

Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children: Lessons from Successful Schools

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Straight Talk Live Chat, March 17, 2009

In order to effectively prevent early reading difficulties, we need to apply two kinds of knowledge

From the “science of reading”

Information about the *individual* components of instruction and assessment that are most effective in raising literacy levels

From effective schools

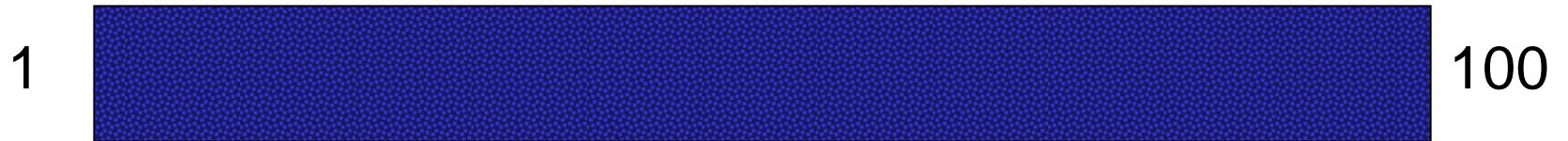
Information about leadership, organizational, and classroom practices that are most effective in raising literacy levels

Understanding, and Motivation to Apply

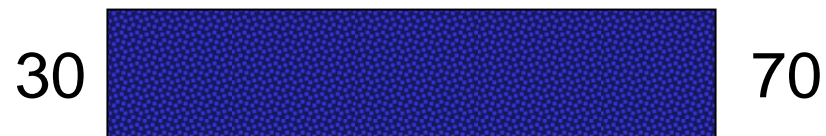
A central problem in reading instruction arises, not from the absolute level of children's preparation for learning to read, but from the diversity in their levels of preparation

(Olson, 1998)

Diversity in Preparation and Ability for Learning to Read



Diversity of Educational Response



Two important sources of diversity

1. Diversity in talent, or inherent abilities, for learning

Learning disabilities -- Dyslexia

Low general intelligence

2. Diversity in pre-school preparation, and family supports for learning to read

Poverty

Language status

Three important kinds of diversity

1. Diversity in the broad verbal and cognitive abilities required for the comprehension of language
2. Diversity in the specific verbal/linguistic abilities required for learning to read printed words and fluently
3. Diversity in the motivational/behavioral attitudes habits required for learning in school

2007 results from National Assessment of Educational Progress at 4th Grade

Overall, 34% of 4th graders performed below the Basic Level of Proficiency in 17,600 schools

Percent below Basic

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

White

23

Black

54

Hispanic

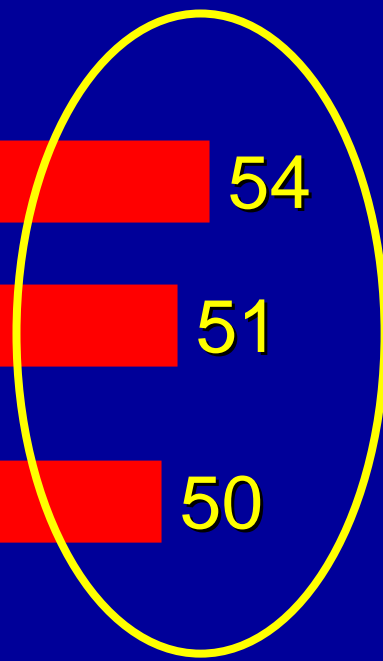
51

Poor

50

Non-poor

21



When there is great diversity among students in their talent and preparation for learning to read...

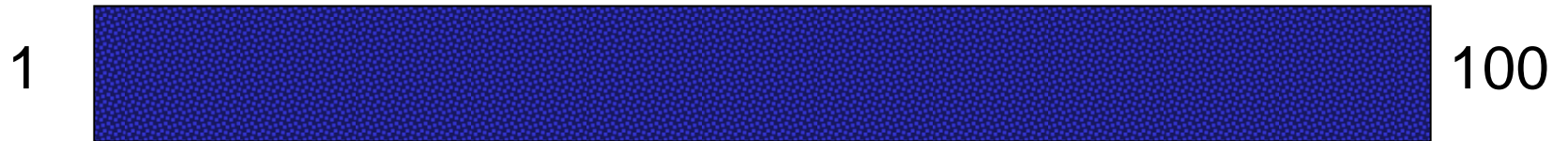
little variation in teaching will always result in *great* variation in student learning.

Elements of a school level plan
to provide reading instruction
that is sufficiently powerful and
adaptive to teach all students to
read

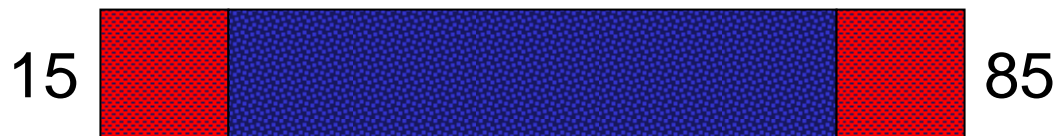
The prevention of reading difficulties: **three** **we must become stronger each year**

1. Increase the quality, consistency, and reach of instruction in every K-3 classroom

Diversity in Preparation and Ability for Learning to Read



Diversity of Educational Response



The prevention of reading difficulties: **three we must become stronger each year**

1. Increase the quality, consistency, and reach of instruction in every K-3 classroom
2. Conduct timely and valid assessments of reading growth to identify struggling readers. Use this data improve school level and instructional planning
3. Provide more intensive interventions to help struggling readers “catch up” to grade level in each grade K-3.

Lessons learned from the Kennewick, Washington school district:

Located in southeastern Washington

Has about 15,000 students – 13 elementary schools, four middle schools, and 3 high schools

25% of students are ethnic minorities, and 48% elementary school students qualify for free or reduced price lunch

Lessons learned from the Kennewick, Washington school district:

In 1995, the school board in Kennewick challenged the elementary schools to have 90% of their students at grade level in reading by the end of third grade –within 3 years

The primary responsibility for accomplishing this was assigned to the school principals

Lessons learned from the Kennewick, Washington school district:

From David Montague, a principal:

“We thought the board and the superintendent were crazy...I saw in the White Paper that elementary principals were responsible, and said ‘Why don’t they come down to our building and see the kids that come to our school?’ I mean, our kindergarten kids seem to enter school every year with lower skills...”

The District passed a bond that provided a district reading teacher for each school, and began to hold public meetings at a different elementary school every two weeks. They also began training principals in what strong instruction looked like...

“After that, the whining died down. The goal started to grow legs....

At the schools...

“We began to have serious staff meetings...we beganlooking at the test data to see how far behind some of our kids were. It was the first time Washington had ever had such precise data. In the fall of 1995, 23% of our 3rd graders were reading at second grade level and 41% of our 3rd graders were reading at a kindergarten or 1st grade level.

Washington Elementary School

Growth in % of 3rd grade students meeting grade level standards

School Year

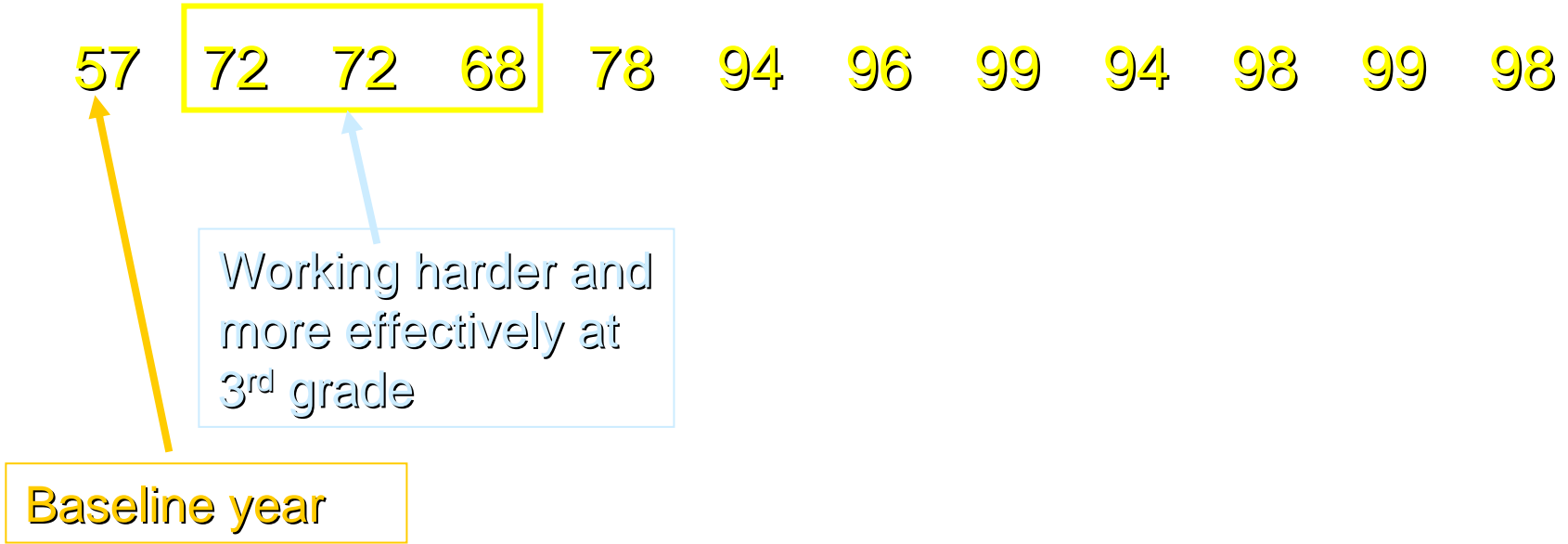
95 96 97 98 99 00 01 02 03 04 05 06

Percent at Grade level

57 72 72 68 78 94 96 99 94 98 99 98

Working harder and more effectively at 3rd grade

Baseline year



From the Principal:

"By the 3rd year, we had exhausted our work-harder-at-third-grade strategy...More of the catch-up gain had to be made at second and first grade. Our first-and second-grade teachers realized that they had to become more accountable for their students' learning. Even our kindergarten teachers, who had spent most of their class time on social activities, began the transition to teaching phonemic awareness along with letter and sound recognition."

Washington Elementary School

Growth in % of 3rd grade students meeting grade level standards

School Year

95 96 97 98 99 00 01 02 03 04 05 06

Percent at Grade level

57 72 72 68 78 94 96 99 94 98 99 98

Working harder and more effectively at 3rd grade

Began providing intensive interventions in the afternoon to many students

Result of improvement at both 2nd and 3rd Grade

Baseline year

Began testing in 2nd grade and focusing on earlier improvement

Washington Elementary School

School Characteristics

55% Free/reduced lunch

28% Minority

85% Stability

Teaching Staff

2 half-day kindergarten teachers

3 classroom teachers each in 1-5

1 District Reading Specialist

3 Title I Teachers

1.5 Resource room/special ed teachers

1 PE teacher

1 librarian, 1 Librarian secretary

3 Specials teachers

9 paraprofessionals

Washington Elementary School

How they get additional instructional power in first grade

During the Morning Reading Block

Small group reading during 1st hour of the day

It puts 13 adults with 75 students during the first hour in first grade

Struggling students get 1:3 with most skilled instructor

Advanced students get 1:7 ratios with paras and others

In the afternoon

Many students get additional small group or 1:1 instruction time as interventions

Washington Elementary School

The reading block for 3 first grade classrooms

1st hour (8:45-9:45)

Small group instruction

3 classroom teachers

1 District Reading Teacher

2 Title I teachers

Specials teacher

PE teacher

6 paraprofessionals

Washington Elementary School

The reading block for 3 first grade classrooms

1st hour (8:45-9:45)

Small group instruction

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2nd hour (9:45-10:45)

Whole group instruction

Washington Elementary School

The reading block for 3 first grade classrooms

1st hour (8:45-9:45)

Small group instruction

3 classroom teachers

1 District Reading Teacher

2 Title I teachers

Specials teacher

PE teacher

6 paraprofessionals

2nd hour (9:45-10:45)

Whole group instruction

2nd hour (9:45-10:45)

Also, during the second hour, paras, Title 1, and others work in small groups with 2nd-5th grades

In the afternoon, many students are provided an additional 40-90 minutes of intervention

Targeted Accelerated Growth

The TAG Loop

1. Diagnostic Testing
2. Proportional increases in direct instructional time
3. Teaching to the deficient sub-skill
4. Retesting to be sure the skill has been learned

From David Motague

”By the fifth year, I was convinced high performance reading was about more time and better use of that time. Students who were behind needed more direct instruction. Some of them started getting 60 to 90 minutes extra each day for a total of 180 to 210 minutes a day. We spent that time on the sub-skills they hadn’t mastered.”

Principals and many teachers at these schools saw the direct connection between increasing instructional time and increasing reading growth. Students who were a little behind needed a little more instructional time. Students who were a lot behind needed a lot more time.” P. 38.

“Growth is directly proportionate to the quality and quantity of instructional time. When we looked at our data student by student, we saw a painful fact with painful clarity. Most students who start behind stay behind. Time-starved reading programs that rely on sudden growth bursts from extraordinary instruction rarely move students from the 5th-30th percentiles up to grade level.” P. 48

“Catch-up growth is driven primarily by proportional increases in direct instructional time. Catch-up growth is so difficult to achieve that it can be the product only of quality instruction in great quantity.”

Teacher quality x time = growth

Quantity of instructional time can be doubled or tripled in a semester. Quality of instructional time cannot. Improving quality occurs over extended periods of time, at different rates for different teachers in the same school, as a constant process of arduous, intelligent labor.

Teacher quality (1) x time (1) = growth (1)

Teacher quality (1) x time (2) = growth (2)

Teacher quality (1) x time (3) = growth (3)

Teacher quality x time = growth

“This is why the primary and immediate strategy for catch-up growth is proportional increase in direct instructional time.

Catch-up growth rarely occurs unless principals and teachers have good data, know each student’s learning needs, and schedule proportional increases in direct instructional time.”

School	% FR Lunch	% at Grade Level, 2003	1 st Grade Reading Block	1 st Grade Interventions	2 nd Grade Reading Block	2 nd Grade Interventions	3 rd Grade Reading Block	3 rd Grade Interventions
Canyon V.	38	90	195	25	135	24	150	32
Westgate	80	76	120	79	120	55	120	67
Cascade	35	96	120	51	120	55	120	55
Hawthorne	60	92	120	56	120	33	120	51
Amistad	76	65	120	25	140	27	125	33
Ridge View	23	90	120	51	120	34	90	42
Southgate	20	93	120	34	120	29	120	33
Washington	54	94	120	24	120	28	120	43
Vista	50	95	120	10	120	25	120	40
Lincoln	41	99	120	17	120	27	120	30
Sunset View	9	95	74	45	105	27	73	23

ANNUAL
GROWTH

FOR ALL STUDENTS,

CATCH-UP
GROWTH

FOR THOSE WHO
ARE BEHIND

Lynn
Fielding

Nancy
Kerr

Paul
Rosier

To Order:

New Foundation Press

Phone: 509-783-2139

FAX: 509-783-5237

Annual Growth for All
Students, Catch-up
growth for those who
are behind

Fielding, Kerr, Rosier

The prevention of reading difficulties: **three we must become stronger each year**

1. Increase the quality, consistency, and reach of instruction in every K-3 classroom
2. Conduct timely and valid assessments of reading growth to identify struggling readers. Use this data improve school level and instructional planning
3. Provide more intensive interventions to help struggling readers “catch up” to grade level in each grade K-3.

Points of Maximum Impact and Leadership in Successful High Challenge Schools

1. Efforts to help increase the quality, consistency, and reach of instruction in every K-3 classroom
 - a. Insuring teachers have excellent professional development, including strong training in use of core program to guide instruction
 - b. Monitoring and supporting classroom instruction through principal walkthroughs

Are teachers providing explicit, systematic, and motivating/engaging whole group instruction?

Is small group instruction differentiated appropriately by student need?



Guidance Document for Florida Reading First Schools

Differentiated Reading Instruction: Small Group Alternative Lesson Structures for *All* Students



Marcia Kosanovich, Karen Ladinsky, Luanne Nelson, Joseph Torgesen

Go to the FCRR
website (www.fcrr.org)

Go to the section for
administrators, and
look in the Curriculum
and Instruction section

Points of Maximum Impact and Leadership in Successful High Challenge Schools

1. Efforts to help increase the quality, consistency, and reach of instruction in every K-3 classroom

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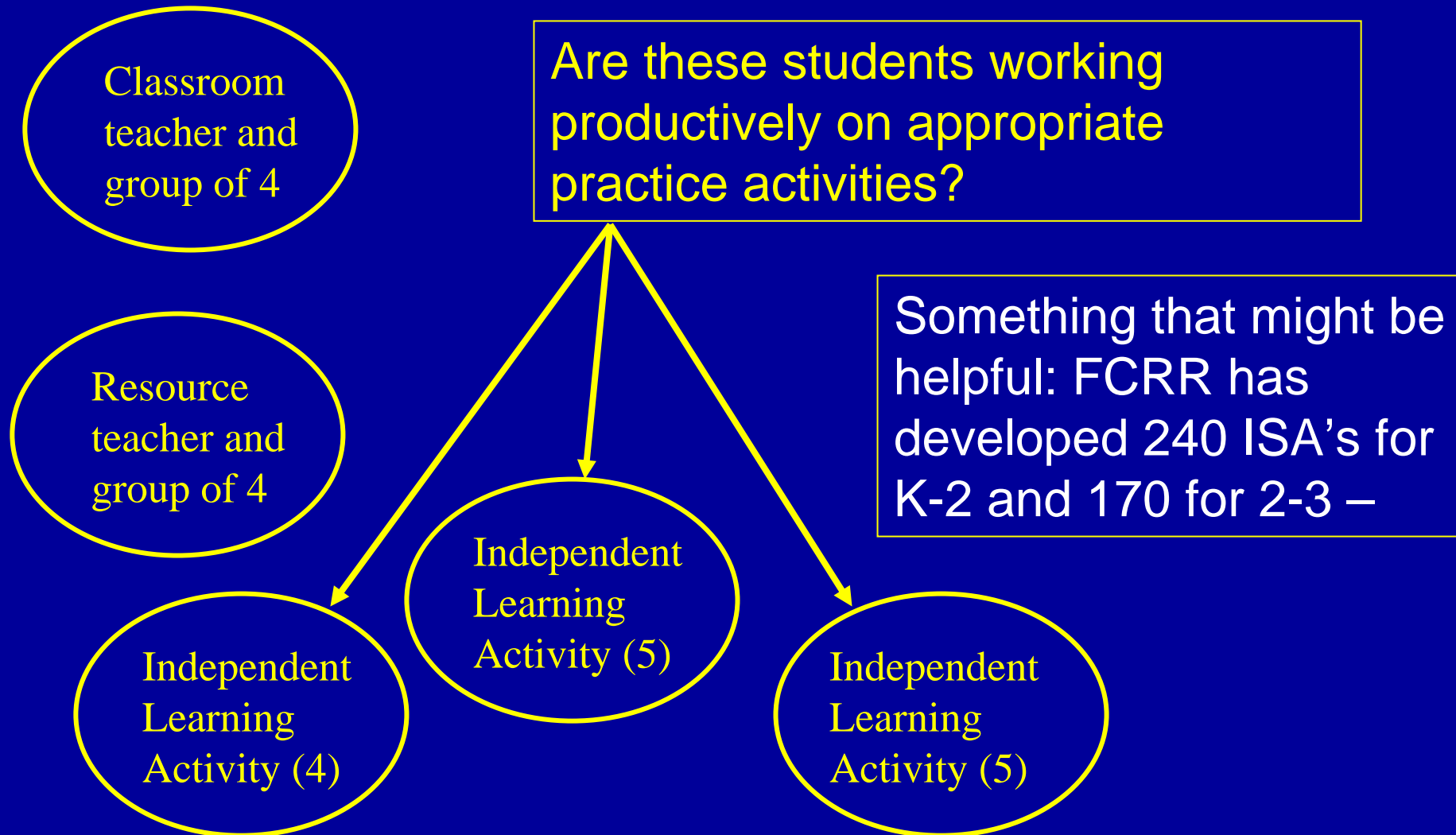
b. Monitoring and supporting classroom instruction through principal walkthroughs

Are teachers providing explicit, systematic, and motivating whole group instruction?

Is small group instruction differentiated appropriately by student need?

Are other students engaged in independent learning activities that are appropriate and engaging

Organization of a classroom during small group instruction



Effective independent student learning activities...

A student center is a place where students demonstrate, practice, and extend learning while working independently of the teacher

The skills practiced in student centers should be explicitly taught prior to asking students to engage in the activity

Resources (free) that may help....

To download up to 240 independent student learning activities for K-1 classrooms, and up to 170 activities for students in grades grades 2-3, as well as activities for 4-5, go to

FCRR website (www.fcrr.org). Select “For teachers” look for listed center activities

There is also a teacher resource manual providing directions for classroom management during small group instruction, and approximately 70 minutes of video training. It is listed under “professional development” in the teacher section.

Student Center Activities

Phonological Awareness

Part One

- Rhyme
- Alliteration

Part Three

- Phonemes

Part Two

- Sentence Segmentation
- Syllables
- Onset and Rime

Phonics

Part One

- Letter Recognition

Part Three

- Onset and Rime

Part Five

- Syllable Patterns
- Morpheme Structures

Part Two

- Letter-Sound Correspondence

Part Four

- Word Study

Fluency

All Parts

- Letter Recognition
- Letter-Sound Correspondence
- High Frequency Words
- Oral Reading

Vocabulary

All Parts

- Word Identification/Words in Context
- Word Categorization/Word Knowledge
- Words That Describe/Word Meaning
- Word Structure/Word Analysis

Contents

Phonics

Letter-Sound Correspondence

- P.027 Object Letter-Sound Matching
- P.028 Alpha Eggs
- P.029 Letter-Sound Train
- P.030 Sandpaper Letters and Picture Match
- P.031 Letter Stamp Mini-Books
- P.032 Photo Chart
- P.033 Letter-Sound Place Mats
- P.034 Letter-Sound Big Book
- P.035 Words Around Us Memory Game
- P.036 Brown Bag It
- P.037 Letter Bag
- P.038 Chalktalk
- P.039 Write the Room
- P.040 Letter Boxes
- P.041 Letter-Sound Folder Sort
- P.042 Letter-Sound Mobile
- P.043 Letter-Sound Dominoes
- P.044 Letter-Sound Bingo
- P.045 Where's That Sound?
- P.046 Picture Letter-Sound Match
- P.047 Guessing Belts
- PLSC-I Initial Letter-Sound Correspondence Cards
- PLSC-M Medial Letter-Sound Correspondence Cards
- PLSC-F Final Letter-Sound Correspondence Cards



P.027

Letter-Sound Correspondence

Object Letter-Sound Matching

Objective

The student will match initial sounds to letters.

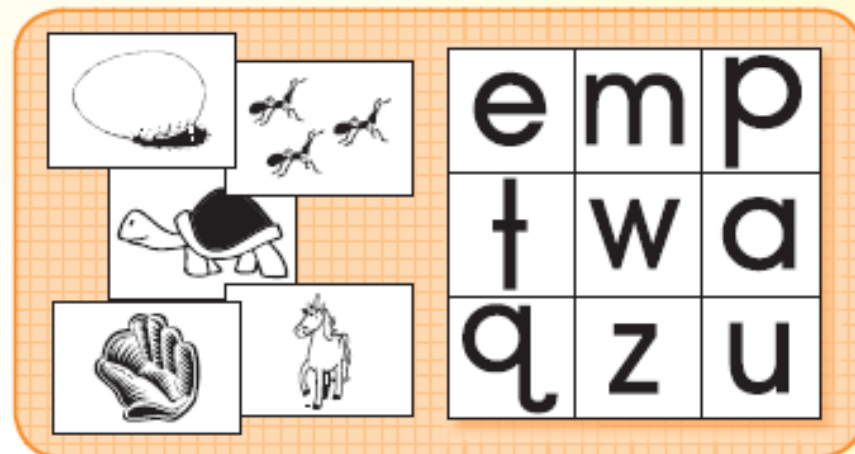
Materials

- ▶ Scrambled letter boards (Activity Master P027.AM1a - P027.AM1c)
- ▶ Magnetic letters
- ▶ Tray
- ▶ Tub of "A-Z" objects
- ▶ Dry-erase marker boards or paper
- ▶ Dry-erase markers or washable markers

Activity

Students match the initial sounds of objects to letters

1. Place the scrambled letter board, tray of magnetic letters, and tub of objects on a flat surface.
2. The student chooses an object from the tub.
3. Places the object on corresponding letter (e.g., turtle, /t/).
4. Continues until all objects are matched with a letter.
5. Practices writing the letters on the marker board.
6. Self-check



The illustration shows a collection of objects and a letter board. On the left, there are five boxes containing: a hole in the ground with worms, three ants, a turtle, a hand, and a horse. On the right, there is a 3x3 grid of letters: e, m, p in the first row; t, w, a in the second row; q, z, u in the third row.

Extensions and Adaptations

- ▶ Label the object.
- ▶ Use final and medial sounds.

Phonics



Letter-Sound Correspondence

P.047

Guessing Belts



Objective

The student will match initial/final sounds to letters.



Materials

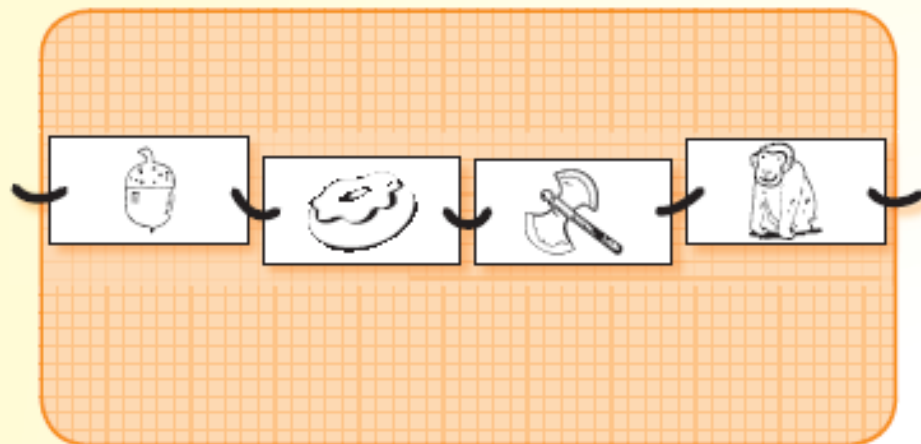
- ▶ Set of initial and final sound picture cards (Activity Master PLSC-L1 - PLSC-L22 and PLSC-F1 - PLSC-F16)
- ▶ Yarn
 - Cut into 36 inch lengths.
- ▶ Hole punch



Activity

Students identify words on picture belts using letter and sound clues.

1. Place picture cards, yarn, and hole punch on a flat surface.
2. The students hole punch and "thread" four or more picture cards with yarn to make belts. Tie the belts around their waistlines (with the pictures on their backs facing outward).
3. Taking turns, the students provide clues until each student is able to guess the names of the pictures on his partner's belt. Clues should include the name of the beginning and ending letters. For example, "This picture begins with /d/ and ends with /t/."
4. Reverse roles and continue activity.
5. Peer evaluation



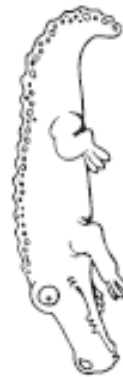
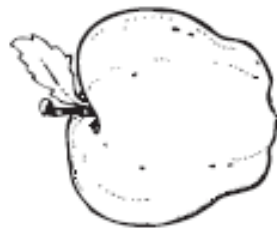
Extensions and Adaptations

- ▶ Include medial sounds in the clues. For example, "The middle sound in this word

Phonics

P.LSC-I.1

Letter-Sound Correspondence Cards – Initial



ant, apple, alligator, ax, ape, apron

Providing Differentiated Instruction: The Challenges

Small group instruction is not really differentiated (time, frequency, focus) by student need

Students waste time at independent learning centers because they are not engaged and centers are not focused and leveled properly

Behavior management issues interfere with teacher-led small group instruction

Points of Maximum Impact and Leadership in Successful High Challenge Schools

2. Be sure school-level assessment plan is working, provide leadership in use of data to plan instruction at the school and classroom level

Two important uses of student data

1. School level planning involves identifying needs materials, personnel, time – takes place in spring or early summer-has budget implications
2. Provide leadership for the use of data to make adjustments and increase power of instruction those who need it –attend important data meetings

Points of Maximum Impact and Leadership in Successful High Challenge Schools

3. Provide powerful interventions to students who need them for as long as they need them

Scheduling for success

The most important point is to create the school around maximizing reading instruction for all who need it.

Example of Staggered Reading Blocks with "Walk and Read"

Team	Reading	Writing	Math	Science /SS	Special Area	Lunch
K	8:45-10:30	10:30-11:30	1:35-2:35	12:15-12:50	12:50-1:35	11:30-12:15
1	8:45-10:30	12-1	1-2	2-2:30	11:15-12	10:30-11:15
2	10:30-12:15	9:45-10:30	8:45-9:45	1:15-1:40	1:40-2:25	12:30-1:15
3	10:30-12:15	9:30-10:30	1-2	2-2:30	8:45-9:30	12:15-1
4	12:45-2:30	8:45-9:35	10:20-11:20	11:20-11:55	9:35-10:20	11:55-12:40
5	12:45-2:30	9:45-10:25	8:45-9:45	11:50-12:35	10:25-11:10	11:10-11:50

Points of Maximum Impact and Leadership in Successful High Challenge Schools

3. Provide powerful interventions to students who need them for as long as they need them

Scheduling for success

Budgeting for success

Planning the budget in the spring and summer to allocate intervention resources for all who need significant amounts of extra instruction

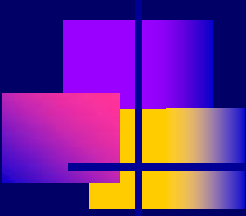
Points of Maximum Impact and Leadership in Successful High Challenge Schools

3. Provide powerful interventions to students who need them for as long as they need them

Scheduling for success

Budgeting for success

Teaching for success



Ways that instruction must be made more powerful for students “at-risk” for reading difficulties.

More powerful instruction involves:

More instructional time

Smaller instructional groups

} resources

More precisely targeted at right level

Clearer and more detailed explanations

More systematic instructional sequences

More extensive opportunities for guided practice

More opportunities for error correction and feedback

} skill

Who, or what, can contribute to more differentiated instruction and stronger interventions?

Regular classroom teacher

Special education teachers (IDEA 15% rule)

Reading resource teachers

Special area teachers (art, P.E., music), assistant principals, media specialists, if well trained and a structured reading program

Paraprofessionals, if well trained and provided with explicitly structured (scripted) instructional materials

High quality, individualized instruction and practice delivered via computers

“A good rule of thumb is that, the less experienced the teacher, the more structured and “scripted” the intervention program should be”



TEACHING ALL STUDENTS TO READ IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A Guide for Principals



Teaching Students to Read in Elementary School: A Guide for Principals

Download at
www.fcrr.org. go to the
section for
administrators

It matters little what else they learn in elementary school if they do not learn to read at grade level.

Fielding, L., Kerr, N., & Rosier, P. (2007). *Annual growth for all students, catch-up growth for those who are behind*. Kennewick, WA: The New Foundation Press, Inc.

Questions or Discussion