

Appendix C10

Teaching High-Frequency Words

Choose one new high-frequency word to teach each week or every few days. Do not move too rapidly to introduce and teach new words. Have a lot of materials available to teach new words. Some items you could use include magnetic letters, a cookie sheet, a chalkboard or white board, salt or sand, shaving cream, zip-top bags, and paintbrushes of different sizes. Choose from some of the following activities and be sure to allow variety. Mix it up each day you teach a new word. The purpose is to allow various kinesthetic (hands-on) learning opportunities to solidify what a word looks like.

1. **Magnetic letters:** Prepare the letters needed to teach a new word, such as "here." Show the word on a chalkboard or cookie sheet where the magnets will stick. Show your child how to "break" the word, letter by letter, from left to right. Have your child stand or sit to the left of you. Without saying any letter names or sounds, move each letter one at a time, going down to the left diagonally--first the "h," then the "e," then the "r," then the "e." Underline the word with your finger and say out loud, "Here." Have your child copy you and do it the same way. Watch your child's eyes and make sure they are following the letters as they move from left to right. After a few times, shake up the letters in your hand. Have your child make the word again using the magnetic letters.
2. **Chalkboard or white board:** Have your child write the word using chalk or a dry erase marker. If he/she cannot remember how to write the word, make the word visible with magnetic letters at the top of the board. Once your child has mastered that task, take the letters away and see if your child can write the word independently. The idea is to use a lot of different writing tools to write the word. You can also use crayons and markers on paper. Have him/her do this 3-4 times without looking at the word.
3. **Sand or salt tray:** Pour salt or sand on a cookie sheet to make a thin layer. Have your child "write" the high-frequency word in the salt/sand with his/her finger. Always have him/her underline the word at the end from left to right and say the whole word aloud. Shake the tray to make it "erase" to write the word again.
4. **Shaving cream:** Fill a zip-top bag with shaving cream. Make sure it is securely closed at the top. Have your child "write" the word with a finger while the bag lies flat on the table. Your child will be able to see the word written in the cream. Have him/her do this a few times.
5. **Paintbrushes:** Use a paintbrush and water to "write" the word on a chalkboard (or you could even use the driveway outside). Use different-sized paintbrushes to make the words big or small. Always have your child underline the whole word at the end and say the word out loud.