



You and the school can share literacy resources to help your child and others get evidence-based literacy instruction. Learn to spot questionable or ineffective practices.

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Decoding Words

What is it?

The ability to figure out unknown words correctly.

If you are given:

Strategies that encourage your child to look away from letters to read words (looking at the pictures, using context clues, saying the first sound and guessing).

Ask for:

Ways to help your child use knowledge of letter-sound relationships* to read words.

Why?

Kids who can't decode often don't become strong readers. Reading words correctly requires knowing how letters and groups of letters link to sounds to form letter-sound relationships.



Learning Sight Words (like high-frequency words)

What is it?

The ability to know a word instantly and easily, including ones spelled regularly or irregularly.

If you are given:

Strategies, tips, or activities focusing your child on memorizing whole words to learn sight words.

Ask for:

Strategies, tips, or activities focusing your child on saying and using letter-sound relationships* and letter order to learn sight words (irregular word parts and advanced letter-sound relationships are taught to be remembered).

Why?

Sight word learning is not based on visual memory. It requires knowing speech sounds, letter-sound relationships, and letter order. There are too many words to learn by memory alone.



Spelling Words

What is it?

The ability to write words correctly.

If you are given:

Strategies, tips, or activities focusing your child on memorizing letters or letter shapes to spell words (word searches, tracing words, rainbow writing).

Ask for:

Strategies, tips, or activities focusing your child on saying and using letter-sound relationships* and the right letter order to spell words.

Why?

Spelling is not based on visual memory. It requires knowing speech sounds, letter-sound relationships, and letter order.

***Based on skills appropriate for your child's grade-level and literacy needs**