What’s that word?

An unfamiliar word can stop a reader in her tracks and make it harder to understand a novel or textbook. If a word stumps your child, suggest that she ask herself these questions.

Am I pronouncing it correctly?
Your youngster might know the word *delicate* when she hears it spoken, but misread it as *de-LIE-kate* in a book. When a word seems unfamiliar, she can check its pronunciation in a dictionary. Tip: Some online dictionaries have audio, too. She may be surprised to discover that she knows the word if she hears it (and now she’ll know how to spell it, too).

Do I know a similar word?
Sometimes a new word will remind your child of a word that she recognizes. For example, she might read *herbivore* and think of *carnivore*. She could say, “A carnivore is a meat eater and an herb is a plant, so an herbivore must be a plant eater.” Then, have her reread the sentence with that meaning in mind to see if it makes sense.

Are there clues in the text?
Examples, explanations, synonyms, or antonyms can help your youngster understand words. If she reads, “To advance in a profession like fashion design, it helps to take classes,” she could realize that profession means career. Or she may notice the synonym *job* later in the same paragraph. (“Staying on top of the latest information is important in any job.”)

Giving directions

Writing instructions is easy, right? Not necessarily. Here’s a fun way to show your youngster how much thinking, writing, and revising go into technical writing—like the how-to manuals that come with furniture or electronics.

Ask your child to write directions for walking to school or to a neighbor’s house. Then, follow the directions together, exactly as written. If they aren’t correct, it will be clear when you take a wrong turn or end up in the wrong place.

Let your youngster revise his instructions as you go. He will see how important it is to write accurately and clearly.
Terrific titles

A good title can catch a reader’s eye and draw him into a story. These tips will help your youngster write attention-grabbing titles for his stories and papers.

Use names. He might put the name of a character or a place from his story into the title. Examples: The World of Jeremiah or On the Way to Miracle Island.

Be catchy. Suggest that your child consider a title that rhymes (Lucky Ducky) or has alliteration (The Crazy Cookie Caper).

Vague or specific? To add intrigue, he may go with The Elusive Fish rather than Fishing on Spring Break. Or he could be specific (but still interesting) with How Not to Catch a Fish.

Take a vote. Getting feedback can help your youngster understand what will hook an audience. Let him list five titles. Then, he could ask family and friends to read his piece and vote for their favorite.

Idea: Have your youngster try out a title by saying it aloud. If he likes how it looks and sounds, it might be a good choice.

My grammar poster

Which grammar rules give your child trouble? This colorful poster can help her remember them at a glance.

Maybe your youngster struggles with the difference between your and you’re. Or perhaps she forgets which kinds of clauses are separated by commas. Suggest that she look over graded assignments to spot her most common errors. She can also look in her class notes and her English book for rules on commas, apostrophes, capitalization, and pronouns, for instance.

On poster board, she could write the rules in colorful markers and add fun illustrations. Say she’s giving the rule for plurals vs. possessives. She might draw a bookshelf and write, “Books fill the shelves” and then sketch an open book saying, “The book’s pages have small print.”

Have her hang the poster above her desk as a handy reminder.

Discuss books together

Q I’ve heard that talking to my daughter about books we read is a good thing, but I don’t know what to say. Can you help?

A First, there really is no wrong way to discuss books with your youngster. By talking together, you’ll show your interest, and you’ll encourage her to think about what she’s reading.

Try talking about the characters. You might discuss how a character’s actions got him into—or out of—trouble, for example. Ask your child what she would do differently if she were the character. Or ask which character she’d like to be friends with and why.

Another idea is to explore how the story is the same as or different from other books you’ve read together. Your daughter might say a science fiction novel reminds her of a historical fiction book she read because both involve traveling to new and unknown places.

Q&A

Parent 2 Parent

Reading the news

My son Max recently did a current events project in social studies class. He had to choose a news topic, collect five articles about it, and write a report.

At first I was concerned about all the scary news out there. Then, Max showed me the kid-friendly sources his teacher had listed. I was glad to see the great sites where children can read the news in a way that they can understand and that is less frightening for them.

After doing this project, my son has become more interested in reading the news. He’s following kidscoop.com and timeforkids.com, and he’s also enjoying the kids’ section in our daily newspaper.
We wanted to know what is your favorite thing about What's that Word? and what do you want us to improved. Post your answers here!

What's That Word? 19 February 2013 â—”. Hey guys, great job with yesterday’s What’s That Word Challenge! I bet you’ve seen a lot of fun and interesting words in game. What is your favorite word that you have seen while playing What’s That Word? Post your answers below! What’s That Word? 18 February 2013 â—”. Hey guys, it’s time for another What’s That Word Challenge! Whatâ€™s That Word? by Bob Kim (Maryland, USA). Who is it good for? For example, if the word is UP, and the 4 words that team A say team B cannot say are ABOVE, DOWN, NORTH, and SKY, the first member of team B cannot say any of those words in order to get the other member to say it. If the first member does say a disallowed word, the word is invalid and team B has to move on to another word. Another way of saying "what?” or "pardon me" Synonyms: what, pardon me, say that again, I beg your pardon, I’m sorry? What’s that? Something you say when you are embarrassed about something or trying to change the subject . Adam: ”So Dwain I heard you blew that guy last night.” Dwain: ” What's that ?” by Brucist August 04, 2007. 38. 13. Flag. Get the What's that? neck gaiter and mug. 3. What's that?