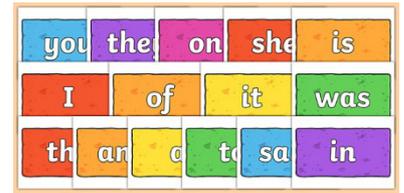


High Frequency Words

What are High Frequency Words?

High frequency words are common words that appear very often in writing. While some of the words are decodable (words that can be sounded out) others are known as tricky or exception words (words that can't be sounded out, so need to be learned and recognised on sight). There are 300 High Frequency Words that we focus upon.



Why are High Frequency Words so important?

It is incredibly important for children to learn to read these words on sight as they form most of the words they will come across when reading. Once they can read these words, the next step would be to spell them, so they can use the words in their writing.

How should my child be practising these words?

When tackling learning with your child, we would promote our school motto, 'Learning Through Enjoyment'. Wherever possible, make the activities fun and be careful not to spend too long on each activity.

The ideas below come from Ian McNeilly, director of the National Association for the Teaching of English.

- Flashcards – but don't use drawings alongside or your child may simply stick to looking at the drawing, not the letters. "A child's ability to concentrate depends on their individual personality," says Ian. "Five minutes could be enough for some, while others could do more." You can download free high frequency words flashcards from <http://www.highfrequencywords.org>
- Cut out high frequency word lists and stick them on a prominent place (the fridge, the back of their cereal packet, etc.), so your child has a visible reminder while they're learning them.
- Magnetic letters – good for helping children with tricky words. Leave some up on the fridge so your child becomes more familiar with the word every time they get a drink.
- Memory games – place flashcards downwards for a game of pairs.
- Ask your child to look out for high frequency words on signs or advertisements when you're on a journey or a shopping trip.
- Choose three or four of the words and help your child make a silly sentence containing as many of them as possible.
- Make sure your child sees you reading. "You are their best role model so show them you enjoy reading," says Ian, "and make sure books in the house are easily available, not tidied away."

And, finally, try not to worry if your child is not progressing at the same pace as other children. "Don't get too hung up if your child is not at the same stage as other children," says Ian. "In the classroom, there can be a nine-month age gap between children – that's 20 percent of their life in Reception – and it does make a big difference."

