How to support

- For example, talking to a child about which strategies they used when they read some text. Or narrating aloud which strategies you yourself used when reading something to your class.
- Spend time talking about why a particular strategy worked when you were reading, indicating what situations this strategy might help with in the future.
- Teach a problem solving approach to reading. When faced with an unknown word, prompt children to consider what they have noticed so far. This might be what the word looks like, what sounds they can see, what they have read so far or something that they have noticed on a picture.
- Is there anything on the page that might help them to decode the word? Have they met a word like this before?
- By supporting children in this manner, children will learn to naturally to problem solve as they read and will be able to select the most effective strategy in the moment.

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DECODING STRATEGIES FOR ACCURATE READING

A guide for Practitioners

What are they?

A variety of different methods that help readers decode, decipher and read words.



A Little More Information

Within most schools, children are taught to read using a phonetic approach. This however is not the only way that a child can learn to read. The most successful readers are those who have a variety of different strategies to support them in reading words when the first strategy that they try is unsuccessful.

Useful Websites:

Decoding | EEF
Stuck On Decoding: 5 Ways To Scaffold Instruction

Ways of decoding

Blending
The ability to identify letter sounds and put these together to read words.

Segmenting
The ability to decode a word by breaking it down into it's individual letter sounds.

Context clues
Using knowledge gained from what you have read already or from pictures in a book to provide you with clues as to what the word that you are tying to read might say.

Morphology
The study of the structure and meaning of words. By looking at and understanding root words, pre ixes and suffixes. For example, knowing "struct" means to build. Allows for greater comprehension of "structure, deconstruction and construct".

Reading on/ reading back
Choosing to continue to read or re-read the words prior to the unknown word to provide clues as to what it might be.

Chunking
Breaking unknown words down into syllables, or familiar chunks to support reading.

Sight vocabulary
To be able to read words at an initial glance.

Analogy
Being able to use known words that you see within other words to support you in reading an unknown word. This approach helps bridge the gap between a phonetic approach and a whole word approach.

How to support

Once a child has a range of different strategies to help them to decode unknown words when reading, the role of the supporting adult is to model and to support children in developing metacognition so that they are aware of which strategy they could use and why.