

# Supporting children as they decode words

(Useful alternatives to three-cueing)

**“The best cue to a word is the word itself.”**

Mark Seidenberg, 2021

## Things to say:

### **Word Awareness**

- Point to the word.
- Look at the word.

Invite the child to point to the word they are unsure of. Demonstrate how to isolate the word between two fingers.

### **Letter Knowledge**

- Point to each letter.

Invite the child to point to each letter in the word. Do they recognise the letters?

- Look at the letters
- Look slowly at every letter.

Invite the child to look at each letter carefully.

### **Phonics & Phonemic Awareness**

- Make every sound.
- Point to each sound / phoneme.

Invite the child to make each sound and/or identify the phonemes within the word. Do they recognise the phonemes? Encourage the child to use their finger to press underneath the grapheme as they say each individual phonemes.

- Sound it out.
- Put all of the sounds together.
- Blend the sounds.

Invite the child to put the phonemes together and blend to read the word. Encourage them to drag their finger underneath the word for the blending if it is helpful. Repeat as necessary.

### **Fluency & Comprehension**

- Read the word while pointing to the word.
- Do you know this word?
- Do you understand this word?
- Read the sentence again.

Ensure the child reads the word in the context of the sentence again.

**NB:** Teachers should avoid using reading cues that take the child’s attention away from the word itself.

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