

Sight Words

by Julie A. Daymut, M.A., CCC-SLP

What Are Sight Words?

Sight Words are written words that children know just by seeing them. Children do not have to spend time or energy decoding (sounding out) a sight word. Sight words tend to be common words that a child sees over and over, often in children's books. Some examples are "the," "and," "please," and "cat." A list of sight words called *Dolch Sight Words* (<http://www.dolchlearning.com/flash-cards>) contains over 200 high-frequency words: these words do not generally follow typical patterns for decoding (Introduction to Sight Words, 2006, ¶ 1 and 2).



Why Are Sight Words Important for Reading?

Sight words are crucial in helping a child develop beginning reading skills. Not only do sight words help build a vocabulary base, but they help build reading fluency skills. Reading fluency is the "child's ability to read text quickly and accurately" (Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn, 2001, p.22). Fluency skills help improve comprehension because the child is not spending time trying to figure out many words. Instead, he/she is reading for content.

What Are Some Ways I Can Help a Child Learn Sight Words?

At home:

- Label common objects around the home with sticky notes.
- Write sight words on a chalkboard or on the driveway or sidewalk outside.
- Put magnets with sight words on the refrigerator.
- Read storybooks with words that repeat over and over (*Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* or *Goodnight Moon*).
- Make grocery lists with common items and read these with your child.

At school:

- Create a word wall for sight words, adding new words each week.
- Have students practice reading sight words at the beginning and/or end of language arts time.
- Send home weekly lists of sight words for practice.
- Have students write sight words in a journal/log and review them on a regular basis.
- Have students look at newspapers, magazines, instruction manuals, comic books, etc. and use a highlighter to highlight as many of their (word wall) sight words as they can find.

Resources

Armbruster, B. B., Lehr, F., & Osborn, J. (2001). *Put reading first: The research building blocks for teaching children to read*. Jessup, MD: National Institute for Literacy at ED Pubs.

Introduction to sight words and E.W. Dolch. Retrieved January 15, 2009, from <http://www.dolchlearning.com>



Helpful Products

The list of Super Duper® products below may be helpful when working with children who have special needs. Visit www.superduperinc.com or call 1-800-277-8737. Click the links below to see the product description.

First 100 Sight Words Plus Sentence Building Super Fun Deck®

Ask for Item #FD-74 <http://www.superduperinc.com/products/view.aspx?pid=FD74&stid>

Sight Words Combo

Ask for Item #FD-7486 <http://www.superduperinc.com/products/view.aspx?pid=FD7486>

200 More Sight Words Plus Sentence Building Super Fun Deck®

Ask for Item #FD-86 <http://www.superduperinc.com/products/view.aspx?pid=FD86&stid>