

Video Transcript

Shared Reading: An Instructional Routine that Promotes Communication

Slide 1. In this training, you will learn about supporting communication development within the context of shared reading for students with significant cognitive disabilities who are developing symbolic communication skills. This approach provides a rich context to model and invite communicative participation around a shared referent, the book.

Slide 2. What is shared reading? Very simply, shared reading is the interaction that occurs between an adult and a child, student, or group of students while reading a book together.

Slide 3. Shared reading focuses on communication and interaction. In fact, the primary goal of shared reading is to maximize interactions with the student or students on a page-by-page basis. This is in contrast to the goal other forms of reading that have a focus on text comprehension. Here, our goal is to use the book as a context to support students in interacting with us about parts of the book the student finds interesting.

Slide 4. In the beginning, adults maximize interactions during shared reading by guiding students. This guidance involves making comments, connecting the book to the student's life, and carefully observing students to determine what attracts their attention or peaks their interest in the book. This guidance also involves modeling communication using the student's communication system or a classroom system that has the same basic format as the individual student's. Over time, students should take increasing control of the interaction and depend less and less on adult guidance to keep the interactions going from page to page.

Slide 5. During shared reading interactions, adults can model the use of the Universal Core to make comments. Typically, the adult reads the text in the book and then models a comment using one or more core words. The comment can be as simple as "Look" or "He help" or "She put in." The goal is not to restrict comments to those that can be made using core. Instead, the goal is to try to use one or more core words in the comments that will be most meaningful to the students.

Slide 6. Follow the C-A-R is a structure that many adults find helpful when engaging in shared reading. The C-A-R is a research-based approach to shared reading interactions that was developed for use with young children in early intervention; however, it has been used successfully with students with significant disabilities of all ages who are just learning to interact during shared book reading.

- a. C-A-R stands for Comment – Ask – and Respond
- b. Using CAR during shared reading requires the adult to initiate the interaction by making a comment. Too often adults ask questions as a means of engaging students, but questions pose a challenge that may keep some students from being able to respond. When we ask questions, we're also teaching children to respond rather than initiate. Ultimately, we want

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students to take the lead during shared reading, which means we need to help them learn to comment and initiate the interaction.

- c. Following the CAR helps us work toward this goal. To follow the CAR, the adult reads the text on a page in the book. Then, the adult makes a simple comment. After making the comment, the adult stops and waits for 10 to 15 seconds or more depending on the students involved. The idea is to provide enough wait time that students have a chance to make their own comment or communicate with us in some other way. If the student does communicate, the adult responds by repeating what the student did and adding a little more. If the student does not make an effort to communicate after the comment and 10-15 second pause, then the adult explicitly asks the student to participate. Then the adult waits again. If the student makes an effort to communicate, the adult responds by repeating what the student did and adding a little more. If the student does not, the adult goes to the next page.

Slide 7. While you are busy following the CAR key instructional practices should be incorporated. First, the adult should always work to encourage student communication. The communication can take many different forms including things like reaching for the book, gesturing, vocalizing, signing or pointing to symbols. Each of these is important and should be encouraged. One important way to encourage communication is by attributing meaning to each communication effort you observe. When you first begin shared reading students may not know that their behaviors or vocalizations are communicating anything. Their eyes look fleetingly at the page, they may reach out and grab the book, they may randomly point to symbols on the Universal Core board. They could do each of these without intentionally conveying a message. But the adult can help the student build intent by acknowledging the behavior and attributing meaning to it. For example, when a student makes a grunting noise the adult may say, "I heard you, do you have something to say?" When a student grabs the book the adult might say, "Do you want to look at it?" In every case, the adult works to find meaning.

- a. In addition to encouraging students to communicate and attributing meaning to each of their efforts, adults should model the use of the Universal Core during shared reading. While following the CAR, adults can model the use of the Universal Core in each comment, in their efforts to attribute meaning to student behavior, and each time they respond by repeating and adding a little more.

Slide 8. Pause for Activity 1

Slide 9. Now that you have an understanding of what shared reading is and the key instructional practices that support a good shared reading experience, let's talk

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about the specifics of what you will look for when planning and evaluating a shared reading interaction that involves the use of Universal Core.

Slide 10. It is vitally important that students have an individual communication system that meets their access needs. This communication must be available to the greatest extent possible all day every day. Since shared reading is all about the communicative interaction between the adult and the students, the communication system is required during shared reading. While adults should encourage and attribute meaning to all communication efforts, the Universal Core provides a means of modeling ways that students could use symbols to communicate more effectively.

Slide 11. Choosing appropriate books is another element that can impact the communicative experience adults and students have during shared reading. Length and complexity are two issues to address when choosing a book. Select books that are short enough that they can be read and reread in a single session and make sure that the language complexity of the book is a good match for the students. At the same time, consider students' interests and experiences when selecting books. There will be much more to talk about if you select a book that you can relate to your students' knowledge base and interests.

- a. If you have students who cannot see pictures in books, be certain to select books where the bulk of the story is told by the words and not by the pictures. Many, many picture books use the illustrations to tell the story. Even with good tactual support, students with significant visual impairments who are emerging in their understandings of literacy will find it very hard to interact during shared reading of a book in which the story is told through the pictures.
- b. Once you select a book, plan to read it for three to five days. You can read more than one book at a time, but make sure you read each book often enough that it becomes familiar to the students.

Slide 12. After you selected a book, spend time planning comments you can make on each page. We literally put sticky notes on the book to help us remember these planned comments when we are interacting with students during shared reading. It helps us juggle the book, our role in modeling how to use core vocabulary, and our role in attributing meaning and building upon the students' efforts to communicate. You see an example here of a book called *I Love All Kinds of Music* from Tarheel Reader. You might plan to model, "I like" on the first page, "it good" the second and, "more" on the third. You should plan different comments to use each time you read the book. Furthermore, when adults use the planned comments during shared reading, they should use a Universal Core communication system that is like the systems used by the students in the group. If students access their core boards by pointing, then teachers can model by pointing. If students access their core boards

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using partner assisted scanning, then adults should model how to make comments using Universal Core with partner assisted scanning. It may not be feasible to model with each student's system every time, but all students should have a chance to learn from others who communicate in the same way they will.

Slide 13. Pause for Activity 2

Slide 14. Before beginning with any book, the first step is to connect it to something that you have taught or students have experienced. Sometimes the connection is difficult, but if you were going to read *I Love All Kinds of Music* you might start by saying something as simple, "I know you like music." or "This book is about music. Who likes music?"

Slide 15. If we want students to participate in communication exchanges on a page-by-page basis we must slow down our reading process to provide students an opportunity to participate. Adequate wait time literally means that after reading a page or making a comment about the page the adult pauses for 5, 10 or more seconds and says *nothing*. This processing time is vital for students. When we interrupt this processing with questions or encouragement students often have to start processing all over again. Waiting quietly provides the student with an opportunity to try to interact using whatever means is available.

Slide 16. One of the tricks to a good shared reading experience is for the adults in the room to become highly attuned to what the student is doing while the book is being read. Everyone needs to learn to recognize communicative attempts or behavioral changes and respond to them. Our response to those communicative attempts will often be in the form of modeling the Universal Core. For example, if a student reaches out to the edge of the book, the adult can attribute meaning, "Oh, do you want to turn the page?" and then models TURN on the Universal Core board. Another student might repeatedly touch MORE on her own Universal Core board. Again, the adult would attribute meaning saying something like, "MORE? Do you WANT MORE?" In this case, the adult touches MORE on the Universal Core board while saying "MORE?" and then touch "WANT" and "MORE" on the Universal Core while saying "Do you WANT MORE?"

Slide 17. The last thing for adults to attend to is their own level of enthusiasm.

Students are going to be much more likely to engage and interact if the adult reads with enthusiasm in a way that fosters a joy of reading and participating.

Slide 18. On the Project Core web site, you will find a planning form that will help you plan Universal Core-based comments to use during shared reading and a self-evaluation or observation form that lists each of the features of shared reading described in this training.

Slide 19. This concludes the module. Your feedback is important to us. Please take a couple of minutes to complete a brief survey about this module by going to project-core.com/pdsurvey. Thank you for your participation. To learn more about Project

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