

## Word Recognition: Phonics, Word Families

SPC ED 587

## Phonics is both

knowledge of letter-sound relationships

And

reading instruction that teaches students to make the **connections** between phonemes (sounds) and the graphemes (letters)

## And the Research says. . .

- The ability to decode is NOT strongly linked to intelligence\*
- Working memory (short-term) IS a factor in being able to decode, as is development of phonological awareness .

Connors et al. (2001)

– “Working memory may be the single most reliable predictor of reading ability among individuals with MR.” (Connors, 2003, p. 212)

## And the Research says. . .

Vocabulary knowledge is highly correlated with learning to decode; phonological awareness was also correlated with this but not to the degree that vocabulary knowledge was. (Hulme et al., 2012)

- Beginning instruction when students are younger is helpful (Burgoyne et. al., 2012)
  - BUT older individuals can also benefit from phonics instruction (e.g., Moni, Jobling, Morgan, & Lloyd, 2011)
- Decoding instruction must be structured and explicit (e.g., Allor et al., 2010; Browder et al., 2012)
- Individuals with severe disabilities require intensive and sustained instruction to demonstrate meaningful growth (Allor et al., 2010; Burgoyne et al., 2012)
  - Importance of using meaningful and engaging activities (Morgan et al., 2006)

## Phonics Instruction

- Analytic (implicit)
  - Whole – Part – Whole
  - sat /s/ sat
- Synthetic (explicit)
  - Part – whole
  - s = /s/ /s/ /a/ /t/ sat
- Patterns (word families)

## Effective Phonics Instruction

- \* Builds on students' prior knowledge of print functions
- \* Is explicit, i.e., clear
- \* Is integrated into a comprehensive reading program – focus on reading words **and** understanding (meaning) (not just drill & practice decoding!)
- \* Is integrated with writing
- \* Starts with **Assessment**: determine what letter/sound correspondences a student already knows before beginning instruction

## Sequencing Levels of Difficulty

- Begin instruction with sounds in the *initial* position
  - cat, fan, map
- Then teach sounds in the *final* position
  - cat, nap
- Then teach sounds in the *medial* position
  - canap,

### One Suggested Sequence of Instruction

1. Letter Names/Phonemic Awareness
2. Initial consonants
3. Short vowels
4. Easy long vowels, Final consonants
5. Initial-consonant clusters (*bl*)
6. Long vowels: final *-e* marker
7. Long-vowel digraphs (*th* = /th/ and trigraphs (*igh* = /i/
8. Advanced consonant correspondences
9. R-controlled correspondences (*her*)
10. Other Vowel correspondences

### Format for Explicit Phonics Instruction

1. Bombard students with correct models.
2. Provide structured practice.
3. Assess learning, e.g., using a phonics game (remember, assessment doesn't have to always be a formal testing situation!)
4. Provide opportunities for students to share what they've learned.

### Other Instructional Methods for teaching phonics

- picture cues,
- response prompts, modeling,
- computer programs,
- the *Nonverbal Reading approach*, and
- published reading programs

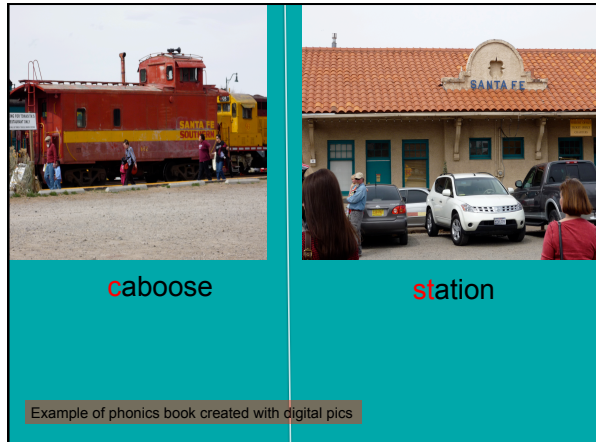
### Some published Reading Programs that Include Phonics Instruction

- *Early Literacy Skills Builder* (has high quality research that demonstrates its effectiveness with students with severe disabilities)
- *Building With Stories* (uses shared storybook reading to build concepts about print and early phonological awareness skills.)
- *Early Reading Interventions in Reading* (research supports its use with young students with ID)
- *Reading and Language Intervention for Children with Down Syndrome* (has high quality research demonstrating its effectiveness with students with DS)

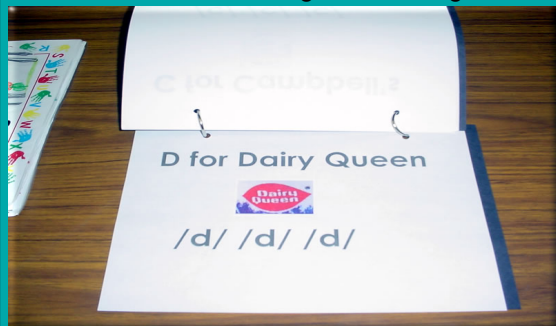
## Examples of Active Phonics Practice

### • Phonics Exploration

- Give student (or group) a card with letter on it – practice sound(s) letter makes
- Tell student/group to find as many things that begin with the sound the letter makes as possible:
  - Make a list
  - Label the items with a sticky note
  - Go around the school and take a digital picture of every item you find that begins with that sound. Create a book with pictures/labels.
  - Or, do this on a field trip or have children bring in pics they took at home or in the community.

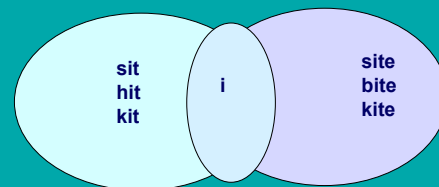


## Using environmental print to develop letter/sound knowledge and writing



[http://www.drjean.org/html/monthly\\_act/act\\_2005/03\\_Mar/index.html](http://www.drjean.org/html/monthly_act/act_2005/03_Mar/index.html)

## Venn Diagrams for Vowel Sounds: CVC vs CVCe



On a Dryerase board, teachers can work with small groups to teach or review vowel sounds in the context of words. This type of comparison helps readers pay closer attention to the unique differences between words that, on a glance, look the same.

## Examples of Active Phonics Practice

### Phonics Feelies

- Fill a bag with items that begin with sounds students have studied
  - Ask student to reach into the bag, select an item and without looking, say what it is (label it), what sound it begins with, and what letter it begins with.
  - Make it more challenging by asking about ending sound/letter or medial sound/letter
  - Alternatively, “put your hand in the bag and find something that begins with \_\_\_\_\_ sound (e.g. / sh/)”

## Word Families

\* This approach has students break words into onsets (the part of the syllable that comes before the vowel) and rimes (part of the syllable that begins with a vowel); recognize similarities between words based on their rimes

\* Example: -at family

\* *bat*  
 \* *cat*  
 \* *hat*  
 \* *sat*

## Word Families Approach

- Has students break words into **onsets** (the part of the syllable that comes before the vowel) and **rimes** (part of the syllable that begins with a vowel); recognize similarities between words based on their rimes
- Example: -at family
  - *bat*
  - *cat*
  - *hat*
  - *sat*

## Closed Word Sort (by rime)

/-ip/	/-ell/	/-op/
skip	fell	top
lip	tell	lop
sip	well	mop
drip	sell	drop

Remember: Keep instruction active and practice within meaningful contexts

**Two Useful Resources:**

*Teaching reading to children with Down Syndrome: A guide for parents and teachers.* (Patricia Oelwein, 1995, Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House).

*Systematic sequential phonics they use for beginning readers of all ages.* (P. Cunningham, 2000, Greensboro, NC: Carson-Dellosa Publishing Co.)

## Published Resources for Making Words Lessons

(All by Patricia M. Cunningham)

- ***Making Words: Multilevel, Hands-On, Developmentally Appropriate Spelling and Phonics Activities***
- ***Systematic sequential phonics they use for beginning readers of all ages.***
- ***Making More Words***
- ***Month-by-Month Phonics for First Grade: Systematic, Multilevel Instruction for First Grade (Month-By-Month)***

### Next Week (Week 8):

- **Read**
  - Morgan et al. (2006) article
  - Allor & Chard (2011) article on fluency
  - Chapter 5 in your text (fluency)
- **Finish Discussion** of Phonics;
- **Discuss** fluency and instructional activities to develop fluency
- **Turn in** Part 2 of the Literacy Project: Comprehensive Assessment & Instructional Plan