

Teaching Tips for Word Attack

Reading Strategies

The following activities have been included to show parents inexpensive games to make and play with their children which help strengthen word attack strategies. Most adults have not spent much time thinking about word attack strategies and how to use them effectively in their own reading. Developing games which focus on reading skills can bring parent and child together and help the adult learner review these principles to begin to use them more effectively for their own reading.

Games have not been included for all word attack strategies, however, by using a little creativity, parents can develop other games which focus on specific strategies.

Here is a list of word attack strategies and a brief description of each.



1. Use context to predict

There must be good clues in the sentence to guess the word.

I went to the barber to get a haircut.

Wayne Gretzky scored in overtime.

Read ahead and say “blank” for the unknown word.



2. Give a rhyming word

There are many common rhyming words, especially words that are short and have one or two syllables.

I didn't expect to bump into you.

You have a nice tan.

The reader needs to look at the beginning sound.

3. Use phonics to sound the word out

Use for words which are short and easy to sound out.

He gave me a plant for Christmas.

It was hard to see because of the fog.

Beginning sounds are especially important.

Use both letter-sound cues and context cues together.

If one sound is difficult, use a key word to jog their memory
(it's like **ch** in **chair**).

4. Tell the student the word

“Wh” words are difficult as are gh and ph.

When is your exam?

Words at the beginning of sentences are difficult and names are difficult.

Alan Van Luven is doing research.

5. Give an explanation, the meaning, an opposite or a synonym

They fought with swords.

He fell in the aisle.

6. Use structural analysis

The student can get part of the word by covering the other parts.

The girl was unhappy with her choice.

Wayne Gretzky scored in overtime.

Tackle longer words by breaking them up.

Encourage the recognition of smaller words or chunks.