

Learning to read at Pitteuchar West

Part 3: Fluency

Learning to read is a journey. At Pitteuchar West, we follow the Fife Workshop for Literacy approach which uses the science behind learning to read. Learning to read has 5 components which are taught in depth to support success in reading.



This third handout will focus on fluency. Fluency is sometimes thought of as being able to read quickly. Speed is a small part of being a fluent reader, with accuracy and expression being the most important areas of fluency.

Why is fluency important?

Fluency is the link between recognising what words say and our understanding of what we are reading.

The skills learned from an early age, listening to stories, hearing patterns and rhythm, guessing words that finish a sentence, all work together with recognising letters and word shapes to allow us to understand what we are reading.

Accuracy

As we spend less time learning the shape of each letter, matching it to a spoken sound, recognising letter patterns, we begin to recognise whole words without sounding out each letter. This allows reading to flow and become less stilted or robotic.

As confidence and word recognition increases, we begin to understand what we are reading with greater speed and accuracy. The next step is to begin to add expression.

Reading a book which is too challenging can be tiring, so a focus on accuracy, expression and understanding isn't always taught with an unfamiliar text.

Using the Oxford Owl link to choose a familiar story for enjoyment helps these skills to develop without leading to a lack of confidence. It's okay to choose a book read repeatedly, especially at bedtime and encourages independent reading.

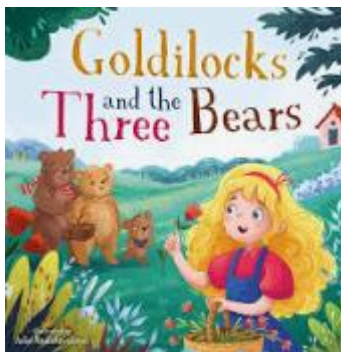
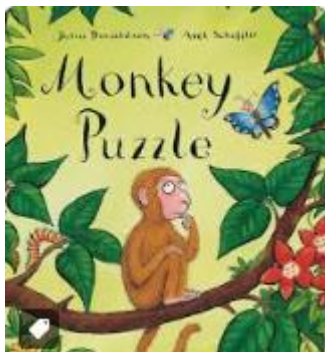


Expression

Expression, when listening to an audio book or someone reading aloud, adds to the enjoyment and understanding of a book.

From an early age, we teach the impact punctuation can have on expression.

When reading aloud together, exaggerating the way your voice gets higher when there is a question mark (?) or louder when you see an exclamation mark (!) is a fun activity to do together.



<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/reading/reading-at-home/>

In school, your child reads throughout the day. Fluency and understanding take time to develop, with every learner being different, so we use a variety of tools to help every child access text.

We use computer programmes such as Immersive Reader, Clicker and Lexia as well as using picture symbols to ensure that every learner has the same opportunities to learn.

Choral reading, where groups read aloud at the same time is a method used to reduce anxiety of reading aloud alone. Reading alongside your child can help to reduce anxiety at home, if your child finds this challenging.

Sometimes, a story will be acted, supporting the development of expression, away from the added pressure of reading from the book.

Reading can be tiring, especially when the letters, sounds, words or subject matter are unfamiliar, so making use of audio books or reading aloud to your child is a relaxing way to enjoy a story, while knowing that hearing someone else read is an excellent way to model fluent reading.

If you would like more information on developing fluency, please get in touch.

