



Practicing Sight Words

The following are some suggested ideas for practicing sight words.
Please select the idea(s) that work best for you and your child.

- Use plastic letters: Make the word, read the word, and break the word. Later, encourage child(ren) to make the word, read the word, cover the word, write the word, check the word, read the word. (Children may peek at the word if necessary while they are learning to write it correctly.) I use homemade letter cards they work the same as plastic letters and are less expensive.
- Use a dry erase board: Write the word over and over until it is learned, erasing each time. This is a writing task, not a copying task. If the child is using paper and pencil, fold the paper over each time or use another paper or card to cover the previous word. If the child needs a model to start with, provide it. Then cover it and allow the child to peek if necessary. Then remove it altogether. Encourage the children to make sure the words are in their heads.
- Keep a list of sight words: in the back of each child's writing journal (or other handy location) for reference. Each time the child writes

the word correctly, the more habituated it becomes. We use a word journal in the classroom.

➤ I Have, Who Has?

Make cards for this game to practice sight words: I have "the," who has "from?"

➤ Funny Voices:

As you go through the stack of cards, ask the children to read in the following voices:

baby robot (monotone) goofy scary mad old

➤ Making and Breaking

Going from the known to the unknown using onset & rime:
i.e., from at to cat and sat using magnetic letters
(also useful for prefix/suffix, medial vowel changes)

➤ Flexible Practice/Taking sight words to fluency:

Write several times on the practice page

Rainbow writing

Magnetic letters

Write on a dry erase board

Write in the air

Write on the carpet

Write on a Magna Doodle

Write on a chalkboard

Write words with a wet sponge or brushes on the sidewalk

➤ ABC Order:

Each child gets four or five cards to put in ABC order on the floor in front of them. They check with a partner, combine cards and put in ABC order.

Add another pair, etc.

➤ Commercial Games/Activities: any games with cards to read or letters to manipulate:

Scrabble

Go Fish

Bingo

Boggle

Lotto

Chunks

Word Search

Hang Man

- Provide a guided reading creative response that requires the children to write the word in a meaningful context. Give the children a sentence starter to copy and complete. For example:

I like the part when _____.

My best character was _____.

Make sure the children copy the sentence starter because in this way they are practicing the high-frequency word.

- I'm Thinking of a Word:

This is a good activity for developing scanning skills. You need to have many words available for it to be effective.

I'm thinking of a word. It rhymes with____, means the same thing as____, is the opposite of____, we use this word when____, etc.

When you know it, say it.

- Flash Card Activities: to engage all readers (including expert readers)

Whisper/Shout: teacher/parent directed using cards

As you go through the stack of cards, students read words in a whispery voice. After several words, "Say it louder." Students gradually move up to a gentle shout for the last few words.

- Making Sentences:

This is a good activity to use once a week. Start by giving your child 2 word cards. The child thinks of a sentence that uses those two words. The child says his/her sentence. Gradually move up to more words. Keep the activity oral - do not have the child write his/her sentences until later in the school year. Sentences can be silly or serious!

- Highlight high frequency words: Have children go through a poem, worksheets, math homework, etc. and highlight the sight words.

- Circle, Circle, Underline: Circle the prefix, circle the suffix, and underline the vowels in the root word. This makes multi-syllabic words more manageable, breaking them into chunks of meaning.

Beyond Just Reading Sight Words

- Match cards whose word begins with the same letter or syllable.
- Match cards whose word ends with the same letter or syllable.
- Match cards whose word is the same.
- Match cards whose words rhyme.
- Arrange cards according to alphabetical order.
- Arrange cards according to the number of syllables in each word.
- Make up sentences using the words on the cards.
- Make up a story using all the words on the cards.
- Find synonyms, antonyms or homonyms.
- Find cards whose words have the same root or base word.
- Find cards whose words have prefixes or suffixes.
- Find cards with compound or derived words.
- Arrange cards by the stress on the words.

- Make up a story or poem using all or most of the words on the cards.