

Ways to Improve Reading Fluency in Developing Readers

Read Aloud – Reading aloud to your child is a wonderful way to model the fluent, expressive reading that is necessary for skilled reading. Hearing books read aloud helps developing readers internalize the rhythm and flow of written language. Listening to phrased, fluent reading expands vocabulary, builds background knowledge about reading, gives young readers access to high interest text, and conveys the joy of reading. Helping your child develop a love of reading now, will help him or her become a life long reader.

Choral Reading – The adult and child read a text aloud in unison. Choral reading increases a child’s awareness of the rhythms, conventions, and structures of written language. Choral reading can occur with the first reading of the text, after the adult has read the book to the child (child’s eyes following the author’s words as the adult reads), or after the child has read the story silently. The choral reading activity does not require reading the whole story aloud. The adult may choose to choral read specific segments of the story. The adult may choose a part of the story that includes dialogue or a segment in which expressive reading seems especially important (a scary, sad, exciting or happy part). The story can be read multiple times. The child could read the text independently after choral reading with an adult. The key to choral reading is the fluent reading that is practiced. Choral reading strengthens readers’ word recognition and vocabulary skills while enabling them to feel what it means to be fluent.

Echo Reading – The adult reads a sentence, phrase, paragraph or page fluently, using appropriate tone, expression, and phrasing. The child then “echoes” the adult by reading the same text. Echo reading gives the developing reader a model of fluent reading to emulate. Echo reading is best with short texts.

Adult Models Initial Page – The adult reads the first two or three pages of the story in a fluent, expressive manner. The child follows along with eyes tracking the print. To aid the child in visual tracking the adult might sweep his/her finger under the print while reading. The modeling of phrased, fluent reading may help the child read the remainder of the story with greater fluency and fewer misread words. Accurate, fluent reading occurs because new and/or “tricky” words have been pronounced by the adult in the first few pages. The adult’s fluent reading provides a good sense of the story as well as a model of fluent reading.

Alternate Page Reading – The adult and child alternate reading pages, paragraphs or sentences throughout the book or story. Adult models fluent, expressive reading.

Rereading – The adult and child reread familiar, independent (few or no difficult words) stories multiple times. Rereading familiar stories gives the child practice reading words that occur frequently in text. Automatic recognition of frequently occurring words helps the child become a fluent reader. Automatic recognition of words gives the child the “brain energy” necessary for comprehension.

Enjoyment of reading is an important message to send to your child.