

# Cracking the Code of Decoding Skills: Prompt Cues for Parents

## Using the Clues as Strategies

Your beginning reader should be tracking, or placing a finger or pointer, on each of the words during the reading. This strategy helps with letter-to-sound identification, word recognition, fluency &, ultimately, comprehension. Tracking is an important way for your child to focus on the unknown word s/he has hesitated on. Quickly, offer these prompting clues to assist your young reader.

These strategy prompts should only take a few minutes.

### WHAT IS GOING ON IN THIS STORY ?

- Go to the next word. What would make sense there?
- Look at the picture & think about what is happening in the story now.
- Go back to the beginning of the sentence & reread it. Think about the story & make a guess.
- Still stuck? Let's look at the word. You can figure it out. Let me help you.

### WHAT ARE THE LETTERS IN THE WORDS SAYING ?

- Do you see a word inside this word that you know? (This is where word family and/or sight word knowledge can be a step up).
- Cover up all the other letters & read the word you know.
- Start with the smallest known word & work back to the letter in front of it (-an, c-an).
- Vowel sounds can be very tricky for beginning decoders. Make sure s/he is reading the word family chunk vowel accurately.
- Say-"Try a different sound"-once. If not correct, give him/her the correct sound.
- Have your child echo the sound you've given.
- S/he can, then, use it to reread the word family chunk or sight word.
- Work back to re-try decoding.
- Then, what sound does the first letter of the word make?

### AN EXAMPLE.....

The unknown word is **enormous**. Word chunks: **or** to **n-or** & **us**. Look at the picture. What's going on? What word would make sense there? "**norus?**" "Is that a word you know? Make the first letter of the word say its name." "**E-n-or**" "Next letter sound is?" "**mmm**" "Put your finger on the first letter & read as you travel across the word." "**E-nor-m-us**; oh, **enormous!**" "YAY! Back to the beginning of the sentence and reread it, using your enormous new word!"

### STILL NOT ABLE TO DECODE THE UNKNOWN WORD ?

- Don't allow your reader to become frustrated to the point of shutting down.
- Give them the word. Prompt her/him to go to the beginning of the sentence.
- Have him/her reread the sentence, tracking, with the given word.
- Praise her/his attempt. Remember the comprehension is the most important part of reading!