AVOID A LEMON

HOW TO SPOT INEFFECTIVE READING INSTRUCTION

ROUTE TO READING

Just like car buyers want to avoid a "lemon" — a car with hidden problems — families need to recognize reading instruction that looks helpful, but isn't effective.

WARNING SIGNS

THE RIGHT TRACK

DECODING WORDS

- Guessing from pictures.
- Using context clues.
- Saying the first sound, then guessing the rest.

- Uses letter-sound relationships.
- Avoids guessing strategies.
- Blends sounds together.

SIGHT WORDS

- Memorizing whole words as visual units.
- Treating words as shapes.
- Focusing on word appearance.

- Teaches letter-sound relationships.
- Breaks down irregular words.
- Uses sounds, not memory.

SPELLING WORDS

- Word searches.
- Tracing words.
- Memorizing letter shapes.

- Says sounds, writes letters in order.
- Maps sounds to letters.
- Uses sound-letter patterns.

For more free literacy resources, visit improvingliteracy.org.

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