



The Water Horse

by Dick King-Smith

Reading with your child is an excellent way to expose your child to words, topics, and ideas that are more complex than what they would see in books they can read on their own. Conversations will help increase your child’s oral language skills and build their vocabulary. C.A.R. is a conversation starter that you can use with your child any time.

Below is an example of how to use C.A.R. with the book, *The Water Horse*.



C.A.R.	Example
<p>C Comment and Wait (count to 5) *Make a comment about what you see on the page.</p>	<p><i>Adult:</i> Look at Crusoe closing his eyes.</p> <p><i>Child:</i> It looks like he enjoys getting his head scratched.</p>
<p>A Ask questions and Wait (count to 5) *Ask questions that do not have a “yes/ no” or one-word answer to them.</p>	<p><i>Adult:</i> What do you think that Crusoe is thinking right now?</p> <p><i>Child:</i> He’s probably thinking that he misses spending time with his humans.</p>
<p>R Respond by adding a little more to the child’s response.</p>	<p><i>Adult:</i> I think so too. He is used to seeing the humans and getting food. He is probably thinking that it is time to eat.</p>



Activities

- » Fantasies are a wonderful way to strengthen your child's imagination and gain a deeper understanding of human nature. Help your child develop a stronger understanding of human nature by completing one or more the following tasks:
 - » *Create a list of the main characters and list their character traits. Ask your child which main character is the most like them and why.*
 - » *Compare two of the main characters from the story. Use the table below as an example to create your own chart of character traits.*

Character 1 Traits	Shared Traits	Character 2 Traits

- » *Create your own fantasy short story and turn it into a comic strip.*

Parent Tips

- » Incorporate reading into your daily routine.
- » Create a quiet, special place in your home for your child to read, write and draw.
- » Talk to your child about their favorite part of the story so they make a connection with what they read.
- » As your child works on activities related to the book ask them questions or give them hints to help them with their thinking. You can even help them by providing an example.
- » Visit the local library and sign up for a library card to enable your child to select books on based on their interests.

More Activities

Retell the Story

- » Have your child create a story board of *The Water Horse* to help them retell the story. First, have your child divide a sheet of paper up into 12 parts. Then have them draw one scene from each chapter into the squares. Finally, have your child use their story board to retell the story to a family member.
- » Have your child create a flipbook of their favorite scene and share with a family member.
- » Have your child draw the main characters on card stock and cut them out. If craft sticks are available, have your child glue or tape their characters on to crafts sticks to create character puppets. Then your child can use these puppets to retell the main events.

Related Books/Resources

Dragon in the Sock Drawer

by Kate Kilmo

Frog Princess

by E.D. Baker

Bread Crumbs

by Anne Ursu

Witches

by Roald Dahl

Matilda

by Roald Dahl

Bad Beginning

by Lemony Snicket

