

Vocabulary

Reading vocabulary refers to the words we need to know to understand what we read. Thus, vocabulary plays an important part in learning to read. Readers cannot understand what they are reading without knowing what most of the words mean.

How can I help my child expand their vocabulary?

Read to your child: Exposing children to more complex stories offers lots of opportunities for discussing new and interesting words. Talk about the meanings of these words and challenge your child to use them in daily conversations.

Before your child reads to you: Browse through the story and discuss any new words they may come across as they are reading the story. Try to connect these new words to something they already know about.

Have lots of interesting discussions and conversations at home: A child's vocabulary expands enormously when they have an opportunity to hear new words used frequently and in turn use these words themselves in daily conversation.

Parent Handbook for Reading with Children

Encourage a Love of Reading

To become an effective reader in the primary grades, current research tells us that students need **massive amounts of reading - approximately 1 ½ - 2 hours per day.**

Children who enjoy reading will read more. We must help children really learn to **love** reading, and they must see parents who model reading and share books with them. Here are some tips to help motivate your child to read.

Model reading for your child - If they see you reading everyday for fun and for purpose, they are going to have a more positive attitude toward reading themselves.

Read to your children often - Not only is it pleasant and fun, but students will come to read more on their own when they see how enjoyable reading can be. Reading aloud will also strengthen comprehension, support vocabulary development, and encourage fluency as your child models their own reading after yours.

Read books which have been made into a movie - If there is a movie coming out that is based on a book, read the book with your child, then go see the movie. The movies are never exactly the same as the book, and this will lead to a discussion about what was different and why and which was better.

Create an at-home library - Include lots of great literature including non-fiction. Be sure to include "light reading" as well, (comics, magazines, picture books). Always keep your child's interests in mind. While book orders are a great way to buy books, don't overlook second-hand books or department stores.

Comprehension (Understanding what is read)

There are children who are extremely accurate in saying the words (decoding) and who read with great expression (fluency), who are not able to answer questions about what they read (comprehension). The first step is helping a student learn to monitor their own comprehension. This means that they:

- Are aware of what they do understand.
- Can identify what they do not understand.
- Use "fix-up" strategies to resolve problems.

An easy way to determine if a child is comprehending the text is to ask them to do a "check for understanding". This simply means a brief retelling, (in their own words), of what they have just read. If meaning does break down, then a student should be taught to "go back and reread".

Other ways to encourage comprehension include:

- Having a child make predictions, "What do you think will happen next?"
- Drawing conclusions, "Why do you think...?"
- Making comparisons between a book and movie or comparing one character to another, "How are they alike? How are they different?"
- Making connections to something in their own life, "What does this remind you of?"

Fluency (How the Reader Sounds)

Fluency refers to how smooth a reader sounds, the pace at which they read, and whether or not they read with expression. Generally, though not always, the more fluent a reader is, the more time they spend on making meaning. Struggling readers spend so much of their time thinking on decoding that they frequently make little meaning as they read.

How do I help my child read more fluently?

Rereading - After your child has read one paragraph, page or passage, have them read it again and again, working on how they sound. This strategy will also help them remember newly learned words.

I read, you read - Read a passage to your child as you are both looking at the text. After you have read, have your child read the same passage while trying to match your fluency; (pace, smoothness and expression).

Choral reading - Read the text together simultaneously. Reread the text again.

Listen to Reading - Reading along with a tape-recorded text.

Increase the amount of time students read. Encourage kids to read, read, and read (which we refer to as "voracious reading"). Try increasing the amount of reading your child does at home.

Choosing a book level for your child

Here at school students are taught to choose "good-fit books". Books that are at the child's reading level, as well as interesting to the child. If a book is too hard, a child will just become frustrated and/or struggle to comprehend the text. If the text is too easy, then your child is not learning as quickly as they could. To help your child choose a good-fit book, use the "I Pick" method:

I Pick "Good Fit Books"

I look at a book

Purpose

(Why do I want to read it?)

Interest

(Does it interest me?)

Content

(Do I understand it?)

Know

(Do I know most of the words? Use the Five-Finger Test described below).

The Five Finger Test: Have your child read one page of the book you or they think might be at the right level. If they struggle with more than 5 words on that page, the book is probably too difficult for them at this time. Keep track of tricky words on the finger of one hand.

Accuracy (Reading the Words):

What do I do when my child gets stuck on a word?

Allow your child to work through the word using various strategies. In the classroom we ask the question "coaching or time?" If the child responds with "time", it means that they want to try to figure out the word on their own without assistance. If the child responds with "coaching", help your child use the following strategies to unlock the word.

When you came to a trick word ...

 <p>Look at the picture.</p>	<p><u>c</u> a <u>t</u></p> <p>Look at the first and last letters.</p>	<p>m a n</p> <p>Look for letter chunks you know.</p>	 <p>Skip it and read on. Now what would make sense?</p>
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Be metacognitive! Check your thinking ...

 <p>Does it make sense?</p>	 <p>Does it look right?</p>	 <p>Does it sound right?</p>
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When you get stuck on a word . . .

THINK: Think about the story.

(This means using the sentence or the story to help a child figure out what word would make sense.)



LOOK: Look for picture clues 

SAY: Get your mouth ready to say the beginning sound.



SLIDE: Slide to the end of the word.

(Have the child blend the sounds together while listening for a word they might have heard before.)



LEAP: Leap over the word, read to the end, then go back and start again.



RUNNING START: Go back and start over. Reread quickly



PUZZLE: Break the word apart and look for the pieces that you know. (This strategy is often referred to as "chucking")



SUB: Substitute a word that makes sense and keep on reading.



STOP & THINK: Does it look right?
Does it sound right?
Does it make sense?

