

RESPONDING TO ERRORS IN READING

Based on the way most of us were taught to read, we have told the child to “sound it out” when he/she comes to an unknown word. While phonics is an important part of reading, reading for meaning is the primary goal. To produce independent readers who monitor and correct themselves as they read, the following prompts are recommended **before** saying “sound it out.”

- Give your child wait time of 5 to 10 seconds. See what he/she attempts to do to help him/herself
- “What would make sense there?”
- “What do you think that word could be?”
- “Use the picture to help you figure out what it could be.”
- “Go back to the beginning and try that again.”
- “Skip over it and read to the end of the sentence (or paragraph). Now what do you think the word is?”
- Put in a word that makes sense there.”
- “You read that word before on another page. See if you can find it.”
- “Look at how that word begins. Start it out and keep reading.”
- “Do you see a part of the word that can help you to read it?”
- “Think of what the word means. Is it like another word you know?”
- “What other word do you know like that?”
- “What letter do you expect to see at the beginning? (or end?)”
- “Do you know a word that starts with those letters?”
- “Do you know a word that ends with those letters?”
- Tell your child the word.

Most important, focus on what your child is doing well and attempting to do. Remain loving and supportive. When your child is having difficulty and trying to work out the trouble spots, comments such as the following are suggested:

- “Good for you. I like the way you tried to work that out.”
- “That was a good try. Yes, that word would make sense there.”
- “I liked the way you looked at the picture to help yourself.”
- “I like the way you went back to the beginning of the sentence and tried that again. That’s what good readers do.”
- “That sounds right, but does it look right?”
- “That makes sense, but does it look right?”
- “You are becoming a good reader. I’m proud of you.”