

The Keys to Unlocking Words

Below you will find some strategies that will help unlock those tricky words and open the door to strategic reading!

When your child is having trouble reading a word or phrase:

- **Skipping the word** (say “blank”), read to the end of the sentence and then come back and say or think, “What makes sense here?” Often times, the child will be able to figure out the word using the context of the sentence.
- **Sound it out** by breaking it up into chunks or syllables, looking for familiar parts of the word, looking for smaller words inside of the word that he/she does know.
- **Go back to the beginning** of the sentence and try again. Ask yourself, “What makes sense?”
- **Use pictures for clues.** It’s okay to look at picture clues to help understand what a word, sentence, or phrase might be about.
- **“Crash through the word.”** Have your child get his/her lips ready and pretend to crash through a cardboard wall by saying the word. Say it fast, and you might be surprised!
- **Ask someone for help.** Try not to let your child rely on this method. Quite possibly the book is simply too difficult at this point. With practice, your child will be able to read this book at a later time!

