

Fluency

Reading fluency is the ability to read with accuracy, expression, phrasing, and appropriate rate. Students who are fluent readers are better able to devote their attention to comprehending the text.

Here are some suggestions for you to help your child become a fluent reader.

Model fluent reading.

Continue to read aloud to your child throughout the elementary school years. Read with lots of exaggerated expression. Change your voice to represent different characters. Use a high squeaky voice for the mouse and a sweet, loving voice for the princess. You are modeling what a good reader sounds like.

Echo reading.

Choose a book that your child has read several times. You read the first short sentence or phrase aloud using an appropriate rate and expression. Then have your child echo you, copying your rate and expression. Younger readers need to point to the words when echo reading so that they are attending to the written text. Continue reading the book in this manner. You read the next sentence or phrase, and then have your child echo you.

Choral reading.

Choose a book that your child has read several times and read it aloud together. Read with expression and emphasize phrasing.

Super Signals.

As you read with your child, point out the Super Signals that good readers use. An exclamation point or bold print tells the reader to raise his voice and read with emphasis. A period or comma tells the reader to pause. A question mark signals the reader to sound like they are asking a question. Explain to your child that fluent reading sounds like the reader is speaking to you.

Say It Like the Character.

Reread a familiar book with your child. Have your child choose one character's part to read; you choose a different character. Discuss the characters' feelings throughout the story. When the character is angry, use an angry voice. When the character is frightened, make sure that you sound really frightened. Have fun reading each part with lots of expression. You may want to invite other family members to join in the fun when there are several different characters within a story.

Challenge Yourself.

Time your child for one minute as he reads a new book. Count the number of words he read correctly. Now have your child practice those same pages again and again. You may want to read these same pages to your child as a model. After he has had a lot of practice, time him again for one minute as he reads these same pages. Count the words he has read correctly this time and compare to the number he read the first time. Celebrate his improvement!

Have your child reread books that he has read before. Research suggests that repeated reading of familiar texts is the best way to improve fluency.