



READING DISCOVERY

You may have heard in the news lately that the Australian Government is considering the adoption of a Phonics Screening Test for Year One students, like that used in the United Kingdom. Phonics has always been hotly contested as a method of teaching literacy however, I believe strongly that it plays an integral role in the teaching of reading. In order to read proficiently, students need both accurate and fluent word identification skills and adequate language comprehension. They need to be able to work out what the words on the page are and know what they mean. Phonics helps increase the speed and accuracy with which children decode words. The more efficient they are at doing this, the easier the reading process becomes. Children can then focus

on comprehending the material and developing complex skills like interpretation and analysis. And of course, the more efficiently and easily a child reads, the more enjoyable the process is.

Knowing phonics is one thing but another essential ingredient for the efficient decoding of words is practice. Just as we become proficient in playing cricket or a musical instrument through daily practice, so too do we learn to read through the act of reading. If parents and children persist with reading, a little bit every day, all of a sudden a switch is turned on ...magic happens and reading a book suddenly becomes easy and fun! Its then that parents, teachers and other caregivers play a role in nurturing a child's love of reading books. Libraries are a great source of wonderful reading material. And what could be more delicious than snuggling up in bed to read a book before turning the light off each night?

The following poem sums it all up for me...

Read, read, read!
The more you read,
The more you know,
The more you know,
The more you grow... so,
Read, read, read!

My door is always open to parents who would like further advice.
Here's to a wonderful year, 2017!
And, please... make time for reading!

Kendra Anderson