

Tricky Words

Tricky words cannot be sounded out easily. They are common words that have complex spellings in them.

Tricky words are normally taught in an order which is based upon a mixture of their relative simplicity (with easier words at the start of the list), and also of their frequency in the English language. Children learning the most common words such as 'I, no, to, the, go, into, he, she, we, me, be, you, are, her, was, all, they, my' etc.

Flashcards are one of the best ways to teach tricky words, as learning to read these words is all about memory and recognition more than anything else. However, below are a range of games to make it more exciting:

- **Beat the clock!** How many words can you read before the timer stops?
- **Snap!** This is a 'tricky word' version of the classic card game. Have lots of flashcards of a few 'tricky' words and deal out the pack between the players. Take turns to put one card on the table and say what the card says. Then the next player puts one on top, and says it. Continue until you get two the same, and the winner is the person who puts their hand on them first and shouts 'Snap!'
- **Tricky word domino game.** Have some tricky words with domino spots on the back. One child rolls the dice, and then picks up a domino with that number of spots on. They try to read what the tricky word says.
- **Tricky word car park.** On a piece of card/cardboard create a track with a tricky word car park. As your child parks the cars up, they have to read the tricky word in the parking space.
- **Tricky word bingo.** Each player to have a bingo board with tricky words on. There is then a pot of 'tricky' word flashcards in the middle of the table. Take it in turns to pick a flashcard out of the pot, try to read it

and then see if they have it on their board. If they do, then they place it on the word. If not, they put it back. The winner is the first person to fill their board.

- **Splat the word!** Have the tricky words written onto a piece of paper. Say one of the words to your child where they have to find the word and 'splat' it with either their hand, a wooden spoon, a spatula etc.
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