Home Reading Glossary

We are implementing a new way of teaching reading in line with the brand new Department of Education Curriculum here at Waratah Public School. At home, you may hear our students using very impressive language like 'decoding' and 'fluency' when they speak about reading, which are words that are new for many of us! To help in supporting your child with their reading at home, here are some of the new words that we use when we are learning to read at WPS:

Sounds (phonemes)- Words are made of individual sounds which are represented by 1, 2, 3 or even sometimes 4 letters which we call graphemes e.g. a for apple or ch for chicken

Decoding- This is when we look at the letters in a word and say the sounds that they make. Remember that some letters are working together to show 1 sound like the digraph 'sh' at the start of 'shop'.

Blending- Once we know the sounds that the letters are making, we put them together. Blending is holding each sound in our mouth and running it into the next sound. This turns the individual sounds into one word. Sometimes it helps to use our finger or arm to blend sounds.

Sight words- These are words with sounds that we might not have learnt yet so we need to remember them off by heart. Words like 'said' have a tricky sound in the middle which makes it hard to decode, so we just need to remember what it looks like.

Chunking- To help us decode longer words, we can break them into smaller parts. Words like 'pocket' we can read by blending 'pock-' then '-et'. Then we put the smaller chunks together!

Automatically- When we have practised blending words for long enough, our brains become so good at it that we don't even notice they're doing it! When this happens, we no longer need to say the sounds in a word before we blend. This is what it sounds like to read words automatically.

Inferring- When we know what is happening in a story without the words telling us explicitly. We could use picture clues, or clues from other characters to infer meaning.

Fluently- When our reading voice sounds like our speaking voice. Fluency means that we are decoding words quickly enough that nobody can notice us doing it. We start by reading words, then phrases then sentences fluently, all the way up to whole books!