

Discussing a Book Together

Why? Discussing books helps us make connections to what we already know, find answers to our questions, make predictions, and uncover the author's purpose and craft. All of these things develop our ability to read and understand all types of books.

When and Where? Anytime! Anywhere! Over lunch, in the car, before bed. Thinking about books and talking about what you're reading can happen anytime. In fact, the more natural the conversation, the more fun it is for everyone.

The questions below are a guide. Not every question is appropriate every time you discuss, but are here to give you ideas. Remember: Don't force a discussion and diminish enthusiasm for the book.

- Before reading: Why did you choose this book? What do you think will happen? What makes you think that?
- What part of the book did you read? What happened?
- Were there any words or concepts that were hard to understand? Let's figure it out.
- Does any part make you want to know more? How can you get the answers?
- How did that part make you feel? Why?
- Does that part remind you of anything?
- How is that the same as or different from _____?
- Do you like one character more than another? Why?
- Authors usually give their characters problems to solve. Do you notice that? What problems are going on in your reading right now? What is the big problem that will get solved in the end (hopefully)? How do you think the author will end it?
- Do you think it was a good idea for the character to do that? Why or why not? What would you have done?
- What do you think will happen next? Why?
- What message do you think the author is trying to convey? How do you know?
- Do you agree or disagree with the author's message? Why?
- When it's all over: Do you have a better way to end it?

If they feel uncomfortable discussing the book with you, they can write their thoughts and questions in a notebook. Each of the questions above could be used as a writing prompt.