

# BASIC READING SKILLS



## Tier 2 – Tier 3 Letter-Sound Awareness

English is based on an alphabet in which letters and groups of letters represent specific sounds (phonemes). A basic part of reading is recognizing that words are made up of a sequence of these sounds. This is called *phonemic awareness*. For example the letters *h*, *a*, and *s* include the sounds “h”, “ah”, and “z” and can be put together to form the word *has*. Students often sound out words they do not know using phonemic rules. To do this, they must organize the sounds of the letters in the correct sequence or order. Providing students with ways to pay attention to the sounds in words and to practice the sequencing of those sounds is likely to help them improve in reading.

### How to Teach Phonemic Awareness Strategies

Phonemic awareness is not necessarily easy for students to understand because we are more concerned with the meaning of what we are saying than the sounds we make when we speak. The following strategies are ways for teachers to teach students phonemic awareness and to practice putting together words, their sounds, and the sequences of those sounds.

Here are the steps for the Letter Switch Strategy:

1. Write a word on the board (e.g., book).
2. Guide students to sound out the word (“b-o-o-k”).
3. Replace or add one letter to the word on the board (e.g., blook).
4. Ask students to sound out the new word (“bl-o-o-k”).
5. Continue with variations, including changes to consonants, vowels, and beginning and ending letters.
6. Change word parts and focus on the sounds of the word parts (e.g., booking, booked, boot, reboot).
7. Complete each word by asking the students to use the word in a sentence. This encourages them to consider the word’s pronunciation and its meaning.

Here are the steps for the Chained Words game:

1. Select 10 target words to be learned.
2. Break the words into their sound parts (e.g., “c” and “at” for cat), and write the parts on separate cards.
3. Place cards face down and ask the students to pick one.
4. Have the student say the word part and then pick another card.
5. Have the student say the second word part, then put it with the first, saying both word parts and blending them together.
6. Ask the student if the word is real or not. If it is not, have the student replace one card or continue with Step 4.
7. If the word is real, the student gets to keep the cards and start again. The student is finished when all cards are gone.

As a variation, words can be longer and more cards can be picked up to make complete words.

These strategies are only two of many possible ways for helping students improve their phonemic awareness. The resources section includes sources that have more instructional plans.

**Progress Monitoring Tool**

Use DIBELS "NWF" to monitor the student's progress on this intervention. Additionally, in Tier 3 the Intervention Documentation Worksheet must be used to document when the intervention is implemented.

Excellent resources can be found at [www.ezschool.com/](http://www.ezschool.com/), [www.fld.jcu.edu.au/netshare/learn/mindmap/](http://www.fld.jcu.edu.au/netshare/learn/mindmap/), and [www.iss.stthomas.edu/studyguides/mapping.htm/](http://www.iss.stthomas.edu/studyguides/mapping.htm/)

**References:**

Adams, M.J., Foorman, B.R., Lundbert, I., & Beeler, T. (1998). Phonemic awareness in young children: A classroom curriculum. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

From Helping Children Learn: Intervention Handouts for Use in School and at Home by Jack A. Naglieri, Ph.D., and Eric B. Pickering, Ph.D. © 2003 Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.: 1-800-638-3775; [www.brookespublishing.com](http://www.brookespublishing.com)

Moats, L.C. (2000). Speech print: Language essentials for teachers. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Richrds, R.G. (1999). The source for dyslexia and dysgraphia. East Moline, IL: LinguiSystems.

## Tier 2 - 3

### Word Attack Hierarchy

In this approach, the instructor prompts the student to apply a hierarchy of word-attack skills whenever the student misreads a word. The instructor gives these cues in descending order. If the student correctly identifies the word after any cue, the instructor stops delivering cues at that point and directs the student to continue reading. NOTE: To avoid too many reading interruptions, do not correct minor student errors (e.g., misreading or omitting *the* or *a*, dropping suffixes such as *-s*, *-ed*, or *-ing*).

#### **Materials:**

Reading Book

Index cards

#### **Steps in implementing the Intervention:**

1. Sit with the student in a quiet locations without too many distractions. Position the book selected for the reading session so that both you and the student can easily follow the text.
2. Instruct the student to begin reading out loud. Encourage him or her to "do your best reading."
3. Follow along silently in the text as the student reads.
4. If the student mispronounces a word or hesitates longer than 5 seconds, the instructor uses the following cues:

\**"Try another way."* This cue is given directly after a reading error and alerts the student to the fact that she or she has misread the word.

\**"Finish the sentence and guess the word."* The student is encouraged to make use of the sentence context to discover the correct word pronunciation.

\**"Break the word into parts and pronounce each one."* The student is directed to sound out the segments of a word independently.

\*Using an index card, the tutor covers over parts of the word and each the student to sound out only the part of the word that is visible. This approach teachers the student a method for reducing the amount of visual information in each word.

\**"What sound does '\_\_\_' make?"* As the tutor covers selected parts of the word with an index card, the student is directed to use phonics information to sound out the word.

\**"The word is \_\_\_."* If the student cannot decode the word despite instructor support, the instructor supplies the word. The student is directed to repeat the word and to continue reading.

Children who have trouble with basic reading and decoding may find using reading/decoding rules helpful. Also, children who score low in successive processing and who have problems with reading/decoding may find reading/decoding rules particularly helpful because they change the successive nature of reading and gives them a plan to figure out words.

**Progress Monitoring Tool**

Use the DORF from DIBELS to monitor the student's progress on this intervention. Additionally, the Intervention Documentation Worksheet located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual must be used to document when the intervention is implemented.

**References:**

Haring, N. G., Lovitt, T. C., Eaton, M. D., & Hanse, C., L. (1978). *The Fourth R: Research in the Classroom*. Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing.

## Tier 2 Word Families for Reading/Decoding

Reading/decoding involves making sense out of printed letters and words and includes understanding the sounds that letters represent and how letters work together to make sounds. Knowing what order letters, letter sounds, and words must be in to make sense requires careful examination of the successive series or order of the sounds. A strategy that encourages the comparison of known words to new words with similar spelling patterns may be helpful for the student having trouble with decoding a word or text for the first time. Using a strategy for decoding also provides plans needed for recognition of details such as letter orders (ie or ei), punctuation, focus on the story line, and so forth. Word families is such a strategy.

### Word Families

Using word families for reading/decoding, students are taught to compare and contrast words they do not know to words they do know that are similar in order to help pronounce them. Words that sound the same often are spelled similarly, and children who know how to pronounce a word such as tank could make a reasonable guess at *rank*. The same student might also have a good chance at pronouncing bank, Frank, and thank if he or she were to recognize that these words are similar to tank. This helps the student read a word without relying on the successive nature or order of the letters in the word.

#### *Steps in Implementing the Intervention:*

1. Discuss the rationale or helpfulness of the strategy: Explicitly teach the students that they can compare and contrast words they do not know to words they already know that are similar. Then introduce known target words along with five to six new words that can be related to the words the students already know. Students are encouraged to learn the new words by analogy and are asked why and how the strategy helps them.
2. Present each word on a sheet of paper and have the students write two or three words that share the same spelling pattern. (This also helps children with spelling problems).
3. Provide ample opportunity for practice and feedback: The students should be asked to read passages containing the new words and to use analogies to decode them.
4. Use and model the strategy: The teacher should always model the use of analogies while reading and provide feedback for each student independently using the strategy.
5. Encourage use of the strategy.

#### *Considerations:*

It is important to consider that this reading method need not be confined to simple words or comparisons, such as bug, hug, and rug. More complex words and analogies can be made; for example, the words at, ten, and the suffix -tion may be put together or analogized to form attention. Although not a direct combination, this analogy can serve to help the student approach the word thoughtfully and independently.

## **Who Should Learn Word Families for Reading/Decoding?**

Children who have poor reading/decoding skills may benefit from using word families for reading/decoding. Children who need help with successive processing skills are likely to have decoding problems (see Naglieri, 1999), and those with a planning weakness often have few plans to help them learn how to decode. This strategy for reading/decoding should be applied when the child has a successive and/or planning weakness along with reading/decoding problems.

### **Progress Monitoring Tool**

Use DORF DIBELS probe to monitor the student's progress on this intervention. Additionally, use the Intervention Documentation Worksheet to document when the intervention is implemented.

### **Source**

From *Helping Children Learn: Intervention Handouts for Use in School and at Home* by Jack A. Naglieri, Ph.D., and Eric B. Pickering, Ph.D. © 2003 Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.: 1-800-638-3775; [www.brookespublishing.com](http://www.brookespublishing.com)

### **Resources**

Two excellent starting points can be found at [www.iss.stthomas.edu/studyguides/](http://www.iss.stthomas.edu/studyguides/) and [www.hood.edu/seri/serihome.html/](http://www.hood.edu/seri/serihome.html/).

### **References**

- Kirby, J., & Williams, N. (1991). *Learning problems: A cognitive approach*. Toronto: Kagen & Woo Limited.
- Naglieri, J.A. (1999). *Essentials of CAS assessment*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

## Tier 2 – Tier 3 Chunking for Reading/Decoding

Reading/Decoding requires the student to look at the sequence of letters in words and understand the organization of specific sounds in order. Some students have difficulty with long sequences of letters and may benefit from instruction that helps them break the word into smaller more manageable units, called chunks. Sometimes the order of the sounds in a word is more easily organized if the entire word is broken into these units. These chunks can be combined into units for accurate decoding. Chunking for reading/decoding is a strategy designed to do that.

### *Steps in Implementing the Intervention*

1. Teachers should first teach the children what it means to chunk or group information so that it can be remembered more easily.
2. Use number sequences and letters for illustration (e.g., how telephone numbers are grouped).
3. Then introduce words to be read and break the words into units such as re-member for remember or car-pet for carpet. Try to organize the groups of letters in the work in ways that are natural (see figure below). For example, re-me-mb-er organizes the letters into groups of two, but that is not as easy to remember as re-mem-ber because it doesn't flow the way people naturally say the sounds.

### PLAN

### ACTION

Look at the word.	“I see the word beginning.”
Find the chunk.	“I see the chunk ginn” in the middle
Sound out the chunk.	“I say, ‘ginn.’”
Sound out the beginning.	“I say, “be.”
Sound out the chunk.	“I say, “ginn”
Sound out the ending.	“I say, “ing.”
Say the word.	“I say, “beginning.”

## Who Should Learn Chunking for Reading/Decoding?

Children who have difficulty with sounding out words are likely to find chunking for reading/decoding helpful. Children who have difficulty working with things in order often have low successive processing ability and may find this strategy particularly helpful. This strategy also teaches children with low planning processing scores some ways of reading.

### **Progress Monitoring Tool**

Use DIBELS "NWF" to monitor the student's progress on this intervention. Additionally, in Tier 3 the Intervention Documentation Worksheet located in the SST/Tier 3 Procedural Manual must be used to document when the intervention is implemented.

### **Source**

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**Resources**

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**References**

Ashman, A. & Conway, R. (1993). Using cognitive methods in the classroom. New York:Routledge.

Naglieri, J.A. (1999). Essentials of CAS assessment. New York: John Wiley & Sons.