


Hettie Johnson's Tips and Tricks

Testimonies and Other Words of Inspiration:

- "The brain must feel safe in order to learn." - Dr. Loretta Brown University of Montevallo
-  Mark Hall's FULL Testimony (Casting Crowns)
- [Every Kid Needs a Champion](#) Rita Pierson
- [GRIT: The Power of Passion and Perseverance](#) Angela Duckworth
- [The True Gifts of a Dyslexic Mind](#) Dean Bargainier
- [Mindset: The Power of Knowing You Can Improve](#) Carol Dweck
- Dyslexic [Sir Richard Branson](#) is a British entrepreneur and the founder of the Virgin Group, a multinational conglomerate that includes Virgin Atlantic, Virgin Records, and Virgin Galactic. Branson, known for his wit and down-to-earth demeanor, has built a vast fortune through his Virgin-branded businesses, which span airlines, telecommunications, financial services, and space travel.

Resources for Handwriting and Other Interactive Guides:

- Get hundreds of free foldable ideas: [foldables images](#) These are interactive 3D study guides. - like arts and crafts for learning.
- Learning cursive as an art form and to help your learning and joy. [How Handwriting Trains the Brain | UW College of Education University of Washington College of Education](#)<https://education.washington.edu> › ... › [In The News](#)
- <https://www.washington.edu/news/blog/uw-prof-handwriting-engages-the-mind/>
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- Select a keyboarding program to help with keyboarding proficiency
- Add the **Read & Write extension to Google Chrome** and watch tutorial videos.
- The **Reading Comprehension Strip** (below) should be helpful for retelling a story or as an outline for a report and for comprehension. You would print the 4 strips of pictures and use them as bookmarks.
 - Words to go with the Reading Comprehension Strip below:
 - people = characters
 - house = setting, in place as well as in time
 - boy kicking ball = the kick-off of the chapter or story ... the "problem" that gets the story going
 - heart = how ____ feels/emotions (encourage more complicated words for emotions than simply "happy" or "sad" -- for vocabulary-building)
 - hand = the plan to solve the problem in the story
 - 3 blue ribbons = things that happened in the chapter or story (can go back over these ribbons to tell more than 3 events)

- yellow bow = how they "tied up" the chapter or book in the end
- heart again = emotions again



Keep your magnificent brain **READY TO LEARN** by giving it the **BIG THREE**:

1. **Nutrition** - Water and healthy foods throughout the day
2. **Rest** - The brain needs a good night's sleep to consolidate memory and learning from the day.
3. **Exercise** every day and do bursts of exercise throughout the day!
 - **SPARK! The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain** by John Ratey, M.D. (Reading the intro and first chapter gives the idea of the book, but it's all good with chapters on learning, stress, anxiety, depression, ADHD, addiction, hormonal changes, and aging.
 - **Exercise** every day and do bursts of exercise throughout the day! (Read the introduction and first chapter of **SPARK!**)
 - The "7" exercise app is also a super way to start every day

Books, Audiobooks, and Online Resource Libraries:

- **Learning to Love Math** by Judy Willis, MD (or watch some of her YouTube videos)
- **This is Dyslexia: The Definitive Guide to the Untapped Power of Dyslexic Thinking and its Vital Role in our Future** by Kate Griggs, Director of [Made by Dyslexia](#) co-founder Sir Richard Branson
- **Overcoming Dyslexia 2020** edition by Sally Shaywitz, M.D.
- [Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity](#)
- [Dyslexic Advantage](#)
- [Understood](#)
- [DyslexiaHelp](#)
- [International Dyslexia Association - Alabama](#)
- **Predictive Parenting** by Shad Helmstetter

- **How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk** by Faber & Mazlish
- **The Dyslexia Empowerment Plan** by Ben Foss
- **A Walk in the Rain with a Brain** by Edward M. Hallowell, M.D.

Documentaries:

- The Right to Read
- The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia
- DISLECKSIA: The Movie
- Creative Brains: Gifted, Talented and Dyslexic
- Journey Into Dyslexia

Basically, my magic keys are:

1. Tons of listening to chapter books on a higher - but appropriate age and interest - level. It's crucial for the student to get hooked on audiobooks to build expressive vocabulary, syntactic complexity, understanding of story elements, experience with literature, and a passion to hear more!)

2. Multisensory teaching and study strategies

- It is recommended that the student be taught using multisensory, “hands-on” techniques throughout the curriculum as much as possible, and to incorporate movement when studying. Adding movement throughout the day will improve the success of all students because it increases dopamine and therefore increases memory, focus, and joy in the brain.
- Moving while learning will significantly improve success in all subjects; the “SWAG (Study With All Gears) triangle” of simultaneously seeing (occipital lobes), hearing/talking (temporal lobes), and touching/moving (parietal lobes) is the magic key to open the doors for learning in all students. These strategies are the same for all ages, grades, and subjects!
- The SWAG (Study With All Gears) multisensory strategies are key. We need to wake up our brains with a burst of exercise as often as we can. It can be as simple as 10-20 jumping jacks, push-ups, or going for a walk / run,
- Act out/role-play new words and concepts. Make everything physical (see, hear, talk, touch, and move simultaneously while learning) as much as possible.

3. SPA to keep the brain OPEN to begin with. It's crucial to help your child feel like s/he's always right by pointing out ways he IS right instead of pointing out what's wrong. SPA stands for **S**elf-talk, **P**oint out only what's right, and **A**dvocate for yourself.

Here are the steps in Point out only what's right:

1. First, brag on what your child got right ("You got 1 letter right! You got 4 states! You got 3 numbers!")
2. PAUSE while s/he feels good about getting something right. Avoid saying "but" - saying "Now" instead of "but" works well for me.
3. Then say something like, "Now, let's check this part", or "Now, let's look at this one...Let's put this sound on your hand... Can you check THIS part?...What do you hear for ---? ...You want to lead your child to the answer by giving as much scaffolding help as needed.)
4. Brag again!

The idea is that I want him to feel like s/he's always right and to not feel like s/he's always making a mistake. Then the brain's amygdala will calm down and keep the doors in the brain OPEN! Let your brain KNOW what an awesome person you are by using positive self-talk! Be kind to yourself.

"You are such an incredible person; you are the only person ever with your unique personality and talents. You have outstanding gifts to share with your friends and with the world. I can't wait to see how you will blossom in using your gifts! Please let me hear from you about your successes!"

It's crucial you pick out positive things to say to yourself and get rid of any discouraging things you have been saying to your brain. Your brain believes what you tell it and acts on what you tell it. Instead of telling yourself, "I can't." Tell yourself things like: "I'm just having trouble with this-I can DO it! I'm GOOD at this...I'm getting better every day! ... Nothing is as hard as it seems... I LOVE this!"

Be proactive to get accommodations as needed. Be your own best advocate. Ask your teachers if you can sit "front & center" so you can learn better in return for their agreement to not call on you to read aloud unless you volunteer. This is also in return for your promise to do your best work and always come to class prepared and ready to learn. Then you can focus and learn without fear.