

The Phones

Evidence-Based Instructional Ideas for Critical Elements of Foundational Literacy Instruction

Phonological Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, and Phonics.

Wednesday, June 12, 2025 - 12 noon



<https://mlc-wels.edu/openlearning/>

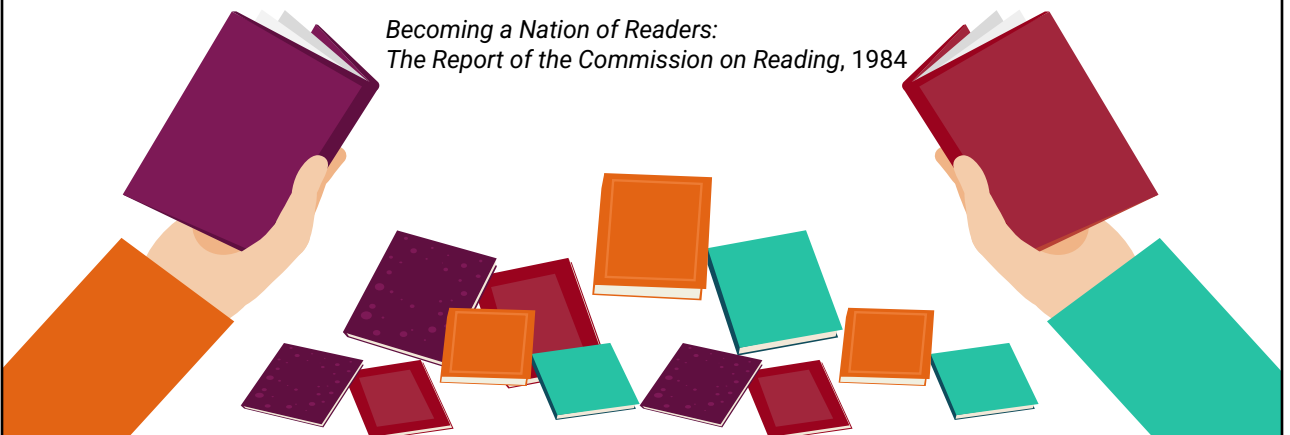
Presenter: Dr. Jonathan Roux



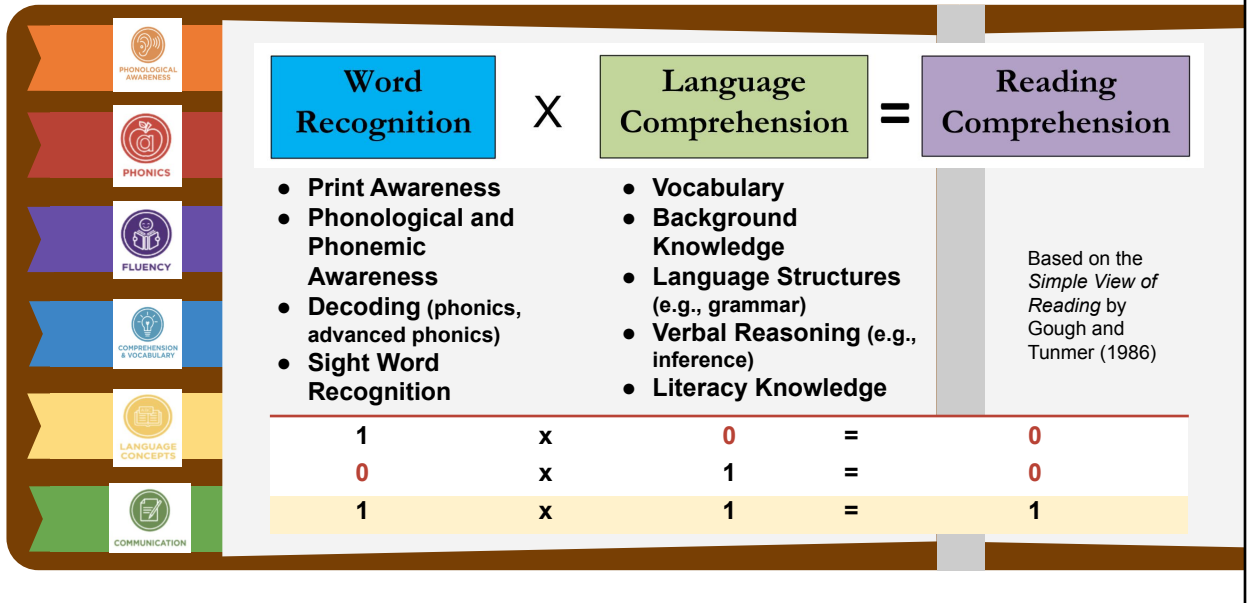
Definition of Reading

“Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts.”

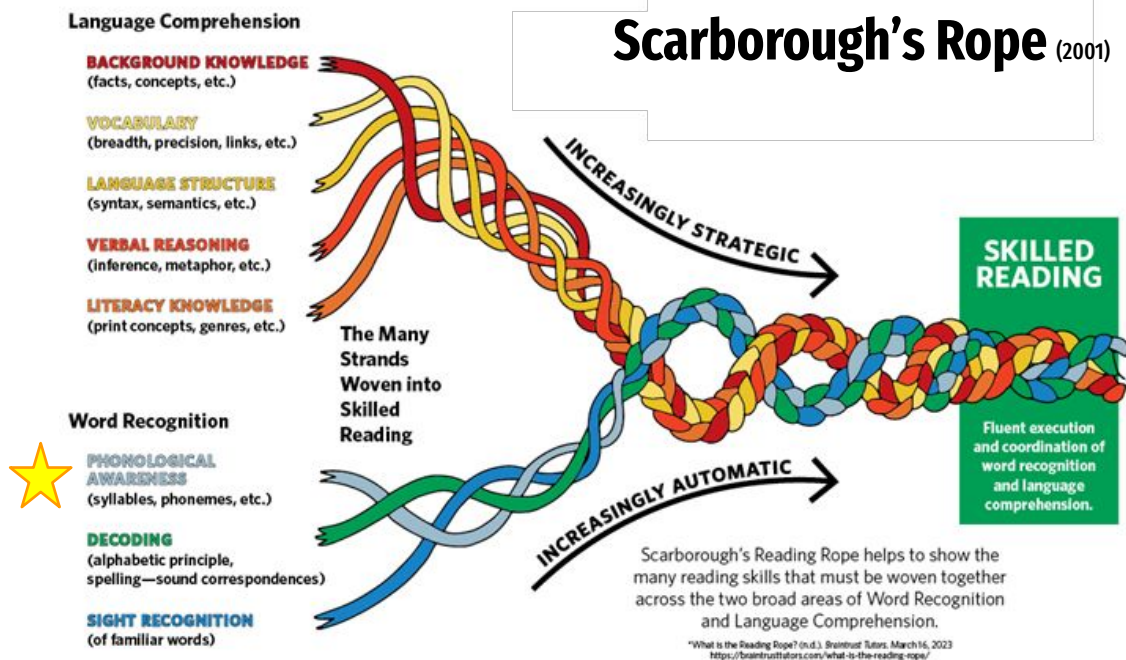
*Becoming a Nation of Readers:
The Report of the Commission on Reading, 1984*



The Simple View of Reading (SVR)



Scarborough's Rope (2001)

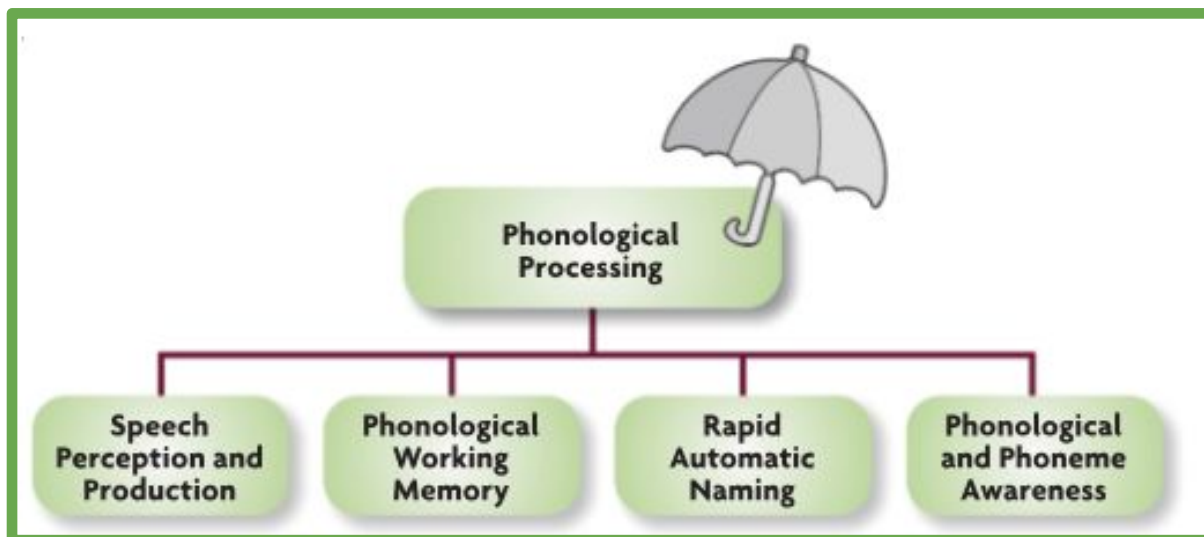


Beginning Terminology

- **Phoneme** - a speech sound that combines with others in a language system to make words; English has 44 phonemes
- **Phoneme-grapheme mapping** - matching phonemes (sounds) in words with the graphemes (letters) that represent them
- **Phonemic awareness** - conscious awareness of individual speech sounds (consonants and vowels) in spoken syllables and the ability to consciously manipulate those sounds
- **Phonetics** - the study of the sounds of human speech; **articulatory phonetics** refers to the way sounds are physically made in the human vocal tract
- **Phonics** - study of relationships between letters and the sounds they represent; also used as a descriptor for code-based instruction
- **Phonological awareness** - conscious awareness of all levels of the speech sound system, word boundaries, stress patterns, syllables, onset-rime units and individual phonemes
- **Phonological lexicon** - the brain's storehouse of words previously heard, but not necessarily understood

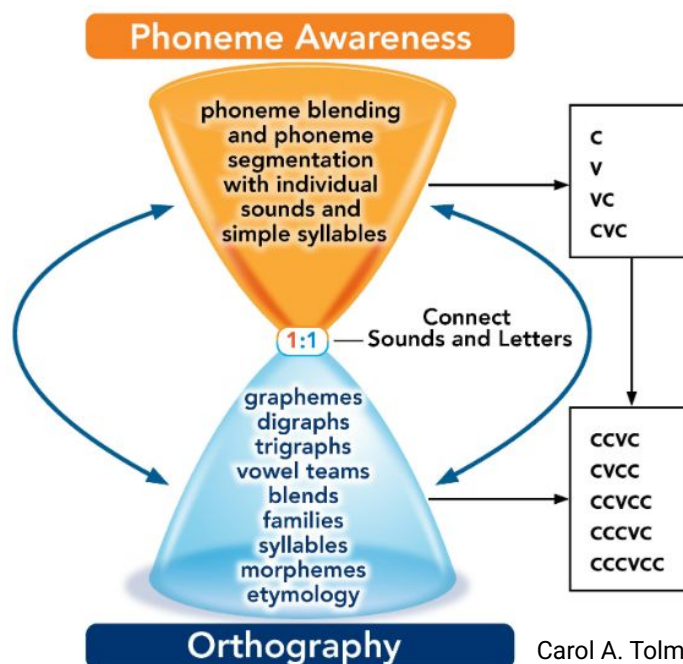
Beginning Terminology, continued

- **Phonological processing** - multiple functions of speech and language perception and production - perceiving, interpreting, storing (remembering), recalling or retrieving, and generating the speech sound system of a language
- **Phonology** - the rule system within a language by which phonemes can be sequences, combined, and pronounced to make words
- **Onset-rime** - natural division of a syllable into 2 parts: the onset comes before the vowel, and the rime includes the vowel and what follows (i.e., d-og, pl-an, eat doesn't have an onset)



The Hourglass Figure

- **Digraphs:** ph, ey
- **Vowel teams:** oa, ee, ay, ai
- **Blends:** bl-blue, sl-slide, spr-spring
- **Families:** word - words - reword - wordy - wordsmith
- **Syllables:** open, closed, consonant+e, vowel team, r-controlled, consonant+le



Carol A. Tolman

The Relationship Between Phonological and Phonemic Awareness

Phonological Awareness

The ability to **hear** and **manipulate** the spoken parts of words and sentences.

- ↪ Word awareness
- ↪ Syllable
- ↪ Onset-rime
- ↪ Rhyme



Phonemic Awareness

The ability to **work with** the individual sound or phoneme in spoken words.

- ↪ Blending
- ↪ Manipulation
- ↪ Segmentation
- ↪ Substitution

(Fisher, Frey, & Lapp, 2023)

Phonological Awareness Activities

Rhyming - by sound, not spelling

2 or more words that have the same rime: *bat, cat, rat, mat, and flat; see, me, and flea*

Syllable awareness

Teacher says 2 or more words having 2+ syllables and students hum or use their hand/fist under their chin to count the syllables

Syllable blending

Teacher says the syllables in a multisyllable word and the students put the syllables together to make a word (vid-e-o)

Syllable deletion

Teacher says a word (dancing) and asks the students to repeat the word without the 2nd syllable: dancing - dance

Manipulatives



<https://www.hand2mind.com/>

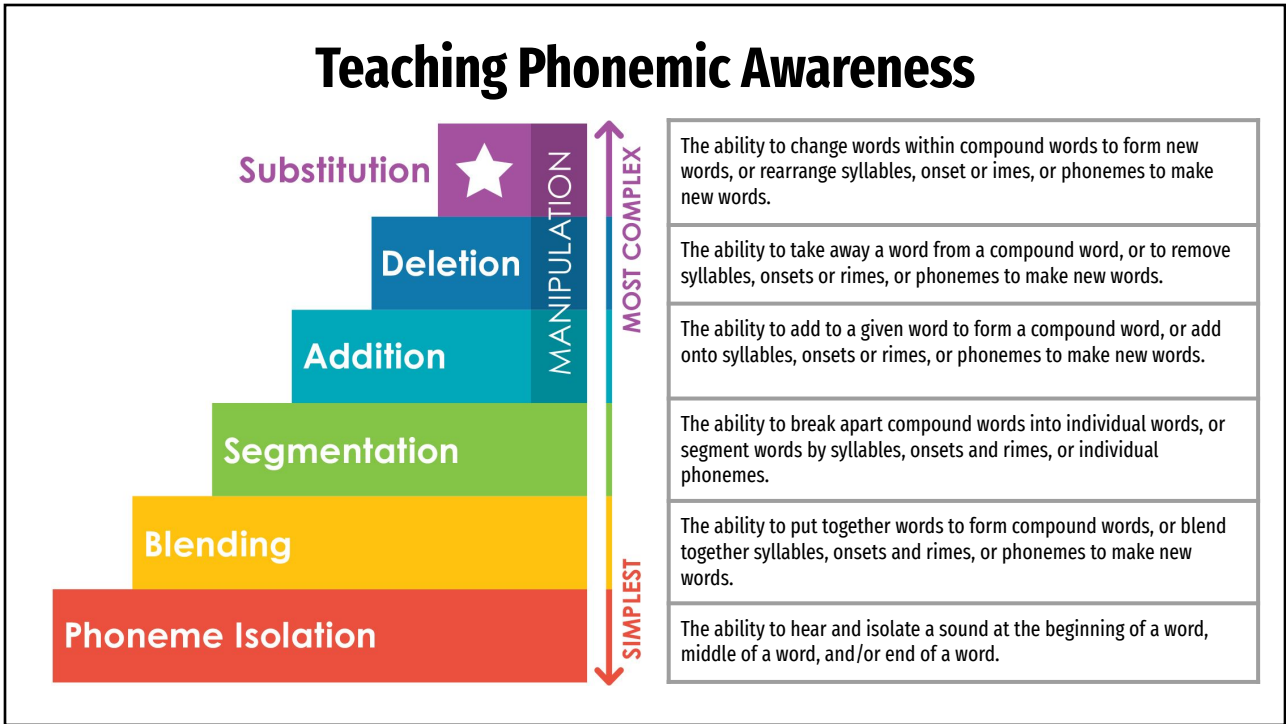
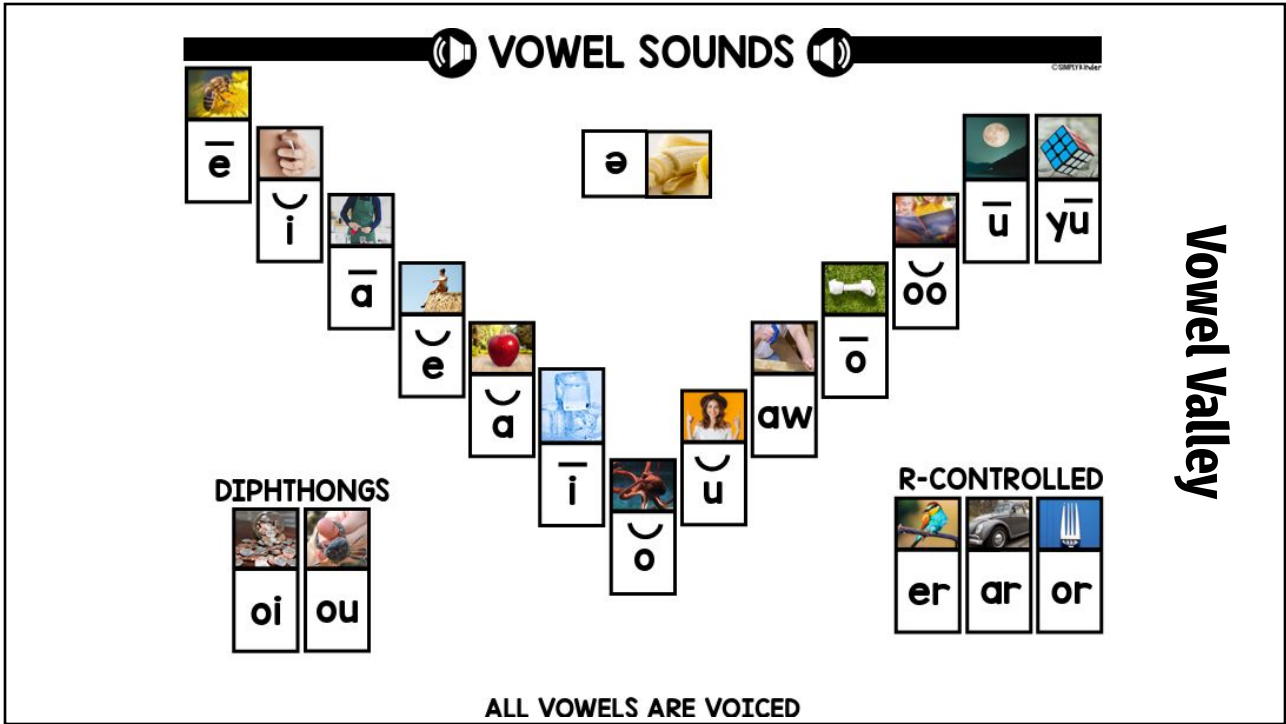
Phonological Awareness Assessment

Yopp-Singer Test of Phoneme Segmentation



- | | | | |
|---------|---------|-----------|---------|
| 1. dog | d-o-g | 12. lay | l-a |
| 2. keep | k-e-p | 13. race | r-a-s |
| 3. fine | f-i-n X | 14. zoo | z-o-o |
| 4. no | n-o | 15. three | fr-ee X |
| 5. she | sh-e | 16. job | j-o-b |
| 6. wave | w-a-v | 17. in | i-n |
| 7. grew | g-o-o X | 18. ice | i-s |
| 8. that | th-at | 19. at | a-t |
| 9. red | r-e-d | 20. top | t-o-p |
| 10. me | m-e | 21. by | b-i |
| 11. sat | S-a-t | 22. do | d-o-u |

1. Nasal Cavity
2. Oral Cavity
3. Tongue
4. Lips
5. Teeth
6. Alveolar Ridge
7. Palate
8. Velum
9. Larynx



Elkonin Boxes - Phonemic Segmenting

- Also known as *sound boxes*
- **Purpose:** isolate the sounds within a word
- **Supplies:** sound box template, chips or pieces of paper
- **Procedure:**
 - Word is said
 - Student repeats the word (slow verbal stretch)
 - Student moves a chip or piece of paper into the template to represent each sound in the word [/g/ /oa/ /t/; /t/ /a/ /p/; /b/ /u/ /g/; /s/ /u/ n/]

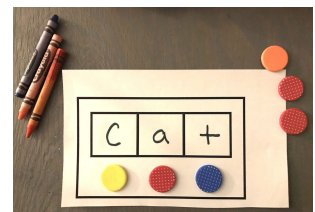


Model - Lead - Check

“I do it” - “We do it together” - “You do it with a partner” - You do it independently”

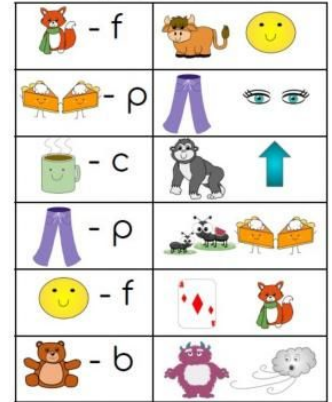
Phoneme Blending

- **Purpose:** to push together the sounds in a word, in sequence, to create the word
- **Supplies:** Elkonin Box and supplies; rubber band to demonstrate the s-t-r-e-t-c-h-i-n-g as the word is said
- **Procedure:**
 - Teacher taps his/her arm each time a sound changes in the words that is said
 - Teacher reminds students to listen to each sound
 - Teacher says the word and taps
 - Teacher blends each sound (s-t-r-e-t-c-h-i-n-g the sounds and then again, but faster as the sounds move closer to one another = blending)
 - Start with two-letter words and then progress



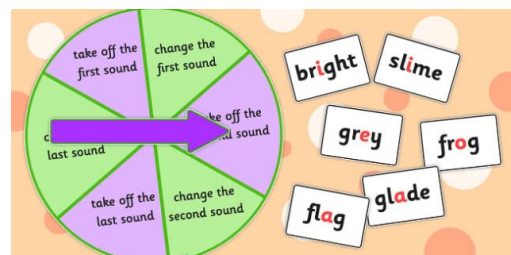
Phoneme Deletion

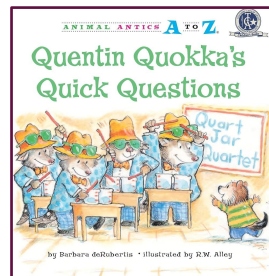
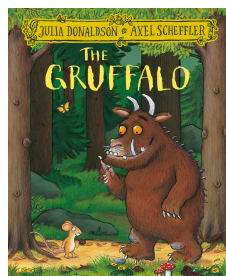
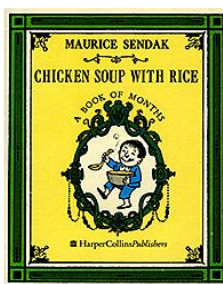
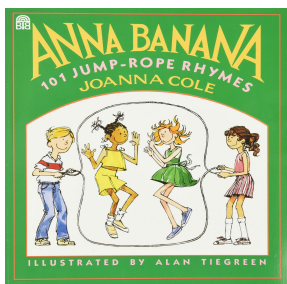
- **Purpose:** helps students deepen phonemic awareness as they isolate sounds by removing some of them within a word
 - **Supplies:** n/a
 - **Procedure:**
 - May be easier to start with compound words and then move to sounds
 - Teacher says, "The word is ("hotdog")." Then I take away a the 2nd part ("-dog") and i am left with "hot".
-
- The word is "pit." Now say the word. ("pit")
 - Now take away the /p/ sound. What is the word? ("It")



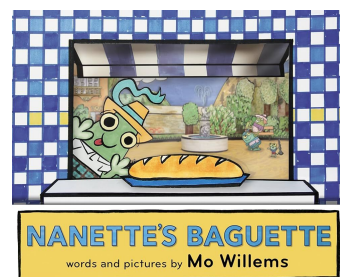
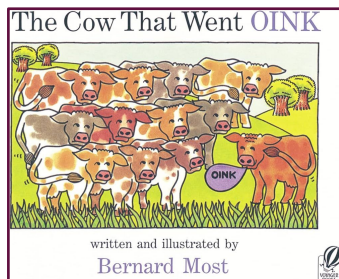
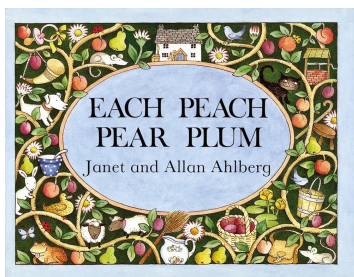
Phoneme Manipulation

- **Purpose:** to make new words by manipulating or changing some letters and their sounds in words we already know; their ability to do this is predictive of later reading and writing development (Savage & Carless, 2005) Being able to manipulate phonemes in spoken words is a prerequisite to visually manipulating letters or combinations of letters to eventually read and write.
- **Supplies:** n/a
- **Procedure:**
 - Teacher says a word
 - Teacher changes a sound in the word and then says the new word
 - "at" + /b/ before the "at" = "bat" /bat/

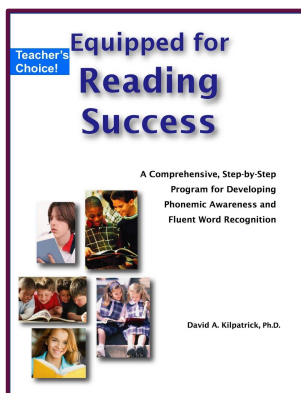
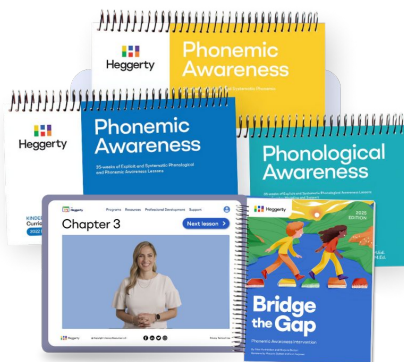




Literature & Phonemic Awareness



More Resources to Consider



<https://heggerty.org/>

One Minute Activities Level D1			
Say: (birth)day Or say: (birth)day	Now say (birth)day, but don't say (thir)th Now say it again, but don't say (birth)	→ day → day	
1. Say: (birth)day (day)time (air)port (eye)sight (foot)ball (disk)drive (bed)time (ice)berg (flash)light (door)bell	→ time → port → sight → ball → drive → time → berg → light → bell	→ day → time → port → sight → ball → drive → time → berg → light → bell	
2. Say: (key)board (hay)stack (grey)hound (clock)wise (half)way (grand)son (book)case (post)mark (race)track (sand)box	→ board → stack → hound → wise → way → son → case → mark → track → box	→ day → time → port → sight → ball → drive → time → berg → light → bell	
3. Say: (gok)fish (black)board (head)light (gun)drop (base)ball (down)town (mail)box (cart)wheel (hair)cut (foot)print	→ fish → board → light → drop → ball → town → mail → wheel → cut → print	→ day → time → port → sight → ball → drive → time → berg → light → bell	
4. Say: (sun)set (life)guard (door)step (rail)road (free)way (sea)shell (row)boat (draw)bridge (him)self (in)come	→ set → guard → step → road → way → shell → boat → bridge → self → in	→ day → time → port → sight → ball → drive → time → berg → light → bell	
5. Say: (tad)pole (moon)light (side)walk (grass)land (text)book (some)thing (leap)frog (there)fore (saw)horse (grand)stand	→ pole → light → walk → land → book → thing → frog → fore → horse → stand	→ day → time → port → sight → ball → drive → time → berg → light → bell	
6. Say: (jig)saw (sand)wich (tight)rope (door)way (soft)ball (fore)head (pass)port (home)land (in)doors (hill)top	→ saw → witch → rope → way → ball → head → port → land → doors → hill	→ day → time → port → sight → ball → drive → time → berg → light → bell	
7. Say: (grape)fruit (out)side (mid)night (bill)board (out)look (air)craft (hill)side (ice)box (side)ways (in)field	→ fruit → side → night → board → look → craft → side → box → ways → field	→ day → time → port → sight → ball → drive → time → berg → light → bell	
8. Say: (space)craft (back)ground (play)pen (out)group (pay)roll (hand)ball (reck)ite (bull)dog (sky)line (land)slide	→ craft → ground → pen → group → roll → ball → tie → dog → line → slide	→ day → time → port → sight → ball → drive → time → berg → light → bell	

Stages of Phonics



- **Stage 0: Prereading**
 - Mostly before students enter school
 - Typically aware of some alphabet letters and that the letters have sounds
 - Begin to understand environmental print carries meaning
 - Becoming phonemically aware - they understand words they speak are made up of discrete sounds represented by letters
- **Stage 1: Initial Reading and Decoding**
 - Kindergarten through end of g1, typically
 - Children learn sound patterns needed to decode
 - Focus is on learning phonics skills to read connected text
- **Stage 2: Confirmation, Fluency, and Ungluing from Print**
 - Grades 2-3+
 - Automatically apply phonics skills to unfamiliar words, without consciously sounding every letter/word out (growth of sight vocabulary - ***amalgamation theory***)
 - Words no longer sounded out = all properties for reading automatically activated

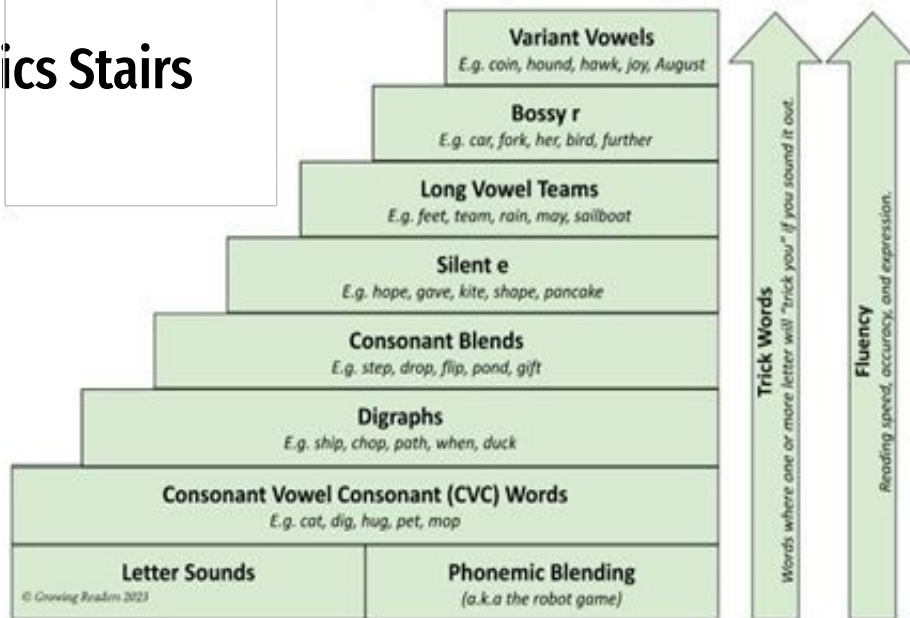
(Ehri & Wilce, 1985; Chall, 1983)

Stages of Phonics, continued

- **Stage 3: Learning the New**
 - g4-g8, generally
 - Reading demands change → reading more to obtain information, and learn about the values, attitudes, and insights of others
 - Texts may contain many words not already in the child's speaking and listening vocabularies
 - Draw on a variety of genres and extend beyond one's own experiences (windows/mirrors)
- **Stage 4: Multiple Viewpoints**
 - Lasts through high school
 - More complex language and vocabulary = cognitive demands increase
 - Read texts containing varying viewpoints and need to analyze them critically
- **Stage 5: Construction and Reconstruction**
 - Lasts through college +
 - "Worldview"
 - Reading is considered constructive - constructing own understanding for individual use

(Ehri & Wilce, 1985; Chall, 1983)

Phonics Stairs



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Approaches to Phonics Instruction



- **Synthetic Phonics**
 - Systematic and explicit
 - Transform letters and letter combinations → sounds → blend (synthesize) sounds → words
 - Practice with decodable books and stories
- **Analogy Phonics**
 - Use phonograms and rimes in a familiar word to identify and unfamiliar word having the same rime
 - Unfamiliar word: "brick"
 - Start by introducing -ick in "kick", then point out the similar rime in "kick" and "brick" → teach the initial blend, and then blend everything together
 - Students pronounce everything following modeling by the teacher

Approaches to Phonics Instruction, continued



- **Analytic Phonics**
 - Begins with identification of a familiar word
 - Teacher introduces particular sound/spelling relationship within that familiar word
 - “mat” → /(ă)/ → other words (*fat, tan, bag*)
 - Students read whole words aloud - without blending individual sounds
- **Embedded Phonics**
 - In the context of “authentic” reading and writing experiences
 - Phonics skills introduced and taught informally as teachers sense students need to know them
 - Relies heavily on context, pictures, familiar word parts, and the first/last letters of words

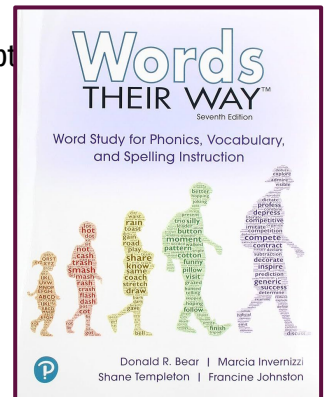
Explicit Phonics Lesson Sequence

1. Develop Phonemic Awareness
 2. Introduce Sound/Spelling
 3. Blend Words
 4. Build Automatic Word Recognition
 5. Apply to Decodable Text
 6. Word Work for Decoding and Encoding
-
- ✓ **Corrective feedback** - immediately
 - ✓ **Monitoring** - attention, responding/participating
 - ✓ **Pacing** - lively, no unnecessary *downtime*
 - ✓ **Signaling** - use of hand gestures: first talk, then signal



Principles of Phonics Instruction

- Follow a scope-and-sequence
- Work for mastery (automaticity) vs. exposure
 - Helps all children learn to read
- Follow explicit instruction
 - Not all students need the same amount of time to master a concept
 - Consider the use of small group instruction
- Develop and understanding of the alphabetic principle
 - Grapheme-phoneme correspondences
- How to blend and pronounce spelling patterns in words being read
- How to use this knowledge to decode less-familiar words
- Link phonics instruction to **practice**
 - Decodable texts (GOAL = get orthographic skill learned well so reader can apply it automatically when reading more authentic texts)
- Word sorts and word building activities



Resources



- Blevins, W. (2023). *Phonics from A to Z - A practical guide* (4th e). Scholastic.
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- Ellery, V. (2009). *Creating strategic readers - Techniques for developing competency in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension*. IRA.
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