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Teaching Phonological and Phonemic Awareness to Prevent Struggling Readers

Everyone Reading 50th Annual Conference 2023

CUNY Graduate Center, NY

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Preventing Struggling Readers

- Teaching phonological awareness is an all-day workshop at a minimum
- My focus today is on some key thoughts that can help prevent some struggles with reading instruction

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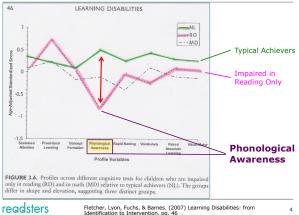
Why Do We Need to Teach Phonological Awareness?

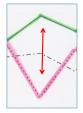
- Phonemic proficiency is critical to proficient reading
- Most (@90%) struggling readers have phonological awareness weaknesses

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Typical Achievers vs. Students with Word Recognition Weaknesses (2nd & 3rd grades)





Explicit instruction and practice will close the gap

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All Students Do Not Start at the Same Place

- Many students come to school with some skills already in place, but many do not.
- Do not assume students have any of the necessary skills in place.
 - Assess to determine which skills students have and which are missing
 - Teach missing skills systematically and explicitly

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Start with Assessment

- Know what you students need to learn and practice.
- Informal assessment will inform you about your students skills and instructional needs.
- There is no need to teach skills a student demonstrates they possess.

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The Pre-Reading Probes

 Free informal assessment of pre-reading skills available at www.readsters.com/resources



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What Do Students Need to Learn?

- Students need to master specific skills to become strong decoders.
- The skills should be taught in a logical progression.
- Breaking skills into logical steps allows students time to master lower level or precursor skills before learning higher level skills.

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Two Critical Cognitive Processes

All proficient readers have:



- Letter proficiency
 - Automatic letter name and sound processing



- Phonemic proficiency
 - Automatic letter name and sound processing
- Both must be:
 - mastered before phonics instruction begins
 - fully automatized during early phonics instruction

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Defining Mastery & Automaticity

Mastery

- Having extensive knowledge of a topic or subject
- Being able to execute a skill accurately
- Mastery requires learning

Automaticity

- Automaticity indicates doing something effortlessly and without conscious thought
- Automaticity with skills is doing something without effort or conscious thought
- Developing automaticity with skills requires repetition and practice (also called rehearsal by researchers)

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Explicit Instruction and Practice Lead to Automaticity

- · All students must develop the pre-reading skills to automaticity in order to learn to decode well
 - A few students are "prodigies" and appear not to learn without instruction or practice
 - Some students master skills quickly and easily and require only a little practice to become automatic
 - Most students require explicit and systematic instruction and lots of practice to become automatic

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Memory and Automaticity for Some Students

- Struggling students often have some weakness in working memory
- Automatizing skills requires considerably more practice, with many more repetitions
- This requires extra patience and time on our part as teachers

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Differentiation and Targeted Instruction in Kindergarten

- Differentiation and targeted instruction are critical for pre-reading and early reading instruction
 - Students arrive at school with different skills
 - Students learn at different rates
 - Orthographic (letters) and phonological (speech sounds) skills are rarely learned at the same pace

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Pre-Reading Skills Terms: Phonological Awareness Skills



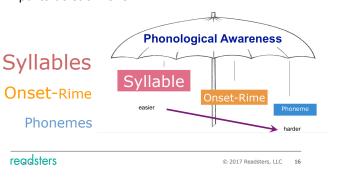
- Greek Word Parts:
- phono means sound in this case speech sound
- <u>logy</u> means *science of, knowledge of,* or *study of*
- Phonological Awareness:
 - Refers to the knowledge of all levels of our speech sound system:
 - syllables
 - onset-rime
 - phonemes
 - Includes the ability to hold sounds in memory and in the correct sequence

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Phonological Awareness

- Conscious awareness of each level
- The ability to identify and manipulate word parts at each level



Phonological Awareness Continuum Terms



 Syllable – a unit of speech sound organized around a vowel sound

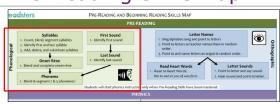
> /o//pən/in open, /a//lə//gā/ter/in alligator

- Onset and rime
 - Onset all sounds in a syllable before the vowel sound /m/ in mop, /st/ in step
 - Rime all sound in a syllable from the vowel sound on /ŏp/ in mop, /ĕp/ in step
- Phoneme smallest unit of speech sound that changes meaning

/c/ /a/ /t/ in cat, /b/ / $\overline{00}$ / /t/ in boot

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Pre-Reading Skills Map



• The Early Reading Skills Map shows 2 domains for pre-reading skills:



- · First and last sounds
- Phonemes
- Orthographic (letters) Letter names and sounds



- Printing letters
- Pre-reading heart words
- Heart words are irregularly spelled high frequency words (e.g., the, you, of, was)

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Master Pre-Reading Skills before Teaching Phonics

 Students who do not master these pre-reading foundation skills will not be strong readers



- Students who memorize words well will eventually show reading weaknesses if phonics instruction is started too early
- Most students master the pre-reading skills and are ready for phonics instruction sometime around the middle of kindergarten
- Some students will not be ready to begin phonics instruction until they are in grade 1 or even grade 2

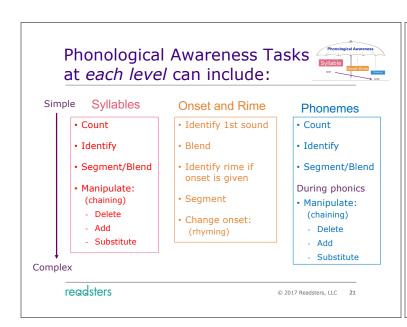
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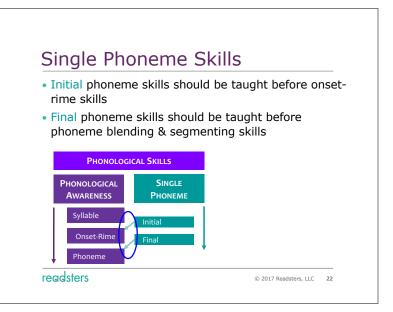
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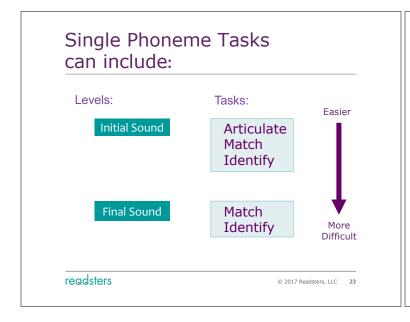
Teach 4 strands of pre-reading skills to prepare students for phonics-based reading

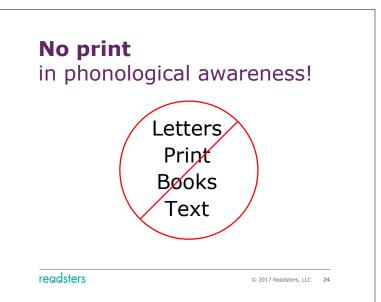
Pre-Reading Skills

PHONOLOGICAL SKILLS
PHONOLOGICAL SINGLE
PHONEME
Syllable
Initial
Onset-Rime
Phoneme
Initial
Onset-Rime
Phoneme
Initial
Initia









Manipulatives

- Are critical for students who struggle with phonological awareness
- Are concrete representations of speech sound, which is abstract
 - Students can see and touch something that represents the sound
 - Students learn that we can use symbols to represent sound
 - Objects are used for phonological awareness tasks.
 - · Later, when phonics is taught, letters will represent sounds.
- Can be felts, tiles, cards, pictures, blocks, game chips, etc
 - Color is not critical but can be useful at times

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Touch & Say

Touching a marker and saying the sound it represents

- Used with non-print manipulatives only during phonological awareness instruction
- · Later, used with print in phonics instruction

Touch & Say is:

- A powerful and critical part of using manipulatives
- Effective for making students attend to the markers
- A way to clarify the relationship between the sound and the symbol

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See $\underline{www.readsters.com}$ for article

Keep Eyes on Words When Reading

- Tell students:
 - -"You need to look at the words when you read."
 - -"If you need help, you can say, "help, please" and I will help them, but you don't need to look up."
- If a student looks up while reading, say, "Remember you need to keep your eyes on the words. Start again and only look up when you are finished reading."
- If a student looks up before finishing the last word, say, "You read all the words correctly, but you looked up before you finished reading. Start again and keep your eyes on the words."

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Prepare Students to Keep Eyes on the Words

- Establish the "eyes on" habit during pre-reading skills practice so that students carry it over to print
 - Phonological awareness with manipulatives, make sure students develop the habit of touching and looking at the manipulative when saying the word part or sound
 - Letter names/sounds When students name letters or letter sounds, make sure they are looking at the letters
- Anytime the student looks up, have him/her immediately repeat the entire task with eyes on the manipulatives or letters (whether or not the task was done correctly)
- The key is to have the student *immediately* practice the correct habit Habits develop from repetition

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Teach the Term 'Syllable'

- The term syllable will be used throughout school
- The earlier students learn and use the term, the more likely the are to remember it
- Teaching a syllable as an oral unit of language will help students relate spoken syllables to written syllables when they learn to read

Syllable vs. Sound

- Older struggling readers often confuse the terms syllable and sound
- When asked to say the syllables in a word they segment and say the sounds instead
- Watch for and clarify this confusion during pre-reading skills instruction

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Understanding Syllables

- Duck Lips or Whale Talk
 - Students feel the syllables by shouting word without opening lips
 - Each vowel sound will heard and felt as a push
- Include one syllable words
 - Students sometimes begin to segment them into phonemes
 - They need to know the difference between syllables and phonemes

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Weave in Questions

- Have students use manipulatives to answer questions to build ability to hold syllables in memory and in the correct sequence
- This also helps build their concept of syllable
- Teach that first is on the left, last on the right.
 - Say What is the syllable?" "Point to (first, middle, last) syllable.
 - Say "Point to (name a syllable)."
 - Ask "What is the (first, middle, last) syllable?"

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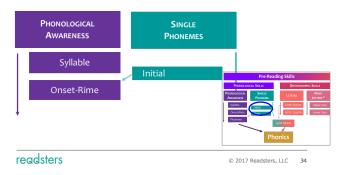
Teach Syllable Manipulation

- Teach adding, deleting, and substituting syllables
 - Add "Add ness to the end of 'happy'. What is the new word?"
 - Delete "What is 'cowboy' without 'boy'?"
 - Substitute "Change 'table' to 'marble'. What syllable came out? What syllable went in?"
- Have students use manipulatives
- Teaching these tasks is easier at the syllable level than at the phoneme level

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Prior to Onset-Rime: Teach Identify Initial Sound

 Students who struggle with onset-rime often can't identify first sound, so teach identify first sound before starting onset-rime.



Vowels Sounds Can Be First & Last Sounds

- Remember vowels can occur at the beginning and end of words
 - Short vowels will only be at the beginning of words, never at the end
 - at, in, on, up, edge
 - Long vowels occur at both beginning and end
 - · ape, eyes, oaks, unicorn, eat
 - play, sigh, show, few, tree
 - R-controlled and Other
 - · car, arch, her, earth, shore, orca
 - oil, boy, ouch, cow, ooze, moo

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Onset-Rime Tasks

- Blending
 - First use words with initial continuant sounds (e.g., /m/, /v/) <u>/sh/</u> <u>/op/</u> (shop)
 - Next, add words with initial stop sounds (e.g., /b/ /ch/) /ōt/ (goat)
- Completion (provide the rime)
 - The word is shop.
 - The first part is /sh/.
 - What is the second part? (/ŏp/)

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For Students Who Struggle with **Onset-Rime**

- Use Through-vowel and End
 - 1. Make sure they can identify initial sound
 - Use "Through-vowel and end" with pictures*: "Through-vowel" - all sounds in word through the vowel - in mop: /mo/
 - "End" all sound after vowel in mop: /p/

*Use three pictures as anchors to a choice of three words that the through-vowel and end parts will blend to make

Other examples:

(face)

(moon)

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Teach Rhyme

- When students can blend and complete onsetrime, they are ready to learn rhyming.
- Use colors to show that when the rime is the same in two words they rhyme.

(m ight)

(b ite)

- Students can make rhyming words by blending different onsets with the same rime.
- This is also a good place to introduce the concept of nonsense words.

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Vowels Cause the Most Difficulty

- Vowels can be letters and vowels can be sounds (phonemes)
- Every syllable has a vowel sound and most have a vowel spelling
- Students also need to understand which sounds are called "long" and which are called "short"
- They also need to be able to identify and label short and long vowel sounds in spoken words

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Teaching Vowel Sounds Is Different from Teaching Letter Sounds

- Students can hear all vowel sounds before they can read them
- Learning about the vowel sounds before learning how to read the many vowel spellings, prevents confusion
- Kindergarten students can learn to identify and label any vowel sound, even though they are only going to learn to read short vowels at first

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Older Struggling Readers

- Older struggling readers have a difficult time separating vowel letters from vowel sounds
 - For example, when we ask older struggling readers what the vowel sound in 'map' is, they often answer with the letter name 'a'
 - Older struggling readers often can tell us that the o-e spells the long o sound, but then read the word 'hope' as 'hop'
- This confusion can be avoided if we make sure beginning readers know the difference between long and short vowel sounds and can identify vowel sounds in spoken words

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Four Categories of Vowel Sounds

- I'm going to show you four categories of vowel sounds
- Before starting phonics instruction, students only need to be able to identify and label short and long vowel sounds
- If they don't, they can also learn to do this as part of early phonics instruction

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Teach short & long vowel sounds during pre-reading skills instruction

- Potential confusion can be avoided if students can hear, recognize, and label the short and long vowel sounds prior to phonics instruction
- Students can the learn r-controlled and 'other' vowel sounds in early phonics instruction prior to learning to read and spell them in advanced phonics instruction

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Short Vowel Sounds

 Teach motions and guidewords for each short vowel sound

Short a, /ă/ - apple

pretend to hold an apple in hand and move it from left to right

Short o, /ŏ/ - octopus

use hand as an octopus swimming from left to right

Short i /ĭ/ - itch

mime scratching an itch on forearm

Short u /ŭ/ - up

point up and move hand from low to high

Short e, /ĕ/ - edge

trace finger along and edge from left to right

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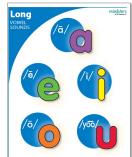
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Long Vowel Sounds

 Teach motions and guidewords for each long vowel sound

The name of the letter is the guideword.

The motion is to air-write the lower case letter.



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R-Controlled Vowel Sounds

Teach motions and guidewords for each

r-controlled vowel sound

hook thumbs together and flap fingers as wings

/or/ - horn

mime blowing a trumpet

/ar/ - arm

"make a muscle" with arm

R-Control

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Other Vowel Sounds

 Teach motions and guidewords for each 'other' vowel sound

/oi/ - oink

push up tip of nose to make a pig's nose

/ou/ - house

show a house roof with hands

/ōō/ - ooze

squeeze hand to make goop ooze out

/ŏŏ/ - book

use hands to show a book opening

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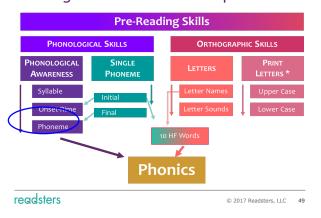
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Teach Identifying Vowel Sounds in Spoken Words

- Students need to know the vowel sounds and labels in isolation
- They also need to recognize the vowel sounds in words
- When students segment sounds, have them identify (say in isolation) the vowel sound and give the label ("What do we call it?")
- Practice this with long and short vowel sounds in Kindergarten
- Practice all four vowel sound categories in Grade 1

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Once Students Can Work at the Phoneme Level: Practice Listening & Labeling Vowel Sounds in Spoken Words



'Stretching' Sounds in Words

- 'Stretching' is a routine for segmenting spoken words into individual phonemes
- The routine includes identifying and labeling the vowel sound
- It can include identifying the first and last sounds
- The routine can also be used for blending sounds

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Why Label Vowel Sounds?

- Students must understand the difference between short and long vowels, as well as r-controlled and other vowels, when they hear a word in order for phonics to make sense
- The various vowel sounds can be matched to spelling patterns when reading unfamiliar words
- When students can categorize vowel sounds, students will know what you mean when you say, "the o & e together spell long o in hope"

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Difficulty with Vowel Sounds

- If students cannot identify the vowel sound:
 - Short i, e, and a:
 - Call attention to mouth shape
 - Elongate the sound when saying the word
 - Compare the elongated vowel sound with the guideword and motion
 - Take the word to the opera
 - · Have students sing the word

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Summary

- Are your students ready to learn to read?
 - Assess students to determine which pre-reading skills they need to master prior to starting phonics.
 - Do they know the letter names?
 - Do they know the letter sounds?
 - Can they orally blend and segment words?
- Explicitly teach skills to independent mastery
- Practice to automaticity
- Teach skills separately and in a logical order

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Reminders for Phonological Awareness

- · Use explicit, multisensory instruction
- Use manipulatives
- Teach at the appropriate skill level
- Give individual turns not choral
- Use all vowel sounds
- Do not use print and do not talk about letters

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Some Keys to Preventing Struggling Readers

- Teach students to look at the letter, manipulative, words, etc.
- · Know what to teach and in what order
- Know specifically what your students know and still need to learn
- · Teach explicitly and systematically
- Teach to mastery and automaticity
- Anticipate where you can expect confusion
- Maximize differentiation
- Maximize individual practice
- Use routines to lighten memory load and maximize practice time
- · Use non-print manipulatives for phonological work

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Some Resources

- Equipped for Reading Success David A. Kilpatrick (Casey & Kirsch)
- Phonemic Awareness: The Skills That They Need to help Them Succeed!

Michael Heggerty (Literacy Resources, Inc.) (designed for whole class instruction)

Po careful that the activity you shou

 Be careful that the activity you choose is at the appropriate phonological level for your students.

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Why Teach PA?

 "...explicit awareness of the phonological structure of a word helps children draw connections between the spoken form of a word and its written representation."

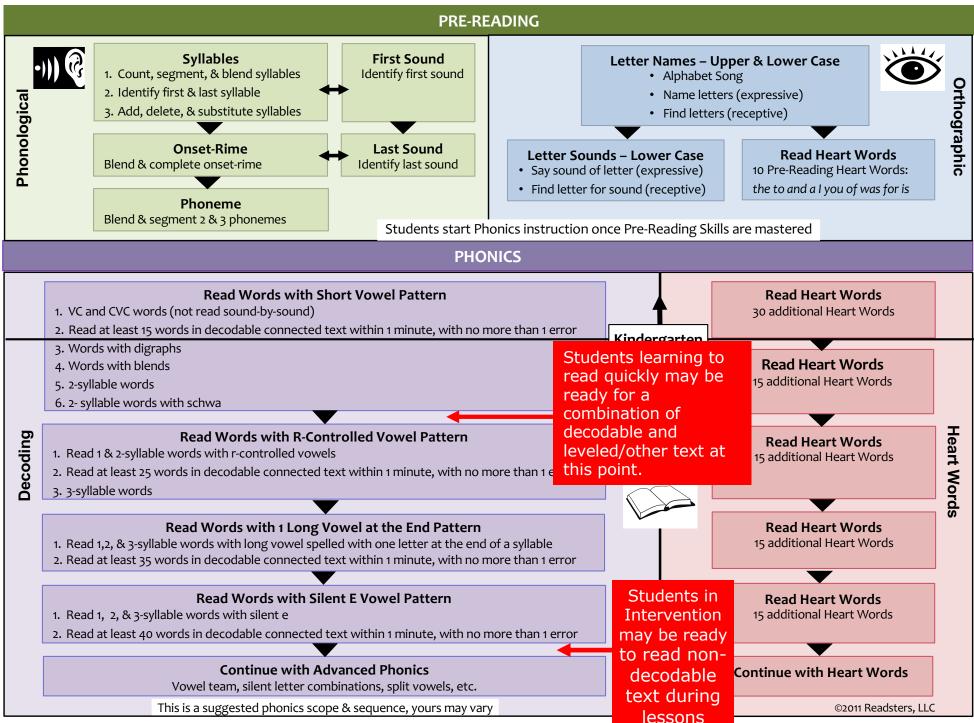


- Gail T. Gillon Phonological Awareness - From Research to Practice

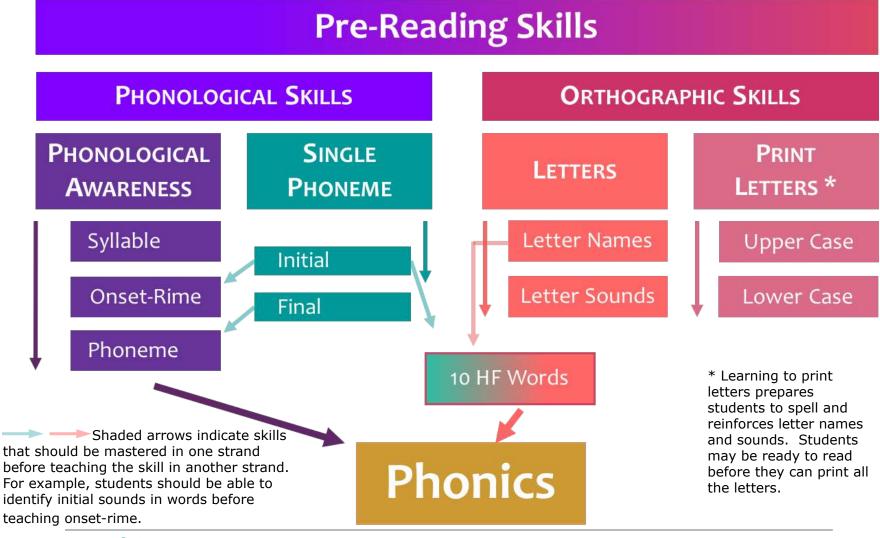
← An excellent resource for the research

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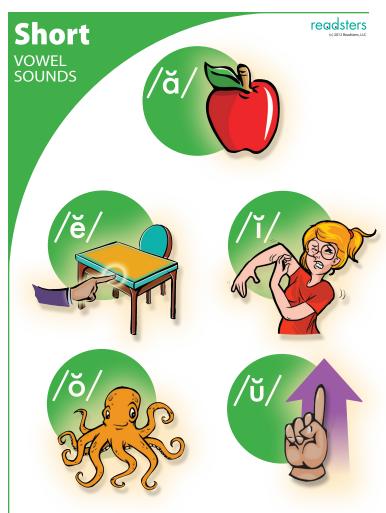
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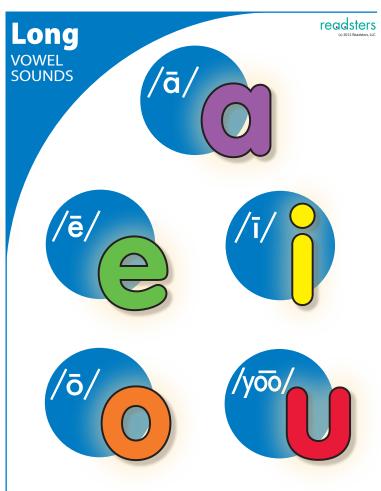


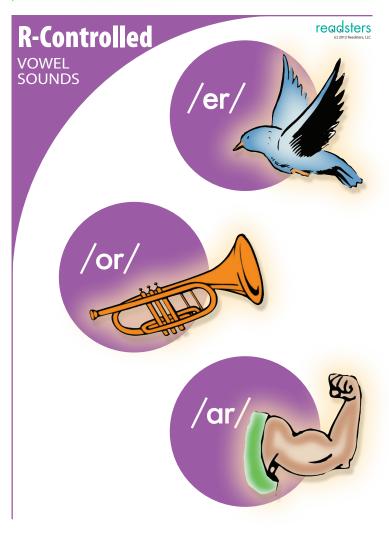


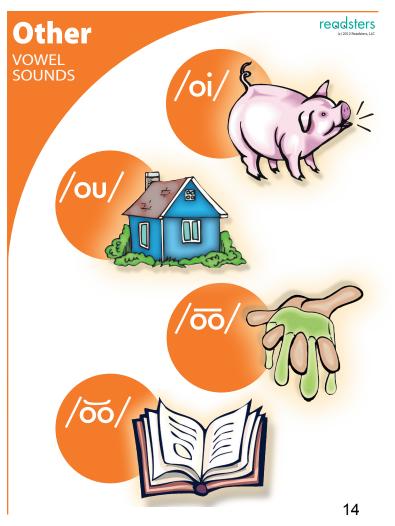
Pre-Reading Skills Small Group Checklist v8

Group:	Check skills group has mastered.				
Orthographic and Phonological strands are taught concurrently.					
	Orthographic (letters)				
1. Letter Names □ Sing the alphabet song ○ Sing pointing to upper case letter	•				
 Recognize & organize upper case letter Find each upper case letter (fast Name randomly organized letters Put movable letters in order 	finger) strokes				
 Recognize & organize lower case lette Match upper and lower case lette Name randomly organized letters Put movable letters in order 	rs strokes				
2. Letter Sounds	2. 10 High Frequency Words				
 □ Short vowels: a e i o u □ Voiced continuants: I m n r v z th □ Unvoiced continuants: f h s sh th □ Unvoiced stops: c k p t ch 	□ Voiced stops: b d g j □ Read 10 HF words: □ Glides: w y the, a, and, I, to, was, for, you, is, of □ x □ qu				
	Phonological (sounds)				
1. Syllables □ Count 1–3 □ Segment and name syllables 1–3 □ Blend 2 & 3 Syllables □ Delete syllables □ Add syllables □ Substitute syllables	 Initial Sounds (without letters) Articulate consonant sounds Articulate short vowel sounds and say label (short i, short o, etc.) Articulate long vowel sounds and say label (long i, long o, etc.) Sort pictures by first sound Say the first sound in words 				
2. Onset-Rime & Rhyming	2. Final Sounds (without letters)				
□ Blend□ Complete□ Identify rhyming words□ Create rhyming words	□ Sort pictures by final sound □ Say the final sound in words				
3. Phoneme Segmenting and Blending – words with short and long vowel sounds					
Stretch or blend sounds and ask "Firs Segment sounds in 2 sound words Blend sounds in 2 sound words Segment sounds in 3 sound words Blend sounds in 3 sound words	t sound?", "Last sound?" "Vowel sound", "Vowel label?"				
Students are now ready to start phonics instruction. Continue developing the phonological skills below as part of phonics lessons.					
☐ Blend sounds in 4 sound words ☐ Segment sounds in 4 sound words					
4. Phoneme Manipulation – add, delete, substitute					
☐ Substitute in 2 sound words ☐ Add to 2 sound words ☐ Delete from 3 sound words ☐ Substitute in 3 sound words					









E. STRETCH SOUNDS

Introduce Stretching Words with Long o

1. Now we will stretch the sounds in words and listen for the 'long o' vowel sound.

REPEATED ROUTINE	I Do Word	SOUNDS
I Do: Long o	1. low	/l/ /ō/

- 1. Watch me stretch sounds.
- 2. I get ready (raising fist to shoulder).
- 3. **'Low'.**
- 4. I stretch.
- 5. $/l//\bar{o}/$ (extending a finger for each, starting with thumb).
- 6. 'Low' (raising fist to shoulder).
- 7. The first sound is /l/.
- 8. The last sound is $/\bar{o}/.$
- 9. The vowel sound is /ō/ (making motion).
- 10. The label is 'long o'.

Phonemic Awareness



E. STRETCH SOUNDS

REPEATED ROUTINE

WE Do: Long o

- 1. We'll do it together.
- \Rightarrow 2. Everyone, ready.

T. and SS. raise fist to shoulder.

- 3. word . Everyone, repeat.
- 4. Stretch.

T. and SS. stretch sounds – stretching fingers,

T. and SS. say word – raising fist to shoulder.

T. can mix the order of next two questions.

5. Everyone, first sound?

T. and SS. say first sound.

6. Everyone, last sound?

T. and SS. say last sound.

T. keeps this order for next two questions.

7. Everyone, vowel sound?

T. and SS. say vowel sound – making motion.

8. Everyone, label?

T. and SS. say label.

Repeat Steps 2–8 for each We Do word.

1. vote /v//ō//t/
2. joke /j//ō//k/

E. STRETCH SOUNDS

REPEATED ROUTINE	You Do Wo	R D S S O U N D S
You Do: Long o	1. go	/g/ /ō/
1. You do it.	2. both	/b/ /ō/ /th/
2. Everyone, ready. SS. raise fist to shoulder.	3. hope	/h/ /ō/ /p/
3. word . Everyone, repeat.	4. coke	/k/ /ō/ /k/
4. <u>name</u> , stretch.	5. road	/r/ /ō/ /d/
S. stretch sounds – extending fingers, S. says word – raising fist to shoulder.	6. горе	/r/ /ō/ /p/
SS. stretch silently.	7. choke	/ch/ /ō/ /k/
T. can mix the order of the next two questions.	8. boat	/b/ /ō/ /t/
5. <u>different name</u> , first sound?	9. cone	/k/ /ō/ /n/
S. says first sound.	10. soap	/s/ /ō/ /p/
6. <u>different name</u> , last sound? S. says last sound.	11. coach	/k/ /ō/ /ch/
T. keep this order for next two questions.	12. goat	/g/ /ō/ /t/
7different name_, vowel sound?	13. phone	/f/ /ō/ /n/
S. says sound – making motion.	14. oak	/ō/ /k/
8. <u>different name</u> , label?	15. home	/h/ /ō/ /m/
S. says label. Repeat Steps 2–8 with You Do words so each student	16. poke	/p/ /ō/ /k/

stretches a minimum of 2 words.

T. does not need to use all the words in the list. Use extra words for students who need more practice.

Positive Error Correction Script in PEC Booklet, page 3.

Blending Sounds



REPEATED ROUTINE

I Do: Short i and Long i

Do not say the word until after you have given the sounds.

1. /l/ /ĭ/ /m/ limb

- 1. Watch me blend sounds.
- 2. I get ready (raising fist to shoulder).
- 3. /l/ /ĭ/ /m/
- 4. I repeat and blend.
- 5. /l//i//m/ (extending a finger for each, starting with thumb).
- 6. 'Limb' (raising fist back to shoulder).
- 7. The first sound is /l/.
- 8. The last sound is /m/.
- 9. The vowel sound is /ĭ/ (making motion).
- 10. The label is 'short i'.



REPEATED ROUTINE

WE Do: Short i and Long i

- 1. We'll do it together.
- \rightarrow 2. Everyone, ready.

T. and SS. raise fist to shoulder.

- 3. sounds.
- 4. Everyone, repeat and blend.
 - T. and SS repeat sounds extending fingers,
 - T. and SS blend word raising fist back to shoulder.
- T. can mix the order of the next two questions.
- 5. Everyone, first sound?

T. and SS. say first sound.

6. Everyone, last sound?

T. and SS. say last sound.

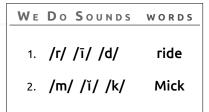
- T. keeps this order for next two questions.
- 7. Everyone, vowel sound?

T. and SS. say sound making the motion.

8. Everyone, label?

T. and SS. say vowel label.

Repeat Steps 2–8 for each WE Do word.



Blending Sounds



REPEATED ROUTINE

You Do: Short i and Long i

- 1. You do it.
- \rightarrow 2. Everyone, ready.
 - SS. raise fist to shoulder.
 - 3. sounds.
 - 4. name, repeat and blend.
 - S. repeats sounds stretching fingers,
 - S. blends word raising fist to shoulder.
 - SS. silently repeat and blend.
 - T. can mix the order of these two questions.
 - 5. different name , first sound?
 - S. says first sound.
 - 6. different name, last sound?
 - S. says last sound.
 - T. keep this order for next two questions.
 - 7. different name, vowel sound?
 - S. says sound making the motion.
 - 8. different name, label?
 - S. says vowel label.

Repeat Steps 2–8 with You Do words so each student blends a minimum of 2 words.

T. does not need to use all the words in the list. Use extra words for students who need more practice.

Positive Error Correction Script in PEC Booklet, page 14.

You	Do Sounds	WORDS
1.	/r/ /ĭ/ /d/	rid
2.	/w/ /ī/ /p/	wipe
3.	/p/ /ĭ/ /n/	pin
4.	/sh/ /ĭ/	shy
5.	/g/ /ĭ/ /v/	give
6.	/t/ /ī/ /m/	time
7.	/j/ /ĭ/ /m/	Jim
8.	/k/ /ĭ/ /s/	kiss
9.	/f/ /ī/ /v/	five
10.	/l/ /ĭ/ /p/	lip
11.	/p/ /ī/ /n/	pine
12.	/ī/ /s/	ice
13.	/ĭ/ /t/	it
14.	/t/ /ĭ/ /l/	till
15.	/w/ /ī/ /d/	wide
16.	/l/ /ī/ /f/	life
17.	/f/ /ĭ/ /l/	fill
18.	/b/ /ī/ /k/	bike
19.	/d/ /ĭ/ /p/	dip
20.	/h/ /ī/ /k/	hike
21.	/w/ /ĭ/ /g/	wig
22.	/n/ /ī/ /f/	knife
23.	/p/ /ĭ/ /t/	pit
24.	/h/ /ī/	high