The So Happy to Learn Recipe

A Little bit of Background on the So Happy to Learn Program and “Mrs. Brown’s House”

Katie, Michael and Mara were Mrs. Brown's first 3 learners. Seen here at age 5 they continue to come to Mrs. Brown’s house each Saturday morning as 21 year olds!

I love my work.
I am blessed.
I teach many precious children born with Down syndrome.
I teach them how to read, how to write, and how to think in math terms, but most importantly, I teach them to love the process of learning.
I show them that learning is fun and that they can be successful learners.
While they have learned a lot from me, I have certainly learned a lot from them.
I have learned patience.
I have developed compassion.
I have come to learn that things are not always as they seem.
Within us all is a great untapped potential.
I have learned how to persevere.
I have learned that most anything is possible if you set a goal and stick with it.
I have witnessed that the human spirit is so beautiful and so full of love.
I have also learned how children learn best.
They learn best when they are relaxed.
They learn best in a safe environment.
They learn best when they connect with and have a rapport with their teacher.
They learn best when they are respected as an individual.
They learn best when they have learning materials and activities that meet them where they are at and then allow them to systematically move to higher levels.
Children learn best when learning is a fun and positive experience.
It is my hope that I can share with you what has worked for me with my precious learners and that you will have the pleasure of experiencing the joy that this wonderful work can bring to both you and your learner.
What you will learn...

• how to make learning a fun and successful experience for both you and your learner
• how to create an environment conducive to learning
• exercises to activate the brain
• how to use The Beginning Reading Series books and worksheets to lay a good foundation and how to move forward with the monthly So Happy to Learn curriculum
• how to make My Reading Books with your learner that target all areas of learning and systematically build upon each other
• how to use flash cards for sight words
• how to develop writing skills
• how to develop math skills
• a few of my favorite additional activities: Question Game, Memory Game and The Reading, Spelling, Sentence, Math Game
• resources

If you would like the Handout Booklet for This Presentation Send Email Request to terrybrown@sohappytolearn.com for the PDF to download

All of the activities are explained in detail

Please write questions on note cards or paper and I will answer at question time. All questions are good and often give me a chance to address things I may have forgotten!

Teaching Reading to Children with Down Syndrome

• My program was developed from the groundbreaking pioneering work of Patricia Oelwein. Her work has been the inspiration for my program.
• Teaching Reading to Children with Down Syndrome is an excellent book that describes how children with Down syndrome learn to read. I encourage every parent and educator to read this book.
• Children with Down syndrome are visual learners. We want to make the most of this strength through fun, simple and success based teaching.
• Patricia talks about children with Down syndrome having buckets not files, we have to help them make files in their minds so they can retrieve information.
• This is done by making the lessons simple, repetitive and fun (making it worth their effort to learn it)
• The lessons must be systematic, each step taking from the last and building upon it.
• Start with sight words using words that are high interest and meaningful. Learning associates the word with a picture.
• I teach the letter sounds with The I See letter Book. I do this so the learner will know the letters and sounds but not to use for decoding...yet...that comes later once the child has about 100 to 200 sight words.
The Methods Continued

- I teach using high interest flash cards.
- I make simple “My Reading Books” with each learner
- We make specialty books
- We use The So Happy to Learn Beginner Reading series, simple easy to master books.
- We do worksheets that correspond with the books in the series. These are simple worksheets that go with the books so each learner can practice their skills, build their skills and learn to work independently. The books and worksheet curriculum grows as the child grows.
- I do the Starfall program for a short portion of each session. I can not recommend this program enough. It has everything one needs to learn reading and compliments these methods most excellently. www.starfall.com

Worksheets and Adaptations
A few words about Spelling Tests

1. Use easy high interest to start
2. Repeat words learned in following tests
3. Use words that build on each other to form sentences. I love Mom. I like Dad. Mom is cute. And so on.
4. Once your learner is comfortable with the routine, ask them which words they would like.
5. Then you can transition into typical spelling words.

Why a Worksheet Choice Folder is so Beneficial
Make Specialty Worksheets

Easy to Master Worksheets
Sight Words, Phonics, Fine Motor, Tracking, and Writing

Dad is a man.
I see a fan.
She has a tan.
This is a can.
The man ran.

Who do you see?
I see a man.

Peter Pan has a can.

What else do you see?
I see a fan.

MAN
FAN
TAN

Your Learner is a Unique and Capable Individual

• Please resist the urge to compare your learner to another.
• See your learner for the unique and capable individual they are.
• Have high yet realistic expectations.
• Meet them where they are at every step of the way and you watch in delight as they learn and progress!

Before we get started, here are 3 of my learners all with different levels of capabilities. You can see their progress over the years.

Ava
At the time of these videos this was the only language she had.
Ava was also very stubborn and challenging. We persevered and she has worked through her issues and is quite the student!

Mason
It took a long time to make this progress but Mason did it. "It doesn't matter how slowly you go as long as you don't stop!"

Katelyn
Katelyn started learning with us at age 2 ½. She has very strong language skills and learns very quickly.

Let’s Get Started!!
Activities you can do in the classroom/home and Successful teaching tips!
As you watch think of ways you can duplicate this at home too.
My Reading Box

How to make learning a fun and successful experience for yourself and your learner

The following guidelines are essential to the success of the program.

How to set yourself (teacher, parent) up, as the teacher for success

- Have a plan and routine and stick to it
- Focus on all that is going right, make note of what can be improved
- Make this a HABIT
- Be organized and consistent
- Go easy on yourself
- Enjoy the process because if you do you will stay with it
- Start in little bits and add more as you gain confidence, don’t feel you need to have it all mastered at once
- Focus on the positive, experience the joy of all progresses, big and small.
Successful Teaching Techniques

They are the key to the success of teaching your learner!

There needs to be a lot more emphasis on what a child can do instead of what he cannot do.

~Dr Temple Grandin

Successful Teaching Techniques

- Have a plan and stick to it (systematic) (show My Reading Box and Materials)
- Give choices (video)
- Make the lesson useful and meaningful and of high interest when possible
- Set the tone/connect with your learner
- Teach do not test (video)
- Set your learner up for success
- Repetition, repetition, repetition
- Adaptation, adaptation, adaptation
- Follow your intuition
- Work from your heart
- Be enthusiastic
- Respect your learner

More

- Believe in your learner
- Have fun toys and special tools handy
- Focus on what is right
- Be calm and assertive
- Offer incentives as needed --- but no bribes!
- Avoid corrections, model for your learner
- Have movement breaks between activities
- See each child as a unique individual
- Give sincere praise and be enthusiastic (relish in their joy of accomplishment)
- Stop before your learner is ready to stop
- Be mindful of what you are teaching do not overwhelm your learner or yourself (great video example for teaching beginning read comp.)
how to create an environment conducive to learning

Things to keep in mind....

- Teacher and Learner should be relaxed and focused
- Start each session taking time to connect.
- BE PRESENT with your learner, they know when you aren’t!
- Work in a non-distracting, peaceful environment as possible.
- Memorize and implement all of the successful teaching techniques
- Have all of your materials handy, have a toy handy for quick toy breaks or if you must leave the session for a second
- Focus on what is right. Model corrections subtly.
- Teach don’t test can not be emphasized enough

The Getting Ready to Learn Routine

- Water
- Focus spray
- Sending Love
- Read Positive Statement Board
- Exercises to activate the brain
Exercises to Activate the Brain

Books and Worksheets

Beginning Reading Series
The Beginning Reading Series
Books and Worksheets

The Word Book
pig
ball
tree

The I See Book
I see a pig
I see a ball
I see a tree

The 3 See Letters Book
Aa
Bb
Cc
I see an apple
I see a boy
I see a cat

The Curriculum contains worksheets that develop skills in reading, writing, math, and drawing, in a simple to understand and easy to master way with success based practice.

The entire curriculum which includes many books and worksheets and new materials monthly, video examples, and much more.

Visit www.sohappytolearn@home.com to subscribe.
Consultations are available too, in person or phone.
Independent work is the goal
Learning should always be a fun and confidence building experience

Katelyn and Charlie ready to go!

Group class, each working at their own level with their own materials

Josh works at the table by himself for the first time!!!!

My Reading Books
BEST ACTIVITY EVER!!!!!

- This activity is designed to teach and develop reading skills, sentence structure and it is wonderful for speech and language skill development.
- Why they work so well, because the child is an active participant, they create a book with you and then read it often for practice.
- Anything you want to teach can be the focus of a book
- Detailed instructions in my presentation handout
- Keep it simple and interesting, then build from there.

Video Examples
How to and Beginner Examples

Making a book with Maddie, how to

Ben says his first sentence while making a book, impressive!

Nic’s book is high interest Sponge Bob theme

Cole, who is non verbal does a great job reading his first book
More beginner books

Go from I see then change to I want or I like

Then add see like and want

Aiden reads his love book

Video Examples

Different ways to make the books

Instruction of making a book. Magnus helps come up with a sentence

Magnus writes and reads

Owen comes up with his own sentences

How to use the books for specific learning issues

Developing reading comprehension skills

Advanced Examples

Then and Now

First one comprehension work. The latest one she comes up with her own words to tell a story about each picture

Katelyn comes up with her own stories for each picture

John makes his own Hobbit book
Kid's say the darndest things

My Mom is kissing a boy.

Mom goes to buy steak.

The pretty lady has bills for me.
Blank ‘My Reading Books’ and Focus Spray available for purchase from my business partner, Jeff Matson.

High Interest Books you can make yourself to use with your learner.

These are premade as opposed to making the books with your learner with the My Reading Books.
High Interest / Specialty Books

- The group gets their own personal book
- Jaden's mom makes a book for him
- Aiden likes stinky feet
- Miyah makes an I am book
- Izzy reads her personal words book
- Aiden reads her personal words book

Personal Family I See Books and Worksheets

- Beth reads her I see Family Book
- Beth does family match worksheets
- Beth matches word to family member's picture

Memory Game
High Interest Flash Cards

• Detailed instructions in handouts.
• Start with just a few HIGH INTEREST words...child’s name, Mom, Dad, yes, no. Add more words as they get it.
• Do not overwhelm. Model how to read the words. Soon they will get it.
• Write words neatly and large on a white index card.

High Interest Flash Word Cards

Izzy's word cards

Benji reads his word cards in a book

Lincoln's words in a book with a sentence

Toby reads his sentence strip

Moving on to other Sight Words

Developing Writing Skills

How I got excited about teaching writing and how I do it.
Key Points

• Always let your learner be expressive, encourage expressive writing
• Focus on high interest words and subjects
• Focus on easy letters first
• Model for them all of the time
• Praise all attempts
• Hopefully you will gain knowledge from the videos!

Beginning Writing

Mia writes
Owen’s first notebook
Danielle writes mom
Emma writes a note
Learning how to make letters, my turn your turn
Tanner learning to write words

Beginning Writing Videos

Agnes circles each word on the worksheet, and scribbling is the first step
Izzy writes in her notebook
Aiden drawing a dog and a cat
Eliah doing beginning writing in his notebook
More advanced Writing with notebooks

I did it all by myself!!
Make a big deal, as it is a big deal and your learner will want to do more!

The word mom is a great word to start with, even before learning to write their name.
This was the first sentence Macy wrote on her own. Notice how I write the sentence afterwards, not pointing out that hers was wrong, but she will make a note in her mind. Now she writes this sentence correctly and with ease.

High interest topics are a great way to encourage writing!

Funny Writing Papers
I am a lot sicker than Tony. (classmate that said he was sick) Will you let me marry Aubrey? (my daughter)

This picture has the BEST story to go with it!
Memory Game

- Auditory and Visual Digit Span Activities that help build memory skills essential for learning and retaining information.

Question Game

- This game helps develop reading and language skills
- This game helps teach your learner how to ask and answer questions
- Neatly write out a few simple questions on cards.
- Read them for your learner until they can read them on their own.
- Keep with the same questions until they have them down then add more questions.

Let’s talk about Math!
Math

- Math can be a bit difficult for learners and can require much patient and thought in teaching. I teach math with the same enthusiasm as other subjects and let my learners know that MATH IS FUN!
- I have had success in teaching my learners to understand basic math concepts, do basic addition and thoroughly enjoy the process. As with other subjects lots of stress free, relaxing practice is key.
- Use a lot of math language with your learner. Wire their brain for math with math language and fun games and activities that are math related.
- I use an adapted version of "Touch Math" to teach addition. I teach one to one correspondence for numbers 1-9 having the learner memorize the position of where each 'happy dot' lives on each number. This is a systematic and effective way to teach one on one correspondence that your learner will remember forever.
- I want my learner to master numbers 1-3 then 4 then 5 then 6, 7, 8 and nine.
- This can take quite a while, but is worth the effort.
- We are building a solid foundation from which all future math skills will develop from.

Math Language

- Teach your learner to talk and think in math terms. Model math language for your learner and soon you will see they will be thinking and talking in math terms as well. Important: model math language do not ask questions. (Teach Don't Test!) Here are some examples:
  - You are at the zoo: "Look Lu Lu, I see two two two two zebras, one is bigger than one is bigger than one is bigger than one is bigger than the other!"
  - You are eating dinner: "Charlie, you have so many so many so many so many french fries. You have more than I do!"
  - In a room with people: "Oh look, I see there are two boys two boys two boys two boys in the room and one girl! one girl! one girl! one girl!"
  - "Wow, three three three three people are wearing eye glasses and one one one one person is not wearing glasses!"
  - Math word problem talk: "You have two cookies and I have one cookie, 2 plus one 2 plus one 2 plus one 2 plus one equals 3, equals 3, equals 3, equals 3, three cookies all together!"
  - The possibilities are endless! I have found this has really opened up my learners minds to think and speak in math terms.

Fun Games and activities

- There is no shortage of fun games and activities on the market that will enhance your learner's math skills. Here are a few of my favorites:
  - The Word Game
  - Keeping track of worksheets completed by putting pennies in a jar and a written tally sheet
  - Counting stairs as we walk up them
  - Fun easy to do math worksheets

Math happy dot placement

- Through repetitive easy practice your learner can learn the one to one correspondence for numbers 1-9 by practicing putting "happy dots" where they live on each number. Here is the placement order. Remember to start with 1, 2 and 3 and move up as they master each number.
Math Videos

Owen and Ellie learn to add

Tristan's Math Book

Charli's Math Book

Math is Fun!

Use "math language" often

Kelly uses a systematic system

Mandy does a word problem

Mason plays a fun counting game

More math

Money Game

Math Word Problems

Michael adds
The End

I did it!