



Resource 6

Ways to Help Your Child with Reading at Home

Consider these ideas on how you can support reading at home.

Setting the Atmosphere

- Help your child find a comfortable, quiet place to read.
- Orient your child to the book by looking at the cover first and talking about what you think it may be about or any way it reminds you of your life. Ask your child what s/he thinks.
- Have your child see you as a reading model.
- Read aloud to your child. Re-read favorite stories.
- Read with your child.
- Discuss the stories you read together.
- Recognize the value of silent reading.
- Keep reading time enjoyable and relaxed.
- Let your child see you reading for enjoyment and for information.

Responding to Errors in Reading

Based on the way most of us were taught to read, we tell children to “sound it out” when they come to an unknown word. To help children become independent readers who monitor and correct themselves as they read, try the following ideas before saying “sound it out”. When your child has trouble reading a word, give him or her wait time of 5 to 10 seconds. See what he attempts to do to help himself and then apply one or more of the following questions or comments.

- “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.”
- Help your child sound it out or tell what the word is.

Most importantly, 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, try these comments.

- “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 it again. That’s what good readers do.”
- “You are becoming a good reader. I’m proud of you.”

Source: Routman, R. (1994)