

Helping Your Child When He/She Reads

Before Reading

- Discuss with your child what you both already know about the topic.
- Help your child choose a strategy for reading - skimming, reading more carefully, etc.
- Help your child make predictions on what he/she thinks will be included in the reading.

While Reading

- Find places for your child to stop reading and discuss the content.
- Help with pronunciation through the use of phonics.
- Discuss the italicized or bold words, including graphs, charts, or questions from the author.

After Reading

- If possible, give your child the opportunity to 'experience' what he or she has just read.
- Ask your child to pretend to be a teacher, and have them explain what they read to you.

Common Problems and Possible Solutions

Problem - When your child says, "I don't get it."

Suggestion - Have him/her reread and take notes.

Problem - Your child can't remember details.

Suggestion - Periodically have your child stop reading and discuss the content with them.

Problem - Your child doesn't seem to understand any of it.

Suggestion - Explain it to your child and then have them reread the information.

Suggestion - Look up the information on the Internet together, read, and discuss.

Problem - Your child can recall some of the information but does not understand the author's meaning.

Suggestion - Have your child skim and look for important information.

Suggestion - Using the structure of the text, help your child look for important information.

Suggestion - Look for charts, graphs, or pictures that will help explain the material.

Problem - Your child has limited knowledge on the topic prior to reading.

Suggestion - Talk to your child about the topic, or find something on the computer on the topic that is easy to read. After reading the easier material, have your child reread the more challenging text.

Problem - Your child can't pronounce many of the words.

Suggestion - Help your child use the glossary or dictionary. If that is not easily accessible, pronounce the words with your child.

Problem - Your child gets distracted or bored while reading.

Suggestion - Let them take periodic breaks from reading.

Suggestion - Remind them to vary the rate of reading - sometimes it's okay to skim; sometimes the reader needs to slow down and read more carefully.

Suggestion - Help your child visualize the content.

Suggestion - Help your child turn the headings into questions, and then have them look for the answers to the questions.

Problem - Your child rereads the text and still doesn't understand the information.

Suggestion - Have your child read the text orally to you and discuss the information. As the child is reading the material, ask him/her to tell you as soon as it gets confusing; then discuss the information with the child.

Problem - Your child reads one word at a time, rather than complete sentences.

Suggestion - Read short passages, and ask your child to watch the punctuation.

Suggestion - Read the passage aloud with your child.

Suggestion - Have your child practice the reading like a radio announcer would do before a broadcast.