

At Home Activities

Punctuation Power

Pick a sentence (like "You are going to the store") and challenge your child to read it as if it had different punctuation marks.

- Period: A flat, matter-of-fact statement.
- Question Mark: Voice pitches up at the end.
- Exclamation Point: High energy, excited, or panicked.

The Dialogue Read

Pick a scene in the story that has heavy back-and-forth dialogue between two characters. You read all the narrative text (the descriptions), and your child reads all the dialogue for the characters.

Sprint Read

Time your child reading for exactly 30 seconds. Count how many words they read. Have them read the exact same text again for 30 seconds and see how many more words they can read the second time.

Emotion Switch

Right before your child reads a sentence, say an emotion (e.g., angry, scared). They must read the sentence with the emotion.

The Audiobook Director

Have your child read a paragraph of a story. You act as the demanding Audiobook Director. After their first read, tell them the hidden mood of the scene, and they must immediately reread the exact same paragraph to match that emotional energy.

- Director Prompt: "That was good, but the main character is secretly terrified right now. Read it again, but make your voice sound slightly breathless and faster."
- Director Prompt: "Excellent. Now, the character is feeling incredibly defeated. Read it slower, dropping your pitch at the end of every sentence."

The Punctuation "Drummer"

Sit at a table while your child reads a paragraph out loud. They must use their non-dominant hand to tap the table lightly like a drumbeat to keep their pace, but they must use specific physical beats for punctuation marks to force a rhythmic pause.

- Commas: One light tap on the table (a brief rest).
- Periods/Semicolons: Two firm taps on the table (a full stop to breathe).
- Paragraph breaks: A gentle clap.

Did You Know?

Children encounter thousands of new, complex words a year, making it vital for them to know how to break words down by prefixes, suffixes, and root words like un-predict-able.

