



Helping Your Child Become a Fluent Reader

Sounds-Write phonics



Welcome to Sounds-Write



Dear Parents and carers,

Reading fluency is the bridge between sounding out words and truly understanding what's on the page.

This booklet explains what fluency is, why it matters, and how it develops—with practical, everyday tips to support your child at home.

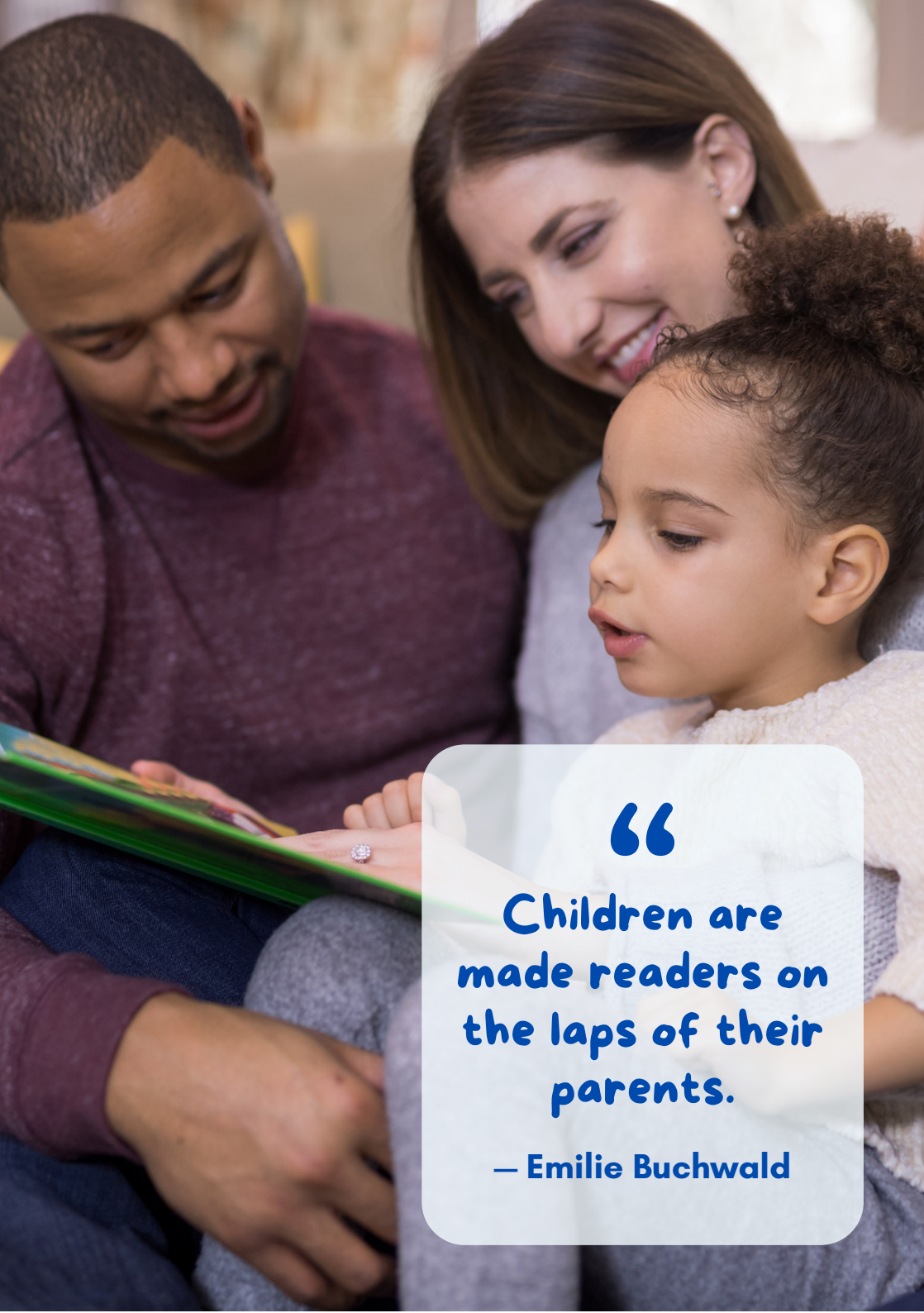
Inside, you'll find simple strategies like **echo reading**, **paired reading**, and **performance reading**, all designed to build confidence, accuracy, and expression. Whether your child is just starting out or growing in independence, these ideas will help them become a confident, more joyful reader—ready to move from “learning to read” to “reading to learn.”

Warm regards,

Tita Beaven

Director of Innovation and e-learning





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**Children are
made readers on
the laps of their
parents.**

— Emilie Buchwald

What is fluency?

Fluency is more than reading quickly. It's made up of three important parts.



- **Accuracy** – reading words correctly.
- **Rate** – reading at a steady, comfortable pace.
- **Expression** (prosody) – making reading sound like natural speech, with phrasing and tone that show understanding.

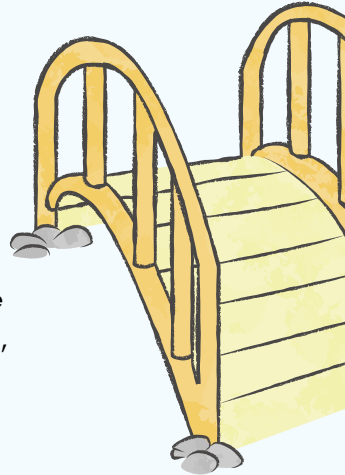
When children read fluently, they don't have to stop and work out every word. That frees up their brain to focus on the meaning of the text.



Why fluency matters

Fluency acts like a bridge. On one side, children are learning to recognise letters and sounds (in their phonics lessons at school). On the other side is full comprehension — reading stories, textbooks, and articles easily.

Without fluency, comprehension becomes much harder.



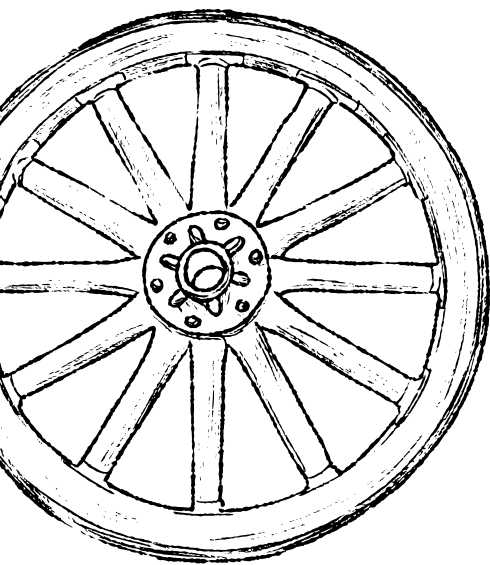
There is no comprehension strategy powerful enough to compensate if a student cannot lift the words from the page.

How fluency develops

Fluency grows through practice and support. Here are some proven ways children build it:



- **Hearing fluent reading** – When adults read aloud, children hear how good reading sounds.
- **Echo reading** – A parent or teacher reads a sentence, and the child repeats it.
- **Reading together** – Sometimes called choral or paired reading, asking your child to read a sentence at the same time as you can reduce pressure and build confidence.
- **Re-reading favourite books** – Reading the same story several times helps children read more smoothly and confidently.



At school, teachers often use specially chosen decodable books that match what children are learning in phonics lessons.

These act like training wheels on a bike: they provide the support children need while they're learning, and are gradually phased out as they grow more independent.



[Download](#) our free decodable e-books to try at home.

Practical tips for building fluency at home

Here's some fun, everyday ways you can help your child become a fluent reader. For Reception and Year 1 children, use the decodable reader your child is bringing home. For older children, use any book they enjoy and can read accurately.



Echo reading game

Read a short sentence aloud, then have your child repeat it, trying to match your expression and pace. Swap roles for fun—let them be the “teacher” and you echo back!



Choral reading

Choose a passage or a few sentences and read them aloud together. This helps your child feel supported and hear what fluent reading sounds like, while also joining in.



Paired reading

Take turns: you read a page, then your child reads the next. If they get stuck, gently remind them to, “say the sounds and read the word.”



Favourite book re-reads

Encourage your child to reread a decodable book or a well-loved book several times. You'll both notice how much smoother and more confident they become each time.



Performance reading

Ask your child to “perform” a short poem, rhyme, or story for you, a sibling, or even a pet! Knowing they have an “audience” can boost motivation to read with expression.



Celebrate small wins

Point out when your child reads more smoothly than before, or when they add expression to their voice. Progress—even tiny steps—deserves recognition.

Help Your Child to Read and Write Course

Our free online course is designed for parents and carers of children aged 4 to 6, offering practical guidance and activities to build early literacy skills.

What you'll learn

- ✓ Help your child take their first steps in reading and spelling.
- ✓ Understand how to help your child build, write, and read simple cvc (consonant, vowel, consonant) words.
- ✓ Understand how to correct your child when they make a mistake in their reading or writing simple words.
- ✓ Develop a basic understanding of how phonics works.

7 sections • 20 lectures • 1h 18m



Scan to enrol





Our mission is to improve the life chances of children by ensuring that they become proficient readers and writers. We believe that teachers' knowledge is key to achieving our mission, so we provide top quality, evidence-informed training for educators to teach reading and spelling effectively.



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Sounds-Write Ltd

Whiteleaf Business Centre
11 Little Balmer
Buckingham
MK18 1TF