

Ideas for Teaching High Frequency Sight Words and Games to Play

The children in your class will be learning these words at different rates so you may need to adapt some of these ideas and games.

Suggestions for teaching

Introduce words in small groups of six to eight words or fewer per week. It may be beneficial to present words in phonetic groups (*this, that, they, the, those, there; big, but, by, best, both, etc.*).

Make sure children read text containing high-frequency words every day. Almost all text contains these words, but the most rewarding reading will come from books children can read easily.

Create a word wall of high-frequency words. Add new words to the wall as they are introduced. The walls can be structured so that they start with the first 12 words and then increase in difficulty. It may be helpful to create your word wall from these versatile, movable flashcards. Each day, children can chant or cheer the high-frequency words posted on the wall.

Allow children to write the words as often as possible. They may practice individual words or write high-frequency word sentences such as "We love to _____," or "I walk by the _____."

Keep a checklist of high-frequency words. When a child has memorized a word, meaning he or she can read it without decoding or write it without seeing the word, check the word off and move on to the next word.

Games and Activities

Create flashcards for the high-frequency words in your lesson (you can download them from my website; www.dyslexiasupportservices.com.au) Flashcards can accommodate any number of fun activities:

Guess the Word: Lay several high-frequency word cards face up on the floor. Have children sit in a circle around the cards. One child mentally chooses a word and

gives a clue about it: "This word begins with an l." The child can continue to give clues ("It rhymes with *took*.") until another child is the first to touch the correct card. He or she gets to give the next set of clues.

Pelmanism: Create two of each high-frequency word card. Lay the cards face down on the floor. Children take turns trying to match identical words. The child with the most pairs wins. This is also very good for improving visual discrimination and memory so will be beneficial to dyslexic children.

Go Fish: Copy a number of sets of flashcards according to how many children are playing, using a maximum of 20 different words. Shuffle and deal 5 cards to each player and put remaining cards face down in centre. Players pick up their cards not letting others see the pictures or words. Players place matching cards in front of them. The dealer then asks any other player next to them if they have a card that matches one in their hand. For example, "Do you have "look?" If 'yes' the card must be handed over so the questioner can make a pair. The pair is placed down and questioner asks again. If the player doesn't have the card they say 'Go Fish' and questioner picks the top card from centre pile to try and make a pair. If they make a pair they ask again, if they cannot make a pair the next player has a turn. If a player does not have a card on their turn they take the top card from the centre pile and ask. The game continues until there are no cards left. The winner is the person with the most pairs.

Tap! Make a word wall or list of high frequency words for display in your classroom. Divide the children into two teams, each standing on one side of the word wall. Give the first child in each team a metre ruler. Read a word from the word wall. The first team to find and tap on the word gets a point. The ruler is then passed to the next team member.

Tag: You will need two packs of flashcards placed on a table at the front of the classroom. Divide the children into 2 teams and out them in a straight line, one behind the other facing the table. When you say "go" the first member of each team runs to the front, picks up the first card and reads it. If they read it correctly they run back to their team and tag the next player, who runs to the front and reads the next card in the pack. This repeats until all team members have read a card. The first

team to finish is the winner. If a player can't read one of the cards or reads it incorrectly they put it on the bottom of the pack and choose the next one until they read a card correctly. The teacher can have more than 2 teams if they choose to use more packs of flashcards. It may help to have different packs of flashcards according to ability and for the teacher to group the children accordingly

Kim's Game. Lay a small number of words on a table in front of a group. Let them have a look for a while before asking them to turn around and close their eyes. Remove a card and ask the group if they can tell you which card you removed.

Spell It. Ask the children to spell words which rhyme with selected high frequency words that you show them, e.g. show them "he" and ask them to spell "she" and "me".

High Frequency Bingo. Choose between 20-30 high-frequency words that you have been working with, and write each one on an index card. Have some cards made up with the words printed on. Alternatively you could write the words on white boards that could be erased after use.

Shuffle your deck of index cards, and call out one word at a time. The children cover each word that was called out with a marker. The first child with their card completely covered calls out, "Bingo"

Beat the Dragon- Put high frequency flash cards into a box or bag. The children take turns to take one card out of the box and if they can read it they get to keep it if they can read it, if they can't read it they return it to the bag. There is also a dragon card in there and if they pull that one then they have to return all the cards they have collected. The dragon could be replaced with another character, according to the topic you are covering at the time.

Blast-Off – This is a good game to play with younger children. The children start spelling the word whilst squatting. As they say each letter they grow taller and taller until the last letter when they jump into the air and shout "Blast Off".