

Northfield Reads & Counts Tutor Manual

St. Olaf College and Carleton College
Northfield Public Schools

Section 5: Tips For Tutoring Reading

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Reading Knowledge by Grade Level

The following are the expectations of what a student will learn of reading and the reading skills he/she will acquire in each grade level.

First Grade

- ✓ Recites the alphabet
- ✓ Recognizes groups of letters as words
- ✓ Tries to sound out words using a variety of strategies (e.g. letters sounds, context, sight words, and illustrations)
- ✓ Recognizes word families, reads picture books
- ✓ Understands the sequence and main idea of a story
- ✓ Recognizes an increasing number of sight words

Second Grade

- ✓ Recognizes letters and words
- ✓ Follows rules for reading
- ✓ Uses routine skills and thinking to create meaning
- ✓ Applies word-analysis skills while reading
- ✓ Understands the characteristics of various simple genres (e.g. fables, poetry, fiction)
- ✓ Understands basic punctuation
- ✓ Remembers the main ideas and important details
- ✓ Learns the difference between fact and opinion

Third Grade

- ✓ Relies on print more than pictures to make meaning of text
- ✓ Reads chapter books
- ✓ Reads aloud with natural rhythm
- ✓ Understands ideas that were implied but not said
- ✓ Can discuss what he/she has read
- ✓ Compares characters and plots, evaluates them
- ✓ Understands basic elements of literature (e.g. author, plot, setting) and can define them for each story

Fourth Grade

- ✓ Reads familiar text with ease
- ✓ Uses word structure clues to figure out meaning
- ✓ Reads and understands different forms of print media (e.g. schedules, recipes, instructions)
- ✓ Reads silently for extended periods of time
- ✓ Uses dictionary skills
- ✓ Ask questions about what he/she has read
- ✓ Can tell how different stories are similar/different
- ✓ Can identify cause and effect

Fifth Grade

- ✓ Construct meaning from reading in the content areas at the literal and higher-order levels (e.g. main idea, multiple meaning words, synonyms, antonyms, homophones, word referents, summarizing, categorizing, sequencing, drawing conclusions, inferences, predictions, and cause and effect)
- ✓ Reads to learn new information
- ✓ Selects and finishes a wide variety of materials
- ✓ Can connect previous experiences to new reading
- ✓ Make predictions based on what he/she has read
- ✓ Recognizes ways an author tries to persuade readers
- ✓ Can find information in books and articles

Sixth Grade

- ✓ Selects and reads more complex literature
- ✓ Evaluate the author's purpose and point of view, tone, mode, and point of view
- ✓ Varies reading strategies according to the text
- ✓ Uses what he/she already knows to help him/her understand what he/she is reading



► Techniques to use to motivate young readers:

- * Act as a reading model.
- * Give the child access to a variety of books.
- * Encourage the child to choose books to read.
- * Talk with the child about books you are reading.
- * Allow the child to read a book again and again.
- * Offer appropriate reading-related incentives.
- * Encourage the child to ask questions and explore new subjects through reading.
- * Never penalize the child for mistakes.
- * Expose the child to a variety of reading and writing material.

Strategies for Reading Together

Reading aloud helps your student practice reading with your support. The following are some reading techniques that all help to build confidence and fluency in young readers, consider asking your student which method he/she would prefer.

1. Choral reading—read aloud with the student while running your index finger underneath the text, as the student becomes more proficient he/she could run his/her finger underneath the text.
2. Echo reading—read aloud while running your index finger underneath the text and have your student repeat the words.
3. Alternate Reading—the tutor will read a sentence, paragraph or page and then the student will read the next sentence, paragraph or page.
4. Paired reading—the student reads aloud and the tutor coaches or provides unknown words when needed.



Help your student get involved in paired reading:

- Ask the student to pick out the book.
- Get to know the book, take a picture walk.
- Make sure the student can see the book and the text.
- Talk about the subject before you begin to read.
- Read with animation.
- As you read, point out the pictures and discuss their meaning.
- Ask questions to help the student think about the story.
- Connect the story to a real life experience.
- Work on book-related activities.
- Read familiar, well loved books again and again.

Language Arts Activities

- ❑ Ask your student to tell you a story and when he/she is finished repeat it back for clarification and verification. Then write the story down saying the words that you are writing out loud and letting your student watch you write and correct your words as you go to match his/her story. Once you have finished ask your student to draw a picture to go with the story and then read it together. The end result is that your student gets to experience the fun and satisfaction of writing his/her own story without the difficulty of writing, spelling, and revising alone. As your student's writing skills develop you can take turns writing and finally let your student do all of the writing.
- ❑ Read a book of tall tales, and then take turns telling stories from each of your days that have extraordinary events added into them.
- ❑ Make a book of one of your stories that your student can take home to show his/her parents.
- ❑ Bring a reading sample with every fifth word blanked out and have the student work to figure out what might fit in each blank and then check against the real text. Use blanks and not a black line as the length of the word may give away its identity.
- ❑ Read aloud a passage of text and have the student draw/color/paint a picture of to accompany what he/she heard. Repeat with the tutor drawing the picture (the student can provide an ad-libbed narration rather than read a book).
- ❑ After reading a sample of text, suggest a different perspective and ask the student how that new perspective changes his/her comprehension. For example, read a description of a home from the perspective of a neighbor and change the perspective to that of a burglar. How does that change what becomes important in the description?



Strategies for Coaching Reading

Pre-Reading Strategies

1. Predicting
Examine the cover illustration and read the title. Ask the student to predict what the book might be about, who the characters will be, where it will take place.
2. Activating background knowledge
Ask the student to tell you what he/she knows about the subject of the story or if he/she has had similar experiences or heard or read a similar story. In this respect, check to make sure that your student is familiar with the subject. For example, if a book is about an ostrich and student has never seen an ostrich before, you will need to discuss what an ostrich is before beginning.
3. Taking a picture walk
Look at the pictures of the story or chapter and brainstorm what could be going on in the story based on the pictures. If there is vocabulary that may not be familiar to the student (for example, “bonnet”) point the words out and explain them in connection with the pictures and context of the story.
4. Noticing Structure of Text
When appropriate, point out or help your student to notice the structure of the text and connect it with other similarly structured texts heard or read (e.g. fairy tales begin with “Once upon a time...”).
5. Forming purpose for reading
Encourage your student to come up with 2 or 3 predictions or questions before reading (e.g. “You already know a lot about dinosaurs. What are some things you want to find out about them when you read this book?”).



During Reading Strategies

Using Cues and Asking Questions

Successful independent reading involves integrating four sets of cues or decoding strategies. Efficient readers use all four to predict, confirm and self-correct as they read.

1. **Meaning or Semantics**
Readers use their background knowledge of vocabulary and word understanding. They also use the context of the sentence, the paragraph or the whole text to figure out what the text is about, and what would make sense.
2. **Syntax or Language Structure**
Readers use their knowledge of English grammar, for example compound words are made by combining two smaller words, to make sense of text (e.g. does this work, sound, and look correct?).
3. **Phonics**
Readers learn to relate sounds to letters and to use these associations to try to sound out new words.
4. **Visual Information**
Readers use information in the text including pictures and print and other knowledge of print conventions (for example, direction, punctuation, letter/sound associations, shapes of letters and words).

Tutors can help young readers learn to use these strategies by modeling and encouraging them to ask themselves questions as they read.

- For example, if a student reads aloud:
“She rode the house into the barn.”
a tutor can ask:
“Hmm, does that make sense? Did she really ride a house? What else could she ride? What word begins with an “h” that you can ride? The word ‘horse’ look a lot like the word ‘house’—does that make more sense? You were close on that word but remember to ask if it makes sense.”
- Over time, students will learn to ask these kinds of questions of themselves:
 - What would make sense?
 - Did what I just read make sense?
 - What word would fit here?
 - Does it sound right?
 - Do the letters and the pictures match up with what I just read?

Does it make sense?

Helping a Reader Who is Stuck or has Miscued

Beginning readers often substitute their own words for those in print (these mistakes are called miscues). While you should help your student to become an accurate reader, helping him/her to make sense and get meaning from the text is the most important goal. Unless a substitution changes the meaning of the sentence, you do not need to call attention to it (allow the student time to self-correct). The following are some ways to encourage and coach a student through a difficult word. Once the student is convinced that he/she has found the correct word, praise his/her efforts.

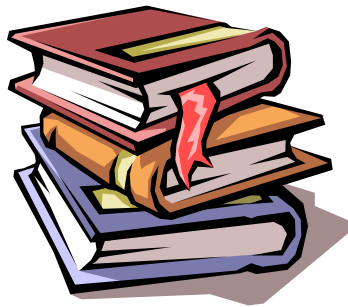
1. **Picture Prompt**
Suggest looking at the picture or trying to imagine what is happening in the story.
2. **Rerun**
Suggest rereading the sentence to clarify the meaning so far and try to predict the upcoming word.
3. **Context Prompt**
Ask the student if what he/she just read made sense, help the reader predict what words would make sense or sound right then look at the difficult word again.
4. **Read-on**
Beginning readers can be encouraged to skip the word or replaces it with a nonsense word (e.g. “hmmmm”) in order to gain context and the meaning of the sentence. Then use the first letter of the difficult word to think of what it could be.
5. **Comparing**
Ask the student if he/she has seen a word that looks like the difficult one, or write down a similar one that the student does know so that he/she can see the letters and hear the sounds that are the same (e.g. “night” for “fright”).
6. **Structural Prompt**
Ask the child if he/she knows a part of the word (e.g. “play” or “ground”).
7. **Look Back**
If the student remembers the word from a different part of the story, look back to learn in what context that word was used.

- High-frequency sight words make up about 50 percent of the words we read and often cause children problems because they can be difficult to sound out and remember. Mastering sight words can provide a great boost in confidence and interest in reading. Your student can spend more energy decoding other words if he/she can automatically recognize the sight words surrounding them. You can help your student learn to remember sight words by making flash cards or keeping a list of all the words he/she has mastered. The following are some examples of high-frequency sight words.

I	a	an	me	what	that	the	of	saw	not	get	know
it	and	one	my	why	there	they	off	come	now	are	knew
in	am	on	we	where	then	can	for	she	yours	ask	should
if	at	no	do	when	these	said	from	he	want	before	could
is	all	be	was	who	those	you	was	see	went	after	would

Post-Reading Strategies

1. Retelling
You and your student can take turns retelling parts of the story, reviewing order of events and main ideas.
2. Discuss your favorite part
Talk about your favorite character, place, picture, etc. in the story.
3. Answering questions
Ask your student if there was any part of the story he/she did not understand or forgot, or if there are any parts about which he/she would like to know more.
4. Comparing to another book
Does this book remind your student of another book he/she has read? Try to look for another book by the same author or with the same theme to read next.
5. Draw a picture or write a summary of the story
6. Model ways of thinking through and organizing the information, main idea and order of events in the story
Help the student to make inferences about how/why different events happened and how/why characters felt and responded in the ways they did.
7. Encourage critical thinking and personal responses to stories



Tips for Choosing Children's Books

- ❖ Keep the student's individual interests, skills, and characteristics in mind. It is helpful if your student can relate to the character or plot.
- ❖ Look for books that introduce new ideas.
- ❖ Vary your selections—real life or imaginary characters, fiction or non-fiction, fable or poetry.
- ❖ Make sure the illustrations and text depict cultures, abilities, genders, and families in positive ways.
- ❖ Read a few pages, is it interesting, is the language varied and creative, are the illustrations colorful and detailed?
- ❖ Look for nominees and winners of book awards such as Caldecott, Newbery and Coretta Scott King.
- ❖ Ask children's librarians to suggest titles and recommended books.
- ❖ Talk with you student about books he/she has enjoyed in the past.
- ❖ Ask teachers or families about which book your student most enjoys.
- ❖ Students should make no more than five mistakes per page while reading (if they make more, the difficulty of the book is too high, seek out another book).

What Can You Say Besides “Sound it Out”?

To help children *monitor their reading*:

- Try that again.
- Are you right?

To help children *use meaning*:

- Look at the picture to help yourself.
- Does that make sense?
- Start that sentence again.
- Make a good guess then go on.
- Think what would make sense.

To help children *use language structure and syntax*:

- Does that sound right? Does it fit?
- Can we say it that way?

To help children *cross check* (use two or three sources of information):

- Check to see if what you said looks right and makes sense.
- It could be _____, but look at _____.

To help children *use visual information/text*:

- Read all the words up to the tricky word and start it.
- Say more of the word.
- Does that look right to you?
- Look at how the word begins.
- Do you know another word that starts that way?
- If that was _____, what would you expect to see at the beginning and at the end?

To help children *problem solve independently*:

- What can you do to help yourself?
- I like the way you tried to help yourself.
- What can you try?
- I like the way you worked on that hard part.



Activities That Help Children Read

The following are summaries of research on 13 core understandings about learning to read, from *Building a Knowledge Base in Reading* by Jane Braunger and Jan Patricia Lewis. These basics should help you understand what activities are important for students to learn to read and write. This knowledge will help you to understand why teachers assign various homework activities and what purpose they serve, so that you can provide the most focused and productive academic support possible.

1. Reading is a construction of meaning from written text. It is an active, cognitive and affective process.

Put it to use: When you read to or with a student, engage him or her. Discuss the pictures, speculate about what will happen next and why characters are the way they are, encourage him/her to use his/her imagination and enter the story. Keep a word list of all the words he/she knows by sight.

2. Background knowledge and prior experience are critical to the reading process.

Put it to use: In the first tutoring session, talk to the student about his/her past literacy experiences. Talk to him/her about other experiences, interests and topics about which he/she would like to know.

3. Social interaction is essential to learning to read.

Put it to use: Play “pass the story” in either an oral or written form. Encourage sharing literacy experiences in groups.

4. Reading and writing develop together.

Put it to use: Have you student write and illustrate a story about an important older person in his/her life. Accept invented spelling and suggest developing writers to use pictures in the place of words they do not know.

5. Reading involves complex thinking.

Put it to use: Have you student write tell and/or draw a sequel or an alternate ending to his/her favorite book. Explore the possibilities by asking questions that help him/her consider the book’s past and future. Encourage the student to insert his/her own experiences into the story.

6. Environments rich in literacy experiences, resources, and models facilitate reading development.

Put it to use: Share the books that you read for fun with your student. Keep a list of all the books that you and your student have read together.

7. Engagement in the reading task is key in successfully learning to read.

Put it to use: Find books and activities that fit your student's interests to build motivation to read and reinforce the enjoyment that he/she finds in reading.

8. Children's understandings of print are not the same as adults' understandings.

Put it to use: Look for a known part or small word to get at a bigger work (like at in bat). Substitute a word that makes sense. Model your own thinking process out loud as you pronounce words or use pictures to understand a story. Play with word tiles/squares.

9. Children develop phonemic awareness and knowledge of phonics through a variety of literacy opportunities, models, and demonstrations.

Put it to use: Read many different forms of print (fiction, non-fiction, poetry, menus). Write words on the white board. Play with magnetic poetry.

10. Children learn successful reading strategies in the context of real reading.

Put it to use: List all the opportunities to read and write your student encounters during a typical day (newspaper, calendar, grocery list, billboards, gas signs, street signs). Encourage your student to recognize and perform "real reading" and draw connections to "homework reading."

11. Children learn best when teachers (and tutors) employ a variety of strategies to model and demonstrate reading knowledge, strategy, and skills.

Put it to use: Use activities that give your student ways of responding and extending a story that are not only verbal. Activate your student's seven intelligences (linguistic [crossword puzzles], logical-mathematical [patterns or riddles], bodily-kinesthetic [plays, crafts or silly putty], spatial [mazes or puzzles], musical [singing or reading out loud in rhythm], interpersonal [group reading] and intrapersonal [silent reading]).

12. Children need the opportunity to read, read, read.

Put it to use: Encourage your student to read everyday.

13. Monitoring the development of reading processes is vital to student success.

Put it to use: Create a portfolio of your student's work. Include drawings, lists of books the child has read, lists of sight words, photos, drawings, and collages. Keep a journal to record the literacy activities you pursue with your student. Discuss your student's abilities, needs and progress with the teacher.

Strategies for Building Fluent Readers

Keys to Reading Comprehension

- ❖ Create mental images
Good readers create a wide range of visual, auditory and other sensory images as they read, and become emotionally involved with what they read.
- ❖ Make connections
Good readers make connections to their prior knowledge before, during and after reading to enhance their understanding of what they are reading.
- ❖ Ask questions
Good readers generate questions before, during and after reading to clarify meaning, make predictions and focus their attention of what is important.
- ❖ Make inferences
Good readers use their prior knowledge and information from what they read to make predictions, seek answers to questions, draw conclusions and create interpretations that deepen their understanding of the text.
- ❖ Determine the most important ideas or themes
Good readers identify key ideas or themes as they read, and they can distinguish between important and unimportant information.
- ❖ Synthesize information
Good readers track their thinking as it evolves during reading, to get the overall meaning.

Ask Questions During a Tutoring Session

1. Questions before reading should help the reader:
 - ✓ Make connections between background knowledge and the topic of the book
 - ✓ Set a purpose for reading
 - ✓ Make predictions
2. Questions during reading should help the reader:
 - ✓ Clarify and review what has happened so far
 - ✓ Confirm or create new predictions
 - ✓ Critically evaluate the story and make personal connections
 - ✓ Make connections with other experiences and books
 - ✓ Monitor the students reading for meaning and accuracy (draw out difficult or new vocabulary)
3. Questions after reading will help:
 - ✓ Reinforce the concept that reading is for understanding the meaning of the text and making connections
 - ✓ Model ways of thinking through and organizing information presented in the text
 - ✓ Encourage critical thinking and personal response
 - ✓ Build awareness of common themes and structures in literature

Online Literacy Resources

The Minnesota Literacy Council

Lots of tutoring, literacy and children's literature links. Go to "Resources" then "Tutor Tips" for good activities.

<http://www.themlc.org/links.htm>

America Reads

Find out more about America Reads, or go to "Resources/Research" for a large number of archived literacy resources

<http://www.ed.gov/americanreads/>

Bank Street College of Education

Great tutor support and reading training. Also, lots of sample games and lesson plans.

<http://www.bnkst.edu/literacyguide/main.html>

Reading Rainbow

Great reading resources. Go to "Teacher Guides" for a list of Reading Rainbow books.

<http://gpn.unl.edu/rainbow/>

Scholastic

Go to "Teachers" for reading activities organized by grade level

<http://www.scholastic.com/>

Kidport

Select the grade and you will get age-appropriate games and worksheets (with lots of helpful links)

<http://www.kidport.com>

National Institute for Literacy

Go to bottom and "LINCS" for resources, literacy facts and academic information

<http://www.nifl.gov>

American Library Association

Go to "Resources" for book lists

<http://www.ala.org/alsc/>

Learning to Read

<http://www.toread.com/>

ERIC academic database and literacy resources

<http://www.eric.ed.gov>

Kay E. Vandergrift

Scholarly information on children's literature

<http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/special>