

A Parent Guide to Understanding Literacy Words Used in Reading

SIGHT WORDS: bridge words sprinkled throughout the text that don't follow "phonics" rules & need to be recognized quickly by just looking at the entire word. They help with the flow of reading text.

HIGH FREQUENCY WORDS: words that appear most often in reading leveled text that do not usually follow a "phonics" rule. They can be longer & more difficult than sight words.

FLUENCY: the flow when reading text aloud. It is measured by the speed/rate, the word recognition accuracy as well as the attention to expression of punctuation and quotations.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: being able to hear, identify & use the different, individual sounds in words. Rhyming with word endings & noticing word parts (syllables) are necessary skills for a beginning reader's accurate word recognition and comprehension.

PHONEMIC AWARENESS: being able to put sounds together to make a spoken word. This skill, also, involves making new words in a word family.

PHONICS: Once phonemic awareness skills have been acquired, lessons can be taught for spelling & reading words using letter-sound associations & letter patterns.

PICTURE WALK: a pre-reading strategy of studying the pictures included in the story & making predictions of what the story will be about. Interactive questions about the story elements of setting, characters & plot will increase the understanding of read text.

VOCABULARY: another pre-reading strategy used to increase the understanding of read text. Pre-assessing the meanings of new and/or unknown words can, also, promote the usage of using context clues as a way to define the words.

DECODING: the ability to use different word recognition strategies to read an unknown word with accuracy. Known words within words, word families & moving to the next word are skills that can be used to decode, or solve an unknown word.

COMPREHENSION: basically~ understanding what has been read by using a variety of strategies, such as prior knowledge, real-life connections, questions, visuals, etc. Usually re-reading text for locating details and/or specific information will increase understanding accuracy.

GUIDED READING: the process of teaching reading skills using a variety of lessons, such as sight words & phrases review, phonics, fluency, vocabulary & comprehension strategies. Teachers will pull small groups of readers ~3-5 students ~ who share similar levels of reading skills for instruction and interactive support within the group.

PARTNER/SHARED READING: paired reading, usually as a re-reading activity that promotes confidence, increased comprehension and word recognition accuracy reinforcement. This peer activity is a wonderful way to engage struggling & reluctant readers.