

Table Tap Method

Who is it for? The table tap method is best for students who are inaccurate word readers but demonstrate strong decoding skills. By using the table tap method the listener can help to draw the reader's attention to the errors the student is making and improve accuracy reading the words on the page. Common characteristics of readers who may be best served by the table tap method may consistently:

- Drop inflection endings, like *-ing*, *-ed*, or *-s*,
- Add sounds to words that aren't there (says "stray" for stay", or
- Skip little words like *in*, *the*, or *and*

What is it? To use the table tap method, the listener, which could be the teacher, peer or parent volunteer taps on the table with their finger or the end of a writing utensil to signal to the reader that they have made an error. The reader then is expected to self-correct the error by rereading the erred word correctly and starting back at the beginning of the sentence before they continue reading. If the reader is unable to self-identify their error, then the listener tells them their error, the reader says the word correctly, and the reader returns to the beginning of the sentence before continuing.

How long should this strategy be used? In general, most students will correct their unforced errors within four to six weeks if the table tap method is used consistently in approximately 3-5 sessions a week. This can be done in as little as 5-10 minutes of reading per session.

Why it works? In general, readers like these, who are making errors not due to decoding deficits, are our stronger readers. They have mastered decoding, but due to their speed or lack of intention in reading the actual words on the page are making unnecessary errors. This technique refocuses the reader to remember that the goal isn't reading fast, but to read accurately with few to no errors. For strong readers, requiring them to correct the error and return to the beginning of the sentence is labor some and they learn they can avoid it by reading accurately.

Should I be alarmed? You will likely notice that their reading fluency rate, or the number of words they can read in a minute, will decrease initially. This is expected. As you can imagine, having to stop to fix their errors and go back to the beginning of the sentence impacts the number of words they will be able to read. Don't worry as their rate will recover as they decrease their errors.