



How to discuss a book with your child

Book discussion is one of the best ways to know the level of, and to support, your child's literacy. The analytical skills used in discussion are what your child needs to succeed in school—and life. But because you're probably not reading the books that your children are reading for pleasure or for school, it's sometimes hard to have a discussion about them.

Here are some tips on how to start and sustain a book discussion with your child. In general, avoid dead-end, yes/no questions such as "Did you like it?"

Before your child reads a book, ask:

- Why did you select this book?
- What makes you think this book is going to be interesting?
- What do you think the book is going to be about?
- Does this book remind you of anything you've already read or seen?
- What kind of characters do you think will be in the book?
- What do you think is going to happen?

While your child is reading a book, try asking:

- Will you catch me up on the story? What's happened so far?
- What do you think will happen next?
- If you were that character, what would you have done differently in that situation?
- If the book was a TV show, which actors would you cast in it?
- Where is the book set?
- If the main character in that story lived next door, would you guys be friends?
- What does the place look like in your head as you read? Would you want to visit there?
- Did you learn any new words or facts so far?

After your child has finished a book, ask questions like:

- What was your favourite part of the book? Why?
- Who was your favourite character? Why?
- What was the most interesting thing you learned from the book?
- Why do you think the author wrote this book?
- Would you have ended the book differently? Did it end the way you thought it would?
- Did the problem of the book's plot get solved?
- If you could change one thing in the book, what would you change?