

When a Student Has Trouble with a Word

When a Student Misreads a Word:

When a student reads a word incorrectly but continues to read, let them get to a natural stopping point before discussing the missed word so the flow of the story is not interrupted. Address the missed word by asking if the word made sense the way they read it.

If student doesn't self-correct and go back to re-read the word, prompt them to go back, and you can ask:

- Did that make sense?
- Let's look at this word more closely.

If they read the word correctly on all but one sound, show them the misread letter(s), give them the correct sound and have them try the word again.

If this is a word you suspect may be a new vocabulary word for the student, ask them if they know what the word means. If they are unfamiliar with the word's meaning introduce some synonyms or give a brief child-friendly definition of the word. If your student misses more than 10% of the words on the page, this level might be too difficult for them and you might consider reading a book one level lower.

When a Student Gets Stuck on a Word:

When a student gets to a word and stops reading, either staring at the word, looking at you, or asking you for help, you can help them break the word down into more manageable "chunks."

If the word has more than one syllable, cover up later syllables and have them tackle it one syllable at a time. For example, a word like carnivore you could help show them car-ni-vore.

In a single-syllable word (or word part) you can break it down by first covering all but the first consonant(s) and have them try the initial sounds and then the vowel part. For instance: t-ake, spl-at, tr-ip.

Note on Irregular Words:

English has many words that are phonetically-irregular in that they do not follow the typically letter-sound patterns. When your students encounter an unknown irregular word, they need to learn to recognize it by sight, they won't be able to sound it out. The best strategy to help students with irregular words is to tell them the word while pointing to it and have them repeat it after you. These are good words to practice if you have extra time in your session. For more ideas see pg. 27 for extension activities.

