



# Parent Pipeline



## **CAFÉ Strategy: Predict What Will Happen; Use Text to Confirm**

As adult readers we make predictions often without even realizing it. We do it when we watch movies, read a book, or hear someone tell us a story. It is a way of focusing our attention and motivating us to want to hear or read more. Children benefit from predicting in the same way. Therefore, it is important that we guide them to not only predict what will happen, but to also confirm their predictions.

To predict, readers tell what they think will happen in the story. To confirm, readers find out if their predictions were true, partially true, or way off. Using this strategy gives readers the chance to make connections to the text, think ahead, and become more engaged.

### **How can you help your child with this strategy at home?**

1. When reading with your child, model this strategy aloud. Use your background knowledge, picture clues, and other details in the selection to make a prediction. Then, after reading, check to see if your prediction was correct. Tell your child what you are thinking so it is clear how you predict and confirm when reading.
2. Encourage your child to use the "secret to success" they learned in class. Our "secret" is to follow these three steps:
  - Look at the details in the selection.
  - Decide what you think will happen next, based on the details and background knowledge.
  - Look back and check to make sure the prediction was correct.
3. Use the following questions to promote this strategy. Ask your child:
  - What do you think will happen based on your information?
  - What clues are you using to make your prediction?
  - What kinds of clues did you use? (pictures, words, or background knowledge)

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• Ideas and strategies are taken from: *The CAFÉ Book*®, written by Gall Boushey & Joan Moser



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## CAFÉ Strategy: Use Pictures, Illustrations, and Diagrams

One way readers expand their vocabulary is by paying attention to pictures, illustrations, and diagrams in a text. They use the context of the story, their background knowledge of what is being read, and at times infer to gain meaning of what is being read. Readers do this because illustrations provide clues about the meaning of words and text. Paying attention to the pictures may confirm the meaning of words. Help your child become familiar with this strategy by using the following suggestions at home.

### How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. When reading with your child, remind your child to cross check. A reader cross checks by asking, "Do the pictures match what I think the word means, and does it make sense?"
2. Model this strategy by breaking it down in these steps:
  - Read a picture book or nonfiction book.
  - When you come to a difficult or "interesting" word, stop.
  - Say, "I am going to look at this picture to see if I can figure out what this word means."
  - Infer the words meaning based on background knowledge of text and what is shown in the picture.
  - Celebrate figuring out the word ~ remind your child that using pictures helped to increase your understanding of the text.

Encourage your child to model the above steps for you.

3. Practice using pictures, illustrations, and diagrams to increase meaning by doing a picture walk through a story. Before reading the words, view all of the pictures of the story and see what story the pictures tell. Then, go back and read the words. Visiting the pictures first will draw attention to important details that will increase understanding of the text and reinforce this vocabulary strategy.

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## CAFÉ Strategy: Ask Questions Throughout the Reading Process

Readers who are actively involved in reading ask themselves questions before, during, and after reading a selection. This not only increases their comprehension of what is being read, but it fully engages them in the reading process. As readers, when we are fully engaged in the reading process, we are more likely to remember important details and information. Asking questions is a great way for readers to monitor their comprehension of a text. In class, your child has learned that successful readers generate their own questions and that not all questions generated will be answered.

Learning to ask questions throughout the reading process is an important reading strategy because it teaches a reader to think aloud. It helps readers review important points in the text, evaluate the quality of the text, make connections, and refine predictions.

### How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. Model this questioning process by reading to your child and stopping during the reading to question what is going on in the text. Use questions such as:
  - “What does this mean?”
  - “Is this important?”
  - “How do I think this story will end?”
  - “What does this word mean?”
  - “Do I need to read this again?”Then, have your child practice asking questions independently.
2. Pre-select several stopping points in a text to stop and ask questions. Have your child verbalize questions he/she has at each stopping point.
3. Encourage your child to write down their questions as they read. Be sure the focus is not about finding correct answers but that it is on curiosity, wonder, and asking thought provoking questions.

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## CAFÉ Strategy: Make a Picture or Mental Image

Have you ever tried to remember where you put something? Usually the first thing people do is retrace their steps or visualize the last time they had the object. Making a picture in our mind helps us to recall events more clearly. The same is true when reading a story. When readers listen to or read text, they can create pictures in their mind or make a mind movie. This helps a reader to remember more of what they read or heard.

Your child is working on the comprehension strategy: **Make a Picture or Mental Image**. This is an excellent strategy for readers to use when recalling details in the text. Making a picture or mental image assists readers in understanding what they read by creating images in their mind, based on the details in the text and their prior knowledge.

### How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. Remind your child that when making a picture or mental image, readers put themselves in the story or text by making a mind movie. They also look for important details that help them make pictures in their minds.
2. Explain that there are many ways pictures help readers remember what they are reading. They can do this by:
  - thinking about what they know about the text before they read
  - using sensory details to create mental pictures (what did it smell like, feel like, look like, etc.)
  - looking back at the picture in your brain after the story to remember what has happened.
3. Read to your child and model how you make pictures in your mind. Then, give your child a chance to try it. Read a selection to your child and ask:
  - What do you see in my mind as I read this selection?
  - Can you see yourself in this selection?
  - Explain to me the picture in your mind.

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## **CAFÉ Strategy: Use Prior Knowledge and Context to Predict and Confirm Meaning**

Occasionally readers come to words that are unfamiliar and therefore difficult to understand. When this happens, readers can use context clues to help gain understanding. Context clues are the words, phrases, and sentences surrounding an unfamiliar word that give clues or hints to its meaning. Although not all words can be figured out this way, it is important for readers to know this strategy as one way to gain meaning from a word. This strategy may take awhile for a reader to become comfortable using, but with practice it will help expand vocabulary and enhance understanding.

### **How can you help your child with this strategy at home?**

1. Encourage your child to look for clue words to help figure out the meaning of a word. These words include: but, however, unlike, means, in other words, also known as, etc. Remind your child that punctuation may also provide clues to the meaning of a word.
2. Your child was taught different context clues, what they mean, and how to use them with the steps below. Review these steps with your child and model them when reading with your child so they become familiar.
  - Check for a context clue that is in the sentence.
  - After finding a context clue, reread the sentence with the new term or clue in mind.
  - Think about what the sentence says using this context clue.
  - If you don't find a clue or understand the main point the author is making, try a different strategy to figure out the word, such as asking someone the meaning or using a dictionary.
3. Remind your child to self-monitor as they are reading. Good readers should check themselves to see if what they are inferring looks right, sounds right, and makes sense.
4. Write a sentence, leaving one word out. Have your child read the sentence and use context clues to guess what word is missing. They enjoy trying to figure it out and it is a great way to practice using context clues.

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## CAFÉ Strategy: Retell the Story

When parents ask their children what happened in school that day, the response is usually one of two things. Either they are given a play by play synopsis or they are given the single word answer "nothing". The strategy of retelling is similar.

Retelling a story helps readers recall what is happening in the story they are reading. It allows a reader to stop and monitor their understanding. A retelling usually includes characters, settings, problems, and the solution or the main ideas of the text. It involves telling what is important without telling too much. Many times children struggle with the concept of weeding out what is important. Often they either provide every single detail or they give a vague description that is hard to follow. Use the following strategies to help your child be successful in retelling.

### How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. When reading with your child, stop to think about what you are reading. Model this process aloud. Stop and reread if you can't remember.
2. When reading with your child, stop and have your child tell you what is happening in the story using the words: *first*, *next*, *then*, *last*, and *finally*.
3. Use the following questions to prompt your child to think about the story being read:
  - Who were the main characters?
  - What problem did the main characters experience?
  - How was the problem solved?
  - How did the story end?
  - What happened first, next, and last?
4. Allow your child to become comfortable with the strategy of retelling by retelling events they are familiar with. This is where you can help your child focus on weeding out minor details by centering their attention on what's important. Use some of the following prompts or come up with some of your own.
  - Tell me about the last time your family went out to dinner.
  - Tell me about what you did at school this week.
  - Tell me about a time when you went to a birthday party.
  - Tell me about the first time you lost a tooth.

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## CAFÉ Strategy: Monitor and Fix Up

Good readers often stop to think about if what they are reading makes sense. They make sure they understand what is happening in the story or what the selection they are reading is about. If meaning breaks down during a story, good readers have strategies to go back and fix the problem. Some strategies a reader may use to assist in making sense of a story include: summarize text, go back and adjust the reading rate, reread text while thinking carefully, skim and scan the selection to gain meaning, or ask for help. Readers who monitor their own reading know and use these specific strategies when meaning breaks down and fix their reading to improve their comprehension.

Your child is working on the comprehension strategy, **monitor and fix up**. This strategy will help your child identify when meaning breaks down and will give him/her tools necessary to regain comprehension.

### How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. When reading with your child, stop periodically and ask your child, "Does this make sense?" If not, ask your child what he/she could do to help gain understanding of what is being read.
2. Read to your child and model what it sounds like when you stop to monitor your reading. Let him/her hear the process you go through. Ask yourself the following questions: Who is this story about? What is happening in the story? What is the author trying to tell me? Let your child hear you answer the questions and go through the process of monitoring your comprehension.
3. Ask your child to create a list of his/her favorite fix up strategies. Remind your child to use these strategies when meaning breaks down. The goal is to coach your child to monitor comprehension and use the strategies until they become a habit.

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## CAFÉ Strategy: Back Up and Reread

Many times when reading a story, adults get to a point where they realize they do not understand what they are reading. Somewhere during their reading, they lost concentration and therefore the meaning of the story. When this happens, as adults we realize we have lost comprehension and we stop, back-up, and reread. Children are no different than we are. They need to be taught the strategies good readers use to be successful.

Your child has been introduced to the comprehension strategy of **check for understanding**. In learning this strategy, the children are taught to stop throughout the story and ask "who" and "what". Now, your child is working on what to do when he/she is not able to answer the questions of "who" and "what". Your child is being taught the comprehension strategy **back up and reread**.

### How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. Model this strategy for your child. When reading with your child, stop to check for understanding. If your child has difficulty answering the "who" and "what", remind your child to **back up and reread**. Tell your child to read slowly and think about what is being read. After doing this, stop and check for understanding again. Remember, modeling is one of the most effective teaching strategies.
2. Remind your child that using the two strategies, **check for understanding** and **back up and reread**, together will help with remembering and understanding the story.
3. Often it is easier to understand text when you read it slowly. Encourage your child to read slowly, follow text with finger if it helps, and truly think about the meaning of the words/story.

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## CAFÉ Strategy: Check for Understanding

Even as an adult reader, there are times when I am reading a story and I get lost and am not sure what has happened. Fortunately, when this happens, I have strategies I use to help me understand the story. The same thing happens when children read. However, with children they often keep reading and do not realize they lost comprehension until the end of the story. They are too concerned with reading accurately, and forget to take the time to think about what they are reading. How can we help them gain comprehension? We can teach them the comprehension strategy: **check for understanding** because good readers stop frequently to check for understanding or to ask who and what.

### How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. When reading to your child, stop periodically and say, "Let's see if we remember what I just read. Think about who the story was about and what happened." Do this 3 or 4 times throughout the story.
2. When reading to your child, stop and have them practice checking for understanding by saying, "I heard you say..."
3. Ask your child the following questions:
  - Who did you just read about?
  - What just happened?
  - Was your brain talking to you while you read?
  - Do you understand what was read?
  - What do you do if you don't remember?

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## CAFÉ Strategy: Skip the Word, Then Come Back

As experienced readers, when we come to an unfamiliar word in a text, we are usually able to use context clues to help us figure out what the word is. We use the accuracy strategy, "**Skip the Word, Then Come Back**" without even thinking about what we are doing. We have enough experience and practice as a reader to know this strategy works.

When children come to words they don't know, some stall on the unknown word and are unable to move on. These children must learn strategies to help them move forward. Your child is working on the accuracy strategy, "**Skip the Word, Then Come Back**". This strategy teaches a reader to skip over the word until the end of the sentence or passage. Then, the reader should back up and read the sentence again, using the first letter or letters of the skipped word and their context clues to decode the unknown word.

### How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. When listening to your child read, help him/her realize it is okay to skip over a word and then come back to it. If, when reading, your child gets stuck on a word, encourage the use of this strategy.
2. Model this strategy for your child. Read aloud and stop at a word they may find difficult. Think out loud. Say, "I am going to skip this word because I am not sure what it says. I will read the rest of the sentence and then come back to it to see if I can figure it out." Hearing someone else think through the use of a new strategy can be helpful to a reader that is learning to use that strategy for the first time.
3. Play a game of "Guess My Word" with your child. Write a sentence and cover up one word. Have your child read the sentence and guess what the word might be. Then, uncover the first letter of the word and help them use the first letter and context clues from the rest of the sentence to figure it out. You may also want to reverse roles and have your child write a sentence and cover a word for you to guess. This will allow you another opportunity to model this strategy for your child.

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## CAFÉ Strategy: Chunk Letters and Sounds Together

When teaching children to read, we are always looking for ways to help them decode words efficiently, rapidly, and accurately. This allows them to focus their attention on understanding what they read rather than focusing on the fundamentals of each word. One way we accomplish this is through teaching children to watch for familiar word patterns called chunks. Chunks are groups of letters that when put together form a recognizable sound or word. Chunks can be found at the beginning, middle, or end of a word. Your child is working on the accuracy strategy of **chunking letters and sounds together**. Use the following suggestions to support your child's learning at home.

### How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. When reading with your child, have your child look for well-known letter chunks in the words they are reading. These chunks could be prefixes, suffixes, endings, whole words, or base words. For example, your child may look for the chunk end in the word send, or air in chair.
2. When chunking a word, have your child first read each chunk separately. Then, have your child put the chunks together to make the word. This will train your child to quickly and easily spot chunks.
3. If your child is having difficulty finding chunks, guide him/her to look for familiar endings and familiar prefixes.
4. Encourage your child to use his/her fingers to frame the chunks found in words, decode those chunks first, and then move on to tackle the whole word.
5. To help train your child to look for chunks in words, play a game of "I Spy" when reading. For example, when looking at the word blend, you would say, "In this word I spy the word end". Then, switch roles with your child and let your child "spy" chunks in words.

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## CAFÉ Strategy: Flip the Sound

Have you ever taught your child a rule from the English language to then have them point out an example where it doesn't work? Many words in the English language don't follow basic phonics rules. For example, children learn that *ch* makes the /ch/ sound we hear in *chip*. However, this rule does not apply when decoding the word *school*. Children need to be given tools to use when reading so they are not stumped when common rules don't apply. **Flip the sound** is a strategy good readers use when they come to a word that doesn't sound right or make sense. Knowing the multiple sounds a letter or letter combination can make and being able to flip the sounds around is an essential skill.

### How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. When your child reads a word incorrectly, wait until he/she gets to the end of the sentence. Then, stop your child and ask, "Did the word you just read sound right?" Put your hand palm-down and flip your hand over while saying, "Try flipping the sound."
2. Remind your child that when good readers use the strategy of flip the sound, they listen for a word they recognize. They then check to make sure that word makes sense in the sentence.
3. When sounding out words, review the different sounds letters make. Ask your child, "What other sound could that letter make?" Encourage your child to use the strategy of flip the sound to try different words until he/she is successful.
4. If your child is still struggling with this strategy, give your child the kinesthetic prompt of flipping over your hand as a quiet reminder to try the strategy.
5. This strategy can be compared to the strategy of cross checking. Remind your child to look at the word and ask, "Does it look right, does it sound right, does it make sense?" If it doesn't sound right, they will then know to flip the sound and try again.

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## CAFÉ Strategy: Blend Sounds, Stretch and Reread

It often requires a lot of patience to listen to beginning readers as they learn to decode and sound out words. Beginning readers usually learn their sounds in isolation and as a result sound choppy when they try to put these sounds together to make words. Taking the individual letter sounds and blending them together can be a first step to becoming a reader for many children. As with any other task, to improve in reading a person must have increased exposure and practice, practice, practice. Your child is working on the accuracy strategy of blending sounds. The following ideas provide you with suggestions on how you can assist your child in becoming a better reader.

### How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. When reading and blending sounds together, encourage your child to listen for a familiar word.
2. Give your child a rubber band and have them take it between two hands. Write down a simple word for your child to read (3 letter words such as bat, dog, and cap). Have your child pull the band apart a bit with each sound in the word. This will have your child stretching out both the band and the word. When finished with all of the sounds, say the word together while bringing hands together.
3. When reading, tell your child, "Say each letter as you stretch them out, then put them together and say it fast." Demonstrate what this sounds like for your child.
4. If your child is having difficulty blending sounds and still sounds choppy, encourage your child to sing as they sound out the word. It is almost impossible to make a word sound choppy when you are singing. 😊

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## CAFÉ Strategy: Use Beginning and Ending Sounds


Often when learning new words, children apply the strategy of **using the beginning sound** to help them identify the word. When they do this, they often guess a word that may not fit in the sentence, it starts with the same letter so they guess and move on without looking at the rest of the word. They may not even know there is an end to the word. To gain accuracy it is important that children also learn to look at the **end of the word** when reading. Applying the accuracy strategy of **using beginning and ending sounds** helps with both accuracy and comprehension since reading the correct words will enhance the meaning of what is being read.

### How can you help your child with this strategy at home?


1. When listening to your child read, encourage him/her to slow down enough to pay attention to the end of the word. Have your child point to the end of the word and tell you the sound it makes. This reinforces that there is an end to the word.
2. Have your child cross check the word he/she just read. Remind your child to ask, "Does it look right, does it sound right, does it make sense?" to help them identify the word.
3. If necessary, revisit letter sounds and the concept words of beginning and end. Then, when stumbling on a word, have your child stretch out the word, saying the beginning, middle, and end sounds. After having him/her focus on the beginning and ending sounds, help your child read the word correctly and ask, "Did that make sense?"
4. If your child is still struggling with this strategy, have your child write the word out. Slowing down to write the word can help focus his/her attention on the end sound.

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## CAFE Strategy: Cross Checking

When reading a book for pleasure or for information, chances are you will come to a word or two you are unsure of. You probably will use the accuracy strategy of **cross checking** without even thinking about it, because it is second nature to you as a reader to read accurately. Accuracy is not second nature to children learning to read. It is something that needs to be taught using a variety of strategies.

Your child has been introduced to the accuracy strategy of **cross checking**. It is important to slow readers down when they come to a word they don't know and teach them to apply the strategy of **cross checking** so they are able to fix the meaning and not just skip the word. **Cross checking** requires a person to constantly think and monitor meaning. It is a strategy for ensuring the words and pictures read make sense and match the letters on a page.

### How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. Listen to your child read. When he comes to a word he is unsure of, remind him to cross check. Ask:
  - Does the word you are reading match the picture or letters written?  
(they cross their right arm over their body)
  - Does it sound right?  
(their left arm crosses over their body making an X)
  - Does it make sense?  
(both arms come down with hands pointing to the ground)

***\*Doing physical movements with each question helps children to remember the questions.***

2. If your child is having difficulty with this strategy at home, break down the process:
  - Have her stop reading when meaning breaks down.
  - Tell her to look at the letters and say the sounds or look for word chunks in words.
  - Remind her to use the pictures to help.
3. To make your child aware of using this strategy, give him a piece of paper and tell him to make a tally mark each time he uses the **cross checking** strategy.

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