Building Word Reading Automaticity

PRINCETON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The more students read, the more effortless reading becomes, freeing up their brain to focus on meaning. When children can quickly recognize words without stopping to sound them out, they read more smoothly and understand more of what they read. Help students master this skill by having them re-read the same decodable texts that come home and practice their High Frequency Word list.

Pre-K

Pre-Alphabetic Phase

Students recognize words by shape or pictures—no letter-sound connection yet.



Pre-K
Kindergarten

Partial Alphabetic Phase

Students use some sounds and letters to guess words.

p = puppy



Pre-K
Kindergarten
Grade 1

Full Alphabetic Phase

Students know all letter sounds represented in print and can read most simple words by sounding out each letter.

m o p



Kindergarten
Grade 1
Grade 2

Partially Consolidated Phase

Students begin to read more common word parts. Reading is slow and requires effort to be accurate.

s+pl+a+sh



Grade 1
Grade 2

Consolidated Alphabetic Phase

Students recognize more complex phonics patterns in words and read more effortlessly and accurately.

spl+ash



Grade 2
Grade 3
Grade 4
Grade 5

Automatic Phase

Students recognize most words instantly. They read fluently with understanding.

The playful puppy splashed in the water.

