**Reading Quest Reading Center Ideas**

1. Each child travels with a two-sided pocket folder. Each folder has their word catchers in it. If needed, they also have Short Vowel Sound song sheet and a b & d page if needed. They can also have a book log with a place for a sticker each time they read a book.
2. Each center has clear instructions for how to set up and clean up. The whole class learns each center prior to opening it up to your students.
3. It is very helpful to have an ABC strip at each desk or center location.
4. **For children learning their ABC’s and cvc words**

1. **ABC individualized little spiral books** (using stickers or drawings)

- each child puts both upper and lower case letters on the front of each page and then writes the letters underneath. On the back they either place a sticker that starts with that letter and/or draws their own images.

- each book has these 3 questions on the back of the first page

1. What is the name of the letter?

2. What sound does it make?

3. What is the picture on the back?

This allows children to quiz each other when they are at stations.

2. **Letters (and numbers) Pop & Learn (Lakeshore)**

- it’s a game like Trouble. Kids collect gems or jump ahead or take gems from another player. 10 gems in each corner for older kids, and 5 for younger. They have to name the letter where their pawn lands, and if you want, name a word that starts with that sound. Kids can help each other whenever needed.

1. **ABC train**:

-write 26 capital letters on cups

-write 26 lower case letters on popsicle sticks

-children sort the popsicle sticks to find the correct cup with its capital pair

4. **Alphabet Teaching Tubs (Lakeshore)**

- put one tub for each child in the center of their group

- carefully dump out the contents and mix them up

-each child has to find the objects that go in their tub

-then they check with their group if they are right by looking at the back of the tub cover if they are reading. If they are not reading, they can each bring their tub up to the teacher to check when it’s their turn to meet with the teacher.

5. **Alphabet Learning Locks (Lakeshore)**

- Kids work to find the lower case letter key that matches the upper case letter lock

6. **CVC Activity Dice**

-kids take turn rolling dice and making words

-then writing them in the correct word catcher column

OR they could play a scrabble like game where words connect to each other

**7. Word Building Puzzles (3 letters)**

**-** kids work to put together puzzles and CVC words and then they can write them in their word catchers

8. **Candyland**

-tell the kids the whole story behind the game

-it can be played as usual, but in addition to moving based on their color card, each child quizzes each other on their ABC book asking the 3 questions or using CVC word cards.

**9. Jenga**

-teachers write upper and lower case letters or CVC words on each side of each block.

-children take turns pulling out a block, reading both sides, recording it on their wordcatcher and then placing it back on top/

-each of your Jengas can target a different reading skill

**10. Letter School app:** teaches how to write letters correctly in a super fun way

**11. Reading Raven:** a great app for teaching beginning reading skills

**12. ABC puzzles:** great for teamwork

**13. Handwriting Without Tears practice**

**14. Play-doh or GAK letter creation: making letters and words using play doh or GAK.**

**15. Lego Word Land- uses regular lego pieces** (Write two, three or four letter words that the children are learning on legos- one word on each side of every lego piece)

a. Students can build 10 piece lego towers and read the words from their tower to the teacher and/or to each other

b. OR students can build lego towers and make up sentences using those words

c. OR students can build towers using similar word families

d. Students can write sentences using the words on their towers

16. **Check out the EL Education K-2 Activity Bank**- starting on page 109. (shared in the google doc) and other online resources in the shared google doc. <https://eleducation.org/resources/k-2-reading-foundations-skills-block-resource-manual>

**17. Nora Gaydos decodable books:** available in all k-5+ SFPS schools and on Amazon. Best easy reading books for teaching phonics skills, comprehension, plot and vocabulary.

**18. Don’t Break the Ice**

1. Choose the most appropriate version of this game (short vowel, short vowel with blends, word families etc.)
2. The goal is to collect as few icebergs as possible while not letting the penguin fall through the ice.
3. Each student chooses the word they want to read, rotates the game if needed so they can see the word right side up and then, if they read it correctly, they can use their ice pick to poke it out. IF they need help to read the word, they have to choose a different iceberg to read.
4. If other icebergs fall out, the student has to read those words. If they read them correctly then the icebergs go to the teacher. If they need help, they keep those words.

19. **Don’t Rock the Boat**

* Divide up the pieces (Penguins, cannon, anchor etc.)
* Students read a word card, then add one of their pieces to the boat
* If anything falls off the boat, they have to keep it
* They write their words on the word catcher while the next student goes.
* The first player to get all of their pieces on the boat, wins.

**20. Cups Game**

a. You write 3 words in three columns on each Styrofoam cup. You can have different cups ready for different reading groups if you have leveled reading groups.

b. You choose 3 cups and hide a gem under one of them. Move the cups around on a smooth surface and let the student choose which cup they think the gem is hiding under. They have to read the three words facing them before they can lift up the cup.

c. Then they get a turn to do it to the other student who is playing with you.

d. You can choose which cups have words that are appropriate for that student or you can make new cups.

1. **For children who can read short vowel, short vowel with blends, magic e and two vowels walking words**
2. **What’s the Rhyme Sorting Houses** (Lakeshore): for kids who know how to read magic e and two vowels walking words.

-Kids read word cards and sort them into the house that rhymes with that word

2**. Spanish English Activity Pockets (Lakeshore)** for kids who can read short sentences.

-students work in pairs to find the matches. Can be done in a group of 6 with 3 pairs.

-quiz each other in Spanish and English

- play memory matching games

- could be great for pairs of students with a native Spanish speaker and a native English speaker to work together.

3. **Individualized Vocabulary little spiral books** (using words and drawings)

- each child is given a list of words to write on one side and illustrate on the back. It’s very helpful to do word families.(e.g- all the ea words, then all the oa words)

4. **Teaching Reading Skills Activity Center (Lakeshore)**

- kids use write and wipe cards and letter tiles to find beginning sounds, ending letters, unscramble, etc…

5. **Candyland**

- tell the kids the whole story behind Candyland

- it can be played as usual, but in addition to the color card, each child reads a word card aloud and then records it on their wordcatcher.

-when they meet with the teacher they read those words aloud and the teacher checks that they are in the right column on the wordcatcher

6. **Jenga**

- teachers write words on each side of each block

- one set can be cvc on one side and magic e on the other- eg. mat, mate

-another set might be magic e words only or two vowels walking

-children take turns pulling out a block, reading both sides, recording it on their   
 wordcatcher and then placing it back on top

-each of your Jengas can target a different reading skill

7. **Don’t Break the Ice**

1. Choose the most appropriate version of this game (short vowel, short vowel with blends, word families etc.)
2. The goal is to collect as few icebergs as possible while not letting the penguin fall through the ice.
3. Each student chooses the word they want to read, rotates the game if needed so they can see the word right side up and then, if they read it correctly, they can use their ice pick to poke it out. IF they need help to read the word, they have to choose a different iceberg to read.
4. If other icebergs fall out, the student has to read those words. If they read them correctly then the icebergs go to the teacher. If they need help, they keep those words.

8. **Don’t Rock the Boat**

* Divide up the pieces (Penguins, cannon, anchor etc.)
* Students read a word card, then add one of their pieces to the boat
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* They write their words on the word catcher while the next student goes.
* The first player to get all of their pieces on the boat, wins.

9. **Creative Writing Center**

* Using prompts
* Writing letters
* Writing cards for birthdays, holidays
* Writing appreciations for other students
* Writing reviews for amazon or for the class
* Handwriting without tears practice
* Sticker stories (each child can choose two stickers to use as prompts- works really well if you have Minecraft or Fortnite or Pokemon or LOL stickers for example)

1. **Independent Reading Center**
2. **Lego Word Land- uses regular lego pieces** (Write three or four letter words that the children are learning on legos- one word on each side of every lego piece)

a. Students can build 10 piece lego towers and read the words from their tower to the teacher and/or to each other

b. OR students can build lego towers and make up sentences using those words

c. OR students can build towers using similar word families

d. Students can write sentences using the words on their towers

1. **Trouble**: Play the regular way, but read a word card each time.
2. **Monopoly:** **Pokemon, Fornite, Cats vs Dogs, Mario Cart and Santa Feopoly:** Play regular monopoly with just a few changes. For example, in Fortnite Monopoly, we all have to dance when someone rolls a boogie bomb and you get 3 HP each time you read a word card. With Pokemon Monopoly, we put up a house every time you buy a property and you start out with 30 yen. (We can share our rules for each of these games with you)
3. **Book Listening Center**
4. **Nora Gaydos decodable books:** available in all k-5+ SFPS schools and on Amazon. Best easy reading books for teaching phonics skills, comprehension, plot and vocabulary.

16. **Vocabulary Twister**

a. Put sight words on an old twister that are appropriate for your group of kids. (we use foam hands or rectangles from Michaels that are velcroed onto the Twister sheet)

b. Spin the spinner and each kid puts their hand or foot for example on the space and then reads the word their foot is on. If they read it correctly they keep that word.

c. They keep collecting words and when all of the words have been taken off the twister, they all make up sentences or stories that use their words and they can sort them in their word catchers.

d. They then choose some to write in their notebook

You can have different piles of foam hand words to use depending on what that group needs to be practicing.

1. **Cups Game**a. You write 3 words in three columns on each Styrofoam cup. You can have different cups ready for different reading groups if you have leveled reading groups.

b. You choose 3 cups and hide a gem under one of them. Move the cups around on a smooth surface and let the student choose which cup they think the gem is hiding under. They have to read the three words facing them before they can lift up the cup.

c. Then they get a turn to do it to the other student who is playing with you.

d. You can choose which cups have words that are appropriate for that student or you can make new cups.

1. **For more advanced readers**
2. **Capture the Flag Reading Comprehension Game (Lakeshore)**

– kids race to capture flags in a medieval castle

* Be sure to make copies of the answer key before kids play!

1. **Creative Writing Center**

* Using prompts
* Writing letters
* Writing cards for birthdays, holidays
* Writing appreciations for other students
* Writing reviews for amazon or for the class
* Handwriting without Tears cursive practice
* Sticker stories (each child can choose two stickers to use as prompts- works really well if you have Minecraft or Fortnite or Pokemon or LOL stickers for example)
* Plays and Skits
* Reading song lyrics, rap lyrics
* Poetry

1. **Independent Reading Center and/or Book Listening Center**

4. **Monopoly:** **Pokemon, Fortnite, Mariocart and Santa Feopoly:** Play regular monopoly with just a few changes. For example, with Fortnite, we all have to dance when someone rolls a boogie bomb and you get 3 HP each time you read a word card. With Pokemon Monopoly, we put up a house every time you buy a property and you start out with 30 yen. (I can share our rules with you)

1. **Trouble**: Play the regular way, but read a word card each time.
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* If other icebergs fall out, the student has to read those words. If they read them correctly then the icebergs go to the teacher. If they need help, they keep those words.

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* The first player to get all of their pieces on the boat, wins.

1. **Pre-reading games and Reading Games for the Whole Class**
2. **Name Game**: students all sit in abc order by their first name (and second letter etc..) Use that configuration to help them learn each other’s names and to identify each other by letter (Frank is in the F part of the circle!) It’s great to then do the name ball toss game at the beginning of the year and challenge the kids to go around the circle saying everyone’s name in abc order.
3. **Beats**: Students are in a circle. We go around the room saying each student’s name and clapping the syllables. Then they sit in syllable order- kids with one syllable name first, then kids with two etc. We ask each student to say their name and clap the beats and then we repeat. Eventually, we can go around the circle saying and clapping each person’s name without them first doing it. It become a rhythm and when kids stand up they can start to stamp it out etc…
4. **Learning the Short vowel sounds**: we teach a song that uses the ASL letters and pictures that go with each short vowel sound. When a student can sign and sing the whole song, they get to join the short vowel sound club and get a small badge of the poster on their desk.

**4. “Find your Corner” Word Families Game**

a. Hang up poster cards (we can share these posters with you) in different corners or spots in the room with different word families (OW and OU, magic e, two vowels walking and short vowel sounds) give out 1 word card (I write words on index cards using all lower case letters) to each student. (Differentiation- this can also be done with just short vowel sound posters around the room, or even just beginning or ending letters) – each child is moving to the poster that matched the vowel in the center of their word)

b. The students move to the corner they feel their word belongs.

c. They have to either hold up their word and read the word out loud to a peer or to the teacher and the group to see they agree that they are in the right corner.

d. Then they go back in the middle and trade with someone (or return to the teacher and get a new card)

e. This is good practice for the musical chairs game (see below) You can keep changing out which cards are in the corners depending on what they are learning. This also gives you a quick way to assess who is getting it and who is struggling.

**5. Eggspert**

If you buy an Eggspert for your class, you can play a wide range of reading games. (wireless: <http://www.amazon.com/Educational-Insights-Wireless-Eggspert-2-4G/dp/B001ZMZK7A> or non-wireless (half the price): http://www.amazon.com/Educational-Insights-Wireless-Eggspert-2-4G/dp/B001ZMZK7A

For example:

1. put the kids into groups of 3 or 4
2. write words on the board (at least one for each group)
3. each team pushes the buzzer to read one of the words on the board. A different person should buzz and read each time
4. OR pass the eggs around so that there are always 6 kids at a time who have the buzzers while they are at their desks and do the same thing as in c.
5. OR put the kids in teams and you say a word, and they each have to write it on their small dry erase board and then they all hold them up when each team is ready and you can see who spelled the word right. Each team can help whomever is doing the writing.

**MORE GREAT IDEAS:**

<http://first-grade-smiles.blogspot.com/2014/04/bright-ideas-for-kinesthetic-learning.html>

<https://www.weareteachers.com/literacy-centers-ideas/>

<https://learningattheprimarypond.com/centers/learning-at-the-primary-pond-literacy-centers-kindergarten-first-second-grade/>