



Provincial Outreach
Program for the Early Years

www.popey.ca



A Scope & Sequence for Foundational Literacy Skills

January 24, 2025

9:00am - 3:00pm

Connect with us online!



@POPEYBC



@popeybc

Presenters:
Lisa Thomas
Megan Zeni

POPEY



Our learning objectives

In this workshop, we will explore a scope & sequence for foundational literacy skills, focusing on:

- evidence-based instructional routines for phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension
- strategies to support early reading and writing development, including a multi-tiered system of supports and a structured literacy framework



POPEY's Approach

POPEY shares research and knowledge around how we learn to read, the reading brain, and the foundational skills that support learning to read and write.

In workshops, we offer a collection of evidence-based strategies for teachers to consider.

Teaching reading is not a one-size fits all model - no two districts are the same, just as no two students are the same.

We invite teachers to consider implementing evidence-based instructional techniques to ensure literacy success for their diverse learners.



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 create the learning experiences our students need to build their foundational literacy skills?



The foundations 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
 - to **expand** their reading and writing powers

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



It doesn't need to be either/or

➔ **and, and, and...**

Decodable texts	vs.	Authentic literature
Research	vs.	Classroom Practice
The art of teaching	vs.	The science of reading
Individual student needs	vs.	Whole class efficiency
Direct instruction	vs.	Discovery learning
Practice in isolation	vs.	Practice in context
Mastery of skills	vs.	Joy of reading
Structure	vs.	Choice
Urgency	vs.	Joy

Comprehensive = complete; including all elements or aspects of something



De-mystifying the Science of Reading

The Science of Reading is **NOT**:

- An ideology or philosophy
- A fad, trend, new idea, or pendulum swing
- A political agenda

- A one-size-fits-all approach
- A program of instruction
- A single, specific component of instruction such as phonics



De-mystifying the Science of Reading

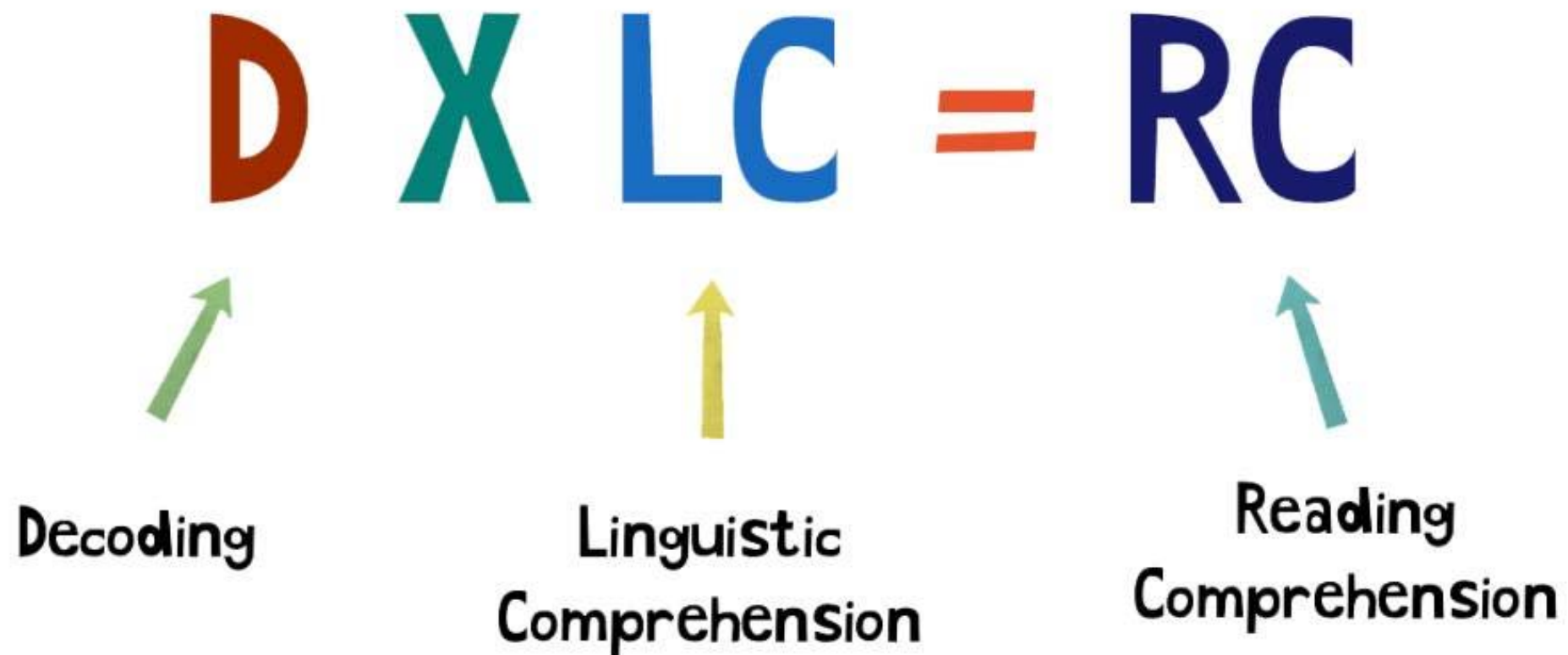
The Science of Reading **IS**:

- A vast, interdisciplinary body of **scientifically-based research** about reading and issues related to reading and writing.
- Based on **research** that has been conducted over the last **five decades** across the world, and it is derived from thousands of studies in multiple languages.
- An abundance of **evidence** to inform:
 - **how** proficient reading and writing develop;
 - **why** some have difficulty; and
 - **how** we can most effectively assess and teach ...

therefore, **how to improve student outcomes** through **prevention** of and **intervention** for reading difficulties.



The Simple View of Reading





Scarborough's Reading Rope: A Visual Metaphor

SCARBOROUGH'S READING ROPE (2001)

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE
(facts, concepts, etc.)

VOCABULARY
(breadth, precision, links, etc.)

LANGUAGE STRUCTURE
(syntax, semantics, etc.)

VERBAL REASONING
(inference, metaphor, etc.)

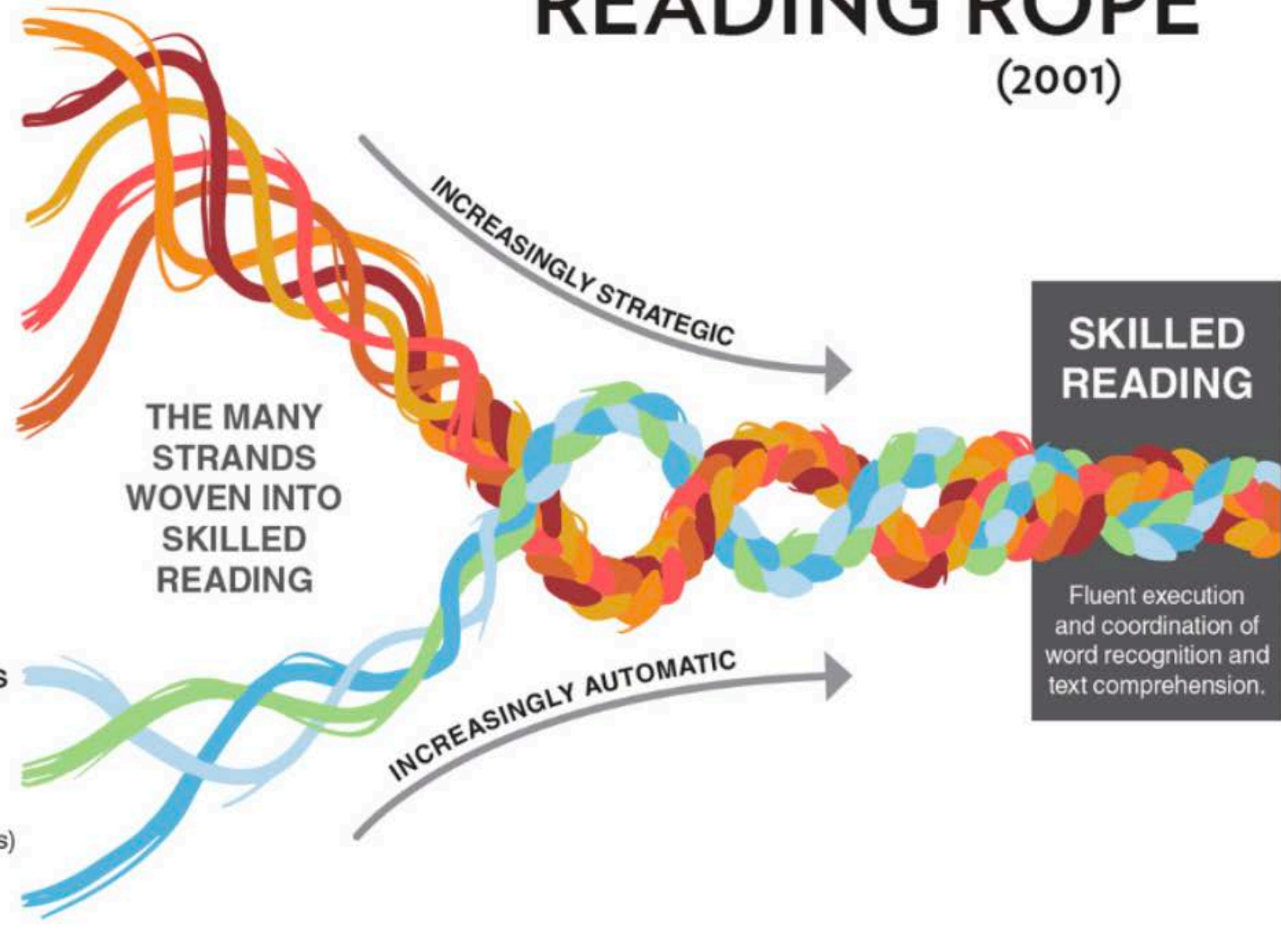
LITERACY KNOWLEDGE
(print concepts, genres, etc.)

WORD RECOGNITION

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS
(syllables, phonemes, etc.)

DECODING
(alphabetic principle,
spelling-sound correspondences)

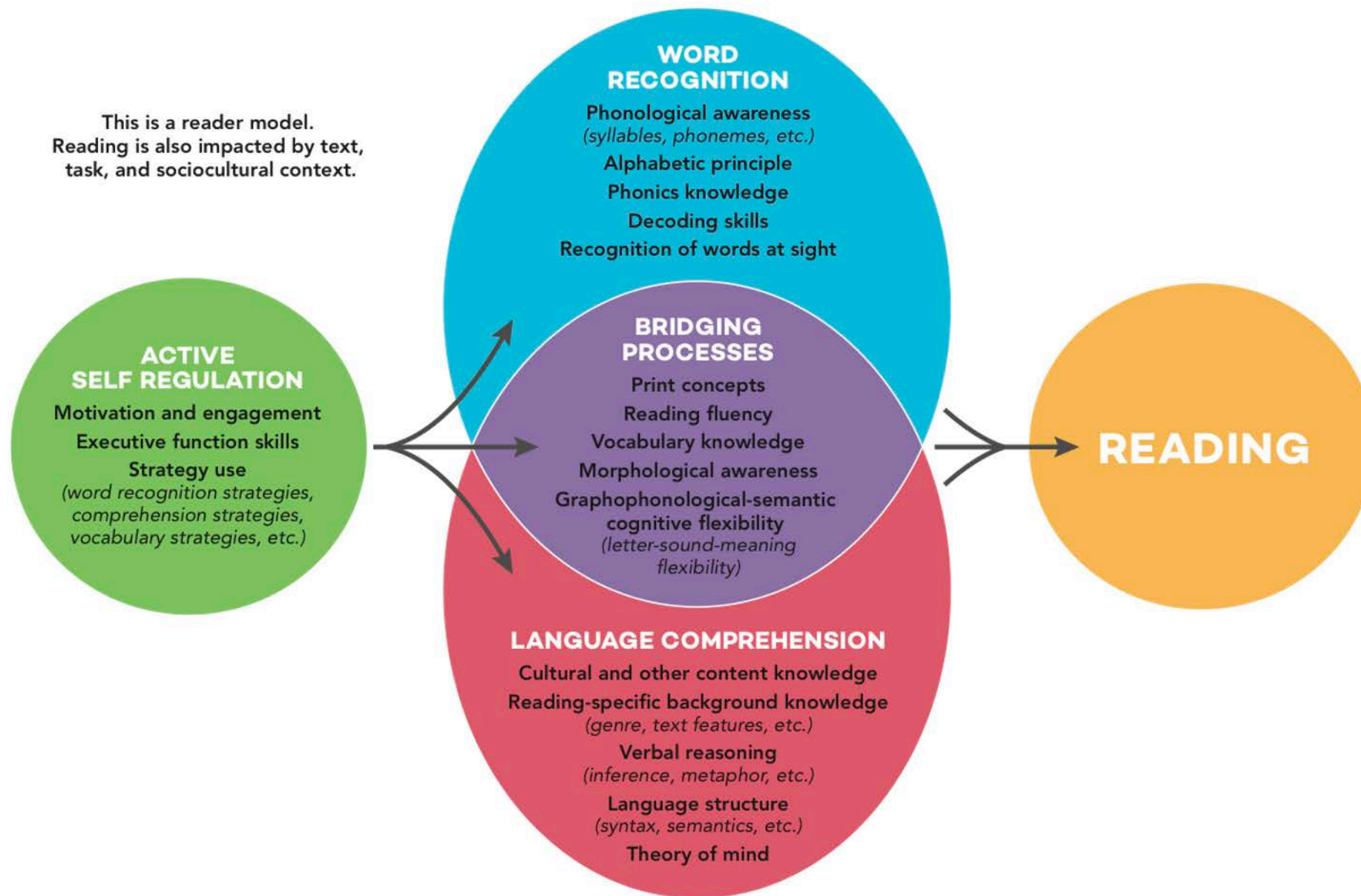
SIGHT RECOGNITION
(of familiar words)





The Active View of Reading: A Reader Model

This is a reader model.
Reading is also impacted by text,
task, and sociocultural context.





Structured Literacy

WHAT is taught:
instructional content

- Foundational skills
- AND
- Higher-level literacy skills

**HOW
it's taught**

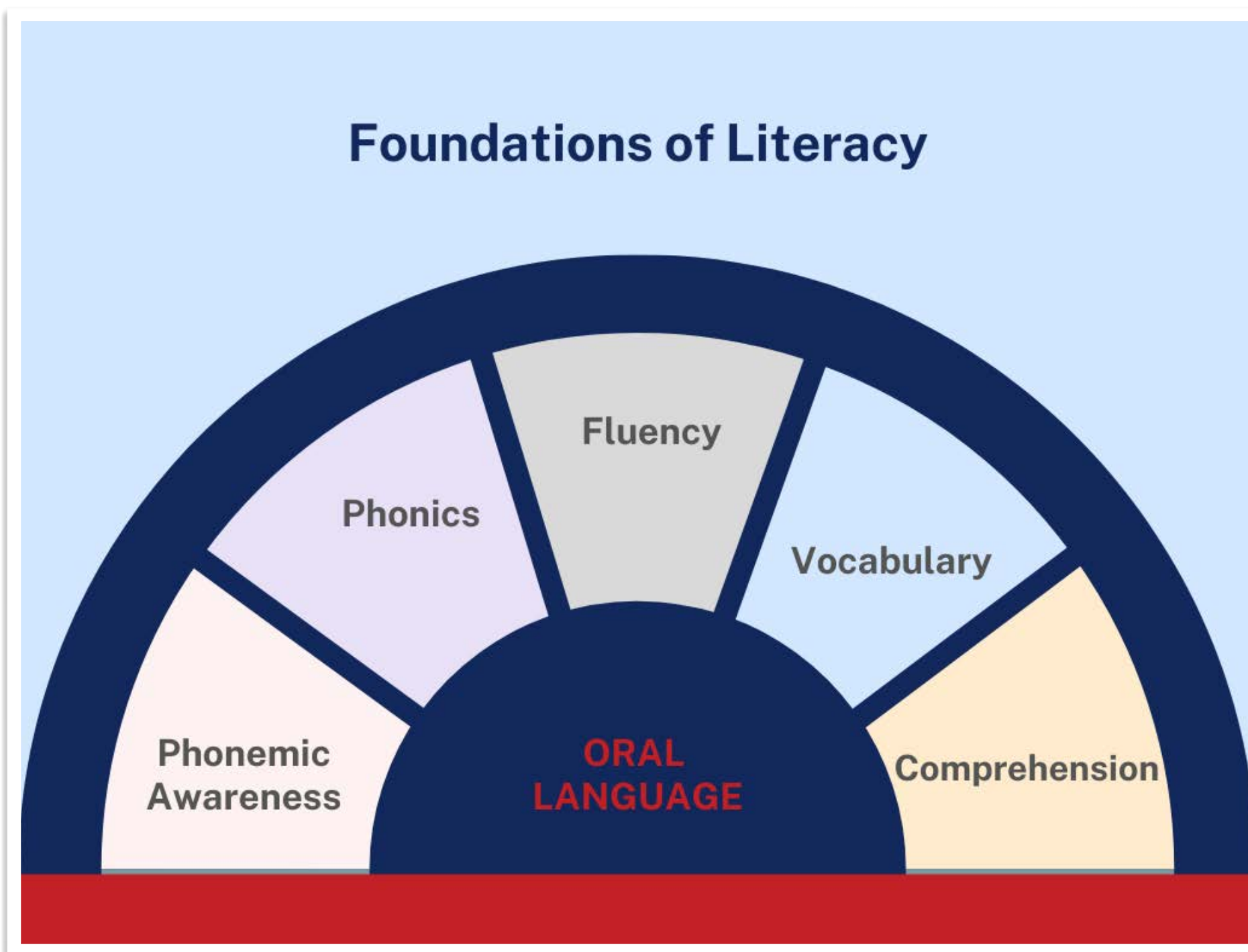
teaching
methods

- Systematic and Cumulative
 - Organized, from simple to complex, follows a scope and sequence
- Explicit
 - Direct instruction
 - “Today we are learning to...”
- Not assuming all students can infer concepts
- Active practice – repetition, reinforcement, feedback
- Whole class and small group differentiated instruction

I Do. We Do. You Do.



Foundational Skills for Reading

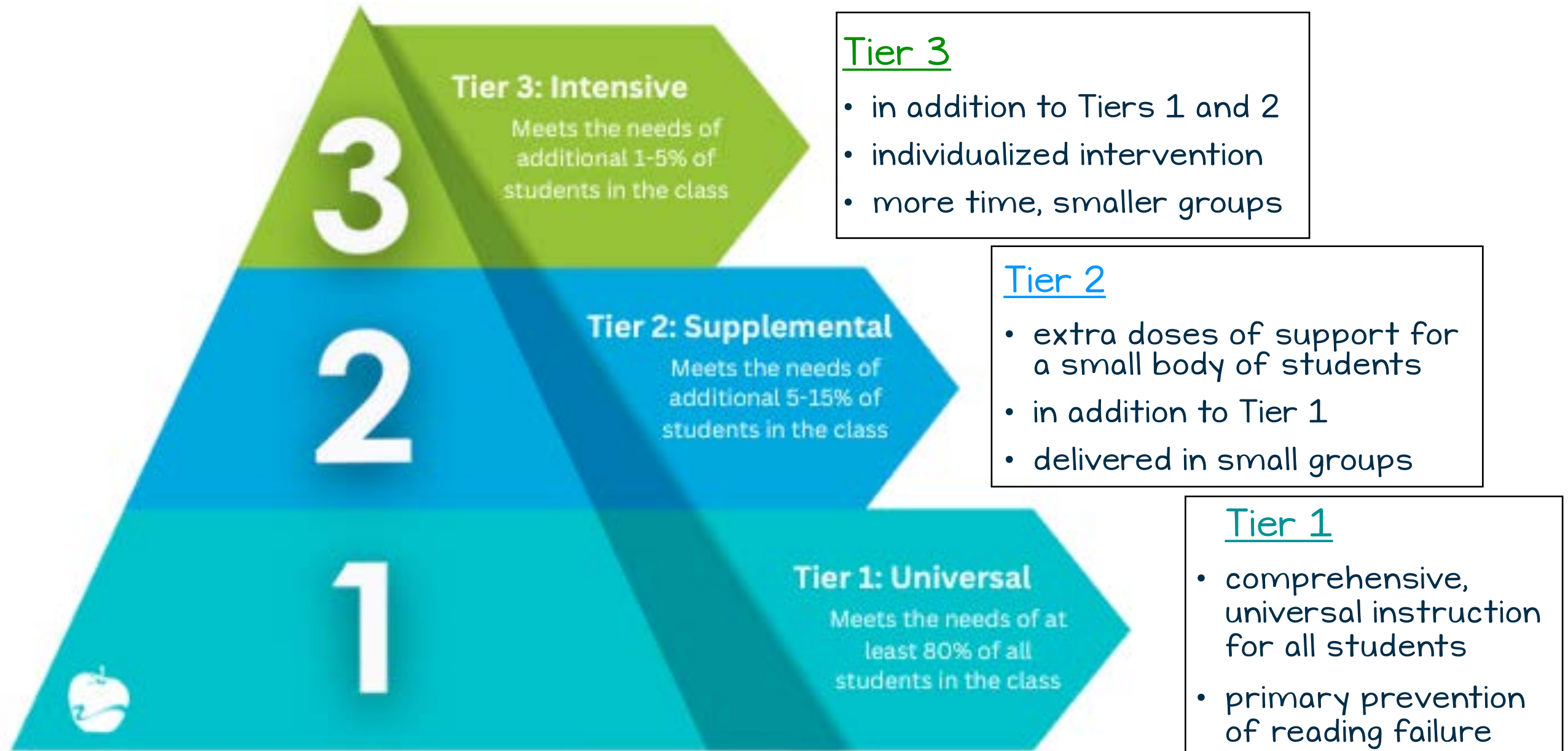


Proficiency in these foundational skills is necessary for all students to be reflective, critical, and independent readers.



MTSS – Multi-Tiered System of Supports

set up to be a **continuum of instructional supports** that are available to every student from day one of kindergarten

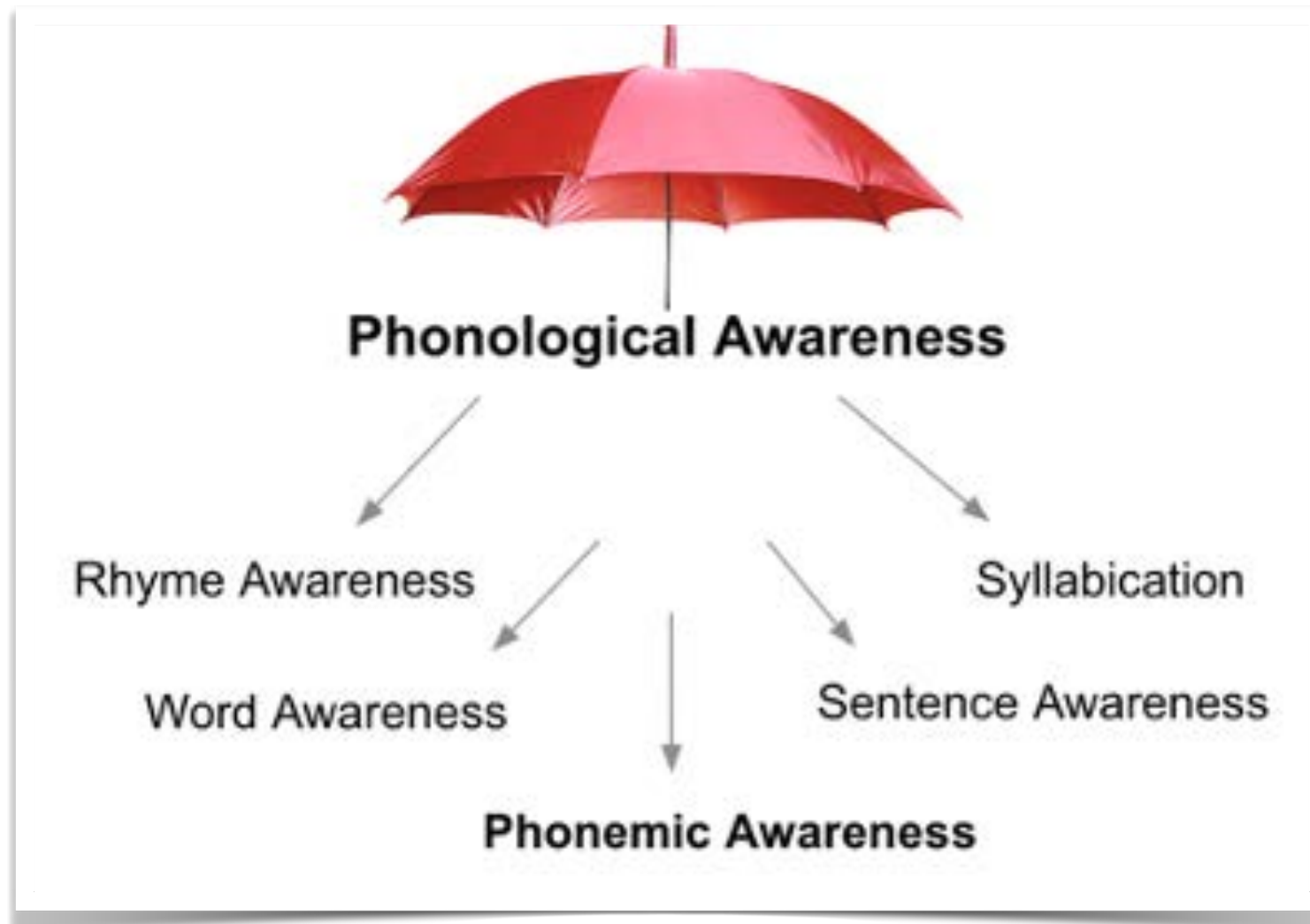


The MTSS model comes from the idea that we can prevent reading failure for the vast majority of students.



Phonemic Awareness

the ability to notice and manipulate individual sounds in spoken language

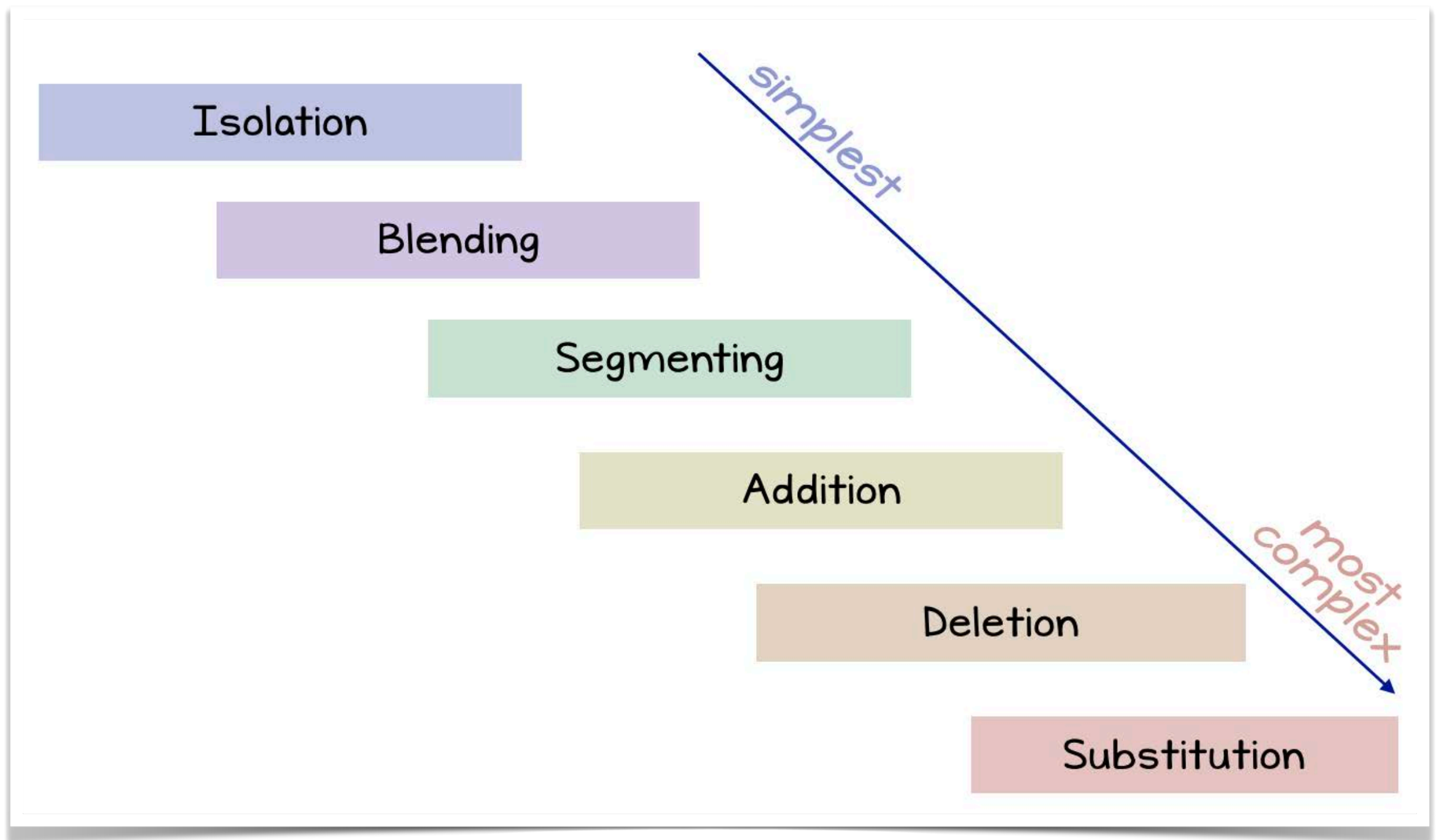


Over nearly four decades of research, “phonemic awareness has consistently been found to be the strongest precursor to, and predictor of, reading achievement” (Kenner, et al).



A scope & sequence for phonemic awareness

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





Intentional, systematic phonemic awareness instruction

High-leverage instructional routines for **phonemic awareness**:

- ✓ Let's **notice** how sounds are made (articulatory gestures)
- ✓ Let's **put sounds together** to make whole **words** (blending)
- ✓ Let's **take words apart** (segmenting)
- ✓ Let's **listen for sounds** that are the **same** (isolation & discrimination)
- ✓ Let's **take sounds off** of words (deletion)
- ✓ Let's **change one sound** in a word to make a new word (substitution)

How can you help students both **NOTICE** and **MANIPULATE**
the phonemic structure of individual words?



One Minute – Whole Class Instruction

Rhyme Repetition

T says word pair,
Students repeat:

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

Onset Fluency

T says word, Students
say word, then isolate
the onset

T: funny S: funny /f/

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

Segmenting Phonemes

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

T: flip
Ss: flip f-l-i-p

Examples:

go/no
yes/me
sad/mad
run/fun
rip/bag

Examples:

baker /b/
puppy /p/
dinner /d/
gentle /j/
happy /h/

Examples:

r-e-d
p-u-t
b-a-l
f-l-a-g
s-w-i-m

Examples:

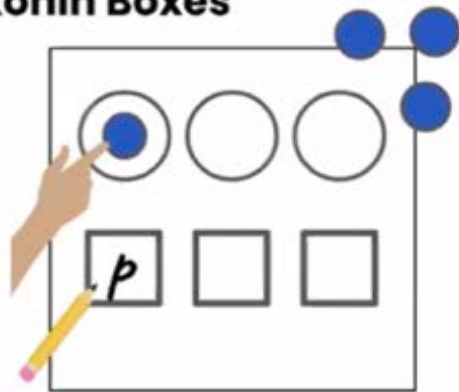
hop
run
map
play
grab



Small Group Supports for Phonemic Awareness

Manipulatives to support phonemic awareness & orthographic mapping

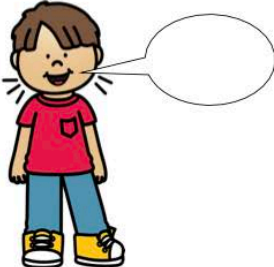





Elkonin Boxes



Tip: Mix it up and use play-doh balls, pompoms, little toys, or paint stampers to represent the sound!

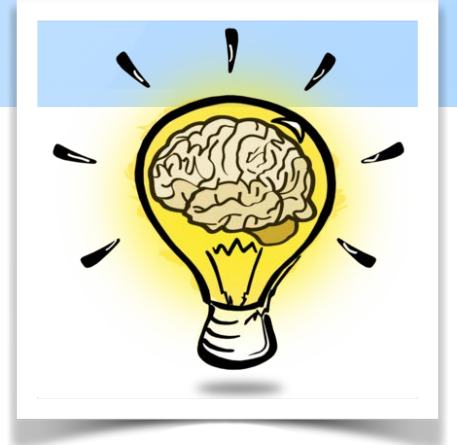


c / a / t

<p>Say it</p> 	<p>Connect to Meaning</p> 	<p>Stretch it</p> 
<p>Tap it</p>  <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">○</div> <div style="text-align: center;">○</div> <div style="text-align: center;">○</div> <div style="text-align: center;">○</div> <div style="text-align: center;">○</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 60px; height: 60px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="width: 60px; height: 60px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="width: 60px; height: 60px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="width: 60px; height: 60px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="width: 60px; height: 60px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> </div>		
<p>Write it</p> <hr/> <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/> <hr/>	<p>Check it!</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; gap: 20px;">   </div>	



Readiness Skills



The two best predictors of early reading success are **phonemic awareness** and a student's understanding of the **alphabetic principle**.

Phonemic Awareness

Students' ability to hear and manipulate the smallest units of sound in a word – phonemes

Alphabetic Principle

The understanding that there are systematic and predictable relationships between sounds and letters.

“these skills open the gate for reading.” – Wiley Blevins



Letter Sound Recognition & Alphabetic Principle

How many words can you make from these letters?

s, m, t, d, l

VS

s, m, a, t, d

“
When a child memorizes ten words, they can only read ten words.
If a child learns the sounds of ten letters, they will be able to read:
350 three-sound words
4,320 four-sound words, and
21,650 five-sound words.
”

Dr Martin Kozloff



Phonemic Awareness Instruction

Keep in mind:

- Short and frequent sessions
- Focus primarily on blending and segmenting (phoneme-level skills)
- Begin to add letters to this work
- Often integrated into phonics lesson



Ideas for instructional strategies:

- Use manipulatives to keep it playful
 - ★ Elkonin boxes + bingo chips
 - ★ Pop It fidget toys
 - ★ Race cars + tracks
 - ★ Unifix cubes
- Encourage gestures
 - ★ Hand choppers
 - ★ Tap down arm
 - ★ Finger/thumb tap
- Word Chains – build phonemic awareness and phonics skills at the same time



A scope and sequence for phonics instruction

Alphabet Knowledge

CVC

Blends & Digraphs

Silent E

R-Controlled

Vowel Teams

Multi-syllabic

Fluency

Vocabulary

simple

complex

Explicit

Systematic

Cumulative



Characteristics of Strong Phonics Instruction

Phonics refers to knowledge of letter sounds and the ability to apply that knowledge in decoding unfamiliar printed words.

- **Systematic**
 - ★ It has a scope and sequence
 - ★ Skills and concepts are taught in a logical order – prerequisite skills are taught first
- **Explicit**
 - ★ Clear and direct instruction of important skills and concepts
- **Cumulative**
 - ★ Build on previously learned skills
 - ★ Sufficient repetition and review for mastery



Engaging * Active * Social * Reflective



Mini-Lesson: time for students to do the heavy lifting

Mini-Lesson Structure

I do



WE do



YOU do

- mini, not maxi (five minutes)
- strategy-focused
- model, model, model
- direct and explicit instruction
- guided practice in a safe, supportive setting
- gradual transfer to independence

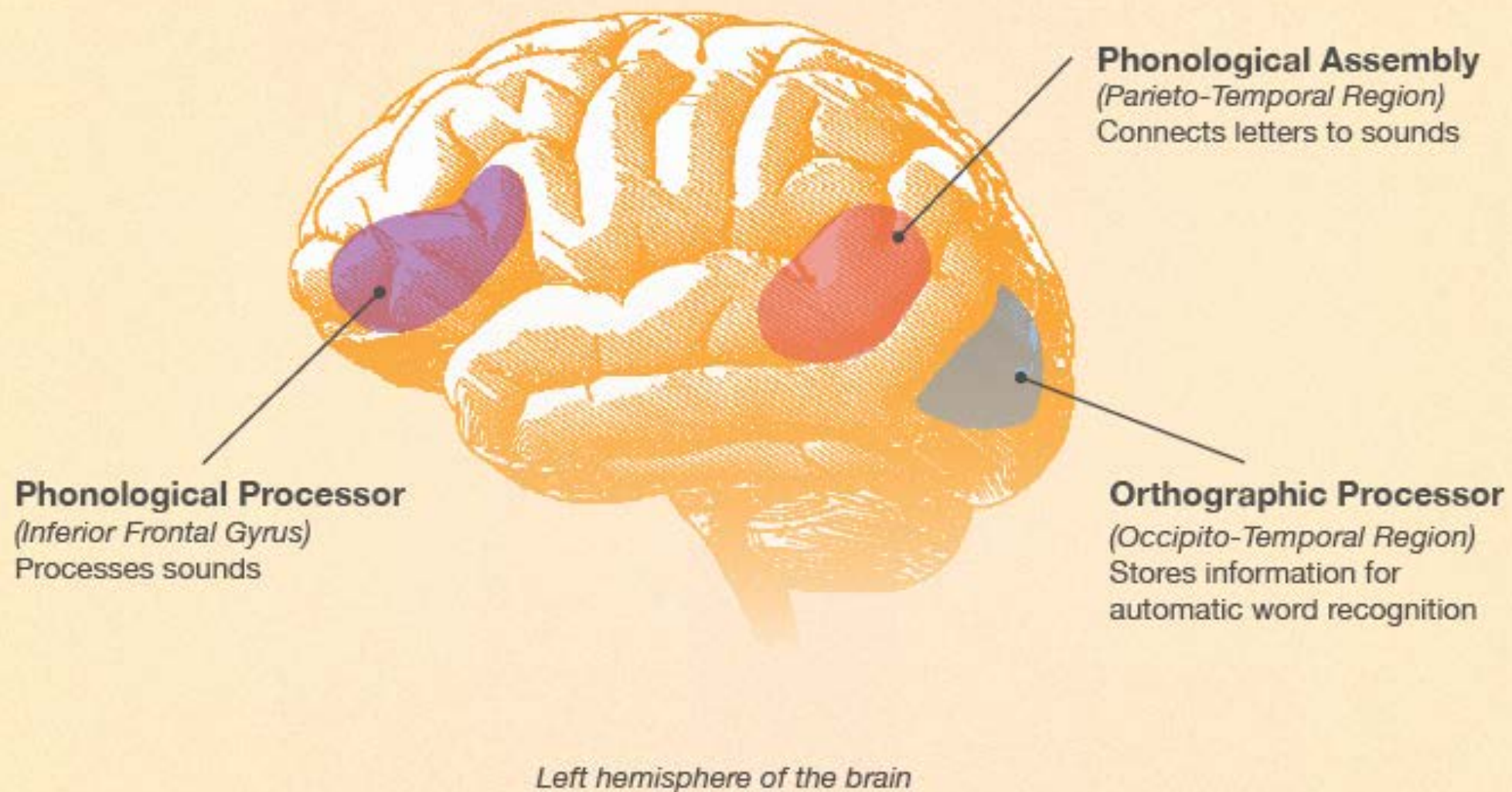
“Whoever does the **work** in the lesson does the **learning**”

– Wiley Blevins



The Reading Brain

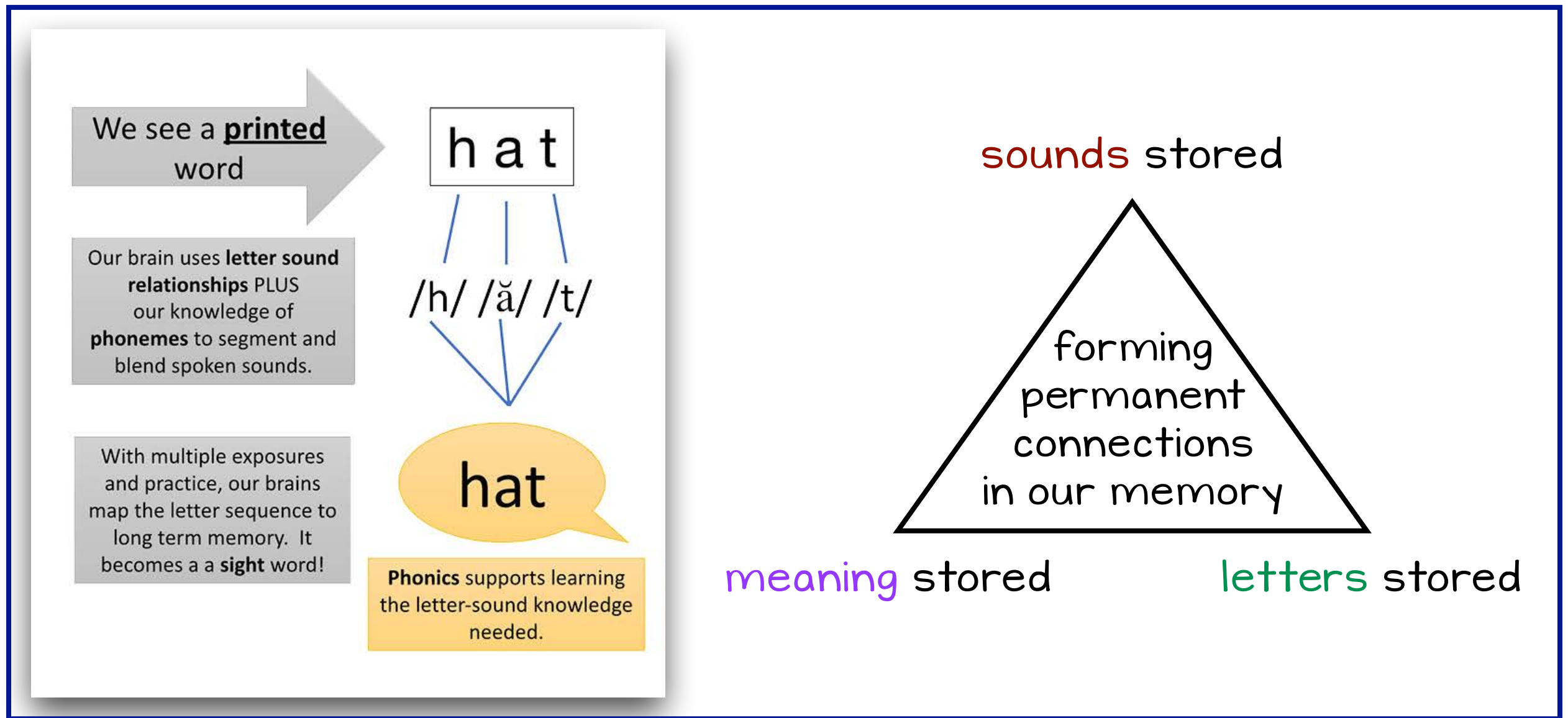
REGIONS OF THE BRAIN ASSOCIATED WITH READING





Orthographic Mapping

The **process** of storing a word permanently in memory for instant retrieval is called **orthographic mapping**.





Word Mapping

supporting the cognitive process of orthographic mapping

Word mapping is a physical way to represent the relationship between the phonemes (sounds) and graphemes (letters).

WORD MAPPING

Say the word

Tap the word

Map the word

Graph the word

Write the word

Check for meaning

Check for context



High frequency power words

109 Power Words

Jan Burkins and Kari Yates © 2020 TheSixShifts.com

1	*the	21	be	41	which	61	into	81	made	101	get
2	*of	22	this	42	their	62	has	82	over	102	through
3	*and	23	from	43	said	63	more	83	did	103	back
4	*a	24	I	44	if	64	her	84	down	104	much
5	*to	25	have	45	do	65	two	85	only	105	before
6	*in	26	or	46	will	66	like	86	way	106	go
7	*is	27	by	47	each	67	him	87	find	107	good
8	*you	28	one	48	about	68	see	88	use	108	new
9	*that	29	had	49	how	69	time	89	may	109	write
10	*it	30	not	50	up	70	could	90	water		
11	*he	31	but	51	out	71	no	91	long		
12	*for	32	what	52	them	72	make	92	little		
13	*was	33	all	53	then	73	than	93	very		
14	on	34	were	54	she	74	first	94	after		
15	are	35	when	55	many	75	been	95	words		
16	as	36	we	56	some	76	its	96	called		
17	with	37	there	57	so	77	who	97	just		
18	his	38	can	58	these	78	now	98	where		
19	they	39	an	59	would	79	people	99	most		
20	at	40	your	60	other	80	my	100	know		

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

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



High-leverage instructional routines for phonics instruction

Explicitly and systematically teach the secrets of how to crack the written code.

- ✓ Let's **play** with sounds – daily
 - ✓ Let's **study** something **new** – 1–3 times per week
 - ✓ Let's **blend** some words – daily
 - ✓ Let's **build** some words – 2–3 times per week
 - ✓ Let's **write** some words – 2–3 times per week
 - ✓ Let's **study** some spellings – 2–3 times per week
 - ✓ Let's **read!** – daily
 - ✓ Let's **review** something that was a little **tricky** – as needed
-

Including **both** systematic phonics and meaningful interactions with texts leads to the most powerful outcomes for beginning readers.

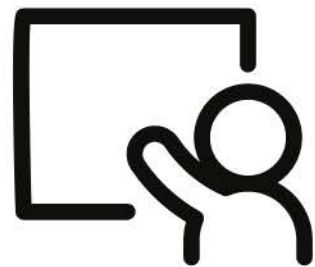


Phonics Instruction: A Lesson Flow



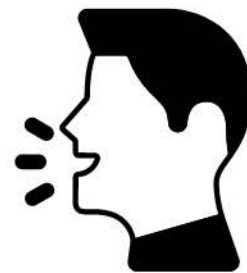
HEAR IT

- phonemic awareness



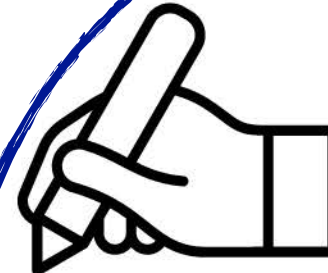
TEACH IT

- name and teach new skill/sound



DECODE IT

- decode words with target skill



ENCODE IT

- spell words with target skill



READ IT

- read words, sentences and decodable passages

The last two steps should be approximately 50% of your lesson time. Blevins states “students progress at a much faster rate in phonics when the bulk of instructional time is spent on applying the skill to authentic reading and writing experiences” (2017).



Differentiation: Below-Level Student Supports

Frontload content

- ✓ audio recordings of decodable texts and/or a guided echo read of the text prior to the whole-group lesson

Modify (don't lower) expectations

- ✓ students practice only a subset of the words, to work with the new skill in a way that doesn't overwhelm them

Revisit the skill during small-group lessons

- ✓ the whole-group lessons give students access and a solid introduction to grade-level skills to build on when they get to that skill during small-group lessons

Design instruction with the awareness that students don't learn phonics skills in a lockstep manner

- ✓ once they understand how the letter-sound system works, it's a matter of us introducing them to specific sound-spellings and giving them ample practice to master them and easily transfer them to all reading & writing situations

Address previous skill needs during small-group time

- ✓ a robust pace (not too slow)
- ✓ focus on high-impact activities like – blending, word building, dictation, and reading and writing about decodable texts



Word Ladders – playing with sounds, letters, words

at
bat
cat
fat

log
dog
dig
big

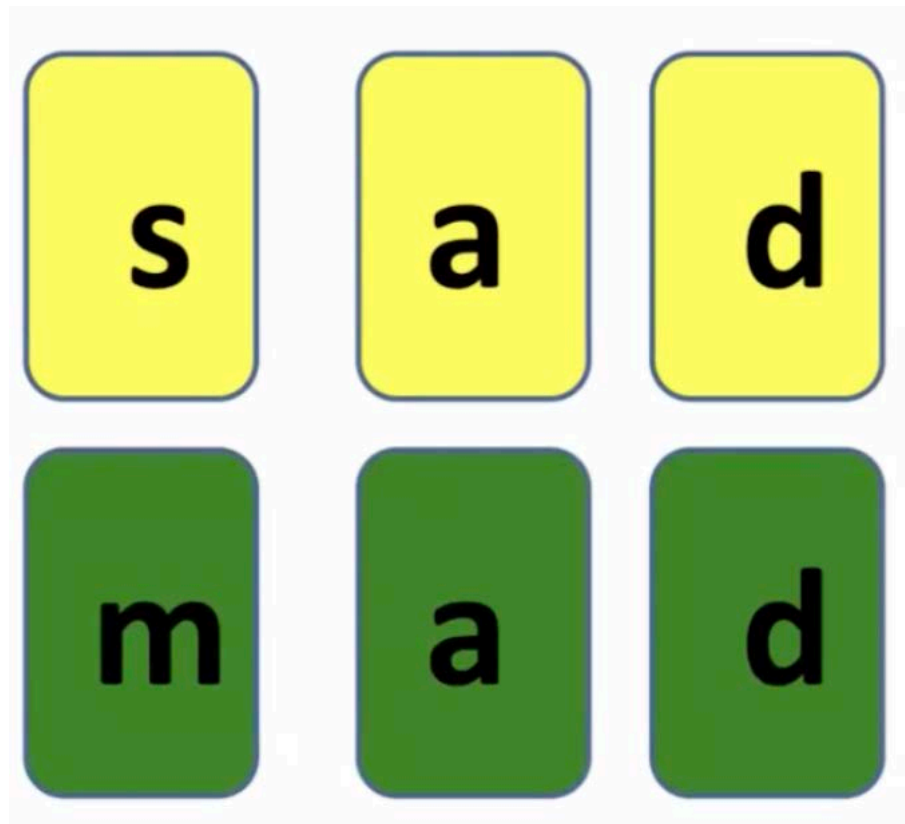
bike
like
lake

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



Teacher Language

(Begin with sad.) Change sad to mad.



Skill

encoding

decoding

This is sophisticated phonemic awareness work:

Students are substituting, deleting, and adding sounds (encoding). And then they're using their knowledge of spelling to create the new word, and then read (decode) the new word to make sure it's correct.



Instructional Strategy: Word Chains

Teacher Language

Skill

(Begin with **mat**.) Change **mat** to **sat**.

encoding

Change the **S** to an **F**.
Now tell me what word you have?

decoding

Change **fat** to **fit**.

encoding

Change the **F** to an **S**. What word is that?

decoding

What letter do you need to change **sit** to **lit**?

encoding






Now add an **S** to the beginning of **lit**.
What word do you get?

decoding



A Phonics Centre Activity – Letter Bank

Word Awareness

1		l	e	g
2				
3				
4				
5				

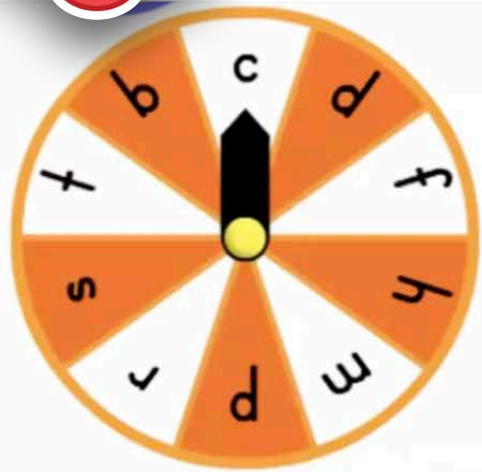
Letter Bank

b	d	d	e
e	e		
e			
l	n	n	
p	s	t	

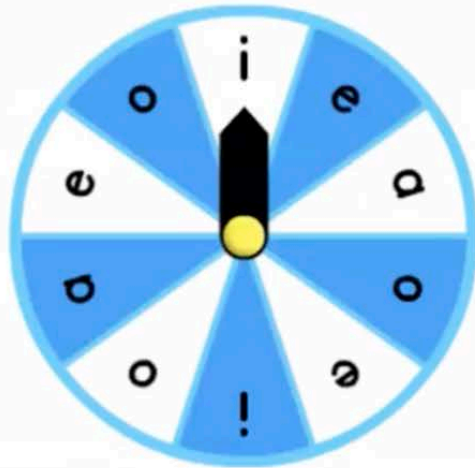


A Phonics Centre Activity – Spin It

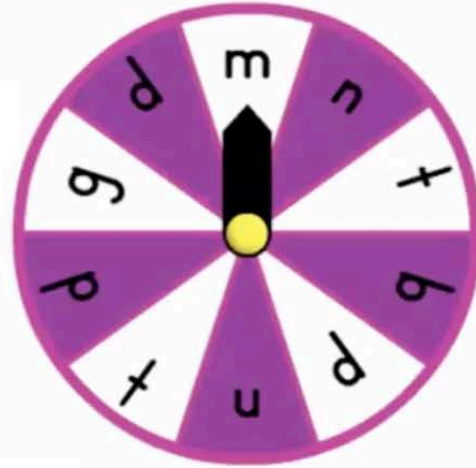
Word Awareness



Spinner 1



Spinner 2

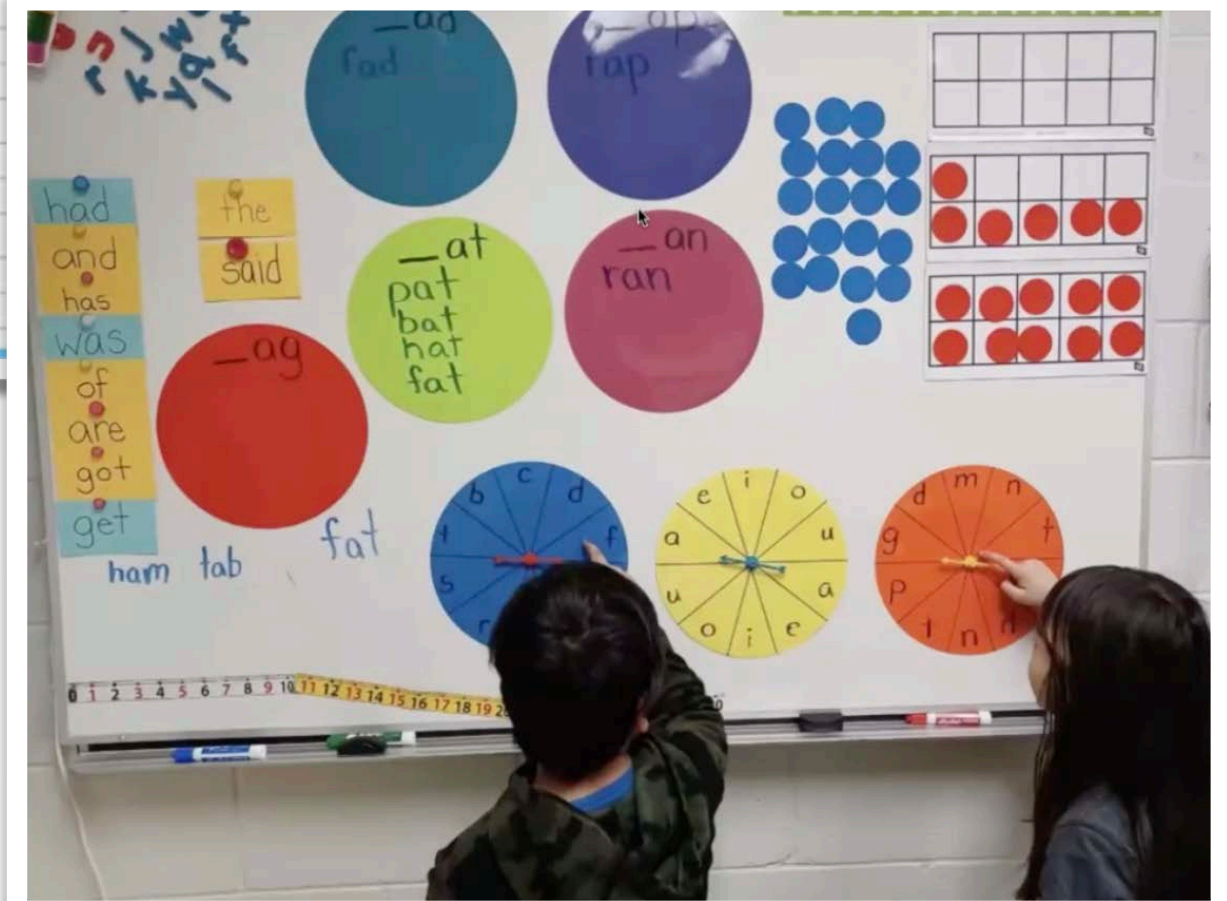


Spinner 3

TEAM 1

Organize list by spelling pattern

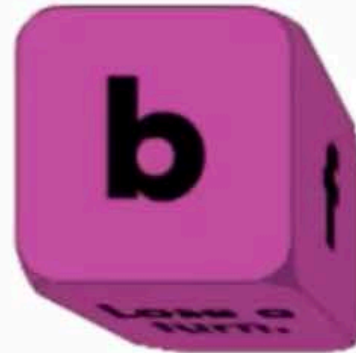
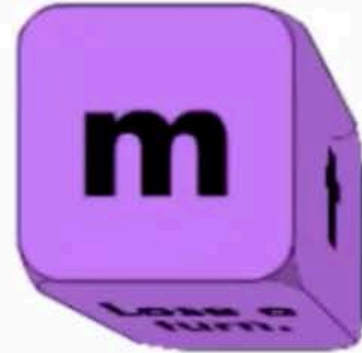
TEAM 2





A Phonics Centre Activity – Roll It

Word Awareness



TEAM 1

-ear	-air	-are

TEAM 2

-ear	-air	-are



Spelling or Syllable Cards

High engagement. Targeted.

Students practice **decoding** and **encoding** by manipulating, deleting, substituting, and blending **recently taught** letters & sounds to make new words.

Spelling or Syllable Cards

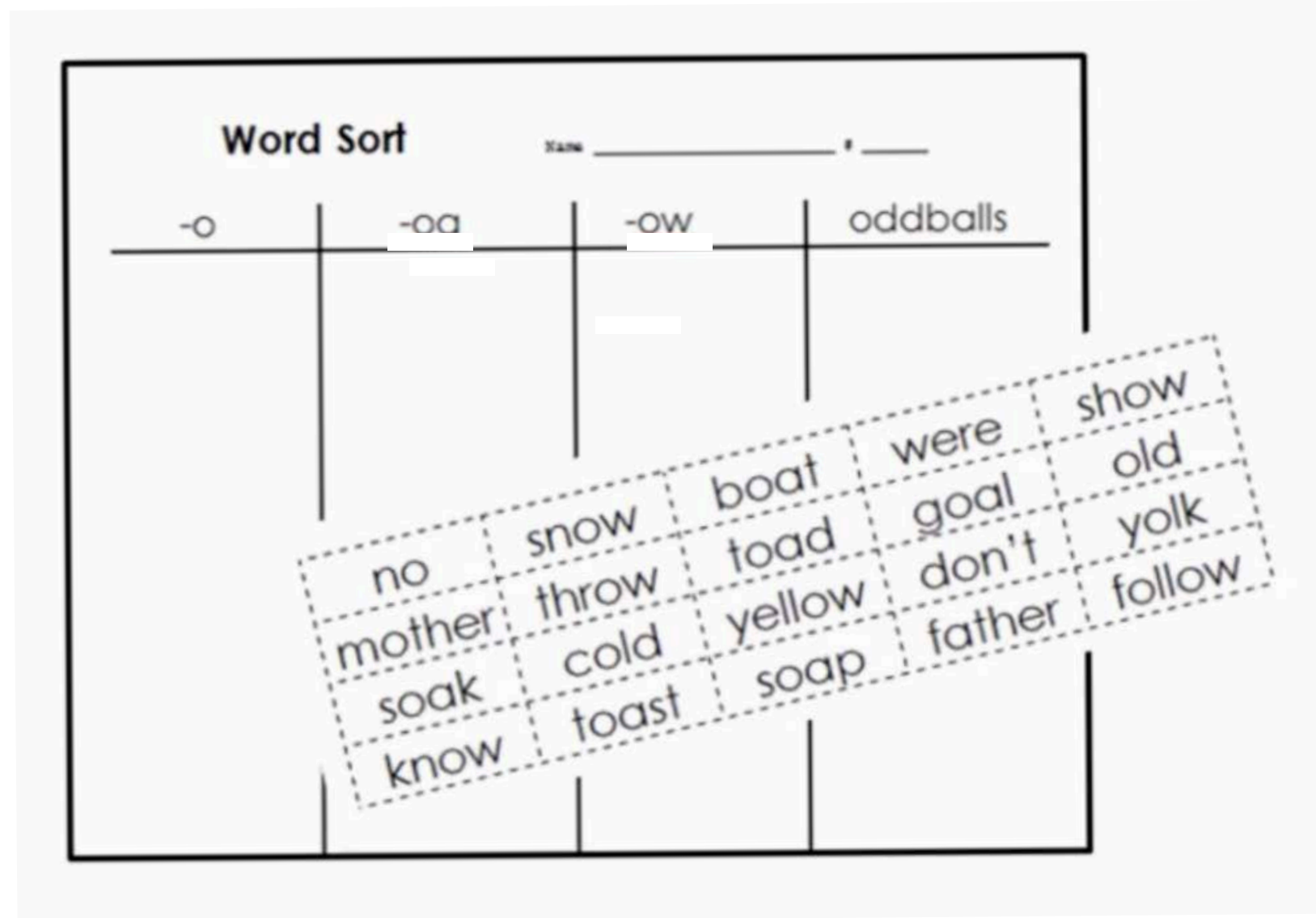
s a d m o p t

- Use small set of letter cards.
- Focus on target skill at first.
- Then fold in review skills.
- Do subset during small groups for students needing extra support.

sad	sad	sad	sad	sad
mad	sat	sat	map	mad
bad	hat	sit	map	map
had	had	hit	tap	mop
		hat	tan	top
			man	tap
				tan
				man



road
show
grow
boat
blow
coat
row
goat



Each sort should end with a question like:

What did you **notice** about these words?

or

What did you **learn** about these spelling patterns?



Living Words



Phonics Instruction

Keep in mind:

- Systematic: Move from simple to complex
 - Following a scope and sequence
- Explicit: “*Today I want to teach you...*”
- Keep students engaged by:
 - Inviting student responses
 - Have students come to the board to find a word, highlight a phonics skill in a word



Ideas for instructional Strategies:

- Understand “the code” yourself
- Consider using a systematic and explicit phonics program
- White boards will be your best friend!
- Keep lessons lively, and stick to suggested times
- Don’t forget to unpack word meaning
- Word sorts
- Word chains
- Try multi-sensory methods
- Use Elkonin (sound) boxes to support encoding
- Weekly progress monitoring is critical!



The best phonics instruction is active, engaging, and thought provoking. Students are playing with letters and sounds and discussing what they observe about how words work to deepen their understanding of our alphabetic system so they can read and write.

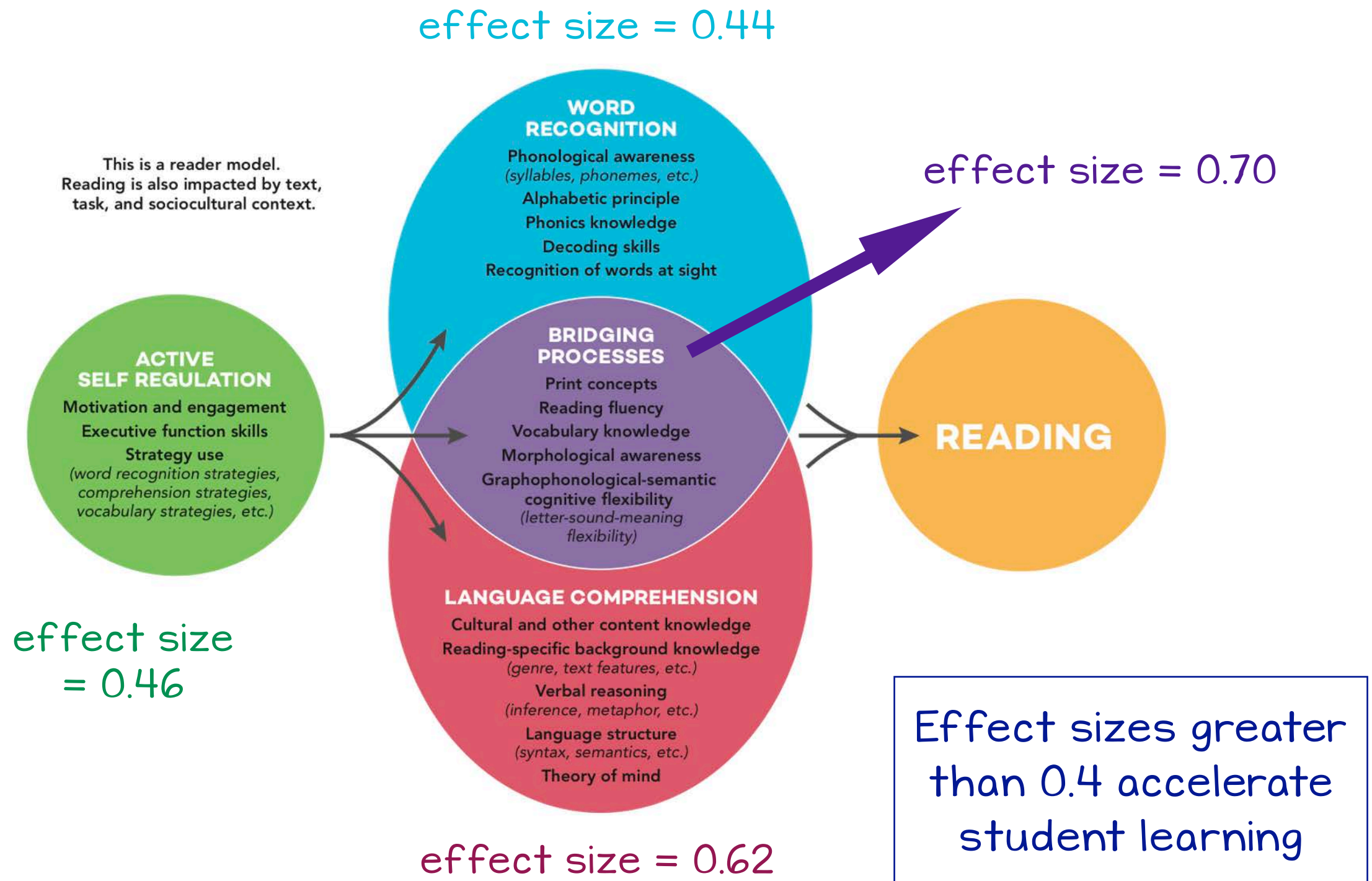
Phonics instruction involves talk. It involves observation. And it involves tons of application to authentic reading and writing experiences.

Differentiating Phonics Instruction for Maximum Impact – Blevins





The Active View of Reading: A Reader Model





Decodable Texts

a teaching tool to support phonics instruction



"Without aligned texts, readers are at risk of formulating the misguided hypothesis that reading is simply using pictures, and maybe a few letters, to infer the words. Worse yet, readers can begin to think that reading is just memorizing the text."

-Shifting the Balance 6 Ways to Bring the Science of Reading into the Balanced Literacy Classroom- Page 141



Patterned, Levelled Texts



	
<p>Puppies get into lots of silly spots. 2 puppies are in the boots.</p> 	<p>Puppies get into lots of silly spots. 3 puppies are in the flowers.</p> 



Decodable Texts: letter/sound



Whole Phonics™
Decodable Books, Workbooks, and More



Is the cap on a mat?
No! It is not on the mat.



Is Zac's cap on a can?
No! It is not on the can.



Considerations for choosing books

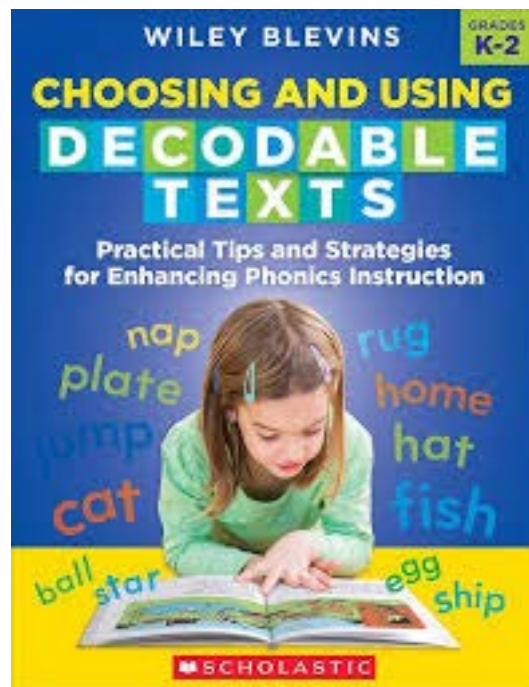
Questions to ask when considering beginning texts:

The three tensions...

Decodability How regular are the words in the text?	Predictability Do the patterns and/or illustrations make the words easy to predict?
Novelty Will students encounter new words built from familiar sound-spellings?	Redundancy Are words or spelling patterns repeated to give st's practice with them?
Orthographic Value How aligned is the text with the student's current phonics knowledge?	Sense-making Value Does the text make sense? Does the text engage the reader in thinking?



Decodable Texts



Important to remember that students need access to a variety of texts for different instructional purposes



Decodable Texts – because, but, so...

Using decodable text is important **because**...

because

Using decodable text is important **but**...

but

Using decodable texts is important **so**...

so

Add your 3 sticky notes to the corresponding chart paper



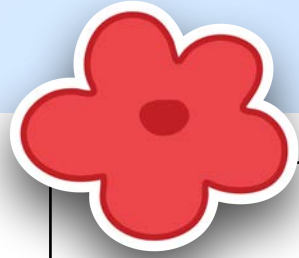
Fluency

accuracy, automaticity, prosody

Fluency is the ability to read text accurately, at an appropriate pace, with expression.

- As decoding is automatized, students increase their ability to read texts fluently, freeing cognitive resources to focus on the meaning of the texts.
 - Reading fluency develops as a result of strong instruction in other core components of literacy: phonological awareness, phonics, and vocabulary.
 - To read a text fluently, students must have accurate and automatic word reading skills (Hudson et al., 2009). Text-level fluency develops with extended opportunities to practice oral reading. (Zimmermann et al., 2021).
-

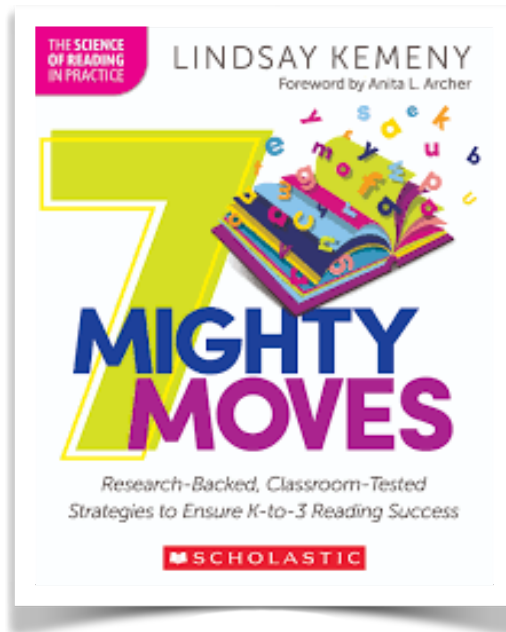
Fluency is the bridge between word recognition and comprehension.



Building Fluency

Keep in mind:

- More than just reading fast
- Don't teach phonics in isolation
- Avoid "round robin" reading
- Be mindful of how you use independent reading time



Ideas for instructional Strategies:

- Remember...fluency is not an isolated skill
 - subskills: phonemic awareness, sound-symbol knowledge, automaticity at letter or word level
- Small Group instruction affords specific, immediate feedback
- Model, model, model!!!
- Whole Group Reading including:
 - Read aloud, cloze reading, choral reading, echo reading
- Partner Reading
- Reader's Theatre
- Beat the Clock Timed Reading
- Repeated Reading

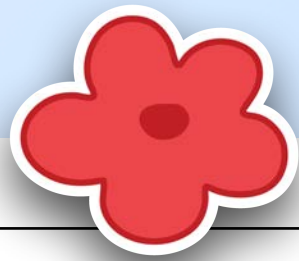


Why Teach Vocabulary?

One of the oldest findings in educational research is the strong relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension.

Vocabulary needs to be taught both directly and indirectly through several approaches:

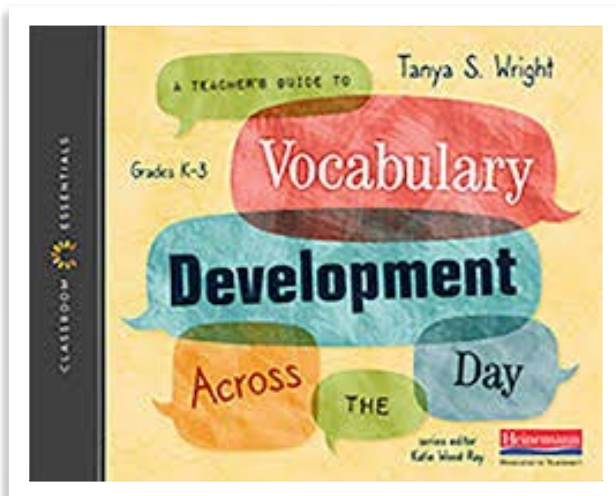
- Encourage wide reading
 - Expose students to high-quality oral language
 - Promote word consciousness
 - Teach word meaning directly
 - Teach independent word-learning strategies, including the use of context clues, the use of word parts, and the efficient use of the dictionary
-



Vocabulary Instruction

Keep in mind:

- Prepare student friendly definitions
- Learners need repeated exposure in meaningful contexts
- We learn words that are relevant, meaningful and useful
- We learn words when we have opportunities for active engagement with those words

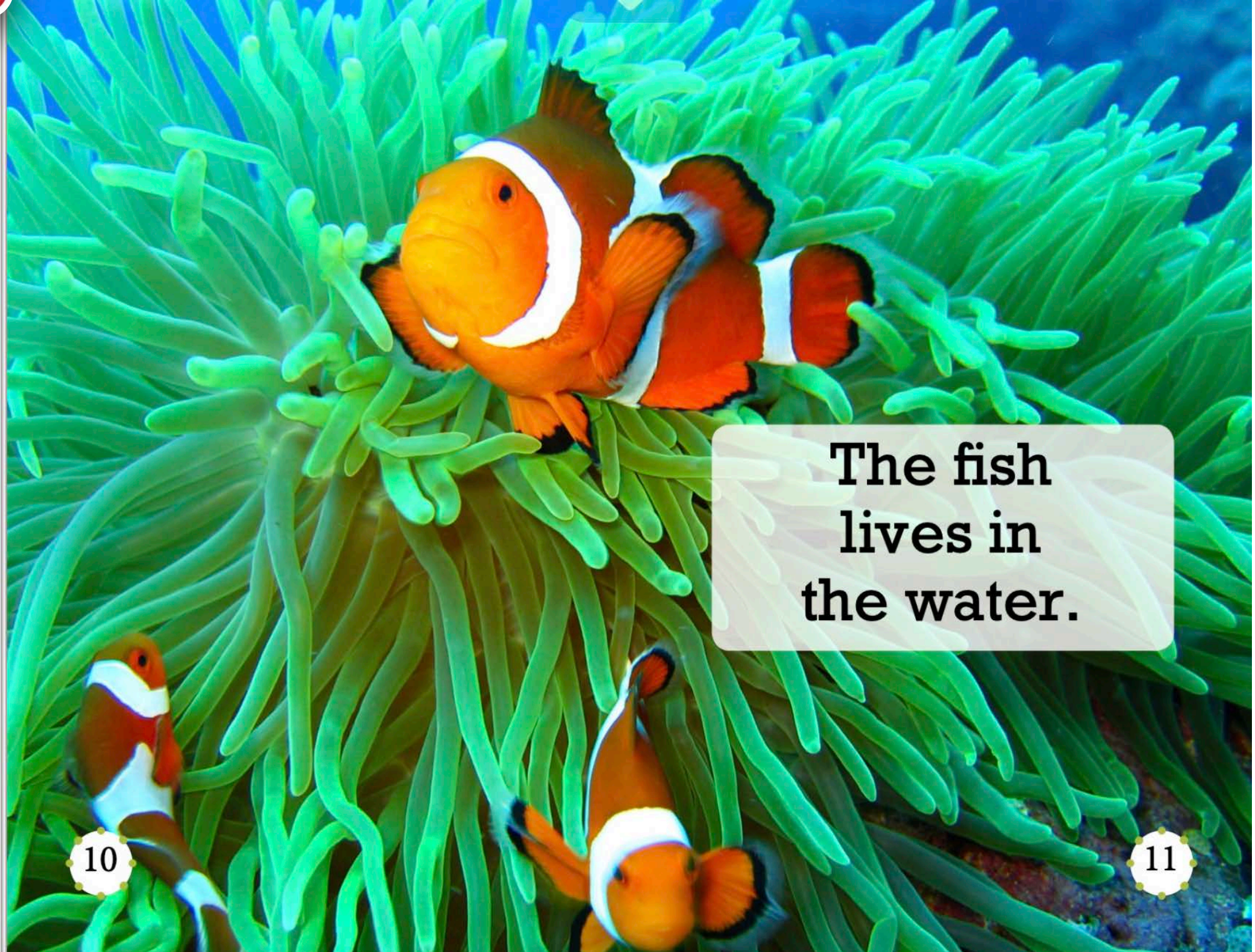


Ideas for instructional Strategies:

- Rich read aloud
 - Planned, pre-selected vocabulary, re-read, connect to content in Social Studies or Science, opportunities for active engagement
- Use text sets
 - www.readworks.com (Article a Day)
- Read – A LOT!
- Use and model sophisticated language, starting in Kindergarten
- Model being word curious!
- Dive into morphology – look for word parts



Listening Comprehension & Vocabulary



**The fish
lives in
the water.**

10

11



Listening Comprehension & Vocabulary

Chapter 1

HEADING HOME

It is early September. A female salmon has spent three years in the Pacific Ocean. It is time to leave. She will return to the place she was born. Where she was born is a good place to **spawn**. She begins her long journey home to Washington State.

The salmon swims south. She finds a body of water called an **estuary**. This is where a river meets the ocean. The salmon stays here for several weeks. The mix of salt water and freshwater in the estuary prepares her to live in the river. New muscles develop that will help her sprint and jump. Eggs start to grow in her body. The salmon gobbles down a few more fish. This will be the last meal of her life.

◀ After living most of their lives in the ocean, salmon return to the freshwater rivers from which they came.

7

Read-aloud texts:

choose texts that will stretch listening comprehension by providing exposure to rich ideas, wide vocabulary, background knowledge, and novel language structures



Teach and model reading comprehension strategies

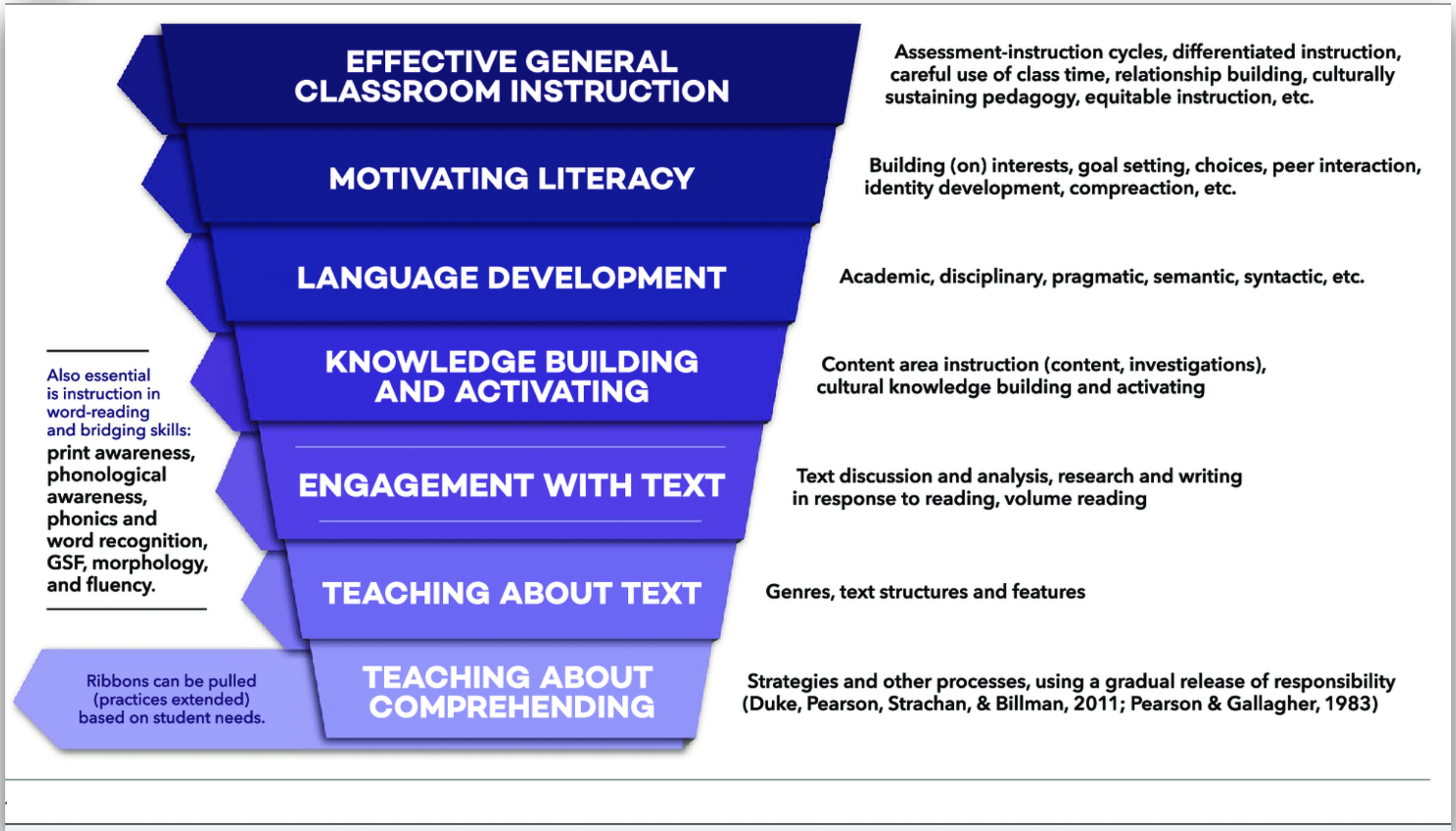
Students need direct, specific strategy instruction and comprehension–building practice.

Supporting comprehension growth and development:

- A teacher's explicit modelling of comprehension behaviours is an effective tool that improves students' use of comprehension strategies
- Asking students to tell you about what they've read sends a message that what they are reading is important and helps them dig deeper for meaning
- Prompting or questioning before, during, and after reading can lead students to deeper text understanding, especially the use of questioning that leads students to draw inferences and connect ideas across sentences



A Layered Model of Effective Comprehension Instruction





Skilled comprehenders use these strategies

CONNECTING

to prior knowledge (schemas)

SELF-QUESTIONING

ask themselves questions about the text; plan to understand

PREDICTING

using prior knowledge & clues from text to make hypotheses

TEXT STRUCTURE

use & organize text information to make meaning

VISUALIZING

mental imagery to remember information from texts

MAKING INFERENCES

integrate bits of info and fill in the gaps

SUMMARIZING

prioritize the importance of info to get the 'gist'

We can explicitly model these comprehension skills and engage students in conversations that allow them to practice comprehension.



Reading as Meaning Making

For students to become efficient meaning makers, they need to:

- build knowledge of text type and content
- undertake practice with decoding texts
- develop and use vocabulary
- make links between prior knowledge and the texts they are reading



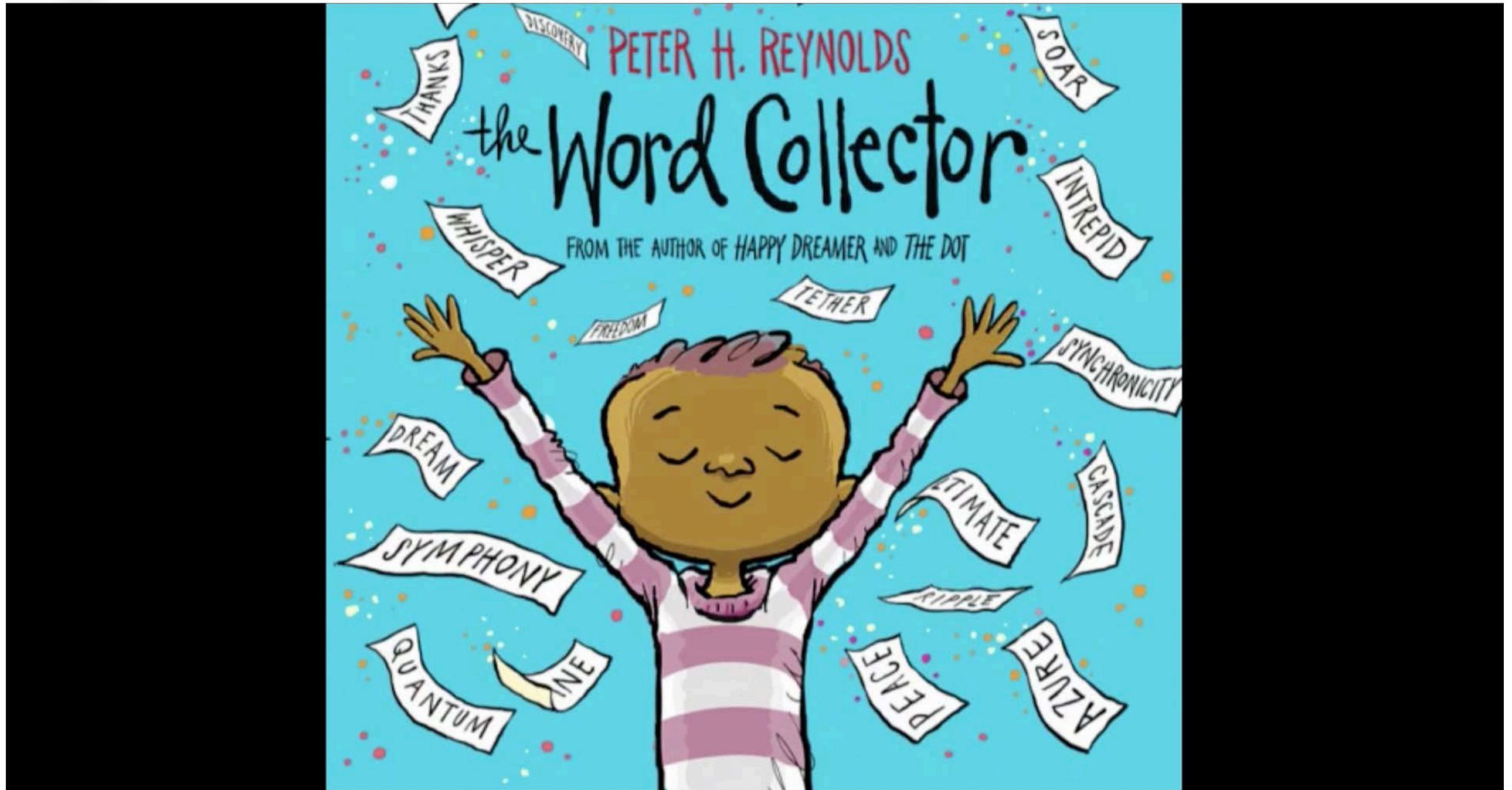


”If children are not spending a significant portion of their day engaged in (reading and writing) texts that allow them to practice the strategies we are modelling, then we cannot possibly expect them to take on these strategies and use them independently.”

—from *Catching Readers Before They Fall*



The transformative power of language and words





Sources

Books & Articles

How to Be a Better Writing Teacher workshop – Anderson & Glover

Bringing Words to Life – Beck, McKeown, Kucan

A Fresh Look at Phonics – Blevins

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Craft and Process Studies– Glover

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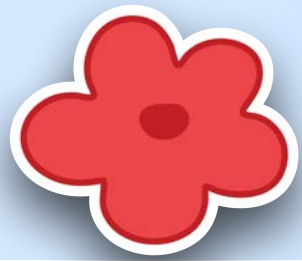
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Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years

www.popey.ca



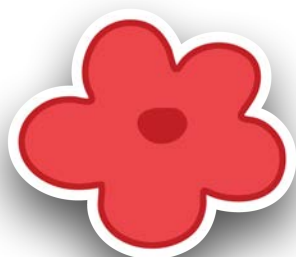
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