

**Table 1.3 Common Causes of Reading Problems, Symptoms and Remedial Strategies** (page 1)

<b>Cause</b>	<b>Symptoms</b>	<b>Investigation</b>	<b>Remediation</b>
DECODING PROBLEMS			
Visual acuity	– may squint	– regular eye examination	– eye glasses
Eye co-ordination	– may complain of losing one’s place, skipping lines, or may use finger to track words	– examination by a developmental optometrist	– eye co-ordination exercises, special glasses or any combination of these – Ann Arbor Tracking Program <sup>9</sup>
Scotopic sensitivity syndrome (SSS)	– may complain of words getting blurry or running off the page at the end of the lines  – may not even realize that there is any other way to see	– examination by someone trained in SSS	– use of colored plastic overlays or special colored glasses
<b>Difficulty knowing sounds the letters make (especially vowel sounds)<sup>10</sup></b>	– may guess at words and make errors where vowels are involved	– ask to repeat hard and soft sounds made by each vowel	– teach remedial strategies re vowel sounds and rules (next page) – some people need the intensive remediation involved in Auditory Discrimination In Depth Program
Difficulty breaking the words into syllables	– may read small words fine and seem to look at the first few letters and then guess at longer words	– show familiar and new words with three or four syllables and ask to read them	– teach syllables by feeling movement of jaw or clapping while saying longer words such as “intelligent” – show how to break words into syllables of 2-3 letters with a vowel in each section

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<sup>9</sup> For more information about any of the programs mentioned specifically in this chart, contact your local Learning Disability Association

<sup>10</sup> Bolded sections indicate reasons for reading difficulties most commonly experienced by those with A.D.D.

**Table 1.3 Common Causes of Reading Problems, Symptoms and Remedial Strategies** (page 2)

<b>Cause</b>	<b>Symptoms</b>	<b>Investigation</b>	<b>Remediation</b>
<b>COMPREHENSION PROBLEMS</b>			
Poor vocabulary	– may miss the meaning of passages due to lack of knowledge of word meaning	– ask student to tell you the meaning of key words in the passage (even though they may have been read correctly)	– work on building vocabulary through the use of a personal word dictionary
Reading books that are too difficult	– may take a very long time to read a short passage	– check that books are at an appropriate level of difficulty	– use the 5-finger rule - ensure that book has no more than 5 words per page that the person does not know (i.e., either how to read it or the meaning of it).
Problems making visual pictures of material being read	– may read quickly but without intonation which suggests comprehension	– ask person to paraphrase or re-tell the meaning of what they have just read – some people need the intensive Visualizing and Verbalizing Program	– practice in visualizing what is read
<b>not taking in the information deeply enough</b>	– may read but realize afterwards that they were thinking about something else	– ensure that person can decode and comprehend what is being read, ask them about symptoms	– margin monitoring with a pencil or pen in order to create an interaction between author and reader.
<b>not connecting new information with prior knowledge</b>	– may show passivity in identifying what they already know about topic being studied and may not be making connections as they read	– ask person what they already know and how they are remembering the new information	– give practice activating prior knowledge before reading and help them to organize new information through semantic mapping (see KWL strategy, p. 80)



## **MORE ABOUT ... Reading Strategies**

Whenever anyone has a concern with reading, I recommend that their eyes be examined by a developmental optometrist who checks for both acuity and eye co-ordination. ***The possibility of eye co-ordination problems should always be ruled out with a reading difficulty.***

There are many different remedial strategies which are very effective in developing reading skills. Local tutoring or remedial services should be of assistance in determining the cause of your reading difficulty.

In the section below, I have included the three most common intervention strategies that I recommend. The need for this information has arisen due to lack of phonics being taught in the last decade. All reading methods (e.g., visual, phonics, whole language) have their value, because we all learn in different ways. Difficulties arise when one technique is taught to the exclusion of other methods. Under these circumstances, different sets of “disabled” readers tend to be created. I now see more teachers presenting children with a variety of ways to learn to read and that is encouraging. Remember, a particular strategy should be used only if you feel that is the reason for the reading problem in the first place. Be sure to try it for a few weeks and then evaluate whether or not it seems to be working. If it isn't helping, try something else. Tool K - Positive Problem-Solving Worksheet (p. 151) may help you approach this area in a systematic way.

### **A. Decoding Strategies**

These three strategies may be tried for improving decoding skills when there is **difficulty knowing sounds the letters make (especially vowel sounds).**

**Vowel Sounds** - vowels have two basic sounds - a hard and soft sound. The hard sound is when it says its name (a - as in ape) or soft (a - as in apple). The soft vowel sounds are the first sound in the following words:

- a - apple
- e - elephant
- i - igloo
- o - ostrich
- u - umbrella

## When Two Vowels Go Walking ...

“When two vowels go walking the first one does the talking (i.e., says it’s name).” For instance, in the word “peat” there are two vowels. The way you sound out the vowel is to say the name of the first vowel in the pair which is “e” (as in “even”).

## The Silent “E” Rule

When there is an “e” at the end of the word, after a consonant, the vowel before the consonant says its name. For instance, in the word “flake” there is an “e” after the consonant “k”, therefore the “a” says its name (as in “ape”).

## B. Reading Comprehension Strategy

The strategy below is very effective in developing reading comprehension when the difficulty is due to **not taking in the information deeply enough** or **not connecting new information with prior knowledge**. I recommend it to parents and teachers alike, for all ages of students.

### K-W-L

K-W-L is a wonderful strategy to activate any reader. Just make up a chart which looks like the one below:

<b>K</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>
What do I already know?	What do I want to learn?	What did I learn?

Fill in the “K” before beginning to read about a certain topic, then the “W”. Once questions are identified, the student will find it easier to get involved in the reading and will recognize when answers come to their questions. After reading, complete the “L”. The student will be amazed at what s/he has learned!