

Quick Guide

10 Tips for Reaching Your Struggling Learner

A struggling learner has to work harder than other children to accomplish the same task or learn the same thing. The child may be a year or more behind grade level in one area or in all subjects. Interestingly, a struggling learner may be gifted in some areas, such as a child who is amazing with math but does not read.



Luckily, there are very specific teaching methods that can help your struggling learner succeed. Check out these ten tips to learn how to use these methods effectively.

1

Teach through Direct Instruction

Direct instruction is a proven method in which the child is taught exactly what he needs to learn. The explicit teaching of language rules and patterns means that your child doesn't have to guess or struggle to figure out how to read or spell a difficult word.

2

Choose an Incremental Approach to Lessons

Incremental instruction provides a “[no gaps approach](#)” that allows your child to learn one new piece of knowledge at a time in a well-thought out, logical sequence. With this method, your child learns skills step by step by step—*without* all the struggles along the way.

3

Understand the Importance of Multisensory Instruction

Multisensory learning happens when multiple senses—sight, sound, and touch—are used to learn new information. Children learn best when they can **see** a concept as it is explained, **hear** about it, and then **do** it with hands-on activities.

4

Give Your Child an Advantage by Teaching the 72 Basic Phonograms

A *phonogram* is a letter or letter combination that represents a sound. When your child learns the phonograms and which sounds they represent, reading or spelling the word becomes much easier. [Teaching phonograms](#) helps kids see spelling as a doable task.

5**Teach One New Concept at a Time**

Teaching one concept at a time respects the [limitations of your child's short-term memory](#) and allows concepts and skills to be more easily stored in the long-term memory. And that means significant amounts of meaningful learning can occur.

6**Teach Reliable Rules**

When your child learns [reliable spelling rules](#), he'll have some guidelines to help him make the right letter choices. For example, the [Floss Rule](#) helps kids know when to double consonants at the end of words like *floss*, *sniff*, and *fill*.

7**Teach Reading and Spelling Separately**

On the surface it may seem to make sense to teach reading and spelling together. But [teaching these subjects separately](#) actually allows kids to progress as quickly as possible through reading while taking as much time as needed to master spelling.

8**Make Review a Priority**

Consistent review is the key to getting spelling facts and spelling words to “stick.” Have your child practice spelling concepts with letter tiles and flashcards and through [dictation](#). Use a [variety of techniques](#) to ensure that your child retains what you are teaching.

9**Keep Lessons Short but Frequent**

Short, frequent lessons are better than longer, sporadic lessons. Keep [reading](#) and [spelling](#) lessons upbeat and fast-paced and use teaching methods that engage the child's interests. Start with 15-20 minutes per day and adjust the time as needed.

10**Recognize the Power of Encouraging Words**

In the ups and downs of the daily grind, we sometimes get so focused on teaching and “improving” our kids that we forget to encourage them. Be sure to visit our blog post on [7 Ways to Be the Teacher Your Child Needs](#) and download a free Encouraging Words poster.

Teaching a struggling learner can be difficult, but the tips above can help make it a lot easier. Just take it one day at a time. Before you know it, your struggling learner will be accomplishing things you never dreamed were possible!

Visit blog.allaboutlearningpress.com/struggling-learner to learn more.