

Sounds Like Fun!

Vocabulary Games

Most youngsters can't seem to get enough of games! The ones below will help your child improve her vocabulary through thinking, spelling, listening, writing, and reading. Practicing these skills will put her on the road to becoming a successful learner.

Listen & Find

After reading a story, such as "Little Red Riding Hood," to your child, choose three or four words from the story.

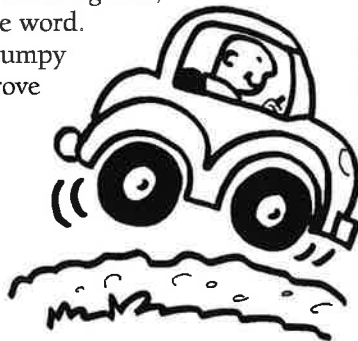
Examples: "red," "wolf," "Grandmother."

Write each word on an index card, and give them to your youngster to hold. Then, spell and read the words aloud. Say, "R-e-d spells red. That's the color of the little girl's cape." Tell her that every time she hears you read "red," she is to show you the card with that word. See if your child can also point to the word in the story.



Change-a-Word

First, write a simple sentence for your youngster ("I played a quiet game"). Ask him to change one of the words to write a sentence with a different meaning, such as "I played a noisy game." When your youngster gets the hang of it, see if he can change more than one word. For example, "We drove down a bumpy road" could be changed to "We drove up a smooth road."



Awesome Adjectives

Ask your child to point out an object. Then, put on your thinking caps and take turns coming up with adjectives—words that describe the object. See how many describing words the two of you can string together. Example: A ball might be described as a big ball; a big round ball; a big round red ball; a big round red bouncing ball; or a big round red bouncing beach ball.

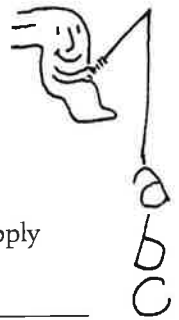


Breakfast Reading

What do reading and breakfast have in common? Answer: cereal boxes. Ask your child to find these things on a cereal box:

- the first letter in her name
- a word that rhymes with _____ (you supply a word)
- a word that begins or ends like the word _____
- a word that means the opposite of _____

Variation: Write a few words on paper, and see if your youngster can find them on the cereal box.



Spell It!

As you spend time waiting in line or riding in a car, look around for signs with words on them, such as billboards, store displays, or traffic signs. Take turns using the letters in the words you find to form new words. See how many words you and your youngster can come up with. Example: With a stop sign, you can make the words "spot," "pot," "to," "so," "top," and "sop."

For older children, see who can make up the longest word by using the letters more than once.

Categories for All

Start by choosing a category for your child. Give him 30 seconds to think of words that fit in the category. If you say, "things that you can eat," your youngster could say, "ice cream," "pizza," and "apple."

Other categories could include "things that melt" (ice, candle, chocolate) and "things that are larger than a house" (skyscraper, dinosaur, giant).

