



Tricks of the Trade

We know that children with below average language skills often have difficulty learning to read. Researchers have found that there **are 5 factors at Kindergarten age that can predict reading ability in second grade**. They are: **letter identification, sentence imitation, phonologic awareness, rapid naming and mothers educational attainment**. Below are some tricks for you to try at home to help your child improve his reading ability.

1. **“Do These Words Rhyme?”**: Simple and easy to play! Simply ask your child whether certain words rhyme and track points for correct answers. For example: “Does **bat** rhyme with **pat**?” “Does **sheep** rhyme with **park**?” “Does **foot** rhyme with **feet**?” and so on. If he answers correctly, he receives a point. Then, it is his turn to ask YOU if words rhyme. The first player to 10 points wins!
2. **“First Sound/Final Sound”**: Ask your child to tell you the first sound he hears in a word. For example, ask him to tell you the **first sound** he hears in the word **‘baseball’** /b/, /ch/ or /k/. If he answers correctly he earns a point. Next, have him come up with a word and you tell him the initial sound. First player to 10 wins! You can play this game with final sounds as well. For example, ask him to tell you the **final sound** in the word **‘snap’** /p/, /r/ or /d/. This game will help your child learn to decode sounds in words—a key component to reading readiness.
3. **“Clapping for Syllables”**: Play a clapping game with your child to teach him to identify words in sentences and syllables in words. Here’s how it works: read a sentence to your child. Ask him to **repeat it** back to you while **clapping once for each word**. For example the sentence **“Read your book” would require 3 claps**. Similarly, to practice syllable identification you can say different words and have your child **clap for each syllable**. An example of this would be **clapping 2 times for ‘baby’, 4 times for ‘alligator’**. When you have successfully completed 10 words you can have reward!





MEET YOUR THERAPIST

ALISON SHIMKO

Alison Shimko grew up in Hillsborough, New Jersey. Drawn by her love of the outdoors, Alison moved to Salt Lake City to attend the **University of Utah** where she studied Speech-Language Pathology and Spanish. Following graduation from her undergraduate program, she moved to Spain on a Fulbright Scholarship to teach English to elementary school children. She returned from Spain to complete a Master's Degree in Speech Pathology at the **University of Washington**.

Alison has always had a special interest in helping others and was drawn to speech-language pathology as a career after watching her mother's successful career as an SLP in a New Jersey school. Alison grew up learning the tricks of the trade from her mother and works to implement those early memories of how to elicit sounds from kids in her daily speech sessions.

Upon graduation from the University of Washington, Alison returned to Salt Lake because she couldn't resist the **mountains**. She is currently completing her clinical fellowship through **RiteCare of Utah** and is excited to be working with an amazing team of therapists and awesome kids!

Thank you to our 2021 Donors

We had an exciting and productive year at RiteCare of Utah! Thanks to all of our donors, RiteCare's therapists were able to complete over **2200 visits** with children from *your community* with speech, language and reading delays. You are impacting countless lives and ensuring children have the best **opportunity for success** in school and life. The profoundness with which you impact lives is evident when parents say things like "I feel like I have learned to maximize our practice time into a process that is more engaging for my son" and "**we are blown away at how much progress our daughter has made thanks to RiteCare.**"

I thank each of you for making this program possible!

Sarah Farr

Executive Director, RiteCare of Utah

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Society grows great when we plant trees in whose shade we know we shall never sit. -Greek Proverb