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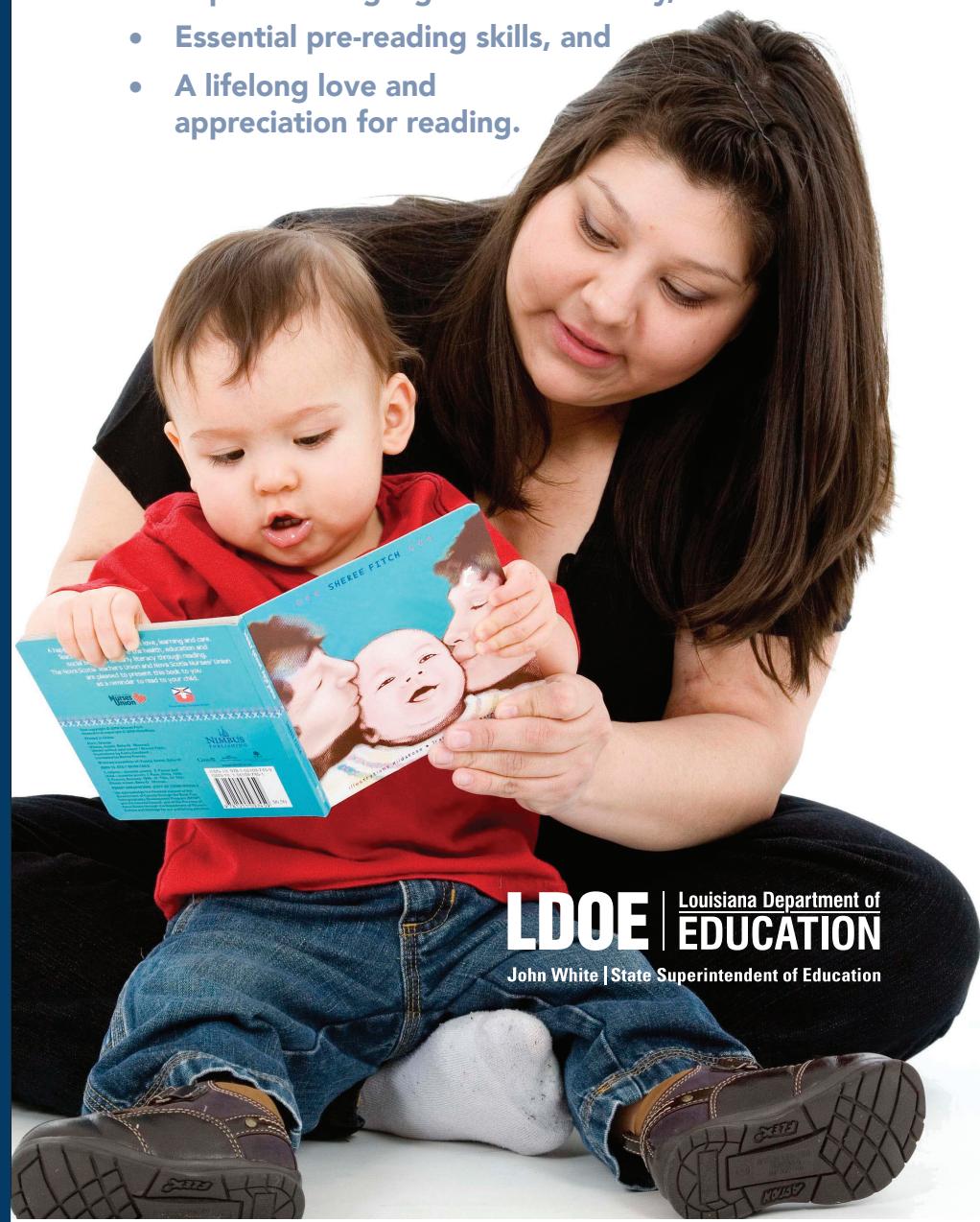
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A Parent's Guide to Read-Alouds

A simple way for parents and other adults to help children develop:

- Important language and vocabulary,**
- Essential pre-reading skills, and**
- A lifelong love and appreciation for reading.**



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What is a Read-Aloud?

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

Read-Alouds are important because they...

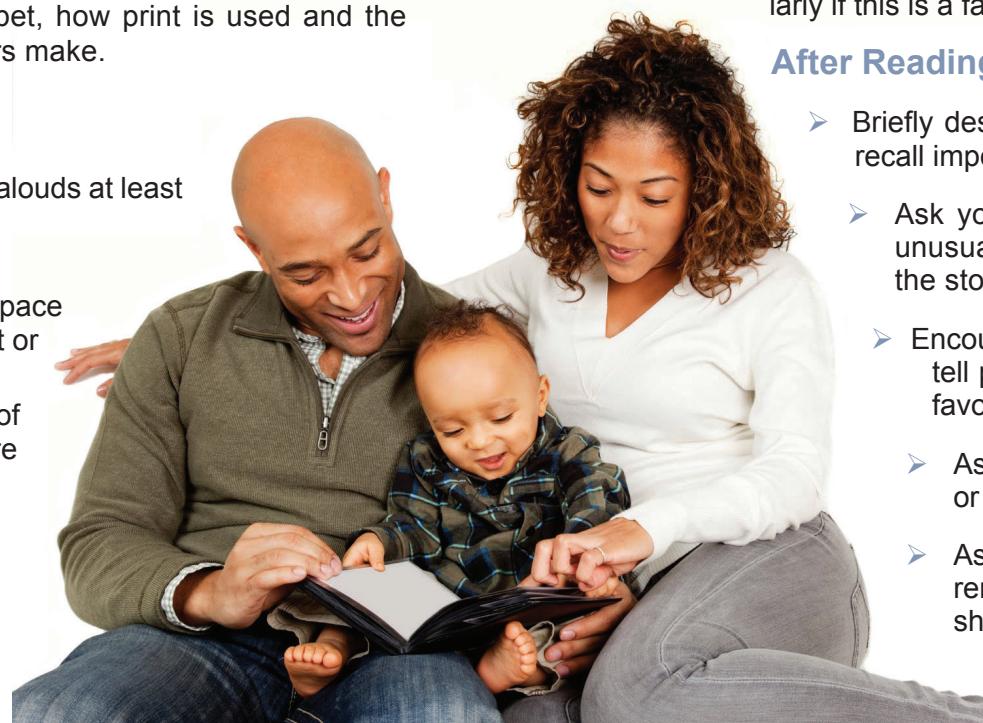
- Get children interested in the world around them;
- Provide opportunities to model what good readers do;
- Help develop children's imagination, creativity and curiosity;
- Support children's interest in a broad variety of subjects;
- Develop traditions; and
- Stimulate and nurture positive interactions with adults.

Important skills that can be developed through Read-Alouds:

- Language that might not be heard during regular conversations, activities and interactions;
- Listening skills;
- Vocabulary development and how words are used;
- Comprehension or understanding; and
- Awareness of letters of the alphabet, how print is used and the ability to listen to sounds that letters make.

Preparing for Read-Alouds:

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



Steps to successful Read-Alouds:

(Be sure to consider the age of the child when doing some of the following activities)

Before reading:

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

During reading:

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

After Reading:

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