

FUN ACTIVITIES!

Naming Activity (*focus on vocabulary development*)

- ★ Ask your tutee to make a list of everything he can see from where he sits, while you do the same.
- ★ Compare notes when time is up, and cross off any objects on both lists.
- ★ Give each player a point for every object that does not appear on another player's list.
- ★ The child will most likely choose the most obvious objects. In order to give him a chance, begin your list with things that he may not focus on immediately or may not know the name of—i.e., ventilator, hinge, clasp, etc.

Notes: This can be a great activity for kids who are competitive; if your student isn't very competitive, focus on collaborating and making the list together. To make it more challenging, you can add new adjectives to your lists of nouns and have your student try to define them.

Creative Brainstorming (*focus on writing*)

- ★ Show the child the item. Have the child take a few minutes to think of creative uses for this item.
- ★ For example, a comb might be a musical instrument (by strumming the teeth); a fork might be a comb or a back-scratcher, etc. The idea is to come up with a number of "new" ideas for the object.
- ★ Use one of the ideas to create a story.
- ★ If your student really enjoyed the activity, invite her to bring an object from home for the next session.

Notes: This is a great activity for kids who have big imaginations and like to chatter. Focus on getting them to put their great ideas down on paper. Take turns writing sentences if your student is reluctant to write.

Make A Book (*focus on any word classification*)

- ★ Choose a group of words to make a book about with your student (rhyming words, homophones, synonyms, words with silent letters, etc.) Together, brainstorm some words.
- ★ Make a small book by folding and stapling pieces of paper together.
- ★ On each page, write out the words you brainstormed, along with illustrations, and sentences using each word.
- ★ Keep the book on hand. When new words in the category come up in conversation or reading, your student can add it to the book.

Notes: This is a great way to reinforce a specific skill. Use the chance to draw as a motivator to get your student to write!

Word Chains (*focus on sounds*)

- ★ Begin by saying a word aloud (you or the tutee can go first).
- ★ The next player says a word that starts with the last *sound* of the first player's word.
- ★ The next person begins his word with the last one's ending sound.
- ★ Take turns making words, following this pattern. For example, *cat — ton — nut — take — cane — nothing*, etc. Note that *cane* begins with a hard /c/ sound and it fits the pattern because *take* ends with a hard /c/ sound. The e is silent. Focus on the last *sound* heard in the word rather than the last *letter*.

Notes: Great for kids who are auditory learners, or are struggling with phonemic awareness and different sounds. You can modify this to make it a written game as well.

I'm Going on a Trip (*focus on word classifications,, vocabulary, etc.*)

- ★ Begin with the phrase, *I'm going on a trip and I'm going to pack...* Each player decides how to finish the sentence. Pick a clapping rhythm to engage antsy students.
- ★ The first player might begin: *I'm going on a trip and I'm going to pack a book.*
- ★ The second player repeats the phrase and adds an item of her own: *I'm going on a trip and I'm going to pack a book and a lizard.*
- ★ Continue, with each player repeating all the previous items and adding something to the list until someone makes a mistake. If you like, pick a theme, such as animals, sports, or another category of interest to the student. Or pick a part of speech, homophones, synonyms, antonyms, etc.

Notes: Great for vocabulary development and practice with sequencing. If it seems too simple for your student, make it a writing activity.

Change a Letter (*focus on phonics*)

- ★ Begin by choosing a four-letter word, writing it on a piece of paper and reading it aloud.
- ★ Have the child make a new word by only changing *one* letter of the word. For example: *real* can be changed to *deal*. The child writes the word under your word and says it aloud.
- ★ The student then makes a new word based on the one she just created, again changing only one letter. *Deal* can be changed to *dear*.

Notes: Keep this activity quick-moving by taking turns making the new words. If necessary, prompt your student by covering a letter and asking them to go through the alphabet.

Silent Conversation (*focus on writing*)

- ★ Explain to your tutee that for the next 3 minutes you will have a conversation in writing *and no one is allowed to talk*. The only way to communicate is to write back and forth to each other.
- ★ Set a timer for 3 minutes and begin the conversation with your tutee. If you notice the child has difficulty reading one of your words, help him through written prompts. Take the silence seriously!
- ★ Continue the written conversation until the timer goes off.

Notes: Don't focus as much on your student's spelling as having a conversation that is engaging and interesting.

Pair Writing (*focus on writing*)

- ★ Ask your tutee to choose a number between one and ten.
- ★ The first person starts a story, writing as many words as the number you have chosen. For example, if you chose the number four, you can only write four words each time.
- ★ The next person starts where the last player left off. For example, the first writer begins, *The great, green, slimy...* The second writer adds the next four words, such as *alien drank from the...*
- ★ Continue writing together until you agree the story is complete.

Note: This is a great activity for reluctant writers. Encourage your student to be silly!

Action Spelling (*focus on spelling and letter classifications*)

- ★ Get your student to bring in her spelling words, or use words that she struggled reading.
- ★ Stand up, and quiz your student on her words, asking her to clap whenever she says a vowel and kick for consonants.

Note: You can vary this activity by making up different gestures for each letter – jumping jack for *j*, head nod for *h*, etc. This would be a bit more complicated, so try practicing the same word over and over again.