

On Vacation. . . But Not From Learning!

Vacation is about relaxing and reconnecting with those we love. Playing games together as a family is one way to spend quality time together while reinforcing learning concepts. Children love playing games and even simple homemade ones offer many opportunities for linking learning with fun! Remember, the goal of the following games is to read and practice as many words or skills as possible.

CONCENTRATION

Make two sets of identical flashcards with plain backs (about the size of “real” playing cards). In large, bold, lower case letters, write common words, days of the week, months, colors, or number words.* Remember to start “day” and “month” words with capitals.

Small youngsters might want to start with four or five card pairs; older children can handle ten to fifteen pairs. Place all the cards “face down” in rows on the floor or table. The first player turns over a card and reads the word, definition, prefix or number sentence*. After it is correctly read, the card remains in place “face side up.” (A reading referee or coach can help make sure words and numbers are pronounced correctly.) Next, the same player, trying to find a matching card, chooses another card, reads it, and keeps the pair if it is a match. If the card is not a match, it is replaced, face down, *in its original place*. Players finding matched cards may immediately take another turn.

The goal is to collect as many matching pairs as possible. As a review, require the “winner” to read aloud all of the pairs.

GO FISH!

Go Fish can be played with the same word pairs made for **Concentration**. Each player is dealt four to seven cards (depending on the total number of players and ability to handle the cards). The remaining cards are placed face down in a pile. The players take turns asking each other for a card. When a player cannot deliver a requested card, the requester takes one card from the “Go Fish” pile. Continue the game until there aren’t any cards left in the pile and in a player’s hand. The player with the most cards wins. Remember to review.

BEAT THE CLOCK

Time your child reading aloud a stack of ten flash cards. Ask him or her to reread the pile, trying to decrease the time. Make new challenging trials by shuffling the cards or adding more difficult words.

Have a great summer and remember: *the family that plays together, learns together.*

* Other ideas to use for matching card pairs: new vocabulary words and their definitions, spelling words, synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, words with matching abbreviations; prefixes/suffixes with definitions, coins/values, clock face/digital time,numerals/number words, number sentences paired with answers ($2+6= (8)$).

