attention? 
   c. Is the size of the book suitable for easy handling in groups or for individual viewing? 
   d. Can the child participate in the story by speaking or making actions? 
   e. Is the fairy tale or folktale too complex, symbolic, and confusing to have meaning? 

6. Is the author’s style enjoyable? 
   a. Is the book written clearly with a vocabulary and sequence the children can understand? 
   b. Are repetitions of words, actions, rhymes, or story parts used?
c. Does the story develop and end with a satisfying climax of events?

d. Are there humorous parts and silly names?

7. Does it have educational value?
   a. Could you use it to expand knowledge in any special way?
   b. Does it offer new vocabulary?
   c. Does it increase or broaden understanding?

8. Do pictures (illustrations) explain and coordinate well with the text?

iii. Some books meet most criteria of the established standards, while others meet only a few
   1. Age of attending children makes some criteria more important than others
   2. Schools often select copies of accepted old classics
      a. These titles are considered part of our cultural heritage, ones that most American preschoolers know and have experienced
      b. Many classics have been handed down through the oral tradition of storytelling and can contain archaic words, such as stile and sixpence

iv. Most teachers try to offer the best in children’s literature and a wide variety of book types

IX. Culturally Conscious and Culturally Diverse Books
   a. “Multicultural literature” can be defined as children’s literature that represents any distinct cultural group through accurate portrayal and rich detail
      i. Educators are urged to evaluate multicultural children’s literature by examining both literary quality and cultural consciousness
   
   b. Another definition of multicultural literature states that multicultural literature is about some identifiable “other,” a person or group, that differs in some way from the Caucasian American cultural group
      i. Publishers are beginning to create books depicting gay and lesbian families in loving relationships
   
   c. Question of authenticity, or what constitutes an accurate portrayal of a culture, has plagued educators for years
      i. Teachers try hard to present an authentic portrayal of cultural reality in the books they select
   
   d. Multicultural books offer opportunities for children to learn to recognize our similarities, value our differences, and respect our common humanity
      i. Children need literature that serves as a window onto lives and experiences different from their own, and literature that serves as a mirror reflecting themselves and their cultural values, attitudes, and behaviors
e. When offering multicultural and multiethnic books to young children, no attempt to give these books special status is suggested
   i. Child questions and comments that arise are discussed as all interesting books are discussed
   ii. These books are not shared only at certain times of year or for recognized celebrations but are included as regular, standard classroom fare
f. Harris believes the following characteristics are part of authentic multi-ethnic/multicultural literature:
   i. Books include the range of character types or people found within the culture, although not necessarily in one book
      1. Characters should not be idealized, but neither should stereotypes predominate
      2. Should be doctors, teachers, truck drivers, cooks, and individuals with other occupations
   ii. Illustrations should not consist of caricatures of a group's physical features
      1. Illustrations should reflect the variety found among members of any group
   iii. Speech adopted by characters should have linguistic authenticity
   iv. Names of characters should reflect cultural traditions of a group
   v. Food should not be used as a shorthand signifier of a group
   vi. Beliefs and values of characters as well as their worldviews should reflect the diversity found in the group's communities
   vii. Writers should understand pivotal family roles and family configurations
   viii. Members of groups should portray members as intelligent problem solvers
   ix. Authenticity derives from insider knowledge about a culture acquired as a member or through extensive study, observation, and interaction
g. “Hispanic” children’s literature does not refer to one culture but rather a conglomerate of Central and South American cultures
   i. Hispanics have been poorly represented in children’s literature until recently
   ii. Books that existed were often folktales or remembrances of an author’s childhood
h. In picture books classified as depicting the Asian culture, one may find Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, Laotian, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Filipino cultural experiences depicted
   i. Increasingly, published books about Asians deal with Asian assimilation into the American mainstream
   ii. One can find numerous books dealing with Asian folktales
iii. Yet to be written are plentiful picture books from the Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian cultures, but they are slowly appearing

i. Books concerning Native Americans can be easier to locate
   i. Most are folktales, but some deal with rituals, ceremony, everyday life, family joys, and problems
   ii. Books depicting Middle Eastern cultures are scarce
   iii. Teacher needs to screen for stereotypical characteristics

j. Books read to children are most effective when they mirror children’s culture

k. High quality reading instruction and a cultural approach is a key to building strong literacy skills

l. Learning the alphabet, phonics, spelling and writing are essential to literacy, but it is also important to help children make meaning of what they are reading

X. Moral and Nonviolent Education

a. Good number of educators are offering picture books whose story lines include moral dilemmas and conflict resolution
   i. These lead to classroom group discussion
   ii. Because many stories involve a moral problem or conflict to overcome, it is not difficult to find positive models of character’s actions, words, and behaviors
   iii. Author recommends selecting books:
      1. With well-defined dilemmas
      2. With characters who model levels of reasoning readily understood or slightly above those of the child group audience
      3. That suggest a variety of appropriate follow-up activities
      4. Of high quality with powerful plots, lively characters, and a satisfying conclusion
      5. That portray clear and logical consequences
      6. That promote critical thinking skills
      7. That have characters who embody a wide variety and mixture of physical, social, and emotional features and show a balanced representation of morals considered good and evil

XI. Bibliotherapy

a. Bibliotherapy, literally translated, means book therapy
   i. Teachers, at times, may seek to help children with life problems, questions, fears, and pain
   ii. Some professionals believe that books can help children cope with emotional concerns
   iii. At some point during childhood, children may deal with rejection by friends, ambivalence toward a new baby, divorce, grief, or death, along with other strong emotions
b. Fairy tales can reveal the existence of strife and calamity in a form that permits children to deal with these situations without trauma
   i. These tales can be shared in a reassuring, supportive setting that provides a therapeutic experience
   ii. Small sampling of books considered to be therapeutic in nature:

XII. Reading Books to Young Children

a. Teachers read books in both indoor and outdoor settings, to one child or too many
   i. Koralek suggests teachers look beyond the library corner as the only place to display, share and read books with young children
      1. Books can be linked to all areas of the curriculum, she feels
      2. Her recommended locations include books carried outdoors, near discovery tables, and alongside dress-up clothes
      3. Other suggested areas are block areas, housekeeping areas, window seats where natural outdoor settings can be viewed, theme and display areas, and room settings where counting or number concepts are explored
      4. Other room areas with comfortable seating shouldn’t be overlooked

b. Teachers need to assess their ability to make books and book-reading times exciting and personally relevant and rewarding to each young child
   i. In successful classrooms, observable child behaviors include:
      1. Eager attendance at book-reading times
      2. Joyous participation
      3. Active dialogue
4. Self-selected investigation
5. Time spent in the classroom library
c. How the teacher achieves this is critical
   i. Most of us have seen well-meaning adults use reading techniques that are questionable and defeat the adult’s purpose in reading
   ii. Your story’s literary quality remains intact
   iii. First story readers might query:
       1. Factual details
       2. Child opinion
       3. During the reading ask children to infer, label, evaluate, summarize, elaborate and predict
       4. Might also make comments that point out, explain or build bridges to children’s experiences during story reading
   iv. Others, following the second method, would instead save teacher comments and questions for an after-story discussion
       1. Beginning teacher can attempt to ascertain if either approach is at work at their center, or perhaps both approaches are used or the center has its own unique approach to reading aloud
d. Burden of making reading interesting falls on the teacher
   i. Teacher must also strive to make the book’s content relevant to each child
       1. This means relating and connecting story elements to children’s lives and their past experiences whenever possible
       2. Can be likened to building a bridge to the world of books—a bridge that children will be eager to cross because books are pleasurable and emotionally satisfying
   ii. Building these positive attitudes takes skill
   iii. Step-by-step outline is helpful in conducting group story times:
       1. Step 1. Think about the age, interests, and special interests of the child group and consider the selection criteria mentioned in this chapter
          a. If you are required to write a lesson plan for sharing a particular book, identify possible unfamiliar vocabulary and what child comprehension goals you are attempting and planning to achieve
          b. Read the book to yourself enough times to develop a feeling for characters and the story line
          c. Practice dialogue so that it will roll smoothly
       2. Step 2. Arrange a setting with the children’s and teacher’s comfort in mind
a. Illustrations should be at children’s eye level and the teacher should face the audience as she speaks
b. Setting should provide comfortable seating while the book is being read
c. Some teachers prefer small chairs for both children and teachers, while others prefer rug areas
d. Avoid traffic paths and noise interruptions by finding a quiet spot in the classroom
e. Cutting down visual distractions may mean using room dividers, curtains, or furniture arrangements
f. Preschoolers, in small groups of children, tend to make greater language gains than when they are read to in larger groups
g. Some classrooms use “instant replays” of storybook readings when adult supervision affects group size

3. Step 3. Make a motivational introductory statement
   a. Statement should create a desire to listen or encourage listening:
      i. “There’s a boy in this book who wants to give his mother a birthday present”
      ii. “Monkeys can be funny, and they are funny in this book”
      iii. “Have you ever wondered where animals go at night to sleep?”
      iv. “On the last page of this book is a picture of a friendly monster.”
   b. Then briefly introduce the author and illustrator

4. Step 4. Hold the book to either your left or right side
   a. With your hand in place, make both sides of the page visible
   b. Keep the book at children’s eye level

5. Step 5. Begin reading
   a. Try to glance at the sentences and turn to meet the children’s eyes as often as possible so that your voice goes to the children
   b. Also watch for children’s body reactions, facial expressions, and try to ascertain whether children are engaged and understanding or have quizzical looks
   c. Speak clearly with adequate volume, using a rate of speed that enables the children to both look at illustrations and hear what you are reading
d. Enjoy the story with the children by being enthusiastic
e. Dramatize and emphasize key parts of the story but not to the degree that the children are watching you and not the book
f. Change your voice to suit the characters, if you feel comfortable doing so
g. A good story will hold attention and often stimulate comments or questions
   i. Savor it and deliver each word
   ii. Try not to rush unless it adds to the drama in places

6. Step 6. Answer and discuss questions approvingly, and if necessary or prudent increase child interaction by guessing about or labeling character actions
   a. If you feel that interruptions are decreasing the enjoyment for other children, ask a child to wait until the end when you will be glad to discuss it, and then do it
   b. If, on the other hand, most of the group is interested, take the time to discuss an idea, but be careful to resist the temptation of making a lengthy comment that will disrupt the story
   c. Sometimes, children suck their thumbs or act sleepy during reading times
   d. They seem to connect books with bedtime
      i. Many parents read to their children at this time
   e. By watching closely while reading, you will be able to tell whether you still have the children’s attention
      i. You can sometimes draw a child back to the book with a direct question like, “Debbie, can you see the cat’s tail?” or by increasing your animation or varying voice volume
      ii. Wondering out loud about what might happen next may help

7. Step 7. You may want to ask a few open-ended discussion questions at the end of the book
   a. Keep them spontaneous and natural—avoid testing questions
   b. Questions can clear up ideas, encourage use of vocabulary words, and pinpoint parts that were especially enjoyed
i. “Does anyone have a question about the fire truck?”

c. You will have to decide whether to read more than one book at one time
d. Helps to remember how long the group of children can sit before getting restless
e. Story times should end on an enthusiastic note, with the children looking forward to another story
f. Some books may end on such a satisfying or thoughtful note that discussion clearly is not appropriate
   i. Short pause of silence seems more in order
   ii. Other times, there may be a barrage of child comments and lively discussion
e. Many children’s comments incorporate the story into their own personal vision of things and indicate that the text has meaning for them
   i. Personal meanings are confirmed, extended, and refined as children share their interpretations with others
   ii. Focus in after-book discussions is on meaning, and the goal is to “make sense of the text”
f. Judging oneself on the ability to capture and hold children’s attention during group reading times is critical
   i. Many factors can account for children’s attention wandering, so analyze what can or did interfere with classroom focus
   ii. Factors to consider include group size, seating comfort, temperature, the way the light shines on the book, the child who cannot sit next to a friend without talking or touching, and so on, and, of course, the teacher’s presentation skills
g. Independent reading
   i. Teachers should examine daily programs to ensure children time to pursue favorite books and new selections
      1. Ridiculous to motivate then not allow self-selection or time for children to spend looking at and examining introduced books page by page at their own pace
h. Additional book-reading tips
   i. Check to make sure all of the children have a clear view of the book before beginning
   ii. Watch for combinations of children sitting side-by-side that may cause either child to be distracted.
      1. Rearrange seating before starting
   iii. Pause a short while to allow children to focus at the start
   iv. If one child seems to be unable to concentrate, a teacher can quietly suggest an alternative activity to the child
      1. Clear understanding of alternatives or lack of them needs to be established with the entire staff
v. If one points to or makes references to print on a page occasionally, children will take more notice, make more comments about print, and ask questions about it more frequently
vi. Moving a distracted child closer to the book, or onto a teacher’s lap, sometimes works
vii. When an outside distraction occurs, recapture attention and make a transitional statement leading back to the story
viii. Personalize books when appropriate
ix. Skip ahead in books, when the book can obviously not maintain interest, by quickly reading pictures and concluding the experience
   1. Good idea to have a backup selection close by
x. Children often want to handle a book just read
   1. Make a quick waiting list for all who wish to go over the book by themselves
xi. Plan reading sessions at relaxed rather than rushed or hectic times of day
xii. Handle books gently and carefully
xiii. At times when a new, word with multiple syllables appears, repeat it, emphasizing syllables
   1. Clap word syllables such as festival (fes-ti-val) and interpreter (in-ter-pret-er
   2. This technique is primarily used with children nearing kindergarten age
xiv. Remember it is not so much what you are reading but how you read it
xv. Choose material to suit yourself as well as the group
   1. Select a story type that you like
xvi. Lower or raise your voice and quicken or slow your pace as appropriate to the text
xvii. Lengthen your dramatic pauses, and let your listeners savor the words and ideas
xviii. Introduce vocabulary words associated with the book sharing experience – cover, title, author, illustrator, front, first page, beginning, print, middle, ending, turn, words, pictures, last page, ending, back cover
xix. Read a book a child has brought to school before you read it aloud to children
   1. Share suitable “parts” only if necessary
xx. Handle a child comment such as, “I’ve heard it before,” with a recognizing comment such as, “Don’t tell how it ends,” or “See if you see something different this time.”
i. Clarifying the act of reading
i. Teachout and Bright have developed a way to promote children’s ideas about the act of reading a book based on the work of Kibby

1. Approach is a “think out loud” technique (reading the illustrations) involving nine steps
2. Can be used with children that have little or no acquaintance with picture books or those with wider experience
3. Nine steps attempt to “walk” children through a teacher-led book reading session with a familiar book:
   a. Explain that children can read the story even if they are not sure what the print says
   b. Choose a story the class is familiar with and reread it
   c. Begin by “reading” the pictures, describing in simple words what you see
      i. Use your knowledge of the storyline and the visual clues in the illustrations to explain slowly what is happening
      ii. Read one page at a time, stopping to allow the children to absorb your comments
   d. Be extremely transparent in your thoughts
      i. Explain your thought process as you study each page
   e. Call on a child who can read independently to read a page after you have (picture) read three or four pages
   f. Continue allowing successful and non-successful readers to participate
   g. Ask questions to help children who get stuck, directing them to the visual clues on the page
   h. Build on responses
      i. Often, our children answer questions with short phrases
   i. Follow up with more lessons on reading the pictures
      i. Continue the lessons, reading the illustrations until children are comfortable with the routine of reading

ii. Teachout and Bright work with pre-kindergarteners in a class where 59 percent of the children are English language learners
1. On step 5 above you may not have a preschooler who reads independently in your group but reading the pictures can still be instructionally developmentally appropriate
iii. Teachers who want to enhance children’s understanding of a book’s story line can elicit children’s ideas about what might happen in a new book
   1. Focusing on the book’s cover and showing a few select interior illustrations aid children’s predictions

iv. Teacher prints these child suggestions on chart paper, labeling each comment with the child’s name
   1. An after-book discussion can return to children’s predictions
   2. Each suggestion is given merit as another possible story happening
   3. How close the child’s prediction comes to the storybook’s plot is not the point

v. Many teachers are more interested in building a love of books during preschool years than talking about book characteristics
   1. Others believe they are able to add to children’s knowledge of books without diminishing children’s enjoyment
   2. What may preschoolers know about books?
      a. They contain stories and information
      b. They can be read by adults and older children
      c. A book has an author, and maybe an illustrator
      d. The name of an author usually printed on the book cover
      e. Books have a front and back cover and first page
      f. Adults read a page starting at the top left and read horizontally across the line of words
      g. The last word on a page is usually printed on the right bottom corner
      h. There are spaces between words
      i. Words are made of alphabet letters
      j. Letters are printed in capitals and small letters

j. Paraphrasing stories
   i. Paraphrasing means putting an author’s text into one’s own words, and this is done when some teachers realize the book or some other factor is interfering with children’s ability to maintain attention
      1. Brings the book to a speedy conclusion
      2. By tampering with the text, the teacher may interfere with a book’s intent, message, and style
      3. Many professionals find this objectionable and urge teachers to read stories exactly as they are written, taking no liberties, respecting the author’s original text
      4. Other educators feel when a book does not hold the interest of its audience, it should be saved for another time and place, perhaps another group
5. Some teachers believe that maintaining child interest and preserving the child’s positive attitude about books supersedes objections to occasional paraphrasing

k. Targeting words for vocabulary development
   i. Recommended technique used to promote vocabulary development during book-sharing is referred to as targeting
      1. Teacher attempts to ask an open-ended question during a book’s re-reading which allows the teacher to determine unfamiliar vocabulary words and then explain them
      2. Explicit explanations are deemed best
         a. Later, purposeful teacher use of the unfamiliar (target) words during daily or weekly activities takes place therefore, providing additional child exposure and deeper word understanding
         b. To do this, the teacher needs to guess which words her class may not know beforehand by scanning the book(s) to be shared

I. Building Participation
   i. Children love to be part of the telling of a story
      1. Good teachers plan for child participation when choosing stories to read
      2. Often, books are read for the first time, and then immediately reread, with the teacher promoting as much participation as possible
      3. Some books hold children spellbound and usually take many readings before the teacher feels that it is the right time for active involvement other than listening
      4. Listening skills are encouraged when children contribute to read-aloud sessions and become active, participating listeners

   ii. Three-year-olds take a while to settle into appropriate and expected story-time behaviors
      1. Young group may hardly enjoy the physical participation opportunities that a teacher plans ahead of time
         a. Possible if she has recognized portions of the about-to-be-read picture book where children can chime in, make movements or sounds or in other ways mirror or duplicate something in the story

   iii. Nonfiction books may not provide opportunities for child involvement
      1. Examining them closely may give the teacher ideas for children’s active participation
      2. Many of the benefits young children derive from adult-child readings come adult reading strategies such as:
         a. Prompting responses
b. Modeling responses for them to copy
c. Asking children to relate responses to real experiences
d. Asking questions
e. Offering positive reinforcement for children’s participation

iv. Additional ways to promote child participation and active listening

1. Invite children to speak a familiar character’s dialogue or book sounds
   a. This is easily done in repeated sequences
      i. “I don’t care,” said Pierre.
2. Pantomime actions
   a. “Let’s knock on the door.”
3. Use closure
   b. When using closure, if children end the statement differently, try saying “It could have fallen on the rug, but the cup in the story fell on the floor.”
4. Predict outcomes
   a. “Do you think Hector will open the box?”
5. Ask opinions
   a. “What’s your favorite pie?”
6. Recall previous story parts
   a. “What did Mr. Bear say to Petra?”
7. Probe related experiences
   a. “Emil, isn’t your dog’s name Clifford?”
8. Dramatize enjoyed parts or wholes

v. As a rule, younger preschoolers find sitting without active motor and/or verbal involvement more demanding than older children

m. Sharing your thoughts

i. A strategy suggested by Dori for use with preschoolers and kindergarteners involves thinking aloud during read aloud times and during other teaching moments
   1. When teachers think aloud, they stop whatever is going on and signal in some way that their next words will describe thoughts that normally are not spoken aloud
      a. Then they talk through their thought processes
   ii. It’s easy to see the effectiveness of think-alouds, because the children’s voices begin to chime in as they add their own ideas to the adult’s thinking
   iii. Two teaching goals promoted by using this strategy are:
      1. Encouraging children’s self-initiated active thinking
      2. Encouraging metacognition (act of thinking about one’s own thinking)
3. At kindergarten level, it also helps to create thoughtful readers

n. Reading to individual children
   i. Teachers without aides and/or volunteers in their classroom may never have undivided time to share books with individual children
      1. One on-one readings can be the most beneficial and literacy-developing times of all
      2. Dialogue and the personalized attention exceeds what is possible in group readings
      3. In large groups, some children are reluctant to speak and consequently receive less appreciation and feedback
         a. Small groups are recommended
   ii. Busy families tend to rely on schools to offer books
      1. Many centers have been clever in promoting home reading
         a. Bulletin boards, lending arrangements, and mandating family classroom volunteering are among the most common tactics
   iii. It is not the simple “I-read-you-listen” type of adult-child interaction with books that really counts
      1. It is the wide-ranging verbal dialogue the adult permits and encourages that gives children their best opportunity to construct a full knowledge of how people use books
      2. Schools consequently include and share reading techniques in their communications with parents
   iv. Teachers plan times to be in the classroom’s book center, book corner, library, or book-reading area (whatever it is called)
      1. Teacher’s presence models interest and allows for individual child readings, questions, and interactions other than at planned group book times

o. Rereading stories
   i. Never ceases to amaze teachers and families when preschoolers beg to hear a book read over and over
      1. Beginning teachers take this statement to mean they have done a good job, and even veteran teachers confess it still feels good
      2. A teacher who can read the same book over and over again with believable enthusiasm, as if it were his first delighted reading, has admirable technique and dedication
      3. Children often ask to have stories reread because, by knowing what comes next, they feel competent, or they simply want to stretch out what is enjoyable
      4. Decisions that teachers make about fulfilling the request depend on many factors, including:
a. Class schedules
b. Children’s desire but lack of capacity to sit through a second reading

5. Suggested that books be reread often and that teacher statements such as, “I’d like to read it again, but . . .” are followed by statements such as, “After lunch, I’ll be under the tree in the yard, if you want to hear the story again.”

ii. Requests to “read it again” arise as a natural developmental demand of high significance and an integral part of book exposure
   1. Child’s behavior alerts adults to which books hold and preoccupy them
   2. Teachers can think of the behavior as children selecting their own course of study
   3. Multiple copies of favorite books and fresh, new books that extend individual children’s ‘course of study’ are provided by alert teachers

iii. Curious response occurred when the same storybooks were read and reread to four-year-olds
   1. Researchers attempted to identify the consequences of rereading familiar and enjoyed stories
   2. Children in the study made more detailed comments centering on characters, events, titles, story themes, settings, and the book’s language with re-readings
   3. Other results suggest that as children understand particular aspects of stories (gained through numerous re-readings), they shift focus and attend to additional story dimensions overlooked in initial readings

iv. Early childhood educators with any experience have met children who want to “read” to teachers or peers
   1. Teachers often hypothesize that the child is using rote memory
      a. Often find that the child is telling his own version of the story
      b. Researchers suggest this indicates a child has displayed a deep understanding and response to the story’s meaning

v. Teachers decide to introduce books with objects or other visuals for a number of reasons
   1. Currently, with the popularity of theme or unit approaches to instruction, a picture book may expand or elaborate a field of study or topic that has already been introduced
      a. If so, some new feature mentioned in a book may be emphasized by using a visual

vi. When the teacher wears an article of clothing, it may help him get into character
1. Because children like to act out story lines or scenes, items that help promote this activity can be introduced at the end of the story.

2. Previewing a picture book may make it easier to find an object or person who could add to the storytelling experience.

XIII. After-Reading Discussions

a. How soon after a story is read should discussion, which promotes comprehension of stories, take place?
   i. Obvious that a discussion might ruin the afterglow that occurs after certain books are shared.
   ii. Teachers are sometimes understandably reluctant to mar the magic of the moment.

b. Teacher’s role during storybook readings is acting as a “mediator” who assists children in two ways:
   i. By helping them learn to take knowledge they had gained outside of book-reading experiences and use this knowledge to understand the text.
   ii. By helping them apply the meanings and messages gained from books to their own lives.

c. Teachers often wonder what type of questions to ask to stimulate book discussions.
   i. Open-ended questions work well.
   ii. Questions concerning how children feel about book features are helpful.
   iii. Inviting child responses and reacting with close accepting listening, is suggested.
      1. Teacher who conjectures, connects, appreciates, muses, challenges, and questions shows the child how the mature responder interacts with text.

d. Looking closely at picture books, teachers will find they have a:
   i. Beginning, which introduces a setting, characters, and a place.
   ii. Desired goal or outcome or problem.
   iii. Series of happenings working toward an accomplishment or satisfactory solution often discovered by the main character.
   iv. Resolution or attainment of a goal.

e. Understanding this sequence gives hints to pertinent features teachers can probe in after- book discussions that have much more educational value than “What was the dog’s name?” or “Did you like the story?”
   i. Teachers build on what children say rather than trying to impart or transmit information.
   ii. What can early childhood teachers expect when children make comments or have questions after book reading?
      1. Book illustrations or book concepts account for approximately 95% of children’s comments during shared readings.
2. Questions about meaning will be less common
3. Questions about alphabet letters, words, or letter sounds are rare
4. Questions about the author, illustrator, titles, or book’s format are asked infrequently

iii. Teacher’s focus in asking questions in an after-book discussion is not to check children’s knowledge, but rather to learn from the child
   1. A preschool teacher’s story-reading discussions can be described as negotiated, unfocused interactions in which teachers become aware of the “sense making” children express
   2. Process depends on what children say about their confusions and interpretations and what they understand, together with the teacher’s response to the meaning the group seemed to make of the story

iv. Teachers do revisit newly introduced vocabulary words or areas of the book to see if comprehension goals were achieved

v. Early childhood teachers could, at times, consider asking questions that draw attention to major elements of characterization and plot and the moral or deeper implications of a story, if appropriate
   1. Solution that many teachers favor is to wait until children seem eager to comment, discuss, and perhaps disagree, and only then act as a guide to further comprehension
   2. Teachers hope children will think out loud, sharing their ideas with the discussion group
   3. All present are given the opportunity to respond or add comments and cite personal experiences
   4. Teachers using after-book discussions believe book content, word meanings, and ideas are best remembered if talked about

vi. Some centers designate a time after a story is read as “story time talk”
   1. Described as a time when children’s ideas are recorded by the teacher on a “language chart” made of chart paper or butcher paper
   2. This activity gives importance to children’s ideas
   3. Writing the children’s names by their contributions affords additional status
   4. Children’s art related to the book can be appended.
   5. Other schools make basket collections of inexpensive small plastic (or other material) figures of story characters, animals, houses, story objects, and so on, to go along with a book

vii. Discussions can promote print knowledge
1. Can include the idea that books are held in a certain way, and pages are turned from front to back
   a. They learn about beginnings and endings of stories, about title pages, authors, and illustrator
   b. They discover that teachers and other adults read print rather than pictures
   c. Children also acquire concepts about print directionality—in English print is read from left to right and top to bottom—as well as concepts about letters and words—words are made up of letters and are marked by spaces on either side

XIV. Story or Book Dramatization
   a. Some early childhood educators encourage child dramatization of favorite picture books and stories
      i. Young children’s recollection of literal story details and their comprehension of story features are enhanced if enactment takes place
   b. Planning for book enactment means teachers start with simple short stories and display various props, objects, costumes, and so forth, to serve as motivator and “get-into-character” aids
      i. In previewing picture books or oral stories for story times, teachers become accustomed to looking for material with repeated words, sentences, or actions
      ii. These are the books or story parts that are easy to learn

XV. Picture Books as the Basis for Theme Instruction
   a. Early childhood centers are experimenting with using picture books as the basis for theme program planning
      i. Under this approach to program planning, instruction branches out from the concepts and vocabulary present in the book
      ii. Usually, the meaning of the story is emphasized, and a number of different directions of study and activities that are in some way connected to the book are conducted
   b. Classroom setting can be transformed into the cabbage patch that Peter Rabbit was so fond of exploring
      i. Activities such as counting buttons on jackets, singing songs about rabbits or gardens, taking field trips to vegetable gardens, and engaging in science experiences in vegetable growing are a few examples of associated activities
   c. Memorable experiences connected to classic books can aid literacy development, and an increasing number of early childhood centers are using this approach

XVI. Literature-Based Curriculum
   a. Literature-based reading instruction swept the nation in the 1980s
      i. Many states at the time either recommended or mandated this elementary school approach

©2010 Wadsworth, Cengage Learning
ii. Advocates have described a comprehensive literature program as permeating the curriculum
   1. Includes:
      a. Reading aloud to children
      b. Making use of informational books
      c. Encouraging children’s response to books using drama, art, and child-dictated writing
b. Walpole and McKenna describe a high-quality early childhood program that could easily be called a literacy-based model:
   i. “Teachers read and reread books aloud, interactively. They engage children in shared and guided retellings, and help children to act out their favorite books themselves, including chances for pretend readings of books previously read aloud. They model writing about what is read and about what is important to the life of the class. These activities together (dramatic play, extended language interaction, and reading and writing) provide an authentic window into authentic introduction of letter names, letter sounds, and early phonemic awareness activities appropriate for very young children.”
c. Can an early childhood teacher implement a “literature-based” language arts program?
   i. Most early childhood teachers would answer, “Yes, if activities are developmentally appropriate, literature can permeate program planning
      1. Many educators are also choosing to add new research-based instructional techniques”

XVII. From Books to Flannel (Felt) Boards and Beyond
a. Teachers find that a number of books can be made into flannel board stories relatively easily
   i. Five books that are particular favorites have been adapted:
      1. The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle
      2. The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss
      3. Johnny and His Drum by Maggie Duff
      4. My Five Senses by Aliki
b. Books often open the door to additional instruction through activities or games on the same subject or theme
   i. Whole units of instruction on bears, airplanes, families, and many other topics are possible
c. Teachers have attempted to advertise particular books in creative ways
   i. Enlarged book characters might be displayed, or displays of the book of the week or book of the day may be placed in a special spot in a classroom
ii. An attending child’s family member may be a special story-time book reader

XVIII. Library Skills and Resources
a. A visit to the local library is often planned for preschoolers
   i. Librarian-presented story hours often result in the children’s awareness of the library as a resource
   ii. Selecting and checking out one’s choice can be an exciting and important milestone
   iii. Most early childhood centers also do their best to encourage this family-child activity
b. Many libraries have well-developed collections and enthusiastic and creative children’s librarians who plan a number of activities to promote literacy
   i. Along with books, you may find computers, language-development computer programs, audio and video CDs, records, book and electronic media combinations, slides, films, children’s encyclopedias, foreign language editions, pamphlet collections, puzzles, and other language-related materials and machines
c. Finding out more about the authors of children’s books can help provide teachers with added insights and background data
   i. One goal of language arts instruction should be to alert children to the idea that books are created by real people
   ii. Most children find a photograph of an author or illustrator interesting, as well as stories concerning an author’s childhood or reasons for writing a particular picture book
d. Web sites that give information about children’s book authors and illustrators are helpful, and librarians can guide you to books with autobiographical and biographical information
e. Some early childhood centers set up author displays, celebrate author/illustrator birthdays, and encourage visiting authors and illustrators
   i. Letters to authors might be written with child input

XIX. Child- and Teacher-Authored Books
a. Books authored by children or their teachers have many values
   i. They:
      1. Promote interest in the classroom book collection
      2. Help children see connections between spoken and written words
      3. Contain material based on child and teacher interests
      4. Personalize book reading
      5. Prompt self-expression
      6. Stimulate creativity
      7. Build feelings of competence and self-worth
b. Hostetler states that the children in the class who are four and five years old love to dictate text and illustrate the pictures for their handmade books
   i. She suggests creating a group-produced classroom book in which each child has a page
      1. Teacher suggests a focal point subject such as something the children would like to have in their pocket or mom’s or dad’s work
      2. Another idea is to ask older four-year-olds who will be going to kindergarten soon to help make a book for children coming into their four-year olds’ classroom
      3. The book will give the new children advice about the good things that might happen at preschool, how to play with others, and so on
   ii. Many teachers make an alphabet book as an ongoing class project. When too many ‘A’ pages are collected, a separate ‘A’ book is developed

c. If a child-authored book is one of the school’s books, the book corner becomes a place where the child’s accomplishment is exhibited
   i. Teachers can alert the entire group to new book titles as the books arrive and make a point to describe them before they are put on the shelves

d. Child-made books require teacher preparation and help
   i. Variety of shapes and sizes add interest and motivation
   ii. Covers made of wallpaper or contact paper over cardboard are durable
   iii. The pages of the books combine child art and child-dictated words, usually on lined printscript paper, or print is enlarged with computer help
   iv. Staples, rings, yarn (string), or brads can bind pages together
   v. Child dictation is taken word for word with no teacher editing

e. Teacher-authored books can share a teacher’s creativity and individuality
   i. Favorite themes and enjoyed experiences can be repeatedly relived
   ii. Books containing the children’s, teachers’, staff’s, parents’, or school pets’ names are popular
   iii. Photographs of familiar school, neighborhood, or family settings are great conversation stimulators
   iv. Field trips and special occasions can be captured in book form

f. Resources for motivating early childhood teachers to write children’s books include:

g. Some educators suggest using what they call caption books with young children
   i. Their caption books:
      1. Carefully place the print at the top left of the page
      2. Include photographs that give clues to the print message on the same page
      3. Use short, meaningful sentences that repeat on succeeding pages
   ii. These writers also suggest teacher-made books that record nature walks, seasonal events, and holiday celebrations
   iii. Also recommend urging children to illustrate their favorite stories with their own art

h. Group authorship is another idea
   i. Books in which every child has contributed one or more pages are enjoyable projects and discoveries

XX. Book Areas and Centers

a. Classrooms with inviting book storage areas beckon curious browsers
   i. Teachers have become exceptionally clever at devising eye-catching, comfortable, well-lighted, inviting, visually stimulating book-browsing classroom areas

b. If an educator is trying to attract children to the book collection or book display area, thought and effort may be necessary to sell the “look-at-books” activity
   i. Use your creativity and use what is at hand, whether it be a sunny interior wall, a tabletop, an old bookcase, or an unused corner

c. Thematic and seasonal displays, potted plants, spotlights, and lamps have been used to lure children
   i. Displays in or near the book center can broadcast, lure, shout, reach out, and grab the eyes and ears of passersby, forcing them to stop and pay attention

d. Books should be at the child’s eye level with book front covers in sight
   i. Book-jacket wall displays and life-size book characters (drawings made by using overhead projectors to increase size then tracing on large sheets of paper) have their own appeal
   ii. Comfort and color attract
      1. Softly textured rugs and pillows, comfortable seating, and sprawling spaces prolong time spent in book areas
      2. Low round tables and plump pillows used as seating can also be inviting
   iii. Quiet, private spaces that are shielded from outside distractions and sounds and that have good lighting increase the child’s ability to stay focused

©2010 Wadsworth, Cengage Learning
1. Hideaways where friends can escape together and experience a book that has captured their attention are ideal.

e. Guidelines that outline the rules and responsibilities of book handling should be developed by the school:
   i. Rules should be designed to encourage children to:
      1. Return books to shelves
      2. Turn pages carefully
      3. Respect the quietness of the area
   ii. Well-defined boundaries of library centers help books stay put
   iii. Teachers should promote the idea that using the area is a privilege and should monitor book centers frequently when younger preschoolers, who may have had little past experience with book collections and libraries, enter the area.

f. What kind of collection should a well-stocked classroom library center have?
   i. Collections often reflect a school’s budget and priorities
   ii. The purchase of classroom favorites and classics should be the first priority
      1. After that, a well-rounded collection that includes a lot of different topics and categories is recommended
   iii. Some centers prize nonfiction books, and consequently, these comprise a large percentage of their class library collection
      1. Their goal is to offer more reality and informational resources as well as fiction that expand and extend children’s interests

g. Rotating books by removing and storing some books from time to time and providing a different, previously stored set of books will make the area more interesting:
   i. Some centers categorize and store related books together and label them with a sign, identified picture, or drawing (such as animals, trains, things that are blue, and so on)
   ii. Library books supplement the school’s collection and may have special classroom-handling rules
   iii. Seasonal and holiday books are provided when possible
   iv. Paperback round out some collections, and multiple copies are considered for younger preschoolers’ classrooms
   v. Constant book repair is necessary in most classrooms because of heavy use
   vi. A classroom “Book Hospital” box reflects teachers’ concern and esteem for books

h. Teachers should browse in book centers, modeling both interest and enthusiasm when time and supervision duties permit:
   i. Many teachers set up a system so that the story (or nonfiction) can be heard by using an “I-want-to-know-about-this-book” box
      1. Children’s name cards are adjacent
2. Child can select his book, slip his card inside, and place the card in the box
3. Younger children can find a name card with their picture and do the same
4. This system works well only if the staff follow through and finds the time to share the child-chosen book

i. Group settings
   i. Most classrooms have areas suitable for picture-book reading in groups, besides areas for individual, self-selected browsing and places where children can be in the company of a few others
      1. If these areas are not available, staff members can create them
      2. Reading area should be comfortable and well lit and as far removed from interruptions and distractions as possible
         a. Generally, lighting that comes from behind the children is preferred
         b. Intense, bright light coming from behind the book can make it hard to see
         c. Many centers use small carpet sample squares for comfort and to outline individual space
   ii. The number of children in groups is an important consideration; as the size of the group increases, intimacy, the child’s ease of viewing, and the teacher’s ability to be physically close and respond to each child decrease
      1. Ideal group size for story time ranges from 5 to 10 children, but staffing ratios may mandate a much larger group size
         a. Some early childhood centers do “instant replays”
            i. They have many small reading groups in succession, rather than large group reading sessions
   iii. Most centers have developed rules about what behavior is expected from the child, whether the child chooses either to come or not come to a book-reading time, and whether a child can leave before the book’s end
      1. If the center decides to give children a choice, usually the rule is stated thusly:
         a. “You need to find a quiet activity inside our classroom until story time is over.”

j. Care and storage of books
   i. By setting an example and making clear statements about handling books, the teacher can help children form good book-care habits
1. With time and use, even the sturdiest books will show wear
   ii. Teachers are quick to show their sadness when a favorite book is torn, crayoned, or used as a building block
1. Some classrooms have signs reading “Books Are Friends—Handle with Care” or “Books are for looking, talking about, and sharing”
2. Teachers are careful to verbally reward children who turn pages gently and return books to shelves or storage areas

XXI. Resources for Finding Reading Materials
   a. Public libraries
   b. Children’s book stores and toy stores
   c. Teacher supply houses and school supply stores
   d. Children’s book publishers
   e. Book clubs
   f. Children’s periodicals
   g. Book week
      i. Children’s Book Council has sponsored National Children’s Book Week since 1945 to promote reading and encourage children’s enjoyment of books
   h. Book services to families—school lending libraries

XXII. Favorite Children’s Books
   a. Generally, children’s favorites become your favorites
      i. Only way to develop your own list is to preview books and then try them with children
   b. You can help children learn the value of reading first by falling in love with picture books yourself, and then by developing your repertoire for sharing that enjoyment with children

XXIII. Family Influences on Children’s Reading-Like Behaviors
   a. Family influences on the attitudes young children hold about books and book-reading times must be considered
      i. When a first book-reading time is announced, a newly enrolled child’s behavior can reflect past experience
   b. Book reading by families usually starts in infancy, with parents setting up a social book-reading routine
      i. Physical closeness, comfortable seating, and lighting in which the parent acts as if the child is taking part of a two-part dialogue takes place
      ii. Family acknowledges the child’s earliest responses, such as looking, pointing, producing vocal imitations of adult speech, turning pages, and so on
         1. The adult may speak for the child
         2. As the child responds, for himself, the adult subtly asks for more and accepts all attempts
iii. More and more interaction and responsibility for the child’s role as a partner in the “reading to” routine is experienced as the child develops
   1. Some adults encourage verbalization and adjust their speech to their child’s increasing evolvement and ability
   2. Child experiencing many adult-to-child readings learns:
      a. What is expected
      b. When to talk
      c. When to listen
      d. When to turn pages
      e. How to answer adult questions
      f. Whether to join in with actions or words
      g. Whether to ask questions,

c. Many young children who have developed a liking for books through being read to regularly from very early in their lives
   i. If so, children soon begin to demonstrate their growing enjoyment of the experience
      1. Their attention span increases, their repertoire of favorite stories expands, and they begin asking that favorites
      2. Their avid listening to stories in the secure and close proximity of a loved adult becomes a deeply rewarding human experience

ii. When a powerful inner drive to want to learn and a natural aptitude for learning are coupled with families who not only select highly predicable stories to read to their children, but who also read in a way that invites children to participate, then learning to reproduce stories through reading-like behavior becomes a relatively simple process
   1. This learning becomes even easier when it is permitted to operate in a non-corrective no-fail environment where children are encouraged to experiment and approximate in their attempts to “read”
   2. When these home conditions prevail, children have the opportunity to take the initiative and direct their own learning

d. These techniques are also used effectively by teachers, especially when reading with very small groups or in one-to-one classroom reading situations
   i. Some of the techniques:
      1. Non-corrective, no-fail environment
      2. Invited child participation
      3. Encouragement of the child to experiment and approximate in his attempts to “read”
      4. Books to select for sharing are predictive ones

e. Reading-like child behavior can include:
   i. “Reading” the book to self or others
ii. Mumbling words while paging through a book
iii. Joining in with the parent on select pages, passages, and/or book character’s verbalizations
iv. Offering rhyming and repetitive guesses during an adult reading
v. Echoing by “reading” slightly behind the adult
vi. Children may also embellish or deviate from a known familiar story, and then return to the original text

f. Reading-like behavior called completion reading, occurs when a reader pauses and the child completes the sentence or story
   i. Families seem to know intuitively where to pause in order to invite their children to complete a sentence or phrase

g. Reading-like behavior may include early child knowledge of print
   i. Adults may have pointed to print in picture books explaining “it says that here” or “this word is...”
   ii. Family members may move their hands under words as they read, consequently drawing attention to print
      1. Also gives clues to the direction words are read
      2. An adult may point and ask, “What does this say?”
         a. Children also may point to words in books asking readers the same question
         b. At this point, some young children actually accomplish the unbelievable feat of the real reading of many words
         c. Others can read simple books and primers before kindergarten