

Learning sight words is a very important step towards learning to read. Once a student is able to read all of the words on Dolch's lists for example, they have access to up to 75% of what is printed in almost any piece of children's literature. How exactly do parents help children develop their stores of sight words? There are several proven techniques that any adult can use to teach sight words. The more one-on-one time a child has learning and practicing sight words with an adult, the greater his chances to integrating them into his long-term memory.

Here is a list of sight words to get you started..

the	it	my
a	of	but
and	with	all
to	me	we
I	they	are
in	have	up
is	said	at
on	can	
you	for	

Here are some ideas for practicing them at home!

Teaching Sight Words With Pictures

Many learners think in pictures. Whether we realize it or not, we often visualize what we are attempting to learn to help solidify the information in our memories. Think about the last time you needed to get somewhere you hadn't been before. Even if you used written directions instead of a pictorial map, you probably had a number of visual markers such as unusual sights or signs to help you learn how to get there. Presenting children with illustrations of sight words along with their print versions helps them make important connections between the object and the word. Flashcards or posters with a colorful picture and the word written under it are excellent sight word teaching tools. In addition, teachers or parents can have children draw their own pictures of each word on the same page to help them link the print with the visual.

Listening to and Saying Sight Words

Sight words are not only frequently used in writing, they are also essential to conversational English. Because most sight words are already in children's verbal vocabularies, learning to read them is simply a matter of connecting the print word to the oral version in their prior knowledge banks. Parents and teachers should make explicit connections between the print version of a word and its sound. Pointing to a word while repeating it is one way to do this. Also, adults should have children say the sight words to help them become actively involved in their learning. This can be as simple as asking them to repeat a sight word while writing it or as involved as having the child search through a pile of sight words written on index cards or sentence strips to find a word that best completes a sentence you have written.

Teaching Sight Words Through Repetition

Children do not learn new words by being exposed to them only once. Repetition is key to sight word acquisition. Young readers should be given opportunities to read and write a new sight word multiple times. Repetitive reading of texts featuring certain sight words is one strategy for helping children commit these words to memory. Also, to practice spelling sight words, parents and teachers can have children write and say aloud words several times. When a child writes and says the word at least five times in a row, she is more likely to commit it to memory.

Sight Words in Context

When children see words used in natural ways rather than in isolation they are more likely to remember them because they develop an understanding of the word's significance and meaning. Literature based instruction is an extremely effective method for helping children learn sight words.

There are many leveled texts that are designed to highlight certain age-appropriate sight words.

Teaching Sight Words Through Music

Music is a wonderful medium for presenting and reinforcing information especially for young children. Think of how much easier it is to remember the lyrics to a song you haven't heard for years than to remember what you had for dinner last night. Check out the Youtube channel *Have Fun Teaching* and check out their great sight word songs!

Teaching Sight Words With Games

Once children have had the opportunity to study new sight words, games are a fun, hands on way to help strengthen their retention. These games are easy to create at home and can be modified based on the particular sight words a child is learning at the time.

Wordo—Played just like the game Bingo, but this version uses sight words instead of numbers on a grid card.

Concentration—Sight word concentration cards can easily be made using index cards. Simply write each word on two cards, shuffle and lay face down to play.

Word Searches—Create word searches featuring sight words or use one of the many available on the Internet.

Go Fish—Go fish cards can easily be made using index cards. Simply write each word on two cards, shuffle and deal to play.

Letter Magnet Spelling—To reinforce sight word spelling, provide the child with a set of letter magnets and a metal surface. Call out sight words and ask the child to use the magnets to spell the word.