

What's different about reading wordless (or nearly wordless) picture books?

Unlike typical picture book read-alouds, including wordless or nearly wordless books in storytimes depends heavily on the ability to read and interpret illustrations. There's a give and take that happens. With few or no words for guidance, students must create meaning through careful observation, collaborative conversation, and thoughtful questioning.

In her book, [READING PICTURE BOOKS WITH CHILDREN](#), Megan Dowd Lambert suggests reading *with*, rather than *to* children. Her Whole Book Approach, inspired by [Visual Thinking Strategies](#) (VTS) employs a kind of “co-constructive storytime,” in which the adult reader guides a back-and-forth conversation with kids using the following open-ended questions as a starting point:

1. What's going on in this picture?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?
3. What more can we find?

The lessons that follow aren't meant to be an *exact* implementation of Visual Thinking Strategies or the Whole Book Approach, but a starting place. (You can learn more about the Whole Book Approach [HERE](#).)

