

**LISTEN
WRITE AND READ®**

*Sentences
for
Sight Word
Dictation*

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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Sight Words	5
Sight Word List of 220 Words	6
Sight Word List by Grade Level	7
Dictation	8
Required Materials	9
Dictation Technique	10
Level 1 Sentences for Dictation	11
Level 2 Sentences for Dictation	12
Level 3 Sentences for Dictation	13
Level 4 Sentences for Dictation	14
Level 5 Sentences for Dictation	15
Appendix A	16

Introduction

For nine years, I taught reading and writing to children and adults in Los Angeles. At the end of each school term, all my students could write clear, coherent sentences and paragraphs that developed a central idea.

The dramatic improvement in their reading and writing skills over a single school term was attributable to the use of dictation exercises I developed to introduce and review the use of high-frequency sight words. Training in the whole-word recognition of sight words is clearly superior to phonics instruction for these words.

This book is a collection of the specific sentences I used for this instruction, arranged by grade level.

The dictation sentences in this book exclusively use high-frequency sight words previously published as the Dolch Basic Sight Vocabulary. All 220 high-frequency sight words are used in this book, proceeding in order by grade level from Level 1 (Pre-Primer), to Level 2 (Primer), Level 3 (Grade 1), Level 4 (Grade 2), and Level 5 (Grade 3). The student should be able to read and write Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 words at the conclusion of Grade 1. Level 4 words provided for Grade 2 and Level 5 words for Grade 3 assist in raising reading and writing proficiency to the corresponding level.

During dictation, students individually write down sentences spoken aloud by the teacher. Students illustrate one of the sentences used in each session. A typical grade 4 dictation session uses ten sentences and takes forty-five minutes. All sentences are dictated while students write them down. The teacher then writes each sentence on the board and students correct their work. During initial sessions, the teacher may point to individual words on a display of sight words to assist students; later dictation is verbal, without visual cues.

Dictation is most effective in improving listening, writing, and reading skills if it is conducted daily over a two- to three-week period early in the school year. After

students become proficient in the use of sight words, writing instruction progresses to more advanced exercises in which students respond to questions about reading material or write descriptively about their experiences. This is a proven strategy for narrowing/closing the reading and writing achievement gap among students.

Equally beneficial results are obtained when these techniques are used in adult education instruction. Nearly all students are naturally interested in and will benefit from dictation exercises, with corresponding increases in conversational English fluency and comprehension skills.

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Dictation

What is dictation?

Dictation is a whole class activity used for teaching basic literacy skills. Dictation requires students to listen and write sentences spoken aloud by the teacher. Dictation blends the activities of listening, writing, and checking through reading. This process appeals to students whether they learn primarily in a visual, an auditory, or a kinesthetic way. Dictation engages students by combining the use of several senses at the same time.

What are the objectives of dictation?

The primary objectives in giving dictation are that students spell previously taught words correctly while they write them down in sentences. The results give the teacher some clues as to what ought to be addressed in future classes.

What are the benefits of dictation?

With practice, students usually show improvement in their ability to take dictation. They also show improvement in listening to the teacher, writing sentences with proper conventions, and reading fluency.

ESL (English as a Second Language) students learn to understand English speech and relate what is spoken to what is written. Writing and spelling can be taught at the same time with words the students have learned to use in conversation.

While dictating, the teacher can move around the room and observe each student's progress. Individual or whole class help can be given quickly.

How can dictation be effective?

Dictation is effective when the teacher uses words from the student's vocabulary and sentences that are of interest to the students. Interesting sentences come from contemporary oral communication and are relevant to daily life.