

Sight Words



Sight words are words that a reader can recognize and read without sounding out. Many sight words are hard to sound out phonetically and must be memorized. Here are a few suggestions for how to practice learning sight words.

1. PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE!

The more a beginning reader sees the words and practices reading them, the easier the words become.

2. MAKE FLASHCARDS

Flashcards work well for many students. Each word should be written neatly on an index card. Write large enough so the reader can touch each letter as they are saying the sounds. In the lower right corner of each card, write what list the word is from. Keep the cards for review.

3. WRITE THE WORDS THAT ARE TRICKY

Although learning to read sight words IS NOT a spelling activity, some people memorize things by repeatedly writing them down.

4. USE COLORS

With a colored marker or crayon, outline the shape of the word. Pay close attention to blends, such as *th*, *wh*, *sh*, *tr*... Blends should be underlined or boxed together so the reader has a visual cue to remember to say the sounds as one, not choppy as two.

5. VOWELS

Usually, when two vowels are together the first one does the talking, the last one does the walking. For example: in the word *COAT*: the *o* makes a long *o* sound and the *a* is silent (the first one does the talking, the last one does the walking.)

An *e* at the end of the word is silent because it is tired from helping the other vowel say its name. For example: In the word *TAPE*, the *a* says its name (*a*) and the *e* is silent.

Word Lists

These word lists are the 1,200 most frequently used words in reading and writing. The lists are in groups of 20 to making learning them more manageable. A fluent reader will be able to look at a word on this list and say it without sounding it out. A fluent reader can read these words by sight.