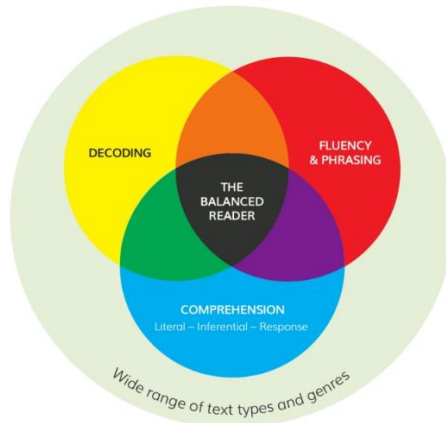


Teaching and Learning at IFPS – Decoding

At Ingle Farm Primary School (IFPS), our aim is to ensure that all our students become 'Balanced Readers' based on the model below.



As previously explained, to become a 'Balanced Reader' each student requires the skills to: decode correctly; read with fluency and phrasing; comprehend literally, inferentially and be able to respond to a text effectively. These skills should also be demonstrated across a wide range of text types and genres. Once a student has these abilities they read to learn successfully. It is important to understand that children 'learn to read' and 'read to learn' simultaneously and the skill acquisition is not as simple as moving from one to another.

To enable you to support your children at home, I refer below to each aspect of the Balanced Reader, beginning with Decoding. Decoding refers to a child's ability to understand concepts of print, read high frequency words, be phonologically aware and to link phonemes (sounds) and graphemes (letters) using phonics.

Concepts of Print

Concepts of Print refers to the awareness of 'how print works'. This includes the knowledge of the concept of what books, print, and written language are, and how they function. Understandings that allow the reading process to take place including:

- understanding that print conveys a message
- knowledge about book orientation and directionality of print
- distinction between sentences, words and letters
- knowledge of the alphabetic system and the difference between letters and words.

High Frequency Words

High-frequency words are words that a student needs to know and cannot decode. They follow rules that may not support decoding practices.

Phonological Awareness

Phonological Awareness is a focus of literacy teaching incorporating:

- recognising phonological patterns such as rhyme and alliteration

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- awareness of syllables and phonemes within words
- hearing multiple phonemes within words.

Phonics

Phonics is the ability to map sounds onto letters (sound-letter knowledge). Phonics knowledge allows children to understand the link between sounds (phonemes) and letter patterns (graphemes).

Supporting your child at home

Each child at IFPS will have access to a levelled reader that has either been given to them by their teacher or borrowed from the library. To support your child's education and achievement it is suggested that they should read independently for at least 20 minutes each day.

As parents, there are some simple strategies that can be adopted when listening to your child read to practise their decoding ability.

- For a younger reader, help your child learn the names and sounds of the alphabet. Occasionally point to letters and ask your child to sound them.
- Play with magnetic letters. See how quickly you can put them in alphabetical order while singing the alphabet song.
- Look at written materials around your house and at road signs to see if you can spot familiar words and letter patterns.
- When you're trying to sound out a word, pay close attention to the print. Try to look at all the letters in the word, not just the first one or two.
- Help your child make connections between what he or she might see on a sign or in the newspaper and the letter and sound work he or she is doing in school.
- If your child stumbles on a word, encourage them to sound it out. If they still can't get it, provide the word so they don't get discouraged.
- Encourage your child to write and spell notes, e-mails, and letters using what he knows about sounds and letters.
- Talk with your child about the "irregular" words that she'll often see in what she's reading. These are the words that don't follow the usual letter-sound rules. These words include *said*, *are*, and *was*. Students must learn to recognise them "at sight."

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