



**POPEY** 

Provincial Outreach Program  
for the Early Years

[www.popey.ca](http://www.popey.ca)

Foundational Literacy Learning:

Phonological Awareness, Word Solving & Structure

Thursday, March 9th

12:05–12:50pm

Presenter:  
Lisa Thomas  
POPEY Program Manager



# Outcomes for Our Lunch & Learn



Strategies and routines to create a meaningful, responsive, and engaging literacy block that supports foundational literacy skills, with a focus on:

- ★ a scope & sequence for phonological and phonemic awareness
- ★ mini-lessons, activities, and routines to develop students' word solving skills



Why are  
foundational skills  
important?

# Connecting to BC's Early Learning Framework

## Pathways for Engaging with Communication and Literacy

To inspire communication and literacies, adults **design environments** and **cultivate practices** considering these **pathways**...

### Language Communication

Children *and educators* engage in meaningful, reciprocal conversations

### Vocabulary, symbols, and written language

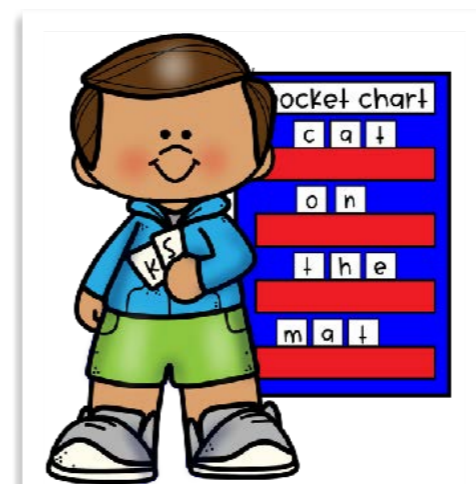
Children have **opportunities** to engage with verbal, symbolic, and written languages that are meaningful to them

### Sound and Word Play

Children have **opportunities** to **explore** and **play** with sounds and words

# Effective Word Study

Word study goes on in many contexts throughout the day; sometimes in the context of reading and writing, sometimes it is within a focused lesson. Word study is active; it involves children in an investigation through which they make sense of the way written language works.



# How do we learn?



- \* observation of someone skilled modelling/demonstrating
- \* direct instruction
- \* gradual release of responsibility
- \* practice / repetition
- \* time / opportunity
- \* encouragement / feedback
- \* safety to take risks and try new things
- \* relationships, motivation, engagement...

Learning is:

- \* social
- \* constructive
- \* experiential
- \* inquiry-based

With this in mind, how can we provide our students with the comprehensive learning experiences needed to build their foundational literacy skills?

# The Name Game: Connections & Meaning

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.

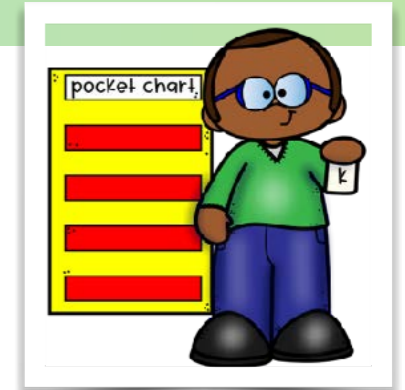
See how many words you can make, using the letters in your name, in **one minute**.

Stefanie



Easily differentiated to be responsive to your students' varied abilities & needs.  
Can be adapted to use vocabulary words from across the curriculum,  
and extended to a literacy centre/station.

# More Ways to Use Names & 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 or 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?”

Easily differentiated to be responsive to your students’ abilities & needs



# 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**



# 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...

# Readiness Skills



The two best predictors of early reading success are phonemic awareness and alphabet recognition.

## Phonemic Awareness

A range of subskills is taught to develop phonemic awareness, with oral blending and oral segmentation having the **most positive impact** on reading and writing development.

★ These skills are **power skills**.

## Alphabet Recognition

Involves learning the **names, shapes, and sounds** of the **letters** of the alphabet with **fluency**.

Phonemic awareness and alphabet recognition are focused on primarily in Kindergarten and Grade 1.

# Scope and Sequence of Phonemic Awareness

...the understanding that spoken words are made up of individual sounds

## Examples of Phonemic Awareness Skills

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



### 1. Sound and word discrimination:

*What word doesn't belong with the others? cat, mat, bat, ran*

### 2. Rhyming: *What word rhymes with 'cat'? bat*

### 3. Syllable splitting: *The onset of 'cat' is /k/, the rime is /at/*

### 4. Blending: *What word is made up of the sounds /k/ /a/ /t/? cat*

### 5. Phonemic segmentation: *What are the sounds in 'cat'? /k/ /a/ /t/*

### 6. Phoneme deletion: *What is 'cat' without the /k/? at*

### 7. Phoneme manipulation: *What word would you have if you changed the /t/ in 'cat' to an /n/? can*

# Seven Principles for Effective Word Study



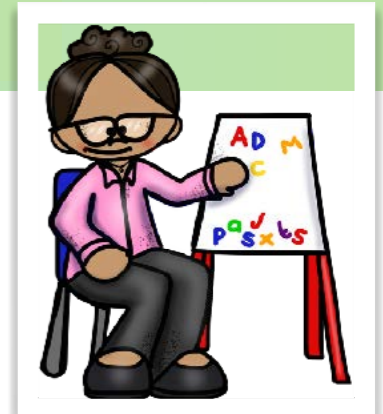
1. Provide **direct & explicit teaching** of **strategies & principles** to the whole group, to small groups, and to individual students in conferences
2. **Demonstrate** specific principles & then **engage** children in making, sorting, and creating charts or webs of principles and generalizations
3. Place an **example** on the **word wall** or list examples on **charts** and **lead** the students in a **discussion** of how this word is **related** to other words on the wall or other chart
4. Follow **whole-group** instruction with an **application** of **concepts & principles** or **strategies** using manipulatives and/or reading and writing activities

# Seven Principles for Effective Word Study



5. Set up a **variety** of learning investigations for small groups or partners at a **word study centre** or for individuals at desks or tables
6. Bring to **closure** whole group, small group, partner, or **independent application** with a **group meeting** in which students **report** on their **understandings** and **discoveries** about words
7. Draw children's **attention** to **powerful examples** within the **context** of language – reading and writing – helping to **solidify** the new principles

# 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



# Word Wall I Spy

- ▶ the word starts with 'm'
- ▶ the word has 3 letters
- ▶ the word has 2 syllables
- ▶ the word has a long 'e' sound
- ▶ it's a compound word
- ▶ it's a word that means the opposite of **last**

and	animal	because	another
ball	big	crash	community
can	friend	eating	discover
day	have	make	everybody
fun	look	outside	first
like	night	really	question
play	said	school	recycle
see	talk	sometimes	terrible
the	thing	truck	usually
up	your	writing	weather

Easily differentiated to be responsive to your students' varied abilities & needs.

Can be adapted to use with vocabulary words from across the curriculum, and extended to a literacy centre/station – Portable Personalized Word Wall Folders.

# Rhyme Recognition & Repetition

One minute lesson to fit in during transition times:

## Examples:

go/no  
yes/me  
sad/mad  
out/pig  
run/fun  
in/lap  
rip/bag

## Role of the Educator

- ▶ educator says the word pairs

## Role of the Students

- ▶ Students repeat the word pairs and show thumbs up if the words rhyme, thumbs down if the words don't rhyme.

## Rhyme Repetition

T says word pair,  
Students repeat:

hop/mop ran/fan  
wet/jet mad/dad

# Segmenting Phonemes

One minute lesson to fit in during transition times:

## Examples:

hop  
run  
map  
play  
slug  
grab

## Role of the Educator

- ▶ educator says the word

## Role of the Students

- ▶ Students repeat the word and segment it into phonemes

## Segmenting Phonemes

T says the word,  
Students say word,  
then segment it

T: flip

Ss: flip f-l-i-p

# Blending Phonemes

One minute lesson to fit in during transition times:

## Examples:

r-e-d

p-u-t

b-a-l

f-l-a-g

s-w-i-m

g-l-a-s

## Blending Phonemes

T says the phonemes for each word, Students blend the sounds & say whole word

T: b-l-a-k

Ss: b-l-a-k ... black

## Role of the Educator

- ▶ educator says the phonemes for each word

## Role of the Students

- ▶ Students blend the sounds to say the whole word

# Practicing Phonemic Awareness throughout the day

Make use of transition times and existing routines...

- ▶ During morning meeting – have students segment phonemes in each other's names
- ▶ During interactive writing – use elkonin boxes
- ▶ During transition times – play a few rounds of “Guess my Secret Word” by saying segmented words and students can blend sounds together



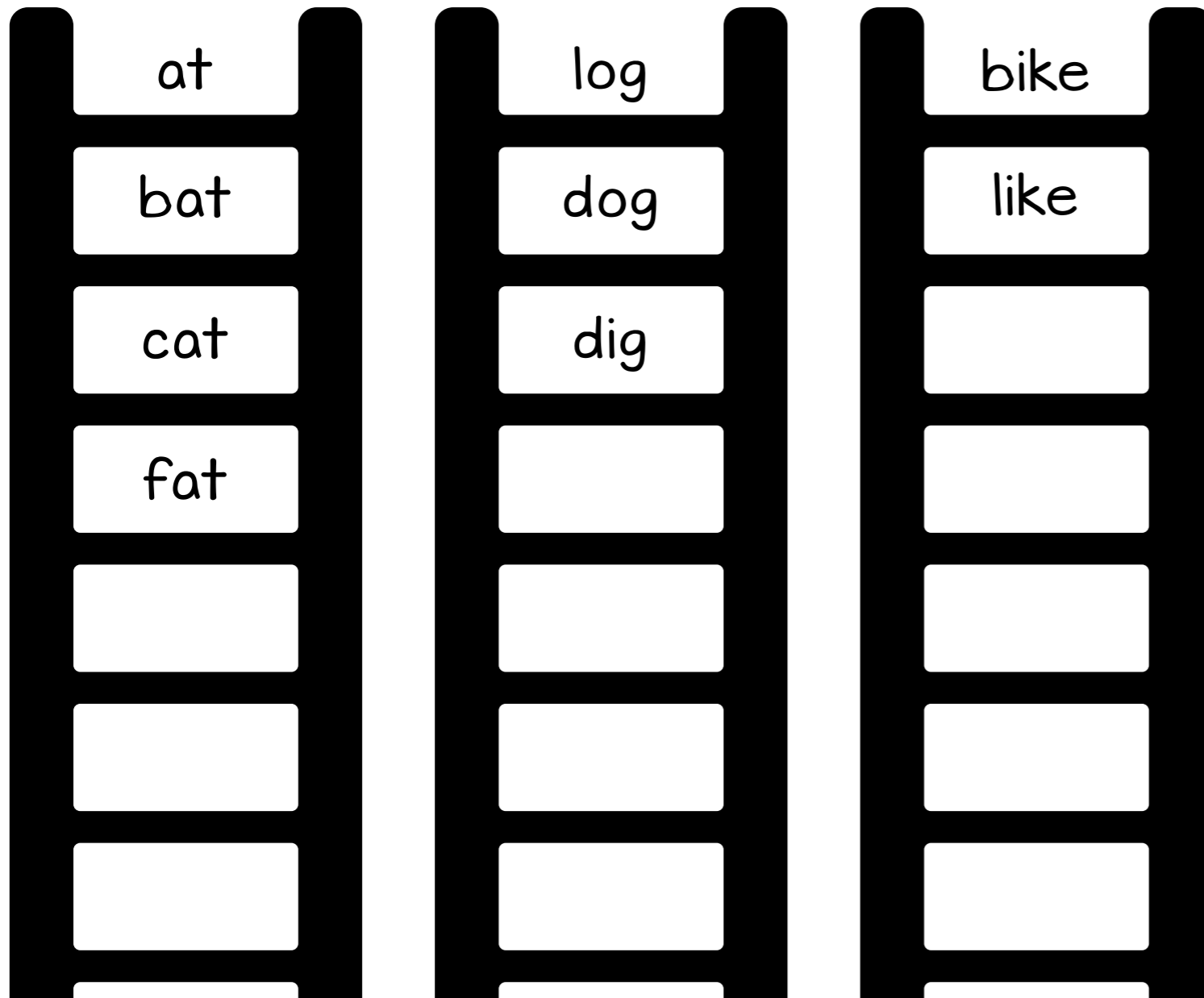
# Isolating & Substituting Sounds Through Word Ladders

bed

bet

# Word Ladders - Playing With Sounds, Letters, Words

To: Everyone  
|Type message here...



Take one minute to finish **one** of these word ladders, or create your own word ladder, either on your own or with a partner or your table group.

See if you can come up with 7 words in your ladder.

Easily differentiated to be responsive to your students' varied abilities & needs, and can be extended to a literacy centre/station for additional engagement & practice.

# The Power of Word Families

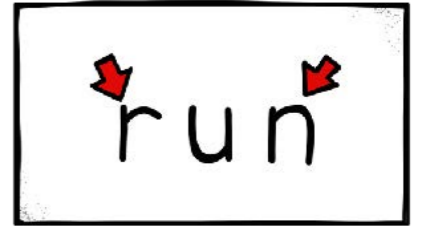
Teaching word families is high impact instruction

- \* 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.



# 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

# POPEY's Vowel Charts to Support Early Literacy

## Vowel Teams





long A (a)

ai 	ay 	eigh 	a_e 
train	play	eight	cake

long E (e)

ea 	ee 	ey 	e_e 
leaf	tree	key	athlete

long I (i)

ie 	igh 	y 	Le 
pie	light	fly	smile

long O (o)

oa 	ow 	oe 	o_e 
toad	window	toe	globe

long U (u)

ue 	ui 	ew 	u_e 
glue	fruit	jewellery	cube

# Segmenting CVC Words Using Toy Cars/Elkonin Boxes

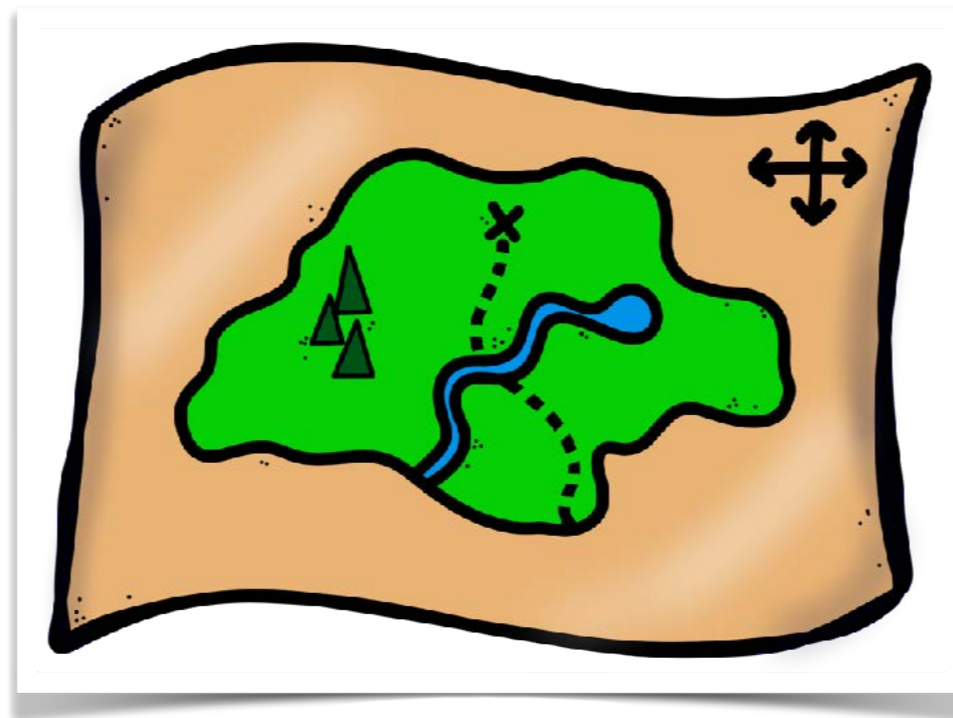
Park Those Sounds!



# *A Systematic Plan for Instruction, Practice & Mastery*

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

– Wiley Blevins



# Explicit Instruction Both In and Out of Texts

## Making Meaning OUT OF Texts

### Word Study

Early Literacy Concepts  
Phonological Awareness  
Letter–Sound Relationships  
Letter Knowledge  
Spelling Patterns  
High–Frequency Words  
Word Meaning/Vocabulary  
Word Structure  
Word Solving Actions

## Making Meaning IN Texts

### Reading

Active Read Aloud  
Reading Mini–Lessons  
Shared Reading  
Guided/Small–Group Reading  
Independent Reading

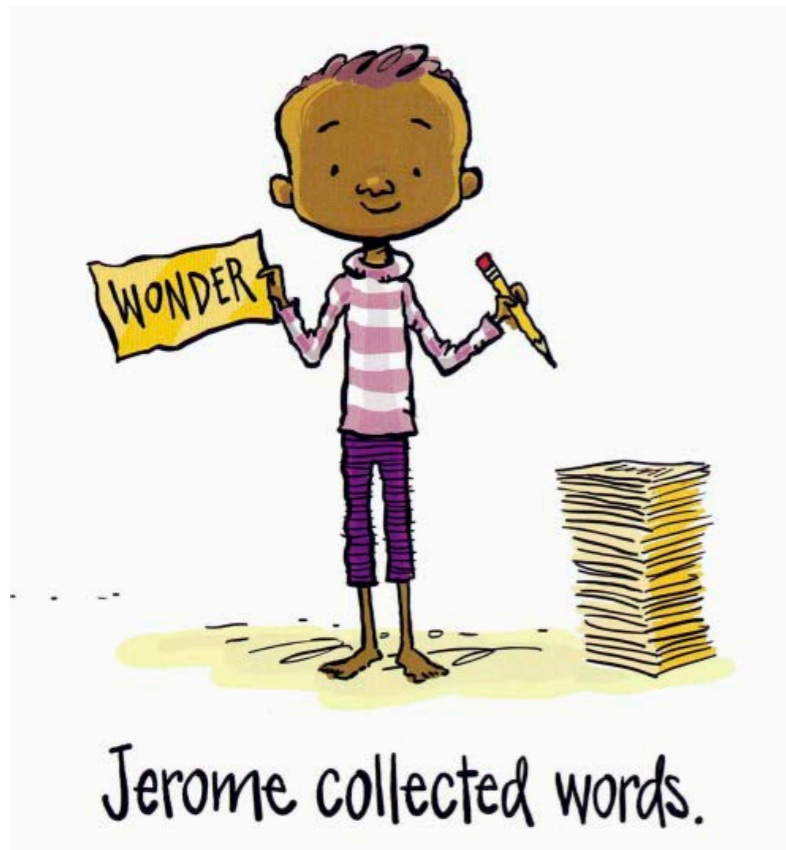
### Writing

Modelled Writing  
Writing Mini–Lessons  
Shared/Interactive Writing  
Guided/Small–Group Writing  
Independent Writing

Oral Language

“Explicit phonics lessons are more effective when children are highly engaged through elements of inquiry (seeking connections and patterns) and kinesthetic application activities in which they work “hands on” with letters, sounds, word parts, and words. In addition, there should be explicit links to reading and writing in other contexts.”

–Fountas & Pinnell, from  
*Twelve Compelling Principles from  
the Research on Phonics Instruction*



Jerome collected words.

# Reflections & Next Steps

## Resources & activities shared today:

- ✓ how do we learn? the importance of foundational skills
- ✓ readiness skills, scope and sequence
- ✓ principles of effective word study
- ✓ demonstrations and examples of word study throughout the day:
  - ★ Using students' names
  - ★ Word wall I spy
  - ★ One minute transition activities
  - ★ Word ladders, word families, vowel charts
  - ★ Elkonin boxes

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

# Sources

## Info Links

more info links are available on our [website](#)

[The Golden Circle of Why](#)

[The Development of Phonological Skills – Reading Rockets](#)

[BC Early Learning Framework](#)

[Reading Rockets – Phonological and Phonemic Awareness: Introduction](#)

[University of Oregon Center on Teaching and Learning: Phonemic Awareness](#)

## Books & Presentations

Phonics From A to Z: A Practical Guide – Blevins

Shifting the Balance – Burkins & Yates

Comprehension: Skill, Will & Thrill of Reading – Fisher & Frey

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

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

Write from the Start: Writing Workshop in K–3 – POPEY Presentation by Lori Jamison

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

Twelve Compelling Principles from the Research on Phonics Instruction – Fountas & Pinnell

The Phonological Awareness Handbook for Kindergarten and Primary Teachers – Ericson & Juliebo

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

The Fountas & Pinnell Comprehensive Phonics, Spelling, and Word Study Guide

## Videos

more videos are available on our [YouTube channel](#)

[POPEY – Word Ladders](#)

[Balanced Literacy Diet – Park Those Sounds](#)

[Balanced Literacy Diet – Word Wall I Spy](#)

Workshop Padlet available [HERE](#)



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