

Antonyms around the Room

1. Two students stand next to each other.
2. The teacher calls out a word.
3. The first student to say the antonym for the word gets to move to the next person and try again.
4. This continues around the room.
5. The student that misses sits down in the seat of the person who answered correctly.

Heads and Tails with Word Wall and Other Words

1. The teacher begins by saying a word from the word wall.
2. The teacher then calls on someone to say a word that begins like the word ended.
3. This continues as students take turns playing this game.
4. Example: Teacher, "because". Student, "every". Student, "your". Student, "rode".

Word Charts

1. The teacher puts up blank charts.
2. During Word or Writing Block, the students help the teacher generate words to put on the chart.
3. The chart remains on the wall as long as it is appropriate. Some charts may stay up all year.
4. Examples include charts of seasonal words, theme words, or groupings such as pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, big words, compound words, etc.

Spelling Tag

1. A student tags another student and tells him/her a word to spell.
2. The student may choose to spell the word or to tag someone else.
3. If the student spells the word correctly, he/she tags the next player. If the student spells the word incorrectly, the person who tagged him/her tags someone else to try the same word.

Quick Spell

1. The teacher gives the word.
2. The teacher then points to a student to say the first letter of the word.
3. After the student says the letter, the teacher quickly points to another student to say the second letter.
4. This continues until the word is completely spelled.
5. Keep the activity going in a brisk manner.

Ghost Sticks

1. During times when students are trying to hear sounds in words, the teacher models stretching a word out slowly. The teacher says “ghost” very s-l-o-w-l-y.
2. Give the students a ghost cutout to remind them that they are to say the words they are having difficulty spelling very slowly.
3. Have the students to use the sticks to help them spell.
4. A variation of this game would be to stretch bubble gum or move slowly like a turtle.

Word Wheel

1. The teacher writes a category, prefix, suffix, part of speech, or root word in the center of the wheel.
2. During an appropriate time, the teacher and the students will generate words in that category.
3. The teacher prints the words in the spaces around the center of the wheel.

Cloning Around With Words

1. The graph is used to compare words.
2. Write any words on the graph, so the students can automatically start to see which ones have more letters.
3. They can practice concepts such as least, greatest, and the same.
4. They can add and subtract using the graph.
5. The teacher can also teach syllables with this graph, and it can also be used for endless other possibilities.

Spelling Banners

1. Give students one of the ending spelling change patterns such as “**y** to **i** and add **es**.”
2. Divide students into groups of 3-4 and see how many words they can brainstorm that follow the pattern.
3. The team with the most words may add them to a banner using brightly colored markers. Other teams may add any words they found that are not included by the winning team.
4. Other patterns include: “**y** to **i** and add **er/est**,” “drop **e** and add **-ing**” “double the **t** and add **-ing**.”

Reading/Writing Rhymes

1. Choose the spelling pattern you want to use.
2. Write the pattern at least 10 times on a chart.
3. Pass out the onset deck. *
4. The children bring the cards up and hold the beginning letters that make a word in front of the chart and say the word.
5. If they have letters that don't make a word, their card is given to the teacher.
6. The teacher may have to explain the meaning of some words.
7. Sometimes the beginning letters are right, but the word is spelled using another spelling pattern. These words are written at the end.
8. Write a silly rhyme with the children using several of these words.
9. Students can work individually or in groups to create other rhymes.

** Onset decks contain cards for all beginning sounds including blends, digraphs and **ph,wr,kn, and qu.***

Prefixes/Suffixes

1. Write 9 words that begin with a specific prefix or end with a specific suffix that has more than one meaning.
2. Have students group words by the meaning of the prefix or suffix. Use an additional column for words that do not fit the pattern.
3. For examples of words and charts for prefix/suffix meanings see pages 146-157 of Phonics They Use.

Using Words You Know

1. Show students 3-5 words they know. Have them spell and pronounce these words.
2. Divide your chart, board, or overhead into the correct number of columns so that each word appears at the top of one column.
3. Remind students that rhyming words usually have the same spelling pattern.
4. The students make a chart on their paper.
5. Show a word and have students write it in the column under the word with the same spelling pattern. Continue using additional words.
6. Now say some words, but do not show them to the students. Have students write these words in the appropriate column.
7. This lesson can be extended to 2 days by using longer words or compound words that have the same rhyming patterns on the second day.

Brand Name Phonics

1. This activity is similar to Using Words You Know except that environmental print is used to show the spelling patterns.
2. Examples include Burger King, Sprite, Dollar Tree Store, Wal-Mart, Slim Jim, Nations Bank, etc.

Rounding Up the Rhymes

1. You can use this activity after reading a story, book, or poem with lots of rhyming words.
2. As you read each page or two stop and have the children identify all of the rhyming words.
3. Write the words on index cards or on the overhead.
4. Children help to cross out or discard any rhyming pair that does not use the same spelling pattern.
5. Write other words that rhyme with the rhyming pairs and show these words to the children. Have them put the new word next to the ones that will help them figure out the new word.
6. Say a word you might want to write that follows the pattern of some of the words. Do not show the children the word. Have them identify the words it rhymes with and spell the new word.

I have... Who has...?

1. This activity can be used with Word Wall words, Nifty Thrifty Words, Lightning Words, or any vocabulary words.
2. The teacher writes, "I have _____ on the front of the card. Who has _____ on the back of the card."
3. A student begins by reading his/her card. The student who has the word that was called out says, "I have _____. Who has _____?"
4. The game continues until all the cards have been read.

Hinks Pinks

1. Hinks Pinks are rhyming pairs of words such as “pink ink, fake snake, string thing, fat cat.”
2. Children are asked a riddle such as “What is a four legged animal that eats lots of mice called?” **[Fat Cat]**
3. Make these riddles with word wall words, theme words, and/or other vocabulary words.
4. Have the students make an illustrated riddle book.
5. Students may want to create their own Hinks Pinks.

The Clue Review

1. This is a good activity to use to review many language arts skills.
2. The students number their papers from 1-5.
3. The teacher will give one or more clues for each word. For example: Lower grades – “This word is under the letter “p” and is the opposite of ugly (**pretty**). The second word has three syllables and is on red paper (**beautiful**).”
Upper grades – “The first word has a prefix that means ‘not’ and is a synonym for argue (**disagree**). The second word has a prefix, a suffix, and the same vowel sound that you hear in ‘more’ (**performance**).
4. **HINT:** If there are a lot of words on your word wall, give the students enough clues to be able to eliminate all but two choices.

What Looks Right?

1. Write two words on the board that have a vowel pattern that sounds the same but is spelled differently. (**all, awl**)
2. Discuss how these words are alike and different.
3. Make two columns on the board and head them with the words. Have the students make the same columns on their papers.
4. As you say words that have the pattern, write the word in both columns using the spelling pattern at the top of the column.
5. Students write the word that looks right to them in the correct column on their paper.
6. Verify the correct spelling by using a dictionary and cross out the incorrect spelling.
7. Review all words at the end and discuss how words sound the same but are spelled differently.
8. For example:

-eel	-eal
de eel	de a l
feel	fe a l

What's My Rule?

1. Write several words from the word wall on index cards and place them in a pocket chart.
2. Think of a rule that determines which words you will take out and which ones you leave.
3. Group the words together that follow the rule.
4. Have the students try to guess the rule.
5. When someone guesses the rule, pick another set of words with another rule in mind.
6. Examples of rules could include: compound words, words beginning or ending with a certain letter, same vowel sounds, same number of letters, etc.

Changing Hen to Fox

(from Second Grade Month-by-Month Phonics by Patricia Cunningham and Dorothy Hall
p.45-46)

1. The teacher writes key words on the board: **cat-hen-pig-fox-bug.**
2. Have the students say the words with you.
3. Call the students' attention to the beginning, middle, and ending sounds.
4. Ask the students if they can change hen to fox.
5. If the students follow the teacher's directions, they can.
6. "Write hen. Now, change hen to pen. Then, change pen to pet.
7. Can you change pet to pit? Then, change pit to sit. Next, change sit to six. Now change six to fix. Last, change fix to fox. If you have made these changes correctly, you have changed hen to fox!"

Mystery Words

(from Phonics They Use by Patricia Cunningham p.138-139)

1. This is a game in which students try to guess a mystery word, which has parts like two or three other clue words.
2. Divide the students into two teams.
3. Write a sentence on the board and include the clue words.
4. Read the sentence, and pronounce the clue words.
5. Each team may ask a question about the mystery word by using parts of the clue words.

Example: The restaurant was _____.

(dependable, excitement, impulsive)

S. – “Does the mystery word end like impulsive?”

T. - “Yes.” The teacher then writes –sive at the end of the word.

6. The game continues until a team can correctly pronounce the mystery word.
7. Each mystery word starts out being worth 10 points. Teams may continue to ask questions until they receive a “no” answer. The point value for the word then goes down by one point. A team is awarded the number of points the word is worth when it is correctly identified.

Opposite Riddles

1. After you have a good number of words up on the word wall, you should have a number of words that would have opposites.
2. Have the students number their papers from 1-5 and give them a riddle similar to this: “Word number one begins with the letter ‘**p**’ and is the opposite of **ugly**.”
3. Continue with four more riddles.

Wheel of Fortune

1. The teacher or a child picks a word from the word wall and draws lines on the board or overhead to indicate the correct number of letters in the word.
2. The students can guess vowels or consonants.
3. Correct letters are written in the lines and incorrect ones are listed over to one side.
4. A student **MUST** guess all the letters before saying the word.
5. There is one turn per person.

Theme and Word Wall Dictation

1. Each month make a chart of theme words for students to use in their writing.
2. The teacher will dictate one or two sentences that are made up of word wall and/or theme words.
3. The teacher repeats the sentence twice.
4. This is a good On-the-Back activity that improves reading, writing, and listening skills.

Be A Mind Reader

1. Have students number from one to five on a small piece of paper.
2. Write your word on paper, but do not tell the students what it is.
3. Students are given five clues in which to guess the word.
4. Each time a clue is given, students will write a word from the word wall that matches the clue.
5. They should be able to guess or “read your mind” before you get to the fifth clue.
6. For example:
 1. **“It is one of the words on the word wall.”** (This is always the first clue.)
 2. **“It has four letters.”**
 3. **“It begins with *th*.”**
 4. **“The vowel is *e*.”**
 5. **“It finishes the sentence ‘I gave my books to _____.’”**

Concentration

1. This game may be played in small groups or as a whole class activity.
2. Make sets of cards that include words and definitions, antonyms, synonyms, homonyms, or for younger children just two words that match.
3. Lay cards face down.
4. Students take turns turning over two cards at a time and trying to find matches.
5. Each time a player makes a match, he or she keeps the cards and takes another turn.
6. The player with the most cards wins.
7. In order to play this game with the whole class, place the desired number of words face down in a pocket chart.
8. Make number cards and place a number in front of each word.
9. One student calls out two numbers and the teacher turns over the cards behind these numbers. Play continues as before with students trying to match pairs.

A Ball Game

1. Prepare vocabulary cards using words from the word wall.
2. Have students form a large circle.
3. Show a vocabulary word and bounce the ball to a student.
4. When the student catches the ball, he/she pronounces the word and uses it in a sentence.
5. If the student does this correctly, he/she scores a point and bounces the ball to another student.
6. If the student can not do this, the word is placed back in the stack.
7. The teacher then displays and new vocabulary word and play continues.

Wordo

1. This is a variation of Bingo.
2. A grid with 9, 16, or 25 squares is used.
3. Students choose words from the word wall and write one word in each box.
4. The teacher shuffles the word wall cards and then calls out one word at a time.
5. Students can chant the spelling and cover the word if it on their card.
6. The student who is the first to complete a row is the winner.
7. Variations include choosing words from a select group or having students call out a word and everyone puts the word somewhere on his/her card.

Ruler Tap

1. Say a word and then use a ruler to tap out several letters in the word without saying the letters.
2. Have a student say the missing letters.
3. For example: The teacher would say “**t-a**” and tap the ruler twice.
The student would respond with **l-k**.
4. If the child correctly finishes spelling the word, that child gets to call out a word and tap some of the letters.

Build, Mix, Fix

1. The teacher calls out 5 words from the word wall one at a time. Students chant and write the words on paper as the teacher writes them on the board.
2. The teacher directs the class to **build** the first word with letter tiles/cards at their desks.
3. After all the students have the word built, the teacher directs the class to **mix** up the letters of the word.
4. Students are directed to **fix** the word by arranging the letters to spell the word.
5. Have students chant the word.
6. Continue with the remaining words.

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Tic-Tac-Toe

1. Draw a tic-tac-toe board on the board or overhead.
2. Choose two spelling patterns or word patterns you have been studying in class (i.e. **“at”** and **“an”**).
3. Have the students think of a word that has the pattern. Have a student tell you the word, spell it out loud, and then come and write it in a spot on the tic-tac-toe grid.
4. The teacher then takes her turn by writing a word that has her pattern on the grid.
5. Continue in this manner until someone has tic-tac-toe.

On-the-Back-Endings

1. Students number their papers from 1-5 on the back.
2. The teacher calls out a word that can have an ending added to it. (You may begin with just one ending per lesson and gradually add new endings when appropriate.)
3. Give the students a sentence using a word wall word with an ending. For example, “-ing– The girl is jumping rope. – jumping.” Students find jump on the word wall and write “jumping” on their papers.
4. Ask what word was used with an ending. Say the word and chant the spelling.
5. Continue with 4 additional words.
6. The teacher can choose to use 5 different words using the same ending or use one or two word wall base words and use multiple endings.
Looks, looking, looked, and eats, eating **OR**
Looking, making, running, riding, swimming
7. You may also include words that have tricky ending rules such as “drop the e,” change y to i,” “double the final consonant.”

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Sparkle

1. Students line up in one long line facing the teacher.
2. The teacher says the spelling word.
3. Students must listen carefully as each child says a letter of that word.
4. After the word is spelled, the next child says “**Sparkle**” and the child next to the child who says “**Sparkle**” then sits down.
5. If a student says the wrong letter, (s)he sits down and the spelling of the word starts over.
6. The last student standing is the winner.

Making Sentences

1. “Dictate a sentence using several of the word wall words:
Josh will come to my house to play.”
2. Students listen as you repeat the whole sentence.
3. Then repeat the sentence one word at a time, giving students plenty of time to find the words on the word wall and write them.”
4. Remind students of any grammar or capitalization rules that are necessary. (Be sure to include questions and exclamatory sentences. You may also want to use the names of your students in the sentences.)

On-the-Back-Rhymes

“The teacher says a sentence that contains a word that rhymes with one of the new word wall words and is spelled with the same pattern. Children must decide which word rhymes and how to spell it.

1. Students number their paper from 1-5.
2. The teacher gives the following clues for the lesson’s words.

Examples:

“**I like to talk.**” The word begins with a “t” and rhymes with walk. The students write “Talk” on their papers.

“**I have my book.**” The word begins with an “m” and rhymes with “by.” The students write “my” on their papers.

3. To check the answers, the teacher says the rhyming word and lets students say the word they wrote and chant its spelling.”

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Working with Words



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