



POPEY 

Provincial Outreach Program
for the Early Years

www.popey.ca



The Foundations of Literacy Learning:

Phonics

Presenters:

Lisa Thomas & Jen Kelly

Friday, February 24th

1:00–2:30pm

*Workshop handout & resources available at padlet.com/POPEY

Outcomes for Today



- ★ we will explore the importance of phonics instruction as a key component of your primary literacy program, including:
 - how to design effective mini-lessons, activities, and routines to explicitly and systematically integrate phonics instruction that supports students as they learn letter/sound relationships in reading and writing

Building a Strong Foundation for Reading & Writing

“Children who are aware of sound segments such as phrases, words, syllables, rhymes, letter clusters, and individual sounds have developed (phonemic and) phonological awareness and can use this knowledge to connect their oral language with the written language as they read and write.

The development of this sound awareness is necessary in order for readers and writers to understand that print represents speech.”

Opening Activity - The Name Game

Our name is the first word we loved. We can study our names as an entry point for learning letters and writing other things.



Write down your name on some paper.

See how many words you can make, using the letters in your name, in **one minute**.

Stefanie

You could also sort them like this:

- ▶ high frequency words – at, as, is, if, in
- ▶ cvc words – fan, tin, tan, set, net, sat
- ▶ cvce words – safe, sane
- ▶ blends or digraphs – nest, fast
- ▶ vowel teams/pairs – feast

What's in a name?

How could you group your names together?

-syllables, beginning sounds, vowel teams, etc.

Heather

Kathy

Olivia

Lisa

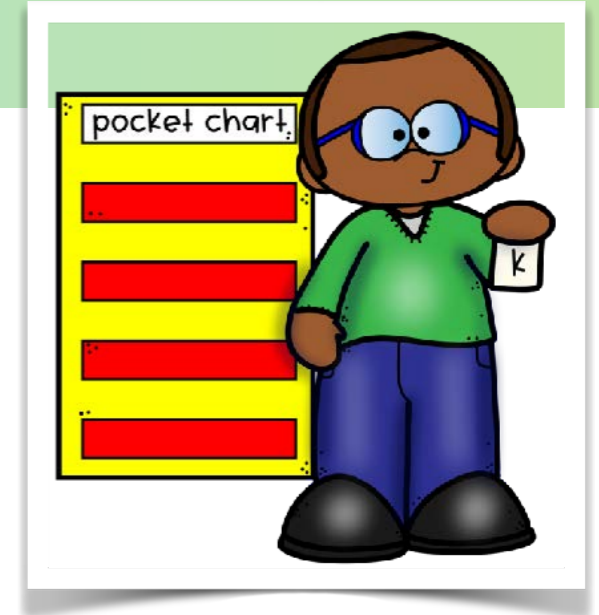
Jennifer

Angela

Darcy

Ella

More Ways to Use Name Charts



- * Clap your name when we come to it
- * Count the letters in your name
- * Use riddles: "I'm thinking of someone whose name starts/ ends with _____"
- * Clap the syllables in your name
- * Match name cards to photos
- * Find a name that has a letter like your name
- * Ask students, "What do you notice about our names?"



Phonological Awareness

–refers to the ability to recognize and manipulate the spoken parts of **sentences** and **words**, and involves a continuum of skills that develop over time and are crucial for **reading & spelling success**:

- * *rhyme, alliteration, syllables, blending/segmenting, and...*
- * *the most sophisticated – and last to develop – is **phonemic awareness***

Phonemic Awareness

–refers to oral language and is the understanding that **spoken words** are made up of individual **sounds** called **phonemes**



Phonics

–refers to **print**, and is the knowledge of **letter/sound relationships** and the ability to **apply** that knowledge to **decoding** unfamiliar **printed words**



What is phonics?

“We use phonics to refer to letter–sound relationships in reading and writing, not to describe a particular method of teaching or approach to reading instruction. Phonics and spelling are interrelated processes; both involve reading and writers using, analyzing, and solving words.”

Emergence of Phonological Awareness



Phonological awareness is the ability to **recognize** and **manipulate** the **spoken parts** of words.

* Rhyme

* Alliteration

* Sentence Segmentation

* Syllables

* Onset and Rime

* Phoneme Matching

* Phoneme Isolating

* Phoneme Segmenting

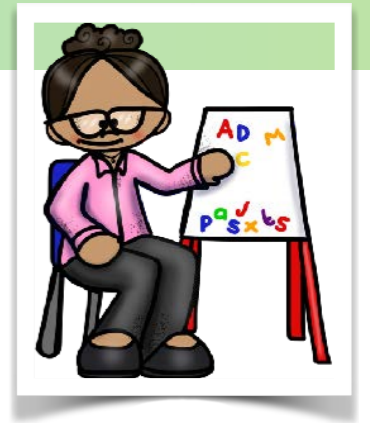
* Phoneme Segmenting and Blending

* Phoneme Manipulating

Taught and learned in the order of easiest to most difficult...

Phonemic Awareness & Phonics

These work in concert to **explicitly** and **systematically** support our students as they navigate the unpredictable, complex alphabetic structure of language & print.



Phonemic Awareness

- main focus is on **sounds**
- deals with **spoken language**
- lessons are **oral** and **auditory**
- students work with **manipulating sounds in words**
- there are **44 sounds** in the English language

Phonics

- main focus is on **letters** and their **sounds**
there are 26 letters that make 44 sounds
- deals with **written language** and **print**
- lessons are both **visual** and **auditory**
- students work with **reading** and **writing letters**
according to their sounds, spelling patterns, and phonological structure
- there are **over 200 ways** to **spell** the 44 sounds we hear

Phonemic awareness **instruction** improves phonics **skills**, and phonics **instruction** improves phonemic awareness; the relationship is **reciprocal**.

—Lane & Pullen, 2004

Spelling - Ehri's phases of reading development

Reciprocity – reading and spelling

Phase 1:
pre-
alphabetic

(not using
alphabetic
principles)

Phase 2:
partial

(write with
consonants-
initial & final
sounds)

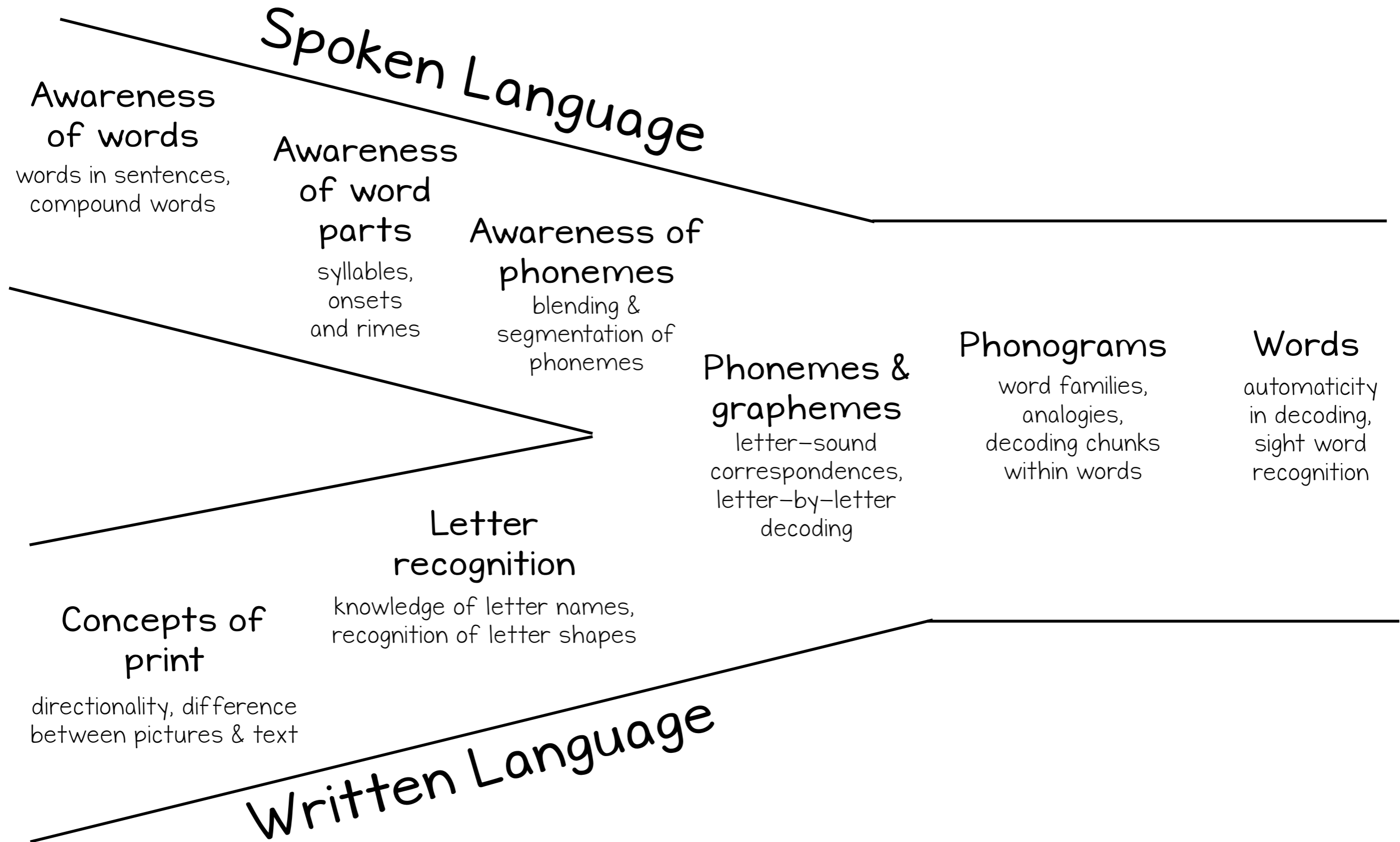
Phase 3:
full
alphabet

(All the
sounds are
present, not
necessary
spelled
correctly)

Phase 4:
consolidated
alphabetic

(Writing
multi-syllabic
words)

The Road to Reading Words



Possible Phonics Scope and Sequence

1 Teach short-vowel sounds before long-vowel sounds

- efficiency and ease of learning are critical
- the simplicity of using short-vowel spellings and CVC words is beneficial to struggling readers

2 Teach consonants and short vowels in combination so that words can be generated as early as possible

- you can create decodable, connected text so kids can apply their knowledge of learned sound-spelling relationships

3 The majority of consonants taught early on should be continuous consonants

- such as f, l, m, n, r, and s – because these consonant sounds can be sustained without distortion; it's easier to model blending

4 Use a sequence in which the most words can be generated

- for example, many words can be generated using the letter t; very few using x
- higher-frequency sound-spelling relationships should precede less-frequent ones

5 Progress from simple to more complex sound-spellings

- consonant sounds should be taught before digraphs and blends
- short-vowel sound-spellings should be taught before long-vowel sound-spellings

WHY a Scope and Sequence?

Scope and sequence are **formed** so that many words can be **formed** as early as possible.

How many words can be **formed** with the following letters?

* s, m, t, d, l

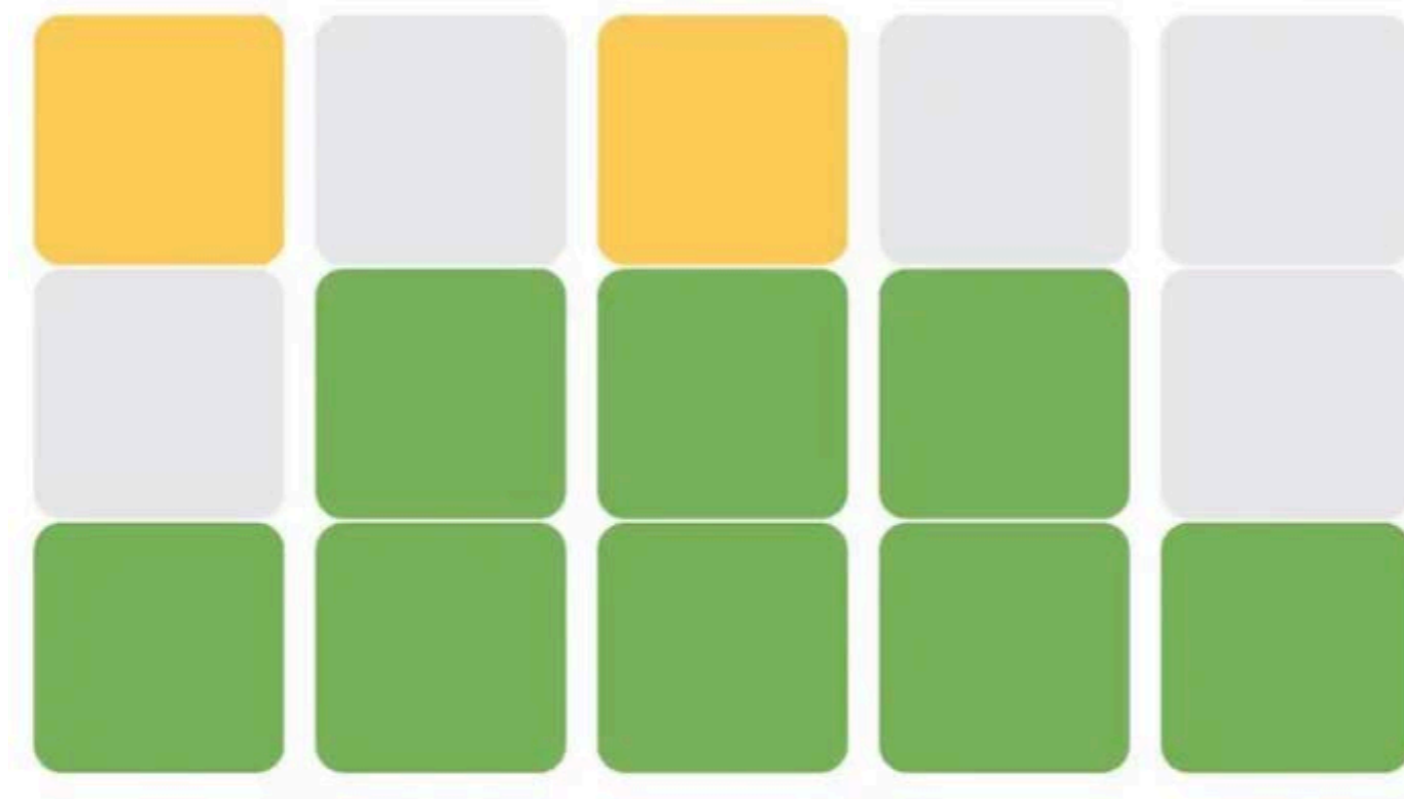
* s, m, a, t, d



Quick generation of useful words is not only more efficient, but highly motivating!

High Engagement Literacy Learning

Games can engage young learners, and help them identify **rules** and **patterns** in spelling all on their own.



Building Phonics Knowledge Through Wordle

Games can engage young learners, and help them identify rules and patterns in spelling all on their own.

- * Some letters are more common than others
- * The position of letters in a word matters
- * Letters and sounds don't have a one-to-one match
- * Vocabulary knowledge is important to word reading & spelling
- * Phonics and spelling can be engaging



Characteristics of Strong Phonics Instruction



- ✓ **Readiness Skills** – phonemic awareness & alphabet recognition
- ✓ **Scope and sequence** – build student learning from simple to complex
- ✓ **Blending** – must be frequently modelled and applied
- ✓ **Dictation** – guided spelling helps transition growing reading skills to writing
- ✓ **Word Awareness Activities** – word sorts and word building provide opportunities to play with words and experiment with how word parts combine
- ✓ **Teaching High-Frequency Words** – teaching high utility words that are irregular based on common sound-spelling patterns (typically the top 200–300 high frequency words are taught in K–2)
- ✓ **Reading Connected Text** – controlled, decodable text at the beginning level of reading instruction helps students develop a sense of comfort in and control over their reading growth – a key learning tool in early phonics instruction

Active * Social * Reflective

Reflect, Connect & Share

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Active * Social * Reflective

Take **one minute** to reflect **individually** on which activities are already in your daily routines.

Next, share a favourite routine, a connection, or a new possibility with your table group.

Framework for Word Study Lessons

Teach

- whole class lesson
- introduce the day's word study principle
- often includes an **inquiry** element – to encourage kids to **discover** something about language

Apply

- kids apply principle through **hands-on practice** (*often kinesthetic*)
- **opportunity** for them to **construct** their own knowledge
- can be whole-class, small-group, partner, or independent work
- teacher is working with small groups (*guided reading or other*)

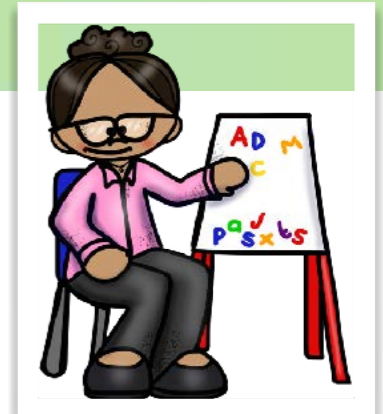
Share

- kids **share discoveries** they made in whole-class meeting
- sharing provides teachers with **feedback** on the effectiveness of the lesson & how the kids did in **application** of the **principle**

Connect

- **connections** are made to **reading & writing** – so kids know **how** to use what they've learned
- suggestions for various reading & writing experiences
- suggestions to extend learning & to make **home-school connections**

The Art of the Mini-Lesson



Mini-Lesson Structure

I do



WE do



YOU do

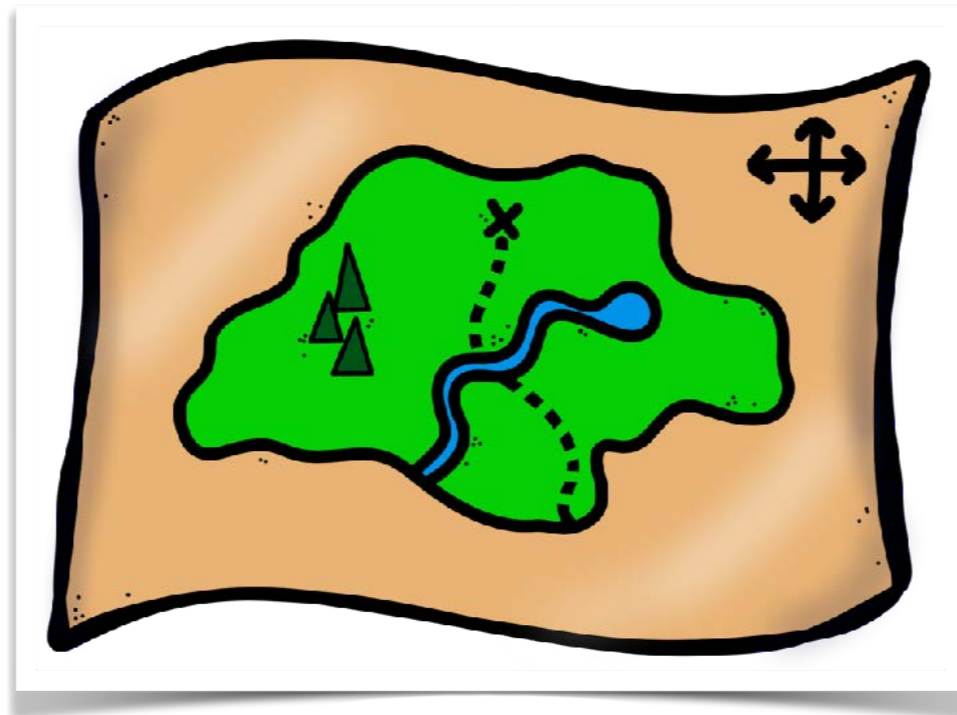
- * mini, not maxi
- * strategy-focused
- * model, model, model
- * direct and explicit instruction
- * guided practice in a safe, supportive setting
- * transfer to independence



Systematic Plan

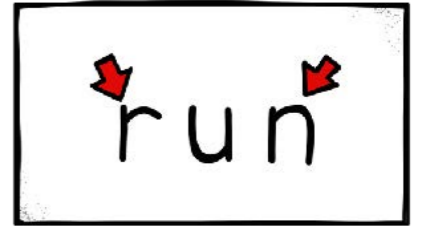
“When a new skill is introduced, it should be systematically and purposefully reviewed for the next four to six weeks.”

– Wiley Blevins



Vowel Charts

Can help with the middles of words:



- ▶ At first, most of the sounds children hear are **consonants**.
- ▶ Tell them that every word has at least **one vowel**.
- ▶ When the middle of a word is hard, it is often because **vowels are tricky**.
- ▶ Even if their vowel guess is incorrect, it makes the word they are writing **more readable**.
- ▶ Show students how to **use the vowel chart** to help decide which **vowel to use**.

a - e - i - o - u

Vowel Charts

Vowel Teams




long A (ā)

ai 	ay 	eigh 	a_e 
train	play	eight	cake

long E (ē)

ea 	ee 	ey 	e_e 
leaf	tree	key	athlete

long I (ī)

ie 	igh 	y 	Le 
pie	light	fly	smile

long O (ō)

oa 	ow 	oe 	o_e 
toad	window	toe	globe

long U (ū)

ue 	ui 	ew 	u_e 
glue	fruit	jewellery	cube

The Power of Word Families





















Teaching word families is high impact instruction

- * There are 37 word families that can help kids spell about 500 words
- * The word families help kids make C-V-C words and also teach children a foundational spelling strategy
- * One known word can help you spell other unknown words:
 - ✓ hop, mop, chop
 - ✓ day, say, play
 - ✓ bat, cat, flat
 - ✓ fin, pin, grin
 - ✓ bit, fit, split
- * Once writers understand a word family, sometimes they can then begin to recognize that short vowel sound in other words, too.



Scaffolded Supports for Working with Word Families

Word Families

<p>-ad</p> <p>bad lad Dad mad glad pad had sad</p> 	<p>-ag</p> <p>bag nag brag rag drag sag flag snag</p> 	<p>-an</p> <p>can plan fan tan man than pan scan</p> 	<p>-ap</p> <p>cap nap clap slap gap snap lap tap map trap</p> 
<p>-at</p> <p>bat mat cat pat fat rat flat sat hat that</p> 	<p>-ed</p> <p>bed shed fed shred fled sled led sped red wed</p> 	<p>-en</p> <p>den ten hen then men when pen</p> 	<p>-et</p> <p>bet net get pet jet set let vet met wet</p> 
<p>-ig</p> <p>big pig dig rig fig twig jig wig</p> 	<p>-in</p> <p>chin spin fin tin grin thin pin twin skin win</p> 	<p>-ip</p> <p>clip rip dip ship drip skip hip tip lip zip</p> 	<p>-it</p> <p>bit lit fit pit grit skit hit sit kit split</p> 
<p>-og</p> <p>clog hog dog jog fog log frog smog</p> 	<p>-op</p> <p>cop pop chop shop drop stop hop top mop</p> 	<p>-ot</p> <p>cot plot dot pot hot rot lot spot not tot</p> 	<p>-ub</p> <p>cub scrub club shrub grub stub hub sub rub tub</p> 
<p>-ug</p> <p>bug plug dug rug hug slug jug snug mug tug</p> 	<p>-um</p> <p>drum plum glum scum gum sum hum yum</p> 	<p>-un</p> <p>bun run fun spun nun stun pun sun</p> 	<p>-ut</p> <p>but nut cut rut gut shut hut strut</p> 

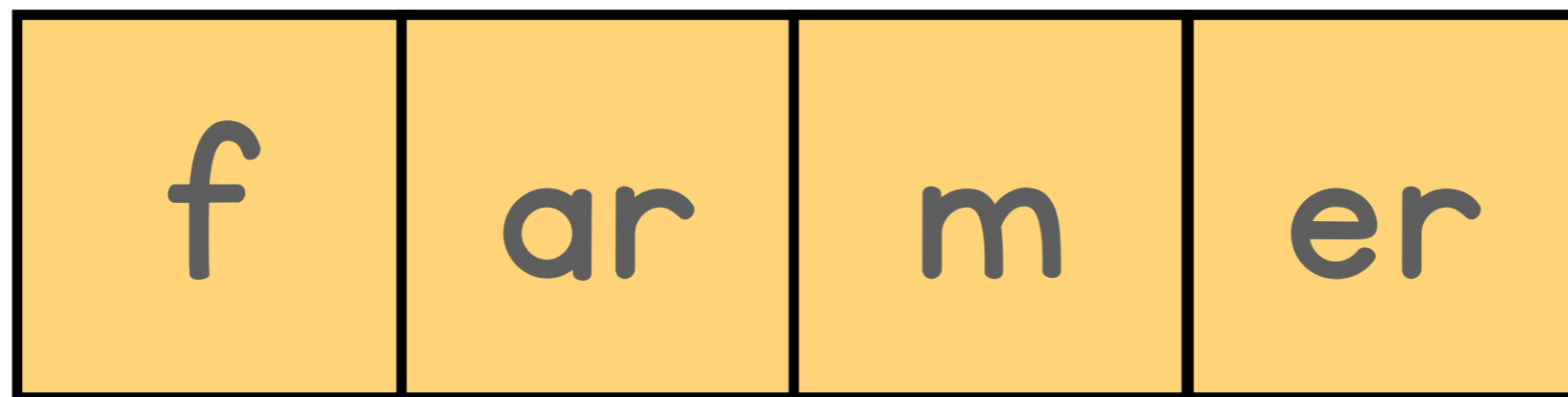
Elkonin boxes

Why use Elkonin boxes?

- *it helps build students' phonemic awareness & phonics
- *it helps connect letters to sounds
- *it helps students hear and record all sounds in a word
- *it helps solidify left to right directionality

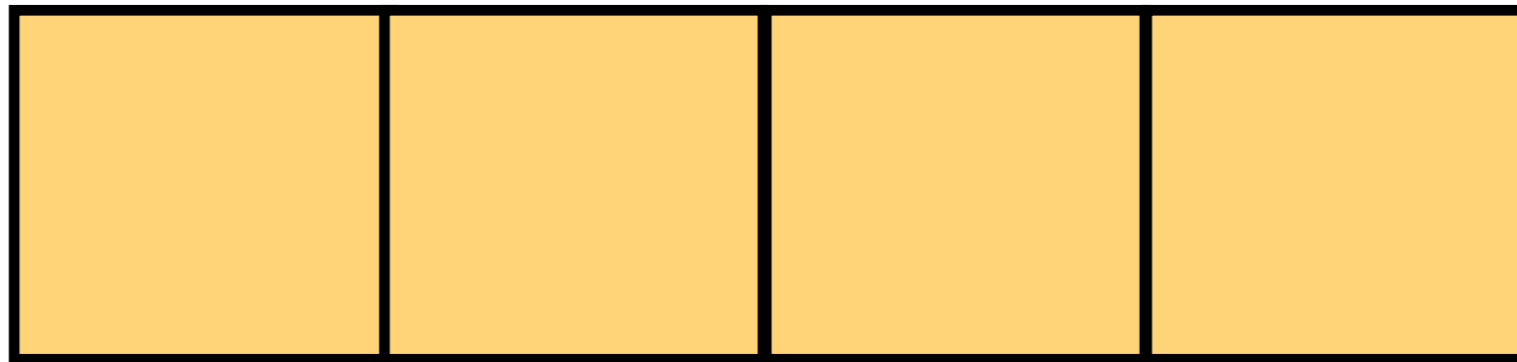
Once students are proficient with phonemic awareness:

- *You can transition to teaching **letter** boxes (this helps with spelling)
- *Students gain independence with this problem-solving strategy



The process of using Elkonin boxes during Writing

- * Give the student a 'practice page' or white board
 - * When the student is writing and they come to a word they need to problem solve, model the use of Elkonin boxes on the practice page
- * Model the task for the student
 - * Say the word slowly and touch the boxes (or push objects into the boxes) as you say the word
- * Have the student try it themselves
 - * You may do the task together until the student can take over



High Frequency Power Words

109 words comprise 50% of the words found in children's texts

*the	*for	from	were	do	some
*of	*was	I	when	will	so
*and	on	have	we	each	these
*a	are	or	there	about	would
*to	as	by	can	how	other
*in	with	one	an	up	into
*is	his	had	your	out	has
*you	they	not	which	them	more
*that	at	but	their	then	her
*it	be	what	said	she	two
*he	this	all	if	many	like

* Words 1-13 make up 25% of the words in children's texts

High Frequency Power Words

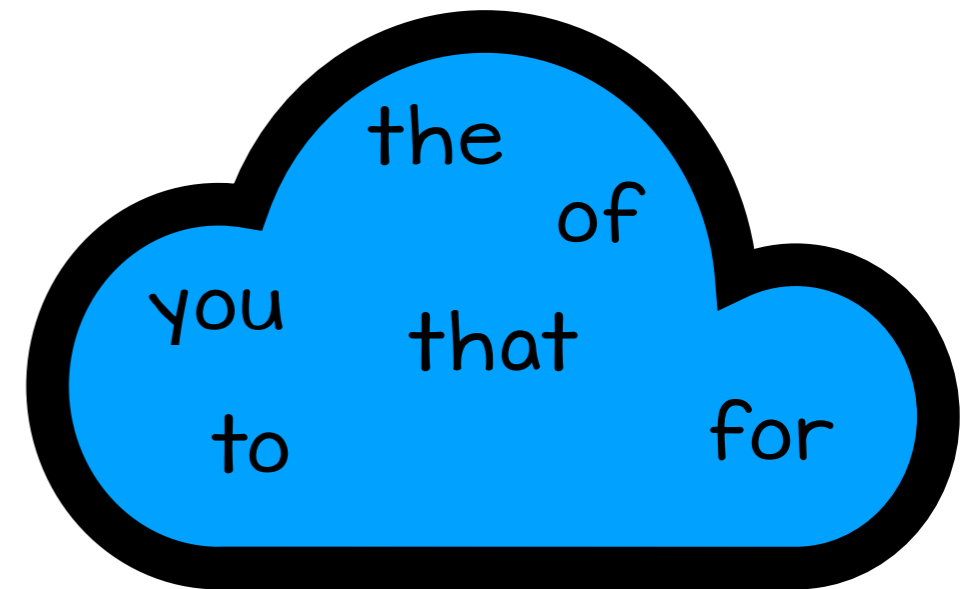
109 words comprise 50% of the words found in children's texts

him	its	only	after	back
see	who	way	words	much
time	now	find	called	before
could	people	use	just	go
no	my	may	where	good
make	made	water	most	new
than	over	long	know	write
first	did	little	get	
been	down	very	through	

High Frequency Words

Prioritize which high frequency words you explicitly teach...

	Low Frequency	High Frequency
Regular	quake	went
Irregular	choir	was

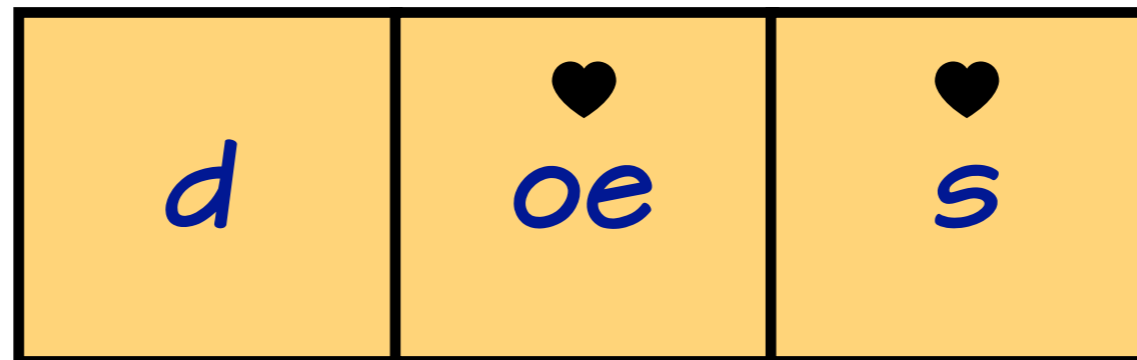


Orthographic Mapping

Orthographic mapping proposes that we use the pronunciations of words that are already stored in long-term memory as the anchoring points for the orthographic sequences (letters) used to represent those pronunciations.

Let's Explore an Orthographic Mapping Routine for the word

does



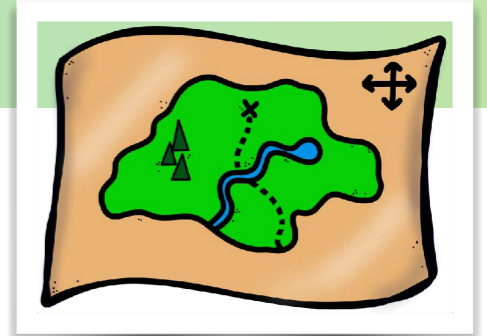
Reciprocity of Reading and Writing

Contributions of writing to literacy learning:

- * slow analysis of print from left to right
- * letter formations
- * notice the importance of letter sequence
- * hand-eye coordination
- * group letters to get the message down quickly
- * notice the difference between words, letters, phrases, and sentences

To help children notice that **groups of words** create meaning.

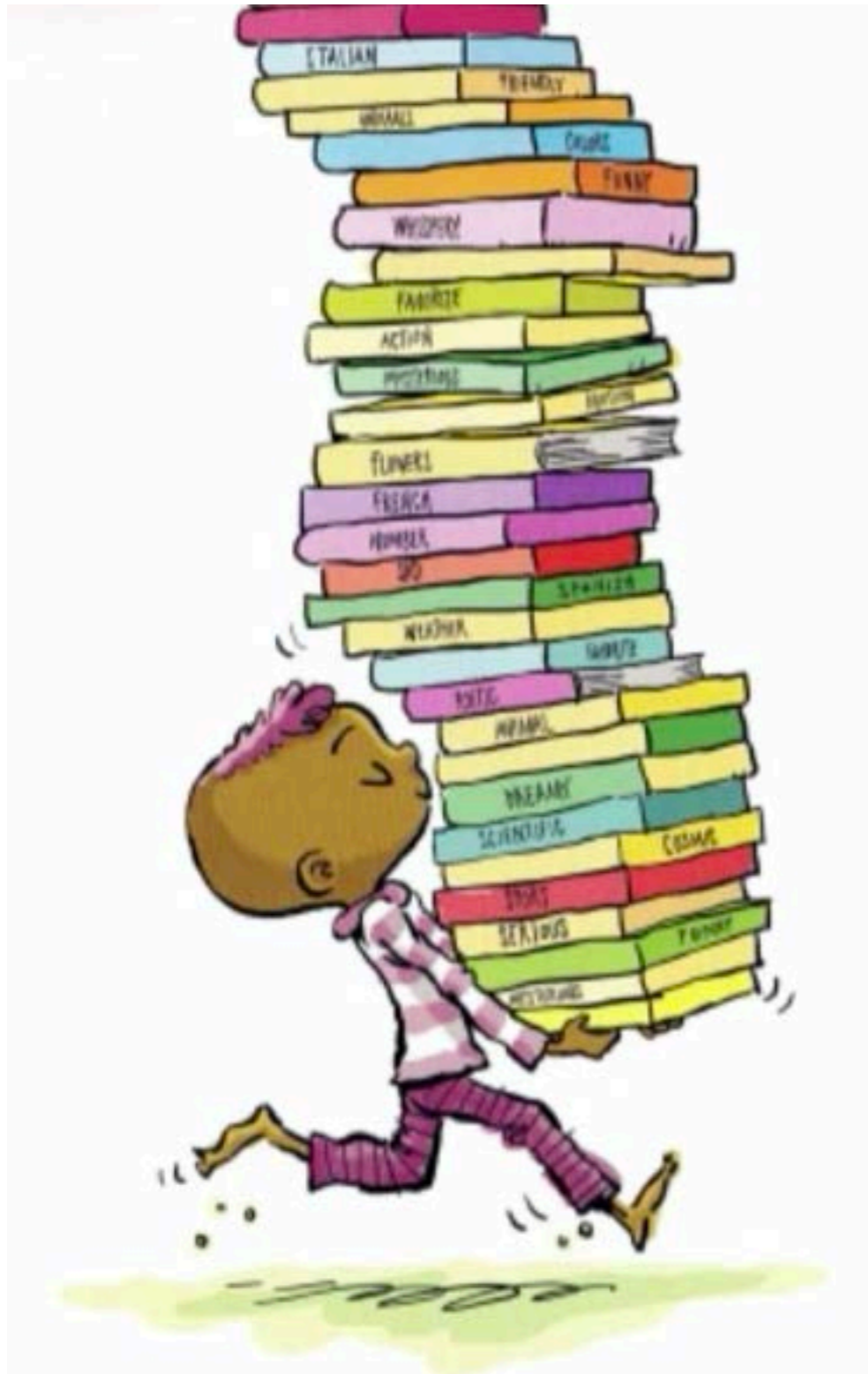
The Building Blocks of Literacy Learning



The goal is for students to...

- be enthusiastic explorers of words:
 - ★ puzzle out letter–sound relationships
 - ★ see patterns
 - ★ take words apart
 - ★ investigate meanings
- connect to words in an active way
- expand their reading and writing powers

Students learn **HOW TO LEARN** aspects of words, and develop efficient and powerful word–solving strategies



Engagement deepens further as children actually deploy their developing phonics and spelling abilities to read and write texts to inform, persuade, entertain, and innovate.

—Nell Duke

Reflections & Next Steps

Resources, research & activities shared today:

- * Key definitions – phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics
- * Scope and sequence/skill progression
- * Names connected to phonics activities
- * Framework and examples of word study lessons
- * Elkonin boxes and orthographic mapping

What is **ONE** thing you can commit to **TRY** in your classroom or role?

Sources

Books, Blogposts & Presentations

[Movement into Reading – Ehri](#)

[The Big Five: Phonics–Orthographic Mapping – Woolldridge](#)

[POPEY Vowel Charts](#)

[Make Your Own Wordle](#)

[What Wordle Reminds Us About Effective Phonics and Spelling Instruction](#) – Duke

Word Matters: Teaching Phonics and Spelling in the Reading/Writing Classroom – Fountas & Pinnell

Conceptualizing reading: What have we learned from scientifically based reading research? Presentation by Lane

Lesley University Institute: Word Study: Teaching Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling in Grades K–3

The Fountas & Pinnell Phonics, Spelling, and Word Study System – Fountas & Pinnell

When Readers Struggle: Teaching That Works – Fountas & Pinnell

A Fresh Look at Phonics, Grade K–2 – Blevins

Literacy Lessons Part Two – Clay

Phonics From A–Z – Blevins

Units of Study in Writing – Calkins, The Reading and Writing Project

Videos

[Tik Tok Word Reading](#)

[Miles Music Kid on Tik Tok](#)



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