

## **TUTORING**

### **How to Teach Students to Read and Spell Sight Words**

A learner may not have the ability to sound out certain words that occur in reading. These words can be taught as sight words. Here's a way to teach sight words that involves touching as well as seeing and hearing. It works with most students and is invaluable with those who are kinesthetic learners.

For each word, you'll need a sheet of 8 ½" x 11" unlined paper and a crayon or marker—something that makes a broad line.

1. Divide the paper into two pieces by cutting it in half lengthwise.
2. On one piece, write the word in large letters across the long dimension.
3. Have the student trace the word with her forefinger while saying the word as a unit. Repeat this several times.
4. Cover or remove the word.
5. Have the student write the word on the top of the second piece of paper (across the narrow width).
6. Ask the student to check her spelling by looking at the word you wrote on the first paper. If she has made a mistake, go on to steps 7-9. If she wrote it correctly, skip to steps 10-12.
7. Ask the student to fold down the top of her paper to cover the incorrect word. Don't let her make corrections by erasing or changing parts of the incorrect word. In this exercise, the word is always written as a whole.
8. Have the student trace the large print sample again while saying the word.
9. Cover or remove the sample. Have the student write the word again on the second sheet of paper. Repeat the above steps as often as necessary until the student can write the word correctly.
10. Type or print the learned words onto small cards.
11. Have the student alphabetize both the small cards and the large pieces of paper in separate files. Use the small cards for drills.
12. Keep the pieces of paper if you have to reteach the word. Once the word is mastered, you or the student can discard the paper.

- 13.** Remember that when the student forgets a word, he/she should retrace it until he/she can write it from memory without looking at the original word. A student should never copy the word.

Developed by a reading professor at Cleveland State University, this technique has helped many students learn words when other methods failed. Try it with your student. It just might prove to be the key that unlocks the gates of literacy!

This Tutor Tip is from Daphne Schor of the Literacy Council of Montgomery County, Inc. in Wheaton, Md.