

Fun With Phonics Practice

Why it's important to practise

Because while it may be one of the oldest clichés, practice really does make perfect. The more your child familiarises herself with the different components of Phonics, the faster her reading and spelling skills will improve. And as I mentioned last month, this is a method that encourages both independent reading and comprehension. Phonics is uncommonly well-suited to interactive styles of learning. Since the emphasis is on the way words sound, with a little bit of thought parents can make a fun game of Phonics practice and at the same time reinforce what their kids have just been taught.

The refrigerator game

Buy packets of refrigerator magnets of all the letters of the alphabet. They're not expensive and the more colourful the better. There's no need to display the entire alphabet; simply focus on those letters your child is currently learning. Every time he comes into the kitchen scrounging for food, call out a letter sound and have him pick it out on the fridge. Or arrange the magnets into words or sound groups and get your kids to pronounce those.

Car and shopping games

Play impromptu games while driving your children around, or riding with them on the bus or MRT. See who can call out the greatest number of street names or traffic signs. A "STOP" sign, for example, can be used to reinforce the consonant blend /st/ and word family /op/. Be careful not to crash the car. At the supermarket, tell them you need their help reading labels and signs (fish, rice, beef, corn etc.). Deliberately misread or mispronounce words yourself sometimes, to give your children the rare opportunity to correct Mummy and Daddy. You'll be empowering them and giving them a sense of responsibility while at the same time fostering their alertness to language.

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Coming next month:

Teaching kids that reading can be FUN!



Elly Sim is a Child Development Specialist (B.Sc) who was trained and qualified in the US in Child Development and Psychology. She co-founded the school Jan & Elly in 1995 and continues to design and develop its highly-acclaimed English programmes.

Ask Elly anything regarding your child's English language challenges. Email her at elly@jan-elly.com