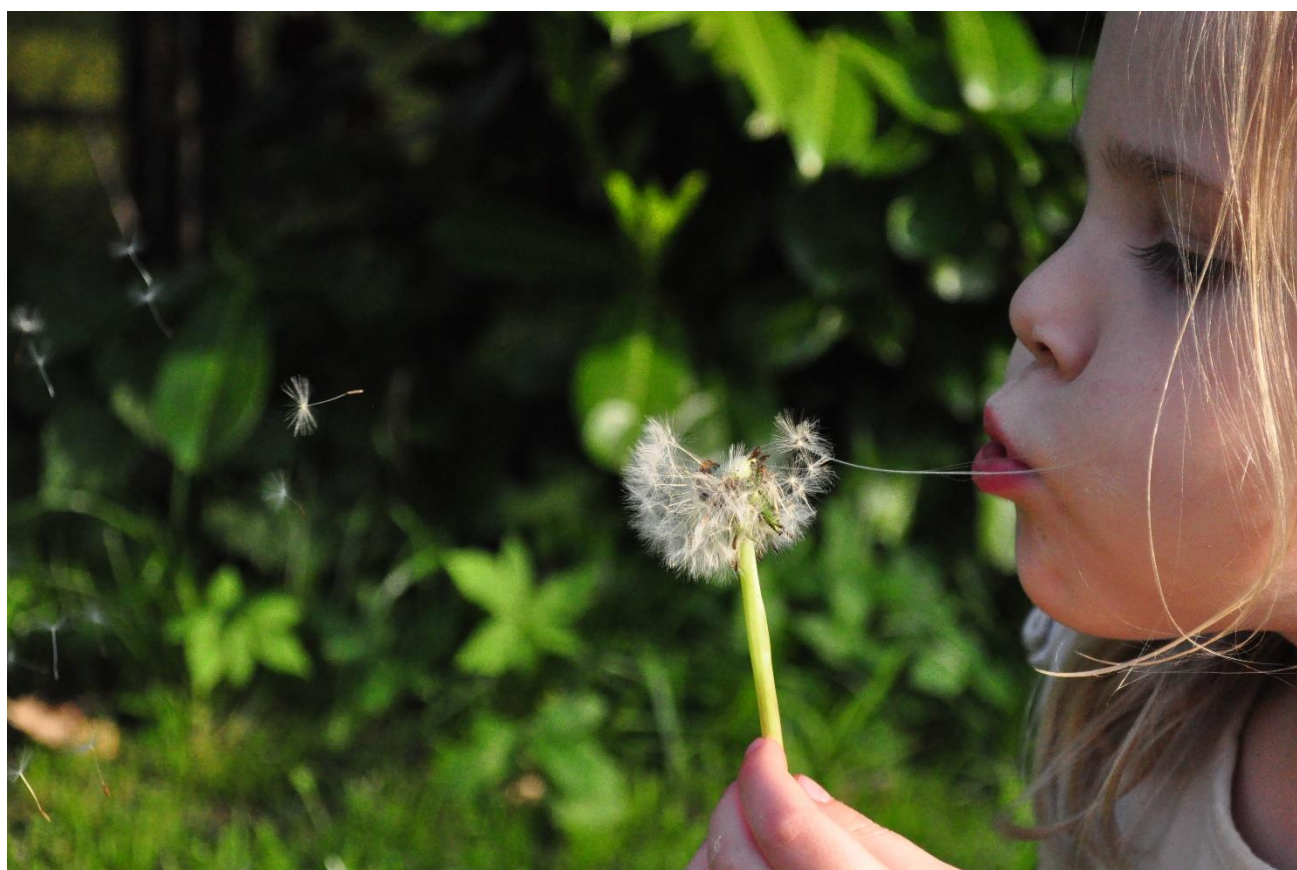


# Helen Arkell

Believe Achieve Succeed

## Ideas to Help You Support Your Child



# Reading

## Reading High Frequency Words

- ❖ Work on, at most, six words at any one time.
- ❖ On the first few occasions read the words to your child before asking him/her to read them.
- ❖ Talk about the look of the word, its shape and length and the exact sequence of letters. For example, *good* has four letters, a tail at the beginning, two round os in the middle and a tall letter at the end.
- ❖ The words could be written on cards and your child asked to read them on sight.
- ❖ If he/she succeeds the card can go in an envelope/box; if he/she does not know the word he/she should be told it immediately and the card put to the back of the pile to give another opportunity for it to be read correctly.
- ❖ Games such as 'pairs' and snap are excellent ways of encouraging children to read these words at speed.
- ❖ Continue to revise words until they are known automatically.

## **Strategies to use when listening to your child read:**

### **Pause, Prompt, Praise**

*For correct reading*, adults should praise children often and specifically – when they read a sentence correctly, when they correct themselves after a mistake, when they remember a ‘problem’ word they’ve been working on, when they get a word correct after an adult has prompted them.

*For difficulties with reading*, adults should pause and wait to give children a chance to tackle the problem. This pause should be as long as five seconds – count to ten under your breath.

*For incorrect reading*, if the word does not make sense the adult should prompt with clues about the meaning of the text, e.g., ‘You read....Does that make sense?’ If the prompt does not elicit the correct response, the adult should provide it. If the mistake does make sense but is not the correct word adults can prompt with clues about the look of the word, perhaps suggesting that children should look again at individual letters or asking about a part of the word that is wrong.

*For long pauses when reading*, adults should suggest that children omit the word and read on to the end of the sentence, or read the sentence again.

*If the word is not correct after two prompts*, adults should supply the word and encourage the child to keep reading.

### **All Attempts Should Be Praised**

Marie Clay (1979) found that, when children were praised specifically, e.g. ‘Well done, you looked carefully at the beginning of that words and worked out what the word was’, or ‘Good. You tried to read ahead to help you sort out that problem word’, the child had a clearer idea of what to do.

Adapted from ‘Supporting Struggling Readers, UKRA, D Bentley & D Reid

## **Paired, or Shared, Reading**

You can use this for a pre-school child who shows signs of wanting and being ready to learn to read, or you can use it to help a child who has started school but lacks confidence or some of the skills necessary for independent reading. You can even use it for older children whose reading is not fluent. Just use the right books for your child's level. It aims to build confidence and NOT to focus on mistakes. It's best to do about 10 minutes a day.

There are two stages:

### **Stage 1 - reading together**

1. Child chooses book (but if your child is a non-reader it should be one he knows; if he can read a little, it should be simple)
2. Read aloud together, with adult pointing to the words; child reads fractionally behind the adult or simultaneously if he can.
3. If a child makes a mistake, adult says the correct word and moves on.
4. Do this on 4/5 occasions for about 10 minutes each time.

### **Stage 2 - independent reading**

1. Use the same book (or a new one for a more experienced reader)
2. Arrange a sign (such as a tap on the table)
3. Adult and child begin reading together.
4. When child wants to read alone, he gives the sign and the adult stops.
5. If child makes a mistake, adult joins in, giving the correct word, and continues reading with child until child gives the sign.

It's very important not to make a fuss about mistakes. Paired reading is about building confidence and fluency rather than anything else. Make sure you are not using a book which is too difficult.

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## **Discussing a Book with a Child**

We get better responses from children if we

- Ask fewer and better questions
- Seek better answers
- Encourage children to ask more questions

Ask open ended questions that invite the child to think:

- What do you think?
- Why do you think that?
- How can you be sure?
- Is there another way/reason/idea?
- What if..?
- What do you think happens next?
- What is happening in the picture?
- What is the story about?
- What do you most like or dislike about this story?
- How do you think it will end?

## **Suggestions to Encourage Reluctant Readers**

- Audio books
- Graphic novels
- Comics and magazines
- Read to your child

## Reading Strategies

Encourage your child to use a reading method to suit the purpose of the task.

### Accurate Reading

Needed when your child needs to understand something really well

- Read text twice
- Read one word at a time
- Highlight key words

### However.....

It can be a revelation to a child when he/she understands that he/she does not always have to read *every* word of the text.

### Skimming

A quick look to get the general idea

- Title
- Pictures and diagrams
- Headings
- Captions
- Bold type
- Beginning and end

### Scanning

For one bit of information. What will it look like?

- Capital letters?
- First letter?
- Length of word?
- Numbers?
- Patterns of letters?

## Interactive Reading

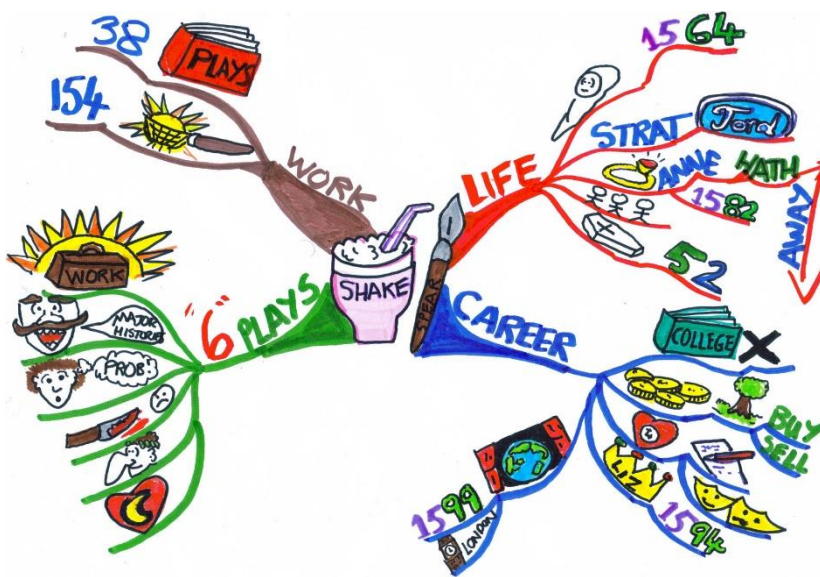
To help your child understand and remember what he/she reads.

### RAP

- Read the information
- Ask 'What is it all about?'
- Put it into your own words

### Make text memorable

- Make it colourful (highlight)
- Use headings
- Use sub-headings
- Write key words
- Make a diagram, chart, poster or mind map



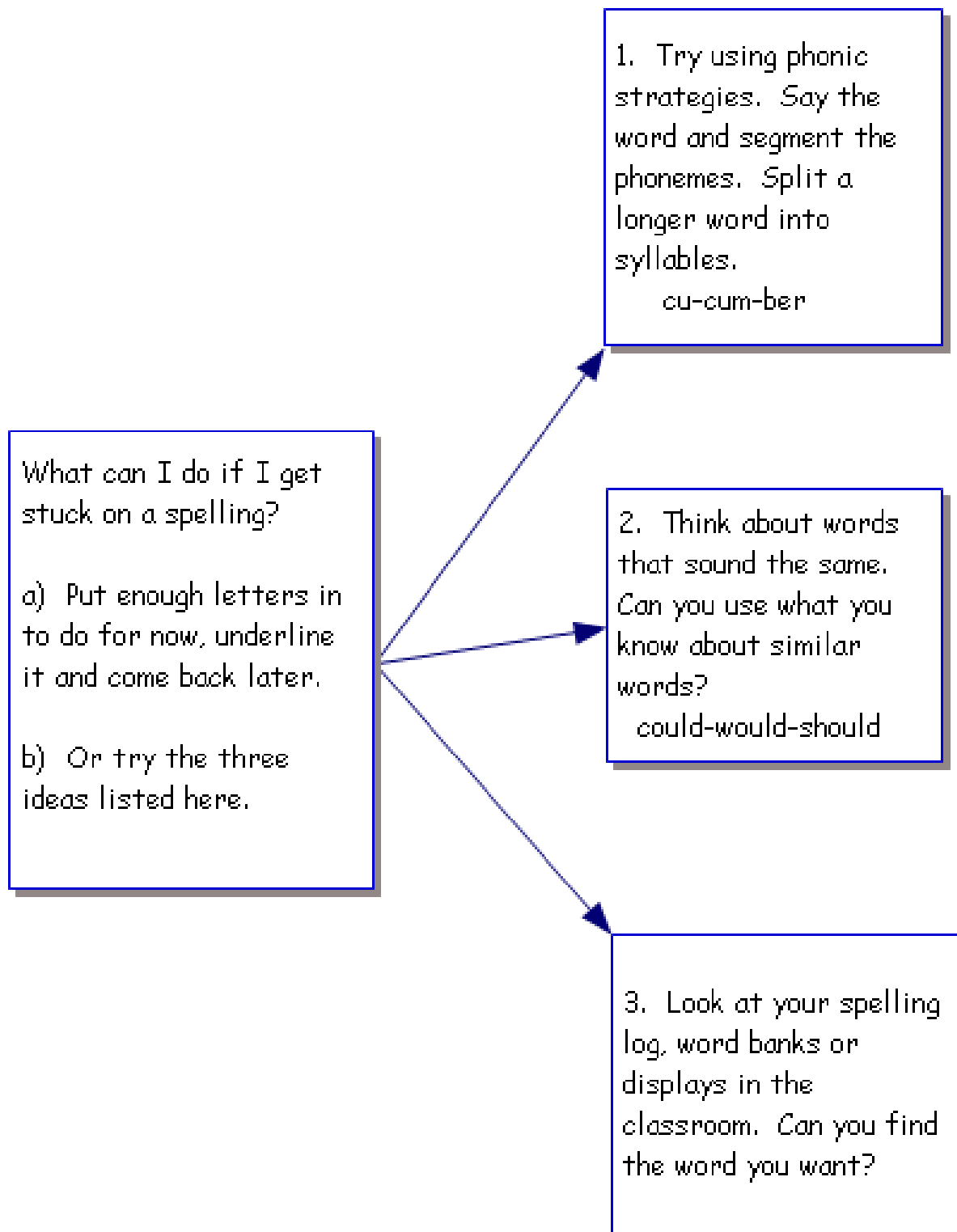
# Spelling

## Spelling High Frequency Words

- ❖ Use rainbow writing – write over the word in different coloured pens, pencils, crayons, etc. Your child should say each letter name out loud as he/she writes it, and the whole word each time he/she completes the word.
- ❖ Write in different media, e.g. sand, sugar
- ❖ Use simple mnemonics, e.g. for 'said' – **s**ave **a**nimals **i**n **d**anger
- ❖ Find words in words, e.g. 'hospital'
- ❖ Say the word as it is spelt, e.g. 'fri-end'
- ❖ Visualise (make a mental picture) of the word
- ❖ Make a spelling game:
  - Decide on six different ways to write the words: best handwriting, with left (or right) hand, using a special pen/pencil, on sandpaper, with eyes closed, on mum's back, on a 'magic slate', etc.
  - Assign each a number
  - Child rolls the die and spells the target word in the manner linked to that number



## What do I do if I can't spell a word?



## Study Skills

Suggest methods suited to your child's preferred learning strength:

Visual



Auditory



Tactile (kinaesthetic)



### Strategies for visual learning:

- Colourful displays
- Coloured paper, post it notes
- Colourful pens, highlighters
- Visualisation techniques
- Pictures, illustrations
- Mindmaps

### Strategies for auditory learning:

- Tape record own voice to listen to
- Mnemonics
- Discussions
- Rhymes
- Reciting information
- Explaining information to someone else

### Strategies for kinaesthetic learning:

- 'Real life' activities
- Role play
- Hands on experiences
- Writing out in own words
- Drama, plays
- Making things
- Games

# Homework

## General tips:

- Establish a predictable routine
- Allow 'down time'
- Allow your child to have some control over the time homework is done
- Find a quiet place and make sure pens and paper are readily available
- Make sure your child understands what he has to do. Talk through the task.
- When helping your child, keep your explanation as simple and practical as possible
- Be realistic
- Set a time frame for each subject. If set homework is not completed in time allowed, send a note to school explaining how much time has been spent on task
- Help your child to prioritise homework. Encourage him/her to tackle the hardest homework first
- Break it down into manageable chunks
- Negotiate with the class teacher:
  - Can you act as scribe?
  - Can the homework be word processed?
  - Can the homework be presented in an alternative format, e.g. timeline, diagram?
- Encourage your child to check his/her homework after a short break
- Once homework is completed, look at completed assignment together – each find 3 good things and 2 things that could be improved next time.

# Helen Arkell

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**At Helen Arkell, we are passionate about removing barriers to learning and life. We want to promote unsung skills, champion new ways of approaching life. We give people the tools they need to learn in their own way. We train dedicated professionals to inspire people to love learning. We help parents to nurture their children and employers to support their staff.**

**Together we inspire people to believe in themselves, achieve their goals and succeed on their own terms.**

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