

Practical Strategies and Activities for Reading Practice —K-2
by Mrs. Miesner, Reading Teacher

There are 5 important skill areas necessary for children to develop into good readers. They are **Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Fluency**. Many children will have difficulty acquiring skills in these areas unless additional practice is provided. Following are practical strategies and activities to help with the additional practice at home.

Phonemic Awareness (the ability to think about sounds heard in spoken words)

1. **Listen to rhymes** such as common nursery rhymes to hear patterns in sounds or words.
2. **Read alphabet books** to understand why “m” might be for “mouse”
3. **Children identify words** with different beginnings, middles, or ending sounds (ex. Which word has a different beginning sound: ball, call, boot?)
4. **Stretch a word out** so that all sounds can easily be heard: ddddoooogggg, etc. or listen to a word and practice chopping it into all the sounds heard.
5. Practice saying **tongue twisters** (ex. Timmy tried to test his turtle two times.)

Phonics (the relationships between letters and sounds in written words)

1. Practice sounds by **writing and using Inventive Spelling**, Sound Spelling, where words are written as sounded out but not necessarily spelled correctly.
2. **Making words** using letters to manipulate: start with a 2 letter word like “at” and gradually add on to make longer patterned words for example, at, fat, cat, rat, rate, mate, plate, inflate, etc. Write words down.
3. **Make lists of words** that have patterns of sounds (ex. words that sound like the “a” in ate and note different spellings: ate, eight, play)
4. **Play “I’m thinking of a word”** (give clues to words on a page that have particular sounds such as “I am thinking of a word that has a “o” sound in the middle.”
5. **Finding bits and parts of words.** Look for large words in a dictionary; circle the parts you know how to pronounce then go back and sound out the whole word (ex. beginning)

Vocabulary (words usually designated as theme words about a topic such as animals-- wolves, bears, mammals, reptiles, etc. and are usually memorized)

1. **Play BINGO** by writing words on a grid; call out words and students cover them up; can also give a definition of the word and students find the word.
2. **Play Memory or Concentration** by putting 2 sets of words to be memorized on index cards; put them face down, mix them up, and turn 1 over at a time saying word and trying to find its match. (can also put definitions on 1 card and find its vocabulary match)
3. **Write words with chalk on sidewalk** and hop to a given word.
4. **Use word banks by** making a list of 3 or 4 words; write 3 or 4 short sentences leaving out one of the listed words; reread when completed.
5. **Write a story** with your list of vocabulary words.

Comprehension (understanding the content of the text)

1. **Pre reading or After reading** whole text, read under pictures, bold type, or headings to set the purpose for reading. After reading tell what the author’s message was in 2 sentences or less.
2. **Summarize by** recalling details and Main Idea or sequence events when appropriate.
3. **Draw Graphic Organizers** (Semantic Map or web) to include all details and main ideas; use a Venn Diagram to compare events, characters, etc. from a story.
4. **Write a paragraph** using the main idea and details from the semantic map or Venn Diagram. For studying, students can dictate as parents write and then reread.
5. **Make a KWL Chart**—The letters stand for what we **Know**, what we **Want** to learn, and what we have **Learned** (The chart helps to use prior knowledge to bridge or connect new information we have learned.) **Good for test studying.**

Fluency (decoding words and automatically reading sight words,ex. her, all, they, that make up 85% of the words in daily reading so as to read orally with accuracy, speed, and normal expression so comprehension can occur.)

1. **Sight Word Jar/box** by putting all high frequency words on index cards; pull several out each evening to practice and earn a penny for each word recognized.
2. **Newspaper sight words** begins by choosing a sight word to be found in the newspaper; keep track how many times you see it.
3. **Traveling sight words** can be found on billboards and signs from the car.
4. **Echo Reading** is for practicing fluency while reading a sentence and having your child repeat it until comfortable. Continue with whole page.
5. **Context Clues** are used when a word is not known after looking at first sounds. Skip the word, and read the rest of the sentence. Come back and think “What would make sense?” ex. I w___ to the zoo. How do we talk? What would we say next?

Choosing the Correct Book – The Goldilocks Test		
Too Easy	Just Right	Too Hard
*Have you read it lots of times before?	*Is the book new to you?	*Are there more than 5 words on a page you don’t know?
*Do you understand the story very well?	*Do you understand a lot of the book?	* Are you confused about what is happening in most of the book?
*Do you know almost every word?	*Are there just a few words on a page you don’t know?	*When you read, does it sound really choppy?
*Can you read it smoothly?	*When you read, are some places smooth, some choppy?	*Are you finding that you’re not enjoying this book?
*Are you reading without thinking?	*Do you have to think as you read?	