

HOW TO KEEP A STUDENT ENGAGED IN THE LEARNING PROCESS

(submitted by Stephanie Trees, OG Tutor)

Engagement is probably one of the most difficult parts of the learning journey for students and teachers. When a student is not engaged in their learning it can stall the lesson and the learning process. So, how do we keep a student engaged and the lesson moving? I have a few strategies that I use to help. I use a timer for work and break time. I let the student dictate when to take breaks. Both of those are great and keep the lesson moving. However, the one that gives the most bang for its buck and keeps the learning moving are multisensory activities.



Facilitating the O.G. approach which is multisensory in nature, lends itself to using these types of activities to keep students engaged. So, I really lean into those activities to keep the learning progressing. The activities don't have to be elaborate. The ones I suggest and I use often are simple to implement and require very little preparation.

There are three activities that I use often. The first one is simply using a highlighter in a color of the child's choosing to highlight the skill or spelling pattern. For example, the student is working on vowel teams ai and ay and they highlight those teams before they read each word. The students love to use highlighters, especially in cool colors and it gets the job done.

The second activity I use often is a word or skill sort. This can be part of the word reading portion of the lesson. The student can pick 2 colors to use to sort the words by skill or by syllabication. For example, Rabbit Rule vs Tiger Rule. The student would sort how they decode 2 syllable words (or more) based on syllabication rules. I use this one usually as a culminating activity to make sure the student has internalized these rules.

The third multisensory activity that I use are games. Let's face it, games are a fun way to hide learning. Games do not need to be pre-fab or expensive. Memory, Follow the Path or Snakes and Ladders style games can be made easily just on paper.

Working with students at varying ages and levels keeps you on your toes, especially when it comes to engagement. Feel out your students and get them involved with what they like or need to keep them engaged in their learning. The multisensory process not only serves as a function to help students hold onto information. It also engages a student with their learning; therefore, leaning into the multisensory activities helps to keep the engagement level up.

Scan the QR Code for game templates:



January 2 - Office Hours Resume.
 January 6 - OG cohort training; no tutoring sessions.
 January 15 - Office Closed.



During the month of January, students will combine their scavenger hunting abilities with their knowledge of syllable types in the following fun activity: Students will be asked to:

1. Search for a hidden snowman.
2. Read the word on your snowman.
3. Tell what syllable type your word is.
4. Tape your snowman on the window under the correct syllable type.

Have fun!



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: ANTHONY

(submitted by Gayle, OG Trainee)

Anthony is 7 years old and in the second grade. He is a smart, funny, and hard-working guy who always has a great haircut. He tries hard and never gives up. Anthony is an excellent artist, talented Lego builder, and has beautiful handwriting. He loves reading, writing, and creating sentences, but I think he has the most fun making words with the blending cards. I always look forward to our time together playing Tic Tac Toe, drawing on the black board, and playing Zoom Ball. Sometimes, Anthony even brings a friend or two, Max the dog and Jingles the Elf. I'm starting to think that one night Anthony is going to wake up and catch Max and Jingles reading his books. It is so exciting to see how much Anthony has grown during our time together. I feel so lucky to have Anthony as my student.



Who is your favorite superhero?

Batman. I was Batman for Halloween and I got to ride to school in the real bat mobile.

What is your favorite subject in school?

Math and Art.

What is your favorite thing to eat for dinner?

Pizza with cheese in the crust.

What is your favorite treat when you finish tutoring?

Pop Rocks!

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: ELISABET

(submitted by Susanna, OG Trainee)

Elisabet is a friendly and hardworking girl. She comes to every session ready to learn. Elisabet's kindness can be seen in all of her actions. She is consistently helping me find what I am missing during our Spot It games and she regularly takes her prizes for her friends and family. Elisabet has been working so hard and she has shown a great deal of progress. I am so proud of Elisabet.

What is your favorite holiday?

Christmas! Then I can play Secret Santa, White Elephant, and get more gifts. Plus it's fun!

What do you want to be when you grow up?

I think an artist or a nail polish girl. I like that I can paint nails and I like painting things.

If you could have a super power, what would it be?

I would fast forward time and skip time. In case I didn't know a math question, I would look at a calculator and write it down.

What is your favorite animal and why?

I like peacocks, or different types of birds. Peacocks are beautiful and birds are nice. I have chickens at home.

What is an important thing you have learned at tutoring?

I have learned about writing cursive. When I grow up and I have to pay, I can write my signature.



WRIGHTS LAW: ALL ABOUT TESTS AND ASSESSMENTS, BY MELISSA LEE FARRALL, PAMELA DARR WRIGHT, AND PETER W.D. WRIGHT

(submitted by Karen Micciche, Executive Director)

This book is a comprehensive guide for parents (and professionals) that is organized into categories by question. Essentially, it's like a giant FAQ guide for cognitive and academic assessments, and to be honest, as a parent of two dyslexic children, I wish I'd read it much sooner.

Assessments have always been kind of a mystery to me. While I can certainly pull apart and interpret assessments of other people's children, when it came to my own, I really didn't know how to advocate for them or what to ask for. This book offers information from the very first step (how to request an evaluation) and intentionally demystifies each of the tests so that parents can understand not only their scores, but their functional implications, and can then use this knowledge to make informed decisions regarding treatment for their children both inside and outside of school. Knowledge is power, and the information offered in this book about each test can make all the difference in how parents are treated in CSE meetings, how influential they can be in the IEP process, and more.

By this point, I've read and learned quite a bit about various testing instruments. What was different about this book, and what I consequently found the most interesting, was the second chapter regarding evaluations by the school. Since my girls don't go to public school and since I have never had them tested at all, the evaluation process vis a vis districts has always been something of an anomaly for me.

I found it very interesting how the authors weave in information about federal laws and mandates (which is obviously their forte) to explain why school districts offer testing. They offer in this chapter a sample letter that parents can use to request an evaluation from the district, and they explain the process of consent and authorization. They go on to explain what observations will entail, as well as what is involved in the evaluation report. Lastly, they explain how placement in a special education program is determined.

