Overview

I am working with Jack. He is 10 years old and is in the fourth grade. In our first session, I learned that Jack enjoys reading and sees himself as a capable reader. To help me get an idea of his reading level skills, we did the following activities:

* Word knowledge assessment— we played a word memory game that I created using a list of 20 vocabulary words. It was obvious from this experience that he was able to easily and accurately identify a variety of words. He didn’t stumble on any of the words.
* Comprehension assessment— to gauge his comprehension ability, I read a short passage called “The Elephant’s Child” (attached) to him and asked him to answer the comprehension questions at the end. He did this quickly and answered each of the questions correctly. He also enjoyed and did well with the word search
* Writing assessment— we both created a tutoring journal and Jack was asked to write a brief reflection on his experience (attached)
* Book interests – I wasn’t really sure what he would be interested in reading so I brought several different options for him to choose from. He immediately selected a book by Mary Pope Osborne called “Mummies in the Morning”. I had him read the blurb to get an idea of his reading level. Once again, he did this well.

Information about the reading assessment:

For the running record assessment we used the first 150 words of “Mummies in the Morning” which is #3 in the Magic Tree House book series. This book is an early chapter book and written on a 3.5 grade level. Before I started to record, I gave him time to preview the selected text to familiarize himself with it. To make sure I was able to make an accurate assessment, I made a copy of the text so that I could mark any miscues as he read and I recorded it so I could go back.

Information about accuracy and self-correction

I have included a copy of the running record with markings which shows that Jack made a total of 3 errors and 7 self-corrections. As you can see, Jack made a reverse word order mistake when he read “said Jack” which counts for 2 errors. He also omitted the word “was”. Several times throughout the text, he self-corrected himself and even reread a couple of phrases to correct errors made. His error rate is 1:50. Based on this assessment, Jack was able to read at a rate of 98% accuracy. This means that this text is easy and appropriate for him to read independently.

Analysis of reading

Jack is able to recognize words automatically and was able to identify all the words in this part of the text. He did hesitate on oak and at at the very beginning of the passage but I took this as more of nervousness than not recognizing the words. I think that he uses appropriate intonation, pitch and pauses. Also, he reads in phrases as opposed to word by word.

Jack also exhibits self-monitoring strategies as evident by the number of self-corrections. He is aware of his mistakes and goes back to make appropriate corrections. My opinion of this is that he has a vested interest and wants to become a better reader. Most of the time he reads at a proper pace, however sometimes he reads quickly, the words seem to run together and it sounds as if he is mumbling. I think this is what contributes to most of the errors he makes and the need for him to self-correct as he reads.

Using the assessment information

Jack and I decided the best way to help him improve his reading abilities was to help him slow down and read purposefully. As a result, we created a signal to help Jack recognize when he is reading unintentionally. The signal is snapping and when he hears me snap while he’s reading he needs to go back to correct any mistakes he made in the sentence. I think this is a great prompt to use as not to intrusively interrupt his reading. When he does come to a word that he doesn’t know, the best prompts I found to work with him is: Do you recognize any part of the word? Another strategy that worked really well was the words strips to help him identify parts of the word.

Teaching Point

Teaching point: Student will read with high accuracy, fluency and phrasing.

I think this is the most suitable objective based on what I’ve learned while working with Jack. I’ve emphasized to Jack that he shouldn’t focus solely on speed because that can impede his ability to engage in meaningful reading. Plus, if he is rushing through the text, he’s less likely to understand what he’s read.

Some of the strategies I’ve used to help him achieve this goal is to provide regular opportunities for shared reading. This way, Jack is able to hear fluent reading and also has the chance to practice; with coaching. Also, it is important to give him positive feedback and encouragement to make this an enjoyable learning experience.

Teaching point: Student will learn new vocabulary words.

I also think that it is important to help Jack expand his vocabulary. My hope is to encourage his curiosity about the meaning and use of unfamiliar words and promote the use of strategies that will help him find the meaning of unfamiliar words.

The single most effective way I think I can help Jack build his vocabulary is by encouraging him to read more. In addition, I can help him increase his vocabulary by exposing him to difficult words and encouraging him to use those words in his speaking and writing.

The strategy I’ve use to incorporate vocabulary into our learning session is to make a list of challenging vocabulary words and give Jack the opportunity to identify five words that he doesn’t know, have never used or is curious about. Then we take those five words and add them to our word memory game. Next, we look up the words and talk about how we can use those words and identify synonyms.

Prompts that I’ve used:

* Have you seen this word before?
* What do you think the definition is?
* How would you use this word in everyday conversation?
* What is another word that you know that means the same thing?