

If it is to be,  
it is up to me  
to do it

Helping Anyone

(Children/Parents/Neighbors/Relatives/Friends)

Overcome Reading/Spelling Problems

by

Don McCabe

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## Dedication

This book is dedicated to  
all the members of the AVKO Dyslexia Research Foundation,  
but especially to the memory of one of its first members,

### Mary Clair Scott

without whose work and devotion to the cause of literacy,  
the AVKO Foundation might never have gotten off the ground,

### Betty June Szilagyi

who was my first and by far my most important teacher,

### Devorah Wolf

without whose encouragement and commitment  
to the ideals of AVKO  
this edition would not be possible,

### Ann, Robert, and Linda McCabe

all of whom have sacrificed much of their time and energy  
helping AVKO grow

my grandchildren, Jason and Brian McCabe  
as well as all those friends and relatives  
who have been a source of encouragement.

**May this book help you to help others improve their abilities to read and write.**

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## What is AVKO?

AVKO is a non-profit tax-exempt 501(C)3 membership organization dedicated to finding an economical solution to the widespread problem of dyslexia in our nation.

AVKO believes that we can eliminate the vast majority of reading and spelling problems by:

- 📖 disseminating its discoveries relating to the specific inner consistencies of English spelling that good readers learn without having been taught and which both dyslexics and poor readers cannot learn without being taught.
- 📖 spreading the concepts that:
  1. **parent** and **spouse** tutoring in spelling/reading skills can be successfully taught in adult community education classes.
  2. members of a problem reader's support group can greatly assist the efforts of any volunteer tutor, whether a Laubach, LVA, or other literacy group member.
- 📖 Please note that although presently through the nation adult community education programs and literacy programs are in place, **conspicuous by their absence** are any specific programs designed to teach adults the art of tutoring their children (or spouses, other relatives, or friends) in reading or spelling. Granted, this group might be a minority—but we believe this minority has as much right to learn tutoring skills as that minority of adults who wish to learn how to decorate cakes or make flower arrangements. This is why we offer free lesson plans to schools who would include such a course in their adult education programs.

**AVKO provides free daily tutoring at its AVKO Reading/Spelling Clinic.**

If a dyslexic cannot come every day, then, for a modest fee, a tutor of his choice (usually a spouse, parent, neighbor, etc.) is trained at the clinic in how to tutor.

**AVKO was founded in 1974.** Its name comes from the four modalities of learning.

**A** is from **A**udio

**V** is from **V**isual

**K** is from **K**inesthetic (the muscle memory of hands-on learning style)

**O** is from **O**ral. (we can learn as we speak)

AVKO provides newsletters to its members. It also affords them an economical opportunity to participate in research projects.

**AVKO planned to go out of existence on June 30, 1999** and leave all its assets to that 501(C)3 organization AVKO believes will make the best use of

them. The reason that AVKO planned to go out of existence is simple. At its inception in 1974, its board of directors felt that if AVKO could not achieve its major goals in 25 years, it would never achieve them. We have NOT gone out of existence for the simple reason we have yet to find a non-profit organization that would guarantee carrying on our mission. We are still looking. As it is, AVKO has already achieved all its primary goals. That is, AVKO has discovered:

- 📖 the causal relationship between the spellings of words in English to the nature of reading/spelling problems.
- 📖 the types of instructional techniques necessary to correct the problems.
- 📖 the types of instructional materials necessary to implement the teaching techniques.

## Don, Who?

Besides being AVKO's Research Director and the author of over forty books and articles on reading, Don McCabe is a former reading teacher. He taught in the Flint Community Schools at Northwestern High School, Zimmerman Junior High, the Alternative Junior High, and the Regional Detention Center. It was in these schools that he first developed and tested the materials that became the basis for all the AVKO materials and the techniques that worked on the hardest of all subjects, the dyslexic juvenile delinquents, many of whom were labeled learning disabled with attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD).

McCabe is himself a dyslexic with ADHD who considers the "affliction" the gift that enabled him to learn how to teach dyslexics. His autobiography *To Teach a Dyslexic*<sup>1</sup> describes (1) how he was lucky enough to learn to read because of a rare fortunate combination of circumstances, (2) how his experiences while in the Army Security Agency and learning the Russian language helped prepare him for teaching illiterates, and how his punishment for being a union leader put him in the position of having to work with the worst students in the city of Flint, Michigan.

Not only is McCabe a dyslexic, but so is his son Robert and his grandson Jason. Robert, whom he had to teach to read, is now himself a published author. Jason, who was tested as "gifted" in kindergarten but who had to be taught to read by his mother using AVKO materials, became a honor student despite his school's prognosis that he couldn't successfully learn to read without repeating kindergarten.

Since that time McCabe has opened the AVKO Reading/Spelling Clinic where he has successfully taught adult dyslexics to read and has taught adults to teach their dyslexic spouses and/or children to read.

<sup>1</sup>The book *To Teach a Dyslexic* can be ordered directly from the AVKO Foundation.

What does **AVKO** mean?

**AVKO** is a word coined from the four basic ways we learn.

**A** is for **A**udio (Some learn best through their sense of hearing.)

**V** is for **V**isual (Some learn best through their seeing.)

**K** is for **K**inesthetic (Some learn best by doing, using their body, their muscles, their sense of touch often referred to as tactile.)

**O** is for **O**ral (Some learn best by talking aloud, repeating sounds, hearing themselves speak.)

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## **General Direction #1**

### **Set aside 20 minutes a day to work with your student.**

The actual time of day is not really very important. What is extremely important is that it is the same time every day.

Occasionally you will have a student whose work schedule is so irregular that this is impossible. However, even with irregularity you can find some regularity! For example, the tutoring can be done first thing upon getting back from work—or just before going to work!

### **What if my student can only afford to come to my house once a week?**

Find someone in your student's family or a neighbor, relative, or friend of his and train that person to use this book twenty minutes a day with him. You then will become the master tutor and can check his progress and work on other areas of reading and composition with him during your weekly session.

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## General Decision #1

I will work with (or find a helper to work with) \_\_\_\_\_.

(Insert your student's name)

every day, Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays included for 20 minutes.

I will work with my student (check one)

\_\_\_\_\_ first thing in the morning.

\_\_\_\_\_ right after breakfast.

\_\_\_\_\_ as soon as \_\_\_\_\_ comes home from school or work.

\_\_\_\_\_ right before supper.

\_\_\_\_\_ right after supper

\_\_\_\_\_ right after the evening news

\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock AM

\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock PM

If something unavoidable prevents a tutoring session I will try my best to have a second tutoring session some other day—but not at the same time as the regularly scheduled tutoring session.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_\_\_ No

**Do not read any further unless you have made your decisions and filled in the appropriate blanks.**

## The AVKO Quick Questionnaire

**Remember, we expect you to write in this book.  
Books are tools for learning that should be used.**

**Please answer by checking with a pen or pencil.**

**Yes**

**No**

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      Did you make your decision and commit yourself to a program of action by writing your answer to Decision #1 on page 7?

If you answered NO, go get a pencil. Go back to page 7.

If you answered YES by checking with pencil, continue on.

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      Did you get this book in an Adult Community Education Course?

If yes, decide now that you are going to make every session. No matter how good we believe this book to be, it doesn't replace a good teacher who can help you with problems that come up. Besides, there will be many things presented in class that can't be presented in a book. You also can learn from the other students in your class in informal discussions.

If no, call your local Adult Community Education Director and ask to have one added to the course offerings. Better yet, send to AVKO for a free copy of How to Set Up a Community Education Course for Adults Whose Children (OR SPOUSES) Have Reading/Spelling Problems. Then, personally hand the booklet to the director.

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      Can a book answer your questions?

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      Can you talk back or argue with a book?



- \_\_\_\_\_ I will go to every session of the class so that my  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_husband, \_\_wife, \_\_child, \_\_neighbor, \_\_friend,  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_student knows that I care enough about him/her to go  
 every week to the class.
- \_\_\_\_\_ It important that I know that other \_\_\_tutors, \_\_\_adults,  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_parents have the same problems and that I am not  
 alone.
- \_\_\_\_\_ It is important that I meet other \_\_\_tutors, \_\_\_adults,  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_parents who are working with dyslexics so that out of  
 sharing experiences and sharing mistakes we can all learn.

**If you did NOT get this book as part of an  
 Adult Community Education Course**

**Yes**

**No**

- \_\_\_\_\_ I promise to do my best.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I promise not to get discouraged.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I promise to follow the directions exactly as written for at  
 least the first thirty days of the 180 day program.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I love (respect) \_\_\_my child, \_\_spouse, \_\_\_parent,  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_neighbor, \_\_\_friend, \_\_\_student enough  
 \_\_\_\_\_ to PRAISE him/her when he/she does something right,  
 \_\_\_\_\_ NOT TO CRITICIZE when a mistake is made,  
 \_\_\_\_\_ that I am willing to FORGIVE MYSELF when I make  
 mistakes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree with AVKO's motto, "Mistakes are opportunities  
 to learn."
- \_\_\_\_\_ I agree that the natural way of learning is by making  
 mistakes. This is the way I learned to stand, to walk, to  
 talk, to ride a bicycle, and even to feed myself.

**Only if you have answered all the questions  
 with a pencil or a pen  
 should you turn to the next page.**

## Lesson 1

From now on, we ask you to please substitute the word that you want to use for the word *student* and where necessary substitute the proper gender. For ease of writing we will use the masculine pronouns, he, him, and his. However, if your student is female, use she, her, or hers as the case may be.

Read the next few pages through before meeting with your student and practice it.

When you meet your student, smile.

After you finish greeting him, take out his Lesson 1 sheet (page 109). Read to him the words on the bottom of the page. With your finger point out each word as you read:

### **Mistakes are Opportunities to Learn.**

Then show your student the little essay on the next page. Read it to him. Remember to sit across from your student so you have to read upside down. Use your finger or a sheet of paper to keep your place. Tell your student that the paper (or finger) is for you—not him. Let your student know that you are learning how to read upside down.

## Did you remember to turn this upside down?

### Mistakes are Opportunities to Learn.

Everybody makes mistakes. Mistakes are how we learn. When we were born into this world, we didn't know how to stand, how to crawl, how to walk. Everybody falls down thousands of times while learning to walk. Everybody makes billions of mistakes. Mistakes are no big deal. We all learned to talk by trying. No one ever was born being able to speak. We all had to learn by making zillions of mistakes. No one ever learned to ride a bicycle without taking a spill. It took me a long time to learn to ride a bike. After about a thousand falls, two pints of blood, and a broken arm, I finally learned to ride my bike. And sixty years later, I can still ride a bike. Everybody can learn to read. Everybody can learn to spell. But not everybody can learn to read and to spell in one day. We are going to work together. Every day we are going to learn together. For the first few weeks we are going to work just on spelling. As we get used to working together and learning together, we will branch out into many other activities. Right now, we are going to prove to you that you can learn by making mistakes. Are you ready?

### Stop

**Turn the book around so that it's easy for you to read. Now, go to the index tab, open the notebook and take out pages 109 and 110. Give the page to him. Continue reading to him:**

Just to prove to you that you can learn something without studying, I want you to write on the bottom of your page just the word *scatters* as in "When my friend Jack works on his car, he *scatters* his tools all over the place." Spell *scatters*. Or just write down whatever letters you think ought to be in the word *scatters*. Don't worry about it. If you could just automatically spell *scatters*, you probably wouldn't need any of my help. Just put down the letters you think might be in the word *scatters*. When we get to the 5th lesson, you'll know how to spell *scatters* without ever having seen the word. Trust me. The things we know best we never studied.

Okay? Let's start. On the sheet I just gave you Lesson 1 (page 109) and in the blank that is in the sentence (not the one on the left) I want you to spell the word **at** as in:

  at   1. What are you looking   at  ? **at**

If your student gets it right, say: "Good!" and go to number two. If your student got it right but put it in the very first blank, tell him that you want it written in the blank that is part of the sentence. But don't bother erasing it.

If your student got it wrong, say: "Don't worry about it. Just erase and spell the word **at**, a-t. **at**. Cover it up. Now write the word **at** one more time in the first blank. Good, now try..."

  bat   1. Sammy Sosa broke his   bat  . **bat**

If your student gets it right, say: "Good!" But make sure he put the word in the second blank, the one that goes with the sentence. If your student gets it wrong, say, "Don't worry about. just erase it and spell the word **bat**, b- **a-t**. Cover it up. Now write the word **bat** one more time. Put it in the first blank. Good. Now let's try..."

  rat   1. Who said, "Okay, you dirty   rat  !"? **rat**

If your student gets it right, say: "Good! Okay, now let's try..."

If your student gets it wrong, say: "Don't worry about it. Just erase it and spell **rat**, r- **a-t**. Cover it up. Now write **rat** one more time in the first blank. Good. Now, let's try..."

  brat   1. The kid across the street is a little   brat  . **brat**


If your student gets it right, say: "Good!"

If your student gets it wrong, say: "Don't worry about it. Just erase it and spell **brat**, b-r- **a-t**. Cover it up. Now write **brat** one more time in the first blank. Good. Would you believe that this is all the spelling for our first lesson? Right now I want you to read along with me the student-tutor contract.<sup>1</sup>"

<sup>1</sup>The student-tutor contract is on the next page.

## Student-Tutor Contract

As a student I \_\_\_\_\_ promise to do my best

 to never say the word can't because I know that the word can't is perhaps the worst four letter word a person can say. Saying "I can't" won't help me learn to improve my reading and spelling.

 to be on time for my tutoring sessions.

 to wear a smile.


 to learn from my mistakes.


& and to thank my tutor for helping me learn that I can learn to improve my reading and spelling.


\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of student


\_\_\_\_\_  
Date


As a tutor I \_\_\_\_\_ promise to do my best


 to never say the word can't because I know that the word can't is perhaps the worst four letter word a person can say. Saying "I can't" or allowing my student to say, "I can't" won't help me help my student improve his reading and spelling.

 to be on time for my tutoring sessions.

 to wear a smile—and let my student know that I enjoy seeing him improve his reading/spelling skills.

 to learn from my mistakes and help my student understand that mistakes are opportunities to learn.

 to attend regularly (if available) a local adult community education class designed to help me improve my tutoring skills.

 and to cooperate fully with the school system and never, never criticize the schools or other teachers especially in front of my student because blaming others is not constructive. Teaching and tutoring is what is important.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of tutor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Lesson 2

**Before you meet with your student fill in the blanks.**

Mistakes are opportunities to \_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_ my student. I \_\_\_\_\_ be patient with him  
(love or respect) will or will not

I will try to praise him much \_\_\_\_\_ than I criticize him.  
(more or less)

### Things to SAY OFTEN to your student

Very good!

Great!

Good going!

See you're learning without studying!

Hey, don't worry about mistakes!  
We all make mistakes, but don't  
expect me to tell you all of my  
mistakes. Just use your eraser  
and make it right.

### Things NEVER to say to your student

Didn't I just tell you?

Can't you remember anything?

Just sound it out.

You're not trying.

When you meet your student, smile. Say something like: "Hey, you're looking good today. Are you ready for a real fast learning session? Are you ready to make mistakes and to learn from them? Okay, here's lesson 2." Give him page 110.

**bats** 1. Would you like some **bats** for pets? **bats**

If your student gets it right, say: "Good! Okay, now let's try..."

If your student gets it wrong, say: "Don't worry about it. Just erase it and spell *bats*, *b- a-t- s*. Cover it up. Now write *bats* one more time in the first blank. Good. Now, let's try..."

If your student spells *bats* "BAS" congratulate him on his great ear for sounds. There are only three phonemes (distinct sounds) in *bats*, the /b/, the /a/ and the /-ss/<sup>1</sup>. The sound of the /t/ actually disappears. But no matter, In our language, we have to first spell the word *bat* which ends with the letter *t* and then we have to add the letter *s*. Please don't ask me why. We just do.

**rats** 2. I won't let you have **rats** for pets. **rats**

<sup>1</sup>The Russians have a special letter for this phoneme.

If your student gets it right, say: “Good! Okay, now let’s try...”

If your student gets it wrong, say: “Don’t worry about it. Just erase it and spell *rats*, *r- a-t -s*. Cover it up. Now write *rats* one more time in the first blank. Good. Now, let’s try...”

**brats** 3. You shouldn’t call those kids **brats** even if they are. **brats**

If your student gets it right, say: “Good! Okay, now let’s try...”

If your student gets it wrong, say: “Don’t worry about it. Just erase it and spell *brats*, *b-r- a-t -s*. Cover it up. Now write *brats* one more time in the first blank. Good. Now, let’s try...”

**flat** 4. Everybody falls **flat** on their face once in a while. **flat**

If your student gets it right, say: “Good! Okay, now let’s try...”

If your student gets it wrong, say: “Don’t worry about it. Just erase it and spell *flat*, *f-l a-t*. Cover it up. Now write *flat* one more time in the first blank. Good. Now, let’s try...”

**flatter** 5. I like people to **flatter** me once in a while. **flatter**

If your student gets it right, don’t just say: “Good!” say “FANTASTIC!!!” You’re the first student I’ve ever had that got that word right the first time!” Although most students will not double the “t” in *flatter*, most of them will at least get either the beginning “*fl-*” right or the “*at*” right or have at least the letter “*r*” for the ending sound. Praise your student for getting that part right. One word of praise I often use is: “Good, you got almost all the right letters and they’re in the right order. You just left out one letter. Can you guess which letter it is?” If he does, great. And tell him, “Great!” If he doesn’t, just say, “Don’t worry about it. Just erase it and spell *flatter*, *fl- a-(double t) -er*. Cover it up. Now write *flatter* one more time in the first blank. Good. Now, let’s try...”

NOTE: The misspellings such as “*fladr*”<sup>1</sup> or *flatr*” actually show a very fine ear for what linguists call phonemes. If your student misspelled *flatter* something like that, tell him he spelled *flatter* the way it should be spelled *if* English were truly phonetic. But it isn’t. So, he’ll just have to learn the the /atr/ or /adr/ sound is correctly spelled: A - double the T and add -E-R” or “A-T-T ER”

**spat** 6. A little fight is often called a **spat**. **spat**

If your student gets it right, say: “Good! Okay, now let’s try...”

<sup>1</sup>In normal sloppy speech, the word *flatter* is most often pronounced as if it were spelled *fladder*!

If your student gets it wrong, say: “Don’t worry about it. Just erase it and spell *spat*, *s-p* *-a-t*. Cover it up. Now write *spat* one more time in the first blank. Good. Now, let’s try something a little different. How would you like to read some of those sentences we just had along WITH me. Now remember, I’m going to be reading the sentences with you. Only, I’m going to be reading them upside down. So please don’t laugh at my mistakes. I’m learning, too.”

Now, use a piece of paper or your finger to hold your place and read with your student. Your student should at least be able to read some of the *-at* words the two of you are working on. Who knows, he might be able to pick up some other words in this process. However, don’t try to teach him any of the other words. We don’t want an overload. We’re just working on the *-at* words—remember?



## Lesson 3

**Before you meet with your student fill in the blanks.**

Mistakes are opportunities to \_\_\_\_\_

I respect my student. He is not \_\_\_\_\_.

It doesn't matter how fast he learns. It only matters that he does \_\_\_\_\_.

Forgetting is normal. You forget. I forget. What did you have for supper on April 19, 1997. Have you forgotten? \_\_\_Yes. \_\_\_No.

If you answered "yes" does that mean you are dumb or just plain normal?

### Things to SAY OFTEN to your student

Very good!

Great!

Good going!

See you're learning without studying!

Hey, don't worry about mistakes!

We all make mistakes, but don't expect me to tell you all of my mistakes. Just use your eraser and make it right.

### Things NEVER to say to your student

Didn't I just tell you?

Can't you remember anything?

Just sound it out.

You're not trying.

When you meet your student, smile. Say something like: "Hey, you're looking good today. Are you ready for a real fast learning session? Are you ready to make mistakes and to learn from them. Okay, here's lesson 3." (Give him p. 111).

<p><b>batted</b> 1. Babe Ruth <b>batted</b> _____ in the winning run many times. <b>batted</b></p>
--

If your student gets it right, say: "Good! Okay, now let's try..."

If your student gets it wrong, say: "Don't worry about it. Just erase it and spell **batted**, **b-** **-a-** double the **t** and add **-ed**. Cover it up. Now write **batted** one more time in the first blank. Good.

Although Babe Ruth hit 714 home runs, he also set the record for strike outs! 1,330 times which stood for many years until Reggie Jackson came along. I guess he made a few mistakes, didn't he. But Babe Ruth didn't let his mistakes bother him. He just kept swinging.

<b>ratted</b> 2. My sister <b>ratted</b> her hair. <b>ratted</b>
--

If your student gets it right, say: “Good! Okay, now let’s try...”

If your student gets it wrong, say: “Don’t worry about it. Just erase it and spell *ratted*, *r- -a* double the *t* and add *ed*. Cover it up. Now write *ratted* one more time in the first blank. Good.

Have you got the routine down pat as to what to do when your student gets it right or gets it wrong? \_\_Yes \_\_\_No.

If yes, assume the direction is there after each word in each lesson.

If no, put a book mark on this page and refer to it as often as necessary.

But again, please congratulate your student EACH TIME he gets a word right. Remember, he hasn’t studied the word! If he misses, help him understand that it’s all right to make a mistake. This is the way we are learning — from our mistakes.

The following are the rest of the words and their sentences for Lesson 3.

**batter** 3. I would like to be the first **batter** up.

**Flats** 4. **Flats** are what some people call apartments.

**flatters** 5. The dress you bought your mother really **flatters** her.

**spats** 6. We never have fights in our family—just little **spats**.

**mat** 7. Do you think we should have a welcome **mat**?

**matter** 8. What’s the **matter** with me?

**hat** 9. The Cat in the **Hat**<sup>1</sup> has the silliest **hat**.

---

<sup>1</sup>The first “hat” is capitalized because it is part of a name-The Cat in the Hat.

Stop the spelling for the day. If you have time go back and read the sentences with your student. Remember you are to be across the corner of the table from your student and you should be reading the sentences upside down! You might want to practice ahead of time. Again, your student isn't expected to know any of the words except the ones that belong to the -at family.

The last sentence about the "Cat in the Hat" is a reference to a book by Dr. Seuss. If you haven't read it, you should. You can almost always find a copy in the library—but you might have to reserve it, because kids love the book. If your student is an adult (as I expect he is) let him know that one of the greatest joys in life is reading Dr. Seuss books to little kids. When you think he is ready for one of those books, have him buy or borrow one and practice reading it aloud with loads and loads of expression and different voices for different characters. Make reading fun!

## **Lesson 4**

**Before you meet with your student fill in the blanks.**

Is it true that the things we remember the best, such as names of relatives, friends, TV characters or actors such as Jerry Seinfeld, we never studied? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No.

Is it true that the things we studied the hardest in school such as the names of the capitals of all the states, the largest and second largest cities in all the states, the names of all our presidents in order, we tend to forget? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No.

Mistakes are \_\_\_\_\_ to learn. We also must learn to accept mistakes as part of life. As a tutor, one of the most important things I can do for my students is to help them accept mistakes as just mistakes.

When was the last time you said, "Didn't I just tell you..."? If you forget and make the mistake of saying that (for the 10,000th time), it's a mistake—just a mistake. Just as you should forgive your student his mistakes, you must be able to forgive yourself for making mistakes. But just as you expect your student to learn from his mistakes, so too, you should try to learn from yours. Whenever you make statements like: "Didn't I just tell you?", what you are really saying is: "You're so dumb you can't remember anything." Your student is smart. He reads you. So please don't use any of those easy pat phrases that make him feel dumb.

Build your student's confidence with positive statements.

Make your student feel worthwhile by making positive statements.

**Things to SAY OFTEN  
to your student**

Very good!

Great!

Good going!

See you're learning without studying!

Hey, don't worry about mistakes!

We all make mistakes, but don't expect me to tell you all of my mistakes. Just use your eraser and make it right.

**Things NEVER to say  
to your student**

Didn't I just tell you?

Can't you remember anything?

Just sound it out.

You're not trying.

When you meet your student, smile. Say something like: "Hey, you're looking good today. Are you ready for a real fast learning session? Are you ready to make mistakes and to learn from them. Okay, here's lesson 4. (Give him p. 112).

## Lesson 4

- batting** 1. I think **batting** practice is more fun than fielding practice.
- ratting** 2. My sister is always **ratting** her hair (or **ratting** on me).
- batters** 3. Their team doesn't have any real good **batters**.
- pat** 4. Everybody needs a **pat** on the back once in a while.
- flattered** 5. Men enjoy being **flattered** just as much as women do.

Note: The /urd/ sound in the word flattered is one of those “crazy” things about the English language. Look at some of the different ways /urd/ is spelled:

ard (wayward)

erd (herd)

eard (heard)

ered (entered)

erred (inferred)

ird (bird)

irred (stirred)

ord (word)

urd (curd)

urred (slurred)

- . You might want to show these to your student. But you don't have to. And certainly, please don't try to teach him all these sounds or words right now! It's enough to teach him that all the “at urd” sounds are spelled the same, *-attered* as in *-at*, double the *t* and add *-er* to get *-atter* and then add the *-ed* to get *-attered*.

- spatter** 6. I don't like to have hot grease **spatter** all over me.
- mats** 7. We should have a couple “STAY AWAY” **mats**.
- matters** 8. What **matters** the most to me is that you try your best.
- spats** 9. Not very many men wear **spats** anymore.
- cat** 10. Who ever heard of a **cat** wearing a **hat**?
- scat** 11. Tell the crazy **cat** to go **scat**.
- scatter** 12. You shouldn't **scatter** your tools all over the place.

**Mistakes are Opportunities to Learn.**

## Lesson 5

- chat** 1. It's about time we sat down and had a little **chat**.
- chatter** 2. Nat just loves to **chatter**. I think he talks too much.
- battered** 3. It's no fun to see someone who has been badly **battered**.
- patted** 4. He **patted** himself on the back so hard he broke his arm.
- flattering** 5. That dress looks real **flattering** on your mother.
- spatters** 6. It isn't funny when hot grease **spatters** all over you.
- gnat** 7. There is a dumb bug called a **gnat**. But how can you look up the word **gnat** if you don't know that **gnat** starts with the dumb letter **g**?
- matters** 8. It really **matters** a lot to your mother.
- tat** 9. How did the saying, "tit for **tat**" get started?
- cats** 10. Why does it rain **cats** and dogs? Why not horses and cows?
- scats** 11. When a cat **scats** it runs. When a singer **scats**, that's something else.
- scatters** 12. If your brother **scatters** your toys, just tell me about it. Don't beat him up.

Check your student's spelling of the word **scatters**. If he has it right, show him his misspelling on the bottom of page 109 (Lesson 1). Praise him for learning a word without ever having had it shown to him. If by chance, your student misspelled **scatters**, just have him correct his spelling. Wait until tomorrow when he gets to spell the word **scattered** or the following lesson when he gets to spell **scattering**. We bet he will have learned it by then. Praise him. Let him know that he is learning the natural way, by correcting his own mistakes.

- rag** 13. Can you find a clean **rag** for me?
- bag** 14. We always used to have a **rag bag** to keep our clean **rags**.
- brag** 15. If you are really good, you don't have to **brag**.

**Be proud of who you are and what you do.**

## Lesson 6

- chats** 1. She stops by for a cup of coffee and **chats** with me.
- Nat's** 2. Did you ever see a car like **Nat's** car?
- battering** 3. They used to use **battering** rams to knock down doors.
- patted** 4. She **patted** herself on the back so hard she broke her arm.
- flattery** 5. Everybody enjoys a little honest **flattery**.
- spattered** 6. The hot grease **spattered** all over me—and did it burn!
- gnats** 7. I hate **gnats**. They are dumb bugs that start with **g**.
- matter** 8. Something is always **matter**ing to my sister.
- tats** 9. I can't believe that she **tats** for a living (Makes lace).
- vat** 10. Pickles are pickled in a **vat**. Beer is brewed in a **vat**.
- cat's** 11. My **cat's** tail tickles.
- scattered** 12. My dog's tail hit the cards and **scattered** them all over.
- rag** 13. We need a place to keep clean **rag**s.
- bag** 14. We don't need a dozen **bag**s to keep **rag**s.
- brag** 15. Nancy **brag**s about how she beat me once in checkers.
- lag** 16. I used to **lag** pennies up to a line pretty good.
- flag** 17. We all know how to pledge allegiance to the **flag**.
- wag** 18. You don't have to teach a dog how to **wag** its tail.

**Mistakes are Opportunities to Learn.**

## Lesson 7

- chatted** 1. Don **chatted** with us for over an hour.
- Rats** 2. **Rats** and snails and puppy dog tails. That's what little girls are made of. Right? Okay, so I got it wrong. So what?
- battery** 3. I think this flashlight needs a new **battery**.
- patting** 4. She is always **patting** herself on the back.
- chattering** 5. I love to hear little squirrels **chattering**.
- spattering** 6. Don't get close to the stove when the grease is **spattering**.
- drats** 7. I have never heard anyone say, "Oh **drats!**"
- smattering** 8. I have learned a **smattering** of this and that.
- matter** 9. Can you find the word **matter** in **smattering**?
- tatting** 10. She **tatted** that with a special needle called a shuttle made for **tatting** (Making lace.)
- vats** 11. Pickles, beer, and whiskey are made in **vats**.
- slat** 12. Go fix that broken **slat** on the bench before someone gets hurt.
- scattering** 13. She is always **scattering** her clothes around the room.
- tattered** 14. I don't like a shirt that looks real **tattered**.
- bagged** 15. My brother went hunting but he never **bagged** a thing.
- lags** 16. A good putter **lags** the golf ball close to the cup.
- flags** 17. There must be thousands of different **flags**.
- hag** 18. It's not nice to call your sister an old **hag**.
- Jag** 19. **Jag** was originally a load.
- Mag** 20. Do you know anybody by the name of **Mag**?
- zag** 21. If you know how to zig, do you know how to **zag**?

**Be proud of who you are and what you do.**