



Sight words are words we use all the time, but often do not follow the rules of phonics or spelling. They cannot easily be decoded, or “sounded out”. New readers need to develop a bank of these words so they can read them instantly. For this reason, students are often taught to memorize them. This may be difficult for young readers. One of the best ways to help students when they are learning to recognize sight words is the use of manipulatives or multi-sensory techniques. Once children are familiar with the sight words, additional practice is necessary so they easily recognize them in a story. This will help them to become fluent readers and aid in their understanding of the story content.

Below you will find some activities to use with your children to help them learn the sight words on your list.

See It/Say It

See It/Say It requires a student to see something (e.g., word card, phrases, etc.) and vocalize what is being represented. This strategy accesses both the visual and auditory senses. For students who need additional practice, a parent or older sibling can say the word first.

Tapping Out Words

Tapping out words gives students a way to feel and hear the how the words are spelled. The act of tapping each letter provides muscle memory for the number of letters in the word, very helpful for words that have silent letters or combination spellings. The student looks at the word written on the card. The child then places his writing hand at the opposite shoulder and begins spelling the word (s.a.i.d). With each letter the child moves his writing hand down the arm towards the wrist. Once the word is completed, the child moves his writing hand back to the shoulder and repeats the word using a sweeping motion towards the wrist.

Say It, Build It, Write It



Say It, Build It, Write is a routine that can be used for the practice of sight words. Students will look at a sight word on an index card. They will say the word, build it using magnetic letters and then write it.

Air Writing



When teaching new sight words, the use of Air Writing incorporates gross muscle memory while reinforcing the sound the letter makes. Have students hold their arms out straight in front of them using two fingers as an imaginary pencil. Say the word, then spell the letters (s, a, i, d) as the students write them in the air in front of them.

Use of Textures



Sight words are well suited for tactile surface activities. Have students trace in, or on, different surfaces while saying the word and letters that spell the word. Some tactile surfaces include: seeds, sand, shaving cream, and sandpaper. As students become more experienced with the words, you may want to add magnetic letters and have them arrange them to spell the sight words.



GAMES

Almost any game your child likes to play can be adapted to use for practicing sight words.

Board Games: Does your child have a favorite board game with dice? You can use sight word flashcards to play the game. Have your child roll the dice, and turn over a flashcard. If he reads the word correctly, he gets to advance the spaces.

Post-it Bingo: Students can create their own “Bingo Cards” by writing their sight words on post-it notes and placing them on a Bingo Card or writing them in a piece of paper like a bingo grid. The caller uses the flash cards to call the words. Five in a row and you are the winner!

Go Fish! and Concentration: Make a set of sight word pairs for each word or sets of four like the traditional Go Fish! Game. You will need at least 30. Deal out five cards to a player. Play using the Go Fish! Rules looking for two cards to make a pair. You can also use the cards to play Concentration.

Bean Bag Toss: Spread out your cards on the grass face up. They should be close together but not touching. The child stands nearby and tosses the beanbag. He can aim for a specific card or just toss. After the bag is tossed, the child goes over to the word and reads it. If it is correct, he gets to pick up the word until all of them are gone. This can also be played with multiple players. A variation of this can be created using a cupcake tin. Just write the words on cupcake papers and have children toss a marker into the tin.

Sight Word Hopscotch: Using sidewalk chalk, create a hopscotch pattern on your driveway. Put a sight word in each box. The child tosses a stick or pebble into the first square. He then hops over that square and continues to hop through the board saying each word as he hops on the square. When he gets to the last square, he turns around and hop back saying each word again. He completes the course, he must pick up the stick and hop off. This can be played with multiple players just like the traditional hopscotch.

Tic-Tac-Toe: Here is a take on the traditional tic-tac-toe-game using sight words. Each player chooses a sight word he or she is working on. Instead of using the traditional Xs and Os, the child will say the word and place it in the Tic-Tac-Toe grid. Three in a row and you are the winner!

VOCABULARY

Words Are Important!

Vocabulary refers to word choice in both oral and printed language. Vocabulary is a critical component for comprehension. Word recognition is the first step, understanding what the word means leads to comprehension and understanding. They are learning words and storing them away!

Vocabulary at Home

- Play charades
- Put words in a jar – Draw a word and try to get everyone to guess your word without saying the word.
- Play I Spy using descriptions until someone guesses what you see.
- Play Popcorn – name a word and throw a ball into the air. Each time someone “pops” it into the air, they have to say a new word that goes with it. For example, “cereal = breakfast, spoon, milk, bowl, cold, hungry, Cheerios”
- Flip the script! Quiz an adult at home to see if they know the words in your book that you had to look up!
- Have a Word of the Day Challenge – family members see who can come up with the most challenging word!