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ABSTRACT

This inservice professional development module, part of the Alabama Reading Initiative, presents research summaries, notes for presenters, and activities. The Phonemic Awareness and Phonics module clarifies that skilled readers are accurate and automatic decoders (i.e., they have the alphabetic principle). Phonics instruction must empower all learners to be both accurate and automatic. Accurate and automatic decoders are then able to become fluent readers whose minds are "free" to concentrate on building meaning. Any student who is not an accurate and automatic decoder and/or who does not spell well can benefit from phonics instruction. Sections of the module, and associated objectives, are: (1) "Phonological Awareness and Phonemic Awareness" (know how to develop phonological awareness in their students using instructional activities that are progressive and engaging; know how to recognize, count, segment, blend, and manipulate the phonemes of any English words; and know how to teach phonemic awareness to their students); (2) "Assessment of Phonemic Awareness and Decoding Skill" (know how to assess phonemic awareness and decoding skill and to use this information to guide instruction); (3) "Phonics Instruction and Decodable Texts" (how to provide systematic, explicit phonics instruction; how to teach blending; how to develop fluency in reading through use of decodable texts, extensive amounts of reading, multiple re-reading of printed material, and reading at independent and instructional levels; how to respond to oral reading errors in ways that are appropriate to the nature of the error, the purpose of that particular lesson, and the needs of the learner at the moment; how to recognize, secure, and use decodable texts; and how to integrate phonics instruction in the context of an integrated reading lesson format); and (4) "Teaching Spelling" (how to teach spelling in ways that enhance decoding, strengthen visual imagery, and give appropriate emphasis to spelling rules and patterns). Appendixes contain English phonemes and example words; advice on "making friends with phonemes"; phonological and phonemic awareness sample activities; practice activities for learning correspondences; activities to practice blending; commercial phonemic awareness resources; and a list of decodable text resources. (RS)

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ED 464 368

PHONEMIC AWARENESS AND PHONICS INSTRUCTION

Grades K-1

READING IS THE KEY

Alabama Reading Initiative

(Version: 2001)

Presenter:

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Participants will:

1. Know how to develop phonological awareness in their students using instructional activities that are progressive and engaging. (Phonological awareness is considered the umbrella under which phonemic awareness is a part.)

2. Know how to recognize, count, segment, blend, and manipulate the phonemes of any English words. (Teachers must be able to do these things before teaching phonemic awareness to students.)

3. Know how to teach phonemic awareness to their students.

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6. Know how to teach blending.

7. Know how to develop fluency in reading through use of decodable texts; extensive amounts of reading; multiple re-reading of printed material; and reading at independent and instructional levels.

8. Know how to respond to oral reading errors in ways that are appropriate to the nature of the error, the purpose of the particular lesson, and the needs of the learner at the moment.

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9. Know how to recognize, secure, and use decodable texts.

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Section 1: PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS AND PHONEMIC AWARENESS

Goals

Participants will:

1. Know how to develop phonological awareness in their students using instructional activities that are progressive and engaging. (Phonological awareness is considered the umbrella under which phonemic awareness is a part.)

2. Know how to recognize, count, segment, blend, and manipulate the phonemes of any English words. (Teachers must be able to do these things before teaching phonemic awareness to students.)

3. Know how to teach phonemic awareness to their students.

Assumptions

1. Because English is an alphabetic language, it uses a small group of symbols (26 letters of the alphabet) and combinations of those symbols to represent speech sounds (phonemes).

2. Using an alphabetic language requires sufficient familiarity with phonemes to recognize them in spoken words. Once the phonemes are recognized, they can be "mapped" with letters and then translated back into phonemes.

3. Many beginning readers need to be taught explicitly to attend to phonemes. Teachers have an important instructional role when students are identified as lacking phonemic awareness. For all children explicit help in recognizing phonemes makes decoding instruction easier to understand.

4. There is a body of knowledge that teachers must have to effectively teach phonological awareness and phonemic awareness to their students. This includes:

- a common vocabulary for talking about phonological awareness.
- the ability to recognize, count, and manipulate the phonemes of English words.
- a sequence of instruction that progresses logically.
- a repertoire of instructional activities that are engaging and effective.

Parameters

1. The recommended frequency of phonemic awareness instruction is no less than 15 to 20 minutes three to four times a week.

2. The teaching of phonemic awareness and phonics is not as separated as the organization of this module suggests.

3. Lessons are explicit when the teacher explains and models the phoneme before the children practice and assesses children's understanding of the new concept. Practice activities usually do not include explicit instruction.

Let's Define It

1. **Alphabetic Principle** – The recognition that there are consistent, though not entirely predictable, relationships between the letters of the alphabet and the phonemes of the language so that the letters in a spelling map out the phonemes in the pronunciation of a word.

2. **Auditory Discrimination** – Accurate perception of *sounds of all types*. This should not be confused with phoneme awareness.

3. **Blending** – Smoothing together phonological parts of a word so that the word becomes recognizable.

4. **Explicit Instruction** – Instruction that is teacher directed, clearly stated, distinctly illustrated (not merely implied or ambiguous), and capable of clarifying key points.

5. **Manipulating** – Playing with phonemes by blending, segmenting, adding, deleting, or substituting them in words.

6. **Morpheme** – The smallest unit of meaning. This could be a word (*read*), affix (**pre**read, read**er**) or inflectional ending (read**s**).

7. **Onset/rime** – Onset is the part of a spoken syllable that comes before the vowel. Rime is the vowel and any consonants that follow it. For example, in *speech*, *sp* is the onset and *eech* is the rime.

8. **Phoneme** – A basic vocal gesture from which words in a language are composed. In this module, phonemes are written within slashes (/*t*/) and spellings of the phoneme are written in *italics*.

9. **Phonemic Awareness** – The recognition of the features, identity, and order of phonemes when they occur in words.

10. **Phonics** – Instruction in strategies needed to decode words.

11. **Phonological Awareness** – Awareness of *speech* sounds including spoken words, syllables, onsets (the part of a spoken syllable that comes before the vowel), rimes (the vowel and any consonants that follow it), and phonemes. For example, in *speech*, *sp* is the onset, *eech* is the rime, and /s/, /p/, /E/, and /ch/ are all phonemes.

12. **Segmenting** – Separating a word into its phonological parts.

13. **Syllable** – Part of a word that includes a vowel phoneme and is pronounced as a unit.

14. **Systematic Instruction** – Instruction that is orderly, planned, and gradually builds from basic elements to more subtle and complex structures.

Note to Presenters: Make sure participants can distinguish auditory discrimination, phonological awareness, and phonemic awareness.

What the Research Says

A basic appreciation of the phonological structure of spoken words appears to be necessary for a child to understand how print represents the sounds of the language. (Ehri and Wilce, 1980, 1986; Perfetti et al., 1987)

The discovery of the nature and enabling importance of phonemic awareness is said to be the single greatest breakthrough in reading pedagogy in this century. (California Department of Education, 1996, p. 5)

Phonemic Awareness is more highly related to learning to read than are tests of general intelligence, reading readiness, and listening comprehension. (California Department of Education, 1996, p. 5)

Deficits in phonological processing can be identified in late kindergarten and first grade, and the presence of these deficits is a strong indicator that difficulties in learning to read will follow. (Lyon & Alexander, 1996/1997, p. 14)

In fact, when faced with an alphabetic script, the child's level of phonemic awareness on entering school is widely held to be the strongest single predictor of the success she or he will experience in learning to read. (Adams & Bruck, 1995, p. 15)

Although some children may need training in phonological awareness that goes beyond the kindergarten and first-grade year, "rather that providing this training in the context of oral language activities that might be appropriate for kindergarten and Grade 1, a more efficient approach might involve code-oriented reading instruction in which the connections between print and speech are made explicit" (Blachmann, 2000, citing Wagner, Torgenson, Rashotte, Hecht, Barker, Burgess, Donahue, & Garon, 1997).

Survey of Linguistic Knowledge

1. For each word on the left, determine the number of syllables and the number of morphemes.

	syllables	*morphemes*
salamander	_____	_____
crocodile	_____	_____
unbelievable	_____	_____
finger	_____	_____
pies	_____	_____
gardener	_____	_____

2. How many phonemes are in the following words?

ox	_____
boil	_____
thank	_____
straight	_____
though	_____
shout	_____

3. What is the third speech sound in each of the following words?

boyfriend	_____
stood	_____
chalk	_____
badger	_____

4. List all the ways you can think of to spell long *a*.

_____

5. List all the ways you can think of to spell /k/.

_____

Adapted and used with permission from Louisa C. Moats.

Note to presenters: Use the definitions (pp. 2-3) and the phoneme catalog (appendix F) as a

reference.

Activities for Teachers to Practice Phonemic Awareness

Recognize Phonemes

Segment and Count Phonemes

Blend Phonemes

Manipulate Phonemes

Note to presenters: Teachers must be able to perform the tasks outlined above in order to enable students to perform these tasks. To develop the capacities above in participants, use activities that are engaging for adult learners. Pause periodically for comment and reflection. Comment on how your instruction is both systematic, explicit, and guided by the needs of the participants. Participants may take notes in the spaces provided. Participants need to be comfortable with the

tasks above before presenters continue.

Levels of Phonological Awareness

Sound Awareness Level
Stories, songs, fingerplays, poems

Level Word
Rhymes, recognizing words in sentences, compound words

Syllable Level
Isolating, blending, segmenting, deleting

Onset-Rime Level
Matching, isolating, blending, segmenting, deleting, substituting

Phoneme Level
Isolating, blending, segmenting, deleting, substituting

Grapheme Level
Isolating, blending, segmenting, deleting, substituting

Note to Presenters: At this point participants are learning how to develop phonological awareness and phonemic awareness in their students. Emphasis needs to be given to understanding what makes these series of illustrative activities both progressive and engaging. Sample activities are provided in the appendix on pages 49-52. Presenters may want to provide many more illustrative activities. It is important also to note that there is no research base to support one progression over another. In fact, it is not clear that phonemic awareness does develop in any specific order and researchers are mixed on the point at which print should be

introduced. Discuss with participants the common sense basis for making instruction both progressive and engaging.

Section 2: ASSESSMENT OF PHONEMIC AWARENESS AND DECODING SKILL

Goal

Participants will:

4. Know how to assess phonemic awareness and decoding skill and to use this information to guide instruction.

Assumptions

1. In this section, we think of reading comprehension as the product of word recognition and listening comprehension. If we can read every word in a text effortlessly, then we will comprehend the text through reading just as well as we can understand it by listening. (See Gough, P. B., & Tunmer, W. E., 1986, "Decoding, Reading, and Reading Disability," in *Remedial and Special Education*, 7(1), 6-10.)

2. A student who is a decoding expert will be able to read with understanding to the limit of his/her spoken language comprehension. However, if the student has trouble either with reading the words or grasping the concepts and ideas by listening, he/she will be unable to read with comprehension.

3. Reading assessment, therefore, especially for beginners, must examine the ability to read words and to comprehend spoken language.

4. The task in reading assessment is to find out where reading progress is stalled so that we can teach the strategies that allow the next step. For example, word recognition must be effortless and automatic to allow mental resources to attend to meaning. We should, therefore, test for automatic word recognition, e.g., with graded passages or word lists. If word recognition is not automatic, we should look at the student's decoding strategies, and other prerequisite processes, until we reach the source of the problem.

Parameters

1. This section utilizes a chart that shows many of the skills that students need to be able to read words. Toward the top of the chart is automatic word recognition. The other levels of the chart represent an educated guess about the prerequisite skills upon which automatic word recognition rests. If a student can perform any skill on the chart, we can usually assume that the student has accomplished the tasks on the lower levels of the chart. Thus, there is no need to test for every skill on the chart.

2. Many of the items on the chart are assessed with the new state assessments for grades K, 1, and 2 (AELI, ARA-1.And ARA-2). Since a parallel version of these instruments remains in each school for continuous assessment, these assessment tasks are emphasized.

3. Assessment is important in determining what to teach and what not to teach. For example, if a child can read unfamiliar text fluently, he or she probably doesn't need phonics instruction. Children who can decode words probably don't need to work on phonemic awareness.

4. Teachers should not be misled by dialect issues. The teacher must be aware of children's speech patterns and not infer from a dialect pronunciation a lack of decoding skill. For example, one child worked on decoding the word *strap* as follows: "/r/ /a/ /p/ … /t/ /r/ /a/ /p/ … /s/ /t/ /r/ /a/ /p/ ... Oh, yeah, like you *scrap* him into his car seat." This reader exhibited excellent decoding skills, especially blending. Moreover, the reader understood the word *strap* when he translated it into his familiar dialect. Another way dialect influences students will be in the way phonemes are pronounced.

Let's Define It

AELI – Acronym for Alabama Early Learning Inventory, an assessment that is required statewide and administered in the fall of kindergarten. A classroom version of this instrument is available in each school to provide ongoing assessment information that can guide instruction.

ARA-1 – Acronym for Alabama Reading Assessment for Grade 1, an assessment that is required statewide and administered in the fall of Grade 1. A classroom version of this instrument is available in each school to provide ongoing assessment information that can guide instruction.

ARA-2 – Acronym for Alabama Reading Assessment for Grade 2, an assessment that is required statewide and administered in the fall of Grade 2. A classroom version of this instrument is available in each school to provide ongoing assessment information that can guide instruction.

Automatic decoding – Effortless analysis of unfamiliar words that involves strategies such as recognizing familiar word parts or transferring information from known words to an unknown word with a similar spelling pattern.

Automatic word recognition – The ability to pronounce a word instantly when the word is encountered in a printed word list and/or passage.

Fluency – Achieving speed and accuracy in recognizing words and comprehending printed material and coordinating the two with ease. In oral reading fluency is suggested by reading that resembles the speed, intonation, and flow of the reader's speech.

Grapheme – A letter or digraph (two or more letters) that spells a single phoneme.

Sight vocabulary – All the words a reader recognizes effortlessly and automatically.

Overview of Automatic Word Recognition Reading Assessment

SKILLS

Fluency

Automatic Word Recognition

Sight Vocabulary | **Automatic Decoding**

Accurate Decoding

Letter/ Phoneme Correspondence | **Blending**

Concepts of Print | **Letter Recognition** | **Phoneme Recognition**

ASSESSMENT NOTES

1. Reading Comprehension involves listening comprehension and automatic word recognition.
2. Subtest on the ARI-1 (passage comprehension) and the QRI (prior knowledge) yield information about listening comprehension.
3. Graded passages on the ARA-2 and the QRI yield information on the student's automatic word recognition, fluency, and reading comprehension.
4. Assesser must determine whether interferences to reading comprehension are due to listening comprehension (insufficient overlap between speaker's and listener's system of meaning and/or systems of language and/or insufficient attention); inadequate decoding (accuracy, automaticity); and/or insufficient fluency and attention. (See diagram on p. 20.)

1. Graded word lists on the QRI and an analysis of oral reading errors on the ARA-2, a running record, or the QRI yield information about accurate decoding.

1. ARA-1 assesses letter/phoneme correspondence and blending.

1. Concepts of print, letter recognition, and phoneme recognition are measured on the AELI and ARA-1.
2. Phoneme recognition is measured by the *Test of Phoneme Identities* (p. 12) and the *Yopp-Singer Test of Phoneme Segmentation* (included on page 13).

Note to Presenters: Presenters may introduce additional measures. However, for any assessment, participants should be able to locate what they are assessing on the skills chart above and identify why the information is needed. Remember, if a student can do a task, we can usually assume accomplishment of tasks listed lower on the chart.

Test of Phoneme Identities (Pretest)

Materials: None. The test is administered conversationally. Read with expression. Do not emphasize phonemes. Accept any repetition of the sentence that includes target words, but repeat the sentence if either is incorrect. Require a correct approximation of the isolated phoneme. Repeat the sound-to-word matching question if the response is unclear. Circle the response.
Directions: We're going to play a repeating game. First, I'll say a sentence, then you say it back. Then I'll say a sound, and you say it back. Then I want you to listen for the sound in a word. Let's begin.

1. Say: We'll see the moon soon. Now say /s/. Do you hear /s/ in moon or soon?
2. Say: She caught a fish by the fin. Now say /sh/. Do you hear /sh/ in fish or fin?
3. Say: That bug makes a buzz. Now say /z/. Do you hear /z/ in bug or buzz?
4. Say: We hid from him. Now say /m/. Do you hear /m/ in hid or him?
5. Say: Those girls have the same name. Now say /n/. Do you hear /n/ in same or name?'
6. Say: I race to wash my face. Now say /f/. Do you hear /f/ in race or face?
7. Say: Can you move a moose? Now say /v/. Do you hear /v/ in move or moose?
8. Say: He gets a badge for taking a bath. Now say /th/. Do you hear /th/ in badge or bath?
9. Say: This card game is hard. Now say /h/. Do you hear /h/ in card or hard?
10. Say: His chin is too thin. Now say /ch/. Do you hear /ch/ in chin or thin?
11. Say: We found him in the gym. Now say /j/. Do you hear /j/ in him or gym?
12. Say: I brought a scoop to school. Now say /l/. Do you hear /l/ in scoop or school?
13. Say: There's a rat under that hat. Now say /r/. Do you hear /r/ in rat or hat?
14. Say: We have tar on our car. Now say /k/. Do you hear /k/ in tar or car?
15. Say: Would you share a pair of socks? Now say /p/. Do you hear /p/ in share or pair?
16. Say: The playground is part of the park. Now say /t/. Do you hear /t/ in part or park?
17. Say: The cub will come when you call. Now say /b/. Do you hear /b/ in cub or come?
18. Say: She likes to leap into deep water. Now say /d/. Do you hear /d/ in leap or deep?
19. Say: In this game, you have a new name. Now say /g/. Do you hear /g/ in game or name?
20. Say: We hate to wait for the bus. Now say /w/. Do you hear /w/ in hate or wait?
21. Say: The yarn is in the barn. Now say /y/. Do you hear /y/ in yarn or barn?
22. Say: He popped the bag with a bang. Now say /ng/. Do you hear /ng/ in bag or bang?
23. Say: Find a space by the spice. Now say /A/. Do you hear /A/ in space or spice?
24. Say: This street is straight. Now say /E/. Do you hear /E/ in street or straight?
25. Say: We go from nine till noon. Now say /I/. Do you hear /I/ in nine or noon?
26. Say: I have a nose for news. Now say /O/. Do you hear /O/ in nose or news?
27. Say: Your shoelace is loose. Now say /OO/. Do you hear /OO/ in lace or loose?
28. Say: He's last on the list. Now say /a/. Do you hear /a/ in last or list?
29. Say: I have a red fishing rod. Now say /e/. Do you hear /e/ in red or rod?
30. Say: On Halloween bring a big bag. Now say /i/. Do you hear /i/ in big or bag?
31. Say: Move the rock with the rake. Now say /o/. Do you hear /o/ in rock or rake?
32. Say: Don't cut our kite. Now say /u/. Do you hear /u/ in cut or kite?'
33. Say: I heard a sound in the sand. Now say /ou/. Do you hear /ou/ in sound or sand?
34. Say: We saw the old barn burn. Now say /er/. Do you hear /er/ in barn or burn?
35. Say: The fair is far from the school. Now say /ar/. Do you hear /ar/ in fair or far?
36. Say: We'll draw on our pictures after they dry. Now say /aw/. Do you hear /aw/ in draw or dry?
37. Say: That spill might spoil. Now say /oy/. Do you hear /oy/ in spill or spoil?
38. Say: Look at the beautiful lake. Now say /oo/. Do you hear /oo/ in look or lake?

Used with permission of the author, Bruce Murray, Auburn University.

Yopp-Singer Test of Phoneme Segmentation

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Score (number correct): _____

Directions: Today we're going to play a word game. I'm going to say a word and I want you to break the word apart. You are going to tell me each sound in the word in order. For example, if I say "old," you should say /O/-/l/-/d/." (**Administrator:** Be sure to say the sounds, not the letters, in the word.) Let's try a few together.

Practice items: (Assist the child in segmenting these items as necessary.)

ride, go, man

Test items: (Circle those items that the student correctly segments; incorrect responses may be recorded on the blank line following the item.)

1.	dog	_____	12.	lay	_____
2.	keep	_____	13.	race	_____
3.	fine	_____	14.	zoo	_____
4.	no	_____	15.	three	_____
5.	she	_____	16.	job	_____
6.	wave	_____	17.	in	_____
7.	grew	_____	18.	ice	_____
8.	that	_____	19.	at	_____
9.	red	_____	20.	top	_____
10.	me	_____	21.	by	_____
11.	sat	_____	22.	do	_____

The author, Hallie Kay Yopp, California State University, Fullerton, grants permission for this test to be reproduced. The author acknowledges the contribution of the late Harry Singer to the development of the test. For a complete description, see Yopp, H. K. (1995). A test for assessing phonemic awareness in young children. *The Reading Teacher*, *49*, 20-29.

Notes Related to Assessment

Scoring and Interpreting the Test of Phoneme Identities

The Test of Phoneme Identities is designed to see whether beginners recognize phonemes when they are hidden in spoken words. Score the test by counting the number of items correct out of 38. Since there are two choices per item, we can expect scores in vicinity of 19 by chance. Students who score below 25 probably are not aware of phonemes. The average kindergarten score is 28 (SD = 6). Scores in the 28-33 range imply some developing phonemic awareness. Students who score 34-38 are well aware of phonemes.

Scoring and Interpreting the Yopp-Singer Test of Phoneme Segmentation

Score the test by counting the number of correctly segmented words. Do not give partial credit. The kindergarten average is about 12 (SD = 8). Yopp writes, "Students who obtain high scores (segmenting all or nearly all of the items correctly) may be considered phonemically aware. Students who correctly segment some items are displaying emerging phonemic awareness. Students who are able to segment only a few items or none at all lack appropriate levels of phonemic awareness."

Testing Letter Recognition

Materials: Sheet with all capital and lower case letters in random order (laminated if possible), a photocopy for marking, and a stopwatch.
Administration: If the response is correct, make a check above the letter on the photocopy. If it is incorrect, write what the child said. For example, if the child touches *b* and says "dee," write *d* above the letter *b*. Use the stopwatch to time how fast the page of letters is named.
Directions to student: Here are all the letters in the alphabet. I want you to point to each letter and say its name as quickly as you can. Ready? Go.
Interpretation. Children should recognize all letters by the end of kindergarten. Guide printing practice on primary paper with guidelines for any letters not recognized. By first grade, children should recognize letters automatically and should thus be able to name the entire set in one minute.

Test of Phonetic Cue Reading

Materials: Individual cards with the words in the 'card' column printed in all capital letters. (For a posttest, use the other word in the question.)

Card	Question	Card	Question
1. MAD	Is this sad or mad?	7. MICE	Is this mice or nice?
2. FAN	Is this man or fan?	8. LIGHT	Is this light or fight?
3. SAT	Is this sat or fat?	9. LOCK	Is this sock or lock?
4. TEAR	Is this tear [TEER] or near?	10. FOG	Is this log or fog?
5. SELL	Is this sell or tell?	11. TOP	Is this mop or top?
6. NEST	Is this test or nest?	12. NOT	Is this lot or not?

Instructions: I'm going to show you some words, and I'm going to tell you two words it might be. See if you can use the beginning letter to figure out which word it is.

Interpretation: Children who get at least 10 correct understand how beginning letters stand for phonemes in words, i.e., the alphabetic principle. Children who get less than 10 correct have not demonstrated this understanding.

Pseudoword Reading Test: Pretest version

Materials: Print the pseudowords below on plain cards or on a sheet of paper. Write the response on the line; you may have to invent a spelling. Do not help the reader decode the word in any way.

Directions: I'm going to show you some made up words. They aren't really words, but some people can read them anyway. Can you?

Interpretation: The ability to decode even one pseudoword shows that the reader knows how to sound and blend to recognize words. Successes in the first column show the ability to blend simple short vowel words. Successes in the second column show the ability to decode more complex long vowels signaled by digraphs or silent *e*. Successes in the third column show decoding mastery by recognition of sight chunks or analogizing. Miscue analysis will reveal missing correspondences.

fim _____	yain _____	snitting _____
sep _____	bire _____	bathtail _____
lat _____	nool _____	inteakness _____
dob _____	pote _____	overtodded _____
huz _____	jeek _____	rebenderable _____

Miscue Analysis

Miscues are simply oral reading mistakes, but mistakes can reveal a reader's strategies. For example, miscues that make sense in context show that the reader is reading for meaning.

Miscues are helpful in assessing word recognition because they reveal missing correspondences or ineffective decoding strategies. To analyze miscues for missing correspondences, write what the student said over the word he or she attempted, as you would write a fraction. For example, suppose Brittney read "B.J. *set* off for school" as "B.J. *seat* off for school."

Her miscue is: $\frac{\text{seat}}{\text{set}}$

A correspondence in the text word (at the bottom) that is not used in the word the student said (at the top) is a missing correspondence. In this case, Brittney is missing *e* = /e/ (short *e*).

Section 3: PHONICS INSTRUCTION AND DECODABLE TEXTS

Goals

Participants will:

5. Know how to provide "systematic," "explicit" phonics instruction.

6. Know how to teach blending.

7. Know how to develop fluency in reading through use of decodable texts; extensive amounts of reading; multiple re-reading of printed material; and reading at independent and instructional levels.

8. Know how to respond to oral reading errors in ways that are appropriate to the nature of the error, the purpose of the particular lesson, and the needs of the learner at the moment.

9. Know how to recognize, secure, and use decodable texts.

10. Know how to integrate phonics instruction in the context of an integrated reading lesson format.

Assumptions

1. Every reader must become expert at decoding words to build sight vocabulary and free up attention for constructing meaning. Though decoding expertise is essential, the methods of teaching decoding – phonics instruction – are many and varied. Children require different degrees of systematic progression, explicitness, and intensity.
2. Learners need phonics instruction if they have not made sense of the alphabetic principle, i.e., they do not know how to map the letters of the alphabet to the phonemes of the language. This includes all beginners and any students who have not yet mastered the alphabetic principle.

3. Readers demonstrate decoding expertise when they read accurately and fluently any material not previously seen that corresponds with their spoken language; when they read nonsense words (*sim, fep, rean, wope, fitsbandle)*; or when they decode words that they have not previously seen in print (*exanthema*). Decoding experts should "graduate" from phonics instruction and turn to more challenging texts, where interferences to comprehension may stem from insufficient overlap with the author's systems of meaning and the language used in the texts. Other interferences to overcome may be the reader's failure to exhibit appropriate comprehension strategies and sufficient attention required by challenging texts.
4. Some readers make sense of the alphabetic principle without formal phonics instruction. Such readers are typically the beneficiaries of rich preschool literacy experiences, through which they informally acquire letter recognition and phonemic awareness. These readers can move through phonics instruction more quickly than children who lack this rich literacy background.
5. Since reading comprehension is the product of listening comprehension and decoding skill, it makes sense that reading instruction should emphasize making sense of the code and expanding listening comprehension.
6. The best practice activity for beginners is reading books, and initially those books should have a high percentage of decodable words that are linked to their phonics lessons.
7. Decodable texts are an integral part of early phonics instruction. These texts provide students opportunity to practice the phonics they are being taught, reinforce the alphabetic principle, lead to automaticity, and develop confident readers.
8. Decodable texts are used for a brief period of time.
9. The sequence of phonics instruction determines appropriate decodable texts.

Parameters

1. This section will clarify what is meant by systematic phonics instruction and establish the need for it. There is no research base for recommending one sequence over another sequence. The sequence of phonics instruction needs to be determined at the school level as is the sequence of instruction for other subject areas.

2. Presenters will model explicit phonics instruction and provide time for participants to practice. Emphasis will be given to establishing letter-phoneme correspondences and blending.

3. Examples of decodable texts should be referenced as presenters work through the sample progression.

4. Activities that help participants to recognize text decodability at different levels of the progression and to modify existing texts into decodable form will be emphasized.

The Purposes of Phonics Instruction

1. To convey the logic of English spellings. Effective phonics instruction leads to mastery of the alphabetic principle.

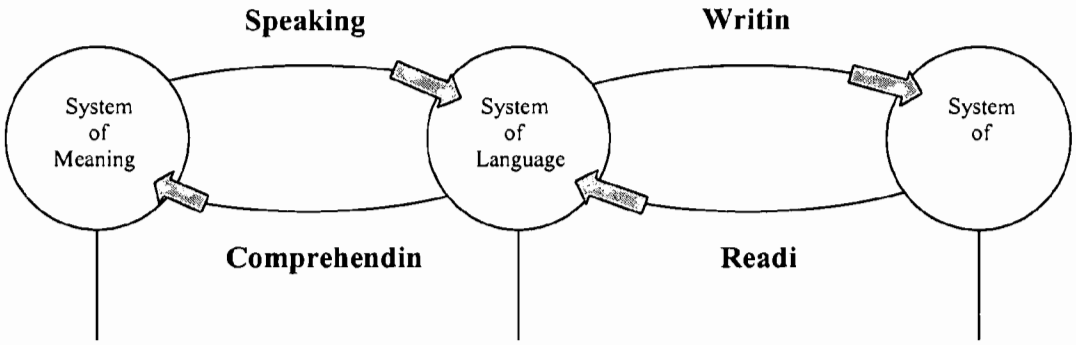
2. To enable students to decode new words they encounter on their own. Effective phonics leads to independence in word recognition.

3. To bring about automatic word recognition. Effective phonics instruction leads to effortless, fluent reading so that readers are freed to concentrate on meaning.

4. To ensure accurate and automatic word recognition. Effective phonics instruction enables readers to comprehend printed material at least as well as they would comprehend the same material if it were spoken to them (listening comprehension).

Note to Presenters: The success of this section is dependent upon the presence of various types of decodable texts. Efforts must be made to secure examples of decodable texts in which the English is not too constrained and in which a few sight words are used to increase the readability and appeal of the texts.

Summary of Reading Interferences to Reading Comprehension



1. The reader's system of meaning does not overlap sufficiently with the author's system of meaning.	2. The reader's system of language (i.e., vocabulary, syntax, idioms) does not overlap sufficiently with the author's expression.	3. The reader lacks the power to say what each word requires. (Accuracy) 4. The reader is cumbersome in word recognition and does not identify words instantly. (Automaticity) 5. The reader fails to read with ease, appropriate speed, and phrasing, and, therefore, is unable to

IMPLICATION: At every stage of reading development, teachers must be able to identify whether the interferences to comprehension stem from the system of print, the system of language, the system of meaning and/or from inattention. Teachers must make certain that students recognize the source(s) of the interference and have the strategies necessary to overcome each type of interference.

Let's Define It

Explicit phonics instruction – Decoding instruction that is teacher-directed, clearly stated, distinctly illustrated (not ambiguous or merely implied), and capable of clarifying key points about the relationships between the letters of the alphabet and the phonemes of the language.

Systematic phonics instruction – Decoding instruction that is orderly, planned, reasonably sequenced, and that gradually builds from simple elements to more complex structures.

Decodable Texts – Printed material composed primarily of words that contain the letter/phoneme correspondences previously and/or presently being taught.

What the Research Tells Us

1. Children given training in phonological sensitivity and/or alphabetic coding show superior outcomes on measures of comprehension and text reading as well as word recognition. (Stanovich, K. E. & Stanovich, P. J., 1995)

2. Research evidence supports the intuitively obvious view that skill in comprehension is highly correlated with skill in decoding of single words. (Liberman & Liberman, 1990)

3. Early attainment of decoding skill is important because early skill accuracy predicts later skill in reading comprehension. (Beck, Isabel & Juel, Connie, 1995)

4. Three maxims should be considered in the teaching of phonics:

   a. Do it early.
   b. Keep it simple.
   c. Finish by the end of grade 2.

   (Anderson, et al., Becoming a Nation of Readers, 1985)

Systematic Phonics – A Sample Progression

Consonants and short vowels
Examples: *sit, run, up, slip, drag, spent*

Consonant digraphs
Examples: *sh*, *ch, th, wh*

R-controlled vowels
Examples: f*ur*, c*a*re, *o*r, c*a*r

Schwa
Examples: moth*e*r, *u*pon, wag*o*n, gard*e*n, *a* man, th*e* pet

Long vowels and their common spellings
Examples: *a*te, s*ee*, *i*ce, h*o*me, c*u*te, p*ai*n, s*oa*p, b*ea*d

Other vowels and their common spellings
Examples: *a*ll, s*aw*, h*ow*, b*oy*, t*oo*k, p*oo*l

Other common spellings for vowel and consonant sounds
Examples:
- soft c and g
- vowel "y" (Examples: funn*y*, m*y*)
- unsounded letters (such as *kn*, *gn*, *wr, gh*, *lk*)
- final clues (*ph*, *tion*)

Note to Presenters: Since there is no research base for recommending one sequence over another, this progression is only for illustrative purposes. In the sequence above, the schwa is introduced early to emphasize its importance in reading multisyllable words and the contributions it makes to oral reading fluency because of the frequency of articles (*a* and th*e*) in printed materials. Four activities need to be emphasized in connection with this page: (1) Clarify all terminology used above; (2) Have participants examine the passage on page 26 to determine at what point on the progression this decodable text was written; (3) Have participants examine reading material used in their school to determine what sequence is used and how reasonable that sequence is; and (4) Discuss which sequences are most common in commercially available materials and how sensible or reasonable these sequences are. Through these activities criteria for selecting a sequence for a school should emerge. Suggested criteria are listed on p. 31.

Blending

Blending is the process by which we put phonemes together to make words. Some children have the ability to produce phonemes but are unable to blend them together to recognize words.

- Oral blending is an important part of a phonemic awareness program. Students may first learn to blend phonemes orally to lay the groundwork for decoding. In oral blending, be careful not to overload children's memories by asking them to blend many phonemes in a sequence.

- Later students learn to match phonemes to letters. With letters to symbolize the phonemes, children can blend longer words because the letters help children hold in their minds the phonemes they are putting together.

Explicit Teaching of Blending

Modeling by the teacher is a vital step toward students' ability to blend on their own. There are three common approaches to the explicit teaching of blending:

1. **Successive Blending** – Start first with sustaining consonant sounds. This gives children something to hold on to as they learn to blend. Demonstrate how one continues the sound until the next sound is added, e.g., *mmmmmuuuuuuug*. Letters, colored blocks, or other manipulatives may be used to provide visual cues for the children.

2. **Start With the Vowel** – To model, first sound the vowel. For example, if the word is soap, first pronounce *oa*. Then cover the *p* and blend *s – oa*, *soa*. Last, uncover the *p* and blend *soa-p*, *soap*. To help students blend, group the letters to lead readers through this sequence. First show only the vowel. Then put the initial consonants with the vowel and help students blend the onset-vowel chunk. Finally, reveal the final consonant(s), and have students blend it (or them) to finish the word.

3. **Onset/Rime** – This method is used after phonemes have been taught individually. It is helpful in leading students to recognize "chunks" of words. First, point to the letter(s) (*e.g., s, st,* etc.) that occur before the first vowel while you say or elicit the phoneme(s) for that letter(s). Then, blend the vowel with the remaining letter(s) (*op*). Finally, blend both parts together.

Attention to Dialect Differences

Differences between the dialect children speak at home and the dialect spoken at school and/or by their teacher can create difficulties for children learning to read. Dialect differences need to be viewed as regional variations, not as incorrect English.

Teachers need to develop sensitivity to dialect differences when teaching blending or any other explicit phonics lesson. Phonics instruction must be focused on the "logic" of the English writing system and on developing the students' appreciation of how the phonemes of words are spelled.

This can be especially difficult for dialect-speaking children. A teacher pointing out the "d" sound in the words "sold" or "find" can confuse Southerners who pronounce these words as "sol" and "fine." These kinds of confusions can be avoided if teachers become more aware of dialect differences.

Decodable Texts
Key Points of Research

Students who use decodable texts are better decoders.

Discuss importance:

The selection of text used very early in first grade may determine the strategies and cues children use in word identification.

Discuss meaning and importance:

The types of words which appear in beginning texts may well exert a more powerful influence in shaping word identification strategies than the method of reading instruction.

Discuss meaning and importance:

Note to Presenters: These quotes are from Juel, C. & Roper/Schneider, D. (1985). The influence of basal readers on first grade reading. Reading Research Quarterly, 20, pp. 134-152. Since they are taken out of context, their meaning and importance need to be discussed.

A Tent in the Garden

Sam has a tent in the garden. Dad set it up. Sam lets his sister, Pat, sit in the tent with him.

At dusk, as the sun sets in the west, Sam and Pat step in the tent. The grass in the garden is wet, but a mat is on top of the grass in the tent. Sam and Pat sit on the mat.

Pat tells Sam that her cat is fantastic. Sam tells Pat that his pet frog swims in the bathtub.

At seven, Mom stops at the tent with a wagon. In Mom's wagon is dinner for the children.

Note to Presenters: This passage is provided so that participants can locate at which point in the sample progression it was written. The passage was written to illustrate that fairly interesting decodable texts can be written (with multisyllable words and a few sight words) before long vowels are introduced. Presenters may provide other examples of passages that correspond to some point in the progression. It is assumed that the words *is*, *his*, and *has* have been introduced early (as sight words or a common spelling for /z/.)

? You ?

? Decide! ?

Examine each sentence and determine if it is decodable according to the sample progression listed on page 22. If the sentence *is* decodable, write yes on the line. If the sentence *is not* decodable, make necessary changes and rewrite the sentence.

Point on the progression: All sounds/symbols have been taught through the schwa.

1. A quail is a bird.

   _____

2. The truck stops at the corner.

   _____

3. Ann ran on the sidewalk.

   _____

4. The girl went up the mountain.

   _____

Components of an Explicit Phonics Lesson

- Begin the lesson with a short **phonemic awareness warm-up** activity.

  Example:

- Focus on the new **correspondence** by stating, explaining, and modeling how to decode and spell words.

  Example:

- Have children practice **blending and spelling words** using the correspondence that is being studied that day.

  Example:

- Give opportunities to apply the day's lesson by reading **decodable text**.

  Example:

- Encourage recognition of the spelling connection through **writing activities** (e.g., dictation and composition).

  Example:

Note to Presenters: This is the single most important page in this section. Presenters must model this procedure and make sure that the participants complete the page by writing next to "Example:" how the presenter modeled each step in the procedure. "Paul's Pet" (page 30) is included for presenters who choose to model the introduction of /aw/ and the common spellings found in b*a*ll and P*au*l. Next, participants should be paired to prepare an explicit phonics lesson. The next page can be used to guide their preparation. Lessons may be presented and discussed as time allows. Seek variety in the lessons shared and emphasize the procedure with each lesson. Writing can be incorporated into any stage of the lesson.

Components of an Explicit Phonics Lesson

- Begin the lesson with a short **phonemic awareness warm-up** activity.

  Example:

- Focus on the new **correspondence** by stating, explaining, and modeling how to decode and spell words.

  Example:

- Have children practice **blending and spelling words** using the correspondence that is being studied that day.

  Example:

- Give opportunities to apply the day's lesson by reading **decodable text**.

  Example:

- Encourage recognition of the spelling connection through **writing activities** (e.g., dictation and composition).

  Example:

Paul's Pet

Paul has a summertime pet. This is how Paul got his pet.

One day Paul and Austin lost a ball. "Where is the ball?" asked Paul. "Over by that tall maple tree," said Austin. Paul walked over to the tree to find the ball. Just then, he saw a baby bird fall to the ground. It had fallen out of its nest and was hurt. Paul picked the bird up and took it home. He made a birdhouse for it. Every winter it flies south because it is warmer there. Every summer when it comes back, it makes its nest in the house.

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Criteria for Selecting a Sequence for Phonics Instruction

1. The sequence emphasizes consistent letter/phoneme correspondences at the early stages, thus emphasizing the logic of the English language spellings.

2. The sequence introduces letter/phoneme correspondences that allow students to build many English words from the first correspondences introduced (e.g., short vowels and simple consonant spellings allow for the building of hundreds of English words like sat, ran, fantastic, ant, plants, strip, split, trip, bathtub).

3. The sequence is thorough, i.e., accounting for all phonemes of the English language and the most common spellings of those phonemes.

4. The sequence corresponds with available decodable texts, so that the taught letter/phoneme correspondences can be practiced extensively in printed material.

Note to Presenters: Participants may want to add to the criteria.

Phonics Instruction Within the Context of an Integrated Reading Lesson Format

Research has shown that students benefit from a comprehensive and balanced classroom literacy program. What instructional components are important enough to include in most reading instruction?

Several widely used, research-based intervention programs such as Reading Recovery, Direct Instruction, and Language! are characterized by structured routines and procedures. Most of these programs integrate variations of three common components: rereading familiar text, focusing on words, and guided reading of new text. Teachers can use these components in a lesson plan that matches the needs of individual learners. The needs of the learner should guide the amount of emphasis given to each component.

This reading lesson format assumes the following:

- A teacher works with a small group of children who are similar in their reading development and able to read about the same level of text.
- The teacher assists students in ways that make them independent decoders and comprehenders.
- The components of the lesson may occur in any order. For example, the teacher may focus on words before the reading, after the reading, and briefly during the reading.
- The emphasis is on reading increasingly challenging books over time.

Rereading Familiar Text

Definition: Students reread previously read text.
Emphasis: Developing accuracy, automaticity, and fluency as well as providing additional opportunities to refine and self-regulate the building of meaning; developing confidence and motivation.

Note to Presenters: Throughout this module we have emphasized that the best practice activity is reading in decodable text. An excellent culminating activity is to have participants practice developing a lesson using the three-part lesson format outlined above. Model the framework using a decodable text. Have participants choose a decodable text with which to illustrate the format. Participants may be Grades 2-12 teachers who work with students who have many sight words, beginning decoding skills, and beginning comprehension skills. If so, the reading lesson format should be practiced with any reading material assumed to be at the students' instructional level. Point out that this lesson format will be called an instructional framework in the module dealing with struggling readers. Relate this framework to the components of an explicit phonics lesson listed on p. 28.

Focusing on Words

Definition: Teachers provide explicit and systematic decoding instruction that matches the instructional needs of the students (e.g., developing phonemic awareness; expanding knowledge of letter-sound correspondences; recognizing high-frequency words; decoding chunks of words; writing words and sentences that use the words being studied; studying prefixes, suffixes, root words, and other morphemes). This component may occur before, during, or after Guided Reading of New Text.

Emphasis: Enhancing the building of meaning by developing the knowledge, skills, strategies, and self-regulating behaviors needed to read with accuracy and automaticity and to figure out unfamiliar words rapidly and efficiently.

Guided Reading of New Text

Definition: Teachers support students in building meaning and solving problems as students read unfamiliar text at increasingly challenging levels. Support is provided before, during, and after reading as required by the learner.

Emphasis: Developing and orchestrating the knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary to engage in active building of meaning and self-regulation; nurturing the motivation needed to activate and sustain this process.

Guidelines for Dealing with Multisyllable Words

The ability to decode multisyllable words does not rely on the ability to apply rules as much as it does the ability to identify vowel sounds in a word. Each syllable contains one vowel sound. Consequently, the location of vowels enables students to take two important steps: (1) identify the chunks (usually syllables) and (2) identify the vowel phoneme, the main carrier of the sound of a chunk. Usually, the decoding of multisyllable words will be accomplished through three steps described below.

Step 1: Identify recognizable chunks.

Chunks are usually syllables, a single vowel sound accompanied by a consonant or consonants. As students read more, they learn to recognize chunks like *pre*, *in*, *ing* and *tion* automatically. Chunks found at the ending of words (e.g., ed, s, ly) are found easily and can be read first.

Step 2: Identify the appropriate vowel phoneme.

First, use spelling cues, and try the most common sounds for the vowel or the vowel combination (*ai, ow, ou, oo*). As students read more, they learn to recognize how chunks resemble other words or chunks that occur in known words. (Example: the word *finish* contains a chunk that looks like *pin* and a chunk that looks like *dish*.)

Step 3: Blend the chunks together and recognize the word.

Don't worry if the pronunciation is not quite right the first time. Usually a similar pronunciation is enough to trigger a known word, especially when the word is found in context. (Wagon may be read as "*wag*" "*on*" initially, but that pronunciation sounds close enough to the word *wagon* that it is usually recognized, especially in the context of a sentence or story.) As students read more, they learn how to deal with stressed and unstressed syllables.

Note to Presenters: Phonics is not an exact science. The goal of decoding is to generate a pronunciation that comes close. If phonics were a game of golf, decoding would get you on the green. Context and knowledge of the language will sink the putt. For example, if a reader makes *guillotine* rhyme with *pine*, that would be close enough to recognize the word in context, so long as the word being read is within the student's spoken/listening vocabulary.

Reduced Vowels in Unaccented Syllables

The ability to read multisyllable words requires students to deal with stressed (or accented) and unstressed (unaccented) syllables. Most unaccented syllables in English sound much like the first phoneme in up (/u/), referred to as "short u." Examples would be the last phoneme in *sofa*, the first phoneme in *upon*, and the second to last phoneme in *wagon*. This unstressed vowel is referred to as the "schwa" (/□/).

Less common is the unaccented syllable that resembles the first phoneme in *it* (/i/), called "short i." This phoneme can be heard as the next to last sound in most pronunciations of *chicken* and is written /i/. Most instructional material does not reference this unaccented vowel; in fact, some instructional material does not deal with unaccented syllables at all!

Helping students learn to decode multisyllable words generally requires teachers to have tools to make the task easy for students. The following suggestions will help.

1. Introduce unaccented syllables soon after students are comfortable with short vowels. Start with words in which the unaccented syllable is sounded like "short i" and spelled with the letter *i*.

it	ic	ish
rabbit	picnic	finish
visit	traffic	punish
	fantastic	selfish

2. Add other examples of words that contain short vowels and easy-to-read unaccented syllables such as the following:

er	est	en	on	ness
sadder	saddest	sadden	wagon	sadness
fresher	freshest	freshen	dragon	freshness
sicker	sickest	sicken	cannon	sickness
fatter	fattest	children	gallon	
		happen		
		kitten		
		chicken		

Note to the Teacher: There is no research to support this progression of instruction for unaccented syllables. It is illustrative only of a common-sense approach that builds from simple to more complex and allows early readers to decode multisyllable words. Participants can discuss the merits of this progression as well as the progression they employ to empower learners to read words that contain unaccented syllables.

et	ful	y	ly
pocket	restful	daddy	sadly
rocket	thankful	Billy	swiftly
puppet		rocky	
ticket		puppy	
		funny	
		penny	
		sunny	
		lucky	
		happy	

3. Teach students to recognize final syllables that are unaccented and sounded as /□l/ and their common spellings.

el	al	le
travel	pedal	candle
camel	metal	handle
nickel	signal	riddle
tunnel		tickle
		tumble
		twinkle

4. Having built a foundation for dealing with unaccented syllables such as the one outlined above, students will be prepared to continue their decoding of multisyllable words that contain all phonemes of the English language and the various spellings of unaccented vowels. Guidelines provided on the next page help teachers equip students with strategies needed to decode any English word.

Fluency

Fluent reading is easy, flowing reading. Beginning readers usually do not read fluently; in fact, for some, reading can be a word-by-word struggle. Fluency develops over time, usually signaled by oral reading that becomes faster, smoother, and more expressive.

How do we help children struggling with slow, painstaking sounding out and blending? Support and encourage them. Effortful decoding is a *necessary step* toward automatic word recognition. Accurate, automatic word recognition is a necessary step toward fluency.

Fluency, however, is more than automatic word recognition. It includes comprehending connected text and coordinating word recognition and comprehension in an effortless manner. As readers develop, oral reading becomes quieter (perhaps "whisper reading") and effortless silent reading becomes the norm.

In general, the fluency formula is: Read and re-read decodable words in connected text. First, ask students to decode unknown words rather than guess from context. Use text with words children can decode using known correspondences. Use whole texts to sustain interest. Ask students to re-read sentences that require effort. There are two general approaches to improving fluency. The direct approach involves modeling and practice with repeated reading under time pressure. The indirect approach involves encouraging children to read voluntarily in their free time.

1. **Direct approach: Repeated readings**. In repeated reading, children continue working with each text until it is fluent. Repeated reading works best with readers who have reached at least a primer instructional level. Use a passage of 100 words or so at the instructional level. The text should be largely decodable. Two ways to frame repeated readings are:

   a. Graph how well students read with a "1 Minute Read." Graphing is motivating because it makes progress evident. Emphasize speed as well as accuracy. Set a reachable but challenging goal, e.g., 85 words per minute. Have the student read for 1 minute. Count the number of words read, subtract the misread words, and graph the result with an easily understood chart.

b. Use check sheets for partner readings. Begin by explaining what you'll be listening for; model fluent and nonfluent reading. For example, show the difference between smooth and choppy reading. Show how expressive readers make their voices go higher and lower, faster and slower, louder and softer. Pair students and have students take turns being the reader and the listener. The reader reads a selection *three times*. The listener gives a report after the *second* and *third* readings.

I noticed that my partner ...

After 2nd	After 3rd reading	
☐	☐	Recognized more words
☐	☐	Read faster
☐	☐	Read smoother

2. **Indirect approach: Voluntary reading.** Sustained silent reading (SSR, a.k.a. DEAR, "drop everything and read") gives children a daily opportunity to read and discover the pleasure of reading. SSR has been shown to lead to more positive attitudes toward reading. In addition, the use of peer discussion groups with SSR leads to gains in reading achievement. Generally, three "cardinal rules" apply to SSR: everybody reads; there are no interruptions; and no one will be asked to report what they have read. It is essential that students feel that this is a period of free reading, with the emphasis on reading for enjoyment.

Other essentials for encouraging voluntary reading include a plentiful library of books and frequent opportunities to choose. Children should be allowed and encouraged to read page turners (e.g., easy series books) rather than the classics for their independent reading. For gaining fluency, quantity is more important than quality.

Book introductions help children make informed decisions about what they want to read. For an effective booktalk, choose a book you like. Show the illustrations to the students. Give a brief talk, hitting the high points. Good booktalks often feature some oral reading, e.g., of a suspenseful part.

General Guidelines for Responding to Oral Reading Errors

- Since the best practice for beginners is oral reading of books, beginning readers need to read books every day, and teachers need to respond appropriately to any reading errors.

- Teachers have an important instructional role when they hear students make errors during oral reading. That role is to help students become independent readers. If students already knew how to attack unknown words, they would do so.

- Effective responses to oral reading errors introduce strategies that students can learn to use independently.

- Effective responses to oral reading errors are brief so that efforts to gain meaning from the text are not disrupted for too long.

- Generally, we do not correct errors that don't change meaning, e.g., *home* for *house* (nature of the error), but this may depend upon the purpose of the lesson and needs of the learner.

- All responses to oral reading errors are dependent on the context. For example, if students are practicing in decodable texts, if the meaning is easily accessible, and/or if the reading is a rereading, teachers may extend their period of help or stop the reading and ask the student to practice more by himself/herself (purpose of the lesson and needs of the learner).

- Generally, progress is most rapid when students practice in material where they are about 95% accurate. If students are struggling with many words, the best response may be to find another book (purpose of the lesson and needs of the learner).

Note to Presenters: Steps suggested in Responding to Oral Reading Errors (next page) must be modeled by the presenter and practiced by the participants. It is suggested that presenters collect examples of short passages at various levels of difficulty. The presenter will establish a context and model the steps suggested with two or three participants. Then participants will practice the recommendations with each other. Participants will be paired so that they can alternate between being the teacher and role playing the student. Following teacher role play, presenters can ask questions and discuss answers.

Responding to Oral Reading Errors

- **Wait and write.**
  - Wait five seconds or so. While you wait, write the attempt(s) over the word. comee, comic / *come* — hāv, heavy / *have*
  - Observation of types of errors can help direct future decoding lessons.

- **Send 'em on.**
  - Suggest reading the rest of the sentence as your first response. With partial decoding, this contextual boost can lead to complete recognition.
  - Use gestures such as covering parts of the word or uncovering it from left to right to elicit a student attempt. We want students to make attempts.
  - Avoid merely saying "skip it" or "sound it out." We want to encourage attempts and we want to provide help with the attempt.

- **Provide brief help.**
  - Generally, say or do just one thing. Experts may vary from this when the situation and the student suggest it.
  - Try hints such as the following.

    Cover Up – Covering part of the word to simplify decoding
    Point Out – Explaining for *drew* that *ew* is sounded /uw/
    Use Known – Referring student to a known word that provides a clue (e.g., Write *new* and say, "It looks like this word you already know.")
  - Avoid hints such as referring to the pictures, to meaning, or rhyming words. These clues will not help in the long run.

- **Tell if you must.**
  - If the brief help doesn't lead to word recognition, tell the word.
  - This is not the time for a phonics lesson.

- **Send 'em back to reread.**
  - This shifts attention to the meaning of the story and gives practice with the word that caused the trouble.
  - Ask student to reread whether student reads word or teacher tells word.

Section 4: TEACHING SPELLING

Goal

Participants will:

11. Know how to teach spelling in ways that enhance decoding, strengthen visual imagery, and give appropriate emphasis to spelling rules and patterns.

Assumptions

1. Phonemic awareness needs to form the backbone for spelling instruction. Without it, spelling words appears as memorizing arbitrary letter strings.

2. Expert spellers visualize words and have the ability to store and retrieve the visual form of words in their brains. Consequently, spelling instruction must provide activities that strengthen visual imagery because the greatest help in spelling English words is to recognize when it "looks right."

3. Within the English language there are reliable patterns and rules for spelling. Knowledge of a few rules that apply to large numbers of words and have few exceptions and observations of common patterns help economize the teaching of spelling because the spelling of each word does not have to be memorized separately.

4. Self-correction needs to be used extensively in spelling instruction. Self-correction increases spelling proficiency (Stetson, E. & Boutin, F., 1980) and prepares students for the real-life application of spelling proficiency in activities such as proofreading.

5. Good spelling instruction, like good phonics instruction, is compatible with two facts about written English:
   - That one particular phoneme may be represented by a number of different spellings (/k/ can be spelled *k*iss, li*ke*, si*ck*, *c*at, *ch*orus, wa*lk*, a*che*, o*cc*ur, tre*kk*ed, *qu*ay, cli*que*, la*cqu*er, sa*cch*arine, cho*co*late, *kh*aki).

- That one particular spelling can stand for a number of different phonemes. (The letter *a* can have as many as 10 sounds as illustrated by the sentence: "*A*ll w*a*s d*a*rk *a*nd m*a*ny h*a*res r*a*ced *a*round the vill*a*ge sw*a*mp.")

Done well, spelling instruction can generate a fascination with the phonemes and spellings of the English Language.

Parameters

1. Spelling instruction connects with writing instruction in a number of ways. Examples:

   - Research has shown that use of temporary spelling during the writing process leads to longer stories, better word recognition, and better spelling.

   - Generally, we agree that attention to accurate spelling is appropriate during the editing phase of the writing process. Don't allow concern for perfect spelling to interfere with the composing process.

   Here we are using *spelling instruction* to refer to a systematic effort that is part of the daily language arts program and in which spelling is taught directly.

How to Study Spelling Words:
Emphasis on Phonemic Awareness and Visualization

Without phonemic awareness, word spelling resembles rote memorization, a process similar to how we learn telephone numbers. Without visualization, the only authority for how to spell English words is a dictionary or someone who knows. (Even spell checks require confirmation by the user.) The procedure outlined below emphasizes the two indispensable ingredients of proficient spellers: phonemic awareness and visualization.

1. **Say the word.**
   Clarify meaning. Be sure you can use the word in sentences.

2. **Stretch the word.**
   Clarify the number of syllables. Work by syllables if necessary. If a sound cannot be stretched, stutter it. For example, the word *night* could be stretched and pronounced (/n/ /n/ /n/ /I/ /I/ /I/ /t/ /t/ /t/).

3. **Count the sounds and draw blanks to stand for the sounds.**
   top = ___ ___ ___ = 3 night = ___ ___ ___ = 3

   traditional = ___ ___ ___ / ___ ___ / ___ ___ ___ / ___ ___ = 10
   (Note: The number of sounds is important, not the way the word is divided into syllables.)

4. **Record the spelling sound by sound.**
   top = ___ ___ ___ night = ___ ___ ___

   traditional = ___ ___ ___ / ___ ___ / ___ ___ ___ / ___ ___

5. **Look at the word carefully.**
   Take a picture of the word. Notice any trouble spots (*igh* for /I/).

6. **Visualize the word.**
   Shut your eyes and see the word. Do stunts to verify your visualization, e.g., make the spelling for the /I/ large and colored. (n igh t).

7. **Write the word.**
   - Without looking at the word, except in your mind, write the word.
   - Compare the written word with the model.

Rules in Spelling Instruction

Although there are 314 spelling rules, there are only a few generalizations that occur frequently enough to make using them instructionally sound. These rules are:

1. *q* is always followed by *u* (quiet, queen, quack).

2. *i* comes before *e*, except after *c* (chief, ceiling, receive) or when sounded as *a* as in neighbor and weigh.

3. No English word ends in *v* (have, gave, glove, live)

4. Concerning plurals ...

   - Add *es* to words ending with *s, ss, sh, ch,* or *x* (passes, slashes, churches, foxes).

   - Change *f* or *fe* to *v* and add *es* (knife to knives, half to halves).

5. Concerning suffixes other than plurals ...

   - Keep the final *e* when the suffix begins with a consonant (advancement).

   - Drop the final *e* when the suffix begins with a vowel (hoping, giving, having), except when the vowel ends in *ce* or *ge* (ages, noticeable, courageous).

   - Change *y* to *i*, unless the suffix begins with *i* (happily, buried, burying, carried).

   - Change *c* to *ck* (picnicking, panicky, trafficking, frolicking).

Patterns in Spelling Instruction

Regarding the use of patterns in spelling instruction, teachers need to keep in mind the following guidelines:

- The deliberate introduction of a few spelling patterns can heighten students' awareness of the logic of English spellings and create a "detective" or "research" attitude in learners.

- The teacher's role is to present a list of words capable of illustrating a pattern. The student's role is to discover the pattern and verbalize the generalization.

- Patterns work for a high percentage of words but not all words. Teachers need to generate an atmosphere of excitement around the discovery of exceptions to the patterns. Examples of patterns worthy of exploration are listed below.

1. Collections of the most common spellings of /k/ could yield the following:

k	**c**	**ke**	**ck**
keep	cap	like	neck
kilt	cost	bake	sick
sky	cut	joke	track
skill	class	Mike	pick
sketch	act	strike	sock
book	scrap	broke	luck
peek	scratch	woke	truck
milk	picnic	take	brick
task	traffic		
took	come		
work	close		
look	clock		
think	criminal		
thank	capable		

What generalizations might be drawn???

a. **K** is used in the initial position before *e, i,* or *y* only.
b. Use ***ck*** after short vowels in one-syllable words.
c.
d.

2. A study of all the spellings of /ch/ might lead to observation of how /ch/ is spelled.

tch	**ch**	**ch**	**t**	**c**	**che**
ma**tch**	spee**ch**	**ch**in	pic**t**ure	**c**ello	ni**che**
Du**tch**	por**ch**	**ch**urch	fea**t**ure		apa**che**
ske**tch**	pou**ch**	**ch**ildren	furni**t**ure		
pi**tch**	sandwi**ch**	**ch**icken			
blo**tch**	enri**ch**	handker**ch**ief			
ke**tch**up	su**ch**	whi**ch**			

Can you find examples of words for the rare spellings of /ch/???
What generalizations might be drawn???

a.

b.

***When working with patterns, be prepared for the exceptions. They make the study more fun!!!

Appendix A

English Phonemes and Example Words Showing Common Spelling(s) of Each Phoneme

Phoneme Symbols Used by Linguists	Symbols Used in Module	Spelling(s) and Example Words
/ey/	/A/	*a* (bake), *ai* (train), *ay* (say)
/æ/	/a/	*a* (flat)
/b/	/b/	*b* (ball), *bb* (ribbon)
/k/	/k/	*c* (cake), *k* (key), *ck* (back)
/d/	/d/	*d* (door), *dd* (sudden)
/E/ (baby)	/E/	*e* (me), *ee* (feet), *ea* (leap), *y*
/□/	/e/	*e* (pet), *ea* (head)
/f/	/f/	*f* (fix), *ph* (phone), *ff* (off)
/g/	/g/	*g* (gas), *gg* (egg), *gh* (ghost)
/h/	/h/	*h* (hot)
/ay/	/I/	*i* (bite), *igh* (light), *y* (sky), *I*
/ɪ/	/i/	*i* (sit)
/j/	/j/	*j* (jet), *dge* (edge), *g* (gem)
/l/	/l/	*l* (lamp), *ll* (ill)
/m/	/m/	*m* (my), *mm* (comma)
/n/	/n/	*n* (no), *kn* (knock), *nn* (funny)
/ow/	/O/	*o* (bone), *oa* (soap), *ow* (low)
/□/	/o/	*o* (hot)
/p/	/p/	*p* (pie), *pp* (happy)
/r/	/r/	*r* (road), *wr* (wrong)
/s/	/s/	*s* (say), *c* (cent), *ss* (pass)
/t/	/t/	*t* (time), *tt* (better), *ed* (flipped)
/□/	/u/	*u* (thumb)
/v/	/v/	*v* (voice)
/w/	/w/	*w* (wash)
/y/	/y/	*y* (yes)
/z/	/z/	*z* (zoo), *s* (as), *zz* (dizzy)
/uw/	/OO/	*oo* (boot), *u* (truth)
/□/	/oo/	*oo* (book), *u* (put)
/oy/	/oi/	*oi* (soil), *oy* (toy)
/aw/	/ou/	*ou* (out), *ow* (cow)
/□/	/aw/	*aw* (saw), *au* (awesome), *a* (tall)
/□/	/sh/	*sh* (ship), *ti* (nation), *ci* (special)
/□/	/ch/	*ch* (chest), *tch* (catch)
/θ/	/th/	*th* (thick)
/ð/	/TH/	*th* (this)
/ŋ/	/ng/	*ng* (sing)
/□/	/zh/	*s* (measure)

Reduced vowels in unstressed syllables

/□/ /□/ *a* (sofa), *u* (upon), *o* (wagon)
/□/ /i/ *e* (chicken)

Several interesting cases

An r-controlled vowel (sometimes treated as one phoneme, sometimes as two phonemes)
/□/ /er/ *er* (her), *ir* (first), *or* (work)

There are combinations of phonemes that are often treated as one letter.
/y/ /uw/ /yoo/ *u* (use)
/k/ /s/ /ks/ *x* (box)
/g/ /z/ /gz/ *x* (exam)

There is one combination of phonemes that is written with two letters but generally treated as one entity.
/k/ /w/ *qu* (quick)

Note to Presenters: This is merely a catalogue of English phonemes (represented within slashes) and example words that show common spellings (in italics) of each phoneme. The first column contains symbols generally used by linguists to represent phonemes. The second column contains symbols more commonly used in instructional materials and the ones used throughout this module. This listing is not intended to suggest a progression for instruction.

Appendix B

Making Friends with Phonemes

Phoneme awareness is the ability to identify phonemes when they are found in their natural context – spoken words. Children need phoneme awareness to learn to read because letters represent phonemes in words. The spelling of a word – its letter sequence – is a map of the pronunciation – its phoneme sequence. To learn to read words, we have to understand this mapping. Thus, learning to read begins by making friends with phonemes – becoming comfortable and familiar with them. Informally, children develop this familiarity in conversations about books read aloud, especially alphabet books and books of nursery rhymes. Guiding and encouraging children's attempts to invent spelling also helps children make friends with phonemes.

Children can also be taught to make friends with phonemes in explicit lessons. When we examine research-based programs for teaching phoneme identities, we find several features: (1) a focus on a basic set of individual phonemes, one at a time; (2) activities designed to make each phoneme memorable; and (3) practice finding each phoneme in spoken words.

1. **Focus on individual phonemes.** Children need to get a feel for each phoneme they will use in reading and spelling. Where to start? Spend time with each phoneme they will need to read and spell words. Some phonemes such as /f/, /m/, and /s/ are easy to stretch and pronounce by themselves. Other consonants like /t/ and /p/ can come soon after. We need vowels right away, because we can't put together any word without a vowel. Long vowels are easier to identify than short vowels. However, short vowels should come early because they are typically the first to be introduced in reading lessons – since they have simple one-letter spellings. Children do not need to be taught every phoneme. As they get used to identifying a limited set of phonemes, they will learn how to identify others.

Introduce each phoneme one at a time. A good introductory strategy is to use meaningful names. Meaningful names provide a familiar image of a sound similar to the sound of the phoneme in the world; for example, /z/ sounds like a buzzing bee. Children can readily associate /a/ (short a) with a crying baby. Have children learn alliterative tongue twisters, e.g., "Nobody was nice to

Nancy's neighbor Nick, but he was never nasty." Once children learn a tongue twister, have them stretch the target phoneme, e.g., "Nnnnnobody was nnnnnice to Nnnnnancy's nnnnneighbor Nnnnnick." Children could compose their own alliterations and write them with invented spelling. An excellent resource is a good alphabet book. Look for alphabetical books that have multiple examples of familiar words to illustrate each letter, such as *Dr. Seuss's ABC*.

2. **Make the phoneme memorable.** After children have been introduced to a phoneme, they need to stretch it, examine it, and make meaningful connections to other things they know about. They will need time to experiment and discover what their mouths are doing as they practice producing each phoneme. Post illustrations of meaningful names, the real-word sounds similar to the phoneme, for review. For example, a picture of a child eating ice cream will help children remember the phoneme /m/. They could eat marshmallows and say, "Mmm mm mm!" In the long run, children need to learn letters and digraphs as symbols for phonemes. Teach students to print the most common letter for the target phoneme (here, *M*). Then have them invent spellings for words with this letter. Daily writing opportunities with invented spelling allow children to identify phonemes by stretching words and feeling what their mouths are doing.

3. **Find the phoneme in word contexts.** Children have not learned the phoneme until they can spot it in words. For early practice, help them recognize the target phoneme at the beginning of words. For this, you might have them pick out illustrations of words beginning with the phoneme from a bulletin board. Later have them search for the phoneme elsewhere in the word. Have children raise their hands when they hear the phoneme in words, perhaps testing words related in meaning (Do you hear /m/ in ham or eggs?). Only after children recognize phonemes in words should we ask them to think of words that feature the target phoneme. For example, until they can readily find the phoneme in words, they can't search magazines for illustrations that begin with the phoneme. *DaisyQuest* and *Daisy's Castle* are excellent computer games that use state-of-the-art animation and synthesized speech to help children find phonemes in word contexts. Blending and segmentation work with the target phoneme is very helpful in recognizing the phoneme in word contexts. Such work is usually helped by having letters to represent the phonemes; otherwise, children have too many things to think about at once.

Phonological and Phonemic Awareness Sample Activities

Sample Lessons with Explicit Instruction

Say /o/. Tell students: The mouth move we are going to spot today is /o/ (short o). Have you ever been to the doctor's office, and the doctor says, "Say ah" (/o/)? Let me hear you say /o/. Funny thing, we have a letter that that says /o/, [draw *o* on the board] and it looks like a mouth wide open saying /o/. Draw that letter in the air with me. Make an *o* with your hand. Great, you'll always have an *o* right in your hand. What is the sound? What does it feel like to say /o/? Say "Oliver had an operation in October, and Oscar gave him an octopus." Say it again, and stretch out /o/. Let's see if you can spot /o/ in some words. Make your *o* hand when you hear /o/: [Say words one by one: Oliver had an operation in October, and Oscar gave him an octopus.] Do you hear /o/ in odd or even? Fran or Ollie? Steal or rob? Hot or cold? Read *Fox in Socks* to the class and have children listen for more words with /o/, holding up their *o* hands. Later, ask children individually to find /o/ in *cow* or *ox*, *stop* or *go*, *catch* or *drop*, *rock* or *stone*.

Crying Baby. The mouth move and sound we are going to listen and watch for today is /a/. It sounds like a crying baby. Say /a/, /a/, apple. /a/, /a/, applesauce, /a/, /a/, applejacks. We have a letter to say /a/. Write it on your paper: It starts like a *c*, then finishes the circle and comes straight down. What sound does it make? Let's see if you can hear /a/ in some words I say. Do you hear /a/ in *pot* or *pan*? *Cap* or *gown*? *Fast* or *slow*? *Dog* or *cat*? Tell which words say /a/: Andrew and Alice asked if Annie's African animals were angry. On your paper draw a picture of something whose name has the /a/ sound. Write the name below it. [Encourage the children to invent spellings. Have each child tell the class about the picture. Make a bulletin board display of the illustrated words.]

Icky Sticky. Explain: Today we will learn about /i/, the icky sticky sound. Did you ever pick up the knife that was used to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and get icky sticky peanut butter all over your hands? Maybe you said this: /i/. Everyone pretend you have icky sticky peanut butter on your hands and say /i/. /i/ is a sound we use in thousands of words, and we spell it with this letter [write *i* on the board]. Remember how to make the letter *i*? Start at the fence, draw

straight down to the sidewalk, and then make a dot on top. If we know letter *i* and can spot the sound /i/ in a word, we can learn to read it and spell it. Model: I'm going to test a word and see if it has /i/. My word is spit. I'm going to stretch it out, *ssspiiit*. Yes, I heard icky sticky /i/, right in the middle. Suppose we wanted to spell *it*. Stretch that word with me: *iiiiiiit*. Hear two sounds? Let's draw two blanks. What's the first sound? We can spell /i/ with letter *i*. [Write *i* on first blank.] What's the other sound? We can spell /t/ with the letter *t*, and now we have *it*. Let's read a word with /i/. [Write *if* on the board]. That *i* stands for the icky sticky sound. Say it with me: /i/. Know the sound for *f*? (/f/). /iiii/ /fff/ becomes *if*. Practice: Let's say a tongue twister: The important Indian was ill with injuries inside the igloo. Say it again, and stretch icky sticky /i/. Which words have /i/? Let's say it again, and when you hear /i/, show me some icky sticky fingers. Let's try some other words. Show me icky sticky fingers if you hear /i/: inch; go; insect; night; big; little; glass; green; is; isn't; city. Now I want everyone to draw something whose name has the sound /i/. Write what it says under the picture. [Have each child show the drawing and tell what word was illustrated, and have the class stretch the word and listen for /i/. Make a display of the pictures.] Assessment: Ask each student, do you hear /i/ in *inside* or *outside*? *this* or *that*? *take* or *give*? *her* or *him*? *sick* or *well*?

Sample Practice Activities

Super Duper 1-2-3 – Give each child rhythm sticks or other tapping instruments. Begin by modeling the *Super Duper 1-2-3* chant, tapping your stick once for each syllable. Then have each child individually tap out his/her name. The teacher may ask the class to give the number of syllables in any name.

Super Duper 1-2-3 Chant
Super Duper 1-2-3,
Can you tap your name for me?

Draw-a-Rhyme Story – Tell the children they are going to draw a picture together. Read each rhyme with the underlined words left out. Have children fill in the blanks (either orally or in writing), then add those parts to the drawing.

When making a clown, it is said,
always start with his big, round head.

Make it real messy 'cause clowns don't care.
on the top of his head, give him red curly hair.

When people laugh, he wants to hear,
so on each side, give him a great big ear.

Now make him look very wise,
by giving him two wide-open eyes.

And yes, of course, everyone knows,
give him a big, fat, rounded nose.

Now make a line as long as a mile,
and turn it into a great big smile.

Look at his clothes – the clown suit he's in,
it has a ruffle right under this chin.

All over his suit are big colored spots,
so give him lots of polka-dots.

Now look at that, can you believe?
he has purple stripes on each long sleeve.

He has two hands – one left, one right,
one's painted yellow, and the other white.

At the bottom of his funny suit,
you can see one big, black boot.

And the other foot has not a shoe,
'cause he just painted his toenails blue.

Now, if you listened and did everything right,
your little clown is a funny sight!

Different Words, Same Initial Phoneme – Gather three picture cards with the same initial phoneme. Have the class say the name of each picture. Choose a child to pick a picture from the set and name it. Then repeat the name, drawing out the initial consonant (e.g., *f-f-f-f-ox*). Then ask all of the children to repeat the name in the same way, and to notice and describe what they are doing with their mouths as the make the sound, /f/. Repeat for other pictures.

Begin with Green – Give each child one green and one red cube linked together. Ask students to lay the cubes horizontally, with the green cube to the left. Read aloud two-phoneme words one at a time. Have children point to the green cube while saying the first phoneme in the word and the red cube for the second. Then ask them to move their finger across the cubes from left to right as they blend the sounds to say the word. When children succeed with two-phoneme words, have them add a yellow cube between the green and red cubes and repeat the task with three-phoneme words. You may extend this activity by asking the children to point to the block that represents a particular sound. Examples of two-phoneme words are: itch, ape, eyes, me. Examples of three-phoneme words are: cat, cage, kiss, love.

The Sounds in the Word – Sing to the tune of "The Wheels on the Bus."

The sounds in the word are /k/ /a/ /t/, /k/ /a/ /t/, /k/ /a/ /t/
The sounds in the word are /k/ /a/ /t/, Can you say the word?

Words Without Sounds – Ask your students to say a word. Then, ask them to repeat the word without one sound. Have your students deleting initial phonemes and final phonemes.

Example: Teacher: "Say 'gold.'"
Student: "gold."
Teacher: Say it again but don't say /g/."
Student: "old."

Change Your Partner – Invite three children to stand in a row. Secretly select a three-phoneme word and whisper beginning, middle, and ending sounds to the first, second, and third child. Instruct each child to say his or her sound, and ask the class to blend the sounds to say a word. For example, Child 1 says, /p/, Child 2 says /*a*/, Child 3 says /t/ – the class says *pat*. Assign other sounds to classmates and have them replace children in the row to form new words. For example, replace /t/ with /n/ to change *pat* to *pan*. For variation, have children "beat the clock" as they decide which sounds to switch to create new words.

Guess Who: Introducing Sounds and Letters – The children sit in a circle and you say, "I'm thinking of someone's name that begins with the letter __. Raise your hand if you know whose name it is." Then display the initial letter while producing the initial phoneme of the child's name, stretching or repeating it as necessary until most children have guessed the name. After children become familiar with the beginning sounds and letters of each others' names, you may begin the game: "I'm thinking of someone's name that begins with __ (letter name)" while displaying the corresponding letter. The children pronounce the sound of the letter and then raise their hands when they have guessed the name of the child. (For names beginning with digraphs, such as *Sh-*, it is appropriate to display the digraph rather than the initial letter only.)

Practice Activities for Learning Correspondences

The best practice activity for strengthening the development of letter/ phoneme correspondence is reading decodable text. Children read more words with greater interest when reading stories. For a change of pace, you can use review games and word play activities to strengthen the development of letter/phoneme correspondences. This is a great place for many tactile-kinesthetic experiences. Give children lots of practice using magnetic letters, letter tiles, clay, shaving cream, and sand.

Concentration. The teacher prepares word cards with decodable words. Make four words for each pattern to make it easy to locate matches. Player must find a match *and* read the words to win them and get another turn. Don't hesitate to say, "Aww. You found a match, but I had to read them. Let's put those cards back in the same place so you can find 'em next time."

Word sorts. The teacher prepares word cards that illustrate several spellings of a vowel, e.g., *ai*, *ay*, and *a_e*. To begin the activity, the teacher explains and models how to read key words for each vowel pattern. Then the student draws a word, reads it, sorts it by matching it with a key word, and tells why. The student reads all words after they are sorted. (For a more child-friendly version, use animal cutouts with large mouths that "eat" the words.)

Fishing for words. Make a fishing pole with a magnet for a lure, and cut fish shapes out of card stock. Attach a paperclip to each fish. On each fish write a word decodable given students' present correspondence knowledge. Players fish for words behind a screen by catching the paperclip with the magnet. If students catch a word they can't read, they have to throw it back.

Grapheme Go Fish. This game is played with the same rules as regular Go Fish. To make a "family," however, the child must lay down one letter card and three cards with pictures that begin with that letter's sound.

Sound Bingo. Pass out Bingo boards with a consonant that you have studied in each box. Hold up pictures of items that begin with a certain sound. Be sure to label the picture, to establish how the picture is to be labeled in the game. The children put a marker on the consonant that matches the beginning phoneme of the displayed picture. The winner is the first child to cover five boxes in any direction.

Letter Tiles. Construct very simple CVC words using letter tiles. Then change one tile to make a new word. Model this first on the board or overhead. This same activity is very effective with magnetic letters on cookie sheets. (Note: Having students build words is thought to be one of the most effective phonics activities.)

Picture Sort – Select two consonants that have very distinctive and different sounds such as B and S or M and R. Write these letters on separate cards and place these on a pocket chart. Pass out cards with pictures that begin with these sounds to the children. Students will then take turns labeling their pictures and placing them beneath the letter that represents the beginning sound of the label for each picture.

Activities to Practice Blending

Bump the Letters. Begin with a simple CVC word. Write the letters of a word such as cat on large, individual cards. Call three children to come up front to hold a letter. Be careful to have them stand slightly apart but in such a way that left-right progression is emphasized for their classmates. After each child makes his sound, have the children move a little closer and repeat their sounds. As they move closer, model for the class how the letters are blended, and then have them blend with you. Repeat this activity with several words. Point out that it is important to run the letters together smoothly. Always conclude by stating the word in a natural flow.

Flip and Blend. Children can practice their blending skills using a three-ring binder that you have prepared. Prepare a card with a single hole at the top for each of the vowels, and attach these to the middle ring of the binder. Do the same thing on the first and last rings using consonants or simple digraphs. Children take turns flipping letters moving from left to right, and blending the sounds as they go. This could easily become a game by having the children see how many English words they can build in a certain period of time.

The Blending Slide. Materials: Overhead with silhouettes of a playground slide and a set of opaque letters. Explain that /s/ and /a/ [pronounce the phonemes, not the letters] are good friends and always play together at recess. One day they wanted to go down the slide, but they wanted to go together so they wouldn't get scared. Together they climbed up, /sa/, /sa/, /sa/ [model by moving the letters *s* and *a* together up the steps of the slide]. But when they got to the top and looked down, they were too scared to slide and too scared to climb back down. They called for help, and a new sound, /t/, said, "I'll catch you." Down they came, /sa/ until /t/ caught them at the bottom of the slide, /sat/. They all laughed and said, "We made a word, *sat*. Let's do it again." Repeat twice more. Then have children practice by holding letters and pretending to slide into children holding other letters, *d, g, l, m, p, t*, and *x*. For other lessons, use different letters and vary the story, e.g., roller coasters, bumper boats, surfboards, etc. Assess by having each child try to recognize spoken blends as you move the letters modeled that day, e.g., *sad, sag, Sal, Sam, sap, sat*, or *sax*.

Blending Riddles. For blending riddles, the teacher gives the phonemes in a word with a riddle that provides a clue to the meaning. Children raise their hands when they think they know the answer to the riddle. Some examples of blending riddles:

- I am thinking of something we hit with a hammer. The sounds are /n/A/l/.

- I am thinking of an animal that has a curly tail. The sounds are /p/i/g/.
- I am thinking of something round. It is found on a bike. The sounds are /w/E/l/.

Blending riddles can be made easier by breaking the word into two chunks instead of blending individual phonemes. For example, *nail* could be presented as /nA/ /l/ or /n/ /Al/.

Commercial Phonemic Awareness Resources

- *Phonemic Awareness in Young Children* by Marilyn Adams (Brookes, 1997)
- *Classrooms That Work: They Can All Read and Write* by Patricia Cunningham & Richard Allington (Addison-Wesley, 1998)
- *Phonemic Awareness Activities for Early Reading Success* by Wiley Blevins (Scholastic, 1997)
- *Phonics from A to Z* by Wiley Blevins (Scholastic, 1998)
- *Teaching Phonics, Phonemic Awareness, and Word Recognition* by Ashley & Suzanne Bishop (Teacher-Created Materials, 1996)
- *The Phonological Awareness Handbook for Kindergarten and Primary Teachers* by Lita Ericson & Moira Graser Juliebo (IRA, 1998)
- *Word Matters* by Gay Su Pinnell & Irene C. Fountas (Heinemann, 1998)
- *Teaching Decoding in Holistic Classrooms* by J. Lloyd Eldredge (Prentice-Hall, 1995)
- *Words Their Way* by Invernizzi, Templeton, Johnston & Bear (Prentice-Hall, 1999)
- *Phonics They Use* by Patricia Cunningham (Addison-Wesley, 1999)

Decodable Texts Sources

Bob Books
Scholastic, Inc.
Available at most major book stores

Books to Remember
Flyleaf Publishing Co.
P O Box 185
Lyme, NH 03768
(603) 795-2875
www.flyleafpublishing.com

J and J Readers
Language!
4093 Specialty Place
Longmont, CO 80504
(303) 651-2829

Reading Sparkers
The Children's Research and
Development Company
216 9th Avenue
Haddon Heights, NJ 08037
(609) 546-9896

Phonics Readers
Educational Insights
16941 Keegan Avenue
Carson, CA 90746
1-800-995-4436
www.edin.com

The Wright Skills Decodable Books
The Wright Group
19201 120th Avenue NE
Bothell, WA 98011
1-800-523-2371
www.wrightgroup.com

Modern Curriculum Press
P O Box 2649
Columbus, OH 43216
1-800-876-5507

- Margaret Hillert Book
- Phonics Practice Readers

SRA
A Division of the McGraw-Hill Co.
220 East Danieldale Road
DeSoto, TX 75115-2490
1-888-SRA-4543/972-228-1982 fax

Academic Therapy Publications
20 Commercial Boulevard
Novato, CA 94949
1-800-422-7249/415-883-3720 fax

- High Noon Books
- High Interest/Low Level
  Decodable Texts

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