

Phonics and Word Study Instruction for Second and Third Grade: Evidence Based Practices

Word Building Strategy

References

- Beck, I., & Hamilton, R. (2000). *Beginning reading module*. Washington, DC: American Federation of Teachers. (Original work published 1996)
- McCandliss, B., Beck, I.L., Sandak, R., & Perfetti, C. (2003). Focusing attention on decoding for children with poor reading skills: Design and preliminary test of the word building intervention. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, 7, 75-104.

Also, see the LEADERS website for additional tips on preparing materials and sequencing of sounds:
<http://www.education.pitt.edu/leaders/Decode%20Strategs/wordbuilding.htm>

Materials

Student letter cards, large teacher letter cards, pocket chart, list of words, silly sentences, student journals.

Procedure (adapted from the LEADERS website, © 2001, University of Pittsburg, School of Education)

- Have students place their letter cards in alphabetical order across the top of their desks. Teacher places letters in alphabetical order in pocket chart.
- Review the name and sound of each letter to be used in the day's lesson. Ask the following questions, modeling the correct answer and providing support as needed. "What letter is this?" 'B' "What sound does it make?" /b/ "How do you write it?" *Write the letter in the air with fingers.*
- Teacher makes the first demonstration word in pocket chart. Tell the students, "This is the word bat." Have students read the word with you. Reread the word slowly, following under each letter with your finger, then repeat at normal speed.
- Tell students you can change the word into a new word by changing just one letter. Replace the 'b' with a 's'. Say the word, reread following under each letter with your finger, then repeat at normal speed.
- Explain to students that they can make new words with their own letter cards. Explain that you will tell them which letter to change, and then they will tell you what new word has been made. Train them to put the old letter back into its place in alphabetical order before they take out the new letter. Explain that sometimes you will take two letters that are already in the word and make them switch places, and sometimes you will add or take away a letter without changing any of the other letters in the word.
- For the first word, tell them what letters to use in what order. For example, "Take down your m and put it at the beginning of the word. Take down your a and put it in the middle of the word. Take down your d and put it at the end." Then ask, "What is the word?" Model as needed.
- For the rest of the word list, you will tell them what letter to change. You might use such phrases as, "Take out your d and put your t in its place," "Change the d to t," "Take the d and the t in your word and change places," "Take out the d," or "Add a t between the s and the a." As soon as you tell them what change to make, always ask, "What is the word?"
- When they tell you the word, immediately write it down in a column on the chalkboard. Once you have finished building the different words, have them go back and read through this column of words to review and consolidate. This column of words will also show them graphically how one small change can produce a new word.
- The students should then copy this column of words into their journals. This is an important step, because it requires students to practice actually writing down the words they learned, with the letters in the proper sequence. This step helps them make the connection between spoken words and the written code for these words.
- End your lesson by writing silly sentences on the board. Each silly sentence should be a question that includes words used in the lesson. For example, Can a mad cat in a cast catch a fast rat? Run your finger under the words as the students decode them.
- Because each silly sentence is a question, have fun with your kids talking over possible answers to these silly questions.

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Word Analogy Training (WAT)

References

- Gaskings, I. (1998). A beginning literacy program for at-risk and delayed readers. In J.L. Metsala & L.C. Ehri (Eds.), *Word recognition in beginning literacy*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Gasking, I.W., Ehri, L.C., Cress, C., O'Hara, C., & Donnelly, K. (1996). Procedures for word learning: Making discoveries about words. *The Reading Teacher*, 50, 312-327.
- O'Shaughnessy, T.E., & Swanson, H.L. (2000). A comparison of two reading interventions for children with reading disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 33, 257-277.

O'Shaughnessy et al. (2000) used these procedures:

- Students learn a set of 90 key words with high-frequency spelling patterns. The key words are taught using a whole word approach (teach the whole word, yet still make connections between the sounds heard and the letters in the word). Following introduction, the words are displayed on a wall chart organized by vowel sound and rime patterns.
- Each lesson begins with the introduction of 5 new key words and review of all known key words.
- Remainder of lesson involves explicit, contextualized strategy training and practice.
- Teachers model using the compare / contrast strategy, explain how it can be applied, and describe how to check to see if the use of the strategy was successful.
- Students are taught to compare unknown words to the learned key words to assist them in decoding. For example, if the student knows the key words "flag" and "let", they can decode the word "magnet".
- Rhyming and abstraction of rime patterns are a key component of this training.

Gaskins et al. (1996) used the following procedures:

- Clarifying goals and rationale – Focuses on engaging students as 'word detectives' and sharing teacher observation about common decoding strategies that students use. Shared the alphabetic phases with students. Highlighted the importance of focusing on each letter and sound in a word to ensure that it was decoded correctly.
- Teaching and modeling how to self talk – Teacher says word. Class stretches it out, counting the sounds in the word with fingers. Next, teacher writes word on board. Class counts the letters in the word. Discuss whether some sounds may be represented by more than one letter. Next, explore connecting the sounds to the letters. (Example, "Listen as I analyze *stop*. /s/ /t/ /o/ /p/. I hear four sounds. I see four letters. That means each letter will probably go with a sound. The o has a different sound that I hear in *go*. In *go* the o doesn't coe in the middle like it does in *stop*. The o in *stop* has the same sound as in *not*, and the o is in the middle of two consonants as it is in *stop*. The spelling pattern is *-op*. Some words the rhyme with *stop* are..." (p. 320)
- Teacher provides guided practice and partner-sharing is added as a component in which students can check each others use of the key words.
- Students are given the opportunity to read connected text with support to use the word-learning procedures in the text.
- ****Note: This article contains a list of the key words used in instruction.**

Peeling Off Strategy

References

- Lovett, M.W., Lacerenza, L., & Borden, S.L. (2000). Putting struggling readers on the PHAST track: A program to integrate phonological and strategy-based remedial reading instruction and maximize outcomes. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 33, 458-476.

- Peeling Off is a strategy developed by Lovett et al. (2000) that can be applied to most words with Latin or Greek bases.
- Students identify and segment affixes at beginning (e.g., *un-*, *re-*) and the end (e.g., *-ment*, *-ing*) of words. This reduces the unknown word to a smaller part. After other decoding strategies are applied, the word is blended together and read.
- As many as 75 affixes can be introduced at a rate of 1-2 a day. Students review their lists of

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prefixes and suffixes in isolation and practice recognizing them in multisyllabic words.

- Visual reminder, such as a peeling-off tree, can be placed in the room to remind students of learned affixes.
- Example dialogue of a student using the strategy for the word *presumption*: “Oh, I see some beginnings and endings, so I’ll use Peeling Off. First, I’ll peel off the beginning *pre-* and the ending *-tion*. Now, I’ll try to figure out the root word. I’ll try Rhyming on *s-u-m-p*. I’ll find the vowel and what comes after it. It’s *u-m-p*, so I’ll look in the U-column of my Keyword Bank. There it is – it’s *jump*. So if I know *jump*, then I know *sump*. Now, I’ll put the beginnings and endings back on. This is *sump*, so this is *presump*, so this must be *presumption*. Yes! That’s a word I know. I did it!” (p. 468).

Cunningham, P.M. (1996). The multisyllabic word dilemma: Helping students build meaning, spell, and read “big” words. *Reading & Writing Quarterly, 14*, 189-218.

- Tips adapted from Nagy, Osborn, Winsor, and O’Flahavan (1992):
 - Provide explicit explanations, including modeling, think-alouds, guided practice, and the gradual release of responsibility to students.
 - Rely on examples more than abstract rules, principles, or definitions. Begin with familiar words and show nonexamples. Don’t have them look for little words in big words. Begin with word parts.
 - Teach what is most useful for meaning in many words.
 - Make the limitations of structural analysis clear, and ALWAYS check meaning within context.
 - Use extended text in opportunities for application. ■ (p. 203)
- Help students become word detectives on the lookout for the meaning, spelling, and decoding relationships shared by words.
 - Two questions: “Do I know any other words that look and sound like this word?” “Are any of these look-alike/sound-alike words related to each other?”
- Teach prefixes that are most useful from a meaning standpoint.
- Teach suffixes and spelling changes that are most useful.
- Teach a few useful root words.
- Teach students to spell a set of big words that have high utility for meaning, spelling, and decoding.

****Note:** Both of these articles contain a variety of strategies for learners to approach difficult words. Highly recommended that you obtain copies of each.

Strategies for Approaching Irregular Words

References

Lovett, M.W., Lacerenza, L., & Borden, S.L. (2000). Putting struggling readers on the PHAST track: A program to integrate phonological and strategy-based remedial reading instruction and maximize outcomes. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 33*, 458-476.

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts (2004). *Word Analysis: Principles for Instruction and Progress Monitoring*. Austin, TX: Texas Education Agency. Available at: www.texasreading.org/utcrcla/materials (Listed under ‘Professional Development Guides’)

- Although decoding is a highly reliable strategy for a majority of words, some irregular words in the English language do not conform to word-analysis instruction (e.g., the, was, night).
- Use explicit instruction to teach struggling students irregular word endings.
 - Stage 1: Modeling
 - Teacher says /ight/, then /n/ /ight/, then blends to make /night/.
 - Stage 2: Guided Practice
 - Students say along with teacher. /ight/, /n/ /ight/, /night/
 - Stage 3: Independent Practice
 - Students say by themselves. /ight/, /n/ /ight/, /night/
- Select words that have high utility (i.e., used frequently in grade-appropriate literature and

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informational text)

- Sequence high frequency irregular words to avoid potential confusion (i.e., they/them; was/saw)
- Base the number of irregular words introduced at one time on student performance
- Try to introduce irregular words at least 1 lesson prior to their appearance in texts
- Provide a brief, cumulative review as part of daily reading instruction (2-3 minutes)
- Identify irregular words with common parts and teach as word families (i.e., -ight: night, right, fight; -one: done, none)
(TCRLA, 2004)

Lovett's Vowel Alert Strategy

- Students are systematically instructed in alternative pronunciations of vowel pairs, beginning with the most likely pronunciation.
- Students are taught to be on the lookout for the "Double Trouble Twins" and are provided instruction and practice in using the Vowel Alert Strategy.
- Students first identify the word with the vowel pair, then, try the alternative pronunciations to determine which one makes a word they know and that makes sense in the text.
- A visual support of a stoplight is used for younger students.
- Word sort work sheets are used when learning the alternate pronunciations of the vowel pairs.
- Students are given support and practice in generalizing the strategy to text.

Progress Monitoring

References

Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts (2002). *Word study for students with learning disabilities and English language learners*. Austin, TX: Author. Available at: www.texasreading.org/materials. (Includes a spelling pattern list and frequent word list in the appendix.)

- Progress monitoring involves frequent assessment of student skill levels in word study. A recording system is needed to monitor students' mastery of the sounds and patterns taught in word study. For example, you may record what patterns the student reads correctly in words. This information is then used to inform future instruction.
- You should be sure that students are learning progressively more difficult word patterns. Students have mastered sounds or word patterns if they can read words with those sounds or word patterns accurately and quickly (within 3 seconds) for 3 consecutive days. Words with mastered sounds or word patterns should periodically be reviewed to check for mastery.
- In addition, you may want to have the students participate in a progress-monitoring activity, such as a one-minute timed writing of words by each student. The students are given one minute to write any words they know. The goal is to increase the number of words written. The students can then graph the number of words they write correctly. Often the words a student chooses to write are those that follow a similar pattern. This is often the quickest way to write more words and it reinforces the particular word pattern for that student.
- Some students may choose instead to write shorter words (such as *it, is, do*) to increase their number; as the teacher, you will need to decide what words to count and graph, to keep the writing consistent and fair. For a period of time, you may want to count syllables, to reinforce syllabication of words, as well as the writing of more complex words; another time, you may choose to count the number of letters, for similar purposes. Whatever the unit to be counted, it is important that the students write words correctly, and/or that they can read them back when asked. It is especially important that they be held accountable for correct spelling of words in their word banks. (p.12)

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Resources

The IRIS Center for Faculty Enhancement (<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu>)
LEADERS at the University of Pittsburg (<http://www.education.pitt.edu/leaders>)
Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts (<http://www.texasreading.org/materials>)

References

- Beck, I., & Hamilton, R. (2000). *Beginning reading module*. Washington, DC: American Federation of Teachers. (Original work published 1996)
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- Ehri, L. (1998). Grapheme-phoneme knowledge is essential for learning to read words in English. In J.L. Metsala & L.C. Ehri (Eds.), *Word recognition in beginning literacy*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
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- O'Shaughnessy, T.E., & Swanson, H.L. (2000). A comparison of two reading interventions for children with reading disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 33*, 257-277.
- Paulsen, K. (2002). Fluency and word identification: Grades 3-5. Nashville, TN: The Iris Center. Available at http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/case_studies/ICS-006-fluency_&_word_id.pdf.
- Perfetti, C. (1985). *Reading ability*. New York: Oxford University Press.
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