

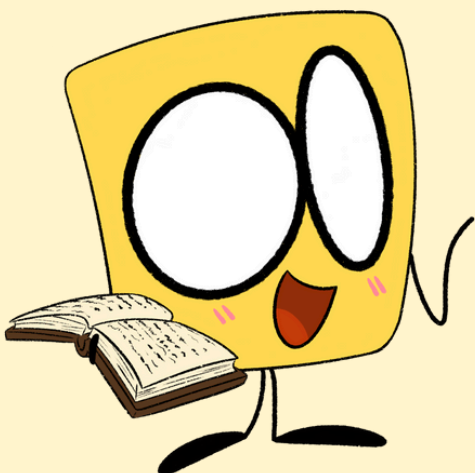


Sight Words

Words are made up of different shapes and squiggles. For example, an “O” looks like a circle, and a “T” is a straight line with a hat on top. Between the ages of about 3 and 8, children start noticing these shapes and learning what they mean as they get ready to read. For some people, reading can stay challenging because it’s hard to match those squiggles and shapes with the sounds they make.

A great first step is to point out how certain letters go together to make a word, without sounding the letters out. Having children notice the squiggles and lines can also be fun!

Some words are commonly found in books, and learning to recognize them by sight helps children become confident readers. These are called "sight words" because kids can identify them instantly, without needing to sound them out.



Learning to read involves two key skills: sounding out words and quickly recognizing familiar ones known as sight words. Knowing these sight words helps children to read more fluently, allowing them to focus on understanding the story rather than pausing to decode every word.

Below is a list of common sight words often used in schools to support children learning to read English, whether it's their first language or an additional one.

Dolch Sight Words

Beginner

a	I	a
and	in	and
away	is	away
big	it	big
blue	jump	blue
can	little	can
come	look	come
down	make	down
find	me	find
for	my	for
funny	not	funny
go	one	go
help	play	help
here	red	here

Beginner - Intermediate

all	get	pretty	want
am	good	ran	was
are	have	ride	well
at	he	saw	went
ate	into	say	what
be	like	she	white
black	must	so	who
brown	new	soon	will
but	no	that	with
came	now	there	yes
did	on	they	
do	our	this	
eat	out	too	
four	please	under	

Intermediate

after	has	put
again	her	round
an	him	some
any	his	stop
as	hers	take
ask	how	thank
by	just	them
could	know	then
every	let	thin
fly	live	walk
from	may	were
give	of	when
going	old	
had	once	

Intermediate - Advanced

always	gave	these
around	goes	those
because	green	upon
been	its	us
before	made	use
best	many	very
both	off	wash
buy	or	which
call	pull	why
cold	read	wish
does	right	work
don't	Sing	would
fast	sit	write
first	sleep	your
five	tell	
found	their	

Advanced

about	grow	own
better	hold	pick
bring	hot	seven
carry	hurt	shall
clean	if	show
cut	keep	six
done	kind	small
draw	laugh	start
drink	light	ten
eight	long	today
fall	much	together
far	myself	try
full	never	warm
got	only	

Bliss, S. L., Skinner, C. H., & Adams, R. (2006). Enhancing an English Language Learning Fifth-Grade Student's Sight-Word Reading with a Time-Delay Taped-Words Intervention. *School Psychology Review*, 35(4), 663–670.

This study describes a method for using the Dolch words with a student who is learning English as an additional language.

Ehri, L. C. (2020). The science of learning to read words: A case for systematic phonics instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 55(60). <https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.334>

"Building a store of sight words that can be read as single units from memory automatically . . . allows readers to focus their attention on the meaning of the text while words are recognized automatically out of awareness" (pp. 55-56).

Lowe, A. J., & Follman, J. (1974). Comparison of the Dolch List with other word lists. *Reading Teacher*, 28(1), 40–44.

This classic study from Reading Teacher shows the history of the Dolch sight word list in comparison to other lists, and how it does not really matter what list is used to start children on their reading journey.