Read Together

Reading aloud with your child builds key language and literacy skills while you connect together with a book. This shared experience ignites children's imaginations, helps them build a greater understanding of the world, and cultivates a lifelong love of reading. Here are some tips for making the most of story time:

• Hold the book so that your child can easily see the cover and the illustrations.
• Make a few comments about the illustration on the cover and note the author and illustrator.
• Show excitement and read the story expressively.
• Listen for your child’s comments or questions and respond briefly to confirm or clarify.
• Provide information to extend your child’s understanding of the story.
• Have fun!

Build Vocabulary

Providing a simple explanation for words that children may not be familiar with can help build their language skills. You can describe the meaning of a word, point to an illustration, or use your tone of voice to convey the word’s meaning. Here are some words to talk about while you read *Amy Wu and the Patchwork Dragon*:

• **Patchwork**: something that is made up of different things
• **Enormous**: very, very big
• **Emerge**: to come out where you can see
• **Snout**: an animal’s long nose
• **Gleaming**: bright and shiny
• **Sketches**: quick drawings
• **Invite**: ask someone to do something
• **Exactly**: right in every way
Tell Stories

In Amy Wu and the Patchwork Dragon, Amy has difficulty creating her own dragon until she is inspired by a treasure—a dragon costume—in her attic. With your child, help pick out something that is special to them. This can be a small toy, a favorite food, a photograph, or an article of clothing. Talk to your child about why they chose the item and how it makes them feel. Share your own treasure with your child and invite other family members to tell stories about something special to them. Then, let your child draw the item and help them label their picture.

Create a Patchwork Dragon

Amy and her classmates create their own dragons, and they all look a little different: some big and some small, some with claws and others with scales, and all in various colors. Help your child create their own dragon! Find any art materials they would like to use for their dragon—such as paint, crayons, paper (for example, gift wrap, newspapers, or construction paper), empty containers (paper towel rolls, boxes), and glue. Your child can sketch, draw, and patchwork—or use many different things—to make the dragon their own. When they are done, ask them what details they have included on their dragons. What’s similar and different compared to the dragons Amy or her friends created? Extend the conversation by talking with your child about the features of dragons and other animals. For example, “I see you drew a snout on your dragon. What other animal do you know that also has a snout?”

Move Like a Dragon

We see Amy, her grandmother, and her friends put on the dragon costume and dance all around the house and classroom. Collect some ribbons, scarves, or colorful fabric. You could also use tissue paper or tissues, and help your child decorate them with markers. When they are ready, put on some music! Invite your child to move like a dragon. They could pretend to blow fire, bring down the rain, and fly without wings. Then, ask your child for other ideas of how a dragon might move.
Make Emotion Masks

Throughout the story, Amy’s feelings change as she thinks about making a dragon that feels “just right.” She’s sad when she doesn’t finish her dragon, excited when she has an idea, and happy when she finally gets to show her dragon to her classmates. With your child, create emotion masks to talk about the feelings Amy shows in the book. Ask your child to make a face and help them identify the emotion it represents—for example, your child can show you a look of surprise and you can ask them what would cause them to make that face.

Using paper plates, sticks (for example: craft sticks, pens, or pencils), tape, and markers, help your child draw a face on the plate to match an emotion. Tape the stick to the back of the mask so they can hold it in front of their face and then repeat with additional emotions.

Once the faces have been drawn, ask your child how they are feeling. Have your child select the mask that represents their mood. These masks can be used over and over to help your child share their feelings and emotions, or to identify with characters’ emotions in books you read together.

Keep Reading

Love reading together? Visit your local library with your child to find more books to read together:

- Deepen conversations on family relationships by trying:
  - *Eyes that Kiss in the Corners* by Joanna Ho, illustrated by Dung Ho
  - *Where Are You From?* by Yamile Saied Méndez, illustrated by Jaime Kim
  - *Grandpa Grumps* by Katrina Moore, illustrated by Xindi Yan

- Dig into themes of creativity and self-expression by reading:
  - *Julián is a Mermaid* by Jessica Love
  - *Maybe Something Beautiful* by F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell, illustrated by Rafael López
  - *Lola’s Fandango* by Anna Witte, illustrated by Micha Archer

- Dive into more books about dragons and cultural symbols by reading:
  - *Dragons Love Tacos* by Adam Rubin, illustrated by Daniel Salmieri
  - *Raising Dragons* by Jerdine Nolen, illustrated by Elise Primavera

- Explore more great books by author Kat Zhang. Try:
  - *Amy Wu and the Perfect Bao*.