

# SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S READING EFFORTS

• by Karin K. Schlegel •

- "A love of reading is the crucial factor in reading success !"

(M. Leonhardt ~ educator, researcher)

So... all interactions and activities with books should promote a love of reading (not jeopardize it) !

- "The relationship between and adult and child as they practice together has a great impact, not only on learning to read, but on whether the child will choose to read as a pastime." (V. Goodman ~ educator)

Your most important contribution as a parent is to provide a warm, relaxing atmosphere, time for sharing, lots of support and patience and a supply of appropriate books.

- Keep in mind: ... → The purpose of reading is understanding, not word-perfect oral reading.

- To help your child understand the reading process, share with them what you do as you read. Think aloud, share strategies.

(eg. "Sometimes I skip a word I don't know and go on.")

- Interact while reading. Encourage comments, questions, predictions.  
(See "Making Storytime Active")

- Reinforce your child's reading progress ! Comment positively on a reading behavior or skill you notice is improving.

(eg. "Wow! You read that last part with a lot of expression !")

- Continue to read to your child even after they are independent readers. Opportunities to hear stories above their reading ability stretches their comprehension skills, expands their vocabulary... and nurtures a love of literature !

→ **IMPORTANT !!!**



- Read a book several times to your child before expecting them to read it.  
Becoming familiar with the plot, characters, vocabulary, etc. will provide a greater opportunity for success and enjoyment.
- Ask your child to track the print with a finger while you read.
- Let your child use the illustrations to seek information.  
(\*Do not cover the pictures up!)
- Preview an unfamiliar book: Study the title and cover, then the illustrations inside and make some predictions about what the book is about. Then, read.
- Read together at the same time in one united voice.  
(Hint: "Fade in" when your child needs your support; "Fade out" when they are on track. Stay slightly behind your child to give them the first chance to predict an unfamiliar word. Occasionally, whisper the beginning sound of a challenging word to trigger an idea that makes sense.)
- Echo read: You read a sentence, child repeats after you. Or, child reads a sentence, you repeat.
- Partner read: "My turn, your turn" - Take turns reading (a sentence, paragraph or page).  
Put the child in charge of telling you when it's your turn.
- Read to your child leaving words out for them to predict.  
Invite participation in any repetitive parts.
- Reread familiar books. Revisiting familiar stories allows for deeper processing of information and increases fluent, strategic reading (leading to a feeling of accomplishment!)
- Suggest to your child that they read a passage silently first, then after, out loud.
- Read a passage first in a "slow, sleepy voice", then repeat in an "alive, awake voice".
- If beneficial, let a child use a marker (ruler, paper strip, finger) to track the print.
- Match books to your child's interests and reading ability.  
Ask a librarian, teacher or bookstore for help. When your child recognizes the majority of words, there is freedom to concentrate on understanding the story line and enjoying the book. Show your child how to "test" a book for independent reading: read a sample passage; if you don't know 3 or more words, try another book.



# A YOUNG READERS' BASIC NEEDS

- A love of words, language and books !!!
- A confident, positive attitude
- A supportive learning atmosphere
- Time - to practice ("We learn to read by reading." F. Smith)
  - to grow and develop
- Opportunity to talk about what is read
- An experienced reader - parent, teacher, sibling, friend...
  - a reading guide, role model
  - to read with, discuss ideas
- Ownership - freedom to make choices (what books? when? where?)
- Enjoyment and Celebration of reading !!! (eg. book projects)
- Background knowledge/Experiences
- Exposure to a variety of interesting reading sources  
("Library visits are crucial." V. Goodman)
- Opportunity to write
- Strategies - to figure out unfamiliar words
  - to enhance comprehension
- A developing knowledge of print and how it works  
(see Concepts About Print)
- A developing sense of story structure
  - how stories are organized  
(characters, setting, problem...



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When your child is "stuck" on a word, you can help in one of these ways:

- Encourage use of context clues (i.e. study the information surrounding an unknown word in order to make a prediction). Strategies:
  - Re-run: Go back to the start of the sentence and run through it again.
  - Read-on: Skip an unknown word and read to the end of the sentence, seeking further clues. Then check to see whether the word predicted makes sense.
  - "Read" the pictures: Study the illustrations to provide a clue.
- Give a meaning clue to help make a prediction. (eg. "It's a word that means the same as big.")
- Study the unfamiliar word: Help analyze the unfamiliar word phonetically.
  - Try whispering the beginning sound of a word to trigger a prediction.
  - The most important clues are in the consonants so focus on them.
  - Look for things that are known in the word. Chop the word up, look for a root word...
  - Reinforce any useful rules. (eg. "When 2 vowels go walking, the first does the talking.")
  - Re-read the sentence to recover comprehension.
- Respond positively when asked for assistance. Supplying a word for a young reader enables them to devote more attention to the meaning of a passage.
- Before assisting your child, give them an opportunity to make a prediction themselves. Count to 3, slowly.
- ⇒ Prompt your child to check their prediction: "Does it make sense?" "Does it sound/look right?"
- ⇒ Talk to your child about "what you can do when you meet an unfamiliar word" and encourage them to verbalize strategies. Reinforce this process often.

### • ERRORS (OR MISCUES) •

When your child misreads a word, base your response on the type of error:

1. If it makes sense, accept it.
2. If it changes the meaning, but not in an important way, accept it.
3. If it doesn't make sense, say, "That doesn't make sense to me. Let's go back and check."
4. Before assisting your child, give them an opportunity to self-correct. (Count to 3, slowly.)

eg: He was a sly fox.

1. sneaky
2. slimy
3. slow

- ⇒ Remember - "Keep the ball rolling!" Try to maintain fluency. If your child is "stuck" on the print, choose a different book so they will feel more successful!

- Make sure your responses promote a love of reading !!!



# STAGES OF CHILDREN'S READING DEVELOPMENT

## Emergent

### "Making a Start"

- Inexperienced reader
- Learning Concepts About Print:

1:1 print match  
directionality  
what is a word  
what is a letter  
punctuation

- Learning Basic Reading Strategies
- Learning Basic Reading Cues:

Meaning  
Structure  
Visual

- Learn to Recognize a Few Basic Words
- Learn About Books:  
they tell stories  
give information  
pictures help  
stories are constant

## Early

### "Becoming a Reader"

- Building experience as a reader
- Have mastered basic concepts about print

- Learning More Complex Strategies  
monitoring  
self correction  
searching

- Establishing the habit of reading for meaning

- Using text to

Sample  
Predict  
Confirm

- Using visual/phonics to confirm

- Reading more complex stories but still needs support from rhyme, rhythm & repetition

Adapted from Reading in the Junior Classes, and The California Learning Record

## Fluent

### "Going it Alone"

- Experienced reader
- Mastered basic reading cues
- Integrating cues

Meaning  
Structure  
Visual

- Reducing to minimum attention to the details of print
- Variety of genres

fiction  
nonfiction  
poetry  
graphs and charts

- Maintaining meaning with more complex sentence structures and stories
- More deeply involved

plot  
character analysis  
story structure

## 12 WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD WITH READING AT HOME

## SETTING THE ATMOSPHERE

Help your child find a quiet, comfortable place to read.  
 Have your child see you as a reading model.  
 Read aloud to your child. Reread favorite stories.  
 Read with your child.  
 Discuss the stories you read together.  
 Recognize the value of silent reading.  
 Keep reading time enjoyable and relaxed.

## RESPONDING TO ERRORS IN READING

Based on the way most of us were taught to read, we have told the child to "sound it out" when he comes to an unknown word. While phonics is an important part of reading, reading for meaning is the primary goal. To produce independent readers who monitor and correct themselves as they read, the following prompts are recommended before saying "sound it out."

- Give your child wait time of 5 to 10 seconds. See what he attempts to do to help himself.
- "What would make sense there?"
- "What do you think that word could be?"
- "Use the picture to help you figure out what it could be."
- "Go back to the beginning and try that again."
- "Skip over it and read to the end of the sentence (or paragraph.) Now what do you think it is?"
- "Put in a word that would make sense there."
- "You read that word before on another page. See if you can find it."
- "Look at how that word begins. Start it out and keep reading."
- Tell your child the word.

Most important, focus on what your child is doing well and attempting to do. Remain loving and supportive. When your child is having difficulty and trying to work out the trouble spots, comments such as the following are suggested:

- "Good for you. I like the way you tried to work that out."
- "That was a good try. Yes, that word would make sense there."
- "I like the way you looked at the picture to help yourself."
- "I like the way you went back to the beginning of the sentence and tried that again. That's what good readers do."
- "You are becoming a good reader. I'm proud of you."

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