

Ways to Practice Sight Words



✓ If your child likes to draw/write:

- _ Rainbow Write words--Write the sight word in one color, then trace over it several more times with other colors.
- _ Write the word in bubble letters.

- _ Write the words in the tub with bathtub crayons.
- _ Write the words outside with sidewalk chalk. The sensation created by the pull of the chalk on a rough surface is especially effective for children who are having difficulty learning to write or identify letters.
- _ Put shaving cream (pudding, yogurt, whipped cream, hair gel, etc.) on a plate and have your child write the words in the substance.
- _ Write the sight word then try to turn the word into a picture.
- _ Write on whiteboards or etch a sketches.
- _ Fingerpaint the words.

✓ If your child likes to talk:

- _ Go outside and have your child spell the sight words by yelling.
- _ Sing the spelling of sight words to a familiar tune.
- _ Rally spell the sight words—You and your child take turns saying a letter until you've spelled the sight word. (For example, mom says "w," child says "h," mom says "a," child says "t" to spell the word "what.")
- _ Have your child make up a cheer for the sight words—"Give me a t. Give me an h. Give me an e. What do you have? THE!"
- _ Give your child 4 or 5 five different sight word cards.

(flashcards or words written on index cards) Make up clues and your child has to guess the sight word. ("The word has 3 letters. The word starts with a "t." The word ends with an "e.") For an extra challenge, have your child quiz you!

✓ If your child likes to play games:

_ Make Sight Word Tic Tac Toe boards. In each space of your Tic Tac Toe grid, write a sight word. Before you or your child can put an X or an O, you must read the word in that space.

_ Play sight word concentration. Have your child pick several words s/he needs to practice. Write each word on 2 different index cards or pieces of cut up paper. Turn the cards face down and play concentration. You can play by just having your child match the word initially, then increase the challenge by having them read the word before they can keep the match.

_ Check out www.starfall.com . It is a fabulous website for children who are learning to read. You will find ABC identification, sounds, vowels, word families, sight words, easy to read books, etc.

_ Boggle, Jr. (or Boggle for older children) is a great game for learning to read, spell, and general problem solving development. You can find this game at any Wal-Mart or Target for about \$10-\$13.

✓ If your child likes to move:

_ Have your child form the letters to spell sight words with his/her body.

_ Clap, stomp, snap, or jump as you say each letter to spell a sight word.

_ Build the letters to spell sight words with blocks, food (such as pretzels), sticks, or any other objects your child can find. Let him/her be creative!

_ (Repeat) Have your child make up a cheer for the sight words—"Give me a t. Give me an h. Give me an e. What do you have? THE!"

✓ Other Tips:

_ Only practice for 5-10 minutes at a time.

_ Review all the words your child knows each night so s/he feels successful and confident, and add one or two new words until your child has mastered them. Then add those words to the familiar pile and add another new one or two.

_ Don't make your child struggle through many words s/he doesn't know each night. Your child will be extremely frustrated, lose confidence, and develop a negative attitude toward homework and learning. We want to make learning to read a positive experience for them!

_ Let your child choose how s/he wants to practice sight words every once in a while. Use this list as a guide or think of your own great ideas!

_ It is OK at this point to go with rote memorization by using flashcards. If your child is content with using the flashcards each night, and s/he's learning the sight words, then do it.

_ If your child has mastered all 27 kindergarten sight words, please email me for the list of 1st grade sight words and/or work on word families (at, cat, sat, fat, etc.) or finding these words in context.

_ Read the guided reading books and paper books that come home even if they are easy for your child. The purpose of these books is to build confidence with reading and promote

a strong foundation of sight word recognition. If your child is "reading" the books without looking at the words, stop them. They have learned to read while pointing to each word. This is called one-to-one matching and it's an extremely important beginning reading skill. It's also a great self-monitoring strategy. The internal dialogue we want is: "I pointed to each word but when I said the last word, there was no word on the paper. I must have made a mistake. I need to go back and reread.")

_ If your child is struggling to learn the sight words or is giving you a hard time about doing homework each night, please let me know immediately. I can offer additional ideas and support for you.

Remember what I said on back to school night.....please have fun!