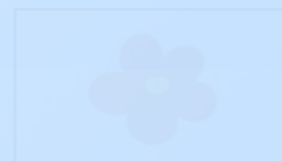




Provincial Outreach Program for the Early Years

www.popey.ca



High Leverage Instructional Routines for Your K-3 Literacy Block

February 19, 2025

11:45 - 12:45

Presenter:

Lisa Thomas

POPEY Program Co-ordinator

Connect with us online!





Our learning objectives



In the next hour, we will explore:

the components of a comprehensive literacy instruction, including a continuum of supports, strategies, and routines that empower students to build the foundational skills required to be successful, joyful readers and writers.



POPEY's Mandate & Workshops

- POPEY's mandate is to increase K–3 educators' capacity to support all primary English literacy learners, within inclusive classroom settings.
- In the last five years, we have provided:
 - **150 free workshops** to
 - over **12,000 educators** from
 - **58 school districts** across BC.
- In our workshops, we offer a collection of evidence-based strategies for teachers to consider
- Our website hosts a large collection of evidence-based resources to support K–3 literacy teaching and learning, including on-demand workshop videos
- POPEY has also supported 14 rural/remote school districts with our Rural Residency Program of ongoing professional learning supports



What We Teach – Foundational Literacy Skills

Literacy floats
on a sea of talk.

(James Britton)

noticing sounds in
spoken language

**Phonemic
Awareness**

matching sounds
with letters/words
to decode (read)
and encode (write)

Phonics

reading with
accuracy,
automaticity &
good pacing

Fluency

understanding words
& their meanings;
to enhance
comprehension

Vocabulary

making meaning &
having successful
reading & writing
experiences

Comprehension

Oral Language & Listening Comprehension →



How We Teach – Our Teaching Methods

the cognitive work shifts **slowly** and **intentionally** from teacher to student

I DO

Explicit Whole Class Instruction

Model & demonstrate the strategies and skills they need to learn, following a scope and sequence (simple to complex)

WE DO

Guided Practice Coaching, Feedback & Repetition

Interactive, differentiated & guided small group learning experiences

YOU DO

Independent Practice

Students practice literacy skills & strategies on their own, to master newly acquired skills

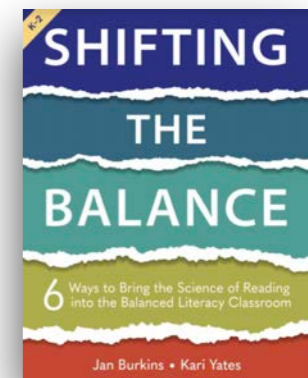
- Systematic and Cumulative
- Explicit instruction
- Active practice
- Responsive – informed by your students' abilities and needs
- Whole class and small group differentiated instruction



The Role of Oral Language in Comprehension

High-leverage instructional routines for **language development**:

- ✓ Make space for planned and incidental conversation
- ✓ Ask quality questions
- ✓ Provide wait time
- ✓ Repeat and expand
- ✓ Use interesting words
- ✓ Read aloud
- ✓ Teach with text sets to build content area knowledge



How can you intentionally support oral language development to maximize early listening comprehension in the classroom?



Readiness Skills & the Aha Moment

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.

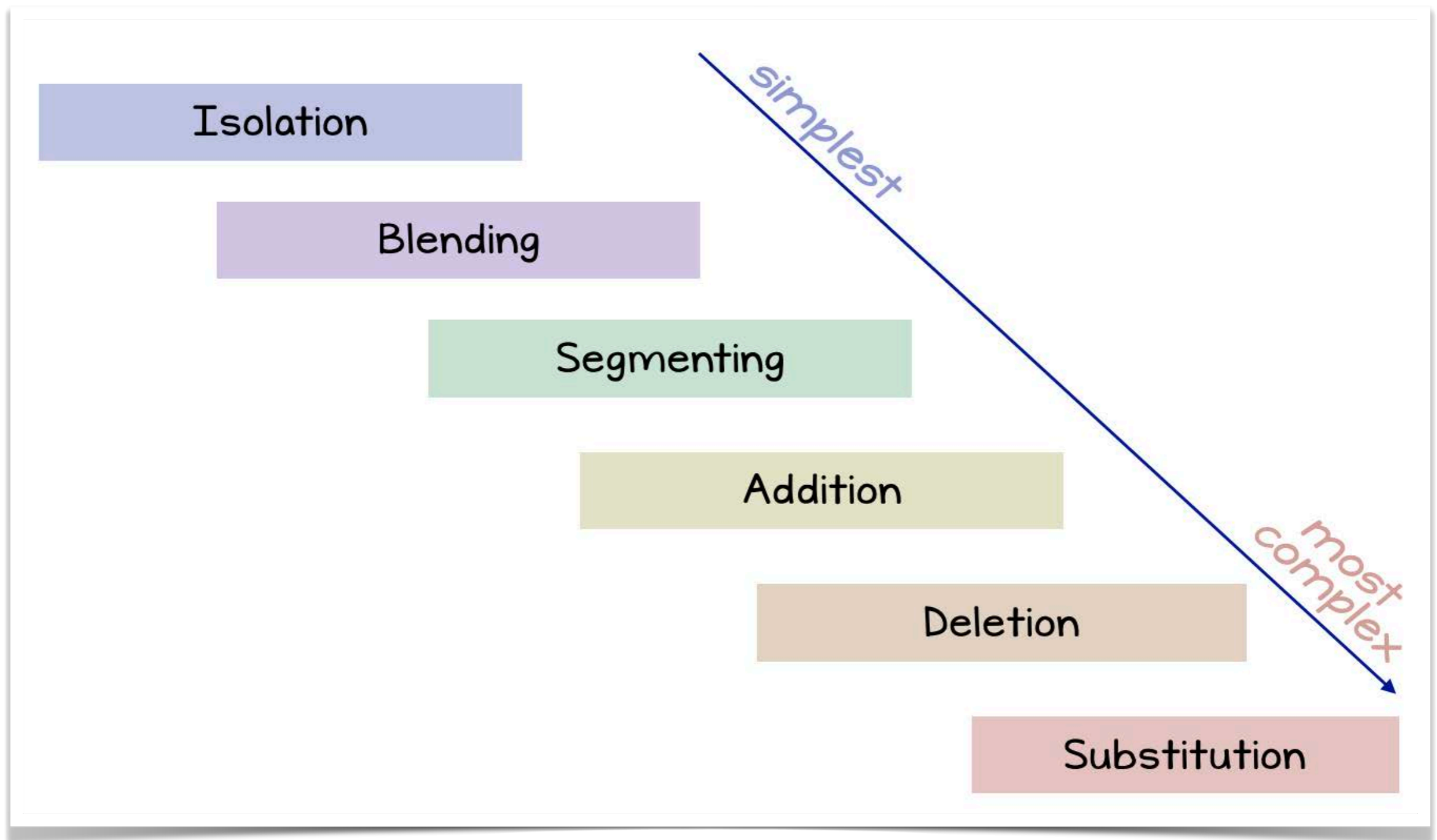


“These skills open the gate for reading.” – Wiley Blevins



A scope & sequence for phonemic awareness

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





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



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:

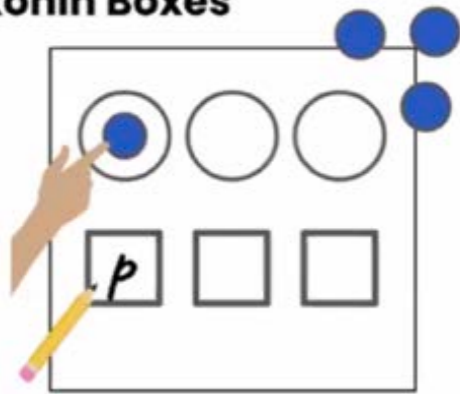
hop
run
map
play
grab



Supports for Phonemic Awareness

Manipulatives to support phonemic awareness & orthographic mapping







Elkonin Boxes

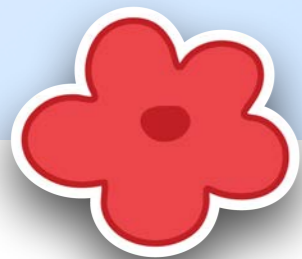


Tip: Mix it up and use play-doh balls, pompoms, little toys, or paint stampers to represent the sound!



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;"> <div style="width: 40px; height: 40px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="width: 40px; height: 40px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="width: 40px; height: 40px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="width: 40px; height: 40px; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="width: 40px; height: 40px; 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; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">   </div>	



The Reading Brain





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



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 and word chains
- Try multi-sensory methods
- Use Elkonin (sound) boxes to support encoding
- Weekly progress monitoring is critical!



A Phonics Centre Activity – Roll It

Word Awareness

How many CVC words can you make by rolling the dice?

C V C



n	a	p
l	o	g
p	e	t
b	i	n



Word Ladders – playing with sounds, letters, words

at
bat
cat
fat

log
dog
dig

bike
like

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



Building Fluency – foundational skills working together

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



Vocabulary – How do we learn new words...?

...when we are engaged in conversation

What can this look like in the classroom?

- ✓ Regularly and intentionally using sophisticated language throughout the day for students of all ages
- ✓ The more interesting words we use around students, the more words they will pick up and use themselves.





Vocabulary – How do we learn new words...?

...when we are read to and read a lot ourselves

What can this look like in the classroom?

- Read aloud in a fantastic way to explicitly teach new vocabulary:
 - ★ select texts with intention – relate to content area
 - ★ read first for enjoyment, then re-read across days
 - ★ plan ahead for student-friendly definitions
- Independent reading time, small groups, partner reads





Active Processing & Engagement with Words

Children are more likely to learn when they can actively engage with a word and its meaning, rather than passively receiving information from the teacher.

- ✓ Discussing **images** related to a new word
- ✓ Discussing and exploring **objects**, e.g. a **thermometer**
- ✓ Using **movement** – demonstrating **migration** by walking from one side of the room to the other
- ✓ Thinking of **real life examples** – a time when you felt **exuberant**
- ✓ Discussing **multiple meanings** of a word – **season** (your food), **season** (winter, spring)
- ✓ Thinking about and noticing meaningful parts of words (**morphology**) – **tricycle**, **triangle**, **tripod**
- ✓ Using new vocabulary in **writing**



Reading Comprehension is an Outcome

- Reading comprehension is complex and is not a single 'skill' or just a set of strategies
- Instead, we can think of reading comprehension as an **OUTCOME**



Reading comprehension is a combination of:

- The **READER**
 - ★ each reader brings their own knowledge and interests
- The **TEXT**
 - ★ texts vary in genre, topic, and difficulty
- The **ACTIVITY**
 - ★ the activity varies depending on the purpose for reading



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.



Nurturing and Supporting Young Writers

- * Writing must be a **predictable**, daily routine
- * Children need to **see themselves as writers**, each with a unique identity
- * Writing is a process of **decision-making** and **action**
- * Writers need a disposition for **risk-taking**
- * Writers need a sense of **momentum** to know they are **growing**
- * Writers work with a sense of **craft** guiding them, and they **learn craft** from **mentors**
- * Teachers must **act as if** children are **capable, competent** writers

Holding these **beliefs** about writing will help **shape** our **plans, actions, and responses** as we **support** and **guide** young writers.



Bookmaking

Learning Through Language, Learning About Language

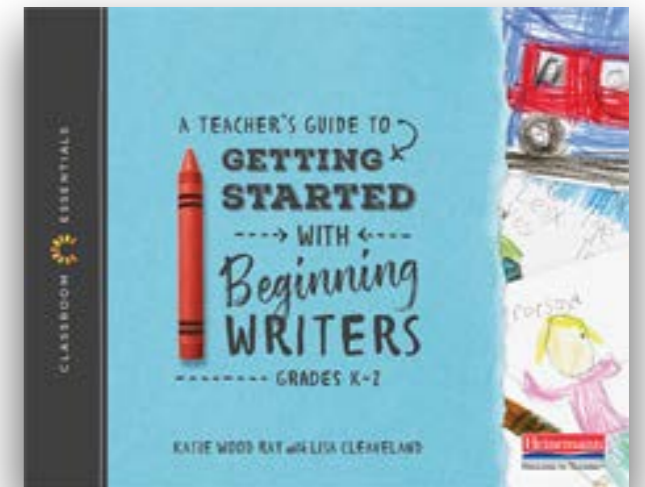
- ▶ Is developmentally appropriate. Brings a sense of **play** to making.
- ▶ Encourages children to do bigger work and develop stamina for writing.
- ▶ Causes children to live like writers
- ▶ Makes the 'reading like writers' connection so clear.
- ▶ Helps children begin to understand the process of composition and decision-making.
- ▶ Helps children begin to understand genre, purpose & audience.

beliefs guide our actions



Bookmaking – what writers need to get started

1. **Time** – conversations, demonstrations, students writing, sharing their process
2. **Space** – deciding **where** they can do their best work as a writer is a decision the children can **own**
3. **Blank Books** – **lines** set an **expectation** for print that makes some children think “I don’t know how to do that, so I **can’t**.”
4. **Writing Tools** – Students **choose** from separate tubs for crayons, coloured pencils, and markers; bins for blank, pre-stapled books; ABC charts
5. **An Image of Bookmaking** – students know what books look like; that **PEOPLE** make books; a finished book is the result of someone’s work to make that book – taking **action** from **ideas**



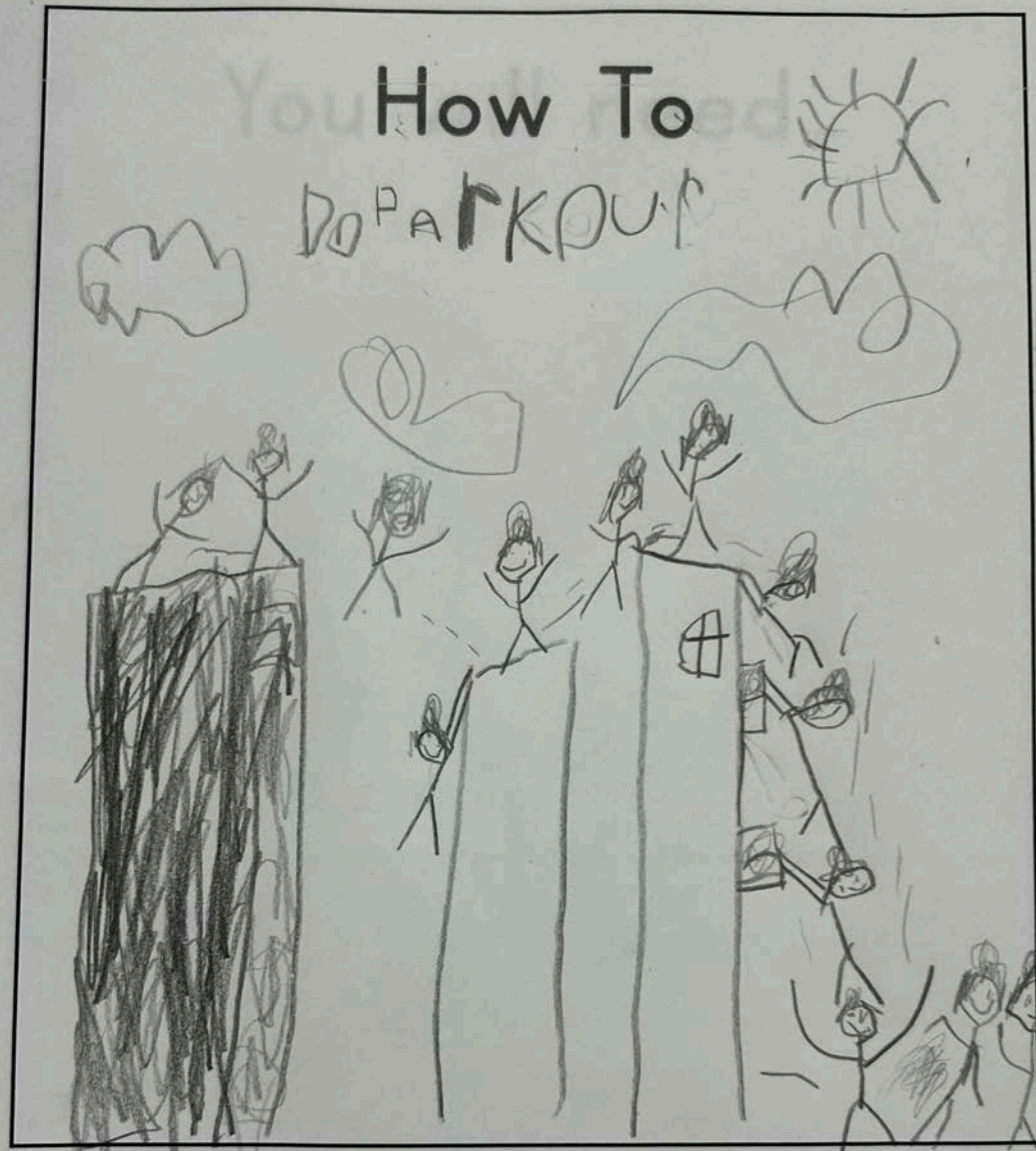
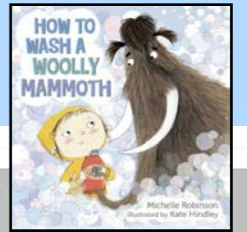


Book Making in a Kindergarten Class





Student How-to Books



by

PHOENIX

How To
Shugl
MY DOG



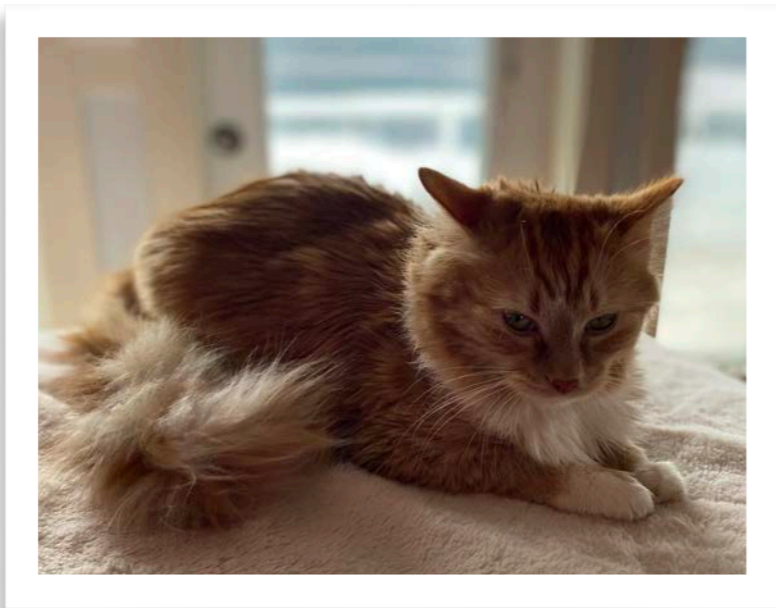
by

MAISSIE



Writing – High Engagement with Choice of Genre

- * Ask students, “what is your favourite topic to write about?”
- * Modelling ‘think aloud,’ explain your favourite topic to write about and all the different genres you can choose to write.



- A **small moment story** about my cat
- A **poem** about cats
- A **labeled diagram** of a cat
- A **‘how to’ book** about taking care of cats
- An **information book** about cats
- A **persuasive paragraph** on why cats are better pets than dogs

What are 3–5 things from your life that you would be KEEN to write about?



Mini-Lessons Leave Time for Student Practice

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**”

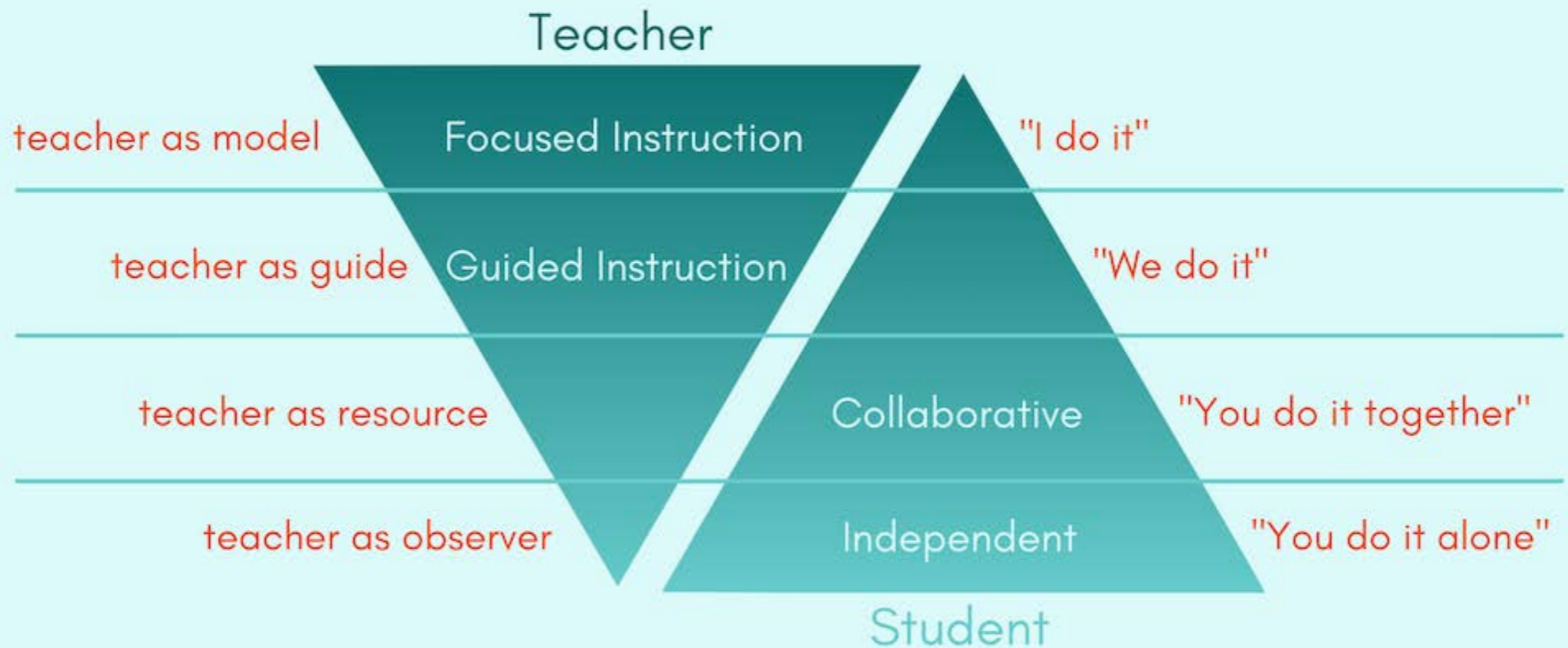
– Wiley Blevins



Systematically supporting student independence

the cognitive work shifts **slowly** and **intentionally** from teacher to student

Gradual Release of Responsibility



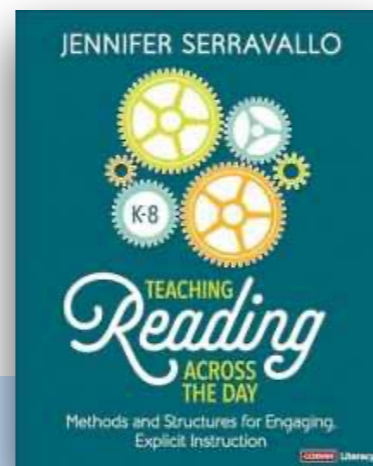
"Letting Go is Messy" Dr. Julie Webb and Dr. Sunday Cummins



The Big Picture: Comprehensive Literacy Instruction

Literacy teaching is a delicate blend of art and science. It requires intentional and responsive teacher decision-making while utilizing evidence-based strategies. Finding the balance between the two allows us to connect with students on a deeper level and facilitate meaningful learning experiences.

– Jennifer Serravallo, *Teaching Reading Across the Day*



Books



Differentiating Phonics Instruction for Maximum Impact: Blevins

A Fresh Look at Phonics: Blevins

Shifting the Balance K-2: Burkins & Yates

Reach All Readers: Geiger

Craft and Process Studies: Glover

Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum

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

7 Mighty Moves: Kemeny

Presentation: The More You Read, The More You Know – Best Practices for

Comprehension Instruction: Dr. Molly Ness

A Teacher's Guide to Getting Started with Beginning Writers: Wood Ray & Cleaveland

A Teacher's Guide to Vocabulary Development Across the Day: Wright



Online Resources

[Gradual Release of Responsibility Framework](#)

[Keys to Literacy – Effective Vocabulary Instruction](#)

[International Dyslexia Association Ontario](#)

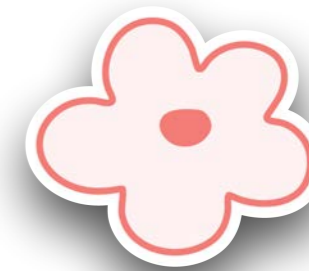
[Reading Rockets: What is the Alphabetic Principle?](#)

[How We Learn To Read – Harvard Medical School](#)

[Article: GRR – When It's Time for You Do, Help Them Fly!](#)

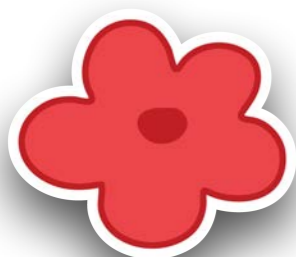
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Lisa Thomas
Program Co-ordinator

lisa@popey.ca



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