

Tip Sheet: Encourage Children to Make Connections

FOR PRESCHOOL PARENTS

For additional support on this topic, visit <https://bit.ly/QTConnect> to view a short video.

WHY?

When you are reading to your child and something in the book reminds them of something familiar to them, they are making a **personal connection** with the story. Perhaps something the character does reminds them of something they did or another book. Talking about these connections encourages emergent comprehension, higher-level thinking, and oral language development.

WHAT?

When children connect what they hear in a book to their lives, we call it making text connections. Making connections shows that they are listening and thinking about it. Children can make different types of text connections:

- **Text-to-self:** when something from the book makes them think about something that happened to them personally. For example, a story about a girl getting a puppy may remind them of the time they got a pet.
- **Text-to-world:** when something from the book reminds them of what they know about the world, such as science, social studies, or math concepts. For example, children may connect what they know about birds to the story of *The Ugly Duckling*.
- **Text-to-text:** when something from the book reminds them of another book. For example, the book *The Runaway Tortilla* may remind children of the story of *The Gingerbread Man*.

HOW?

Here are some ways to encourage children to make text connections:

- Pause during the read aloud and ask your child if they remember a time something similar happened to them. Ask follow-up questions to encourage them to talk about it.
 - For example, "This little girl is lost! Do you remember when you got lost at the supermarket? How did you feel?"
- Pause and ask your child if this book reminds them of anything they've done.
- Model making different types of connections to the text. For example:
 - "This very hungry caterpillar is eating a lot of food! I remember that caterpillars eat a lot right before they turn into a butterfly!"
 - "Those boy's clothes are too big! That reminds me of when we read Goldilocks and papa and mama bears' chairs were too big for her!"