Strategy #3 Come Alive Reading

What is Come Alive Reading?
• In schools we often call this Reader’s Theatre but you can do it at home too with all your children together no matter what grade they are in - or just one child because you will be the main reader.
• You can bring reading and drama together and enjoy each other as you do so.

Why use Come Alive Reading
• Come-Alive Reading is a fun and exciting way to increase reading success and keep children excited about reading.
• Research tells us that this is a great way to increase fluency in reading.
• Fluency is also one of the most important skills in reading success in grades 3 to 12.
• If children do not get practiced at it in grades K to 3 they will struggle more in later grades.
What do I need for Come Alive reading with my child?

- A parent (or grandparent, guardian, an older brother or sister, or any loving relative) to be the leader of Come-Alive Reading;
- A book or poem that has interesting characters or chants in it that children can act out. This book does NOT have to be a book your child can read, just a book you can read comfortably and one you can enjoy. Choose one that will be exciting for your child. It can be an old favourite or a new one you have found. We want children to love this experience with you!

How do I Come-Alive Read with my child/children?

- Practice the story by yourself first to plan; look for lines the character says that can be dramatized. Look for lines that are repeated throughout the book or poem – lines that the children might enjoy repeating.
- Invite your child to listen to you read the whole story to them without stopping for discussion or questions. Model your best reading.
- Tell the children/child you need them to help you make the reading more exciting. Ask them which characters they liked the most and talk about why.
- Tell them you are going to read the main part of the story but you need them to be the characters as you meet them in the story.
- Read the story again slowly. As you get to the lines said by a character, read the line to the child then ask them to say it in a different way – with more expression; the way the character is feeling (scared, happy, sad); the kind of voice the character might use (yelling, whispering, screaming); the pace of the reading (slow, fast, halting). Ask them to practice as many as four times until you are all satisfied.
- Ask them to use their bodies to go along with the way they are reading (face, legs, hands, arm actions).
• When you feel you are finished with the story or poem and have done your best, plan a performance for someone else in your home. Perform for someone far away via technology if you can do it.

**Tips for Parents/Leaders**

• If you have more than one child and they are in different grades – all the better! The older children can help you lead the reading.

• Poems are perfect as they often have refrains; you can read the main part and they can do the refrain.

• Remember to use lots of expression. This helps build confidence in reading and will help children want to read more. Your teachers will appreciate it too; this is one of the skills they are working on too.

• Children love to perform for others after they have practiced. You might even find a few props around the house that fit with the story or poem.

*Most of all laugh a lot, be silly and encourage them to have fun as well!*