Practice Reading with Newspaper "Highlights"

Teachers are always trying to make their classrooms into “print-rich” environments. Charts and posters, lists and how-to guides, calendars and graphs, books and magazines, and labels galore help to make the first grade classroom a place where children have ample opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills.

Your home can be a print-rich environment, too, without covering the walls with posters and charts. Think about the sources of print you rely on in your home every day. The newspaper, for example, is a literacy treasure trove. Here's how to use it to help your first grader see how all those sight words in school are real-life tools

What You Need:

- Daily newspaper
- Highlighter
- Calendar
- Pencil

What You Do:

1. Introduce the newspaper and a highlighter to your first grader and you’ve got daily literacy practice at your fingertips! First show your child how to use a highlighter. Explain that you need to swipe, rather than color, with this special tool, and it makes words appear brighter than the other words around them.
2. Now explain that even though the newspaper is full of teeny print, a first grader has still learned words that are all over the page. Pretty grownup stuff, if you think about it!
3. Next, pick a literacy skill of focus for the day. Perhaps your child is working on a sight word this week, such as “they.” Have him search through the newspaper and highlight the word “they” as often as he can find it.
4. Count the number of times he swiped the word, and write it on the calendar for today.
5. The next day, choose a different skill or focus. Perhaps today, he’ll look for all the words he can find that start with the same letter as “Wednesday.” Again, mark the total count on the calendar.
6. You’ll want to set a weekly goal for your child and write it on the calendar beside the week. At the end of the week, tally up the total number on the calendar. If he has reached his goal, reward him for his efforts. Take him out for ice cream or a movie. It will be the “highlight” of his day!

© Copyright 2006-2012 Education.com All Rights Reserved.