

Helping Your Struggling Reader

Reading success is based on 5 factors: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Learn more about each factor to gain a better understanding of where exactly your child may be struggling.

Encourage kids to read anything—even if it isn't a book. Magazines, comics or websites can engage children, and shows them that computers and iPads aren't just for games.

Ask the teacher for work or suggestions for where to find helpful websites that will support your efforts to help your child. The Ohio Department of Education has helpful tools and tips for parents.

Don't say no to your young reader. If your child is excited about reading about a subject he's interested in, for example, don't push him or her to read something else. Even if the reading level is too difficult for your child, encourage his interest in reading. Offer to read the book to him or with him.

Integrate reading and writing into "real-world" activities. Have your child read menus, signs, recipes, directions on games, etc. Have your child write your grocery list, thank you notes, or Christmas letter. An authentic purpose for reading and writing is motivating to children, and they see that those two things are more than just something they do in school.

Need help finding books at your child's reading level? Ask your child's teacher for assistance. Try to use their DRA or Fountas and Pinnell benchmark reading level instead of a grade level or Lexile level when looking for books. Grade and Lexile levels can be problematic because of their broad spans. DRA and F and P are more specific. Many books today can be identified by their level by looking on the internet or asking your local librarian.

Go for it! Even if all you end up doing is reading with your child daily for 20 minutes daily, that is great! Keep the mood light and upbeat and keep your eyes on the goal of enjoying reading.