

Independent Strategies

by Jill Marie Warner



When I get stuck on a word in a book,
There are lots of things I can do.
I can do them all, please, by myself;
I don't need help from you.

I can look at the picture to get a hint.
Or think what the story's about.
I can "get my mouth ready" to say the first letter.
A kind of "sounding out".

I can chop up the words into smaller parts,
Like *on* or *ing* or *ly*,
Or find smaller words in compound words,
Like *raincoat* and *bumblebee*.



I can think of a word that makes sense in that place,
Guess or say "blank" and read on until the sentence
has reached its end,
Then go back and try these on:
"Does it make sense?"
"Can we say it that way?"
"Does it look right to me?"

Chances are the right word will pop out like the sun
In my own mind, can't you see?



If I've thought of and tried out most of these things
And I still do not know what to do,
Then I may turn around and ask
For some help to get me through.

What If They Can't Read the Word?

Before simply telling your child the word, encourage them/remind them/help them to:

- Look at the picture for a clue



- Say first sound - does that give me a clue?



- Think about phonics...imagine sound buttons - say each sound in the word and blend them together



- Try pronouncing it a different way



- 'Chop' the word up into smaller chunks (use your finger, if it helps, to cover up other bits while you concentrate on just one)



- Look for shorter words that you already know inside the longer word



- Read the whole sentence and guess what would make sense in that place



- Look for letter strings you know how to pronounce already

