

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We recognize you as your child's first and forever teacher, and we'd like to partner with you to help your child progress as a reader and writer. We know that reading opens the door to all learning and that the more students read, the stronger reader they will become. We would like to provide some resources to support you in assisting your child at home in reading. It is our goal that all students find reading and writing to be a rewarding experience.

Difficulty manipulating sounds in words is one of the hallmark characteristics of reading difficulties and can be seen at a young age. Your child might struggle with rhyming, word games, or recognizing words that start with the same sound. Other signs of reading difficulties are related more closely to the act and process of reading. They fall under the more general categories of decoding, comprehension, and retention. Signs of a reading difficulty may include the following:

- consistent difficulty sounding out words and recognizing words out of context
- confusion between letters and the sounds they represent → try hand motions for the letters that help with the sounds like revving motorcycle handles for M while saying "mmmm, mmmm"
- lack of expression while reading → try reading funny poems and nursery rhymes to develop this skill
- ignoring punctuation while reading
- confusion about the meaning of words and sentences → try asking, "what are you thinking as you read that?"
- inability to connect concepts and ideas within a passage → try having students take notes in the margins or on a separate sheet of paper
- high distractibility during reading → try creating a distraction free area to read together with music and TV off

There are many ways you can help your child at home

- Do a combination of independent and assisted-reading each night.
Have your child read alone and with you. You can take turns or have them read on their own.
- Encourage your child to read anything and everything, even if it isn't a book. Comics, websites, or magazines can engage children and hook them into reading.
- Let kids have choice. Interest and choice will allow readers to extend beyond their regular comfort zone. If they are excited about a text, let them read it.
- Don't worry so much about the grade level at which they are reading. Keep things positive and continue to encourage them to read: focus on how much growth they are making, not their reading level.
- If reading is not enjoyable for your child, start by reading simple stories to them. Then begin a chapter book. Start with small chunks of reading and slowly build stamina with them. Try a variety of books.
- Attempt to read books that have a series. If you can hook your child on the first book they will read the rest.
- Listen to audio books while tracking along with printed text. Also, add audio books to your car for road trips.
- Let your child pick a spot with limited distractions in the house for reading.
- Provide your reader with an audience: they can read to a younger sibling, a pet, or even a relative over-the-phone.
- Use a device to record your child reading orally, and then they can listen to themselves read.
- Try reading outside.

Through reading aloud, providing print materials, and promoting positive attitudes about reading and writing, you can have a powerful impact on your child's literacy and learning. If you continue to have concerns regarding your child's progress in reading please refer to Pasco's Read-at-Home Plan and request a meeting with your child's teacher.