Reading Lab by MaryPat Caldwell



It has been a great start to 2023 at GPS! In continuing with my goal of supporting parents at home, I would like to address another frequently asked parent question, "How do I help my struggling reader at home?" Start with patience! Reading is a complex process that takes time and requires the development of **five** essential skills:

1) **Phonemic Awareness** - *the ability to hear, identify and manipulate sounds*
2) **Decoding/Phonics** - *the ability to apply knowledge of letter-sound relationships and patterns to recognize and pronounce words*
3) **Fluency** - *the ability to read with speed, accuracy and expression*
4) **Vocabulary** - *the understanding of word structure and meaning*
5) **Comprehension** - *the ability to process text, understand its meaning, and to integrate with what the reader already knows*– **the ultimate goal of reading*!***

As your child is learning to read, it is important that you support them with encouragement and praise. Be their cheerleader and leave the teaching to us! If they are struggling with **decoding** and/or **fluency**, choose easier books that they have practiced at school, so they can showcase their reading successes at home. Reading and re-reading text is a great way to build **decoding** and **fluency** skills as well as confidence. For more difficult books, buddy reading (taking turns) and echo reading are other ways to build **fluency**. Make it fun! Choose a high interest book to read aloud together. Reading to or with your child is a gift that builds **vocabulary, fluency, comprehension**, personal connection and a lifelong reading habit. Engage them in book discussions at the dinner table, in car rides or before bed. Oral discourse will develop both oral language and higher order thinking skills, which are key components of **comprehension.** Historical fiction is a great way to build background knowledge while enjoying wonderful stories together. Make sure to encourage them to ask you questions as well, so you can model your thinking. **Happy Reading!**