

The Balanced Reader: Decoding

There are three important skills to become a Balanced Reader. Decoding, fluency and phrasing and comprehension.

Decoding is a key skill for learning to read that involves taking apart the sounds in words. This is called segmenting. We then blend the sounds back together. Decoding requires a knowledge of the relationship between a letter and the sound it makes, as well as an ability to apply that knowledge to successfully identify written words and make meaning.



In the infants classroom our children are bringing home decodable stories. These are stories that have words made up of the letter-sound matches children are learning. These stories can give children practice in what they are learning in the classroom about letters and sounds. As children learn to read fluently, they are more easily able to understand what they are reading.

What parents can do to help at home

- For a younger reader, help your child learn the letters and sounds of the alphabet. Occasionally point to letters and ask your child to name them.
- Help your child make connections between what he or she might see on a sign or in the newspaper and the letter and sound work he or she is doing in school.
- Encourage your child to write and spell notes, e-mails, and letters using what he knows about sounds and letters.
- Talk with your child about the "irregular" words that she'll often see in what she's reading. These are the words that don't follow the usual letter-sound rules. These words include *said*, *are*, and *was*. Students must learn to recognize them "at sight."

