

Sight Word Activities

I. Flash Cards and Flash Card Games

Make flash cards of the words that the student is learning. Choose a few flash cards to focus on each session and spend 5-10 minutes practicing them. Once a student has mastered a particular word, keep the flash card for that word in a stack of review words. Go over the review words every now and then to keep them fresh in the student's mind.

One way to make flash card practice more enjoyable is to incorporate the flash cards into a game. Here are a few ideas, each played like the traditional card game except that flash cards are used:

- **Concentration:** Turn the cards face down, mix them up, and place them in rows. Each player turns over two cards at a time and reads each word on the cards. If the cards match, the player keeps the pair and takes another turn. If the cards do not match, the player returns the cards to the same spot. Play continues until all of the cards have been matched. The player with the most matches wins the game.
- **Go Fish:** Shuffle the cards. Deal seven cards to each player. The player to the left of the dealer goes first and asks another player for a particular flash card. If the person has that flash card, he gives it to the first player and the first player can ask for another card from any player in the game. If not, he says "Go Fish," and the first player draws a card from the deck. The player to the left goes next. Any time a player gets a pair of cards, he puts them down in front of him and reads the card. Play continues until one player runs out of cards. The player with the most matches wins.
- **Old Maid:** Create one "Old Maid" or "No Match" card and insert it into the deck. Shuffle and deal all cards. Players look for matches and lay down those pairs in front of them. To increase the educational value, have players read their matches as they lay them down. Players hold their remaining cards so that other players cannot read them. To start play, the player to the left of the youngest player picks a card at random from the youngest player. If it matches a card already in her hand, she lays down the pair in front of her and reads the word. If it doesn't match, she keeps the card. Play continues until all players lay down all matches. The player holding the "Old Maid" or "No Match" card can be either the winner or loser, depending on what you decide before playing.

2. Other Games

One way to make flash card practice more enjoyable is to incorporate the flash cards into a game. Here are a few ideas:

- **Bingo:** Prepare bingo cards with the sight words that your student has learned or is learning. Draw flashcards at random. If the student has that word on his bingo card, he covers it with a chip. The first person to get five words in a row wins the game.
- **Hangman:** Play the word-guessing game using sight words that your student has learned or is learning. An alternative to the hangman diagram is to show 10 apples on a tree, with an apple crossed out for each guess used.
- **Sight Word Board Games:** If you do an Internet search for "free printable sight word board games" you will find a variety of options that have already been created. Choose one that contains words that your student has learned or is learning, or create a similar game on your own!

3. Songs

A variety of songs have been created to help children learn sight words. A quick search on YouTube will reveal many options. One source that is particularly helpful for very young students (pre-kindergarten-first grade) is Heidi Songs. You can find many of her songs/videos on YouTube.

4. Books

Some students, especially global learners, seem to learn sight words best in the context of books they are reading. Look either for decodable books that introduce a sight word or two, or for predictable books that use the same phrases over and over. Tell students to point to each word as they read it (or as you read it with them). Once in a while, have them go back and tell you what a particular word is. Over time, they will pick up more and more sight words.

Another option, while reading to them, is to stop and ask them to read a sight word that they have been learning. If they are not sure of the word, read it to them and continue to read the story. The next time you see the word in the story, stop and see if they can read the word. Continue that pattern until the student is comfortable reading the word.