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Trained Home Literacy Program And Its Advantages In Pre-Kindergarten Through First Grade

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TRAINED HOME LITERACY PROGRAM AND ITS ADVANTAGES IN
PRE-KINDERGARTEN THROUGH FIRST GRADE

by

Zachary Singleton

A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
in Teaching.

Hamline University

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Research shows that the more literacy is practiced in a child's home with parents as active participants, the greater the gains children make in their reading (Boerma, Mol & Jolles, 2017; Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems & Doan Holbein, 2005; Jordan, Snow & Porche, 2000; Mol & Bus, 2011; Steiner, 2014). I created a 15 week curriculum unit for my capstone project in order to help answer the research question: *How will a Trained Home Literacy Program provided with a curriculum, implemented in a child's home, help improve literacy skills for students pre-kindergarten through first grade?*

This curriculum unit was designed for parents of first grade students to implement in their home with their children where the unit is taught by the child's parents. This created a unique problem when developing the curriculum. Although I used the *Understanding by Design* (Wiggins and McTighe, 2011) backwards design model to create the program, I had to write it in such a way that parents could understand. To work around this issue, I decided to provide the state standards and learning outcomes on the cover page following a family letter explaining the overall program. From there on the program is broken up into 15 weeks of literacy activities. Parents are asked to use the activities with their children four to five days a week. There are three new literacy activities each week, each focusing on one of the essential literacy components of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension (NRP, 2000).

The first five weeks focuses on building the child's phonemic awareness, phonics development and vocabulary. The following five weeks center around phonics, vocabulary and fluency, since children tend to develop their literacy skills in that order. The last five weeks of the program, center around supporting the whole reader through focusing on vocabulary, fluency

and comprehension. A child's comprehension of what they are reading is the end goal and the measurement of their success of a reader.

The activities were designed to be easy for parents to use with their children. My experience as an elementary teacher has led me to believe families are busy and do not have much time for long and tedious homework assignments. That is why I designed the activities to be quick, simple, and engaging. Parents will be encouraged to spend no more than 15 minutes a night with the activities. Most of the activities are essentially literacy games, designed with fun children's board and card games in mind. Another factor that determined the design of these activities was parent participation. Children are more motivated to participate if parents are engaged in the activity. Parents are encouraged in the directions for each activity to actually play the games with their children, rather than just facilitating

This curriculum was designed for first grade families, however it can easily be adapted for any pre-kindergarten or kindergarten class as well. It can also be adapted to meet reading intervention needs for older grades. The overarching goal of this project was to create an engaging series of literacy activities that families can have fun with, while still helping improve the student's literacy skills.

Dear Families,

This school year your child will make some important gains in reading. In our classroom, we will be working towards our goal of learning how to read everyday. We also need your help at home! This school year we will participate in an “at home” literacy program. This program includes **15 weeks** of fun literacy games played at home. With your help, your child will spend time learning sounds that make up words, how those sounds make words when combined, how to recognize and use high frequency words (the words we use all the time), how to read with expression, and how to better understand the words they read.

The activities were designed to be short and fun. It is my hope that you would partner with me to reinforce skills we are learning in school. I recognize that families are very busy, and therefore these activities will take only about **15 minutes** each evening. Make it fun as you play these literacy games with your child **4-5 times a week**.

Here is how the program works: Each week there will be three new games to play (5 min per game). As you work through the program, keep track of the time you spend each night with the log sheet that will be sent home with the rest of the program. **Please return the log each Monday in your child’s take home folder.**

It is my intention that you have fun with this program! Learning to read should be exciting and fun. Please contact me if you have any questions. Together we will help your child become a reader!

Sincerely,

Home Literacy Program

The program was built by teachers and designed for parents.

Minnesota State Standards intended to be met in the program:

Phonics and Word Recognition

1.3.0.3 Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

Fluency

1.3.0.4 Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

Key Ideas and Details

1.1.1.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

1.1.2.2. Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.

1.1.3.3 Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details.

Craft and Structure

1.1.4.4 Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses

1.1.5.5 Explain major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information, drawing on a wide reading of a range of text types.

1.1.6.6 Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

1.1.7.7 Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.

1.1.9.9 Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

1.1.10.10 With prompting and support, read prose and poetry of appropriate complexity for grade 1 as well as select texts for personal enjoyment, interest, and academic tasks.

Desired learning outcomes for each category of literacy activity in the program:

Having Fun With Letter Sounds- Phonemic Awareness (isolate and recognize specific sounds). In these activities you are attempting to get your child to hear specific sounds in spoken words and get them to create those same sounds in their own speech.

Playing With Words- Phonics (applying letter sounds to written language). In these activities you are attempting to get your child to connect sounds to our written language. These activities will also teach your children to put sounds together to form words.

Build That Vocabulary- Vocabulary (building a word base). In these types of activities your child will build a bigger vocabulary through working with high frequency words and other key vocabulary words. The goal is to get your child exposed to large volume of words so they can easily recognize them in their reading, as well as know their meaning.

Let's Get Fluent- Fluency (reading with speed, accuracy and expression). In these activities the goal is to get your child to read smoothly, accurately and with appropriate expression. The more fluent they become, the more they will understand what they read.

Working To Understand- Comprehension (understanding what we read). In these activities your child will practice retelling stories, answering and asking questions about the text, and thinking more deeply about what they read. These are all strategies for improving your child's comprehension

***Certain activities were adapted from the sources listed below. For more ideas on literacy activities you can use at home, take a look at these resources.

www.ReadingEggs.com

www.EarlyChildhoodTeacher.org

www.ReadingRockets.org

www.rasmussen.edu/degrees/education/blog/phonics-activities-for-preschoolers/

www.SuperTeachersWorksheets.com

Week One: Let's get started reading!

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Having Fun With Letter Sounds:

Listening Game (1st Day)- Get your child used to listening to sounds. Lie down or sit comfortably somewhere in your home or outside and have your child close their eyes. Encourage them to concentrate on isolating the sounds that they hear around them, have them call out what the sounds are, and describe them.

Say: What sounds do you hear? Can you tell me what they sound like?

Make sure you call out sounds you hear too. If your child is not understanding what to do, model for them how to play.

Say: I'll go first to show you what to do!

This game will get your child used to isolating sounds. This helps later when they start pulling out sounds from words.

Moo-Baa-Oink Game (After 1st Day)- It is important to make this game fun. If you make it fun, your child will enjoy it. This game helps your child separate sounds that they hear. Find a quiet place to play. Have your child close their eyes.

Say: I am going to make an animal sound. Listen carefully. Tell me what sounds you hear. For example, if I say "Baa" you would say "I hear /b/ and /a/".

Have them sound out the animal noise. If they miss a sound, give them the animal sound again and have them try again. After a couple of tries, if they are still missing a sound, give them a hint, but have them still sound it out a final time. Make sure you take turns sounding out animal sounds your child gives you as well. If you play the game as well, it becomes more of a fun game rather than a reading lesson from their parents.

If the game becomes too easy for your child, you can make it more challenging by having them tell you the letters that go with the sound as well. You can also have them name the animal the sound came from and have them tell you the sounds in that animal's name.

Playing With Words:

I Spy the Sound- This game will get your child connecting sounds to the letters they belong to. Find a quiet place to play. Explain the rules.

Say: I spy something in this room beginning with the letter “a”, sounds like /a/, like in aaaaapple. What could it be?

If your child has trouble, remind them of the sound the letter makes and the word starts with that sound/letter. Take turns. Your child will be learning just as much whether it is their turn or yours and it will feel more like a fun game rather than you quizzing them.

If the game becomes too easy for your child, you can make it more challenging by writing the letter on a piece of paper, rather than saying it out loud. This way they have to connect the sound to the letter with less help.

Note: When you write down vowels, you might need to tell them if it is a long or short vowel that you spy. Example: I spy something in this room beginning with a short “a”, like in aaaapple. You can also have your child try to write out the whole word after they locate which item you spied.

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race– This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with “high-frequency” words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don’t have one, an online dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary, and show them that the words are in “ABC” order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week’s vocabulary words (short a & short e):

1. hat
2. am
3. had
4. and
5. as
6. bed
7. jet
8. yes
9. peg
10. gem

Week Two:

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Having Fun With Letter Sounds:

“That is nonsense!” - This game encourages your child to once again isolate letter sounds. A nonsense word is made up of a series of sounds and it has no meaning. We practice with nonsense words to develop an ear for individual sounds and then eventually put those sounds together to form words. Examples of nonsense words: gaz, gibbly, dibble, and supercalifragilisticexpialidocious.

Take turns with your child, one of you giving a nonsense word and the other breaking apart the word into separate sounds. The first time you play, you might want to go first to model how to play.

Example: *Tell me what sounds you hear in the nonsense word “sep”.*

Response: s / e / p

For this game, you are looking for the sounds, not the letter that goes with it. We are practicing hearing the individual sounds. Have fun making up words! This should be fun for both you and your child, otherwise it is just work.

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, start having them spell out or write out the words with letters in addition to telling you the sounds. You can also start giving them longer nonsense words.

In case you are having trouble coming up with nonsense words, here are some to get you started:

hap gur lis hos mon tem wob reg biv gob daf nim ruf kev zom dub jib nes
(start with words no more than 3 sounds and then work up to bigger nonsense words as your child starts to progress)

Playing With Words:

Letter Race- This game lets your child practice connecting sounds to the letters they go to in the form of a race. You will need a race track (open area) and magnetic letters, letter blocks or even letters written on small pieces of paper. It has to be something that your child can physically pick up and race back with. Call out the sound and say “ready, set... go!” Have your child run as fast as they can and grab the letter that goes with the sound and run back. Take turns calling out sounds and racing. If you have a third family member that would be willing to call out sounds for you, then you can race your child.

Note: Try to call out both long and short vowels. (/a/ as in apple and /a/ as in ace)

To challenge your child more, try calling out full words. Just make sure the letters are there for them to grab.

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race- This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with “high-frequency” words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don’t have one, an online dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary and show them that the words are in “ABC” order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week’s vocabulary words (short i & short o):

1. six
2. hit
3. did
4. if
5. him
6. dog
7. top
8. not
9. box
10. jog

Challenge Words:

11. this
12. trot

Week Three:

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Having Fun With Letter Sounds:

In My Box- This game is all about rhyming. Students should have a base knowledge of what rhyming is from class. Rhyming are two words that have the same ending sound. A good way to introduce rhyming is through poems and fun stories that rhyme. Dr. Seuss wrote many fun rhyming books. You could introduce this game by reading a little Dr. Seuss or any other rhyming story/poem. Make it silly and fun!

Start the game by explaining that you have a box (draw a box with your fingers or actually draw a box) and that your child also has a box.

Say: In my box, I have a dog. What is in your box?

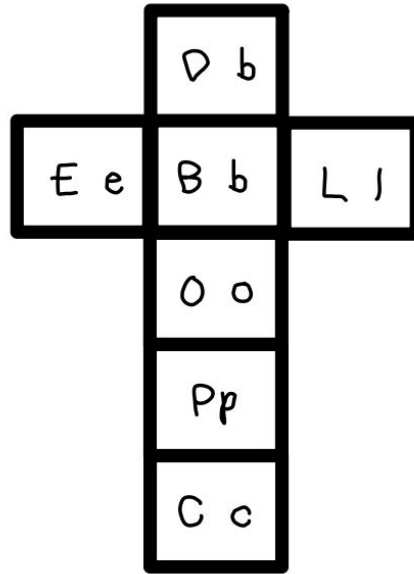
Possible response: In my box I have a log.

Explain that what is in their box must rhyme/have the same ending sound as “dog”. You might want to model the first one by playing both roles. Make sure to take turns, sharing both roles in the game.

If your child needs more of a challenge, have them actually draw a box, write both words and even draw something to represent each word. Connecting reading/writing to drawing can be a great strategy if your child is having trouble as well.

Playing With Words:

Letter Hopscotch- This game will help students connect sounds to the letters they go to. Draw out hopscotch boxes either with chalk, pieces of paper or anything else you think would work. Put whichever letters you want to practice in the boxes. It is a good idea to write both upper and lower case letters in each box. Call out the letter you want them to skip over. For example, if you call out /b/ in the hopscotch example below, then your child will have to hop on one or two feet down the hopscotch boxes, making sure to not step in the “B b” box. Make sure to participate and do some hopping of your own. If you get into it, your child will be more likely to as well.



To challenge your child, call out multiple letters. You could also have them spell out a short word, by having them only hop on boxes that spell out that word. In the hopscotch above a child could spell out “pod”, “cob” or “cod”. This will take a little planning when designing your hopscotch boxes.

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race- This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with “high-frequency” words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don’t have one, an online dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary and show them that the words are in “ABC” order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week’s vocabulary words (sort u & high frequency words):

1. fun
2. pup

3. bus
4. mug
5. tub
6. the
7. of
8. a
9. do
10. to

Challenge Words

11. scrub
12. they

Week Four:

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Having Fun With Letter Sounds:

Clap It Out!- This game will give your child practice finding syllables through clapping or tapping out each syllable in their name and other words. Explain to your child that all words have syllables (group of sounds that go together to form a part of a word). Some words have one syllable and others have more. Encourage them to practice with you by clapping the syllables out for a few words.

Say: "Red" has one syllable (clap once as you repeat the word, "red"). "Reading" has two syllables. Read (clap)-ing (clap). "Purple" also has two syllables. Pur (clap)-ple (clap). Can you clap the syllables for "happy"?

Once they start to get it, have them clap out their own name and any other names they would like to. Then start taking turns giving each other words to clap out. To make it more challenging, start giving your child longer and longer words. See if you can think of words with four (all-i-gat-or), five (e-lec-tric-i-ty), or even six syllables (en-cyc-lo-pe-di-a). Have fun with it!

Playing With Words:

Find The Word- This game will teach your child how to arrange what seems like a random group of letters into a word. You will need something to write on and write with (whiteboard, chalkboard, piece of paper, etc.). Magnetic or block letters would also work. Plan ahead and come up with some words you would like to use for the game. You should probably start with some basic three letter (consonant-vowel-consonant) words like cat, hat, and dog, then move on to longer, more difficult words. Once you have a word in mind, write the letters randomly on whatever you are displaying them on. Call out the word and have your child arrange the letters to match the word you called out. Take turns writing the letters randomly. Your child will learn just as much creating words in their head and writing the letters randomly.

You can end with a challenge round. Write out numerous consonants and a couple of vowels. Together, try to come up with as many words with the random letters written out. Pay attention and encourage your child to point out patterns they notice in spelling out the words. The more they recognize these patterns, the easier putting larger words together will become.

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race- This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with "high-frequency" words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don't have one, an online

dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary and show them that the words are in “ABC” order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week’s vocabulary words (long a w/ silent e & long i w/ silent e):

1. race
2. late
3. rake
4. make
5. gave
6. ride
7. like
8. nine
9. time
10. size

Challenge Words

11. brave
12. twice

Week Five:

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Having Fun With Letter Sounds:

The Gift Troll- This game will get your child stretching out and separating words into separate sounds. Read the story below of the “Gift Troll” and when you get to the gift the troll gives in the story, draw out each sound (not each letter). It would sound something like this:

Say: Once upon a time, there was a kind and generous troll. He was known by everyone as “The Gift Troll”. The troll loves giving presents to people. The troll would get so excited when giving gifts that he would blurt out the name of the present before he gave it to you. The troll had a weird way of talking. He didn’t talk like you and me. He would sound out the name of the gift like “t-oy”. He would not give the gift until the person guessed what the present was. Now I am going to be the troll. You try to guess what the gift is. Once you guess correctly, then you can be the troll.

Start with short basic words with more basic sounds, then introduce longer, more complicated words as your child’s confidence grows. Remember that you are drawing out each sound, not each letter. For example, “puppy” would be sounded out as p-u-pp-y, not p-u-p-p-y and “book” would be sounded out as b-oo-k, not b-o-o-k.

To give your child more of a challenge have them spell/write out each gift as well. They might need some help with silent “e”s and vowel teams (two vowels put together to form one sound). They may not be as familiar with some of these concepts yet.

Playing With Words:

Speed Read- This game will continue to train your child’s ear to listen for not only sounds that are there, but sounds that are missing. It also serves as a quick introduction to fluent reading games, which you will start next week. You need something to write on and write with. Write a series of words in a column down the paper/board. Pronounce each word slowly going down your list. Explain to your child that you are going to start reading the words more quickly and eventually you will leave one word out. Their job is to find the word that is missing as they read down the paper/board with you in their head. Have them wait to call out the missing word until after you read the whole list. Start with easy words first and then insert more difficult words as they understand the game better.

To challenge them even more, you can read faster and skip more than one word. You can make it really difficult by adding a word that is not on the list and see if they hear it. You can also start grouping alike words to make it more challenging. For example: “cat, hat, sat, bat, fat, nat” or “tap, tape, tapping, tapped, taping, taped, taps, tapes”.

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race- This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with “high-frequency” words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don’t have one, an online dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary and show them that the words are in “ABC” order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week’s vocabulary words (long o w/ silent e & long i w/ y ending):

1. rose
2. bone
3. cone
4. hole
5. poke
6. hi
7. cry
8. fly
9. my
10. by

Challenge Words

11. stone
12. sky

Week Six:

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Playing With Words:

Battleship Phonics- This game is based off the board game Battleship. Make a grid similar to the example below. Down the side write five or six initial sounds (beginning sounds to words). Make sure there is a letter per grid box. Along the bottom write a common middle and ending of a word for each grid box. Tell your child that you have picked a few secret grid squares where you hid your battleships (you will have to remember where you hid your secret squares). They will have to find your battleships by putting the beginning sound grid squares together with the middle and ending sound grids squares. Make sure they pronounce it correctly before giving them the square. In the example below “D-og” were put together and pronounced correctly. Once they have located all your battleships they win and you can help them build their own Battleship Phonics game grid.

M					
D			X		
P					
Wh					
B					
	a	e	i	o	i
	t	n	p	g	g

Note that some of the words they put together might be nonsense words and not have a meaning. That is okay. Make sure they still pronounce it correctly and make sure to point out that it is a nonsense word.

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race- This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with “high-frequency” words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don’t have one, an online

dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary and show them that the words are in “ABC” order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week’s vocabulary words (long e & high frequency words):

1. ski
2. me
3. she
4. he
5. be
6. one
7. from
8. all
9. most
10. what

Challenge Words

11. mini
12. said

Let’s Get Fluent:

Find the Sentence- This game will teach your child how to build sentences and read them fluently (quickly and with few mistakes). Write words that your child is familiar with randomly on a board or on a piece of paper. Plan ahead and make sure they are words that would form a basic sentence (*The dog barks. School is fun. I love ice cream*).

First, have your child use the words on the board/paper to build a sentence. They might need a little help with the first few. Encourage them to read through all the different possibilities and pick out the sentence that sounds the best. Have them write out the sentence with a capital letter and punctuation. Have them read the sentence they just wrote a couple more times, so that it becomes easy for them to read.

Next, have them replace at least one word in the sentence with another word they know, that would make sense in the sentence. For example, “I love ice cream”. They could replace “ice

cream” with “donuts”. “I love donuts.” Have them write out the new sentence. Have them read the new sentence a few times. Repeat the same step with the same sentence, but replace a different word. “I love donuts”, could become “we love donuts.” Continue to repeat this step until all the words are changed. On the third step, “love” could be replaced with “like”. “We like donuts.” Remember to have your child write and read out each variation of the sentence. Note that not all words can be replaced in every sentence and the sentence still makes sense. Have fun with it. Build some silly sentences!

Week 7:

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Playing With Words:

Write It Out!- This game is simple yet valuable in your child's reading and writing progress. Create a sentence with words your child already knows. They could be vocabulary words from previous weeks. For example, "I like dogs" or "Games are fun". Say each word one at a time. Have your child write each word after you say it. Make sure to say one word at a time, so that your child is concentrating on how to form that specific word rather than remember the whole sentence. Once the whole sentence is written out, have them read the sentence a few times without your help. If the sentences start getting too easy, start adding more words and more difficult words. Make it fun by challenging them to see how big they can get their sentences. Each day you play this game try to beat your previous word count. Don't forget to congratulate them! They are writing and reading full sentences! This is huge!

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race- This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with "high-frequency" words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don't have one, an online dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary and show them that the words are in "ABC" order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week's vocabulary words (letter blends fl, bl, cl, fl, gl, pl, & sl):

1. flag
2. black
3. clap
4. cliff
5. blink
6. glad
7. play
8. slam

9. plant
 10. glass
- Challenge Words
11. climb
 12. glue

Let's Get Fluent:

UH-OH Game - Write 15-30 words from this week's and previous week's vocabulary (words your child has practiced with) on small scraps of paper or cards. One word per piece of paper/card. In addition write "Uh-Oh!" on 5-10 pieces of paper or cards. Put all the cards into a cup or bowl. The first variation of this game is timed. Time how long it takes them to get all the way through the cup. When you say "go", have your child pick one card out of the cup. If they read it correctly, they can keep the card. If they draw an "Uh-Oh!" card they have to put all their word cards back into the container (don't put back the "Uh-Oh!" card, the game would go on forever). The game is over once all the cards are gone from the cup. See if they can beat their own time with another game.

The other variation gets rid of the time factor, but adds more players. In this variation, take turns pulling cards. Same as before, if the player reads their card correctly, they get to keep it. If a player draws an "Uh-Oh!" card they have to put back all their word cards in the cup. The game is over once all the cards are gone. The player with the most cards at the end is the winner.

To make it a little more interesting you can also add a few "Swap Hands" cards to the cup. If a player grabs this card from the cup, they have to switch their cards they earned with the other players cards.

Week 8:

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Playing With Words:

Find The Rhyme- This game is good practice with rhyming. Remind your child that rhyming is two words that share the same ending sound (**bike & hike**). Give them a few examples if they are still a little confused. Have a pencil and paper ready. Explain that you are going to say a word and they need to write down a word that rhymes with it. For example:

Say: Write down a word that rhymes with “cat”.

Possible written response: “bat”

Help them with spelling if they need it, but concentrate on the ending sound and checking that it actually rhymes.

Say: Why do these words rhyme? Which part of the word tells you that they rhyme? What parts of each word are the same and which parts are different?

Start with easy words then keep picking more and more difficult words as they get the hang of the game. If they need a challenge, have them come up with more than one word that rhymes with the word you gave them.

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race- This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with “high-frequency” words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don’t have one, an online dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary and show them that the words are in “ABC” order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week’s vocabulary words (letter blends fr, br, cr, fl, tr, pr, & gr):

1. frost
2. brown
3. free
4. crib
5. crab
6. trip
7. print
8. grade
9. trap
10. gram

Challenge Words

11. break
12. princess

Let's Get Fluent:

Work It Out- This activity will teach your child to work through difficult words, sentences, and pages while they read. It will teach them not to give up when things get difficult. You will need books that are at or just above your child's reading level. You can get these from your child's book bag or books they already have at home. Have your child find a page in any of the books they have already read that is difficult for them.

Share a personal story where you overcame obstacles through practice and working hard. You can also share a story you have heard from a movie, book, fairy tale, folk tale, or a news article. The point of this exercise is to motivate your child and to show them why it is important to keep trying, even when things get difficult. Learning to read can be frustrating and your child may want to give up. Stay encouraging.

Once you have your child nice and pumped up, have them try the difficult page they have been having trouble with. Remind them to use their reading strategies and above all to keep trying until they have it. Also remind them that it is okay to ask for help. They don't have to struggle through it by themselves. That is why you are there! Once they have mastered the difficult page, have them move on to another page they find difficult.

Week 9:

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Playing With Words:

Grab Bag- This game will get your child thinking quickly about letter sounds. It will also get them connecting letters and letter sounds to actual items and everyday things. You will need a bag that they can not see into. You will also need numerous objects from around the house that fit into that bag. Put 5-10 objects into the bag. Don't let your child see the objects you put into the bag. Explain how to play the game.

Say: I want you to grab one object out of the bag. Make sure not to look into the bag. Tell me what the object is and then tell me what sound the name for that object starts with. Write down that letter(s).

Note: There might be more than one name for certain objects. As long as it makes sense, go with it.

After all the objects are gone from the bag talk about all the sounds and letters used. Were there sounds used more than others? Were there any two letter sounds (th, sh, wh, ph)? Which objects/sounds were the most difficult to figure out? Which were the easiest?

To challenge your child a little more, have them sound out and write out the whole word rather than just the first sound.

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race- This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with "high-frequency" words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don't have one, an online dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary and show them that the words are in "ABC" order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week's vocabulary words (letter blends st, sn, sp & high frequency words):

1. stop
2. snip
3. spot
4. spin
5. step
6. who
7. many
8. your
9. into
10. been

Challenge Words

11. snack
12. would

Let's Get Fluent:

Reader's Theatre- In this activity you and your child will become writers of your own play. With your child, start to write a short play and practice it as you go. Spend around five minutes each day creating a reader's theatre (play). Build on your reader's theatre each day, and stage a performance at the end of the week to show what you have created. Have fun and don't be afraid to make it silly. You can make up characters or just play yourself. You can even base it on fairy tales or stories you know. Encourage the rest of the family to get involved and have parts. Any family members that don't have a part can be an audience member. Reader's theatre encourages kids to read with emotion and inflection. This is critical when learning to read fluently. This activity should be fun and not taken too seriously. The goal is to get kids reading with a purpose.

Here is an example of a start to a basic reader's theatre, in case you are not familiar with it (remember it is okay to be silly with it):

The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig

Narrator: Once upon a time there lived three little wolves who were scared of their own shadows. There was Harry Wolf...

Harry Wolf: Eh... Hello? Who said that?

Narrator: There was Freddy Wolf...

Freddy Wolf: Please don't hurt me!

Narrator: And there was Samantha Wolf...

Sammy Wolf: Uh... it is actually "Sammy Wolf".

Narrator: Down the street from the three scaredy wolves lived a big bad bully of a pig named Porky.

Porky: Hey! Watch what you are saying about me!

Week 10:

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race- This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with “high-frequency” words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don’t have one, an online dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary and show them that the words are in “ABC” order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week’s vocabulary words (long oo & short oo):

1. spoon
2. moon
3. food
4. cool
5. noon
6. cook
7. foot
8. wood
9. book
10. took

Challenge Words

11. school
12. shook

Let’s Get Fluent:

Scoop Reading- This activity will teach your child to “scoop” phrases and read smoothly. You will need their book bag books or any other books at their level. It can be fun to teach this skill with an actual spoon, but a finger will also work.

Start reading one of the books with your child. Have your child follow along with their finger. Stop after reading the first page. Go back and have them try physically, with spoon or finger, scooping the words together. Model it first. Model scooping first two words together, running your spoon or finger in a scooping motion along the words you are reading together. Then have them try. Then go back and have them scoop three to four words together. Keep scooping more and more words until they are reading the full sentence fluidly and smoothly. Keep practicing. The more smoothly they read the easier it will be for them to understand what they are reading. The end goal is for your child to eventually read full sentences with the words “scooped” together, rather than reading in a choppy manner.

The dog jumped over the fence.









The boy did not know what to do!



Working To Understand:

Roll and Retell- This game will teach your child how to retell a story in a fun way. You will need one die and the comprehension questions below. If you don't have a die, you can write the numbers one through six on scraps of paper and put them in a cup or bowl.

Read a story, either from the book bag or one you already have. Make sure it is a storybook (fiction). Once done reading have your child roll the die and answer the question that goes with the number they rolled. Keep rolling until all the numbers have been rolled and questions answered. If they roll the same number again, have them roll again. They may need some help with the questions. It is okay to give them hints or explain further. The goal is to get them talking about the story.

-  Where does the story take place? (setting)
-  Who are the characters in the story?
-  What is the story about?
-  What happened in the beginning, middle and end of the story?
-  What is the most important part of the story? Why?
-  Describe the main character. What is he/she like?

Week 11:

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race- This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with “high-frequency” words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don’t have one, an online dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary and show them that the words are in “ABC” order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week’s vocabulary words (long e & long o):

1. tree
2. green
3. tea
4. read
5. bee
6. goat
7. own
8. boat
9. mow
10. bow

Challenge Words

11. please
12. toast

Let’s Get Fluent:

Echo Reading- This activity is simple, but good practice when trying to get your child to read fluently. Pick a slightly challenging text for your child, a book that they might be having trouble with. This text can be a book from their book bag or any text that is slightly above their reading level (a book your child needs more help reading). Explain that you are going to read a

sentence from the text and you want them to echo you (repeat after you). Make sure you are reading with inflection that is appropriate for the text. Encourage your child to read with the same emotion and inflection you do. Read a page at a time with your child. Don't move on until your child is reading each sentence fairly fluently and with good tone and inflection.

Working To Understand:

Pick The Emotion- This activity will provide practice reading with emotion and help your child pick up on clues that tell which emotion the author is trying to convey. Pick a story from your child's book bag that conveys at least a little emotion. As you read together, try to pick out different emotions displayed by characters in the story.

*Example: Edgar missed his family. He had never spent a night away from his parents before.
Possible emotions Edgar might be feeling: Nervous or Sad*

Once you have identified an emotion, have your child practice showing that emotion with facial expressions and then reread the passage showing that emotion in their voice. Help your child identify more emotions in the story and read those passages with the appropriate emotion.

Week 12:

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race- This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with “high-frequency” words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don’t have one, an online dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary and show them that the words are in “ABC” order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week’s vocabulary words (long a & high frequency words):

1. rain
2. day
3. aim
4. may
5. way
6. find
7. were
8. there
9. only
10. some

Challenge Words

11. stay
12. people

Let’s Get Fluent:

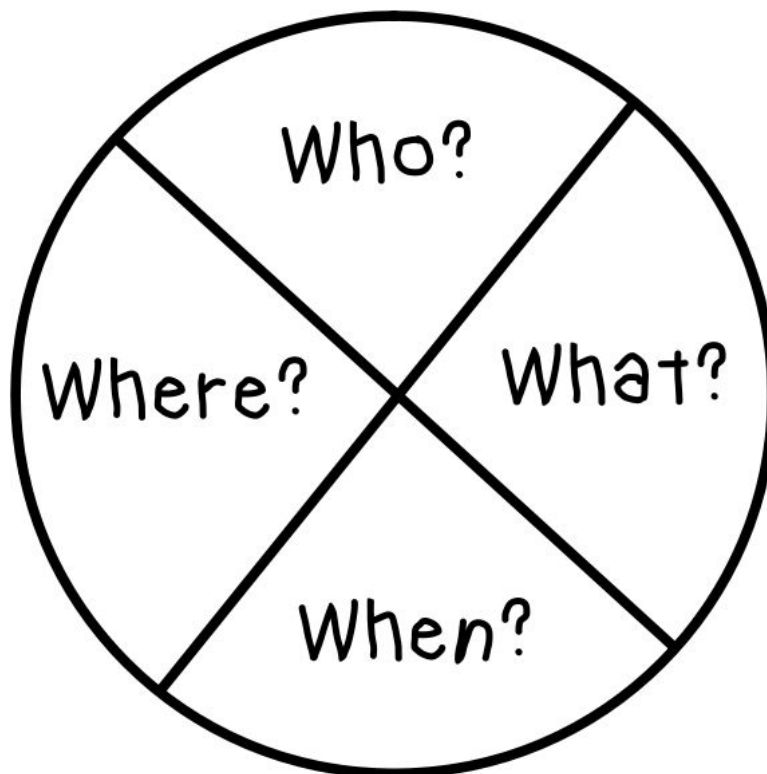
Punctuation Challenge- This activity will teach your child to read with the correct expression, depending on which type of punctuation is used. Write out simple sentences. Write out each sentence three times, each with a different punctuation. Each sentence group should look something like this:

I love cookies.
I love cookies!
I love cookies?

Have your child read each version of the sentence with the correct expression, depending on the punctuation. To make this activity a little more challenging, have your child write their own sentences.

Working To Understand:

Question Wheel- This activity will encourage your child to think about the “who, when, where, and what” of the stories they read. You will need a wheel like the example below and a paper clip, pencil or pen for the spinner. Have your child pick out their favorite story book and read it together. As you read stop and talk about where the story takes place, when it takes place, what is happening in the story and who are the characters. After the book is done break out the wheel and take turns spinning the wheel and answer the questions. While reading the next book, don't stop and talk about the who, when, where and what. Save the questions for the wheel.



Week 13:

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race- This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with “high-frequency” words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don’t have one, an online dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary and show them that the words are in “ABC” order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week’s vocabulary words (digraphs ch, sh & th):

1. shell
2. chair
3. chop
4. show
5. chat
6. this
7. thick
8. that
9. then
10. both

Challenge Words

11. chick
12. these

Let’s Get Fluent:

UH-OH Game- Write 15-30 words from this week’s and previous week’s vocabulary (words your child has practiced with) on small scraps of paper or cards. One word per piece of paper/card. In addition write “Uh-Oh!” on 5-10 pieces of cards. Put all the cards into a cup or bowl. The first variation of this game is timed. Time how long it takes them to get all the way through the cup. When you say “go”, have your child pick one card out of the cup. If they read it

correctly, they can keep the card. If they draw an “Uh-Oh!” card they have to put all their word cards back into the container (don’t put back the “Uh-Oh!” card, the game would go on forever). The game is over once all the cards are gone from the cup. See if they can beat their own time with another game.

The other variation gets rid of the time factor, but adds more players. In this variation, take turns pulling cards. Same as before, if the player reads their card correctly they get to keep it. If a player draws an “Uh-Oh!” card they have to put back all their word cards in the cup. The game is over once all the cards are gone. The player with the most cards at the end is the winner.

To make it a little more interesting you can also add a few “Swap Hands” cards to the cup. If a player grabs this card from the cup, they have to switch their cards they earned with the other players cards.

Working To Understand:

Wanted Poster- This activity will encourage your child to think more deeply about the characters in the stories they read. Make a wanted poster with your child of one of their favorite characters from one of their favorite books. You might want to reread whichever book the character came from. On the poster include a description of the wanted character and a drawing of the character. Be creative and create the poster together.



Week 14:

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race- This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with “high-frequency” words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don’t have one, an online dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary and show them that the words are in “ABC” order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week’s vocabulary words (ar & or words):

1. car
2. mark
3. art
4. far
5. hard
6. fork
7. for
8. port
9. sort
10. cord

Challenge Words

11. arch
12. sport

Let’s Get Fluent:

Reader’s Theatre- In this activity you and your child will become writers of your own play. With your child, start to write a short play and practice it as you go. Spend around five minutes each day creating a reader’s theatre (play). Have fun and don’t be afraid to make it silly.

You can make up characters or just play yourself. You can even base it of fairy tales or stories you know. Encourage the rest of the family to get involved and have parts. Any family members that don't have a part can be an audience member. Reader's theatre encourages kids to read with emotion and inflection. This is critical when learning to read fluently. This activity should be fun and not taken too seriously. The goal is to get kids reading with a purpose.

Here is an example of a start to a basic reader's theatre, in case you are not familiar with it (remember it is okay to be silly with it):

The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig

Narrator: Once upon a time there lived three little wolves who were scared of their own shadows. There was Harry Wolf...

Harry Wolf: Eh... Hello? Who said that?

Narrator: There was Freddy Wolf...

Freddy Wolf: Please don't hurt me!

Narrator: And there was Samantha Wolf...

Sammy Wolf: Uh... it is actually "Sammy Wolf".

Narrator: Down the street from the three scaredy wolves lived a big bad bully of a pig named Porky.

Porky: Hey! Watch what you are saying about me!

Working To Understand:

Go Deeper- This activity allows you and your child to talk in more depth about the stories that you read together. Read a storybook together and then use the questions below to talk about the book.

Comprehension Questions

- Could this story be true? Why or why not?
- What and who was this story about?
- Where did this story take place?
- What do you think the setting for the story looks like? Describe what you see in your head.
- Who is the main character?
- What is the main character like? Describe the main character.
- Do you like the main character? Why or why not?
- What was the most important part of the story? Read it again.

-Did you like the story? Why or why not?

-Do you know anybody that is like any of the characters in the story? How are they the same?
How are they different?

-Has something that happened in the story happened to you before?

-Would you like to be one of the characters for one day? Why or why not?

-Did you learn anything from the story? Any lesson?

Week 15:

(Each activity should take about 5-10 min.)

Build That Vocabulary:

Dictionary Race- This is a fun way for your child to practice using the dictionary and to get practice with “high-frequency” words (words they will see over and over again). This game works best if your child can use an actual print dictionary, but if you don’t have one, an online dictionary will work. Before you play the first time, take your child through the dictionary and show them that the words are in “ABC” order. Let them look through it a bit before playing.

Have them start with their dictionary closed. Write down the vocabulary word on a piece of paper or white board if you have one. Show your child the word and say the word. Have them find the word in the dictionary as quickly as they can. Children that have never used a dictionary, may need a little more help the first few times you play. This is okay. Once your child has found the word, have them pronounce the word and help them read the definition(s).

If your child needs a little more of a challenge, try just telling them the word and not writing it down. They have to rely totally on their knowledge of letter sounds. If you have more than one dictionary at home, you can race your child to see who can find the word first.

This week’s vocabulary words (ir, ur & high frequency words):

1. first
2. girl
3. shirt
4. turn
5. surf
6. old
7. put
8. again
9. kind
10. other

Challenge Words

11. purple
12. does

Let’s Get Fluent:

Find the Sentence- This game will teach your child how to build sentences and read them fluently (quickly and with few mistakes). Write words that your child is familiar with randomly on a board or on a piece of paper. Plan ahead and make sure they are words that would form a basic sentence (*The dog barks. School is fun. I love ice cream*).

First, have your child use the words on the board/paper to build a sentence. They might need a little help with the first few. Encourage them to read through all the different possibilities and pick out the sentence that sounds the best. Have them write out the sentence with a capital letter and punctuation. Have them read the sentence they just wrote a couple more times, so that it becomes easy for them to read.

Next, have them replace at least one word in the sentence with another word they know, that would make sense in the sentence. For example, "I love ice cream". They could replace "ice cream" with "donuts". "I love donuts." Have them write out the new sentence. Have them read the new sentence a few times. Repeat the same step with the same sentence, but replace a different word. "I love donuts", could become "we love donuts." Continue to repeat this step until all the words are changed. On the third step, "love" could be replaced with "like". "We like donuts." Remember to have your child write and read out each variation of the sentence. Note that not all words can be replaced in every sentence and the sentence still makes sense. Have fun with it. Build some silly sentences!

Working To Understand:

Imagine - This activity will teach your child to visualize what is happening in the story they are reading or having read to them. Pick a story book that will be easy to visualize. Explain to your child that you are going to read the story to them and they are to draw what they see as you read. After the story is over, talk about the picture your child has drawn. Have them describe what they drew and why they drew it. Let the drawing be an opening to talk about the story.

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