

May 15, 2020

Dear Parents, Teachers, and Students,

**SUBJECT: Distance Learning – Week 7**

**Oral Reading (reading out loud) Fluency:** Oral reading fluency is the ability to read text quickly, accurately, and with expression. In fluent oral reading, no obvious mental effort in speaking the words on the page is shown by the reader. It is reading that resembles speaking. Oral reading fluency is a critical skill for successful reading comprehension.

The explanation behind this connection between reading fluently (as demonstrated by reading out loud with ease) and understanding what is read (reading comprehension) relates to the mental energy involved. If the reader must devote most or all of this energy to figuring out what each word is, little if any energy is left to understanding the meaning of individual and groups of words. If word reading is automatic, effortless, fluent then mental energy can be directed to the meaning of words, words in sentences, and sentences in paragraphs.

How can we as parents help?

1. **Model fluent reading:** It is important that parents take advantage of opportunities to model accurate, expressive reading. Perhaps, it is a news item from a website, information about the re-opening stores and restaurants, a favorite novel or poem. For primary and middle school age children, modeling reading required by the teacher is a good idea. This is also beneficial for high school students but should be approached differently, like sharing the reading of a difficult problem in math, or an article for a humanities class.
2. **Give your child a chance to read to you, or to a sibling:** The best way to develop fluent oral reading is by practicing it. Perhaps, the reader and the adult can take turns reading the same book. It is important to choose the oral reading text carefully. The material should not be difficult for the child but rather something he or she would read for pleasure. It may even be something they have read before.
3. **Practice critical reading:** When reading is accurate and expressive, it is time to ask questions about the understanding of the text. Parents can lead a discussion about the meaning of text read out loud; what is important to remember from it, what the more difficult words mean.

Working and studying from home is giving families more time together. When things get slow, as they surely will, may I suggest reading together.

Dr Bruce Gilbert, Head of School