



Strategies to help struggling readers

Have Fun - Read Together



As simple as it sounds, ten minutes a day of quality time having fun with a book can make the difference between someone who struggles with reading and someone who discovers the love and joy of reading. The ten minutes spent with your child and a book should be the best ten minutes of your child's day. It is not about reading today but about coming back to read again tomorrow and the day after. Eliminate the stress and anxiety of reading together – try the strategies on this website.

If you always sit in the same place to do home reading, vary the location. Go outside and read under a tree, take the book to the coffee shop, or simply sit on the lounge room floor.

Children sense your anxiety. Reading is about trust. Readers (especially struggling readers) are vulnerable. Parents' expectations often get in the way if they experience anxiety and fear around reading. Alleviate the stress by doing shared reading, NIM, or echo reading. Laugh. Lighten up. Children learn when they are having fun.

If your child insists on reading his favourite book for the 55th time, read it with pleasure...and then say "I noticed this book on your shelf, I would like to read that to you when we finish. Reading a book is an invitation and children need to be given the opportunity to choose.

Book Orientation



Before you start reading with your child, take two to three minutes to discuss the book. It is important that the child holds the book. Flip through the pages and talk about the title, illustrations and any unusual words that you notice. You could also read the blurb together. By having this initial conversation, you are setting your child up for success. You are putting into place the necessary support for your child to read with confidence.

It is not necessary to spend a long time doing a book orientation. Two to three minutes is enough. Spending too much time could become boring and discussing every page takes away from the enjoyment of discovering the plot or discovering something new. Enjoy sharing the book and use it as an enticement to discover what happens in the story.



Strategies that work and take away the angst and stress of reading at home

Echo reading

Negotiate with the child whether you will read a sentence, paragraph or page. The adult then reads the sentence, paragraph or page first. The child rereads (echoes) the sentence, paragraph or page back. Continue in this way to complete the book. Echo reading eliminates the frustration and anxiety that is too often associated with reading aloud.

By "echoing" your reading, the child has an opportunity to sound like a fluent reader. This is important in building a child's sense of what it feels like and sounds like to be a good reader. Your child can feel confident, relaxed and will enjoy the experience.

There is no loss of comprehension and together you can have fun reading the story. You are modeling good reading. When you make a mistake, share the experience. This gives the child an opportunity to understand that all readers make errors and self-correct.

Shared reading

Negotiate with the child to take turns in reading. You could take turns reading a sentence, paragraph or page depending on the book. With shared reading, when the child comes to an unfamiliar word, he/she will hear you read it correctly and will self corrects next time the word appears.

Shared reading ensures that comprehension is maintained. Any meaning that is lost when the child reads is restored when you read the next sentence, paragraph or page.

Shared reading eliminates the frustration of reading together because you are modeling good reading and filling an misunderstandings or mispronunciations the child may experience during his/her turn at reading.

Neurological Impress Method (NIM)

Read a story out loud while the child reads aloud with you. The child will "mimic" the words behind you. Track the reading with your

Prompting Unfamiliar Words



When your child comes to a word, he does not know: WAIT. Avoid eye contact. Keep your eyes on the page. Count to 10 if you have to. Your child needs time to piece together the clues. When we read, our eyes look ahead, reread, skip along to the next line to pick up clues, or gather information from the illustrations —this takes time.

If he substitutes a word that does not make sense say:

- Does that make sense?
- Try that again, go back to the beginning of the sentence
- Read on to collect more information

Avoid jumping in to rescue your child. By being the "instant word factory" you are not supporting your child to use the clues that are available. We want independent readers who understand how reading works. You will not be sitting next to your child in the classroom. We want your child to be confident to try different ways to solve the puzzle. Avoid unnecessary interruptions. The clue is in the book. Do not give a clue that takes the child out of the book.

Give praise after the reading. Remember to praise the reading not the reader. You are reinforcing good reading habits when you respond with:

- I liked the way you read ahead.
- I like the way you worked out that word by using the clues in the sentence.
- I liked how you self corrected when you read the word incorrectly.
- I liked how you did not stop and get worried about that word. You kept on reading to gather more clues.

IN Summary

RULES FOR PROMPTING

When your child comes to a word, he or she does not know, do the following:

- Wait
- Avoid eye contact
- Say:

Read on to collect more information

Keep reading to see what would make sense...

Skip the word...

Try that again, go back to the beginning of the sentence

finger so your child can keep up. The child mimics your reading and by tracking, you are directing the child to where you are reading.

Avoid pointing to individual words – instead, move your finger under the line of text in a fluid movement. Read at your normal reading pace.

When using NIM, the child has an opportunity to sound like a fluent reader. This is important in building a child's sense of what it feels like and sounds like to be a good reader. Your child can feel confident and relaxed while enjoying the experience.

You are modeling good reading. When you make a mistake, share the experience. This gives the child an opportunity to understand that all readers make errors and self-correct. If your child looks away from the book, don't stop reading or give up in despair! Continue to read with enthusiasm and you will find that your child returns to the book.

Does that make sense?

- Avoid unnecessary interruptions
- Praise the reading not the reader...I liked the way you read ahead...said XX and kept on reading...self-corrected when it did not make sense.