

The next step: Fluency

As children become proficient at figuring out words, the development of fluency becomes an important next step. Fluent readers use appropriate pitch, pace, phrasing and expression. Research also shows that fluent reading aids comprehension. Please find below some reading activities to do with the books your child brings home from school. Your child's Practice Reader and easy-level books from your child's weekly Book Bag would be appropriate books to use with these activities:

Reading Activities to do with books your child brings home from school

Echo reading: You read one line, and the child reads the same line after you. Increase the number of lines you read at one time as the child's reading improves. To be sure the child is looking at the words, ask him or her to follow the print with a finger. Try to echo-read at least one story each week.

Choral reading: You and your child read the same text aloud together. Choral reading should be done at least twice a week.

Partner reading: You and your child take turns reading. Start by reading one sentence and ask the child to read the next sentence. As the child's fluency improves, you read a page and he/she reads a page. Partner-read about once a week.

Repeated reading: Read the same book or story more than once in the same week.

Remember: Whenever you read with your child, use as much expression as you can so that your reading sounds like speaking and the story comes alive.

How do you rate your child's fluency?

Needs work—

Reading is word by word, slow, and choppy, with some words missed and not enough expression to show an understanding of the text.

Good—

The pace of the reading is slow but not choppy. Most words are pronounced properly with enough expression to show some understanding of the text.

Excellent—

Reading flows smoothly at a good pace. All words are decoded properly and expression demonstrates an understanding of what is read.

Another idea:

- Tape record your child reading a short passage.
- Several months later tape record another reading.
- Play the two recordings and listen for improvement.