MindBuilders

Training transforms learning AND lives



# **SUMMER FUN**

**READING**

READ ALOUD HANDBOOK

Jim Trelease

READ FOR THE HEART

Sarah Clarkson

READ ALOUD REVIVAL with Sarah MacKenzie

Website: readaloudrevival.com

There are podcasts, book lists, and blogs. Interesting and informative. An index is provided on each podcast so you can easily go to your topic of interest. The recommended book lists are excellent.

TO IMPROVE READING FLUENCY, DECODING AND COMPREHENSION:

Listen to a book on tape while you follow along with the book. Libraries have these in teen sections/children’s sections/adult sections.

Read aloud into a tape recorder and listen to your voice reading.

Listen to audio books on tape/CDs while driving or settling down before sleep.

The goal is to enjoy reading, so read anything: magazines, a series on a favorite topic (ask librarians for ideas) book club as a family, books on tape on family trips, etc.

Have books in your house. A study showed that children with most interest in reading came from homes where books and print were spread throughout the house. Put a basket with books in bathroom, in kitchen by table, and other places where books are easily accessible. Add a reading lamp in child’s bedroom. Explain that they can stay up 15 minutes (or longer, depending on child’s age) and read in bed. Light goes off if they do not want to read.

MAKE A BUBBLE TENT – A cool place to read. Use a lightweight king size duvet cover. 1. Plug in a box fan and turn it on.

2. Place the fan in the duvet opening and let it blow up the “bubble tent”.

3. Put a bunch of pillows inside and play, read or take a nap in a nice cool place.

GAMES THAT HELP WITH READING COMPREHENSION**:**

* **“Rummy Roots” game**. Ages 8 to adult. \* This also helps with spelling.
  + Teaches 42 Greek and Latin Roots
  + Increases Word understanding
  + Improves Dictionary Competency

\*When you first start playing, use the Pre-Rummy rules. The purpose is to learn the Greek or Latin Roots and know their English meaning.

* **Tapple**: Award winning. Fast paced word game. Several variations. Ages 8+
* **Scrabble** this word-building game also builds math skills. Players strategize high point letter tiles to use on the board in just the right places. Tip: Try Bananagrams, Wordical, or Quiddler which are all spinoffs of the classic Scrabble game.
* **Apples to Apples Junior**
  + Ages: 9+ (younger strong readers could also play)  
    There are two stacks of cards. The green set contains descriptive words such as kind, cool, and bold. The red set contains people, places, things, and events. Each round, players choose the best red card from their hand to compliment the green card word. The judge selects the favorite played card as the winner of the round.

Tip: Use the blank cards that come with the game to add vocabulary words your kids are currently studying.

**LEARNING WEBSITES**:

Ppld.org – Pikes Peak Library has tremendous resources

FreeRice.com – varied subjects by level – for each correct answer they donate 10 grains of rice to beat world hunger.

Math - Multiplication.com

Funbrain.com – Math and Reading Games by grade level

Kahn Academy – for explanation on a wide variety of topics

**LOGIC AND REASONING**:

The Critical Thinking Company: www.criticalthinking.org

Brain Benders - workbooks you can buy online or at Mardels

You can subscribe to free weekly puzzles on their website.

All their materials are excellent.

**GAMES:**

**Tangrams** - develop problem-solving and logical thinking skills, perceptual reasoning, creativity, and math concepts. You can buy them or here is a website where you can make your own.

<https://www.education.com/slideshow/tangrams/>

**Shape by Shape** (Think Fun) This is an advanced tangram pattern game, made more difficult because you also fill in the frame around each shape you make.

**Rush Hour** – a sliding block logic game, you must battle the gridlock as you slide the blocking vehicles out of the way for the red car to exit. \*this is a favorite of a lot of my students.

**Tipover** – Conceptual and strategic. This game introduces players to spatial relationships along with sequential reasoning.

**Block by Block** – Creative Building game. Expands your spatial problem-solving skills as you combine seven puzzle pieces to construct three-dimensional structures depicted on challenge cards. Ages 8 to adult

**The Set Game** – This helps with logic and reasoning and processing speed.

Learning level: Player identifies “sets” of three cards. Three cards are considered a set when each feature (number, color, shape, and shading) is either the same on each card and/or different on each card. First level is to just make sets with solid cards until player understands the concept of how to make sets. (helps to lay down two cards and ask what do I need to make a set?) Then add the timer, lay out nine cards and make sets with solid cards.

When the player can make 7 sets within 90 seconds, add in all the cards, and lay out 12 cards at a time.

**Blink** – helps with processing speed and verbal expression.

Variation: student plays against himself. Put two cards face up, stack remaining cards face down and draw three cards for your hand. Player uses a card from his hand placing it on a card that matches either shape, color, or number. He has to say which characteristic (shape, color, or number) he is matching. Use a stopwatch to time how long it takes for him to go through the entire deck of cards. Then, do it again seeing if he can ‘beat his time’. He is competing with himself. When he can do all of them in two and a half minutes, then he can play “war” with someone else. For this, divide the cards in half, put two cards face up. Playing the same as described above (saying what characteristic being matched) the person who gets rid of all their cards first is winner. Note – sometimes there is not a match and you just have to take another card from the pile.

**Jigsaw Puzzles** – helps with memory visualization and logic and reasoning

**Flash Card Games** like math, war, or concentration help with computation and memory skills. Just doing this for a few minutes gives an esteem boost of a solved problem.

**Mobi Math Tiles Game** – Fast paced number tile game. The goal is to make simple math equations as quickly as possible. Ages 6-10.

**Treasure Hunt**: The Treasure Hunt Book (Klutz) Paperback

**Cup Stacking**: (also called sport **stacking**) is a recognized sport, with competitions and tournaments held all over the world. Players compete to **stack cups** in specific patterns at top speed.  The cups are specially designed to allow for speedier times.

**TRAVEL GAMES:**

“**I’m going on a trip** and I’m taking” …. each person adds an item, and the next person repeats that item and adds an item to it, keep going until someone cannot repeat the entire list.

**The Sign Game:**

• This is NOT the road sign game; you name things in alphabetical order from a category

**The Rules:**

• You start with a category like food, bands, cars, etc.

• You start with A and travel down the alphabet

• You can get as specific with your categories as you want

**CREATIVITY**:

**Rube Goldberg Puzzles** – look this up on You Tube and view some of the creations. Here is one to get you started: Rube Goldberg – **Joseph’s Machines** on You Tube.

Rube Goldberg: a comically involved, complicated invention, laboriously contrived to perform a simple operation. ~Webster’s New World Dictionary

What I love so much about these machines is that they are all about learning in a non-traditional manner and they are just so much fun!

**Robotics** – many different ideas, depending on kid’s age. There are many beginner videos on You Tube explaining how to start.

**Crafts** – There are a variety of classes at Joann Fabrics, Michaels, and Hobby Lobby. There are also videos on You Tube teaching many different crafts – knitting, crochet, cross stitch, embroidery, etc.

**Science Experiments**: The Everything Kids’ Science Experiments Book: Boil Ice, Float Water, Measure gravity- Challenge the World Around You! Paperback

**Outdoor Craft Station**: Paint outdoors

**EXPLORE THE OUTDOORS**:

APP FOR YOUR PHONE: ALL TRAILS - find your perfect hike or bike trail. Filter by length, rating, and difficulty level. Easily find dog or kid-friendly trails. When you are hiking or riding a trail, the app shows you where you are on the trail.

There are spaces and places to learn all around you. Check out library programs, zoos, parks, or museums to explore new interests. Talk about what you want to learn and what you enjoyed during your visit. This is a powerful way to bond and learn together as a family.

Nature Scavenger Hunt: <https://buggyandbuddy.com/30-free-printable-scavenger-hunts-for-kids/>. Or just go on a walk and bring a simple plant identification key along. Try to identify plants you see.

**IN THE KITCHEN**: Involve the kids in cooking process by measuring ingredients, reading recipes, watching the stove timer, or dividing up portions for dinner. Older children can plan menus, grocery list and budget.

Countless books at the library for cooking with kids. Websites with videos on specific recipes. Food Network, All recipes.

**IDEAS TO INCORPORATE LEARNING IN DAILY ROUTINES**:

While you are waiting in line at the store, amusement park, etc. create word problems about what you see around you. (For example, there are eight cars on the roller coaster and each car fits four people. How many people can ride at once? Or, there are four cashiers, how many people are standing in each line? What is the total number of people ready to check out?)

Do math at the grocery store. Figure out which buy is better. Estimate how much all the groceries in the cart will cost. Find the difference between the estimate and the actual cost.

Do math at the gas station. Round gas per gallon prices to the nearest tenth. Estimate how much filling your tank will cost.

Kids learn when engaged in an activity. Whether at a baseball game, a museum, or park you can discuss strategy at the game or talk about favorite parts of museum exhibits. They can read everything everywhere – cereal boxes, menus, recipes, and signs as they go about their activities.

Go bowling, but do not use the computer to score. Instead, have your child score manually using a score sheet that you print out from online. Play miniature golf and have your child keep track of scores.

**BRAIN INTEGRATION**

Summer is an opportune time to schedule Brain Integration for your student. Everyone can benefit as it helps the brain to work as a whole instead of in parts. Following is a description of a session. If you would like more information, please call, or email.

**This therapy provides profound shifts in your personal effectiveness. Some of the results are relaxation, higher energy, more easeful seeing, hearing, writing, and learning.**

Each session begins with the therapist quickly evaluating brain wiring to determine where it is weak and/or strong. A new task is focused on each week. Tasks include tracking across pages, tracking up and down on the page, hearing and remembering. Progression to new tasks does not begin until the last task tests are strong.

**Step One** in each session focuses on a particular task and how the brain and body function in relation to that activity.  **A quick example:** tracking a pencil side to side, 18 inches from the face.  This tests if the client tracks easily from side to side when reading.  When the eyes work together, both sides of the brain are engaged in processes like reading.

**Step Two:** the client makes an affirmation.  **For example**, the client will make a statement such as, "*My eyes work well together when I read.*"  The statement creates an objective for the body and brain to achieve.

**Step Three**: checking whether the affirmation is true or false.   Does the client have adequate neurological wiring to do the task easily and automatically, or is the student literally switching from eye to eye when reading?   Muscle checking (kinesiology) determines what the body and brain believe about the affirmation. If the body is integrated for the task the muscle check will be strong.  If the brain and body are not integrated, the muscle check will be weak.

Based on the muscle check, the therapist asks the client to do specific exercises.  **For example,** the client may march in place, touching the right hand to the left knee and vice versa, looking up and to the left. This is referred to as the ***cross crawl*** which activates both sides of the brain at the same time.  Having the eyes look to a certain place selectively activates the brain for that given activity.

After performing the activity, additional checks determine how the body and brain are learning from the activity.  When checks show movement in the desired direction, the therapist can then move on to another task.

**Brain Integration** is very efficient. Generally, re-patterning for a certain task occurs once.  Repetition is necessary for the success of the process, however. Approximately 10 weeks, make patterns permanent. Each session builds upon the previous. Clients experiencing the greatest success have faithfully worked on supplemental exercises at home and make weekly appointments. Exercises also help eliminate the ***fight or flight response*** which can hinder new learning.

When clients have the right level of success the right number of times a learning pattern is programmed in the brain which enables more effective learning and expression.