

## *The Two Best Cakes:* *Reading Fluency 1*

As children begin to read on their own, they need lots of practice to get better. They need to be able to read words **accurately**, with **expression**, and at a **good speed**. They need to feel comfortable reading so that they don't just read the words, but also **understand** the meaning. Teachers call this fluency.

If your child has difficulty reading out loud and at a **good speed** or if your child reads the words but doesn't **understand** what he has read, here are some ideas to help him improve. To increase fluency, follow these three steps. First, before reading, ask questions to help your child focus on the story. Second, read the story to your child and then help your child read the story to you. Third, after you read the story, ask your child questions about it.

### **Before Reading *The Two Best Cakes***

**Make a list.** Children will learn more about a story if you ask some questions before you start reading. Sit down with your child to read *The Two Best Cakes*. Start by reading the title of this story. Ask her what she thinks might happen in this story, and have her write down her ideas on a piece of paper. Don't worry about spelling. You mainly want her to get her ideas on paper. When she has one or more ideas written down, then it's time to read together.

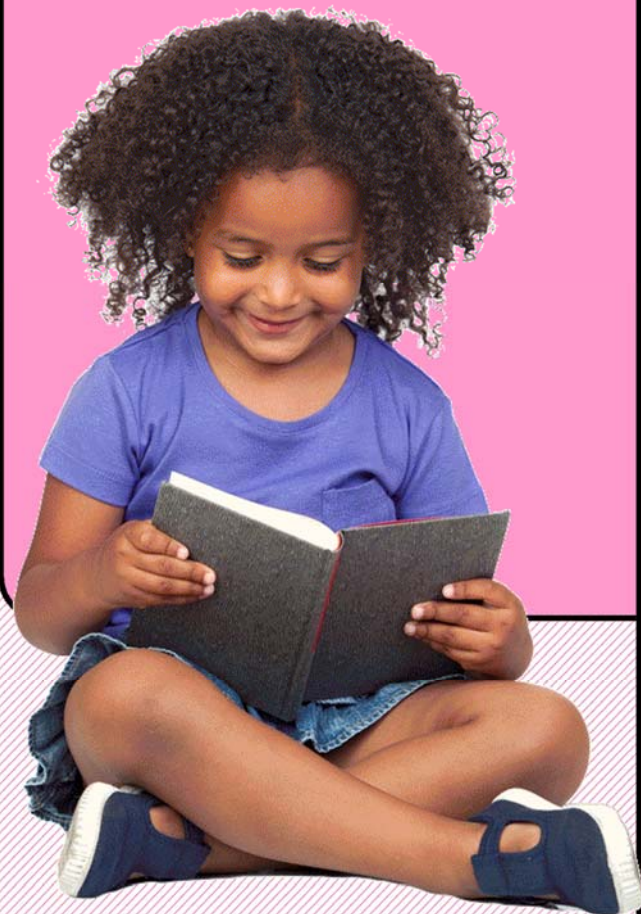




### Read *The Two Best Cakes*

Sit next to your child so that both of you can see the story. Read the story out loud to him. Try to read with expression. For example, use an excited voice when you read, "Wait until Mrs. Diaz sees this!" Point to the words as you read them. Read slowly enough that your child doesn't get lost or confused. This helps him become familiar with the story and learn new words and how to pronounce them so that he can read **smoothly**.

Now read the story again. This time ask your child to read out loud with you. It's kind of like singing a song together. As you did the first time, point to the words as you read them. Help him pronounce words that he doesn't know. This helps him read with **comfort** and with **accuracy**. Reading a story more than once is a good way to help him feel more confident about reading.



### After Reading *The Two Best Cakes*

**Check the List.** After you have read the book, go back to her list and see if what she wrote down before you read the story actually happened. Ask her if she was surprised about anything in the story. Tell her if you were surprised about anything in *The Two Best Cakes*. It doesn't matter if she was right or wrong. The idea is to get her thinking about the story before and after she reads it. This is a good way to help her **understand** the story better.

**Then What Happened.** There is another activity that will help your child **understand** and **remember** what she has read. After you have talked about the list, ask her, "What did we find out at the beginning of the story?" Then ask, "What happened next?" After she tells you, keep asking, "Then what happened?" When you get to the last part of the story ask, "What do you think happened to Mrs. Diaz and Mr. Jones and their cakes?" See if your child guesses that they ran into each other. If your child wants to, she could draw a picture showing what happened.



## Have Fun

If you or your child gets tired, stop and come back to the story and activities on another day. The more your child enjoys reading and doing the activities, the more fluent in reading she will become.

Note: You can use these same activities with another story or book. You can follow the same order of activities, or you can change the order or choose the activities that you think will be most helpful and the most fun for your child.



### More Information

Start with *The Two Best Cakes* and do the activities on this sheet. When your child gets better, you can move on to another tip sheet, *How Many Elephants Will Fit in a School Bus?: Reading Fluency 2*. Finally, the most advanced fluency tip sheet is *My Favorite Stray Cat: Reading Fluency 3*.

If your child is having a hard time with these activities, talk to your child's teacher. There may be another tip sheet or other activities to help. If you enjoy these activities, tell your child's teacher. The teacher may have more ideas to share for learning fun at home.

### Watch Families Doing Activities

To see families doing these activities, please go to: [www.washoestrivingreaders.com](http://www.washoestrivingreaders.com). Next, click on the **Community and Families** tab at the top of the page then select **Family Literacy Videos** from the drop down menu. Finally, scroll down the page and click on the video and tip sheet that fits your family's needs.



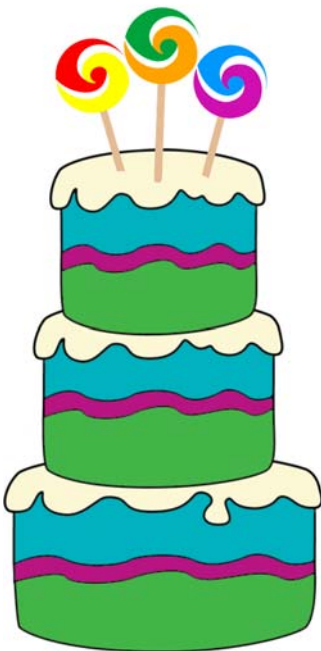
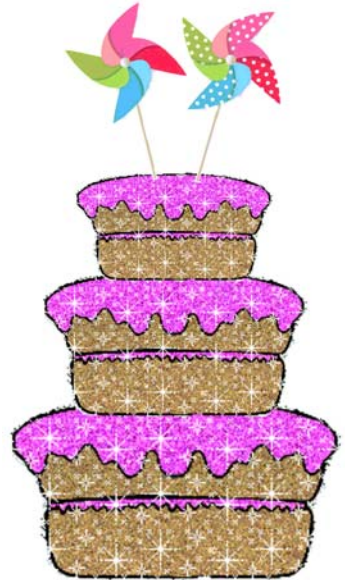
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# The Two Best Cakes

Mrs. Diaz liked to bake cakes. She wanted to be the best baker in town. Mr. Jones lived next door to Mrs. Diaz. He liked to bake cakes. He also wanted to be the best baker in town.

One day Mrs. Diaz baked a cake. The cake was very tall. She decorated it with glitter icing. She stuck pinwheels on the top. The cake looked great.



Mr. Jones baked a cake on the same day. His cake was also very tall. He put green icing on his cake. He stuck lollipop trees on top. Mr. Jones liked his cake very much. "Wait until Mrs. Diaz sees this!" he said. "She will see I am the best baker."

Mrs. Diaz had the same idea. "Wait until Mr. Jones sees this!" she said. "He will see I am the best baker." Mrs. Diaz decided to carry the cake next door to show Mr. Jones.

Mr. Jones decided to carry the cake next door to show Mrs. Diaz. He walked down the street. It was hard to see over the lollipops, but he didn't have far to go. Mrs. Diaz didn't see Mr. Jones coming. Mr. Jones didn't see Mrs. Diaz coming.