

First Grade Activity Ideas

Home: *The Extended Classroom*



1. **Recognizing Labels**: Let your child see if he/she can pick out the brand name items that you buy regularly. Read a label (ex: Lucky Charms) and allow your child to try to find it. When he/she picks out the correct item, read the label with your child several times. Do this for several products. The next time you are in the store, let your child try to find the items in the store with you.
2. **Scrapbook Fun**: Take pictures of your family having fun on vacation, at a party or special outing. Have your child help you put the pictures in a scrapbook, and then tell you what to write for each caption. Make sure your child helps you write by telling you what sound the words begin and end with. Have fun reading through the scrapbook of their words together.
3. **Playing Secretary**: Playing secretary is a fun way to take dictation for your child. Read a picture book with your child or talk about a recent experience. Afterward, ask your child what happened and write your child's answer word for word. Invite your child to read it with you. Allow them to illustrate it and read it to each family member.
4. **Word Race**: Choose a room in your house as the location of the race. On index cards, write the names of items in the room. (television, couch) Time your child as they tape each index card to the item they think it names.

5. **Shake and Make It**: Use a permanent marker to write letters and vowel pairs on lima beans. Put the beans in a paper cup. Have your child shake the cup and dump the lima beans on the table. Observe the beans that landed letter side up. Put beans together to create a nonsense word and sound through the word. Do this for all of the letters that are face up. When finished, put the letters back in the cup and spill them again!

6. **Recorded Stories**: An easy way to help your child hear the difference between fluent and non-fluent reading is to read aloud to him or her. To demonstrate how fluent reading sounds, record yourself reading aloud from a picture book. Use expression and read in a natural, evenly paced way. Have your child listen to the recording as they follow along in the book. Allow your child to practice a story and have you record them reading.

7. **Echo Reading**: Bring out the actor (and fluent reader) in your child with the following simple activity. Explain that reading is more exciting to listen to when the reader changes his/her voice to show feelings, just like an actor. Choose a poem, limerick or joke to read aloud. Read one sentence at a time with expression. Ask your child to repeat after you as your echo. Encourage your child to use the same kind of voice. Remind him/her to read with the same expression when reading alone.

8. **Choral Reading**: This activity proves that two can be more fun than one! Explain that some literature is meant to be read (or sung) by several people at once so it sounds like one voice. (choral reading) Have your child listen to or read choral reading materials such as music lyrics, plays or poems. Invite your child to read one choral reading to read aloud with you. Practice reading until you sound like one voice. Choose a special time and date and perform your choral reading for family and friends.

9. Joking Around: Help your child choose several lively jokes from a joke book. Set up a puppet stage by covering a table with a blanket. Wear one puppet and have your child wear another. Have your child practice telling the joke using his/her puppet. Help with the jokes by having your puppet make comments such as, *I don't know, What?, or How ____ was it?* Perform the jokes together for friends and family members.

10. Story Words: Here is a game that changes every time you play it. Help your child think of several nouns. (people, places, things) The noun can be real or imaginary. Write each word on an individual index card. Place the cards in a paper bag and have your child choose three. Read the cards with your child. Explain that he/she has two minutes to think of a story that includes those three words. Challenge your child to think and not speak for two minutes. Explain that if he/she thinks of a story before time is up, the extra time can be spent practicing the story in his/her head. Invite your child to tell the story, helping if needed. Play again or keep the bag and play from time to time until all cards are chosen. You may also want to record the stories.

11. What a Character!: Encourage your child to make a book come alive with this fun activity. Read a familiar fairy tale or fable aloud. For each character use a different voice. Read the dialogue with a lot of expression. Before reading the story again, invite your child to choose a character. Have your child take that character's part and say the lines. Encourage your child to speak clearly and smoothly with expression as you read a second time together.

12. PVC Pipe Phones: Make a PVC pipe phone using inexpensive PVC pipe pieces that can be found at Home Depot or Lowe's. This allows your child to hear him or herself as they read.

13. Closed Caption TV: Turn off the sound on your TV and turn on the closed caption. Instead of hearing the words, your child will have to read the words as they appear at the bottom of the screen. This will help them practice reading at a faster rate.
14. Rapid Naming Charts: Using the blank template provided, choose six sight words that your child needs to practice. Put the words in a different order on each line of the chart. Have your child read through the chart as you time them for one minute. Count the number of words your child read correctly. Have your child keep a record of the number of words read correctly each time. The chart should be used daily until your child can read sixty words in one minute (first grade) or seventy words per minute (second grade). When this goal has been met, choose six new words your child needs to practice and start a new chart.
15. Multisensory Words: Have your child practice writing words quickly with sidewalk chalk, shaving cream, in a pan of cornmeal, in sand, in paint, salt, or with fingers in a small dab of pudding or chocolate syrup you have placed on a paper plate or waxed paper.
16. Gameboards: Use the game boards and cards provided at the meeting to help your child practice fluency skills.
- Ideas for gameboards:
- *identify phonogram on cards
 - *think of a word with phonogram in it
 - *multisyllabic words
 - *use beans from #5 to make a new word
 - *sight words on index cards that your child needs to practice