

Learning together

Sight Words: Drills, Drills, Drills

ACTIVITY #5

SEQUENCE: SPELLING AND SENTENCE STRUCTURE
2ND CYCLE – PRIMARY

By Lise L'Heureux,
Special Education Teacher, Director,
Instructor, Consultant and Coach



Purpose of the activity

The purpose of this activity is to quickly recognize and spell very common words, and words that don't follow letter-sound associations or spelling rules.



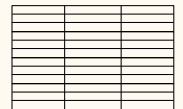
Relevance of the activity

The faster we recognize and produce written words, the better we get at reading and writing. To improve our reading and spelling skills, we must learn to recognize very frequent words and irregular words from memory. We call these sight words. The only way we can recognize sight words instantly is to practise them repeatedly in order to learn them by heart.



Supplies

- The common sight words list (see appendix)
- Optional: your child's vocabulary word list if there are words that don't follow spelling rules, or words from a text or a book your child has read



LET'S GO!

What?



This strategy is called *Reading and Spelling Sight Words*. It means instantly reading and spelling whole words instead of building them from sounds and syllables.

Why?



Instantly recognizing words is the fastest and most efficient way to read and spell. This strategy is usually put to use after you've learned to recognize and spell words based on their phonological and morphological properties, and once you've learned basic orthographic rules. The most efficient readers and spellers recognize (read) and produce (write) words instantly by memorizing the whole words. All words that are learned by heart are *sight words*.

When?



This strategy is helpful when your child needs extra practice reading and spelling certain words automatically. Use it for words that appear very often in everyday reading and writing, and for words that are difficult to sound out because they do not follow the usual spelling rules, such as *of, give, said, some* and *who*.

How?



To be a successful reader and speller, your child must learn many words by heart.

It is a long process and can be difficult to keep words in memory. Learning sight words requires a lot of repetition, at least 4 times a week, preferably every day.

- 1 Let's start your drills by reading the sight words. (See Appendix)
- 2 Now that you can recognize (read) the words quickly, let's practise spelling them.
- 3 Now that you can spell these sight words, let's use them to write some sentences.

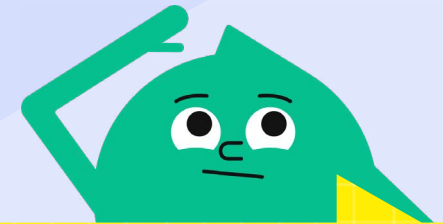
Here are some examples of instructions or questions you could ask your child:

- Can you read these words?
- How do you spell the word...?
- How do you pronounce the letter O in these 2 words, *do* and *to*?
- Can you spell the four 2-letter words that end with an O? (*do, go, no, to*)
- What is special about the word *of*? (*The letter F makes the sound/v/*)
- How do we spell the sound /w/ in the question words *who, what, where, when, and why*? (WH)



Notes

- If reading the sight words is difficult, hold off on spelling them until your child has mastered reading at least 10 words.
- Group words with similar spelling patterns or similar meaning together (see below).
- Don't practise more than 6-10 words at a time.
- Use index cards (3 x 5 inches or 7.6 x 12.7cm) and write one word per card.
- Flash the cards quickly. Start by leaving the card up for 1-2 seconds, and as recognition becomes quicker, flash the cards with increasing speed.



Don't forget!

Many of the words in the sight word list follow spelling rules, so if your child knows these words, there is no need to practise them in this section! Example: an, as, in, is, it, we, she, go, no, wish, with... follow the letter-sound associations. They can be decoded using the letter-sound strategy.



Common sight words

LIST 17	SIGHT WORDS		
a	go	of	them
and	going	off	then
away	had	old	there
after	has	on	three
again	have	one	to
an	he	once	two
any	her	open	up
as	him	or	wash
ask	his	over	we
by	how	play	were
big	I	put	when
blue	in	red	what

LIST 17	SIGHT WORDS		
can	is	run	white
come	it	said	who
do	jump	say	will
done	just	says	where
every	let	see	why
find	little	some	wish
fly	live	stop	with
for	may	take	yellow
from	no	thank	yes
give	not	the	you