***Should I still read aloud to my children after they can read to themselves?***

Definitely! When children begin learning to read, they only have the skills for very simple books. While their reading skills are developing, they need you to read aloud the interesting stories and nonfiction books they can’t read on their own. These books have the rich language, vocabulary, and ideas that will prepare them to read more challenging books when they’re ready. You will also help them develop a love of stories and an appreciation for the information they can learn from books.

***But the teacher reads aloud every day. Isn’t that enough?***

Even though your child’s teacher reads to the class, sharing a book with a parent is an experience all its own. Besides the academic benefits, reading to your child is like taking a trip together. My son had difficulty learning to read, but he grew up **loving** stories. As he got older, we read *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* and *A Wrinkle in Time,* fantasies that he never would have read and understood on his own. Along the way, we learned a lot about each other. (For one thing, I discovered he would only listen to a scary story if I promised it would have a happy ending.)

Some suggestions for reading aloud:

* Read the title and show the cover. Then ask what the book might be about.
* Read with expression—use different voices for different characters, read more loudly or softly as appropriate.
* While reading, try stopping to ask open-ended questions such as:
  + What do you think will happen next?
  + Why do you think the character did that?

(My son’s usual response to questions like these was, “Mom, just read!” That’s OK, too.)