



WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

Video: Ahoy, Fluency! *Developing Reading Fluency (blending the elements of fluency)*



Parents Can Help Children Become More Fluent

Researchers have found over and over again that when parents are involved in their child's education, (no matter the grade level of the child) the child is more successful in school. The child's learning is improved, particularly in literacy.

One way parents can help their child is to read with him/her on a regular basis. The following method is designed to improve reading fluency. Research has shown that it is most helpful for struggling readers. On average, participants in the study spent ten minutes per day reading with their child.

- Choose a daily passage to use with your child. The passage should be short (50-200 words) and age-appropriate in terms of content. If your child is in kindergarten through grade two, highly predictable text is helpful. Highly predictable text includes patterns and rhyming words often found in verse poems and song lyrics.
- Sit together with your child in a quiet area or room. Read the text to your child several times, until he/she is familiar with the passage. Draw his/her attention to the text by pointing to the words as you read.
- Discuss the content of the passage and also point out text features that support fluent reading.
 - For young children, point out the sounds, rhythms, and patterns that encourage playfulness with the language. This includes repeated words, rhymes, alliteration (words that begin with the same letter or sound such as “dangerous, daring dragons”) and patterns that are fun to say.
 - For older children, point out punctuation and print features that provide opportunities to practice phrasing, expression, and other elements of fluency. Punctuation that signals fluency includes commas (phrasing), quotation marks (dialogue), dashes, bullets, periods (pauses) and exclamation marks (excitement). Print features such as bold face or italicized print often signal important words that should be emphasized.
- Next, read the passage together with your child. Read it again several times, until your child feels willing and comfortable to read the passage on his/her own.
- Provide backup or shadow reading while your child reads the text alone. This means that you read softly in the background, or only provide tricky words if your child needs help. If your child is a beginning reader or often loses his/her place, encourage him/her to point to the words as they are read to guarantee voice-to print matching.
- Have your child read the passage again several times on his/her own.

References:

Rasinski, T., & Stevenson, B. (2005). The effects of fast start reading: A fluency-based home involvement reading program, on the reading achievement of beginning readers. *Reading Psychology, 26*(2), 109-125.

Rasinski, T., Blachowicz, C., & Lems, K. (2006). *Fluency instruction: Research-based best practices*. New York: Guilford Press.