Check for Potholes

Reading instruction should be:

Explicit
Teaching that is direct and step-by-step, including explaining and showing how to do something.

Systematic
Teaching that has a carefully planned sequence, including teaching necessary skills first, building from easier to more difficult tasks, and breaking down harder skills into smaller parts.

Evidence-Based
Programs supported by strong, moderate, or promising research evidence of their effectiveness; or demonstrating a rationale that they can improve a targeted outcome.

Questions to ask your child’s school:

- Are phonological awareness, phonics, and spelling taught explicitly and systematically?
- Does the phonics instruction focus on blending and segmenting sounds to read and spell words?
- Are there opportunities for my child to read books that have the phonics skills he or she has learned in them?
- When my child reads aloud, is she or he encouraged to look carefully at printed words and use decoding skills to read unfamiliar words?

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