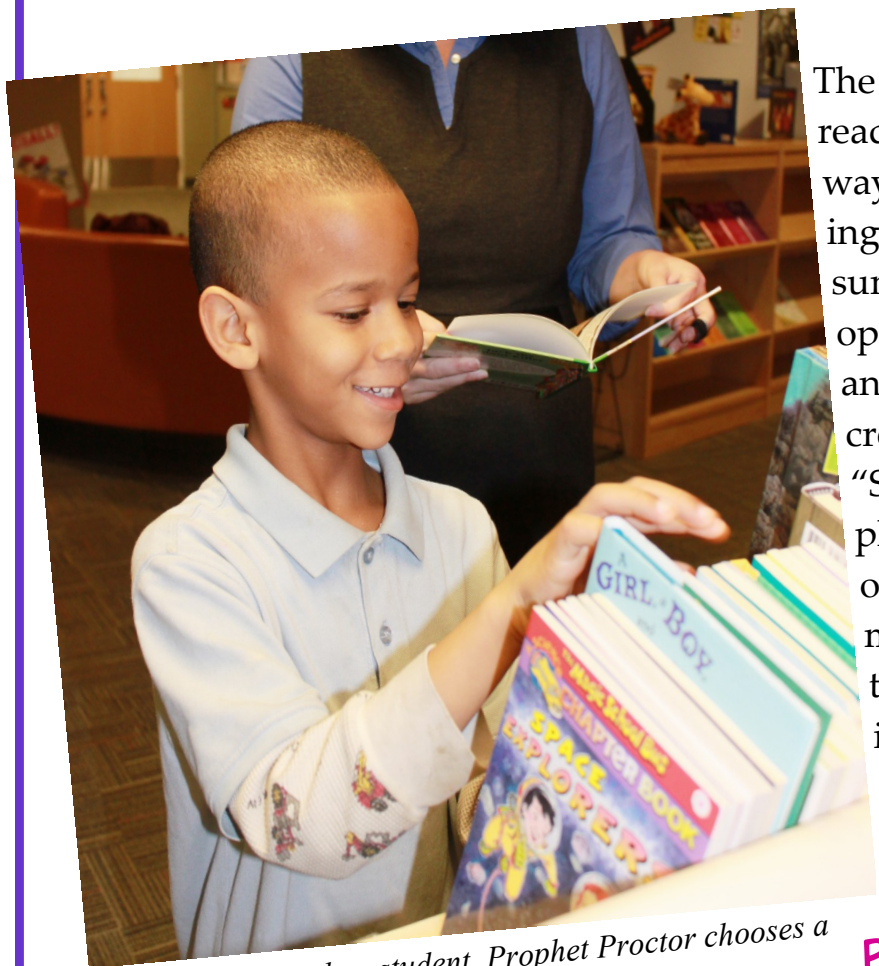


# Mentor Tips: SUPPORTING THE STUDENT READER



*Readers Are Leaders student, Prophet Proctor chooses a book to read.*

The Reading Mentor's assignment is to engage in the simple act of reading with a child. This presents plenty of opportunities along the way that will strengthen skills, bolster confidence, and exercise reading "muscles." *The Source: A Curriculum Guide for Reading Mentors* summarizes the benefits of engaging those muscles so they are developed for the task of reading. The positive experience of reading with an engaged adult can support the student's attention in a way that creates a positive environment for strengthening literacy skills. "Struggling readers commonly struggle with phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, and processing verbal information. They often lack the auditory and visual skills needed for reading, and may have problems with memory and concentration. Because of their lack of success, struggling readers often view themselves as incapable of learning to read. This "learned helplessness" may cause them to give up and resist making an effort."

**"Part of teaching children with reading problems is convincing them that they can learn to read, despite their experience to the contrary"**

"Phonics must not be made to carry the whole burden of reading instruction, especially if students have difficulty with it. Although research and experience have demonstrated again and again that phonics knowledge and skill are essential for learning to read, and that they speed up learning to read, there is also considerable evidence that reading development depends on wide reading of connected text, the development of fluency, and the growth of vocabulary, knowledge and reasoning. Thus, it is wise for all students, even those having extreme difficulty with phonics, to read books they find interesting, learn the meanings of ever more difficult words, and continue to acquire knowledge." - Chall and Popp

Everybody Wins! DC's Reading Mentors have the unique ability to support students in their efforts to discover the joy of reading. The hour-long reading sessions make a tremendous impact on the student: It acknowledges the power of reading; supports the contention that reading is entertaining and informing; and provides a non-judgmental forum in which the student can experiment, build vocabulary, discuss content, and discover new interests.



*Readers Are Leaders Pair Ayanna Moore and Samayah Washington sound out a difficult word.*