

INTERACTIVE READING GUIDE

Dugout Hero

by Ryan Howard & Krystle Howard

from the ***Little Rhino*** series

The Mustangs were on a hot winning streak and every victory was important. Little Rhino’s whole team was cheering for him. Even Dylan was standing on the bench rooting for Little Rhino, the home run hitter. It all came down to the next pitch. When the pitcher threw the ball, Little Rhino swung as hard as his arms could handle, felt a pop in his ankle, and dropped to the ground. That was yesterday. Today, Little Rhino is propped up on the couch with a sprained ankle. The doctor says Little Rhino is not going to be able to play baseball for the next two weeks. Rhino’s friends keep dropping by to bring him his homework, but Rhino just wants to be back on the field. Can he find a way to help his team without playing?

Want to read more books like this one? Visit your local or school library to check out more!

CREATE SUCCESSFUL READING HABITS

Fluency is the ability to read out loud in the same way that you would speak. This means reading accurately, at a regular speed, and with expression. As children become more fluent, the skills that are needed to read become automatic. When your child improves their fluency, their reading aloud will sound more like everyday speaking with very few mistakes.

There are many different things that fluent readers do. They raise, lower, or adjust the tone of their voice as well as change the rhythm of their speech. Fluent readers stress words or syllables for effect. They also pause at punctuation in text and at the end of sentences. Each of these skills combines to help the fluent reader share meaning with their listeners.

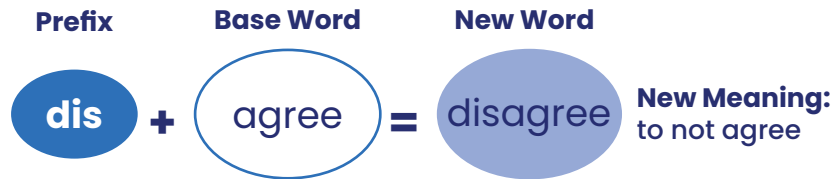
Simple activities you can do at home to improve your child’s fluency are:

- Practice difficult words ahead of time.
- Read out loud to your child.
- Take turns reading with your child.
- If your child skips words or guesses while reading, encourage them to read the sentence again, or ask, “Does that sound right? I don’t think that word makes sense.”
- Add some drama when you read out loud by exaggerating the emotions of the characters.
- Read it again! Reading books multiple times gives children the opportunity to practice and improve their fluency. Difficult skills become more automatic with practice!

* U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, What Works Clearinghouse. (n.d.). Practice Guides. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuides>

WORD WORK

Help your child identify **prefixes** to read and understand longer words. When a **prefix** is added to a **base word**, it changes its meaning. **Base words** are single words that cannot be broken into smaller word parts and still have meaning. Here is an example of how the meaning of the **base word** *agree* changes when the **prefix** *dis-* is added to the beginning of the word.



Here are some examples of **prefixes** from the book and a description of what they mean.

Example	Prefix (Meaning)	Meaning
fore head (p. 22)	fore (front of)	front of the head
un expected (p. 47) un likely (p. 53)	un (not)	not expected not likely
re injure (p. 38)	re (again)	to injure again

Practice identifying words with **prefixes** from the book.

Point to the word *forehead*.

- Say, "This is the word *forehead*; *forehead* has the **prefix** *fore-* at the beginning. The **prefix** *fore-* means *in front of*."
- Say, "When you add the **prefix** *fore-* to the **base word**, *head*, the meaning of the word becomes *the front of the head*."
- Say, "When you talk about your forehead, you are talking about the part of the head that is in the front."

Repeat with *unexpected*, *unlikely*, and *reinjure*.

Find more opportunities to practice identifying and analyzing words with **prefixes** as you read the book together.

TALK ABOUT NEW AND INTERESTING WORDS

When children encounter unfamiliar words, take a moment to talk about the words using child-friendly explanations or definitions. Here are some interesting words and child-friendly definitions to discuss from the book:

trickling (p. 3)

When a liquid **trickles**, it flows slowly in small amounts. Rhino is hot, and he can feel sweat **trickling** down his back.

surged (p. 4)

If something **surges**, it increases suddenly. Rhino feels fine until a pain suddenly **surges** through his ankle.

wincing (p. 4)

If you **wince**, the muscles of your face tighten suddenly because of pain or something else unpleasant. Rhino can't avoid **wincing** in pain when he falls to the ground.

concerned (p. 6)

If you are **concerned** about something, you are worried. Bella is **concerned** about Rhino because of his injury.

ASK QUESTIONS AND MAKE CONNECTIONS

Help your child understand what they read by pausing to have conversations before, during, and after they engage with a book. Encourage them to make connections to their lives, other books, and the world around them. Have your child go to the page numbers listed to help them answer the questions.

Before Reading:



- What do you see on the front cover of this book? What can you guess about what will happen in this story based on the front cover?
- This story is about baseball. What can you tell me about baseball?
- The title of this book is *Dugout Hero* from the *Little Rhino* series. What does it mean to be a hero? How do you think you can be a hero on a baseball team?

During Reading:



- What thoughts are going through Little Rhino's mind at the end of the first chapter? (p. 11)
- What advice can you give to Rhino about being patient? (p. 22)
- What are some of the conversations Rhino has with his thinker? What benefits does Rhino get from having conversations with himself? (p. 34)
- What is your lunchtime conversation like? Do you think you would like to be a part of your own Fact Patrol? (p. 57)
- What advice does C.J. share about the right way to practice? How could you use his advice? (p. 72)

After Reading:



- Tell me about a time when you wanted to be involved in something but had to watch from the sidelines. What did you learn from this experience?
- How does Rhino manage to turn his problem of not being allowed to play into an opportunity? What does his thinker learn?

DUGOUT HERO PUZZLE

This word puzzle asks you to answer the questions to fill in the blank squares by choosing the correct answer from the word bank. If you need a hint about the answer, you can check the page listed in the book. Once you have filled in all the squares, a special hidden word will be revealed in the center squares.

1.														
2.														
3.														
4.														
5.														
6.														
7.														
8.														

SECRET WORD: _____

1. When Little Rhino is feeling better, this is the first thing he practices. (p. 72)
2. This is the name of Rhino's team. (p. 4)
3. Doing things the right way every time. (p. 72)
4. This is what Rhino calls his brain. (p. 10)
5. This is the position that Rhino would normally play. (p. 7)
6. The name of the group of friends who meet at lunchtime to talk about things like dinosaurs and planets. (p. 57)
7. This is the body part that Rhino injures. (p. 4)
8. When Rhino is injured, this person steps in to play first base. (p. 7)

Word bank:

ankle, thinker, batting, consistency, fact patrol, first base, Mustangs, Paul