WHAT IS FLUENCY AS A READING SKILL?

Reading Fluency is, according to the National Reading Panel, refers to how smoothly & accurately a text is read. Using expression, decoding unknown words & understanding the content are the major components of this Literacy skill.

Your child's reading fluency is influenced by 3 factors:

- word recognition accuracy ~ reads sight & high frequency words and uses decoding skills for unknown words
- appropriate (natural) speed ~ reads words in phrases instead of one by one
- inflection ~ reads punctuation pauses, ending punctuation marks & with expression

FLUENT READERS:

- Read with a smooth flow, in small groups of words, as if they were speaking
- Read the words correctly, while using decoding skills & context clues quickly
- Pause briefly at commas, semi-colons, periods, etc.
- Uses appropriate voice inflections at an exclamation point and/or question mark

The National Reading Panel, also, provides a few tips on

How You Can Help Improve Your Child's Reading Fluency:

- Model smooth reading by tracking words with your finger.
- Model brief pauses & appropriate expression while pointing to the different punctuation marks.
- Have your child re-read the text back to you while tracking.
- Read the text together.
- Record yourself reading a book your child can track while listening, and, then, read along with the tape.

Be patient with the progress of this skill. Many beginning readers are putting most of their energy in decoding & understanding the text. Fluency skills grow with your child's comfort level & interest of the content being read.