



# Shiawassee

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### HELPING YOUR CHILD AT HOME: READING STRATEGIES PARENTS CAN USE

The goals of reading are to understand written text, integrate new ideas, and generalize from what is read. As a parent, what should you know about reading comprehension to help your child improve his/her skills and achieve those goals? What are the things your child needs to do to understand what he/she reads? Following are some skills necessary for good reading and some ways you can help.

Skill	What it is	How you can help
<b>Phonemic Awareness</b> <i>Hearing Sounds</i>	Phonemic awareness refers to <b>the ability to focus on and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words.</b> Acquiring phonemic awareness is important because it is the foundation for spelling and word recognition skills.	Help child <b>hear the sounds</b> by asking her to think of a number of words that start with a specific sound, such as the "sss..." sound.  <b>Make up silly sentences</b> in which all the words start with the same sound. "Mom made me many meatballs."  Ask your child to clap or stand up whenever he hears a word that starts with a specific sound "bbb...", or "rrrr", or a word that rhymes with a particular word, such as "cat".  <b>Reading and saying nursery rhymes</b> together is a great way to increase phonemic awareness.
<b>Phonics</b> <i>Decoding Words</i>	The ability to apply your <b>knowledge of letter-sound relationships</b> , including knowledge of letter patterns, to correctly pronounce written words. Understanding these relationships gives children the ability to recognize familiar words quickly and to figure out words they haven't seen before.	Help your young child learn the letters and sounds of the <b>alphabet</b> . Occasionally point to letters and letter combinations and ask your child to name them. A set of <b>magnetic letters</b> on the refrigerator can provide fun and learning during meal preparation.  Encourage your child to <b>write and spell notes, e-mails, and letters</b> .  Talk with your child about the <b>"irregular" words</b> ; such as, <i>said, are</i> and <i>was</i> , that he needs to recognize "by sight."  When your child mispronounces a word, remind him of the <b>rules for that word</b> . i.e., made - the e at the end is silent and makes the "a" a long vowel sound.
<b>Fluency</b>	<b>Reading accurately and with expression - chunking words into phrases and using pauses appropriately.</b>  Children who do not read fluently sound choppy when they read.	In order to read fluently, we need a lot of <b>practice</b> with hearing how good reading sounds and with reading out loud. <b>Read aloud</b> often to your child; the more often she hears a story, the more familiar the words will become and the easier it will be for your child to read.  <b>Ask your child to read to you</b> - she will get practice with reading and you will hear how she is progressing and where she may have trouble. If you don't have time to listen to her read, ask her to read to a brother or sister, or to a pet or stuffed animal. Practice really does help us to improve.

Skill	What it is	How you can help
<b>Fluency, cont.</b>	Reading fluently is not the same as speed reading - it's not just reading fast; it's reading the way we should talk so that we can better understand what we are reading. Reading fluently is a bridge to comprehension.	Ask your child to read into a tape recorder a number of times. The more times she reads, the better she'll sound, and she'll be able to hear the difference.
<b>Expanding Vocabulary</b>	<p>Vocabulary refers to <b>the words we must understand to communicate effectively.</b></p> <p>A reader cannot understand a text without knowing what most of the words mean. Students learn the meaning of most words indirectly, through everyday experiences with oral and written language.</p>	<p>Learn the meaning of <b>new words</b>. The larger your child's vocabulary, the easier it is for him to understand the meaning of the text.</p> <p><b>Read to your child each day.</b> When the book contains a new or interesting word, pause and define the word for you child.</p> <p><b>Discuss the meanings of unknown words</b>, both those he reads and those he hears.</p> <p>Study <b>word parts</b>. If you child knows the meaning of a root word ("kind"), then he'll know what the new word means when the prefix ("un"/not) or suffix ("ness"/state of being) is added. (unkind, kindness).</p> <p>Talk about the relationships between words. <b>Synonyms</b> are words with the same or similar meanings ("bucket/pail"), and <b>antonyms</b> are opposites ("good/bad"). Your child may need help learning figures of speech, such as, "It's raining cats and dogs," in order to understand what he's reading.</p>
<b>Comprehension</b>	<p>Comprehension is the <b>understanding and interpretation</b> if what is read. To be able to accurately understand written material, children need to be able to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Decode what they read;</li> <li>2) Make connections between what they read and what they already know/ and</li> <li>3) Think deeply about what they have read.</li> </ol> <p>Comprehension involves combining reading with thinking and reasoning.</p>	<p><b>Show your child how to be an active reader.</b> Discuss what your child as read. <b>Ask</b> your child probing questions about the book and <b>connect</b> the events to his or her own life.</p> <p>Help your child <b>go back to the text</b> to support his or her answers.</p> <p>Know and share the rules for putting words into meaningful sentences. <b>Making a statement into a question</b> requires changing the order of the subject and verb, such as, "That was a good story." to "Was that a good story?"</p> <p>Help your child understand the "<b>unspoken</b>" <b>ideas</b> in what he has read; such as, <b>inferences, the main idea</b> of the story, and the differences between <b>facts and opinions</b>.</p> <p>Give your child many <b>background experiences</b>, such as visits to zoos and museums; and activities, such as cooking, shopping, and trips to other places, ordinary and not so ordinary. The more experiences a child has had, the more he can connect what ie is reading to what he knows.</p>