**10a - PIL – Reading difficulties – parents / carers / home tutors**

**TRANSCRIPT**

- Reading comprehension, which is the ability to gain meaning from text, involves two primary processes. Decoding or reading printed text and understanding the language of the text. Becoming a reader is not effortless. It is a complex human behaviour which is why so many children struggle. We should remember though, that while reading is not a natural part of human development, spoken language is. A great deal of research has demonstrated strong links between early spoken language skills and learning to read. Supporting children spoken language development provides a natural bridge, if you like, for the development of literacy skills. The pre-school years are a critical time for language and literacy learning and development. By the time typically developing children enter Prep, their language system is fully formed and adult-like. Not all children arrive at formal schooling though with the oral language skills they require to fully engage with the Prep curriculum. Many children begin school with limited language abilities placing them at high risk for difficulties learning to read. A longitudinal study of Australian children indicates that around a quarter of children have a speech, language or communication disorder at school entry. Children who will become poor readers are often recognisable long before formal reading instruction begins. They show lags in developing those skills that are the building blocks to reading and understanding text. These keys skills are phonological awareness. This refers to a child's awareness of different sounds in their language and includes an awareness of rhyme and how sounds link together to make words. Print knowledge. Understanding the difference between print and pictures, that print carries meaning, how to hold a book, turn pages in a book and read from left to right. Vocabulary. Understanding and using words of different types such as naming words, action words and describing words, and having a wide range of words to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas. And finally, narrative which refers to a child's ability to tell a story and describe real or fictional events from the past, the present or the future. For many children, lags in these skills are first realised in interventions for speech and language. Parents, carers and home tutors can support the reading development of young children by creating language and literacy rich environments, engaging their child in conversation, and through shared story book reading. If you have concerns about a child's speech or language development or their progress in reading, discuss this with their classroom teacher.