



Helping your son or daughter to read is one of the most important things you will EVER do with them.

Even if you are not the world's best or most avid reader, being interested in what they read is helpful.

When reading at home, please encourage them to read aloud as often as possible. So, in one session, they may read to themselves for some of the time and to you for a few minutes.

What would be helpful to have?

You will need a dictionary, and a stopwatch, or something (like your phone or tablet) you can set a timer on.



What first?

Ask them to talk about the book title, author and what is written on the back (there is usually a synopsis). Talking about the book briefly will help them focus on what the text is like.

What is my role?

Your role as a parent is two-fold. One, it is to help your son / daughter read aloud confidently and two, it is to help them enjoy reading. You don't have to worry about making too many long comments in a reading diary or commenting too much on progress.

What will I do in the time we have to read?

It would be advisable to sit with them for at least 10 to around 20 minutes. Some children take time to develop fluency. Reading fluency is more or less a skill that enables the reader to read *quickly, accurately, and with expression.*



What do I do if they are stuck?

If a child is struggling to read fluently, there are many strategies you can use to support this critical, lifelong skill. Don't worry! Anyone who struggles with reading fluency can improve with practice, attention, and consistent feedback. Here are a few simple ways you could help at home with reading pages and pages of text with absolute confidence:

1. Model fluent reading

Children can learn well from others. One of the best ways to improve a child's reading fluency is to model it for him or her. Let them see and hear what fluent reading should sound like. Make sure you include plenty of expressions and emotion while reading and model proper phrasing and pacing. Then ask your child to read the same passage in the same style or manner as you did.

2. Stopwatch / Timer readings

Another strategy that works for improving reading speed, which is also a major part of fluency, is asking your child to read a given passage in a set time frame. Here's how it's done: **Set a stopwatch for one minute**, and have your reader read a passage with as few errors as possible. Notice where he or she stops or breaks his fluency and work on improving those areas. Perhaps there was a word he / she couldn't pronounce. Ask them to repeatedly pronounce the word after learning the meaning. Then once again, ask your reader to read the passage with the timer set to one minute. This time the reading should be faster!

The one minute read works because it is a manageable chunk of time and your reader will be able to practice several

repeated reads in a row without losing focus or interest.

3. Choral read aloud sessions

“Choral reading,” is when you read aloud and ask them to follow at the same pace. Choral reading is another way to show your reader what fluent reading should sound like. Choosing a book at the reader’s independent reading level will make it easier for him/her to keep up with the accuracy and pace.

4. Marked reading

Take a passage and ask the reader to read while you silently follow on a copy of that same passage. Mark places where your readers made mistakes, (mispronunciation, skipped words, etc.) and keep practicing these words and passages. This can be done during the stop watch reading exercise or a read aloud activity.

To track progress, mark the number of errors and challenging words each time the passage is read. Again, remember to celebrate progress with prizes and/or praise.

5. Re-read favourite books

Always encourage the reader to re-read favourite books. Some people discourage children from reading the same books again and again in an attempt to expose them to new information. However, constantly reading new material doesn’t help *reading fluency* at all. In fact, the more accustomed to reading a particular book your child is, the more fluent he/she becomes at reading it. This gives them the confidence, accuracy, and speed needed to read fluently without focusing on *just reading* and instead more on comprehending and mimicking expressions.

Lastly, the best way to improve children’s reading fluency is by encouraging them to read more often while keeping speed, accuracy, and expression in mind. The more they read, the better they get! Modelling positive reading behaviour sets the tone for reading.

If you have any questions, please speak to your son or daughter’s teacher or Mrs Downes.

ST FRANCIS XAVIER CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Reading Booklet for Parents

(grandparents, other
relatives!)

