



Improving Reading Fluency

- *Good visual efficiency skills* (refer to Chapter 2, *Your Child's Visual Development*). Some kids use their finger to track along the line. This is common with early readers and usually phases out in second grade. If he still needs it after second grade, then this is a sign of a possible vision problem which needs to be evaluated by a developmental optometrist.
- *Needs to know all the words on the page*. If he is decoding words as he reads, there is no way can he read smoothly, nor comprehends easily. Automaticity of recognizing words rapidly is a key to fluent reading.
- *Read an easy book together*. You read while your child follows along in the book, so that he can hear smooth, fluent reading.
- *Learn to read by phrasing or reading several words at once*.
- *Play games where you time him reading a short passage*. Have him keep track of his time. Then have him read it again and see if he can beat that speed.
- *Allow your child to read silently for at least five minutes per day, any book that he knows all the words in*. He can even re-read the same books. This gives him practice in the eye movement fluency when he doesn't have to struggle with words.
- *When your child has to read out loud, have him pretend that he is an actor*. Have him read the story like he's on the stage, speaking to Grandma in the last row. This often helps with the anxiety and fear around reading. Telling a smart kid to "slow down" when he reads usually results in frustration and avoidance. But telling him to shine as a brilliant actor, gives him a new place to start from.
- *Be in a safe environment*. It's important that your child can take a "risk" on reading out loud without embarrassment.