



Home-School Connection

What is reading?

Reading is making meaning from the squiggles on the page. Research into reading development suggests reading can be described as a multiplicative equation:

$$\text{Decoding} \times \text{Language Comprehension} = \text{Reading Comprehension}$$

There are 2 pathways that are developing for children who are learning how to read. The first is called decoding. Decoding is the child's ability to turn the squiggles on the page into speech. The second is language comprehension. Language comprehension describes the child's ability to understand the meaning of the words and comprehend language (language comprehension).

How to Help Your Child in Reading

Decoding

To help your child build their decoding skills, have them read simple books with words they can sound out.

When your child comes to an unknown word, encourage them to sound it out.

If they say a sound incorrectly or don't know a sound, provide the sound(s) for them and ask them to blend the word together and pronounce it as a whole word.

You can also do activities to build their awareness of these important, tiny speech sounds:

- Say a whole word and have your child say one sound each time they take a step or a hop (cat=/k/, /a/, /t/; wish=/w/ /i/ /sh/)
- Say a word like a robot, one speech sound at a time, and have your child guess what you are saying (It's time for /d/, /i/, /n/, /er/ (dinner)!
- Encourage your child to sound out words to spell them. Research suggests this "invented spelling" builds their awareness of speech sounds in words!

Language Comprehension

To help your child build their language comprehension skills, read books to them above the level they could read to themselves.

Content-rich nonfiction texts that build their knowledge and vocabulary will assist children in understanding more content area texts (like science and social studies) in the future. Some examples of nonfiction texts include:

- National Geographic Kids: Sharks!
- Martin's Big Words by Doreen Rappaport
- The Street Beneath my Feet by Charlotte Guillain

Narrative texts with rich vocabulary will help children to build their understanding of new words and the complex grammar in written language. Some examples of narrative texts include:

- Last Stop on Market Street by Matt de la Peña
- Those Shoes by Maribeth Boelts
- Creepy Carrots by Aaron Reynolds

Whatever you choose to read, ask your child questions and point out the parts you like and what you are thinking as you read particularly exciting or confusing parts!