

Tar Heel Shared Reader Content Activity
Module: Shared Reading
Text Selection- Answer and Discussion

Big Idea:

Students need access to texts that are interesting, and age- and ability-respectful.

Guiding Statement:

1. I choose texts that are the right length to hold my students' attention.

When choosing books for shared reading the primary goal should be to ensure that students will enjoy it. There are a wide variety of reading materials (e.g., fantasy, adventure, mystery, informational texts) and formats (e.g., books, ebooks, graphic novels) we want students to experience. However, not all texts are equally supportive of holding student attention.

Directions: Read each of the text characteristics below and determine if it is likely or less likely to hold student attention.

Text Characteristics	Likely to Hold Student Attention	Less Likely to Hold Student Attention
Texts with lots of unfamiliar words.		X
Texts that can be read from start to finish in a single lesson.	X	
Texts that use everyday language.	X	
Texts with short sentences.	X	
Texts that take multiple days to complete.		X
Texts with one or two sentences on a page.	X	
Texts with supportive picture clues.	X	
Texts with predictable text structure.	X	
Texts with paragraphs.		X

Discussion Points:**Likely to Hold Student Attention**

- Texts that can be read from start to finish in a single session support students in staying engaged as they develop a greater understanding about how books work and why they are interesting.
- Texts that have everyday language are easier for students to understand. They support students in relating to the content of the book.
- Texts with short sentences can help students attend to and understand the book. Longer sentences tend to be difficult to follow and are typically complex. They often have more than one idea or multiple concepts that the student has to process.
- Texts with one or two sentences per page are important because they limit the amount of information students have to process on each page of the book.
- Texts with supportive picture clues can increase student understanding of the information on each page of the book. Teachers can comment on the pictures, helping students connect them to the text. Teachers can also help students understand the different functions of pictures and text in books.
- Texts with a predictable text structure support meaning making. When the text structure is repeated students have multiple opportunities to hear the same information in slightly different contexts. Students may also feel as if they are reading along with the teacher because they know what is coming next, even when they cannot yet read the words.

Less Likely to Hold Student Attention

- Texts with lots of unfamiliar words are difficult for students to follow. They need to understand how to use the language and information they have to figure out unfamiliar words. Beginning readers and communicators are still building their language and learning how their experiences relate to the text.
- Texts that take multiple days to complete require students to remember the information they read previously in order to apply it to the next day's reading. At this point, beginning readers and communicators are learning to make meaning from each page of a book, not comprehend the entire text.
- Texts with paragraphs on each page have lots of language for students to understand and process. Beginning readers and communicators need books with less text on each page to match their level of language understanding.