

THE 3 KEY COMPONENTS TO EFFORTLESS READING AND WHY YOUR CHILD IS STRUGGLING.

the steps to fix it!

When it comes to struggling readers there are 3 things that must happen in order for them to successfully achieve effortless reading.

I will explain the 3 key components to effortless reading and why your child is struggling.

Then, I will give you the 3 areas you need to work on to correct it for good so your child can stop struggling and succeed...in just 15 minutes a day.

Understanding the 3 Key Components to Reading

When a child is struggling to read it can be so devastating to a child's confidence and heartbreaking and frustrating as a parent. Let me show you the base root cause of your child's struggles and how to correct them quickly so they can enjoy effortless reading.

When it comes to the actual components of reading there are 3 key parts to being able to read.

The 3 Key Components to Reading:

Phonemic Awareness

This is the ability to hear and blend speech sounds in words. Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear, identify and manipulate the units of sound that help to differentiate the meaning of words. Separating the spoken word "cat" into three distinct sound parts requires phonemic awareness and allows the reader to hear the difference between similar words such as 'hat, bat, and that'.

Fluency

This is the ability to read quickly and decoding words is automatic and fluid. In contrast, a non-fluent struggling reader's reading is slow and labored, often in a monotone voice with no regard for punctuation.

Comprehension

This is the most important part of reading because it is the understanding of the content the reader has just read. I have seen many times when a skilled reader can easily read the words on the page but when questioned after about the story, they can not tell you about the details or characters of the story. These children have memorized words but have not learned the skill of seeing the story unfold in their imagination. Comprehension is achieved by being able to make pictures in your mind of the words you are reading and making a mini-movie in your mind of the story the words create.

So now that we understand the 3 key components to reading, let me explain why effortless reading has very little to do with actually learning letters or words. Effortless reading starts long before letters and words are even introduced. True reading has little to do with teaching letters and almost everything to do with childhood development. I want to take you to the root of the problems and then show you how to fix them.

Understanding the 3 Key Mechanics of Reading

When it comes to the actual mechanics of reading I want to demonstrate the 3 developmental areas that must be developed in order to be a successful lifelong reader and learner. I will demonstrate how they line up with the 3 Key Components of Reading and hopefully you will have the 'aha moment' that will change everything for your child. This approach is not only the most effective way to overcome reading struggles, it is also the most enjoyable, it takes all of the stress, tears, and frustration out of it.

Let's go through the mechanics as they line up with the 3 Key Components, and in their developmental order.

The 3 Key Mechanics of Reading:

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Phonemic Awareness & Hearing

Phonemic awareness is achieved through our ability to hear, and hearing is one of the earliest senses to develop. Hearing actually start in the womb through sound vibrations. When you were pregnant (or your spouse was pregnant), you probably had people tell you to play music to your belly or to have your partner talk close to your belly.

Now, if this isn't something you did, it is not the reason your child is struggling, it is just the concept that sound vibrations can start to develop the baby's auditory system very early on.

So, how do we develop our child's hearing? Well, through using it. In order for our children to develop their sense of hearing they need to be exposed to all different kinds of sounds.

One of the best and easiest ways to develop our children's hearing is to read aloud to them. Books that have lots of rhyming words are great because it teaches them the subtle differences in sounds in similar words. This trains the ear to hear the micro differences in sounds that are so important in decoding words.

I believe that one of the reasons we have so many more struggling readers today than we did 50 years ago is because reading has been replaced by devices and we rarely read nursery rhymes to our children anymore. Rhymes like Jack & Jill (went up a hill...), and Little Bo-Peep (who lost her sheep...) were the training grounds for our hearing to develop.

Additionally, the difference between hearing stories read and watching a video of the same story is huge. A video is really watching a story and the words are lost in the background opposed to acutely listening to the words of the story as it unfolds on the pages.

As life gets busy, if you can not always be available to read aloud to your children I recommend you have them listen to audio books. I like audio books that either have no book or an actual book that accompany them over video stories. The reason for this is two fold, first, as I will explain later, listening to a story without visuals helps kids to develop their imagination which is an important part of comprehension, and two listening without the distraction of video heightens the listening level and therefore the skill.

Listening to music is also another great way to train the brain to hear different pitches and tones in sound which trains the ear to hear sounds of words better. Again, kids songs that use rhymes and repetition are best.

That being said, the best tool in my opinion is a program I have used a program for years. I love to recommend this program because it has been so helpful to kid's struggling with reading and behavior issues. The program is called The Listening Program and it is amazing! It has been used with great success for everything from reading struggles to ADHD to Autism. It is a simple online program that has the child listen to specially modified music to train the ears and the brain. Kids simply put headphones on and listen to this music for 15 minutes while they relax or work on an activity like coloring or lego. (The Listening Program offers a 7 day FREE trial, here is a link to access the FREE trial directly if you are interested...

http://tlp.advancedbrain.com/tlp/#theorganizedmind)

To Recap:

- 1. Read aloud to you kids, rhyming and Dr Seuss-like books are great.
- 2. Audiobooks, preferably not video.
- 3. Listen to music
- 4. Use The Listening Program for 15 minutes a day.

All of these activities will train the ears and the brain to hear sounds better which will in turn improve the ability to sound out words and hear the slight differences in similar words.

The 3 Key Mechanics of Reading:

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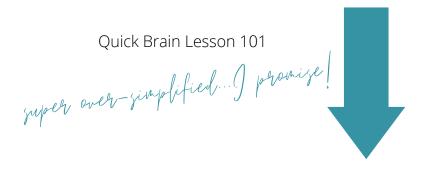
Fluency & Eye Sight

Probably the biggest contributor to poor reading ability is eye sight. When it comes to reading it is not so much visual acuity, or 20/20 vision, but how well the eyes work together and the ability to track across a page.

When the eyes do not work together they are basically getting two different images, one from each eye, but the brain can only handle one message at a time. This results in the brain shutting off the messages from the weak eye which is detrimental to the eye's strength as well as detrimental to the brain's efficiency to process information it is seeing. This is the beginning of struggles that have ramifications far past just learning to read. Don't worry we can easily work on improving this through simple exercises.

The next reason kids struggle with reading is the inability to track words across a page without losing their spot and having to keep going over the same line. This is actually more of a brain integration issue than an eye issue but it affects how the eyes function.

In order to understand this I want you look at the diagrams on the next page.



first...

The brain is divided into two separate hemispheres that are connected by something called the Corpus Callosum, basically it is a bundle of nerves that transfer all messages across both hemispheres of the brain.

Brain Hemispheres

Left Hemisphere

Verbal
Analytical
Logical
Scientific
Reads Words
Math Facts
Sequential Learning
Organized
Time Conscious
Objective
Academic

Right Hemisphere Non-Verbal

Relational
Intuitive
Imaginative
Visualizes Words
Pattern Recognition
Experiential Learning
Disorganized
Random, Free Flowing
Subjective
Athletic

Corpus Callosum

(Connective band of nerve fibers that sends messages from the body to the brain, and between the hemispheres... The Brain's Information Super Highway)

Cross Lateral Brain/Body Function

The brain and body have a cross-lateral organization, meaning that the messages from the left side of the body, including the eye, go to, and are controlled by, the right side of the brain and vise versa for the other side.



The problem arises when the Corpus Callosum is weak and the transition of information across the brain is slow. The result is something we call a midline block or deficiency. When it comes to reading, this means that the eyes struggle to move smoothly across a page of text without skipping or jumping at the middle, which causes the reader to lose their spot every time. (If your child complains of words jumping across the page or always losing their place...this is what is happening.) The other reason a midline block is a problem in reading is because words are read on the left side of the brain but interpretated on the right. So in order to learn, we must be able share information among both sides of the brain.

The Midline, which is not an actual real physical division other than in the brain, plays an important role in a lot of other areas that can be problematic like handwriting and coordination if it is weak.

We can do simple exercises to strengthen the Corpus Callosum.

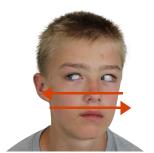
The Best Eye Strengthening Exercises for Reading

The following exercises are simple but truly effective and can easily be done in 5 minutes everyday.

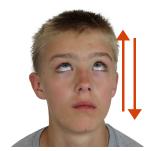
1 Eye Workout

Move eyes only, head stays still. Do each exercise 5x in each direction

Side-to-side



Up-Down



Diagonal



Start top right, then down to bottom left.

Pencil Push-Ups

Do exercise 3x



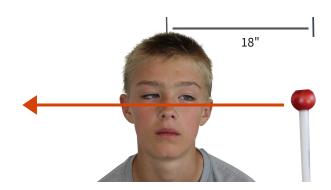


*Putting a sticker, or bead, on end of pencil can help focus.

- Sit directly in front of your child, hold a pencil at eye level 18" from their nose.
- Have the child focus on the end of the pencil (bead), slowly move the pencil
 towards their nose causing them to go cross-eyed and the slowly back out to
 starting position. Go slowly enough that they can keep focus on the pencil at all
 times, if their eyes lose focus or 'break- away', stop and slowly move back out.

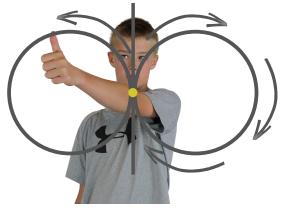
Pencil Tracking (Slow Tracking)

Move eyes only, head stays still. Do exercise 3x



- With child seated directly in front of you, hold up a pencil approximately 12" in front of child, 18" right of the midline, and at eye level.
- Instruct the child to follow the pencil as you slowly move it from your far right to left and then back again. Repeat 3x.
- Make sure you go slow enough that the child can follow without 'look aways' or jumps. (Jumps are what you will probably see as the eyes reach the midline. It is a pause or skip in the movement of the eyes.





Do 20 complete 8's

- Have your child stand with their right arm
 extended, with thumb up. Keeping their eyes
 on the thumb, move arm in the 8 pattern as
 shown, starting at center then up and around
 the right side of the circle, up through the
 center, and then around the other side.
- Be sure their head is not moving and that they bring their arm back up through the midline.
- If they cannot keep eyes on thumb, slow them down and help move their arm through the motion.

The 3 Key Mechanics of Reading:

Comprehension & Imagination

It doesn't do our children any good if they are fast readers but have no idea what they have read when they are done. When we push our kids to be early readers by teaching kids to memorize words and letters but do not slow down to develop their imagination we are setting our kids up for failure in the long run.

The dangers of reading too soon.

Academic learning can not be achieved before proper development has been achieved. In our hyper-competitive society we push our kids to memorize words and learn to read early, thinking we are beating out their tiny classmate competition, when in fact we could be hindering their true development. By pushing our kids to read before they are developmentally ready, we are setting them up for failure. True reading skills are not just developed through academic practice but through proper sensory development and brain integration.

Let me explain what that means in laymen terms. As we briefly touched on earlier, there are two sides of the brain, and they must be able to pass information from one side of the brain to the other side in order for the brain and body to work together. To take this one step further, each side of the brain specializes in certain skills and is responsible for certain functions. When it comes to reading, the left side of the brain is responsible for recognizing symbols, which we know as letters and words, and the right side is responsible for visualizing those words by referencing them to familiar experiences.

Seeing RED...

For example, the word RED. The left side of the brain recognizes the letters R-E-D, and can put them together to read the word RED, but it is not until it transfers that information to the right side of the brain for context that the word has any meaning. When we read RED we conjure up an image in our brain of what RED means from past experiences...red rose, red apple, red blood. We know what RED means because we can see the color RED in our mind.



So, in order for reading comprehension to take place we actually need two things to happen. First, we need to be able to easily transfer information between the left and right sides of the brain, and second, we need to be able to see the words in our minds. When we read, we need to be able to take the words on the page and create mini-movies in our minds to comprehend what we are reading.

These two tasks, like the others, can be simply achieved with some simple exercises practiced daily.

The first exercise is a physical exercise that will help to get both sides of the brain transferring information efficiently. The exercise is called the Cross-Crawl and is probable the most effective exercise for integrating both sids of the brain, and it is super simple.

Cross Crawl





- Stand up straight and march slowly in one spot, alternate touching opposite elbow to opposite knee.
- DO NOT RUSH, do in a slow rhythmic motion, it should look like you are doing them in slow motion.
- Try to stay in one spot and not travel, if necessary tape an 'X' on floor to help.

Do this exercise daily- do 30X.

(have your kids do this quick exercise before any tests or sports to prime their brain for their highest performance)

The next part is to teach your kids to see pictures in their mind, aka, use their imagination. It may sound funny to think of this as something you need to practice but you would be amazed at how many kids really struggle with this. Because of all of the external digital visualization kids are bombarded with on a daily basis now, they are actually weak in the skill of imagination.

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Try these two exercises everyday:

- 1) **Mini Mind Movies** When you are reading aloud to your kids, have them close their eyes and tell them to imagine and see the story in their mind.

 Occasionally stop and ask them, "what do you see?, what does the character look like?, what color is their hair?, what color is the sky? are there clouds in the sky?", ask them all sorts of questions that cause them to see the story unfold in their mind.
- 2) **Mind's Eye Game** Another great exercise that can easily be played in the car or at the breakfast table, is asking them to close their eyes and tell you what they see when you say the word...X? I like to start with colors because it can be a really quick indicator of how well your child can retrieve visual mental references.

So for example, if you say "what do see when you think of the color green?", and they either can't come up with anything, or they say things that are not typically green, like the sky or a dog, you know that your child is struggling to put proper meaning to words and therefore is not comprehending what they are reading.

If this is the case you want to make sure you are practicing the 'eyes closed' storytelling often and really work to strengthen the right side of the brain through creative activities like coloring and drawing, and make sure you are doing the Cross-Crawls daily, even twice a day.

Now let me show you how we put it all together...

putting it all together ...

DAILY ACTIVITY PLAN

Physical Exercises

Eye Workout (5x)

Pencil Push-ups (3x)

Pencil Tracking (3x)

Eye 8's (20x)

Cross Crawls (30x)

Listening & Imagination Exercises

Read aloud to your child and have them create Mini Mind Movies while listening to the story

Play Mind's-Eye Game - What do you see when...?

Listen to music

For maximum results I strongly recommend adding these two programs to your child's daily routine. Both activities create huge results and kids love them.

The Listening Program
Lumosity

Programs I Love to Use...

Use these programs daily for best success.

The Listening Program

tlp.advancedbrain.com/#theorganizedmind

I used this program with all of the kids I worked with one-on-one and I strongly recommend it. It is inexpensive, high quality, and most of all, it is effective. Use the link above to get a FREE 7 day trial.





Lumosity

wwww.lumosity.com

Lumosity is an online brain training website that was created by scientists and game designers. There is a ton of scientific evidence behind their games. Luminosity trains eye tracking, field of vision, memory, sequencing, and much more. It is a great training tool disguised as games. I often used Lumosity as the reward for completing all of the other exercises and tasks in my kids programs. Kids love this program.





Until you really understand how our kids develop, it is hard to see past just the academic teaching of reading and see how you need to work to build the brain and body to be 'ready' for reading.

Also remember, kids will not all learn to read at the same time, and sometimes it is hard not to compare and want to keep up if your child is a struggling reader. I get it, you are scared your child is going to fall behind. I can however guarantee you that trying to MAKE them read by pushing more academic practice rather than developmental practice can cause a lot of tears and frustration for both you and your child, with little results.

I strongly encourage you to do the exercises and activities suggested here for 90 days and you will see great improvement in your child's reading ability and confidence.

Cheers,

Development Coach & Trainer

Stracey Waterson

———— DISCLAIMER ————

The information provided is not intended as medical advice, or treatment of any kind. I am not a doctor, and I do not claim to cure or eliminate any condition or behavior. You are solely responsible for your decision to use the information offered here. Please always consult your physician before starting any exercise or therapeutic program with your child. Program results vary with every child, if you have any concerns while doing the program discontinue the program immediately and consult your physician. This program is not intended for clinical use or training.

FINAL WORDS



Now that you have a program to follow, the 2 most important things you can do to achieve success for your child is to be **CONSISTENT**, and to give it a full **90 DAYS** without quitting.

Quite often people fail at making change because they give up too soon or their efforts are inconsistent and haphazard. This program can make dramatic change for your child so make sure you really commit to it. Also, this program is just the beginning, it is the foundation for many more changes to come. Please check out the additional resources and programs available.

I wish you and your child the best success.

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CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE TO LEARN MORE



www.TheOrganizedMindHq.com