



# Read-Aloud Manual

Volume. 3

NURTURING YOUNG MINDS  
THROUGH WORDS

Learning the technique/craft of writing through Picture Books



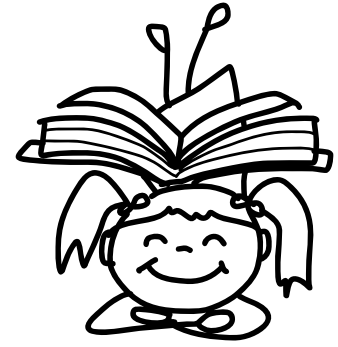
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# Introduction



Reading aloud to children is not just one of the most effective ways to bond with them, it is also a unique opportunity to introduce to them all kinds of literacy skills in a subtle, non-didactic manner.

In book one, we explored the potential of the read-aloud to teach prosody and learn how to read with expression and emotion. In book two *Read Alouds & Visual Literacy with Illustrations*, we looked at how picture books can reveal the symphony of illustrations, thus building analytical and observational skills. In this book, we will study how an interactive read-aloud can unlock the beauty of language and help children understand the writer's craft to become better writers. Adults will learn how to use picture books to help learners to hone their writing skills.



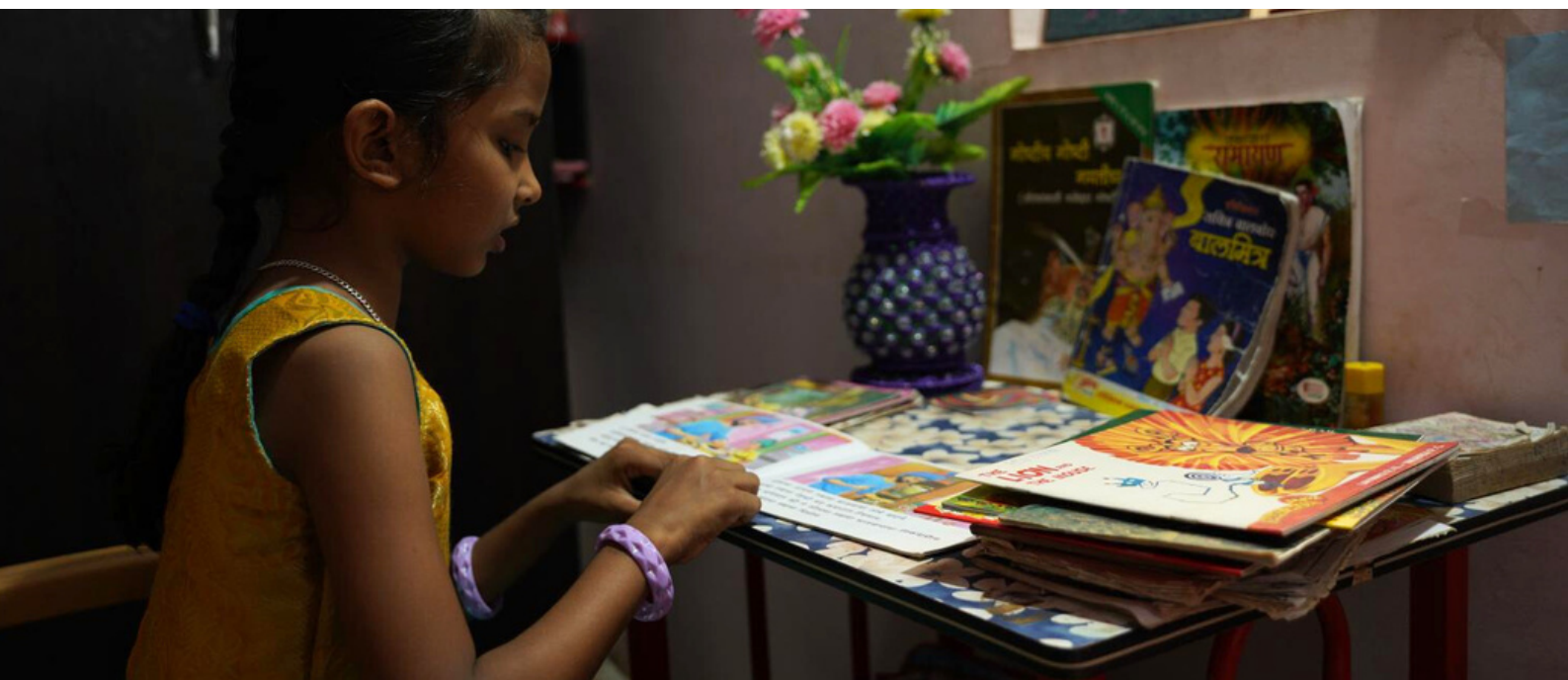


# The Lexical Diversity of Picture Books

Children acquire most of their language from the words spoken to them by early caregivers and the people around them. They pick up vocabulary and grammatical structures by imitating the speech of adults. An analysis of conversational language has revealed that 93.9% of the words we use emanate from a 5,000-word lexicon\*.

Furthermore, studies have found a marked difference in the sophistication of language between children from poverty and those from families of professionals. Poverty-stricken families often face barriers to education, including lack of access to quality schools, financial constraints, and the need for children to work to support their families ("Poverty Leaves India with Huge Literacy Problem Still to Solve")

On the other hand, children's books, including picture books for very young children, have a lexical and syntactical richness that is far greater than what is used in conversation. In the article, *The Early Catastrophe*, there is a million-word gap by age four between children who aren't read to and those who are read to daily. (Hart)



\*Lexicon: the vocabulary of a person in a given language





# Developing Pre-Literacy Skills in the Early Years

Most children enter school in India without any prior preparation. Anganwadis usually focus on the health and nutrition of the child and give little or no input to prepare children for school. Providing children with a foundation in pre-literacy skills can give them the tools and the mindset to succeed when they enter school and raise the literacy rate to match the 21st-century skills.

## PRINT MOTIVATION

When we read stories to children with expression and emotion, the child enjoys the story and begins to view reading as a fun, joy-filled experience. They look forward to learning how to read and write. This positive attitude towards reading and writing is fundamental to learning as they grow older.

## PRINT AWARENESS

As children become familiar with books, they become aware of how the print expresses ideas, thoughts and feelings. They begin by first learning about the parts of the book, for example, the cover page and the back of the book. They also learn to identify the title, the author and the illustrator. One can point to the larger lettering and distinct font of the book's title and show them the author and illustrator's name.

Children slowly learn how to turn the pages in the right direction and hold the book the right way up. When you point to the words as you read, they begin to understand that we read from left to right and top to bottom in most Indian languages and English. When we point to the words as we read, they begin to understand that spaces separate words and punctuation supports deeper meaning and intonation.

Some children love listening to the same story over and over again. They may begin to pretend-read as they have memorized the story. Although this is not actual reading, the child is filled with a sense of tremendous accomplishment and confidence.



## LETTER KNOWLEDGE

Reading alphabet books to preschoolers is important as they learn that language is made up of words, words of letters and that letters are made up of sounds. This is one of the most critical early literacy skills.

## PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

Adults need to help children isolate the sounds each letter makes in a word to help them develop decode as they learn how to read. They begin to identify and separate each letter's different sounds — the beginning, the middle, and the ending sound. Reading books with rhyming words and alliteration is fun for building phonological awareness.

## VOCABULARY-BUILDING

As mentioned earlier, books have 5 times as many unfamiliar words as we use in everyday conversations. As educators, we can draw their attention to these new words, help children understand their meaning, and connect them to their own lives. Children will pick up these new words like sponges and develop a rich vocabulary even if they are not otherwise exposed to sophisticated language.

## NARRATION

Encouraging children to retell the story in their own words is another valuable early literacy skill, as it helps build their vocabulary and comprehension skills. They learn how to sequence the events in order, and they begin to understand the basic structure of all stories — the beginning, the middle, and the end. Thus, allowing children to formulate sentences in a correct sequence with subject-verb agreement.



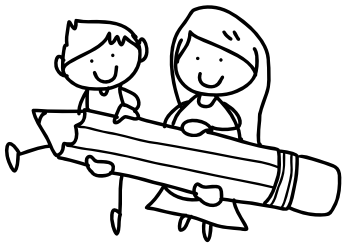
# Readers as Writers



Schools have been charged with teaching children the three Rs since they were conceived — reading, writing and arithmetic. Literacy and numeracy continue to be fundamental to education. The ability to write clearly in a manner that engages the reader is a skill we must develop. While children will pick up vocabulary and gain a greater knowledge of the world from the books they read, it simply is not enough to make them better writers. It is only when we ‘name and notice’ the techniques the writer has used that children become aware of the writer’s craft. This opportunity teaches students to use these techniques as they improve their writing.

Ruth Culham, the educator who developed the famous 6+1 traits of writing framework, says, "You have to explore, talk, think, and question to write well." Inspired by her work, we can learn to draw the child's attention to these strategies used by writers. How do we use the books as mentor texts so that our students can learn these different strategies?





# Uncovering Writer's Craft: A Guided Approach

Here's a step-by-step approach to naming & noticing the writers' craft to build writing skills in readers while reading aloud to them. We can get children of all ages to appreciate the beauty of language and show them how to notice the manner in which writers play with words.

## 1. STRUCTURE

While reading aloud to children, we make them aware of the basic structure of all stories. Every story has an introduction, a problem or conflict, a climax, and a resolution. After reading, children may be encouraged to lead book talks or discussions, where they can identify the elements of the story: the characters, the setting, and the plot and connections.

Authors use different styles of writing to express themselves – some of them may use diary entries to narrate the story or take the form of a series of letters. Some use narration from different characters' viewpoints. Others may use a poetic form of writing with or without rhymes. Understanding the purpose and style of the writing is a part of reading like a writer.

Some titles are

- *Tiny Travelers India Treasure Quest'* by Susie Jaramillo
- *My Name is Gulab* by Sagar Kolwankar, Tulika Publishers.
- *Paati's Rasam* by Janaki Sabesh & Dhvani Sabesh, Storyboard by Viajayanthi, illustrated by Pallavi Jain. Karadi Tales
- *I Am So Much More Than the Colour of My Skin* by Divya Thomas; Illustrated by Ruchi Shah, Harper Collins
- *On the Wild Side* by Katie Bagli
- *The Zoo Around You* by Katie Bagli and Medha Rajadhyaksha





## 2. ORGANISATION

The organisation in writing is like the roadmap that helps readers smoothly follow the writer's thoughts. It encompasses various elements such as attention-grabbing openings, the use of transition words to connect ideas, and a satisfying conclusion that ties everything together. (Adults need to teach each of these elements explicitly using picture books or other writing samples). A well-organized piece flows with a clear beginning, middle, and end. It can employ different structures like comparison and contrast or sequencing to enhance clarity and engagement. Think of it as arranging puzzle pieces so that they fit together logically, creating a coherent and enjoyable reading experience.

Some titles are:

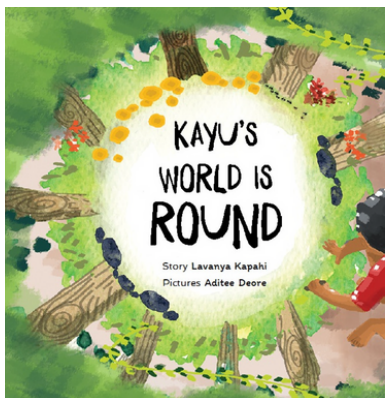


*The Boy Who Wore Bangles*  
by Riddhi Maniar Doda,  
illustrated by Shruti Hemani  
Karadi Tales

Navratri was Bhargav's favourite festival. He loved everything about it –the twirling chaniyas, the steps of the popat dance, the sweet pedas after the aarti. But what he loved the most was the way the bangles on his wrist when he danced. But this year, Bhargav wasn't dancing. Papa had forbidden him from wearing bangles, a morose Bhargav tells Ba. Is there still a chance he can hear his bangles sing?

This story brings forth an innocent yet profound conversation between a boy and his grandmother against the festive backdrop of a Gujarati Navratri night. The story showcases a strong organization of text with:

- A distinct beginning, middle and end to the story
- Simple & compound sentences including
- Dialogue

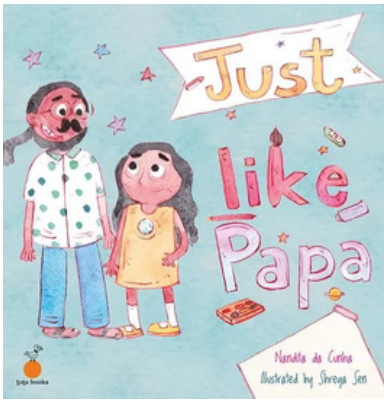


*Kayu's World is Round*  
by Lavanya Kapahi,  
illustrated by Aditee Deore.  
Tulika Publication.

This book tackles autism and sensory disorders. It encourages us to recognize each child's unique abilities and to communicate effectively by finding common ground. In the story, Kayu's love for circles eventually connects him with friends who adore cricket. This story highlights the importance of understanding and embracing our children's individuality, especially when dealing with sensory challenges.

Use this story to identify the beginning, middle and end of the story. Identify the conflict/problem and watch the resolution or end of the story closely satisfying the reader with a smile.





### **Just Like Papa**

by Nandita da Cunha,  
illustrated by Shreya Sen.  
Tota Books Publications.

Little Gia grows up surrounded by art, with paintings adorning her home and her dad's studio. Her father lovingly predicts she'll be an artist, and Gia dreams of becoming famous 'just like Papa.' However, on her 7th birthday, she struggles to paint, feeling frustrated and small. With the help of her Granny, Gia eventually finds her unique talent in a heartwarming twist. 'Just Like Papa' beautifully explores the theme of resilience in the face of initial setbacks.

This story is a problem/solution format of telling the story with a description of events and struggles. The author introduces a third character to help with the solution of the story. The organization of the story is strong, nudging the reader to read ahead to arrive at a solution.

### **Other Titles**

- *Dada's Useless Present* by Nalini Sorensen, illustrated by Allen Shaw. Karadi Tales
- *Kanna Panna* by Zai Whitaker (Tulika)
- *Old Man Who Would Not Listen* by Nonda Chatterjee, and Joyita Banerjee.

### **Story Weaver Titles**

- *There's a Hole in my Galaxy* by Ananya Dasgupta and Illustrated by Chaaya Prabhat
- *Who Ate All That Up?* Written by Sejal Mehta and Illustrated by Rohan Chakravarty
- *Grandma's Glasses* Written by Rohini Nilekani Illustrated by Tanaya Vyas

Reading aloud non-fiction texts helps children build knowledge about the world around them. Non-fiction texts are organised differently than stories. They have certain specific features like headings and subheadings, bullet points, diagrams, maps, charts, a table of contents, and perhaps a glossary and index. Some texts, like biographies, tend to be chronological, whereas others may be non-chronological.

Drawing attention to these details is essential so that when children write their own stories or non-fiction texts, they can emulate such techniques.

Some titles to use as mentor texts are

- *Festivals of India* by Sonia Mehta, Puffin Publishers
- *366 words in Mumbai* by Mirabell D'Cunha, illustrated by Sunhita Mitra, FunOK Please publisher
- *Amazing Facts about Sharks (Knowledge Book)* by Dan Jackson



### 3. IDEAS AND INSPIRATION FOR THEIR OWN STORIES

One of the biggest struggles for most writers is to find good ideas. There are stories about almost everything under the sun (and even beyond) — from common everyday people, places, animals, objects, and familiar experiences to mythical and magical creatures and places, gods, aliens, and so on. No matter how mundane it may seem, almost anything can turn into a beautiful story. When children are exposed to a wide variety of books from different genres, their imagination becomes fertile and they can be inspired by what they read when they write their own stories.

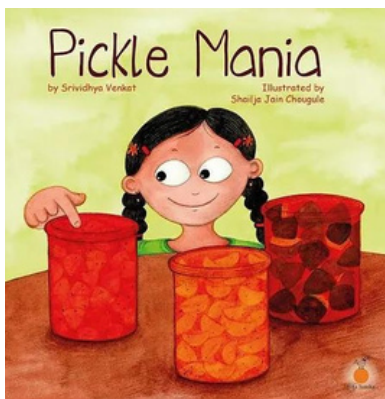
The "idea" in writing is all about having a clear, interesting message. It's like the main idea or story that the writer wants to tell. A strong idea grabs the reader's attention, makes them think or feel something, and sticks in their mind.

Some stories can have questions to consider and finally, it could be a tender story that is culturally sensitive and gently shared. Some stories can mix facts and fiction making them appealing and delightful while still teaching some concepts.

Activities to draw out ideas

- Timeline
- Adult topics and how children see the same topic
- Rules of secret
- List important events in a child's life
- List important incidents in a child's life
- Relationships of love and hate
- Lessons learned

Some titles are:

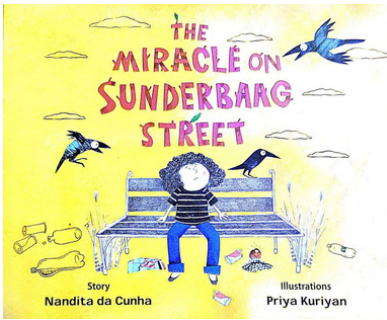


#### *Pickle Mania*

by Srividhya Venkar,  
illustrated by Shailaja Jain  
Chougule, Tota Publications

It is a delightful story that is the perfect mentor text for budding writers for generating ideas. The author, through Nitya, shares a heartwarming tale of taste, cooking, and the power of relationships that transformed her into a confident problem solver who learns to make her own pickle. A simple story of pickle turns into a lyrical story.



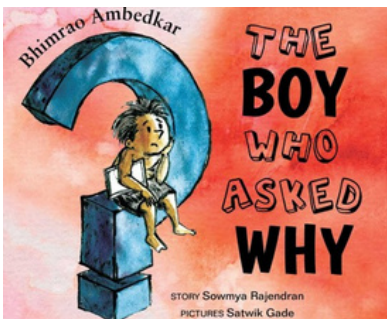


This is a story about young Zara who sits alone every evening, in a dump yard on Sunderbaag Street. Her mother is dead while her father, still grieving, neglects Zara. One day, Miss Gappi plants an idea in Zara's mind. This sets them off on a mission that changes Zara's life and the lives of many who live on Sunderbaag Street. Another idea comes to life – the transformation of barren land.

***The Miracle on Sunderbaag Street***

by Nandita da Cunha

Illustrated by Priya Kuriyan



A biographical story of a historical figure that will impact any child who courageously breaks social barriers. The illustrations are playful and childlike giving importance to the character's action. Another idea is teaching about Ambedkar's life, through a story.

***The Boy Who Asked Why: Bhimrao Ambedkar***

by Sowmya Rajendran and

illustrated by Satwik Gade

by Tulika Publication

**Other Titles**

- *The Rooster and the Sun* written and illustrated by Meren Imchen
- *The Wednesday Bazaar* by Neha Singh, illustrated by Sonal Gupta
- *Putul and the Dolphins* by Mariam Karim Ahlawat, Illustrator: Proiti Roy

**Story Weaver Titles**

- *A Book for Puchku* by Deepanjala Pal illustrated by Rajiv Eipe, Pratham
- *Maths at the Mela* by Kavitha Mandana, Illustrated by Nirzara Verulkar
- *Ammachi's Amazing Machines* by Rajive Eipe



## 4. CHOICE OF WORDS

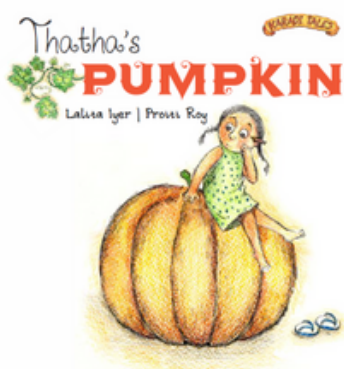
Good writers make deliberate choices in the words that they use. Writers use a colourful palette of words, employing lively verbs, descriptive adjectives and adverbs, and nouns that have depth and clarity. Using figurative language like similes, metaphors, and other figures of speech helps to create word pictures.

Skilful writing involves selecting the right words that convey the message clearly and evoke emotions, set moods, and sometimes reveal the writer's likes and dislikes. These carefully chosen words create images, sounds, and textures in the reader's mind, bringing the writing to life and making it a memorable and immersive experience.

The use of the right verb indicates how we need to sound when we read. For instance, if the author has written "she whispered," we know we have to lower our voices and, on the other hand, if the text says, "he screamed," we know we have to say the words at the top of our voices. These touches make our narration of the story entertaining for the listener.

Some children's authors even make up words to amuse their readers. Some might use words in other languages to add authenticity of their culture to the writing. Children can practise writing using precise words and adding figures of speech in order to make their writing more interesting.

Some titles are:



**Thatha's Pumpkin**  
by Lalita Iyer & Proiti Roy,  
Karadi Tales Publications

This simple story uses a variety of words to build vocabulary. The author uses several words to show how an oversized pumpkin is shared with people in the neighbourhood. These words create images and textures:

*Gaping mouth* - adjective

*Sack* - noun

*Big, fat, juicy pumpkin, weighs 10 kilos*  
(descriptive words)

*Annoyed* - verb

*Frowned* - an active verb

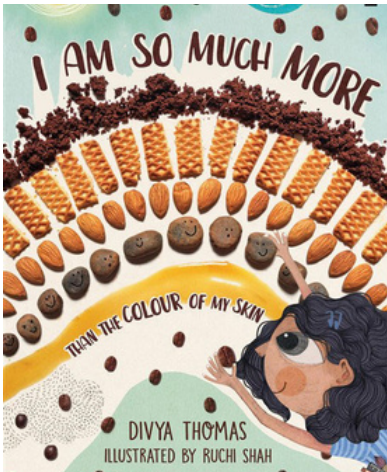
*Wedges* - nouns

*Several individual bags* - detailed writing

*Nice and greasy* - adjectives

*Grabbed* - active verbs





*I am so much more than the colour of my skin*  
by Divya Thomas,  
HarperCollins Children's  
Books

A book that encourages children to delight in their brown skin and define their future by their dreams, not by the colour of their skin. Word Choice - Comparisons of various shades of colour (browns) to the different hues found in elements of nature, foods, and things we experience in everyday life.

For example, the colour brown is compared to tea-time biscuits, this would seem interesting to a child who wants to be a chef; the colour of ivory tusks might seem interesting to a child who wants to protect elephants making them pursue their interest in protecting the environment.



*Machher Jhol*  
by Richa Jha and Sumanta  
Dey, Pickle Yolks  
Publications

A story about a young Gopu who is blind and goes through the busy city by himself to prepare his father's fish curry, hoping that will make his father well again. The choice of words in the story brings out the meaning through the senses.

- *Father's forehead burned* - to indicate the father had a high fever
- *To sneak away* - is used to indicate to slip away
- Words like *honking, jostle, commotion, rattled* indicate loud sounds and busy roads
- *Feel of damp walls* - exemplifies the feeling of touch and arouses the senses while reading

Other sensory descriptions are - "*The mustard was ground into a paste with red chilli, seeds spluttered, the fish sizzled into the oil*"

### Other Titles

- *Run Ranga! Run!* By Geeta Dharmarajan and Srivi. Katha Publications
- *Unhappy Moon* by Menon, Saraswathi, and Proiti Roy. Tulika Publishers
- *The Glass Tree* by Mukundan Em, Katha Publications

### Story Weaver Titles

- *Laundry Day* by Mathangi Subramanian, Illustrated by Shambhavi Singh
- *An Umbrella for Druvi* by Shabnam Minwalla and Illustrated by Malvika Tewari
- *The Very Wiggly Tooth* by Reshma Thapa Gurungm, Illustrated by Canato Jimo



## 5. SENTENCE STRUCTURES

There is a beautiful poem by David L. Harrison called 'The Sound of a Sentence.'

*A sentence can poke turtle-like on a page.  
It can leap like an antelope playing.  
It can vary from short to the lengthier sort,  
Depending on what you are saying.*

*When you read with your eye and hear with your ear,  
Your readers will love what you're writing.  
A balance of turtle and antelope sentences  
Helps make your piece exciting.*

*"He screamed!" is a sentence both short and direct.  
It grabs us. It holds our attention.  
But where he screamed and why he screamed  
Deserve more than two words to mention.*

*So vary the patterns and go with the flow  
And polish the lines 'til they glisten.  
To learn if you've done what you set out to do,  
Read it aloud, and listen.*

When we write, we need to ensure that we use a variety of sentence lengths. While it is best to keep sentences short and crisp as a general rule, it is sometimes necessary to write longer sentences. When read out loud, our words should sound pleasing to the ear. Good writers deliberately vary sentence lengths for effect to hold the readers' interest and attention. A series of short sentences can get monotonous and too many run-on sentences make it difficult to comprehend.

When we read aloud, we do the same thing with our voices. We read some sentences slowly, read some sentences fast and pause sometimes -to create excitement and interest. The audience listens spellbound and gets engrossed in the narration.



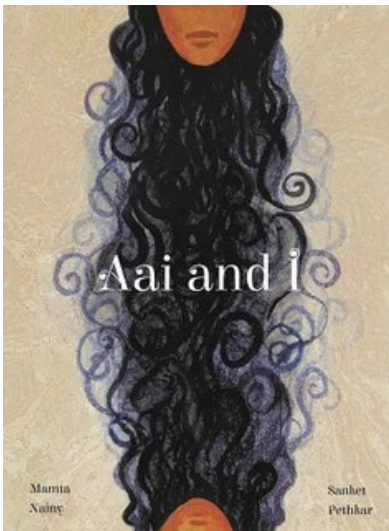


***Papa's Marathon***  
by Nalini Sorensen,  
illustrated by Prashant  
Soni.  
Karadi Tales

Gia's Papa has signed up for the marathon. As he buys clothes and fancy gadgets to match his new hobby. Gia's grandmother becomes his biggest cheerleader. She even has a camcorder ready for the race day. Does Papa lose steam as the marathon approaches, or does he manage to cross the finish line after all?

A variety of sentence beginnings make this delightful story engaging and dynamic. Some examples are

- Dialogue usage
- Similes - Fit as a fiddle
- Idiom - He must have breezed through this



***Aai and I***  
by Mamta Nainy and  
Sanket Pethkar,  
Pickle Yolks Publication

A delicate, tender story of a child exploring her identity. Aadya is the spitting image of her mother, But when Aai goes away to a large hospital, she promises to return after Aadya's next Math lesson. Aai and I, is told with poetic prose and heartfelt warmth, discover a story that celebrates the profound bond between mother and daughter. It's a journey of self-discovery for Aadya as she realizes that even though she may no longer 'look' like her mother, their connection remains unbreakable."

A variety of sentences– simple and compound sentences  
Use of ellipses ...

Use of repetition to give the lyrical prose - words like 'same to same'



***The Night Monster***  
by Sushree Mishra and  
Sanket Pethkar  
Karadi Publication

With moody, atmospheric illustrations and a poetic narrative with economical words 'The Night Monster' is a captivating bedtime story that dispels children's fear of the dark. Avi confesses about his night monster who visits him to his sister Swati, who suggests drawing and locking the creature in a box. When that doesn't work, they exchange letters with the monster, revealing its less frightening side.

Use of transition words: One day, soon, The next morning, that night, as the days passed.

Use of dialogue in the story.





## Other Titles

- *Sadiq Wants to Stitch* by Nainy, Mamta & Wadia, Niloufer. Karadi Publications
- *The Good Indian Child's Guide to Eating Mangoes!* by Natasha Sharma Illustrated by Shreya Sen. Publisher Harper Collins.
- *The Dragon's Toothache* by Annie Besant & Rayika Sen. Karadi Tales

## Story Weaver Titles

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- *Maths at the Mela* by Kavitha Mandana, Illustrated by Nirzara Verulkar
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## 6. AUTHOR'S PURPOSE

Why do writers write? Writers write with a purpose to narrate, inform or entertain. Sometimes, it may be a combination of two or more reasons. Readers need to be reminded about the author's purpose.

Writing genre can be split into three broad categories:

1. Narrative: A narrative tells a story, and the purpose is usually to entertain, describe or share perspective.
2. Expository: An expository text gives facts and explains ideas, directions or terms to inform the reader.
3. Persuasive: A persuasive writing piece tries to convince the reader to support an opinion.

When the reader is aware of the author's purpose, it helps them:

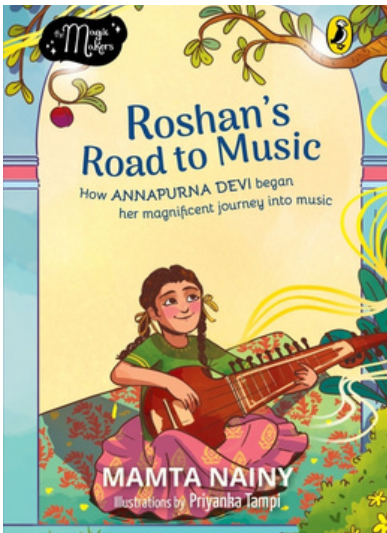
- Appreciate the writing craft features of a particular form of writing
- Critically approach texts; for instance, if the author is trying to persuade they can examine the text for hidden or overt biases
- Connect to what the author wishes them to know. For instance, most stories have a theme or a message that the author is trying to convey.

When we read aloud to children, we can ask questions like - why has the author written this book? What is the author's purpose? Is it to entertain the audience? Is it expository text, explaining nonfiction information? Is the author trying to convey a deep meaning? What is the author's message? These questions help students engage more deeply with the text.



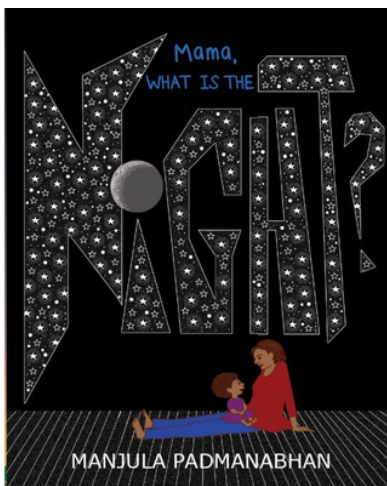
**Voice** in writing is the writer's unique personality that comes through their words. When a writer has a strong voice, it shows they are not just putting words on paper; they are genuinely interested in sharing their ideas. Their voice shines through whether they are writing to explain something (expository), persuade the reader, or tell a story (narrative). A good writer's voice is like a friendly, honest conversation on paper that draws you in and keeps you interested.

Some titles are:



Roshan's Road to Music Is told from **the third person Voice**. This is an inspiring story of Annapurna Devi, India's greatest surbahar player, and a passionate musician. She found inspiration in everyday sounds, from a koel's song in the trees to the splat of scrubbed clothes and even her granny's snores. However, it was the sound of her father giving sarod lessons to her brother that truly ignited her musical journey. Discover Annapurna Devi's remarkable story in this book.

*Roshan's Road to Music*  
by Mamta Nainy  
illustrations by Priyank  
Tampi.  
Puffin Penguin Publication



A curious young child embarks on a journey asking creatures of the night, 'What is the night?' The owl defines night as hunting time, the night-blooming cereus as the time to bloom, and fireflies as the time to find friends. The most heartwarming answer comes from the protagonist's mother, who sees night as a time for enjoyment and love. Rhyming text, first person with second person voice. This story provides multiple perspectives, fostering empathy.

*Mama, What is the Night*  
by Manjula Padmanabhan.  
Tulika Publications.





Right from her childhood, Usha Uthup knew that music was her true calling. She picked up songs from the radio and sang with her big, booming voice. But when rejected during the audition for her school choir, Usha wondered if her big voice was any good. All she wanted was to sing. Does she find a way?

Engaging text with a third-person voice. The author playfully brings to light a variety of music genres such as pop, jazz, etc. as well as showcases platforms for singers such as the choir, nightclubs, concerts, radio, etc.

### *That Big-Voiced Girl*

by Mamta Nainy

illustrations by Asuma Noor

Puffin Penguin Publication

### Other Titles

- *Salim the Knife-Sharpener* by R. Amarendran, and Ashok Rajagopalan. Tulika Publications
- *Dream Writer* by Sandhya Rao and Tanvi Bhat. Tulika Publisher.
- *The Talking Bird* by Swati Sengupta and Sayan Mukherjee. Tulika Publications

### Story Weaver Titles

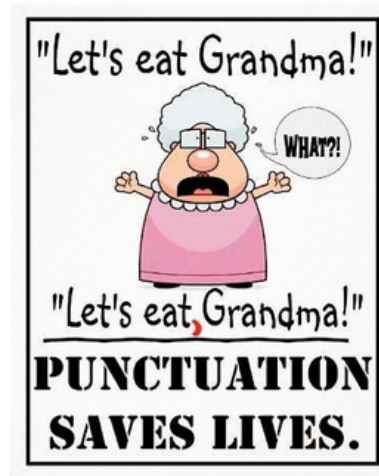
- *Achoo!* By Deepa Balsavar, illustrated by Nancy Raj
- *Lassi, Ice-cream or Falooda?* by Mala Kumar and Manisha Chaudhry and Illustrated by Priya Kuriyan
- *Jadav and the Tree-Place* by Vinayak Varma Illustrated by Vinayak Varma
- *Aiman's School Bag* by Mazhar Ahmad



## 7. GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION

Grammar is often taught in isolation. For blossoming writers, it is essential to read keeping in mind how authors have punctuated their text. The effect of punctuation impacts the written text. Appropriate use of commas, full stops, exclamation and hyphens must be learned so that writers use them appropriately in their writing.

Many of you may be familiar with this joke.



### Other Titles

- *Where Is Amma?* by Nandini Nayar, illustrator Srividya Natarjan. Tulika Publication
- *Jokhu And The Big Scare* by Priyadarshini Gogoi, Illustrator Debasmita Dasgupta, Tulika Publication
- *The Pleasant Rakshasa* by Sowmya Rajendran, Illustrator Niveditha Subramaniam. Tulika Publication
- *I love Yoga* by Anita Raina Thapan, Illustrated by Alankrita Jain. Tota Publication

### Story Weaver Titles

- *Look Up!* by Aditi Dilip Illustrated by Aditi Dilip
- *A Girl Called Cheeku* by Lovleen Misra, Illustrated by Manasi Parikh
- *Singing in the Rain* by Mala Kumar and Manisha Chaudhry
- *My Dream in The Drawer* by Fred Strydom
- *Hope, Where are you for Mulu?* By Armand Doucet

Good writers may use incorrect grammar as a stylistic device at times to describe a particular character's way of speaking. Or they might play with punctuation for effect. The poet E. E. Cummings's signature style was to use lowercase letters only and play with punctuation.

While reading aloud to children, the author's use of punctuation gives us clues about how the sentence is meant to be read. Exclamation marks tell us whether we need to use surprise or anger in our voices. Commas show us where we can take pauses. When we see an ellipsis at the end of the sentence on a page, we know that there is going to be a surprise waiting for us on the next page.

Pointing these out and discussing how they can be used in our own writing helps students become conscious of the variety and versatility of language.



## 8. FORMATTING & PRESENTATION

Writers often use typography, fonts, and white space to draw the reader's attention to what is important. For instance, they might use bold or capital letters and a larger font (or maybe even a different colour) words like **GRRRRR!!!!!!** Can be used to indicate a loud expression; or use italics and a lighter weight of the font to show a soft expression or a whisper "*Don't tell anyone this secret!*" A single word in the entire page can also be used to indicate an important expression.

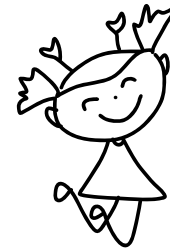
In non-fiction texts, writers use bullet points, texts in boxes or frames, headings and sub-headings to organize information in a manner that is not tedious to read. Labelled diagrams and photographs with captions is used to aid the reader in comprehension.

Neatly organized information makes complicated text easier to read and understand. When read aloud, highlighting these features provides students with an example of good presentation styles that students can incorporate into their own writing.



# Conclusion

We hope that this manual has kindled your interest in using the read-aloud as the springboard for developing students' ability to pay greater attention to the writer's craft and thus, improve their writing skills. Educators and students alike can delight in discovering and uncovering the clever strategies used by skilled writers in making writing interesting, lively, and effective. This is a great way to develop an appreciation for the beauty of language.



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