Introduction to the 3-Tier Reading Model

Fourth Edition

Reducing Reading Difficulties for Kindergarten Through Third Grade Students
Acknowledgements
We gratefully acknowledge the support of the following individuals and agencies for their contributions to the manual.

Texas Education Agency
Gene Lenz, State Director, Division of Special Education -
Kathy Clayton, Director of Federal Programs, Division of Special Education -
Cindy Savage, Program Specialist, Division of Special Education -

Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts
—Development Team—
Christie Cavanaugh -
Melissa Dickey -
Ae-Hwa Kim, Ph.D. -
Michael Krezmien -
Shari Levy, Ph.D. -
Kim Twiddy -
Sharon Vaughn, Ph.D. -
Jeanne Wanzek -
Katie Wood -
—Design Team—
Johnnie Blevins -
Chris Latham -
Elana Wakeman -

The University of Texas at Austin College of Education
Manuel Justiz, Dean -
Marilyn Kameen, Associate Dean -

Reviewers
We would like to offer special thanks to the reviewers who thoughtfully provided feedback for improving this booklet’s content and presentation.
Jane Flinn, Director of Special Education, Cypress-Fairbanks ISD -
Janet Frazier, Special Education Director, Bell County Cooperative for Exceptional Children -
Veronica Harris, Assistant Director, Special Populations, Region 10 Education Service Center -
Judy Haven, Director of Special Education Services, Plano ISD -
Ervin Knezek, Director, Curriculum and Instruction, Region XIII Education Service Center -
Carol Powell, Coordinator-Elementary Programs, Special Education, Dallas ISD -
Jane Rambo, Director of Reading, Midland ISD -
Margie Sanford, Director, Special Education, Region XIII Education Service Center -
Teresa Williamson, Coordinator of Special Education Services, Arlington ISD -

Expert Reviewer
Diane Haager, Ph.D., California State University
Changes Reflected in the 2005 Edition

Previous editions of the booklet have referred to Tier II as “supplemental instruction” and Tier III as “instruction for intensive intervention.” Beginning with the 2005 Edition, Tier II will be referred to as “intervention” and Tier III as “intensive intervention.” Furthermore, the term “critical elements” of reading (i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) will now be referred to as the “essential components” of reading.

In addition, a clarification has been made regarding the use of the term “benchmark assessments.” A parenthetical description has been added to suggest that benchmark assessments may comprise a fall screening plus winter and spring progress monitoring checkpoints.

The CD that accompanies this booklet now contains only a PowerPoint presentation on the basic principles of the 3-Tier Reading Model. Instructional activities previously included on the CD are now in the appendix of the booklet. The most up-to-date versions of the Planning and evaluation tool for effective schoolwide reading programs and A consumer’s guide to evaluating a core reading program, grades K–3: A critical elements analysis are available for free download from the University of Oregon’s Big Ideas in Beginning Reading Web site: http://reading.uoregon.edu. The Analysis of reading assessment instruments for K–3 may be downloaded from the Web site of the Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement: http://idea.uoregon.edu. Finally, the title has been modified to Introduction to the 3-tier reading model: Reducing reading difficulties for kindergarten through third grade students.
Contents

The subsections of particular importance have been listed individually for ease of reference.

How does the Three-Tier Reading Model address national and state legislative mandates? 7

What is the Three-Tier Reading Model? 9

Table 1. The Three-Tier Reading Model: Tiers of Instruction 11-
Which students receive instruction in Tier II and Tier III? 12-
Figure 2. Movement through the Three Tiers 13-
Why use the Three-Tier Reading Model? 14-
How do we plan for assessment? 14-
Table 2. Suggestions For Benchmark Testing Times 15-
What is the role of progress monitoring? 15-
What does implementing the Three-Tier Reading Model entail? 16-
Table 3. A Planning Checklist for Implementing the Three-Tier Model in Your School 17-
How can grouping students help them learn more? 18-
How should we group students who are struggling? 18-

What is Tier I of the Three-Tier Reading Model? 19

Why is progress monitoring important? 19-
What are the essential components of reading instruction? 20-
Which essential components of reading instruction should I address in my classroom? 20-
Phonemic Awareness 21-
Phonics and Word Study 31-
Fluency 40-
Vocabulary 46-
Comprehension 49-
Samples of 90-Minute Core Reading Instruction (K–3) 55-

Tier II: Intervention 75

Which students are eligible for Tier II intervention? 75-
Where does the intervention take place? 75-
Who provides the intervention? 75-
When should Tier II intervention start? 75-
How long is a round of Tier II intervention? 75-
Figure 1. Processes for One Round of Tier II Intervention 76-
How does Tier II intervention fit into the school day? 76-
Table 1. Sample Class Schedule — Kindergarten 77-
How do we group students for Tier II intervention? 77-
What should the intervention look like? 77-
How do we select the intervention program(s) and materials? 78-
How do we monitor students’ progress? 78-
When do students exit Tier II and Tier III? 79-
Figure 2. Checkpoints in the Decision-Making Process 79-
Can students re-enter Tier II? 80-
Table 2. “To Do” List for Tier II 80-
Tier III: Intensive Intervention

Eligibility: How are students selected for Tier III intensive intervention? 81
What is the relationship between Tier III intensive intervention and special education? 81
How do we group Tier III students and how much instruction do they receive? 82
How does Tier III differ from Tier II in materials and instructional adjustments? 82
Table 1: Adjusting Instructional Intensity 83
When do students exit the Tier III intensive intervention? 83
Can students re-enter Tier III intensive intervention? 83
Table 2. “To Do” List for Tier III 84

How can our school get started with the Three-Tier Reading Model? 85
How does the Three-Tier Reading Model address national and state legislative mandates? 85
Table 1. Administrative Planning Tool for the Three-Tier Reading Model 86
Planning and Evaluation Tool (PET) for Effective Schoolwide Reading Programs 88
A Consumer’s Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program Grades K–3: 88
A Critical Elements Analysis 89
Analysis of Reading Assessment Instruments for K–3 90
What can administrators do to facilitate implementation? 91
Tier I Evaluation Form 93

Appendix A: Effective Reading Instruction Summary Checklist 97
Appendix B: Kindergarten Accomplishments 102
Appendix C: First-Grade Accomplishments 103
Appendix D: Second-Grade Accomplishments 104
Appendix E: Third-Grade Accomplishments 105
Appendix F: Frequently Asked Questions 106
Appendix G: Helpful Reading/Literacy Web sites 109
Appendix H: Sample Activities 113
Appendix I: Graphic Organizers/Materials for Activities 149
Appendix J: Instructional Organizers for Teachers 165

Endnotes 173
References 176
How does the Three-Tier Reading Model address national and state legislative mandates?

The Three-Tier Reading Model provides a process for delivering quality reading instruction and reducing the prevalence of reading difficulties in kindergarten through third-grade students. The model provides a strong emphasis on methods and strategies grounded in scientifically based reading research (SBRR), and use of assessment instruments, including screening and progress-monitoring measures, and suggests ongoing professional development for teachers. The Three-Tier Reading Model is meant to be descriptive of how to approach instruction for students with reading difficulties, not prescriptive of the only way to proceed.

By emphasizing early intervention for struggling readers, use of early literacy assessments, and training through the Teacher Reading Academies and Effective Instruction for Elementary Struggling Readers Academies, the model also incorporates the goals and objectives of the Student Success Initiative and the Texas Reading Initiative. The Three-Tier Reading Model serves as a means of bringing all of these pieces together by incorporating the resources and training provided to Texas teachers and administrators through the Texas Reading Initiative. This booklet provides an introduction to the Three-Tier Reading Model. It is designed as a resource both for general and special education teachers, as well as for administrators.
What is the Three-Tier Reading Model?

It is January of Miguel’s kindergarten year. Although most of his classmates have learned all the letter names and most of the letter sounds, Miguel is having difficulty. He identifies a few letter names and letter sounds but is inconsistent from day to day.

It is April of second grade and Amy, who has struggled since first grade with most reading-related tasks, seems to be falling farther and farther behind. She has difficulty decoding new words. Winter benchmark assessments show she is reading about 35 words per minute, while her more fluent classmates are reading about 90 – 95 words per minute.

The Three-Tier Reading Model is designed to meet the instructional needs of all young readers, including those who are slow starters in kindergarten, such as Miguel, and those who continue to struggle in the early elementary grades, such as Amy. It is a prevention model that is aimed at catching students early — before they fall behind — and providing the supports they need throughout the first four years of schooling. The model may be conceptualized as a safety net for struggling readers and as an alternative to a “wait-til-they-fail” model.

The model consists of three tiers or levels of instruction: Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III. The Three-Tier Reading Model applies an intervention approach that is meant to be descriptive of how to approach reading difficulties, not prescriptive of the only way to proceed. As used in this model, the term interventionist refers to the person providing the instruction, whether it is given in the general education classroom or in a small-group setting more akin to tutoring.

Tier I: Core Classroom Reading Instruction

Tier I has three elements: (a) a core reading program based on scientific reading research, (b) benchmark testing of students to determine instructional needs at least three times per year (which may comprise a fall screening plus winter and spring progress monitoring checkpoints), and (c) ongoing professional development to provide teachers with the necessary tools to ensure every student receives quality reading instruction. Tier I reading instruction is designed to address the needs of the majority of a school’s students. During core classroom reading instruction, students are at various levels of development in critical early reading skills. Some students are able to acquire the necessary skills with the standard instruction given by the teacher, while others require more intensive instruction in specific skill areas. Using flexible grouping and targeting specific skills, classroom teachers are often able to meet the needs of those students. Thus, in Tier I the classroom teacher is the interventionist.
**Tier II: Intervention**

For some students, focused instruction within the regular classroom setting is not enough. To get back on track, these students require intervention in addition to the time allotted for core reading instruction. Tier II is designed to meet the needs of these students by giving them *an additional thirty minutes of reading intervention daily*. The aim is to support and reinforce skills being taught by the classroom teacher. In Tier II, the interventionist may be the classroom teacher, a specialized reading teacher, or an external interventionist specifically trained for Tier II intervention.

**Tier III: Intensive Intervention**

A small percentage of students who have received Tier II intervention continue to show marked difficulty in acquiring necessary reading skills. These students require instruction that is more explicit, more intensive, and specifically designed to meet their individual needs. For these students, *two additional thirty-minute sessions of specialized, small-group reading instruction* can be provided in Tier III. The Tier III interventionist may be a classroom teacher, a specialized reading teacher, a special education teacher, or an external interventionist specifically trained for the intervention.

Movement through Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III is a dynamic process, with students entering and exiting as needed. For a more complete explanation of the components of the three tiers and the differences among them, refer to Table 1.

Note: -
Times specified for Tier II and Tier III interventions are guidelines, and may vary based on program used, group size, and students’ needs. For example, if schools are able to provide tutoring and student progress is rapid, then time allocated may be reduced. -
### Table 1. The Three-Tier Reading Model: Tiers of Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Instruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier I</td>
<td>The “core” curricular and instructional reading programs and strategies in the general education setting, including ongoing professional development and assessment three times per year to determine whether students are meeting benchmarks</td>
<td>For all students in K through 3</td>
<td>Scientifically based reading instruction and curriculum emphasizing the five essential components of beginning reading</td>
<td>Many opportunities to practice embedded throughout the school day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier II</td>
<td>Programs, strategies, and procedures designed and employed to enhance and support Tier I that take place in groups of three to five</td>
<td>For students identified with marked reading difficulties and who have not responded to Tier I efforts</td>
<td>Specialized, scientifically based reading program(s) emphasizing the five essential components of beginning reading</td>
<td>Additional attention, focus, and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier III</td>
<td>Specifically designed and customized reading instruction that is extended beyond the time allocated for Tier I and Tier II and that takes place in groups of three</td>
<td>For students with marked difficulties in reading or reading disabilities and who have not responded adequately to Tier I and Tier II efforts</td>
<td>Sustained, intensive, scientifically based reading program(s) emphasizing the five essential components of beginning reading</td>
<td>Carefully designed and implemented, explicit, systematic instruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Focus**
  - Tier I: For all students in K through 3
  - Tier II: For students identified with marked reading difficulties and who have not responded to Tier I efforts
  - Tier III: For students with marked difficulties in reading or reading disabilities and who have not responded adequately to Tier I and Tier II efforts

- **Program**
  - Tier I: Scientifically based reading instruction and curriculum emphasizing the five essential components of beginning reading
  - Tier II: Specialized, scientifically based reading program(s) emphasizing the five essential components of beginning reading
  - Tier III: Sustained, intensive, scientifically based reading program(s) emphasizing the five essential components of beginning reading

- **Instruction**
  - Tier I: Many opportunities to practice embedded throughout the school day
  - Tier II: Additional attention, focus, and support; Additional opportunities to practice embedded throughout the school day; Pre-teach and review skills; frequent opportunities to practice skills
  - Tier III: Carefully designed and implemented, explicit, systematic instruction; Fidelity of implementation carefully maintained

- **Interventionist**
  - Tier I: General education teacher
  - Tier II: Intervention provided by personnel determined by the school
  - Tier III: Intensive intervention provided by personnel determined by the school

- **Setting**
  - Tier I: General education classroom
  - Tier II: Appropriate setting designated by the school
  - Tier III: Appropriate setting designated by the school

- **Grouping**
  - Tier I: Flexible grouping (e.g., 1:1 to 1:5)
  - Tier II: Homogeneous small group instruction (e.g., 1:1 to 1:3)
  - Tier III: Homogeneous small group instruction (e.g., 1:1 to 1:3)

- **Time**
  - Tier I: Minimum of 90 minutes per day
  - Tier II: Minimum of 20–30 minutes per day in small group or 1:1
  - Tier III: Minimum of two 30-minute sessions per day in small group or 1:1

- **Assessment**
  - Tier I: Fall screening plus winter and spring progress monitoring
  - Tier II: Progress monitoring twice a month on target skill to ensure adequate progress and learning
  - Tier III: Progress monitoring twice a month on target skill to ensure adequate progress and learning
Which students receive instruction in Tier II and Tier III?

Tier II and Tier III provide intensive, focused instruction for students identified by benchmark assessments as having low early literacy skills and being at-risk for reading difficulty. Generally, Tier I instruction (core classroom reading instruction) should meet the needs of seventy to eighty percent (or more) of learners. The lowest twenty to thirty percent may need additional support from Tier II intervention, and we anticipate that five to ten percent will require Tier III intensive intervention (see Figure 1). The aim of the Three-Tier Reading Model is to reduce the number of students with reading difficulties and put all students on track to becoming successful readers. Furthermore, the model holds promise as an integrated approach for all levels of instruction.

**Figure 1. The Three-Tier Reading Model**

How do students progress through the three tiers?

Movement through Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III is a dynamic process. Once a student’s needs are met and he or she is able to achieve benchmarks on assessments, the intervention may no longer be required for that student. Benchmark testing of all kindergarten through third-grade students three times per year (fall screening plus winter and spring progress monitoring) ensures that students who require additional help are (a) identified early, or (b) re-identified if they have previously received support and show that need again. The Three-Tier Reading Model provides a system that is responsive to students’ changing needs.
Figure 2. Movement through the Three Tiers

- **Grade Level 1**
  - Mastery
  - Benchmark Assessment
    - (F)
  - No Mastery
    - Strug II
      - No previous Tier II instruction
      - Previous Tier II or Tier III instruction
      - Round one of Tier II instruction
    - Intervention, including Accelerated Reading Instruction; may include dyslexia services
      - Yes: Meet E
      - No
    - Intervention, including Accelerated Reading Instruction; may include dyslexia services
      - Yes: Meet E
      - No
    - Intensive intervention; may include dyslexia services
      - Yes: Meet E
      - No

Why use the Three-Tier Reading Model?

The Three-Tier Reading Model provides early intervention for students most at-risk for reading difficulty, and therefore holds promise for reducing overall reading problems. Students such as Miguel would be identified at mid-year kindergarten and provided with additional support (Tier II instruction) in developing early reading skills during the spring semester. Students such as Amy would have the benefit of supported instruction throughout their early elementary years; further, the instruction would be provided in a small group and tailored to their instructional needs. After ten weeks, Amy would be assessed to determine whether she should continue in Tier II intervention or whether she could receive all instruction in the general classroom without additional support (i.e., Tier I only).

As illustrated by these examples, the Three-Tier Reading Model emphasizes:

- early identification of students in need of help,
- intervention to prevent or alleviate reading difficulties,
- serving students who require occasional additional instruction as well as students who require long-term support,
- assessing students on an ongoing basis, throughout the year, and
- providing an avenue of intervention for students who do not require special education services but who consistently fall behind.1

In addition to these supports provided by the three tiers or levels of reading instruction, the model emphasizes components that are grounded in research on effective practices. Considerable research supports the importance of reading instruction that is systematic and explicit in the following components:

- phonemic awareness,
- phonics and word study,
- vocabulary,
- fluency, and
- comprehension.2

How do we plan for assessment?

Assessment plays a central role in the Three-Tier Reading Model, as it is used for two major purposes: benchmark assessment (fall screening plus winter and spring progress monitoring) to determine the need for intervention and progress-monitoring assessment, both to track student progress and inform instruction.

Benchmark assessments (screening plus progress monitoring) are given to all students three times per year (fall, winter, and spring). Once benchmark assessments have been given, they are used as criteria to determine whether the student would benefit from the next tier of instruction.
Table 2. Suggestions For Benchmark Testing Times

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Period</th>
<th>Suggested Testing Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Screening</td>
<td>About three weeks after school starts -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Progress Monitoring</td>
<td>One to two weeks after the holiday break (mid January)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Progress Monitoring</td>
<td>No later than two weeks before the end of the school year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is helpful to enter the benchmark data into a database so that reading performance can be analyzed at the individual, classroom, grade, and school levels. Reports can then be issued to teachers and administrators to (a) identify students who will benefit from intervention, (b) customize reading instruction based on students’ needs, and (c) help school personnel determine the effectiveness of Tier I (the core reading program).

What is the role of progress monitoring?

In the Three-Tier Reading Model we refer to two types of progress monitoring: (a) benchmark assessments administered three times per year to all students, and (b) frequent (twice per month) progress monitoring to track progress and inform instructional decision-making during the course of Tier II or Tier III instruction.

Throughout this booklet, the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills™ (DIBELS™) and the Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) are cited to illustrate points regarding the use of assessment to guide instructional decision making. Other diagnostic assessments or progress monitoring measures from the Commissioner’s Approved List may be used.

Benchmark assessments (which may comprise a fall screening plus winter and spring progress monitoring checkpoints) aid in early identification of students at-risk for reading problems — a critical aspect of the Three-Tier Reading Model. Testing of all students, kindergarten through third grade, is conducted in early fall, early winter, and late spring. For those who are not making adequate progress, teachers combine core classroom instruction with intervention matched to students’ needs, and use ongoing progress-monitoring data to adjust instruction and ensure students’ academic growth.

Frequent progress monitoring of students receiving Tier II and Tier III instruction is a critical component of the model, as research suggests that progress monitoring is a critical component of high-quality education, and students whose teachers use progress monitoring to inform instruction are more successful academically. Teachers’ instruction improves when they use progress monitoring to (a) track student learning, (b) plan instruction, and (c) provide feedback to students.

The use of these two types of progress monitoring, combined with timely intervention, should result in fewer students with reading difficulties and ultimately reduce the number of students referred for special education services.
Implementing the model requires planning and decision making by a school-based committee.

What does implementing the Three-Tier Reading Model entail?

Adoption of the Three-Tier Reading Model is a commitment to implementing a prevention model designed both to prevent reading problems and assist in early identification of students with reading disabilities who require special education. For a school to adopt and subsequently implement the model, a school-based committee (or a number of committees) benefit from addressing the following components:

- A review of current core reading programs, assessment tools, and intervention programs.
- A school-wide evaluation of current reading instruction and practices, and the development of a school reading plan that identifies areas of need and priorities for change.
- Collection of reading performance data (i.e., benchmarks) in the essential components of reading, three times a year, for all K–3 students.
- Ongoing (weekly or biweekly) use of progress monitoring in the essential components of reading for the most at-risk students who do not meet benchmarks.
- Knowledge and use of curriculum maps displaying the month-by-month instructional priorities in kindergarten and grades 1, 2, and 3 (e.g., priorities provided by state standards).
- Use of grouping and instructional procedures that allow schools to be responsive to progress-monitoring data, differentiate instruction, and intervene early with students not on track.
- Establishment of procedures for providing Tier II and Tier III intervention in reading for students who don’t meet benchmarks.
- A determination of how students will access intervention, including criteria to enter and exit Tier II and Tier III.

Table 3 contains a checklist of the major tasks school personnel need to accomplish in setting up the Three-Tier Model.
### Table 3. A Planning Checklist for Implementing the Three-Tier Model in Your School

Form school-based groups responsible for the following tasks:

- Review current reading practices within the school.
  - Which core reading program is in place; is it aligned with scientifically based reading research?
  - Which assessment tools are in place?
  - Which supplemental programs are in place?
- Ensure that reading instructional practices are aligned with state standards.
- Develop a plan for collecting benchmark and progress-monitoring data.
- Develop a school-wide plan that allows classroom teachers to use grouping and to differentiate instruction based on benchmark-testing data (Tier I).
- Develop a school-wide plan for intervention for students who don’t meet benchmarks (Tier II).
- Develop a school-wide plan for longer, more intensive intervention for students who don’t meet benchmarks after two rounds of intervention (Tier III).
- Set criteria for entry into and exit from Tier I and Tier II.
- Provide professional development as needed to implement steps.
How can grouping students help them learn more?

Grouping practices are a critical component of providing effective reading instruction. The way student groups are designed can greatly influence individual student engagement, both positively and negatively. Highly engaged students are better able to acquire the early literacy skills they need to become successful readers. Core reading programs should incorporate the following grouping practices:

- Alternative grouping formats (e.g., one-on-one, pairs, small group, whole group) for different instructional purposes and to meet students’ needs.
- Flexible grouping that provides opportunities for students to be members of more than one group.
- Small groups for students with reading difficulties.

Grouping can help teachers address the wide range of students found in most classrooms, including those who are struggling, those who are meeting benchmark, and those who would benefit from enrichment opportunities.

How should we group students who are struggling?

For students who are struggling, working in small, homogeneous groups of three to five allows teachers to provide them with more intensive and targeted instruction, as well as more opportunities to practice and reinforce skills. Some schools provide for one-on-one tutoring for at risk students. Students should be grouped according to their needs so that instruction can effectively target those needs. Flexible grouping benefits students both socially and academically. Grouping arrangements change as skill levels and interests change, and students’ social interaction is not restricted by their membership in only one group. The progress of students should be monitored by the teacher, and as needs change, so should group membership.
What is Tier I of the Three-Tier Reading Model?

Tier I has three components: (a) a core reading program based on scientific reading research, (b) benchmark assessment (fall screening plus winter and spring progress monitoring) of all students three times a year to identify the need for intervention, and (c) ongoing professional development to provide teachers with the necessary tools to ensure every student receives quality reading instruction. The core reading program used in Tier I is designed to address the instructional needs of the majority of a school’s students and to prevent students from becoming at-risk for reading problems. An effective and comprehensive core reading program should emphasize the essential components of reading instruction: (a) phonemic awareness, (b) phonics and word study, (c) fluency, (d) vocabulary, and (e) comprehension. The amount of time spent on each of these core areas varies according to students’ reading abilities. Tier I instruction also includes grouping students for effective instruction and the use of progress-monitoring data to inform instructional and grouping practices.

Why is progress monitoring important?

It is essential to know which students do not meet the critical benchmarks that are predictors of reading success. This requires assessment of all students three times a year to determine whether students are meeting benchmarks. When teachers evaluate and modify instruction based on benchmark assessment/progress-monitoring data, students achieve more. This is true at every grade level.

Core reading programs should include assessments aligned with the essential components of reading instruction. Teachers use progress-monitoring information to (a) determine whether students are making adequate progress, or identify students as soon as they begin to get off track, and (b) modify instruction early enough to ensure each and every student gains the skills essential to reading.
What are the essential components of reading instruction?

Research evidence supports the importance of providing explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics and word study, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension in the primary-grade reading classroom. Phonemic awareness and word study (phonics and decoding strategies) help students accurately recognize words. Once this is achieved, students develop fluency in reading words and sentences, which results in better comprehension of what is read. An effective and comprehensive core reading program develops these skill areas by emphasizing the following five components:

- **Phonemic awareness**—recognizing the sounds in spoken language and how they can be segmented (pulled apart), blended (put back together), and manipulated (added, deleted, and substituted).
- **Phonics and word study**—identifying the letters of the alphabet (alphabetic awareness), understanding that the sequence of sounds in a spoken word is represented by letters in a written word (alphabetic principle), and understanding phonics elements (letter-sound correspondence, spelling patterns, syllables, and meaningful word parts).
- **Fluency**—reading text with speed, accuracy, and prosody.
- **Vocabulary**—understanding word meanings.
- **Comprehension**—understanding information presented in written form.

Which essential components of reading instruction should I address in my classroom?

The following table lists the essential components that core reading programs should address at each grade level.

Table 1. The Essential Components of Reading Instruction for K–3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Grade 1</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phonemic awareness</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics and word study</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Resources: National Reading Panel, 2000; Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

The following sections on phonemic awareness, phonics and word study, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension provide an overview of each essential component, as well as a brief description of the DIBELS™ and TPRI measures that assess students’ skills in those components. Activities that build students’ skills in each component can be found in the Appendix.
Phonemic Awareness

Low phonemic awareness in grade 1 [is] highly predictive of continuing reading difficulties in grade 4.

— Pressley (1998, p. 97)

**What is phonemic awareness and why is it important to reading?**

One precursor to reading is a student’s ability to manipulate the sounds, or phonemes, in words. For example, there are three phonemes in the word *dog*: /d/, /o/, and /g/. There is often confusion between the terms “phonological awareness” and “phonemic awareness.” Phonological awareness encompasses the discrimination, counting, rhyming, alliteration, blending, segmenting, and manipulating of syllables, onset-rimes, and phonemes. It includes an awareness of larger spoken units, such as syllables, as well as phonemic awareness. Phonemic awareness is the most complex element of phonological awareness and focuses specifically on the phoneme (the smallest unit of sound) and how it can be manipulated orally.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Phonemic Awareness vs. Phonological Awareness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phonemic awareness</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a narrow term for the ability to focus on and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Which phonemic awareness skills should students learn first?**

Students generally learn how to break sentences into words, and then words into syllables, before they are able to segment individual phonemes. On the phoneme level, segmenting and blending activities are less difficult than sound manipulations (deletion, addition, substitution). A student’s knowledge of phonemes is critical to learning letter-sound correspondence. Instruction in more complex levels of phonological awareness supports teacher-directed instruction in phonics and word analysis.
Table 2. Phonological Awareness Continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Later Developing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phoneme blending, segmentation, and manipulation (phonemic awareness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onset-rime blending and segmentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllable blending and segmentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence segmentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhyme/alliteration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: Using this sequence is helpful for planning instruction. For example, based on the phonological awareness continuum, you would teach segmenting and blending words and syllables before teaching segmenting and blending onset-rimes and phonemes. However, some students vary in the acquisition of these skills. For instance, some students who can learn to blend, segment, and manipulate phonemes may struggle with rhyming. A teacher should not wait to include instruction at the phoneme level when older students have difficulty with rhyming.
How do I teach phonemic awareness?

Phonemic awareness can be measured and taught, although the window of opportunity seems to close as students grow older. A student’s phonemic awareness can be gauged reliably and validly by measuring his or her ability to manipulate sounds (e.g., deletion, isolation, and segmentation).[^9] There are various activities teachers can use to build phonemic awareness. However, it is best to focus on only one or two types of phoneme manipulation during a lesson, and to choose those that are most suitable to the student’s developmental level.[^10]

Table 3. Examples of Phonological and Phonemic Awareness Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| identifying, counting, and segmenting syllables | to break down a word into its individual syllables | Teacher: How many syllables are there in the word *mailbox*?  
Student: (claps) *Mail-box*. There are two syllables, *mail* and *box*. |
| blending syllables                            | to combine separate syllables to form a word | Teacher: What word do these syllables make when they are put together? *An-i-mal*.  
Student: *Animal*. |
| identifying and segmenting onsets and rimes    | to break down a word into its onset and rime | Teacher: What is the first sound in *rake*?  
Student: */r/*  
Teacher: If you take */r/* away, what is left?  
Student: */ake* |
| blending onsets and rimes                      | to blend an onset and rime to form a word   | Teacher: What word do I make if I put these sounds together? */al-ate*  
Student: *Late*. |

### Table 4. Examples of Phoneme-level Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Example -</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phoneme isolation</td>
<td>to recognize individual sounds in words</td>
<td>Teacher: What is the first sound in <em>mat</em>? Student: /m/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoneme identification</td>
<td>to recognize the same sounds in different words</td>
<td>Teacher: What sound is the same in <em>let</em>, <em>love</em>, and <em>lap</em>? Student: /l/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoneme categorization</td>
<td>to recognize the word in a set that has a different sound</td>
<td>Teacher: <em>Fill, fin, pit</em>. Which word doesn't belong? Student: <em>Pit</em>. It doesn't begin with /f/.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoneme deletion</td>
<td>to recognize new words created when phonemes are deleted from an existing word</td>
<td>Teacher: What is <em>clap</em> without /k/? Student: <em>Lap</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoneme addition</td>
<td>to add a phoneme to an existing word to make a new word</td>
<td>Teacher: <em>Lip</em>. Add /s/ to the beginning. Student: <em>Slip</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoneme substitution</td>
<td>to make a new word by changing one of the phonemes of an existing word</td>
<td>Teacher: <em>Hat</em>. Change /t/ to /m/. Student: <em>Ham</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoneme blending</td>
<td>to combine separate phonemes to form a word</td>
<td>Teacher: What word is /dl/ /ol/ /gl/? Student: <em>Dog</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoneme segmentation</td>
<td>to break down a word into its individual phonemes</td>
<td>Teacher: Tell me the sounds in <em>man</em>. Student: /m/ /a/ /n/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do I monitor students’ progress in phonemic awareness?

Following are examples of assessment measures that may be used to monitor progress in phonemic awareness.

**DIBELS™**

The DIBELS™ Initial Sound Fluency (ISF) measure assesses a student’s ability to recognize and produce the initial sounds in a word. The measure is intended for use with students from preschool to the middle of kindergarten.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 initial sounds per minute by winter of kindergarten</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF) measure assesses a student’s fluency in segmenting three- and four-phoneme words into their individual phonemes. The PSF measure has been found to be a good predictor of later reading achievement. The examiner orally presents a word and the student must say the individual phonemes for that word. For example, the examiner gives the word *sat*, and the student produces the phonemes /s/, /a/, and /t/.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35 correct phonemes per minute by spring of kindergarten</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Grade</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35 correct phonemes per minute by spring of kindergarten</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI)

The Phonemic Awareness subtest of the TPRI assesses a student’s ability to rhyme, blend word parts, blend phonemes, detect initial sounds, and detect final sounds. It is intended for use with kindergarten and first-grade students.

Table 7. TPRI Phonemic Awareness Subtest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>rhyming, blending word parts, blending phonemes, detecting initial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sounds, detecting final sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Grade</td>
<td>blending word parts, blending phonemes, detecting initial sounds,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>detecting final sounds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do I organize groups of students with like needs for phonemic awareness instruction?

Once a teacher has administered the appropriate measure(s) to the entire class, the students’ scores are recorded (see sample roster below) so that the teacher is given a picture of which students are strong and which are weak in phonemic awareness. The teacher uses this data to determine instructional needs and student grouping.

The teacher in the following example administered the Phoneme Segmentation Fluency measure.

First Grade Student Roster with Scores (partial list)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Phoneme Segmentation Fluency score (fall administration period)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Breanna</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Sean</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Mary</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Darius</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Chris</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Juan</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Kaitlynn</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Adrianna</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Ty</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teacher of this first-grade class would (a) look at the students’ scores on the measure, (b) determine the number of students within the same range of scores, and (c) organize students with similar skills/needs into groups.
Five of these students have scores in the range of 14 – 18 correct phonemes per minute. Four students have higher scores, in the 29 – 33 correct phonemes-per-minute range.

**First Grade Student Roster with Scores (partial list)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Phoneme Segmentation Fluency score (fall administration period)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Breanna</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Sean</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Mary</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Darius</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Chris</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Juan</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Kaitlynn</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Adrianna</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Ty</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teacher uses an instructional planning sheet (see Appendix J) to arrange these students into two groups.

**Grouping for Instruction Planning Sheet (Appendix K)**

Group Members: (group A)  
Sean  
Mary  
Chris  
Kaitlynn  
Ty  
Instructional Focus:  

Group Members: (group B)  
Breanna  
Darius  
Juan  
Adrianna  
Instructional Focus:
Because PSF is a measure of phonemic awareness, the teacher will choose activities that focus on building skills in this area. First she examines the PSF forms she scored for each student to see whether there is a pattern in their responses.

Example: DIBELS™ PSF test form

**Kaitlynn**

**Benchmark 1**

**DIBELS™ Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Segmentation</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rich</td>
<td>/r/ /i/ /ch/</td>
<td>4/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hawk</td>
<td>/h/ /o/ /k/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passed</td>
<td>/p/ /a/ /s/ /t/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>roof</td>
<td>/r/ /oo/ /f/</td>
<td>2/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sea</td>
<td>/s/ /ea/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shout</td>
<td>/sh/ /ow/ /t/</td>
<td>4/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arms</td>
<td>/ar/ /m/ /z/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smile</td>
<td>/s/ /m/ /ie/ /l/</td>
<td>2/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fish</td>
<td>/f/ /i/ /sh/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>woof</td>
<td>/w/ /oo/ /f/</td>
<td>2/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>his</td>
<td>/h/ /i/ /z/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ling</td>
<td>/l/ /i/ /ng/</td>
<td>3/6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group A**

Several of the students in group A showed a pattern of segmenting the words into onset and rime or repeated the whole word rather than segmenting it. For this group the teacher is planning an activity in which students practice manipulating final phonemes in consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words. This will help the students recognize that words can be broken down further than onset and rime and build their awareness of individual phonemes in words.

**Group B**

The activity for group B will have a different focus. An examination of their test forms shows they frequently are able to segment words into individual phonemes but have trouble doing it quickly and consistently. Instruction for group B will focus on providing additional practice with blending and segmenting words into their individual phonemes. Additionally, students will begin learning to manipulate individual phonemes.
Grouping for Instruction Planning Sheet (Appendix K)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Members: (group A)</th>
<th>Group Members: (group B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sean</td>
<td>Breanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Darius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>Juan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaitlynn</td>
<td>Adrianna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instructional Focus:
- **Group A**
  - Manipulating final phonemes in consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words
  - (such as in the Sound Magic activity, Appendix I)
- **Group B**
  - Blending and segmenting individual phonemes; begin manipulating individual phonemes
  - (see Table 4. Examples of Phoneme-level Activities, p. 24)

*Instructional focus is specific to the needs of each group*

Before doing the activity with her small group, the teacher will explicitly model the concept. For example, before doing the Sound Magic activity with group A, the teacher would do the following:

The teacher has the students sit in a circle. She explains that they will “move” a word around the circle from person to person. To move the word, they must make a new word by changing the beginning sound and saying the new word aloud.

The teacher models the procedure by saying, “I have the word *sit*, and I’m changing it to *fit*. I will take off the first sound */s/* and choose a different sound */f/*. Now I have the word *fit*.”

Then the teacher practices with the students using prompting questions. For example, the teacher says, “Take off the */f/* and add */l/*. What word is that?”

To begin the game, the teacher “hands” the word to the first student, using a stuffed animal or some other (non-print) concrete object to represent the word. The teacher tells the first student to change the beginning sound of the word to create another word (e.g., *hit*). The student can choose which sound to use. If a student uses a sound that has already been used, he or she must choose another sound.

In the future, as the students demonstrate proficiency in these skill areas, new groups will be formed and these students will have opportunities to work with other peers.
Phonics and Word Study

Research has clearly demonstrated that understanding how letters relate to the component sounds of words is critically important in reading.

— Rayner, Foorman, Perfetti, Pesetsky, & Seidenberg (2002, p. 87)

What are phonics and word study?

Phonics instruction teaches students to understand the relationships between sounds and written words, and to use that knowledge to decode the new words they encounter. Word study, the process of reading a word and accessing its meaning, is a broader term, encompassing instruction in print awareness, alphabetic knowledge, the alphabetic principle, decoding, irregular/high-frequency words, spelling and writing, and reading decodable text.

Why are phonics and word study important to reading?

The primary goal of word-analysis instruction is to help students quickly and automatically translate the spelling patterns of written words into speech sounds so that they can identify those words and their meanings. Spelling is a map that visually lays out the phonological form of words. Readers must become skilled at quickly processing letters when they read words. They must be taught to use their sound and spelling knowledge as a primary strategy for word recognition. In addition to developing word-recognition strategies, readers must see the same words frequently in order to become fluent.

How do I promote print awareness and alphabetic knowledge?

Awareness of the forms and functions of print is a critical first step in reading, leading to knowledge of letter shapes, letter names, letter-sound relationships, and words. Once print awareness has been established, students can begin making the connection between oral and written language. Alphabetic knowledge includes an understanding of letter names and shapes, and is highly predictive of later reading success.
### Table 1. Print Awareness and Alphabetic Knowledge

**Teachers can promote print awareness by:**

- Calling attention to print and its functions in and around the classroom
- Reinforcing the concept that print is read from left to right (print directionality)
- Teaching word boundaries, capital letters, and end punctuation
- Teaching students how to hold a book
- Identifying and comparing words
- Having students listen to and read predictable and patterned books
- Reading aloud to students

**Teachers can increase students’ alphabetic knowledge by:**

- Playing games and singing songs related to letters
- Teaching upper- and lower-case forms of letters
- Having students practice writing letters they are learning
- Encouraging students to manipulate letters to create words and messages

How do I teach the alphabetic principle?

The alphabetic principle refers to the relationship between the sounds of spoken language and the corresponding letter patterns of written language. Students need explicit and systematic instruction in the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they represent.

Table 2. Guidelines for Teaching the Alphabetic Principle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When teaching the alphabetic principle, teachers should:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Sequence letter introduction according to frequency of use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Separately introduce letters with similar sounds (e.g., e and i) or visual forms (e.g., m and n)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Begin with letter sounds students can combine to make familiar, phonetically regular words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teach only a few letter-sound correspondences at a time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide students with multiple opportunities to practice the letter sounds they are learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review and compare letter sounds from previous lessons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


How do I teach my students to decode words?

The alphabetic principle provides a knowledge base for students to draw upon when they encounter new words. Decoding a new word by sounding it out helps a student figure out its pronunciation. The word’s pronunciation along with its context can be used to determine its meaning.

Advanced decoding strategies that focus on analyzing the structure of words, such as identifying base and root words, prefixes, and suffixes, should be part of word analysis instruction. Students should also learn common spelling patterns, such as in word families and onsets and rimes. To sharpen these word-decoding skills, students need opportunities to practice reading decodable text.
How do I monitor students' progress in phonics and word-study skills?

Following are examples of assessment measures that may be used to monitor progress in phonics and word study.

**DIBELS™**

The Letter Naming Fluency (LNF) measure assesses the number of letters a student can name correctly in one minute. This measure is highly predictive of students’ risk of reading difficulty. Students are considered at risk for difficulty in achieving early-literacy benchmark goals if they perform in the lowest twenty percent of students in their district. Students are considered at some risk if they perform in the lowest twenty to forty percent of students in their district.

The DIBELS™ Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) measure assesses students’ understanding of the alphabetic principle (including letter-sound correspondence) and the ability to blend letters into words. Students are presented nonsense words (e.g., sig, rav, ov) and asked to verbally produce either the individual sound of each letter or the whole nonsense word. The benchmark goal is fifty correct letter sounds per minute by the middle of first grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>Optional administration period</td>
<td>20 correct letter sounds per minute by end of kindergarten</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Grade</td>
<td>50 correct letter sounds per minute by winter of first grade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI)**

The Book and Print Awareness subtest of the TPRI assesses a student’s ability to identify a) the beginning of a paragraph, b) a sentence, c) a word, d) a letter, and e) a capital letter. It is intended for use with kindergarten students at the middle and end of the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>identifying the beginning of a paragraph, identifying a sentence, identifying a word, identifying a letter, identifying a capital letter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Graphophonemic Knowledge subtest of the TPRI assesses a range of kindergarten, first-grade, and second-grade abilities related to phonics and word study.

**Table 5. TPRI Graphophonemic Knowledge Subtest**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>letter identification, letter to sound linking -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Grade</td>
<td>initial consonant substitution, final consonant substitution,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>middle vowel substitution, initial blending substitution, blends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in the final position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Grade</td>
<td>spelling of CVC and CVCe words, spelling of long vowels,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>orthographic patterns, conventions and past tense, conventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and inflectional endings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Word Reading subtest of the TPRI assesses a student’s ability to read a list of phonetically regular and irregular words. It is intended for use with first- and second-grade students.

**Table 6. TPRI Word Reading Subtest**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Grade</td>
<td>reading a list of phonetically regular and irregular words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Grade</td>
<td>reading a list of phonetically regular and irregular words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do I organize groups of students with like needs for phonics and word-study instruction?

Once a teacher has administered the appropriate measure to the entire class, the students’ scores are recorded (see sample roster below) so that the teacher is given a picture of which students are weak and which are strong. The teacher uses this data to determine instructional needs and student grouping.

The teacher in the following example administered the Nonsense Word Fluency measure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Nonsense Word Fluency score (winter administration period)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Breanna</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Sean</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Mary</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Darius</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Chris</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Juan</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Kaitlynn</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Adrianna</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Ty</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examining student scores on assessment measures helps teachers determine which students may be grouped together.

The teacher of this first-grade class would (a) look at the students’ scores on the measure, (b) determine the number of students within the same range of scores, and (c) organize students with similar skills/needs into groups.

Four of these students have scores in the range of 40 – 48 correct letter sounds per minute. Five students have higher scores, in the 58 – 67 correct letter-sounds-per-minute range.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Nonsense Word Fluency score (winter administration period)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Breanna</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Sean</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Mary</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Darius</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Chris</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Juan</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Kaitlynn</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Adrianna</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Ty</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Four students had scores in the 40 – 48 range

Five students’ scores were in the higher range
The teacher uses an instructional planning sheet (see Appendix J) to arrange these students into two groups.

**Grouping for Instruction Planning Sheet (Appendix K)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Members: (group A)</th>
<th>Group Members: (group B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mary</strong></td>
<td><strong>Breanna</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chris</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sean</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adrianna</strong></td>
<td><strong>Darius</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ty</strong></td>
<td><strong>Juan</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kaitlynn</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instructional Focus:**

Because NWF is a measure of the alphabetic principle (letter-sound correspondence), the teacher will choose activities that focus on building skills in this area. First she examines the NWF forms she scored for each student to see whether there is a pattern in their responses.

**Example: DIBELS™ NWF test form**

**Mary**

**Benchmark 2**

**DIBELS™ Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF)**

- *k i k*  
  - *wo j*  
  - *si g*  
  - *f a j*  
  - *y i f*  
  - *13 /15*

- *k a j*  
  - *f e k*  
  - *a v*  
  - *z i f*  
  - *z e f*  
  - *12 /14*

- *l a f*  
  - *n u l*  
  - *z e m*  
  - *o g*  
  - *n y m*  
  - *12 /14*

- *v u f*  
  - *p o f*  
  - *v o k*  
  - *v i v*  
  - *f e g*  
  - *5 /15*
**Group A**

Like Mary, the other students in group A had difficulty consistently producing correct final sounds in words, especially in consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words. She also missed a vowel sound (/u/), but this mistake only happened once and Mary was able to correctly produce the /u/ sound several other times. Having looked at the students’ test forms, the teacher has decided to review the letter-sound correspondences that they missed (e.g., Mary and several others missed /n/ and /s/). She is also planning a word-sort activity to review and reinforce understanding of final consonants in CVC words.

**Group B**

The students in group B have achieved benchmark on Nonsense Word Fluency. Their test forms show that they are able to read vowel-consonant (VC) and consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) nonsense words quickly and accurately. For these students, the teacher is planning an activity in which they will sort words that begin with consonant blends (e.g., bl, cl, fl). The word-sort activity will include consonant blends the students have learned in previous lessons.

**Grouping for Instruction Planning Sheet (Appendix K)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Members: (group A)</th>
<th>Group Members: (group B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Breanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>Sean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrianna</td>
<td>Darius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ty</td>
<td>Juan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kaitlynn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instructional Focus:

- review letter-sound correspondences group A missed; word sort of CVC words focusing on final consonants

(see Examples of Word Sorts, Appendix I)

Instructional Focus:

- word sort of consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant (CCVC) words with known consonant blends

(see CCVC Word Sort activity, Appendix I)

**Instructional focus is specific to the needs of each group**

Before doing the activity with her small group, the teacher will explicitly model the concept. For example, before doing the Word Sort of CCVC Words with group B, the teacher would do the following:

The teacher writes a blend (e.g., /bl/) on the board. She points to each letter and says its sound: /b/, /l/. She asks the students to say the sounds with her as she points to each letter. She calls on a few individual students to say the sounds.
The teacher tells the students that when these letters are read together they make the sound, /bl/. She runs her finger underneath the two letters and says the blended sound. She asks the students to say the blended sound with her as she runs her finger underneath the letters. She then calls on a few students to say the sound as she points to the letters. The teacher uses this procedure to have the students read words containing the /bl/ blend that will be included in the word sort. She continues using this procedure to introduce all the blends and words in the word sort.

In the future, as the students demonstrate proficiency in these skill areas, new groups will be formed and these students will have opportunities to work with other peers.
Fluency

In practice, a high number of words read correctly per minute, when placed in the proper developmental perspective, indicate efficient word-level processing, a robust vocabulary knowledge base, and meaningful comprehension of the text.

— Kame’enui & Simmons (2001, p. 208)

What is fluency and why is it an important reading skill?

Fluency is the ability to read text with speed, accuracy, and expression. Speed and accuracy in reading depend on well-developed word recognition skills. Non-fluent readers are forced to expend great effort decoding text, resulting in frequent pauses and disconnected reading. Decoding places greater demands on cognitive abilities, so the reader has less capacity for comprehension. This creates a barrier to understanding, as the reader fails to connect one idea to another within the text. The resulting difficulties in comprehension may lead to unrewarding reading experiences and decreased participation in reading-related activities.

Students who have developed automaticity (the point at which very little cognitive capacity is needed) quickly process high-frequency words and decode new words rapidly. Automaticity leads to improved reading comprehension. Students who can automatically read words can focus on understanding and enjoying the meaning of the text.

Although it is a critical component of daily reading instruction, fluency building is often neglected in reading programs. Students should be assessed regularly on their fluency rate. Teachers must quickly address students’ lack of progress through focused activities that promote fluency. There is broad agreement that fluency develops from reading practice. The National Reading Panel (2000) found evidence that repeated oral reading, with feedback and guidance, improves the ability of all students. However, silent, independent reading without guidance and feedback has not proven an effective means of improving students’ reading fluency, and should not take up time allocated to reading instruction.

How can I help my students build fluency?

Once a student becomes fluent at a particular level, the teacher presents him or her with a higher-level text. Correction and feedback are essential, and the text must be challenging without being frustrating. There are various activities teachers can use to increase students’ reading fluency. These include supported oral reading, choral reading, repeated reading of instructional-level text, partner reading, and audiotape- or computer-assisted reading.

What is supported oral reading?

During supported oral reading, the teacher models reading with expression, and may stop and briefly explain to students where and why to pause, give emphasis, etc. Supported oral reading allows students to focus on the meaning of the text before they read. When students have their own copies of a book the teacher is reading, they can follow along and read aloud with the teacher. This is choral reading. Texts for choral reading should be at the students’ independent-reading level (the reader has difficulty with no more than one in twenty words in the text).
What is repeated reading?

Repeated reading is another effective way to build fluency. The teacher selects a section of text that is at the student's instructional reading level (the reader has difficulty with no more than one in ten words in the text). The student reads and rereads the passage until it can be read rapidly and accurately. The teacher must provide correction for incorrect words, words left out or added, and long pauses. The activity should be fast paced. The teacher draws the student's attention to phrases, sentences, or paragraphs the student is having difficulty with and asks the student to reread them. Once the student is able to read the passage fluently, he or she is given another passage at the same reading level.

What is partner reading?

For partner reading students are paired — usually a more fluent reader with a less fluent reader (see “How do I organize groups of students for fluency instruction”). The teacher first ranks students according to their fluency scores. The class is divided in half and the teacher pairs the most fluent reader of the higher group with the most fluent reader of the lower group. The text should be at the independent reading level of the less fluent reader. The more fluent student reads the section first, providing a model of fluent reading. The less fluent student then reads while the partner corrects wrong, left out, or added words, and prompts when the student pauses too long. The less fluent student rereads the passage. The teacher must monitor the pairs to ensure proper procedure and correction. This is also beneficial as a cross-age tutoring activity, in which an older, higher grade level student who needs to build fluency is paired with a younger student.

How can audiotapes and computers help my students build fluency?

Another way to provide a model for fluent reading is through audiotape- or computer-assisted reading. The student reads a book while listening to a computerized reading or an audiotape of the text being read. The student should orally read as he or she is listening. For these activities to be effective, the student must actively participate by reading rather than merely listening, and the teacher must monitor the student to ensure the text is being read orally.

Table 1. Determining Reading Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Accuracy Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent-level:</strong></td>
<td>&lt; 1 in 20 words is difficult</td>
<td>95% – 100% accuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructional-level:</strong></td>
<td>&lt; 1 in 10 words is difficult</td>
<td>90% – 94% accuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frustrational-level:</strong></td>
<td>Difficulty with &gt; 1 in 10 words</td>
<td>&lt; 90% accuracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). Second grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author.
How do I monitor students' progress in fluency?

Following are examples of assessment measures that may be used to monitor progress in fluency.

**DIBELS™**

The DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency (DORF) measure assesses accuracy and fluency with connected text. The DORF is designed to (a) identify students who may need additional instructional support, and (b) monitor progress toward instructional goals. The passages are leveled according to the reading goal of each grade. Performance is measured by having a student read a passage aloud for one minute and calculating the number of words read correctly. The student reads three passages and the median score is used to determine the student’s fluency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency (DORF) Benchmarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Grade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI)**

The Reading Connected Text subtest of the TPRI assesses a student’s accuracy and fluency with connected text, as well as the student’s ability to answer explicit and implicit questions to determine the student’s comprehension of the text. It is intended for use with first- and second-grade students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. TPRI Reading Comprehension Subtest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Grade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**How do I organize groups of students for fluency instruction?**

Once a teacher has administered the measure to the entire class, the students’ scores are recorded (see sample roster below) so that the teacher is given a picture of the fluency levels in her class. The teacher uses this data to determine instructional needs and student grouping.

The teacher in the following example administered the DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency (DORF).

### First Grade Student Roster with Scores (sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>DIBELS™ Oral Reading Fluency score (winter administration period)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Breanna 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sean    14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mary    18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Darius  29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Chris    15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Juan     33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kaitlynn 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Adrianna 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ty       12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>John     16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Angel    36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Mark     28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Kim      14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Sarah    38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Lavonte  30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Maria    23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Amanda   19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Tonya    21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teacher of this first-grade class is planning a partner-reading activity. She would (a) look at the students’ scores on the measure and rank the students by score, (b) divide the list in half, (c) pair the most fluent reader of the higher group with the most fluent reader of the lower group (and so on), and (d) select reading passages for the pairs that are at the independent reading level of the less fluent reader.
The teacher uses a ranking sheet to organize students according to their fluency scores (highest to lowest). This class has eighteen students, so the teacher divides the list into the nine most fluent students and the nine least fluent students.

### Ranking Sheet (Appendix K)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank Order - (highest to lowest)</th>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>DORF Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 -</td>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 -</td>
<td>Angel</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 -</td>
<td>Juan</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 -</td>
<td>Kaitlynn</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 -</td>
<td>Lavonte</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 -</td>
<td>Darius</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 -</td>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 -</td>
<td>Adrianna</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 -</td>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Tonya</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Amanda</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Breanna</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Sean</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Kim</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Ty</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**More fluent half of class**

**Less fluent half of class**

---

44 | What is Tier I?
The teacher forms student pairs of one more fluent reader with one less fluent reader. The student ranked first on the higher list (#1) is paired with the student ranked first on the lower list (#10), etc. Then the teacher selects a reading passage for each pair that corresponds to the independent reading level of the less fluent reader.

**Partner Reading Planning Sheet (Appendix J)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>More Fluent Reader</th>
<th>Less Fluent Reader</th>
<th>Reading Passage (independent level text* of the less fluent reader)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Sarah</td>
<td>Tonya</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Angel</td>
<td>Amanda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Juan</td>
<td>Mary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Kaitlynn</td>
<td>Breanna</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Lavonte</td>
<td>John</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Darius</td>
<td>Chris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Mark</td>
<td>Sean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Adrianna</td>
<td>Kim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Maria</td>
<td>Ty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Independent level text is text in which no more than approximately one in twenty words is difficult for the reader.

In the future, as students' reading fluency increases, data from benchmark testing and progress monitoring will guide the teacher in creating new pairs for partner reading and making other decisions regarding fluency instruction.
Vocabulary

Students with poor vocabularies, including diverse learners, need strong and systematic educational support to become successful independent word learners.

—Baker, Simmons, & Kame'enui (1998, p. 223)

What is vocabulary, and why is vocabulary building important?

Generally, vocabulary is described as oral vocabulary, which consists of the words we use in speaking and listening, and reading vocabulary, which refers to the words we use in writing or recognizing print. Students with delays in language acquisition and oral vocabulary experience persistent difficulty learning to read and comprehending what they read. In contrast, having a large and rich vocabulary is positively related to reading proficiency and school achievement. It is, therefore, important for teachers to develop students’ language skills, especially vocabulary, as they are learning to read.

Does independent reading help build vocabulary?

Some research suggests that the most effective way to build vocabulary is through independent reading. However, for this to be an effective method for building vocabulary, the student must (a) engage in wide reading, preferably reading materials that provide challenging words, and (b) have the skills to infer word meanings from written context. Though independent reading may be highly effective, the amount of reading necessary to close the gap between a student with a poor vocabulary and a student with a rich one is extensive, and those needing the greatest boost in vocabulary development are also least likely to read widely. Because of this, teachers must take a multifaceted approach to vocabulary instruction.

How can I help my students build their vocabulary knowledge?

Teachers can help students build their vocabulary knowledge by reading to students and with students, providing rich oral language in the classroom, and encouraging students’ interest in words inside and outside the classroom. In addition, students benefit from direct vocabulary instruction. Direct learning of vocabulary requires explicit and systematic instruction in individual words (specific word instruction) and word-learning strategies (word-learning instruction). In order to be effective in helping students build their vocabulary knowledge, teachers should provide opportunities for both indirect and direct vocabulary learning.

How can reading to my students improve their vocabulary knowledge?

Oral reading is one method teachers can use to encourage vocabulary growth. Intonation, body language, and shared physical surroundings are some of the features of oral language that promote acquisition of new word meanings. Discussions before, during, and after reading support both direct and indirect vocabulary learning and help students learn new words and deepen their understanding of the words they already know. This practice is beneficial for students of all ages, but it is especially helpful for students with weaker vocabulary knowledge. Reading aloud becomes particularly helpful when the teacher pauses after reading an unfamiliar word and discusses the meaning of the word with a student or relates the word to the student’s previous learning or experience.
What should explicit vocabulary instruction look like?

For explicit vocabulary instruction, teachers should pre-teach the following types of vocabulary words from the texts students will be reading:

• important words that students must know to understand the text;
• useful words that students probably will encounter again and again; and
• difficult words, such as words with multiple meanings and idiomatic expressions.13

Providing word definitions before students read a text, giving repeated exposure to vocabulary through various examples and contexts for a new word, showing pictures, and discussing with students how a word might relate to their own lives are all ways to effectively pre-teach vocabulary. In addition, students need multiple opportunities to use the new words they are learning, such as through reading and rereading texts, using vocabulary words in their everyday speech in the classroom, and reviewing learned vocabulary by engaging in word wall activities.14 When used together, these techniques reinforce vocabulary building.

What are word-learning strategies?

Vocabulary instruction includes strategies that empower students to become independent word learners.15 Some students have difficulty understanding the structure of language and are not able to internalize the rules on their own.16 Directly teaching the use of word-learning strategies can assist students when they encounter new words during reading. Examples of these strategies include using dictionaries and other reference tools, analyzing parts of words (prefixes, suffixes, base words, and root words), and using context clues to determine meaning.17 It is important to note that context may sometimes give little information about a word; the probability of learning a word from context is estimated at between five and fifteen percent.18 A good rule of thumb is to teach students that some contexts are more helpful than others.19

How can I monitor students’ progress in learning vocabulary?

Though assessing vocabulary acquisition is difficult, teachers can monitor learning in the key vocabulary words and concepts they have explicitly taught their students.20 This means that progress monitoring for vocabulary is generally informal and directly linked to instructional content. Because students benefit from multiple encounters with the words they are learning in a variety of contexts, teachers should track the words and concepts they have been teaching and periodically review key vocabulary.21 Student learning can be monitored in a variety of ways, including checking for understanding during instruction,22 engaging in discussions of the meanings of words being taught, and examining students’ classwork, such as their word-learning journals.23

How can I extend vocabulary building for students who may be struggling?

One way for teachers to extend and deepen students’ vocabulary knowledge is through additional practice with new vocabulary in conjunction with small-group comprehension instruction. The small-group format provides students who have weak vocabulary knowledge and comprehension skills more opportunities to practice. It also affords the teacher additional opportunities to provide corrective feedback to clarify and solidify students’ understanding of new words.

For example, before introducing a new story during small-group instruction, the teacher pre-teaches key vocabulary words the students will need to know to understand the story. In addition to defining the words, she uses pictures, provides examples and non-examples, and has students generate sentences with the words.
To deepen her students’ vocabulary knowledge, and consequently enhance their comprehension of the story, the teacher uses a semantic map activity to build students’ understanding of the relationships between the words they are learning (see Semantic Map activity, Appendix H). She begins the activity by presenting a key word or concept from the story, followed by the group brainstorming and discussing related words. The teacher includes relevant words from the story that have been targeted for instruction. Together, the students and teacher develop a semantic map and highlight the key vocabulary words from the story. 

In addition, the teacher has the students generate sentences using the words from their semantic maps. Then they discuss the words in their semantic maps and the sentences they have created.
Comprehension

Teaching students to articulate comprehension strategies is essential in reading programs based on best practices.

— Pressley (1999, p. 92)

What is reading comprehension and why is it important?

Reading comprehension, the ability to understand information presented in written form, begins with decoding words, processing those words in relation to one another, and then combining the ideas in the text with prior knowledge to determine the overall meaning. A reader constructs the text’s meaning based both on the ideas explicitly represented and his or her response to those ideas. A reader’s response often depends on his or her prior knowledge.

What should comprehension instruction look like?

The complex nature of comprehension instruction requires a multifaceted and comprehensive instructional strategy. Studies have consistently found that, although teachers test students on comprehension, they do not provide explicit instruction in comprehension strategies. Asking comprehension questions helps the teacher monitor students’ understanding of the text, but it does not constitute explicit comprehension instruction. To provide explicit comprehension-strategy instruction, the teacher must (a) explain the strategy and when to use it, (b) model using the strategy, such as by “thinking aloud” while reading a passage, (c) guide students in their initial practice of the strategy, and (d) have students practice the comprehension strategy.

Table 1. Modeling Comprehension Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher modeling of comprehension strategies should include:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What the strategy is and how it can improve a reader’s understanding of the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How, when, and where to use the strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Which strategies work best in certain instances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to apply different strategies to different types of texts/reading situations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Word analysis and fluent reading skills are critical to comprehending text. However, it is possible to decode text well without really understanding. Effective reading comprehension instruction should include pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading activities. Graphic and semantic organizers, such as KWL (What I Know, What I Want to Know, What I Learned) charts, story maps, and prediction charts are also helpful tools that aid students in comprehension (see Story Map, Appendix I).
Table 2. Activities that Promote Reading Comprehension*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-reading activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ taking a book walk (reading the title, etc., looking through the pictures)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ activating the students’ prior knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ generating questions students would like answered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ pre-teaching key vocabulary words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ making predictions about the story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During reading activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ asking explicit questions (answers can be found in the text)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ asking implicit questions (answers are implied, but not directly stated, in the text)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ retelling what has happened in sections/paragraphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ identifying the main idea of sections/paragraphs (in ten words or less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ student self-monitoring/problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ constructing mental images that represent meanings in the text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-reading activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ summarizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ identifying the main idea of the story (in ten words or less)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ re-examining predictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ reviewing vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ analyzing story elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ discussing students’ responses to the story</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Remember, comprehension strategies are best learned when teachers provide explicit instruction in how to use strategies through modeling (such as using think alouds) and step-by-step instruction.
How can I monitor students' progress in text comprehension?

Following is an example of an assessment measure that may be used to measure progress in text comprehension.

**Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI)**

The Reading Comprehension subtest of the TPRI assesses a student’s ability to answer explicit and implicit questions to determine the student’s comprehension of the text. It is intended for use with first- and second-grade students.
**How do I organize groups of students with like needs for comprehension instruction?**

Once a teacher has administered the measure to the entire class, the students’ scores are recorded (see sample class summary form below) so that the teacher is given a picture of each student’s strengths and weaknesses. The teacher uses this data to determine instructional needs and student grouping.

The teacher in the following example administered the Reading Comprehension subtest of the TPRI.

**Second Grade TPRI Class Summary Form (partial list)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Story #</th>
<th>Reading - Accuracy - Level -</th>
<th>Reading - Fluency Rate</th>
<th>Explicit Questions (out of 3)</th>
<th>Implicit Questions (out of 2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Chelsey</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Independent -</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Dheepa</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Independent -</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Jamal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Instructional -</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 James</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Independent -</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Kamiar</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Instructional -</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Kimberly</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Instructional -</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Letty</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Instructional -</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Marcel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Instructional -</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Patricia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Instructional -</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Sarah</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Instructional -</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Sergio</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Instructional -</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Timothy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Instructional -</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Tina</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Instructional -</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Veronica</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Instructional -</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teacher of this second-grade class would (a) look at both the story number and the students’ scores for explicit and implicit questions, (b) determine which students had difficulty answering explicit and/or implicit questions, and (c) organize lower-performing students into homogeneous groups for focused instruction in comprehension strategies.
The teacher has selected four students for small-group comprehension instruction based on their difficulty with answering explicit and implicit questions about the text.
The teacher has planned a Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) for this group. The text she has chosen is at the instructional level* of the lowest reader (in this case, Sarah). This small-group instruction will provide the students with more opportunities for questioning and deeper discussions of what they are reading. The focus will be on building and reinforcing the students' strategic reading skills. They must learn to use strategies that will help them self-monitor and improve their comprehension. The teacher will carefully model using these strategies.

### Grouping for Instruction Planning Sheet (Appendix J)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Members:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kamiar Patricia Veronica Sergio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instructional Focus:

DRTA using instructional-level text of the lowest reader

(see Directed Reading Thinking Activity, Appendix H)

In the future, as the students demonstrate improved text comprehension, new groups will be formed and these students will have opportunities to work with other peers.

*Instructional level text is text in which no more than approximately one in ten words is difficult for the reader.
Sample of 90-Minute Core Reading Instruction for Kindergartners

This sample lesson plan is designed to demonstrate ninety minutes of high-quality, effective reading instruction in a typical kindergarten classroom. Each lesson features one of the essential components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics and word study, vocabulary, and comprehension). Key concepts, such as CVC words, are reinforced and practiced throughout. Instruction is explicit and systematic, with the teacher modeling activities to ensure student understanding. Any of these activities may be done in either whole-class or small-group formats.

Phonological Awareness (20 minutes): Segmenting words into phonemes

Objective:
Students will play “Catch It!” to segment monosyllabic words into phonemes.

Materials:
- Word list for the teacher containing words that will be used in this activity, as well as other CVC words
- A beanbag

Instructional Procedure:
- Tell students to form a circle so that they can play “Catch It!”
- Tell students that in this game they will be segmenting words into their sounds (an activity they are already familiar with).
- Provide an example. (If the word is *tip*, the sounds would be /t/ /i/ /p/.)
- Explain the rules to “Catch It!”
  - The teacher will say a CVC word (e.g., *sip*), and toss the beanbag to a student.
  - The student will catch the beanbag, and say the initial sound of the word (e.g., /s/).
  - The student will toss the beanbag to another student who catches it and says the medial sound (e.g., /i/).
  - That student will throw the beanbag to a third student who will say the final sound (e.g., /p/).
  - The whole group will then say the word (e.g., *sip*), and then all of the sounds of the word individually (e.g., /s/ /i/ /p/).
  - The student will toss the beanbag back to the teacher, and the process will begin again with a new word.
- Play the game, providing assistance as needed. Make sure that all students have multiple opportunities to participate.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Phonics and Word Study (20 minutes): Making and blending words

Objective:
Students will learn how to blend letters/sounds together in units.

Materials:
• Word list for the teacher consisting of CVC words with letters that have been previously taught to students (e.g., pit, tip, bit, nip)
• Large letter cards for the teacher
• Pocket chart for the teacher
• Individual letter cards per student
• Pocket chart made from file folder per student

Instructional Procedure:
• Place the letter cards in the first row of the pocket chart (e.g., i, t, p, n, s, b, a).
• Remind students that these are letters that they have been learning for the last few weeks.
• Read through the letter names with the students, and then say the letter sounds.
• Model how to slowly say a CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) word (e.g., sun) by blending the letters/sounds together in units.

First word — sit
• Tell students the first word they are going to make is sit. Tell them that they will need the sounds /s/, /i/, and /t/ to make this word.
• Identify each of the needed letter cards by their sound, and move the cards into a lower pocket on the pocket chart. (e.g., say /s/ and move the letter s into the lower row of the chart. Repeat with each of the letters)
• Put a finger below the letter s and say /ssssss/. Ask the students to repeat the sound in unison.
• Slide the finger below the letter i and say /iiiiii/. Ask the students to repeat the sound in unison.
• Slide the finger below the letter t and say /t/. Ask the students to repeat the sound in unison.
• Ask the students to blend the sounds with you. Slide your finger below the letters and elongate the sounds (/ssssssiiiiiiit/).
• Say the word again without elongating the sounds (e.g., /sit/). Ask students to repeat the word.
Practice — Provide students with practice in making and blending other words (e.g., sip):

- Have the students place their letter cards in the first row of their pocket charts (e.g., i, t, p, n, s, h, a).
- Say the word *sip* and have the students repeat the word.
- Say /s/ and ask the students to identify and move the letter card that represents the sound /s/ into the second row of their pocket chart. Monitor students and provide feedback as necessary.
- Say /i/ and ask the students to identify and move the letter card that represents the sound /i/ into the second row of their pocket chart.
- Say /p/ and ask the students to identify and move the letter card that represents the sound /p/ into the second row of their pocket chart.
- Ask the students to point to each letter and to say the letter’s sound (e.g., /ssss/ /iiii/ /p/).
- Ask the students to blend the sounds together as you did with the first word. Have students slide their finger below the letters and elongate the sounds as they read (e.g., /ssssiiiiip/).
- Ask students to read the word again without elongating the sounds.
- Repeat the same procedure with other words (e.g., pit, pin, tin, tip).

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). *Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices* (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Vocabulary (20 minutes): Using examples and non-examples

Objective:
Students will learn key vocabulary (from a text that will be used for read aloud) through examples and non-examples.

Materials:
• Key vocabulary word(s) from a comprehension reading passage (e.g., gigantic)
• Pictures that provide examples and non-examples of the word (e.g., gigantic)
• Overhead projector, chalkboard, flipchart (or something comparable)
• Marker or chalk

Sample pictures

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
\text{Dinosaur} & \text{Small dog} & \text{Tall building} & \text{Elephant} & \text{Blue whale} & \text{Goldfish} \\
\end{array}
\]

Instructional Procedure:
• Tell students that gigantic is today’s vocabulary word. Tell students that gigantic is a very large word.
• Write gigantic on the transparency. Say the word and have the students repeat it.
• Tell students that gigantic means very, very large.
• Explain that some things are small, some things are big, and some things are very, very big. Explain that when something is very, very big, it is gigantic.
• Point to the word on the overhead. Ask students to tell you the word. Provide assistance as needed.
• Ask the students to explain what they think the word gigantic means.
• If the students make a correct response, say, “Yes, gigantic means huge” or “Gigantic does mean really big.”
• If the students make an incorrect response, provide corrective feedback: “That is a very good guess, but gigantic means really big.”
• Point to pictures and discuss examples and non-examples of the word (i.e., point to the first picture and tell the students, “The dinosaur is gigantic”; Point to the second picture and tell the students, “The dog is NOT gigantic.”)
• Present pictures one at a time, and ask the students to tell whether the picture is gigantic or NOT gigantic.

Practice:
• Have the students sit in a circle. Place the pictures face-down in a pile in the middle of the circle, within reach of everyone.
• Have the students turn the pictures over one at a time and state whether the picture is gigantic or NOT gigantic.
• Pause frequently to check for understanding.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2000). First grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author.
Comprehension (30 minutes): Making predictions

Objective:
Students will learn how to make predictions about what they will learn from their read-aloud text.

Materials:
• Narrative text with previewing cues (e.g., title or pictures)
• Flipchart or poster that can be left in the room for future reference
• Markers

Instructional Procedure:
• Introduce the new text to the students (e.g., The Gigantic Boy). If there is only one book, show it to the students. If there are individual copies, distribute them to the students.
• Remind students that before they read a new text, they will take a “book walk.”
• Remind students that during a book walk they will look at the title and the author, and look at the pictures to see what they can learn about the book.
• Show the students the book and read the title to them. Ask students what they know about the title.
• Point to the key word from the vocabulary lesson (e.g., gigantic) and ask students to give an example of something that is gigantic.
• Open the book and show students the pictures in the text. Call on students to explain what is happening in the picture.
• Ask students whether anything in the picture reminds them of anything in their own lives (activating prior knowledge).
• Repeat this with each of the pictures.
• Remind students what a prediction is. (“A prediction is when we make a good guess about what we think the story is going to tell us.”) Write Predictions at the top of the flip chart.
• Ask a student to make a prediction about this story. Ask the student to explain why he or she made the prediction.
• Write the prediction on the flipchart.
• Ask several other students to share their predictions, and record them on the chart.
• If students struggle with predictions, provide them with assistance using prompts.
• Tell students that they will keep their Predictions page so that they can look at it when they have finished reading the book and can check to see how accurate their predictions were.
• Begin reading the text.

Sample of 90-Minute Core Reading Instruction for First Graders

This sample lesson plan is designed to demonstrate ninety minutes of high-quality, effective reading instruction in a typical first-grade classroom. Each lesson features one of the essential components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics and word study, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension). Key concepts, such as CVC words, are reinforced and practiced throughout. Instruction is explicit and systematic, with the teacher modeling activities to ensure student understanding. Any of these activities may be done in either whole-class or small-group formats.

Phonemic Awareness (10 minutes): Phoneme segmentation

Objective:
Students will segment CVC words into individual phonemes.

Materials:
- Say It and Move It Mat (three circle) per student (see Appendix I)
- Three plastic counter chips per student
- Word list for the teacher consisting of CVC words with short /a/ and /i/ (e.g., *map, man, sit, lid*)

Instructional Procedure:
- Pass out “Say It and Move It Mat” and three chips to each student.
- Say a CVC word with short /a/ (e.g., *map*).
- Model segmenting the word (*map*) into phonemes by saying each sound and moving the chips from the dotted-line circles to the solid-line circles.
- Say /m/ and move the first chip down to the first solid-line circle on the arrow line.
- Say /a/ and move the second chip down to the second solid-line circle on the arrow line.
- Say /p/ and move the third chip down to the third solid-line circle on the arrow line.
- Model saying the word as a whole while sliding your finger below the chips in a left-to-right sequence (e.g., /mmaap/).
- Have students put three chips in the dotted-lined circles above the solid line on the mat.
- Say a CVC word with short /a/ (e.g., *man*).
- Tell students to repeat the word (e.g., *man*).
- Have the students segment the word (e.g., *man*) into phonemes by saying each sound and moving the chips. The students move the chips from the dotted-line circle down to the solid-line circle.
- Have the students say the word while sliding their finger below the chips in a left-to-right sequence (e.g., /mmaann/).
- Continue the same procedure using other CVC words with short /a/ and /i/.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Phonics and Word Study (20 minutes): Making words

Objective:
Students will practice making words containing a newly learned vowel sound (e.g., /a/).

Materials:
- Large letter cards for the teacher
- Pocket chart for the teacher
- Index cards for the teacher with the final word (e.g., plant) to be made
- Individual letter cards for each student
- Pocket chart made from file folder for each student

Instructional Procedure:
- Place the letter cards in the first row of the pocket chart (e.g., l, a, p, n, t).
- Have students place the letter cards in the same order in the first row of their pocket charts (e.g., l, a, p, n, t).
- Place the letter cards in alphabetical order (e.g., a, l, n, p, t). Have the students place the letter cards in alphabetical order.
- Point to each letter, say its name, and pronounce its sound.
- Model making the words using these letters (begin with two-letter words, then three-letter words, etc.).

First word: an
- Tell the students that the word they are going to make has two letters.
- Tell the students that the word is an.
- Provide the word in a sentence (e.g., The boy has an apple).
- Find the letter cards that make the word (e.g., an) and move the letter cards into the second row of the pocket chart.
- Have the students move the letter cards into the second row of their pocket charts (e.g., an).
- Say the word and ask the students to repeat the word (e.g., an).
- Provide the students with guided practices with other words.

Second word: ant
- Tell the students the next word they are going to make has three letters.
- Tell the students that the word is ant.
- Provide the word in a sentence (e.g., The ant bit me).
- Call on one student to find the letter cards that make the word (e.g., ant).
- Have the students move the letter cards (e.g., a, n, t) into the second row of their pocket charts.
- Say the word and ask the students to repeat the word (e.g., ant).
- Repeat the same procedure with other words (e.g., tap, lap, plant).

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts (2000). First grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author.
Fluency (15 minutes): Chunk reading

Objective:
Students will improve their reading accuracy and rate while reading phrases.

Materials:
• Copies of reading passages that include CVC words with short /a/ and /i/
• Graph paper and color pencils for each student
• Timer

Instructional Procedure:
• Before instruction, select reading passages that are at an instructional level* for the less fluent students. Place slash marks between chunks (i.e., phrases) to mark two- to five-word sentence segments and prepositional phrases in each passage.
• Pair students using the following procedure: (a) rank students according to reading ability, (b) split the list in half, (c) pair the top-ranked student in the higher performing half (partner 1) with the top-ranked student in the lower performing half (partner 2) and so forth.
• Give each pair two copies of the reading passages (at the instructional level of the less fluent student) with chunking marks.
• Tell the students that connected text is divided into meaningful phrases and that paying attention to these phrases while reading will enhance their fluency and comprehension.
• Tell the students to pause briefly between phrases, exactly as marked. No pauses should be made except at slash marks.
• Remind students of the procedure for partner reading: (a) four-minute reading for each, (b) one-minute best reading for each, (c) calculating fluency, and (d) graphing.
• Have partner 1 model fluent reading while partner 2 follows along. Partner 1 emphasizes chunking phrases together for meaning. For instance, read the sentence, “One day last week my sister and I drove to the lake,” like this: “One day last week/ my sister and I/ drove to the lake.” (Slash indicates a pause.) Then, partner 2 reads the passage while partner 1 follows along.
• Tell the students to reread the passage one minute (“best reading”), with partner 1 first. While partner 1 reads, partner 2 follows along and marks the passage where the last word was read at the one-minute mark.
• Ask the students to calculate the fluency by computing the total number of words read per minute minus the errors and to graph their fluency on the graph paper with color pencils.

*Instructional level text is text in which no more than approximately one in ten words is difficult for the reader.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Vocabulary (15 minutes): Semantic map

Objective:
Students will learn how to create a semantic map to show relationships between words.

Materials:
- Key concept in the text for the comprehension activity (e.g., feelings)
- Overhead projector
- Overhead marker
- Transparency of a simple semantic map (see Appendix I)

Instructional Procedure:
- Tell the students that they will talk about different feelings and learn about other words that are related to feelings.
- Write the word feelings in the solid-line circle and say the word. Have the students repeat the word.
- Introduce a word (e.g., sad) and talk about how it is an example of a feeling. Write the word sad in the dotted-line circle and say the word.
- Ask students, “How would you feel if you were sad?” and call on students to share their responses.
- Make semantic maps to show how words are related to one another based on students’ responses (e.g., sad: lonely, unhappy).
- Ask students to brainstorm other feelings (e.g., happy, scared) and write the words in the dotted-line circles.
- Ask students, “How would you feel if you were _____?” to encourage them to think about related words. Call on students to share their responses.
- Make semantic maps to show how words are related to one another, based on students’ responses (e.g., happy: glad, good, pleased; scared: afraid, fearful, frightened).

Variations:
- During reading, discuss a new word related to feelings and add it to the semantic map.
- Ask students to think about a word that describes the feelings of characters in the story while they read. Ask the students to give reasons why they think the characters are experiencing certain feelings.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2000). First grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author.
Comprehension (30 minutes): Using comprehension charts to build understanding of vocabulary in a narrative text

Objective:
Students will use a comprehension chart to enrich their understanding of key vocabulary (e.g., feelings) in a narrative text and to make connections with other texts.

Materials:
• Narrative text that incorporates key concepts (e.g., feelings) that students have already read.
• Blackboard, flipchart, or dry-erase board
• Comprehension chart (Appendix I)
• Individual comprehension charts for each student

Instructional Procedure:
• Pass out texts to students.
• Tell students that together, you will be completing a comprehension chart that explores feelings. Remind students that you spent some time discussing different types of feelings, and remind them to use the semantic map from the vocabulary lesson to help them in their understanding of the word feelings.
• Show students the comprehension chart. Explain that it is similar to other charts they have seen, but this one focuses on the types of feelings experienced by characters in the story.
• Ask a student to retell the story, providing support as needed. Ask other students to offer additional input regarding the story.
• Ask another student to name one of the characters from the story, and write the name in the appropriate column. If the student answers incorrectly (e.g., naming a character from another story), provide corrective feedback, and guide them into providing an appropriate response.
• Ask another student to describe the feelings this character experienced in the story and why he or she thinks they feel this way. If the student responds appropriately, write the response on the board. If the student responds inappropriately, use prompts to guide them to an appropriate response.
• Ask another student whether they can think of a connection this situation has to another story or to something in their personal life (e.g., “That reminds me of the way Billy felt in the story about the Underground Railroad.”). Write a brief synopsis of this connection under the heading Connections.
• Continue asking students to talk about other characters from the story and to describe the feelings that the characters had in the story.
• Continue to ask students to make connections to other stories or to their own lives.
• Record all of the reflections on the chart.
• Review the chart with the group, and remind them to think about the word feelings and the different type of feelings that people have.
• Post the chart somewhere in the room for future reference.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts (2001). Second grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author.
Sample of 90-Minute Core Reading Instruction for Second Grade

This sample lesson plan is designed to demonstrate ninety minutes of high-quality, effective reading instruction in a typical second-grade classroom. Each lesson features one of the essential components of reading instruction (phonics and word study, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension). Key concepts, such as a particular onset-rime, are reinforced and practiced throughout. Instruction is explicit and systematic, with the teacher modeling activities to ensure student understanding. Any of these activities may be done in either whole-class or small-group formats.

Phonics and Word Study (20 minutes): Complex onset and rime

Objectives:
Students will learn a complex onset-rime pattern, and practice reading and writing words with that onset-rime.

Materials:
- Cards with onsets that can be taped to the beginning of the chosen rime
- Cards with a complex rime pattern

Example of complex rime patterns:
-ight -ought -ouch
  -ight -ought -ouch
  -ight -ought -ouch
  -ight -ought -ouch
  -ight -ought -ouch
  -ight -ought -ouch
  -ight -ought -ouch
  -ight -ought -ouch
  -ight -ought -ouch
  -ight -ought -ouch
  -ight -ought -ouch
  -ight -ought -ouch
  -ight -ought -ouch

- Dry-erase boards, markers, and erasers
- Materials for a “Bag of Tricks”
  - Paper bag labeled onsets
  - Onset cards inside the bag
  - Rime cards with the rime pattern
  - Writing notebooks

Instructional Procedure:
1. Modeling:
   - Explain to students that sometimes combinations of letters make a rime pattern that does not sound the way we think it should.
   - Show students a card with one complex rime (e.g., -ight). Point to the rime and explain how it is pronounced. (“When we see -ight, the g and the h are silent and the rime sounds like /ite/”).
   - Ask students to read the rime and spell the rime in unison.
   - Have all the students read the word in unison.
   - Continue with all of the onsets (f, n, t, br, fr). Continually remind students that -ight makes the sound /ite/.
2. Practice ("Bag of Tricks"):

- Have students sit in a circle. Pass out a rime card to each student. Place the onsets bag in the middle of the circle within reach of everyone. Explain to students that the words they create can be real or nonsense words.

- Model how to play “Bag of Tricks” by (a) drawing one onset card out of the bag, (b) combining it with your rime card, and (c) saying the word. Ask students if the word you created is real or nonsense. If it is a real word, have them write the word in their writing notebooks.

- Have students take turns drawing one onset from the bag, combining it with his or her rime card, and reading the word. Ask students if the word is real or nonsense. If it is a real word, have them write the word in their writing notebooks.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). *Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices* (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Fluency (15 minutes): Partner reading

Objective:
Students will improve their reading accuracy and rate.

Materials:
- Copies of a reading passage that includes words with the complex rime students learned during either the PA or WS activity. Passages should be at the instructional level of the less fluent reader in the pair. (Instructional level means that the reader is able to decode about 90% of the words correctly.)
- Graph paper and color pencils for each student
- Timer for the teacher

Instructional Procedure:
- Pair students using the following procedure: (a) rank students according to reading ability, (b) split the list in half, (c) pair the top-ranked student in the higher performing half (partner 1) with the top-ranked student in the lower performing half (partner 2) and so forth.
- Give each pair two copies of the reading passage at the instructional level of the less fluent student.
- Remind the students of the procedures for partner reading: (a) read for four minutes each, (b) correct errors (omission/addition of words, stopping more than three seconds, etc.), (c) do best one-minute reading (while timed), (d) calculate fluency rate, and (e) graph fluency rate.
- Have partner 1 model fluent reading for four minutes while partner 2 follows along. Then, partner 2 reads the passage for four minutes while partner 1 follows along. While partner 2 reads the passage, partner 1 identifies and corrects errors.
- Ask the students to reread the passage for one minute (“best reading”), with partner 1 reading first. While partner 1 reads, partner 2 follows along and marks the last word read at the one-minute mark.
- Ask the students to calculate their fluency. Subtract the number of errors from the total number of words read (Total – errors = fluency).
- Ask the students to graph their fluency using color pencils and graph paper.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
**Vocabulary (20 minutes): A word map**

**Objective:**
Students will learn how to create a word map for a concept in the text.

**Materials:**
- Key vocabulary word(s) from a comprehension reading passage (e.g., bright)
- Overhead projector, marker, and transparency of a word map
- Copies of the word map (see Appendix I)

**Instructional Procedure:**
- Explain to students that *bright* is today’s vocabulary word.
- Write the word *bright* on the word-map transparency. Say the word and have students repeat it and write it on their word maps.
- Ask several students what they think the word *bright* means.
- Write the student responses on the board.
- Discuss the definitions, and come up with a good definition (e.g., “Bright is when there is really a lot of light”). Write the definition on the transparency and read it. Have students repeat the definition and write it on their word maps.
- Present several examples and non-examples of the word in sentences, and ask students if the word is used correctly. (E.g., “When I turned off the lights, it was very bright.” “Sometimes the sun is so bright that it hurts my eyes.”)
- Ask students to identify synonyms and antonyms of the word and record them on their word maps (Synonyms: shiny, sunny, brilliant, dazzling; i.e. antonyms: dark, dim, gloomy, shadowy.)
- Ask students to use the word in several sentences and record the sentences at the bottom of their word maps.
- Monitor student work and provide assistance as needed.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Comprehension (35 minutes): A story map

Objective:
Students will learn how to use a story map to improve their comprehension.

Materials:
- Narrative passages that include words with the complex rime learned during the word study activity
- Overhead projector
- Overhead marker
- Transparency of a story map template
- Copies of a story map (see Appendix I)

Instructional Procedure:

Before Reading
- Pass out a reading passage to each student.
- Introduce the day’s topic. Ask students to think about everything they know about the topic. (If appropriate, have them write their brainstorming ideas.)
- Lead students in a brief discussion of the book’s topic.

During Reading
- Explain to students that story elements are like the ingredients used in a recipe. To make chocolate chip cookies, they need flour, sugar, butter, and chocolate chips. To make a story, they need the story elements.
- Introduce and discuss the common story elements of narrative text: (a) setting (where and when), (b) characters, (c) problem or goal, (d) plot (series of events in which the characters try to solve a problem or achieve a goal), and (e) resolution (solution to a problem or achievement of a goal).
- Introduce the story map template, which is used to diagram and connect the common story elements of narrative text.
- Have students take turns reading the passage.
- Stop students’ reading periodically to model how to identify each story component and to record the information on the transparency.

After Reading
- Review story elements from the day’s lesson and encourage students to discuss what they learned about them.
- Ask students comprehension questions related to the story elements, such as, “Who did we read about?” and “Where did the story take place?”

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.; and Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts at The University of Texas at Austin. (2005). Supplemental instruction for struggling readers, grade 3: A guide for tutors. Austin, TX: Author.
Sample of 90-Minute Core Reading Instruction for Third Graders

This sample lesson plan is designed to demonstrate ninety minutes of high-quality, effective reading instruction in a typical third-grade classroom. Each lesson features one of the essential components of reading instruction (phonics and word study, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension). Key concepts, such as prefixes and suffixes, are reinforced and practiced throughout. Instruction is explicit and systematic, with the teacher modeling activities to ensure student understanding. Any of these activities may be done in either whole-class or small-group formats.

**Phonics and Word Study (20 minutes): Mnemonic HINTS**

**Objective:**
Students will practice using a structural analysis strategy to help them decode separate multisyllabic words into word parts.

**Materials:**
- Poster of the HINTS procedure (Appendix I)
- Blank transparency
- Overhead projector
- Overhead marker
- Word list (containing words with prefixes the students have already learned)
  
  Example of words with prefixes
  
  Re- un- pre-
  
  reclaim untied pretest
  reuse uninterested preview
  review untrue preset

- Materials for a “Bag of Tricks”
  - Paper bag
  - Cards with multisyllabic words inside the bag

**Instructional Procedure:**
- Explain to students that separating multisyllabic words into word parts can help them identify unknown words. Introduce the mnemonic HINTS, which helps students identify multisyllabic words with prefixes and suffixes.
  - H—Highlight the prefix (or suffix).
  - I—Identify the consonant and vowel sounds in the root word.
  - N—Name the root word.
  - T—Tie the parts together.
  - S—Say the word.
- Remind students that sometimes combinations of letters are added to the beginning of a word to form a new word. These are called prefixes. Remind them that prefixes also change the meanings of words.
- Use the poster to teach the mnemonic HINTS procedure.
  - Tell the students what each letter stands for, and have them repeat in unison.
  - Point to and name each letter in HINTS, and have students read the descriptor in unison.
• Model identifying a word following the HINTS procedure.
  • Write the word *reclaim* on the transparency.
  • Highlight the prefix, re-.
  • Point to the root word and remind students that *ai* makes the /ā/ sound.
  • Name the root word (e.g., *claim*).
  • Tie the parts together (e.g., re-*claim*).
  • Say the word (e.g., *reclaim*).
  • Model with additional multisyllabic words that contain prefixes (e.g., *reuse, untrue, review*).

Practice:
  • Have the students sit in a circle. Place the “bag of tricks” in the middle of the circle within reach of everyone.
  • Have the students take turns drawing a card from the bag, and then identify the word using the HINTS procedure.
  • Have students show the word to the group.
  • Have all students read the word in unison.

Adaptations
  • This activity can also be used for practicing words with suffixes.
  • A more advanced version of this activity can be accomplished by using both prefixes and suffixes in unison.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Fluency (20 minutes): Partner reading

Objective:
Students will improve their reading accuracy and rate.

Materials:
- Copies of a reading passage that includes multisyllabic words with prefixes and suffixes
- Graph paper and color pencils for each student
- Timer for the teacher

Instructional Procedure:
- Pair the students using the following procedure: (a) rank the students according to reading ability, (b) split the list in half, (c) pair the top-ranked student in the higher performing half (partner 1) with the top-ranked student in the lower performing half (partner 2) and so forth.
- Give each pair two copies of the reading passage at the instructional level of the less fluent student. (Instructional level means that the reader is able to decode about 90% of the words correctly.)
- Remind the students of the procedures for partner reading: (a) read for four minutes each, (b) correct errors (omission/addition of words, stopping more than three seconds, etc.), (c) do best one-minute reading (while timed), (d) calculate fluency rate, and (e) graph fluency rate.
- Have partner 1 model fluent reading for four minutes while partner 2 follows along. Then, partner 2 reads the passage for four minutes while partner 1 follows along. While partner 2 reads the passage, partner 1 identifies and corrects errors.
- Ask the students to reread the passage for one minute ("best reading"), with partner 1 reading first. While partner 1 reads, partner 2 follows along and marks the last word read at the one-minute mark.
- Ask the students to calculate their fluency. Subtract the number of errors from the total number of words read (Total – errors = fluency).
- Ask the students to graph their fluency using color pencils and graph paper.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Vocabulary (25 minutes): Prefixes

Objective:
Students will practice using previously learned prefixes to find the meaning of a word.

Materials:
• Pocket chart
• Cards with prefixes from the word study activity (e.g., re-, pre-, un-)
• Cards with root words (e.g., view, comfort) that can be combined with these prefixes
• Plastic bag filled with prefixes on cards

Instructional Procedure:
• Remind students that sometimes combinations of letters are added to the beginning of a word to change the meaning of the word. Ask students what these word parts are called (prefixes).
• Ask a student to provide an example of a prefix.
• Place a card with a prefix (e.g., un-) on the pocket chart. Point to the prefix (e.g., un-) and model how it is pronounced. Have students read the word.
• Ask a student what the prefix, un- means. Provide assistance as needed.
• Ask students to read the prefix in unison, and to say what the prefix means in unison (e.g., “Un- means not.”).
• Place a card with a root word (e.g., comfortable, able) after the prefix un-.
• Point to the new word, read the word, and ask the students to read the word in unison.
• Ask a student to tell you what the word means. Provide corrective feedback as necessary.
• Repeat the same procedure with other prefixes. Appendix J provides a list of common prefixes.

Practice:
• Have the students sit in a circle. Place the plastic bag of cards with prefixes in the middle of the circle within reach of everyone.
• Have students play the “Add-a-Part, Find the Meaning” game.
• Have a student draw one card out of the bag, and read the prefix out loud.
• Have the student read the prefix out loud.
• Have the student add a root word to the prefix, and say the word.
• Ask the student if the word is a real word. If it is, ask them to tell you the meaning of the word. If it isn’t a real word, ask them if they can think of a real word that begins with the prefix.
• Have the students continue taking turns playing the game.
• Provide assistance as needed.

Adaptations:
• Suffixes can be used in place of prefixes for this activity.
• A combination of prefixes and suffixes can also be used when appropriate.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). Second grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author.
Comprehension (25 minutes): Getting the gist

Objective:
Students will learn how to get the gist (main idea) of one paragraph of a passage while reading an expository reading passage.

Materials:
- Two different expository texts that each consist of several paragraphs
- Overhead projector
- Overhead marker
- Transparency of a gist log (see Appendix I)
- One gist log per student

Instructional Procedure:

Modeling
- Pass out the first reading passage to students.
- Explain to the students that a gist statement represents the main idea of a paragraph. The main idea is the most important information in a paragraph.
- Tell the students that there are three steps to getting the gist: (a) naming the who or what the paragraph is mostly about, (b) telling the most important information about the who or what, and (c) writing a complete sentence about that.
- Read a paragraph of the passage aloud.
- Model identifying the who or what the paragraph is mostly about. Record the who or what on the transparency.
- Model identifying the most important information about that who or what. Record the information on the transparency.
- Model combining the who or what with its most important information. Develop a gist statement of ten words or less (in a complete sentence). Record the gist statement on the transparency. Tell the students that this is the gist statement for the paragraph they read.

Guided Practice
- Pass out the second reading passage to students.
- Ask the students to take turns reading the first paragraph aloud.
- Call on several students to tell who or what the paragraph is mostly about. If there is agreement, record the information on the transparency (the first box of the gist log).
- Call on several students to tell the most important information about the who or what. If there is agreement, record the information on the transparency (the second box of the gist log).
- Call on several students to give a gist statement of ten words or less using the information in the first and second boxes. If there is agreement, record the information on the transparency (the third box of the gist log).
- Continue the same procedure until the entire passage has been read.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.; and Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts at The University of Texas at Austin. (2005). Supplemental instruction for struggling readers, grade 3: A guide for tutors. Austin, TX: Author.
Tier II: Intervention

Which students are eligible for Tier II intervention?

Tier II intervention addresses the needs of students who are not adequately progressing in the general education classroom. Benchmark assessments (fall screening plus winter and spring progress monitoring) identify these students who exhibit low early literacy skills and may be at-risk for reading difficulty. Tier II intervention should support and augment core reading instruction. The goal is to get students back on track so they can continue to succeed without further intervention.

Individual schools determine which students to serve through Tier II intervention. As a general guideline, students are eligible if they fail to meet benchmarks.

Where does the intervention take place?

Each school should designate an appropriate setting, which may be the general education classroom or some other intervention setting.

Who provides the intervention?

The Tier II interventionist may be the classroom teacher, a specialized reading teacher, or an external interventionist specifically trained for the intervention. Schools should strongly consider designating teachers who have attended Teacher Reading Academy (TRA) training as Tier II and Tier III interventionists or interventionist trainers.

Interventionist behavior is important to the success of both Tier II and Tier III instruction. Good interventionists redirect off-task behavior, provide students with positive feedback, and effectively communicate expectations by providing clear and explicit goals for activities. In addition, interventionists should consistently follow lesson plans and select practice items that meet lesson objectives.

When should Tier II intervention start?

Benchmark assessments are administered to all students during the fall screening plus winter and spring progress monitoring. It is suggested that testing take place about three weeks after school starts in fall, one to two weeks after the holiday break in winter (mid-January), and no later than two weeks before the end of the school year in spring. Intervention efforts must start as soon as possible after students have been identified through benchmark testing, within one to two weeks if possible (with the exception of spring benchmark testing). For students who fail to meet spring benchmarks, summer school should be considered.
How long is a round of Tier II intervention?

One round of Tier II instruction lasts ten to twelve weeks, covering most of the semester. After the first ten- to twelve-week round of intervention, a decision should be made about the student’s instructional needs. The options considered should include:

- exiting Tier II intervention if the student is able to meet benchmarks;
- another round of Tier II intervention;
- entrance to Tier III intensive intervention;
- receiving Tier II or Tier III intervention in summer school;
- referral for special services (dyslexia, 504, etc.).

A committee of school personnel, such as a campus assessment team, pre-referral team, student support team, etc., may make this decision. It is critical that a student does not exceed twenty weeks of Tier II intervention without careful assessment of the student’s instructional needs.

**Figure 1. Processes for One Round of Tier II Intervention**

![Diagram](image)

How does Tier II intervention fit into the school day?

During Tier II intervention, students are provided daily (five days a week) with an additional thirty minutes of focused instruction on critical early reading skills. This additional instruction should not be done during regular classroom reading instruction, as the aim is to support, rather than replace, core reading instruction. The scheduling of Tier II intervention should be a school-based decision and may vary within a school from grade to grade. For example, it may be decided that kindergarten students can miss social studies or science, but that second graders should be pulled from computer or library time. Schools may also decide to restructure the school day to allow for a standard time for Tier II intervention.
How do we group students for Tier II intervention?

Tier II groups are organized according to the skills targeted for each student, which is based on assessment data. One-on-one instruction and small groups heighten the level of student engagement by providing students with more opportunities to respond. Grouping students based on their skill deficits allows the interventionist to match instruction to meet the particular needs of each student. This makes for a more efficient use of time during the intervention and maximizes student learning. Student grouping may need adjustment as instructional priorities for each student change.

What should the intervention look like?

Instruction should be systematic and explicit (instruction with modeling, multiple examples, and feedback to individual students). It should be paced to match each student’s skill level. Students should have multiple opportunities to participate and respond, with the interventionist providing corrective feedback. The purpose of Tier II intervention is to provide additional attention, focus, and support. Coordinating instruction for the intervention with instruction in the core program ensures that students have additional opportunities embedded throughout the school day to practice targeted skills.
While working with students, interventionists should follow certain procedures to ensure an optimal learning environment, including:

- Checking in with students during an activity to be sure they are performing correctly
- Asking students to demonstrate what they are doing
- Asking students to repeat the directions
- Checking initial practice items for correctness and providing immediate feedback
- Calling on students during group discussion
- Assisting students in performing assignments correctly
- Using correction procedures

**How do we select the intervention program(s) and materials?**

The Tier II intervention program(s) should be a specialized and research-based program that emphasizes the components of reading in which the identified students have demonstrated a deficit. Therefore, selection of materials is determined based on the needs of individual students. The program(s) selected may include instructional content for many or all of the essential reading components; however, the interventionist should not simply deliver a program “as is.” Instruction should focus on components of the program that target the specific skill deficits of the students receiving the intervention. This will mean that not all students receive intervention in the same components of reading, as needs will differ from student to student.

Results from assessments help pinpoint target areas for each student. This in turn helps determine student grouping. The interventionist then selects components of the intervention program(s) that specifically address those skill deficiencies. For example, if a kindergarten student scores poorly on a measure of phonemic awareness, the interventionist might analyze the results and see that the student is able to produce only initial sounds. The interventionist can then choose lessons from the program(s) that specifically focus on building phonemic awareness, such as segmenting and blending onset-rime, final, and medial sounds in words.

A school-based committee should decide which program(s) should be used for Tier II. The committee should determine the needs of the students entering Tier II intervention and use that information to select the appropriate program(s).

**How do we monitor students’ progress?**

Progress monitoring occurs every two weeks on each student’s targeted skill to ensure adequate progress and learning. Interventionists use the assessment measure that corresponds to the skill targeted by the intervention. For example, if the student has demonstrated low phonemic awareness, the DIBELS™ Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF) measure might be used to track that student’s progress. This student-specific information helps the interventionist to adjust instruction to meet current needs.
When do students exit Tier II and Tier III?

A round of Tier II instruction lasts ten to twelve weeks. After the first ten- to twelve-week round of Tier II intervention, a decision should be made about the student’s instructional needs. A committee of school personnel, such as a campus assessment team, pre-referral team, student support team, etc., may make this decision. The options considered should include:

- exiting Tier II or Tier III intervention if the student is able to meet benchmarks;
- another round of Tier II or Tier III intervention;
- entrance to Tier III intensive intervention if Tier II intervention has proved insufficient;
- receiving Tier II or Tier III intervention in summer school;
- referral for special services (dyslexia, 504, etc.).

It is critical that a student does not exceed twenty weeks of Tier II intervention without careful assessment of the student’s instructional needs.

As a general guideline, students are ready to exit Tier II and Tier III when they have reached benchmarks on the targeted skills.

Figure 2. Checkpoints in the Decision-Making Process
Can students re-enter Tier II?

Tier II intervention is designed to give students two chances to meet benchmarks before being identified for Tier III intensive intervention. (However, in some cases students may show a need for Tier III after only one round of Tier II.) Students may enter round two of Tier II intervention if (a) they have been through one round of Tier II and have exited but now need additional intervention, or (b) they have been through one round of Tier II, never met exit criteria, and current benchmark testing identifies a need for further Tier II intervention.

Table 2. “To Do” List for Tier II

- Select research-based intervention program(s)
- Train interventionists (using teachers who have attended the Teacher Reading Academies as interventionists or trainers of interventionists)
- Identify students who have not met benchmarks
- Identify specific skill areas needing additional instruction for each student
- Arrange student grouping according to focus of instruction (use homogeneous grouping format)
- Select components of the intervention curriculum that focus instruction on targeted skill areas
- Monitor progress every two weeks (using progress-monitoring assessments and observations)
- Use progress-monitoring information to adjust instruction, or exit students when appropriate
- Include a record of the intervention and progress-monitoring data in students’ files
Tier III: Intensive Intervention

The basic steps for implementing Tier III intensive intervention are the same as for Tier II intervention. However, Tier III differs in several important ways:

- eligibility criteria;
- group size and amount of daily instruction;
- additional curricular and instructional adaptations.

These differences are highlighted in this section.

Eligibility: How are students selected for Tier III intensive intervention?

There are three ways students may be selected for Tier III intensive intervention. Generally, students enter Tier III if they have participated in two rounds of Tier II intervention and have not made sufficient progress. In some cases, students may enter Tier III after receiving only one round of Tier II. These students show a marked lack of progress and further Tier II intervention is deemed insufficient to put them back on track. Additionally, students who have received previous Tier III intensive intervention and have exited may re-enter Tier III as needed. Schools may decide to convene a committee of school personnel, such as a campus assessment team, pre-referral team, student support team, ARD committee, etc., to assist in determining a student's eligibility for Tier III.

What is the relationship between Tier III intensive intervention and special education?

Students eligible for Tier III show a lack of growth in acquiring early literacy skills as evidenced by continuing failure to meet benchmarks. Once Tier III instruction has put these students back on track, they will still need a significant amount of support to maintain their progress in becoming successful readers.

Tier III intensive intervention may work in conjunction with special education reading instruction. In Texas, the Admission Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee is empowered to make decisions regarding students' needs for special education services. The Three-Tier Reading Model provides a process for meeting the needs of students identified as having learning disabilities in reading. When adopting the Three-Tier Reading Model, each school or district must decide how it will address the relationship between instruction in Tier III and instruction delivered through special education services.
How do we group students for Tier III intervention?

Tier III groups are organized according to the skills targeted for each student, which is based on assessment data. Small groups heighten the level of student engagement by providing students with more opportunities to respond. Grouping students based on their skill deficits allows the interventionist to match instruction to meet the particular needs of each student. This makes for a more efficient use of time during the intervention and maximizes student learning. Student grouping may need adjustment as instructional priorities for each student change.

How does Tier III differ from Tier II in materials and instructional adjustments?

Similarly to Tier II, Tier III consists of carefully designed and implemented instruction, as well as requiring a sustained, intensive, scientifically based reading program(s) and materials emphasizing the essential components of effective reading instruction. The program(s) selected may be the same as for Tier II or it may be different, depending on the instructional needs of the students eligible for Tier III in a particular school.

Modifications that may be made to adapt programs for Tier III intensive intervention include (a) redefining the group size or providing one-on-one instruction, (b) providing additional instructional time, and (c) providing extended time for the intervention (before school, after school, and summer school programs).

As with Tier II intervention, instruction in Tier III should be systematic and explicit, providing multiple examples and feedback that are individualized to each student. However, because students who are eligible for Tier III have not been able to reach benchmarks even with opportunities provided in Tier II intervention, the interventionist in Tier III must make additional adaptations and adjustments to instruction.

One instructional element that can be adjusted is the intensity of instruction. Instruction can be intensified by adjusting the following: (a) range of examples, (b) task difficulty, (c) task length, and (d) type of response (see Table 1).
**Table 1: Adjusting Instructional Intensity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to adjust</th>
<th>How to adjust it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Range of Examples</td>
<td>provide more examples and a wider range of examples (modeling, explaining, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Difficulty</td>
<td>conduct a task analysis by breaking the task down into smaller steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Length</td>
<td>extend the length of the task; student provides more responses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low intensity</th>
<th>Medium intensity</th>
<th>High intensity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) yes/no response or</td>
<td>a) oral response and/or</td>
<td>a) oral independent response (no choices offered) or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) point to correct answer</td>
<td>b) multiple choice response</td>
<td>b) written response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Intensity can also be adjusted by increasing the amount of interventionist-to-student interaction per unit of time.2 By design (i.e., by increasing the amount of time per day and decreasing the group size), Tier III allows more of this interaction than Tier II. However, the interventionist must be ready to take advantage of these additional opportunities by offering *each student* more of the following:

- repeated opportunities for practice and review;
- additional opportunities for correction and feedback;
- increased time on-task, engaged in reading instruction and practice;
- drill repetition and practice review;
- breaking down tasks into smaller steps;
- making learning visible;
- using, then fading prompts and cues.

**When do students exit the Tier III intensive intervention?**

As a general guideline, a student is ready to exit the intervention when he or she has reached benchmark on the targeted skills. A committee of school personnel, such as a campus assessment team, pre-referral team, student support team, etc., may assist in evaluating the student’s progress and making decisions regarding exiting the student from Tier III.

**Can students re-enter Tier III intensive intervention?**

Students who exit Tier III will still need substantial support and frequent monitoring to maintain adequate progress. If an exited student again fails to meet benchmarks, he or she may re-enter Tier III intensive intervention and exit as needed.
Table 2. “To Do” List for Tier III

- Train interventionists (using teachers who have attended the Teacher Reading Academies as interventionists or trainers of interventionists)

- Use benchmark testing (fall screening plus winter and spring progress monitoring) to identify students not making progress in round two of Tier II

- Identify specific skill areas needing intensive intervention for each student

- Arrange student grouping according to skill deficits

- Select research-based, intensive intervention programs

- Customize instruction based on targeted skill areas

- Designate the intervention location

- Monitor progress every two weeks (using progress-monitoring assessments and observations)

- Use progress-monitoring information to adjust instruction, or exit students when appropriate

- Include a record of the intensive intervention and progress-monitoring data in students’ files
How can our school get started with the Three-Tier Reading Model?

The initial step in the process of implementing new programs or making adjustments to existing programs is assessing the status of the reading program that is currently in place in your school. A thorough assessment involves taking an objective look at all components of the reading program within all levels, from the district to individual classrooms.

At the district level, a review of the mission and goals for primary reading instruction will assist in establishing a frame of reference for evaluating reading programs. Assuming district goals align with research-based recommendations for effective instruction, school administrators are encouraged to refer to these goals when initiating an assessment of campus reading programs. At the campus level, reading goals parallel district goals and together, these serve as guides for making program changes or recommendations. An evaluation of campus reading-instruction practices includes a review of:

- curriculum and supplemental materials;
- instructional practices;
- amount of time devoted to instruction;
- integration of reading and writing into other curricular domains;
- intervention for students who are struggling;
- referral processes for intervention;
- environmental arrangement and grouping practices;
- professional development;
- assessment processes and student outcome data.

Because student outcomes are enhanced when instruction is systematic and explicit, each component of reading instruction should be reviewed with a purposeful emphasis on the delivery of systematic and explicit instruction.

How does the Three-Tier Reading Model address national and state legislative mandates?

The Three-Tier Reading Model provides a process for delivering quality reading instruction and reducing the prevalence of reading difficulties in kindergarten through third-grade students. With a strong emphasis on methods and strategies grounded in scientifically based reading research (SBRR), and use of assessment instruments, including screening and progress-monitoring measures, and by providing ongoing professional development for teachers, the model is aligned with the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act and requirements for Reading First grants.

By emphasizing early intervention for struggling readers, use of early literacy assessments, and training through the Teacher Reading Academies and Effective Instruction for Elementary Struggling Readers Academies, the model also incorporates the goals and objectives of the Student Success Initiative and the Texas Reading Initiative. The Three-Tier Reading Model serves as a means of bringing all of these pieces together by incorporating the resources and training provided to Texas teachers and administrators through the Texas Reading Initiative.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Questions to Answer</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>In Our District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are our primary reading instruction goals?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How well does our current reading program serve our students and meet these goals?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should we implement the Three-Tier Reading Model?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who in our district/school will be in charge of organizing the model’s implementation?</td>
<td>central office administrator; campus administrator; designated team; reading specialist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who will provide Tier II intervention?</td>
<td>classroom teacher; specialized reading teacher; external interventionist; (recommended: TRA-trained teachers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who will provide Tier III intensive intervention?</td>
<td>specialized reading teacher; special education teacher; external interventionist; (recommended: TRA-trained teachers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify training teachers have received.</td>
<td>Teacher Reading Academy; Effective Instruction for Struggling Readers Institute</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What training will the interventionists need?</td>
<td>dependent on the program(s) selected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who will train the interventionists?</td>
<td>Teacher Reading Academy-trained teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much personnel will we need to implement this model? How does this compare to current staffing?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What ratio/percentage of students will we be able to serve in Tier II and Tier III?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What entrance and exit criteria will our district/school use for Tier II intervention?</td>
<td>meeting benchmarks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the school day currently set up? Will it need to be reorganized to provide time for intervention?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who will manage the benchmark-assessment data and how?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who will be responsible for evaluating the progress of Tier II and Tier III students?</td>
<td>campus assessment team; pre-referral team; student support team, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Initial administrative review of current reading programs and practices may indicate the need for further evaluation. Some tools are publicly available via the Internet for districts and schools to use when conducting an evaluation of their core reading programs and planning for schoolwide reading improvement. The following pages provide brief descriptions of each of the following items:

- Planning and evaluation tool for effective schoolwide reading programs
- A consumer's guide to evaluating a core reading program, grades K–3: A critical elements analysis
- Analysis of reading assessment instruments for K–3
Planning and Evaluation Tool (PET) for Effective Schoolwide Reading Programs

What does this tool evaluate?

The PET is used to determine the overall quality of a school's current reading program by evaluating each of its elements. Each element is weighted based on its importance in providing an effective schoolwide reading program. For example, instructional practices and materials are given more weight than goals, objectives, and priorities. The following table lists the elements examined in the PET tool and the weight they are given:

Table 2. Elements of Reading Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element(s)</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goals/Objectives/Priorities</td>
<td>/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>/20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Programs/Materials</td>
<td>/22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Time</td>
<td>/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiated Instruction/Grouping</td>
<td>/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration/Organization/Communication</td>
<td>/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>/100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who does the evaluation?

This tool is designed for use by administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals involved in reading instruction.

What is the evaluation process?

Worksheets are provided that help score and analyze the major elements (e.g., assessment and professional development) of a school’s reading program. Each major element is broken down into smaller items (e.g., professional development includes the item “Time is allocated for educators to analyze, plan, and refine instruction”). The evaluator assigns each item a score of 0 (not in place), 1 (partially in place), or 2 (fully in place) to designate how well it is currently being implemented. Once all the evaluations are finished, the scores for each element are tallied and averaged, and a schoolwide summary is created. The school then determines the weaknesses and strengths of its current reading program, and develops a plan of action by identifying three priorities for change.
What does this tool evaluate?

This tool provides guidelines for evaluating core (basal) reading programs schools may be considering for adoption.

Who does the evaluation?

The recommendation is that every teacher involved in reading instruction participate in the review of new programs. However, grade-level representatives may conduct the initial review and provide teachers with a selected list of options.

What is the evaluation process?

The analysis of reading programs is broken down by grade level (K–3), and further by the essential components of reading instruction emphasized at each grade, as demonstrated by the following chart:

### Table 3. Instructional Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>1st Grade</th>
<th>2nd Grade</th>
<th>3rd Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phonemic Awareness</td>
<td>Phonemic Awareness -</td>
<td>Decoding and Word Recognition</td>
<td>Decoding and Word Recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter-Sound Association</td>
<td>Decoding and Word Recognition</td>
<td>Irregular Words</td>
<td>Vocabulary and Concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decoding</td>
<td>Irregular Words -</td>
<td>Vocabulary and Concept</td>
<td>Passage Reading—Fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irregular Words</td>
<td>Passage Reading</td>
<td>Passage Reading—Fluency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening Comprehension</td>
<td>Reading Comprehension -</td>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The brief worksheets included use a simple rating system to determine how well a program addresses these components. Grade-level summary sheets provide a picture of the program’s overall effectiveness. Further criteria are included for evaluating: (a) overall quality of materials, (b) incorporation of differentiated instruction (grouping, learners with special needs, and advanced learners), and (c) assessment components for all grades.
Analysis of Reading Assessment Instruments for K–3

What kind of information is provided?

This document provides a list of reading assessments used in kindergarten through third grade. Each assessment has been examined to determine which of the essential components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics/word study, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension) it assesses. The following chart provides a brief description of each purpose for which assessments were examined:

Table 4. Purposes for Reading Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Assessment</th>
<th>How Schools Use the Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Screening</td>
<td>To quickly evaluate all students and help determine which students are at risk for reading difficulty and will need additional intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosis</td>
<td>To provide in-depth information about students’ instructional needs to aid teachers in planning instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Monitoring</td>
<td>To determine if students are making adequate progress or need additional intervention to achieve grade-level reading outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>To provide an overall evaluation of the effectiveness of the reading program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


How should my school use this information?

The analysis of reading assessment instruments helps schools to (a) identify the reading components measured by each instrument, (b) determine the most appropriate use of each assessment, and (c) select reading assessment instruments that will best match schools’ needs.
What can administrators do to facilitate implementation?

How can we assist with resources and personnel?

✓ Conduct an inventory of school reading resources to ensure the school has the materials needed for all teachers and students.
✓ Determine if existing school personnel will be sufficient to successfully implement the model, and hire new personnel if needed. Schools may want to consider hiring a campus reading coordinator.
✓ Anticipate scheduling needs, including allocating time for (a) classroom instruction and Tier II and Tier III intervention, (b) benchmark testing, (c) feedback meetings for staff to discuss suggestions and concerns, and (d) ongoing professional development.
✓ Link school personnel to training opportunities (e.g., scientifically based reading research and instruction, assessment-specific training, grouping for instruction) that will aid them in implementing the Three-Tier Reading Model.

What role does communication play in the Three-Tier Reading Model?

Communication is key to effecting schoolwide change. Procedures should be put in place for communication (a) across and within grade levels, (b) between administrators and other school personnel, and (c) between the school and parents. Administrators should schedule opportunities for school personnel to discuss concerns and share insights. Troubleshooting and problem solving should be a collective effort, incorporating the knowledge and wisdom of everyone involved in the implementation process.

What intervention details should we consider during the planning stages?

✓ Designate locations for Tier III instruction.
✓ Establish criteria for students entering Tier II and Tier III.
✓ Ensure that interventionists have the necessary materials.
✓ Identify the training that teachers have received (e.g., Teacher Reading Academy, Effective Instruction for Struggling Readers Institute).
✓ Provide interventionists with any training needed to carry out the interventions (e.g., training on materials/curriculum, progress monitoring, grouping). -
How should our school manage student data?

The Three-Tier Reading Model is more than a quick fix; it is a commitment to changing the process of providing quality reading instruction for all students. Since this process is a long-term commitment, it is important to set up procedures that allow schools to examine student data over the course of a semester, a year, or several years. Creating a system to manage the data involves:

✓ setting up a database;
✓ designating procedures for collecting, entering, and reporting data;
✓ training personnel to enter and report data.

Administrators should ensure that student data management procedures are in place as schools begin the model’s implementation.

How much time should be devoted to regular reading instruction in the classroom?

Ensure that teachers are providing a minimum of ninety minutes of reading instruction. Those ninety minutes should focus on teaching practices and activities that emphasize the essential components of effective reading instruction. It is also crucial that time designated for reading instruction be protected against disruption. Administrators should take the lead in communicating the importance of reading instruction time to all school personnel.

What planning time do teachers need?

Ensure that teachers have adequate planning time. This includes regular opportunities for planning independently and on grade-level teams, and planning and communication across grade levels.

How can we assist teachers during benchmark testing?

Assist teachers during benchmark testing by arranging to have a teacher’s aid or other school personnel help manage the class while teachers are testing students. It may also be helpful for schools to organize and train extra personnel on testing procedures.
Tier I Evaluation Form

This form is to be used by administrators to evaluate the three basic components of the Three-Tier Reading Model. **Domain I** evaluates the core reading curriculum implementation. **Domain II** evaluates progress-monitoring practices. **Domain III** evaluates professional development activities associated with the model. This form should be completed based both on observations and interviews.

Teacher Name: ___________________________ Grade: ____ Date: ___________ Visit #: ____

**Domain I. Core Reading Curriculum Implementation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>🍎</td>
<td>Un satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🍊</td>
<td>Below Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🍋</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🍏</td>
<td>Exceeds Expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Teacher is using the adopted core curriculum program
   - Program is being implemented for the prescribed time
   - Teacher is familiar with and comfortable using the program

2. Teacher provides explicit instruction* in the critical elements of reading instruction (overall rating)

Note: Corresponding grade levels are listed after each indicator. Indicators are intended as examples, not a comprehensive list.

- Phonemic/phonological awareness
  - Sound/word discrimination (K)
  - Sound/word isolation (1)
  - Rhyming (K)
  - Blending & Segmentation (K, 1)

- Phonics and Word Study
  - Letter-sound correspondence (K, 1, 2)
  - Sight-word reading (K, 1, 2, 3)
  - Decoding (sounding out words) (K, 1, 2, 3)
  - Reading connected text (1, 2, 3)

- Comprehension
  - Predicting (K)
  - Identifying information from stories (K, 1)
  - Retelling and summarizing (K, 1, 2, 3)
  - Making connections/Inferences (K, 1, 2, 3)
  - Monitoring comprehension (1, 2, 3)
  - Comprehending stories and informational text (1, 2, 3)

- Vocabulary
  - Concept and naming use (K)
  - Categorization (K, 1, 2, 3)
  - Vocabulary development and use (K, 1, 2, 3)
Elements and Indicators -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 1 2 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Text-Reading**
  - Opportunities for reading connected text
  - Fluency practice -
    - Repeated reading -
    - Partner reading -
    - Timed reading -

3. Students are grouped for reading instruction **
   - Grouping is based on need -
   - Grouping is flexible***

*Explicit instruction is instruction that is clear, overt, and visible.

**Item 2 may be best determined through interview.

***Flexible grouping refers to use of progress monitoring or other assessment data to form instructional groups that may change based on instructional needs.

NOTES (from observation and interview): -
## Domain II. Progress Monitoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements and Indicators</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher monitors students’ progress in reading (overall rating)</td>
<td>📌 1 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher uses appropriate progress-monitoring assessments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher monitors and assesses students on an ongoing basis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher knows which students need intervention and intensive intervention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. How is student progress in reading being monitored?
   a. Who does the progress monitoring?

   b. Which measure(s) are used?

   c. Do all teachers at a school give the same measure(s)?

   d. How frequently are the measures used?

   e. Who is being monitored (i.e., every student in the class or only struggling readers)?

2. Do the measures being used tap the essential components of reading instruction?

3. Do teachers use progress-monitoring results to plan instruction? How?

4. What progress-monitoring records are maintained by the teacher?

5. What are the current student scores on the progress-monitoring measure? What percentage of students is identified as at-risk or struggling? How would you rate this percentage (high, average, low)?
Domain III. Professional Development

1. Is there a professional development plan in place that relates specifically to reading? If so, does it reflect a commitment to reading achievement for all students by providing teachers with research-based information on reading instruction? Are topics coordinated so that they complement rather than conflict with each other?

2. How often do teachers engage in professional development designed specifically to address effective reading instruction? Are teachers required to attend? Are there incentives and/or administrative support for attendance?

3. When are the professional development activities offered? How are teachers’ schedules affected?

4. Does the sequence of topics align with the teachers’ instructional needs (e.g., a session on grouping strategies offered at the beginning of the year to align with teacher need and increase the likelihood of implementation)?

5. What follow-up is provided to teachers to help them implement new practices from professional development sessions?

6. Are teachers given an opportunity for input into the professional development plan?
### Effective Reading Instruction Summary Checklist

#### Phonemic Awareness Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Students Need to Learn</th>
<th>How We Teach It</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• That spoken words consist of individual sounds or phonemes</td>
<td>• Provide explicit and systematic instruction focusing on only one or two phonemic awareness skills, such as segmenting and blending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How words can be segmented (pulled apart) into sounds, and how these sounds can be blended (put back together) and manipulated (added, deleted, and substituted)</td>
<td>• Link sounds to letters as soon as possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to use their phonemic awareness to blend sounds to read words and to segment sounds in words to spell them</td>
<td>• Use systematic classroom-based instructional assessment to inform instruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Phonics and Word Study Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Students Need to Learn</th>
<th>How We Teach It</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Accurate and rapid identification of the letters of the alphabet</td>
<td>• Provide explicit, systematic phonics instruction that teaches a set of letter-sound relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The alphabetic principle (an understanding that the sequence of sounds or phonemes in a spoken word are represented by letters in a written word)</td>
<td>• Provide explicit instruction in blending sounds to read words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Phonics elements (e.g., letter-sound correspondences, spelling patterns, syllables, and meaningful word parts)</td>
<td>• Include practice in reading texts that are written for students to use their phonics knowledge to decode and read words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to apply phonics elements as they read and write</td>
<td>• Give substantial practice for students to apply phonics as they spell words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use systematic classroom-based instructional assessment to inform instruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2002). *The secretary’s reading leadership academy: Effective reading instruction.* Austin, TX: Author.
## Appendix A (continued)

### Effective Reading Instruction Summary Checklist

#### Spelling and Writing Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Students Need to Learn</th>
<th>How We Teach It</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How to remember and reproduce exact letter patterns (e.g., letter-sound correspondences, spelling patterns, syllables, and meaningful word parts)</td>
<td>• Provide explicit and systematic spelling instruction to reinforce and extend students’ growing knowledge about reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to segment sounds in words to spell them</td>
<td>• Provide opportunities for manipulating, categorizing, and examining the similarities and differences in words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to notice reliable spelling patterns and generalizations</td>
<td>• Provide daily opportunities to increase writing accuracy and speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rapid, accurate letter formation</td>
<td>• Model various types of writing and help students to apply spelling and reading knowledge in purposeful writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to write for different purposes and audiences in various forms</td>
<td>• Integrate writing across the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use systematic classroom-based instructional assessment to inform instruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Fluency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Students Need to Learn</th>
<th>How We Teach It</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How to decode words (in isolation and in connected text)</td>
<td>• Provide opportunities for guided oral repeated reading that includes support and feedback from teachers, peers, and/or parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to automatically recognize words (accurately and quickly with little attention or effort)</td>
<td>• Match reading texts and instruction to individual students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to increase speed (or rate) of reading while maintaining accuracy</td>
<td>• Apply systematic classroom-based instructional assessment to monitor student progress in both rate and accuracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2002). *The secretary’s reading leadership academy: Effective reading instruction*. Austin, TX: Author.

98 | Appendix
## Effective Reading Instruction Summary Checklist

### Text Comprehension Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Students Need to Learn</th>
<th>How We Teach It</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How to read both narrative and expository texts</td>
<td>• Explicitly explain, model, and teach comprehension strategies, such as previewing and summarizing text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to understand and remember what they read</td>
<td>• Provide comprehension instruction before, during, and after reading narrative and expository texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to relate their own knowledge or experiences to text</td>
<td>• Promote thinking and extended discourse by asking questions and encouraging student questions and discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to use comprehension strategies to improve their comprehension</td>
<td>• Provide extended opportunities for English language learners to participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to communicate with others about what they read</td>
<td>• Use systematic classroom-based instructional assessment to inform instruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Vocabulary Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Students Need to Learn</th>
<th>How We Teach It</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The meanings for most of the words in a text so they can understand what they read</td>
<td>• Provide opportunities for students to receive direct, explicit instruction in the meanings of words and in word learning strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to apply a variety of strategies to learn word meanings</td>
<td>• Provide many opportunities for students to read in and out of school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to make connections between words and concepts</td>
<td>• Engage students in daily interactions that promote using new vocabulary in both oral and written language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to accurately use words in oral and written language</td>
<td>• Enrich and expand the vocabulary knowledge of English language learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Actively involve students in making connections between concepts and words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2002). The secretary’s reading leadership academy: Effective reading instruction. Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix A (continued)

Effective Reading Instruction Summary Checklist

Features of Effective Instruction

Grouping

- Alternate grouping formats (e.g., one-on-one, pairs, small group, whole group) for different instructional purposes and to meet students' needs
- Use small, same-ability groups, continually monitor student progress, and regroup to reflect students' knowledge and skills
- When students experience difficulties, reteach knowledge and skills that have the highest impact on learning to read
- Use flexible grouping that provides opportunities for students to be members of more than one group
- Incorporate peer tutoring; pair students together (e.g., a less proficient reader with a more proficient reader)

Maximizing Student Learning

- Every minute counts!
- Actively engage students:
  - Vary presentation, format, and ways students can participate in instruction
  - Reduce teacher talk
  - Use an appropriate level of instructional materials
  - Adapt the pacing, content, and emphasis of instruction for individuals and groups of students, including English language learners and those having difficulty learning to read

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2002). The secretary's reading leadership academy: Effective reading instruction. Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix A (continued)

Effective Reading Instruction Summary Checklist

Effective Reading Interventions

What Struggling Readers Need to Learn

• Knowledge and skills that have the highest impact on learning to read

How We Teach Struggling Readers

• Group students into groups of three to five according to their instructional needs or teach students one-to-one
• Provide targeted instruction three to five times per week
• Ensure additional instruction aligns with core reading instruction
• Provide ongoing and systematic corrective feedback to students
• Provide extended practice in the essential components of reading instruction, based on students’ needs
• Increase time for word study and build fluency to improve automatic word recognition and rate of reading
• Use systematic progress-monitoring assessments to document student growth and inform instruction

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2002). The secretary’s reading leadership academy: Effective reading instruction. Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix B

Kindergarten Accomplishments

• Knows the parts of a book and their functions.
• Begins to track print when listening to a familiar text being read or when rereading own writing.
• “Reads” familiar texts emergently, i.e., not necessarily verbatim from the print alone.
• Recognizes and can name all uppercase and lowercase letters.
• Understands that the sequence of letters in a written word represents the sequence of sounds (phonemes) in a spoken word (alphabetic principle).
• Learns many, though not all, one-to-one letter-sound correspondences.
• Recognizes some words by sight, including a few very common ones (a, the, I, my, you, is, are).
• Uses new vocabulary and grammatical constructions in own speech.
• Makes appropriate switches from oral to written language situations.
• Notices when simple sentences fail to make sense.
• Connects information and events in texts to life and life to text experiences.
• Retells, reenacts, or dramatizes stories or parts of stories.
• Listens attentively to books teacher reads to class.
• Can name some book titles and authors.
• Demonstrates familiarity with a number of types or genres of text (e.g., storybooks, expository texts, poems, newspapers, and everyday print such as signs, notices, labels).
• Correctly answers questions about stories read aloud.
• Makes predictions based on illustrations or portions of stories.
• Demonstrates understanding that spoken words consist of sequences of phonemes.
• Given spoken sets like dan, dan, den can identify the first two as being the same and the third as different.
• Given spoken sets like dak, pat, zen can identify the first two as sharing a same sound.
• Given spoken segments can merge them into a meaningful target word.
• Given a spoken word can produce another word that rhymes with it.
• Independently writes many uppercase and lowercase letters.
• Uses phonemic awareness and letter knowledge to spell independently (invented or creative spelling).
• Writes (unconventionally) to express own meaning.
• Builds a repertoire of some conventionally spelled words.
• Shows awareness of distinction between “kid writing” and conventional orthography.
• Writes own name (first and last) and the first names of some friends or classmates.
• Can write most letters and some words when they are dictated.

Appendix C

First-Grade Accomplishments

• Makes a transition from emergent to “real” reading.
• Reads aloud with accuracy and comprehension any text that is appropriately designed for the first half of grade 1.
• Accurately decodes orthographically regular, one-syllable words and nonsense words (e.g., sit, zot), using print-sound mappings to sound out unknown words.
• Uses letter-sound correspondence knowledge to sound out unknown words when reading text.
• Recognizes common, irregularly spelled words by sight (have, said, where, two).
• Has a reading vocabulary of 300 to 500 words, sight words and easily sounded out words.
• Monitors own reading and self-corrects when an incorrectly identified word does not fit with cues provided by the letters in the word or the context surrounding the word.
• Reads and comprehends both fiction and nonfiction that is appropriately designed for grade level.
• Shows evidence of expanding language repertory, including increasing appropriate use of standard more formal language registers.
• Creates own written texts for others to read.
• Notices when difficulties are encountered in understanding text.
• Reads and understands simple written instructions.
• Predicts and justifies what will happen next in stories.
• Discusses prior knowledge of topics in expository texts.
• Discusses how, why, and what-if questions in sharing nonfiction texts.
• Describes new information gained from texts in own words.
• Distinguishes whether simple sentences are incomplete or fail to make sense; notices when simple texts fail to make sense.
• Can answer simple written comprehension questions based on material read.
• Can count the number of syllables in a word.
• Can blend or segment the phonemes of most one-syllable words.
• Spells correctly three- and four-letter short vowel words.
• Composes fairly readable first drafts using appropriate parts of the writing process (some attention to planning, drafting, rereading for meaning, and some self-correction).
• Uses invented spelling/phonics-based knowledge to spell independently, when necessary.
• Shows spelling consciousness or sensitivity to conventional spelling.
• Uses basic punctuation and capitalization.
• Produces a variety of types of compositions (e.g., stories, descriptions, journal entries), showing appropriate relationships between printed text, illustrations, and other graphics.
• Engages in a variety of literary activities voluntarily (e.g., choosing books and stories to read, writing a note to a friend).

Appendix D

Second-Grade Accomplishments

- Reads and comprehends both fiction and nonfiction that is appropriately designed for grade level.
- Accurately decodes orthographically regular multisyllable words and nonsense words (e.g., capital, Kalamazoo).
- Uses knowledge of print-sound mappings to sound out unknown words.
- Accurately reads many irregularly spelled words and such spelling patterns as diphthongs, special vowel spellings, and common word endings.
- Reads and comprehends both fiction and nonfiction that is appropriately designed for grade level.
- Shows evidence of expanding language repertory, including increasing use of more formal language registers.
- Reads voluntarily for interest and own purposes.
- Rereads sentences when meaning is not clear.
- Interprets information from diagrams, charts, and graphs.
- Recalls facts and details of texts.
- Reads nonfiction materials for answers to specific questions or for specific purposes.
- Takes part in creative responses to texts such as dramatizations, oral presentations, fantasy play, etc.
- Discusses similarities in characters and events across stories.
- Connects and compares information across nonfiction selections.
- Poses possible answers to how, why, and what-if questions.
- Correctly spells previously studied words and spelling patterns in own writing.
- Represents the complete sound of a word when spelling independently.
- Shows sensitivity to using formal language patterns in place of oral language patterns at appropriate spots in own writing (e.g., decontextualizing sentences, conventions for quoted speech, literary language forms, proper verb forms).
- Makes reasonable judgments about what to include in written products.
- Productively discusses ways to clarify and refine writing of own and others.
- With assistance, adds use of conferencing, revision, and editing processes to clarify and refine own writing to the steps of the expected parts of the writing process.
- Given organizational help, writes informative well-structured reports.
- Attends to spelling, mechanics, and presentation for final products.
- Produces a variety of types of compositions (e.g., stories, reports, correspondence).

Appendix E

Third-Grade Accomplishments

- Reads aloud with fluency and comprehension any text that is appropriately designed for grade level.
- Uses letter-sound correspondence knowledge and structural analysis to decode words.
- Reads and comprehends both fiction and nonfiction that is appropriately designed for grade level.
- Reads longer fictional selections and chapter books independently.
- Takes part in creative responses to texts such as dramatizations, oral presentations, fantasy play, etc.
- Can point to or clearly identify specific words or wordings that are causing comprehension difficulties.
- Summarizes major points from fiction and nonfiction texts.
- In interpreting fiction, discusses underlying theme or message.
- Asks how, why, and what-if questions in interpreting nonfiction texts.
- In interpreting nonfiction, distinguishes cause and effect, fact and opinion, main idea and supporting details.
- Uses information and reasoning to examine bases of hypotheses and opinions.
- Infers word meanings from taught roots, prefixes, and suffixes.
- Correctly spells previously studied words and spelling patterns in own writing.
- Begins to incorporate literacy words and language patterns in own writing (e.g., elaborates descriptions, uses figurative wording).
- With some guidance, uses all aspects of the writing process in producing own compositions and reports.
- Combines information from multiple sources in writing reports.
- With assistance, suggests and implements editing and revision to clarify and refine own writing.
- Presents and discusses own writing with other students and responds helpfully to other students' compositions.
- Independently reviews work for spelling, mechanics, and presentation.
- Produces a variety of written works (e.g., literature responses, reports, “published” books, semantic maps) in a variety of formats, including multimedia forms.

Appendix F

Frequently Asked Questions

Questions about assessment

As a teacher, how can I manage the rest of my class while I assess individual students?

Other school personnel, such as aides or tutors, can manage the class while teachers administer assessments. Reading specialists can also assist with class management, or administer measures if they have received training. Testing may also be done during time designated for centers or small-group reading instruction. In a team-teaching situation, teachers can trade working with the class and testing individual students.

What can the rest of my class do while I am assessing individual students?

Students may be doing individual work at their seats or working in centers. You may bring in other school personnel (teacher assistant, tutor, your team teacher, etc.) to help manage the class.
Appendix F (continued)

Questions about progress monitoring

For which students should I collect progress-monitoring data?

Progress monitoring is done every two weeks for students who have entered Tier II or Tier III in­struction. Additionally, it is recommended that teachers monitor the progress of their five lowest-scoring students who are not receiving Tier II or Tier III instruction.

How can I use progress-monitoring data to inform instruction?

Progress-monitoring data give teachers information on students’ current skill levels. As teachers evaluate this up-to-date information, they are able to rearrange groups so that students with similar needs are grouped together during small-group reading instruction. The teacher then plans small-group instruction that will focus on the needs of the students in each particular group.

Questions about Tier I

How can my school evaluate the effectiveness of our current core reading program?

The Planning and Evaluation Tool (PET) (available http://reading.uoregon.edu) is designed to evaluate a school’s current reading program (everything from assessment, to instructional practices and materials, to professional development).

A Consumer’s Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program (available http://reading.uoregon.edu) is de­signed to help evaluate the quality of basal reading programs schools are considering for adoption.

How can I determine which core elements of reading instruction are addressed by the early literacy assessments my school uses?

The Analysis of Reading Assessment Instruments for K-3 (available http://idea.uoregon.edu) provides a list of reading assessments and identifies which elements of reading instruction are assessed by each measure.
Appendix G

Helpful Reading/Literacy Web sites

http://www.texasreading.org

The Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts at The University of Texas at Austin provides leadership to educators in effective reading instruction through its diversified research and professional development projects. The Web site of the Vaughn Gross Center provides information on current research, professional development, and technical assistance projects, as well as access to resources related to improving reading instruction for all students, especially struggling readers, English language learners, and special education students.

http://www.texasfamilyliteracy.org

The Texas Family Literacy Center (TFLC) Web site is a resource for all family literacy educators throughout Texas. The center’s focus is to provide support for educators with students who speak a home language other than English. The site contains networks and activities for teachers, including the online family literacy program directory. This directory allows families to network throughout the state and plan for family literacy improvement. Also included are links to the TFLC newsletter, training seminars, research, and dissemination of materials.

http://www.tea.state.tx.us/

The Web site of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides visitors with the top education news of the day and information about Texas school laws, grant accreditation, and curriculum and assessment. A section on educational programs provides information about the Texas Reading Initiative, gifted and talented services, and special education.

http://www.tea.state.tx.us/reading/

The Texas Reading Initiative (TRI) Web site contains numerous resources for educators in Texas, including information about the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), early reading assessments, and recommended books. Many products created through the Texas Reading Initiative can be downloaded from this site.

http://www.tea.state.tx.us/technology/libraries/

The Web site of the Texas School Libraries includes information on the Texas School Library standards and how libraries can motivate children to learn to read. Topics covered include the importance of the library program in schools, the standards for curriculum integration, the library-learning environment, library resources, and program management in school libraries.

http://www.netLibrary.com/

The netLibrary site combines the library system of checking out books with online electronic publishing. Visitors can find full-text articles and professional books as well as keep a bookshelf and favorites list. A book can be “checked out” online and that book will be accessible any time during the “check-out” period. It is also possible to print pages from the book being viewed. An interesting feature is the link to the American Heritage Dictionary site. Simply clicking on a word while reading automatically looks it up in the dictionary.
Appendix G (continued)

http://reading.uoregon.edu

This is the Web site of the Big Ideas in Beginning Reading. The goal of this organization is to have all children reading on grade level by the end of third grade. The site provides teachers with information about the BIG IDEAS in reading (phonemic awareness, the alphabetic principle, fluency with text, vocabulary, and comprehension), how to teach them, and how to assess students.

http://www.ed.gov

The Web site of the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) provides educators with an overview of lesson ideas, assessments, training programs, school accreditation, and grant information. Resources provided through this site include information on early reading, programs and initiatives, research findings for teachers, and policies and regulations for state organizations in higher education.

http://www.nclb.gov

This is the official Web site of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the education law signed by President Bush on January 8, 2002. The NCLB act is based on four principles: stronger accountability for results, increased flexibility and local control, expanded options for parents, and an emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work. Available resources include tools for helping students to read, homework and reading tips, and information about supplemental services offered outside of the classroom.

http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org

The National Reading Panel (NRP) assesses the effectiveness of different approaches used to teach children to read. The NRP site contains information about publications and upcoming speaking engagements by panel members, congressional duties given to the NRP, biographies of NRP members, meeting minutes, and other historical information. In addition, teachers are able to address questions to the NRP about reading and classroom instruction.

http://www.nifl.gov

This is the Web site of the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), a federal organization that shares information about literacy and supports the development of high-quality literacy services for all Americans. Primary activities include policy information sharing between literacy teachers and federal lawmakers and providing information to children and adults in need of family literacy services. The Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) is a state-of-the-art, Internet-based information retrieval and communication system that provides answers to teachers’ questions on literacy-education services and publications.

http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/partnershipforreading/

The Partnership for Reading Web site offers a range of resources to support the implementation of evidence-based reading strategies in schools. Included are a comprehensive database of abstracts containing print and multimedia resources on reading research and instruction, updates on new developments in legislation and program development, and opportunities for educators to exchange experiences and practices related to reading instruction.
Appendix G (continued)

http://www.ciera.org

This is the Web site of the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA), a national center for research on early reading involving universities, teachers, publishers, and school districts from all over the United States. All CIERA publications can be ordered from this Web site. Instructional resources for teaching reading are available in the library section.

http://www.GetReadytoRead.org

This is the Web site of Get Ready to Read, a program of the National Center for Learning Disabilities. This site provides teachers with helpful methods for having children read by the time they enter school, skill-building activities, early literacy information, and programs and resources. The educators' section features information about creating reading-friendly space and using age-appropriate books.

http://www.naeyc.org

The Web site of The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is dedicated to improving the quality of educational programs for children from birth to third grade. The site provides information regarding federal policies and legislation, and national reports. A section for teachers includes information on professional development, program-review publications, and conferences.

http://readbygrade3.com

The purpose of the Read by Grade 3 site is to educate teachers on instruction in phonemic awareness and decoding. A general overview of reading research is provided, along with classroom activities, links to other Web sites designed to aid classroom teachers, and information about organizations dedicated to helping students learn to read. Read by Grade 3 also instructs teachers on how to identify and work with children who need intensive instruction at an early age.


The Web site of RAND Education reports research findings in literacy and reading instruction. This particular page includes the publication, Reading for Understanding: Toward an R&D Program in Reading Comprehension by Catherine Snow, a report on developing guidelines for the improvement of reading comprehension.

http://www.readingrockets.org

Reading Rockets is a national multimedia project that looks at how young children learn to read, why so many struggle, and how teachers can help them. This teacher-friendly site provides summarized reports from the Department of Education, links to educational resources for helping struggling readers, and weekly highlights from various authors about their books. A forum is available for teachers to share ideas about children and reading.

http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/

This is the Web site of the United States Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI). OERI distributes information and provides technical assistance to teachers working to improve education. The Web site gives a list of current educational topics with the latest research findings and published articles. OERI provides a list of educational improvement activities that promote nationwide educational reform efforts.
Appendix G (continued)

http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/

The site of the United States Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is dedicated to improving educational results for infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities from birth to 21 years. This site offers information on programs and projects funded for youth with disabilities, annual reports, national studies, and related legislation.


Just for the Kids (J4K) is an organization whose main goals are to raise academic standards and increase student learning. J4K collects and analyzes student outcome data to determine how well schools are performing, identify what makes the highest-performing schools successful, and provide training to educators interested in adopting practices that have proven successful in other schools. J4K’s data analysis is accessible from their Web site and is organized by state for easy use.

http://cars.uth.tmc.edu/

The Center for Academic and Reading Skills (CARS) is devoted to improving academic skills in children. Research at the Center examines the elements of instructional programs designed to improve academic and reading development, with emphasis on identifying the elements of reading programs that best facilitate reading development in a variety of student populations.

http://www.times.uh.edu/

The primary purposes of the Texas Institute for Measurement, Evaluation, and Statistics are to advance knowledge about, and to improve the behavioral, psychological, educational and developmental outcomes of children and adults through the application and development of high quality, cutting-edge research methods, and the delivery of state-of-the-art research and statistical support services.
Appendix H

“Riming” Race

Phonological Awareness: Blending and segmenting onsets and rimes

Objective:
The students will orally create words with specific rimes.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students to break down words into onsets and rimes.

Suggested grouping format:
whole class

Materials:
• Wipe-off board or piece of paper for keeping score
• Marker or pen

Instructional Procedure:
1. Review that many words can be broken down into an onset and a rime. An onset is the beginning consonant sound of a word, and a rime is the sound that follows the onset (e.g., The word tape can be broken down into the sounds /t/ and /ap/. The sound /t/ is the onset and /ap/ is the rime.).
2. Tell the students that a new word can be made by changing the onset (e.g., If you change the /t/ in tape to /k/, you make the word cape.).
3. Divide the class into two teams.
4. Tell the students they will create words by adding an onset to a rime. Decide whether both nonsense and real words will be accepted.
5. Tell the students the rules of the game.
   • The teacher will call out a rime (e.g., /ak/).
   • The first student to call out a word with that rime (e.g., “bake”) gains his or her team a point.
   • The student must then identify the onset, isolated from the rime (“The onset was /b/”). If the student answers correctly, his or her team gains another point. If that student answers incorrectly, a student from the other team may try to identify the onset and gain a point.
6. Select one student from each team to start.
7. Play the “Riming” Race according to the procedures in step 5.
8. Continue the game using the same or different rimes. The team with the most points wins.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). Essential reading strategies for the struggling reader: Activities for an accelerated reading program (Expanded ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Segmenting Words into Syllables

Phonological Awareness: Segmenting two-syllable CVC words into syllables

Objective:
Students will segment words into syllables.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students to segment words into syllables using concrete representation of the syllables.

Suggested grouping format:
small homogeneous groups or one-on-one with teacher

Materials:
• Word list of two-syllable words with CVC syllables (e.g., magnet, cactus, napkin)
• Two plastic counter chips for each student
• Say It and Move It mats (two circle) for each student (Appendix I)

Instructional Procedure:
1. Give each student a “Say It and Move It” mat and two chips. (The teacher should also have a mat and chips.)
2. Review with the students that a syllable is part of a word and contains one talking vowel. Tell the students that words can be separated into syllables.
3. Say one word with two syllables.
4. Tell the students to repeat the word.
5. Model segmenting the word into syllables (on the teacher’s mat).
   • Place two chips in the dotted-line circles above the solid line on the mat.
   • Say the first syllable and move the first chip down the arrow line to the first solid line circle.
   • Say the second syllable and move the second chip down the arrow line to the second solid line circle.
6. Have the students put two chips in the dotted-line circles above the solid line on their mats.
7. Say another word with two syllables.
8. Tell the students to repeat the word.
9. Have the students segment the word into syllables by saying each syllable and moving the chips from the dotted-line circles down to the solid line circles.
10. Continue the same procedure using other CVC words with two syllables.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Phoneme Chant

Phonological Awareness: Blending onsets and rimes

Objective:
The students will blend onsets and rimes orally.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students to orally separate a word into its onset and rime.

Suggested grouping format:
small group or whole class

Materials:
• Word list for the teacher

Instructional Procedure:
1. Review that words can be broken down into smaller sounds. Tell students that an onset is the beginning consonant sound of a word and that a rime is the sound that follows the onset.
2. Provide students with an example (e.g., The word cat can be broken down into the sounds /k/ and /at/. The sound /k/ is the onset and /at/ is the rime.)
3. Tell the students they will be playing a game in which you give them the onset and rime, and they must blend those sounds into a word.
4. Say the following chant:
   “It begins with /?/, And it ends with /?/. Put them together, And they say ______!”
   (e.g., “It begins with /p/, and it ends with /in/. Put them together, and they say pin!”)
5. Repeat the chant using the words from the word list. The teacher says the chant, giving students the onset and the rime. The students supply the blended word.

Note: This activity may also be done with nonsense words.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). Essential reading strategies for the struggling reader: Activities for an accelerated reading program (Expanded ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Onset-Rime Substitution

Phonological Awareness: Changing beginning sounds to make new words

Objective:
The students will practice onset-rime substitution.

Activity Purpose:
This activity will help students with rhyming and creating new words.

Suggested grouping format:
large group

Materials:
• Word list of words with the same rime pattern

Instructional Procedure:
1. Have the students sit in a circle.
2. Explain the procedure to students.
   • The teacher will introduce a word that will “move” around the circle from person to person.
   • To move the word, each student must make a new word by changing the beginning sound (onset) and saying the new word aloud.
3. Model the procedure by saying, “I have the word find. I’m changing /f/ to /k/ and the new word is kind.”
4. Going around the circle, have the students take turns changing the beginning sound (onset) of a word to create a new word, until students are unable to think of more words with that rime.
5. Introduce a word with a different rime and repeat step 4.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2002). Reading strategies and activities resource book: For students at risk for reading difficulties, including dyslexia. Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Phoneme Segmentation

Phonemic Awareness: Breaking down words into individual phonemes

Objective:
Students will segment three-phoneme words into individual phonemes.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students how to blend phonemes together to make words.

Suggested grouping format:
small group

Materials:
• Say It and Move It mat (three circle) per student (Appendix I)
• Three plastic counter chips per student
• Word list of CVC words

Instructional Procedure:
1. Pass out a “Say It and Move It” mat and three chips to each student (The teacher should also have a mat and chips.)
2. Tell students they will be segmenting words into phonemes by saying each sound, and then moving their chips from the dotted-line circles to the solid-line circles.
3. Model segmenting the word into phonemes.
   • Place three chips in the dotted-line circles above the solid line on the mat.
   • Say the beginning sound and move the first chip from the first dotted-line circle to the first solid-line circle.
   • Say the medial sound and move the second chip from the second dotted-line circle to the second solid-line circle.
   • Say the final sound and move the third chip from the third dotted-line circle to the third solid-line circle.
4. Say the word as a whole while sliding your finger below the chips in a left-to-right sequence.
5. Have students put three chips in the dotted-line circles above the solid line on the mat.
6. Say a CVC word from your word list.
7. Tell the students to repeat the word.
8. Have students segment the word into phonemes (using the procedures in step 3).
9. Have the students say the word while sliding their finger below the chips in a left-to-right sequence.
10. Continue the same procedure using other words from the word list.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Sound Magic

Phonemic Awareness: Manipulating sounds in three-phoneme words

Objective:
The student will manipulate phonemes in words to create new words.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students how to substitute initial sounds in words. (May be modified to medial or final sounds.)

Suggested grouping format:
small group or whole class

Materials:
• Word list of three-phoneme words

Instructional Procedure:
1. Explain the procedure to the class.
   • The teacher will introduce a one-syllable word that will “move” around the circle from person to person.
   • To move the word, the student must make a new word by changing the beginning sound and saying the new word aloud.
2. Ask students to sit in a circle. Introduce a three-phoneme word (e.g., *sit*).
3. Model the procedure by saying, “I have the word *sit* and I’m changing it to *fit*.”
4. Hand the word to the first student. (You may want to use a concrete object to represent the word, but do not use letter or word cards.)
5. Instruct the first student to change the beginning sound of the word to create another word (e.g., *hit*).
6. Have the new word (e.g., *hit*) move to the second student in the circle. That student changes the first sound of the word to create another word (e.g., *mitt*).
7. Have the new word (e.g., *mitt*) move to the third student in the circle. That student again changes the beginning sound to create a new word (e.g., *bit*).
8. Continue the game by moving the word around the circle from person to person. Words that have already been used may not be used again.
9. Tell the students that they can pass if a specified amount of time elapses before they can think of a new word.
10. Start with a new word family after three consecutive passes.

Note: After practicing with the initial sound, change the ending sound only, then the medial sound only. Do mixed sound practice after students can correctly identify and change initial, final, and medial sounds.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Examples of Word Sorts

Phonics and Word Study: Word sorts

Word sorts are activities that provide students opportunities to examine words and categorize them by spelling patterns and/or sounds.

Closed Sorts

• Choose the categories and model the sorting procedure.

Example: Present the three categories, read the three words in boldface, and place them in the correct column. Then ask students to sort the remaining words. Students must read the word as they sort it into the correct category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short /i/ words</th>
<th>Short /u/ words</th>
<th>Short /a/ words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pig</td>
<td>gum</td>
<td>man</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other words: jug, bit, pat, run, wag, big, dug, kit, cat, plan, lip, hum, tan, cub, chin, clap, cut.

• You may build the category without actually giving students a category name and letting them discover the common spelling patterns or sounds.

For example, students have mastered short vowel sounds (CVC words) and are ready to learn long vowels. Introduce the VCe pattern by using a word sort. The words to be sorted might include: van, vane, pan, pane, can, cane, Jan, Jane, man, mane, mad, made, hat, hate, tape, cut, cute.

Open Sorts

• Students organize sets of words into categories based on what they notice about the words.

Open sorts are most effective after students have had many opportunities with closed sorts and understand the concept of sorting.

Observe the categories individual students create. This information may provide you with valuable information about a student's understanding of the orthography of the English language.

• Word sorts can be designed to focus on a single new concept or can be used for a review with mixed concepts.

For example, students know the CVC pattern with short /a/, so you create a sort with /a/ words and the new /o/ sound. An example of a mixed design would be sorting for all the short vowel sounds.

• As students begin to understand the complexities of short and long vowel sounds, they may be asked to do two-step word sorts. First they sort for sound and then for spelling.

For example, in step one, students sort for sound.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short /a/</th>
<th>Long /a/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dad</td>
<td>make</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flag</td>
<td>pale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fan</td>
<td>great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crab</td>
<td>paint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fast</td>
<td>mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grass</td>
<td>say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pal</td>
<td>day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In step two, students sort for spelling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ay</th>
<th>ai</th>
<th>ea</th>
<th>VCe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>day</td>
<td>mail</td>
<td>great</td>
<td>make</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>say</td>
<td>paint</td>
<td>pale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- You can adjust word sorts for students at-risk for dyslexia or other reading difficulties by choosing known words, keeping the sorts focused on a single new category, and providing more modeling.

**Word Hunts**

Word hunts are helpful extensions of word sorts that allow students to find other words in their reading that contain the same spelling patterns and sounds.

Encourage students to identify exceptions, which may lead to understanding that exceptions may have commonalities as well.

For example, *have*, *love*, and *give* are exceptions to the VCe pattern but do have a common *v* that creates a new common sound pattern.

Reprinted with permission from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2000). *First grade teacher reading academy*. Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Word Sort of CCVC Words

Phonics and Word Study: Initial blends

Objective:
The students will sort word cards into categories by reading the words and determining which pattern each word follows.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students to identify and categorize blends at the beginning of words.

Suggested grouping format:
small group or whole class

Materials:
• Fifteen word cards containing CVC words (e.g., CVC: sip, dip, Tim)
• Fifteen word cards containing CCVC words (with the same initial letters as the CVC word cards) (e.g., CCVC: slip, drip, trim)

Instructional Procedure:
1. Write each blend on the board and ask the students what sound it makes.
2. Have the students read through the CVC and CCVC word cards.
3. Place one card from each group (CVC and CCVC) on the tabletop. These are the key cards.
4. Explain to the students that they will put the cards under the key card (CVC or CCVC) of the same pattern.
5. Have the students sort the words into one of the groups (CVC or CCVC).
   • Give a student a word card.
   • Have the student sort the word, read the word, and explain why and how he or she sorted it into that group.
   • The next student repeats the procedure with another card.
6. When all cards have been sorted, ask the students to review the sort to find any mistakes.

Adapted from Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts at The University of Texas at Austin. (2005). Supplemental instruction for struggling readers, grade 3: A guide for tutors. Austin, TX: Author.
Bag of Tricks

Phonics and Word Study: Complex onset and rime

Objective:
Students will learn a complex onset-rime and practice reading and writing words with that onset-rime.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students complex onset-rime patterns.

Suggested grouping format:
small group or whole class

Materials:
• Cards with a complex rime pattern (e.g., \(-ight\)), one per student
• Cards with onsets that can be taped to the beginning of the chosen rime
• Paper bag labeled “onset”
• Writing notebooks and pens or pencils

Instructional Procedure:
1. Review the complex rime pattern the students will be practicing (e.g., \(-ight\)).
2. Have students sit in a circle. Pass out a rime card to each student.
3. Put the onsets in the bag, and place the bag in the middle of the circle within reach of everyone.
4. Explain to students that they will be combining an onset from the bag with their rime card. Tell them the words they create can be real or nonsense words.
5. Model how to play “Bag of Tricks”:
   • Draw one onset card out of the bag.
   • Combine it with your rime card.
   • Say the word.
   • Ask students whether the word is real or nonsense.
   • If it is a real word, have them write the word in their writing notebooks.
6. Have students take turns drawing one onset from the bag, combining it with his or her rime card, and reading the word. Have the students record the real words in their writing notebooks.
7. Continue this procedure with all of the onsets.
8. Review the real words the students have made.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Irregular Word Blackout Bingo

Phonics and Word Study: Irregular word recognition — fifty frequently used irregular words

Objective:
The student will recognize irregular, high-frequency words.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students to recognize irregular, high-frequency words quickly.

Suggested grouping format:
any group size

Materials:
- Fifty irregular words written on cards
- Teacher-made bingo cards, one per student (make sure there are more word cards than squares on the bingo card)
- Bingo markers for each child

Instructional Procedure:
1. Select fifty frequently used irregular words and write each on a word card.
2. Create bingo cards, with twenty-four words on each card and a free space in the middle.
3. Introduce three or four new irregular words to the students.
4. Review with students the new and familiar irregular words found on the word cards.
5. Give each student a bingo card.
6. Review directions for how to play blackout bingo.
   - The teacher calls out a word, shows the word card, and spells the word.
   - The students repeat the word and spell it, looking at the card.
   - If the students have the word on their bingo card, they cover it with a marker.
   - The first person to cover all of the squares on his or her bingo card wins.
7. Shuffle the deck of word cards. Then pick a card from the stack and call out and spell the word.
8. Monitor students to ensure that markers are being placed on the correct words.
9. Play until someone wins. Allowing the winner to call the words for the next game provides both practice and motivation.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Word Detective

Phonics and Word Study: Words with common spelling patterns and/or sounds

Objective:
Students will examine words and categorize them by spelling patterns and/or sounds.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students how to recognize words with similar spelling patterns.

Suggested grouping format:
whole class or small group

Materials:
• Large bulletin board (Word Wall) for the teacher
• Wipe-off board and marker for the teacher
• Wipe-off boards and markers for each student

Instructional Procedure:
1. Tell the students to pretend they are word detectives.
2. The teacher and students write the numbers 1 to 5.
3. Tell the students you are thinking of a word that they have to guess on their wipe-off boards. You will give them clues about the word.
4. Give the students the first clue (e.g., It’s a word on the word wall). Have students write the word they believe you are thinking of next to number 1 on their wipe-off boards. Everyone should make a guess and write a word on their wipe-off boards.
5. Give the students the second clue (e.g., It ends with the letter “e”). Draw a line and write the letter “e” next to numbers 2, 3, 4, and 5 on the teacher’s wipe-off board. The students write their guess for the word-wall word next to number 2 on their wipe-off boards. If they think it is the same word they wrote next to number 1, they write that word again.
6. Give the students the third clue (e.g., It has the letter “a” in it). Write the letter “a” in front of numbers 3, 4, and 5. The students write the word next to number 3 on their wipe-off boards. They can write the same word if they think they have figured it out.
7. Give the students the fourth clue (e.g., It has seven letters). Erase the line in places to make seven blanks with “e” in the last blank. The students write the word next to number 4.
8. Give the students the fifth clue. It should be a sentence that the word could fit into. (e.g., It fits in the sentence: I wear a coat ____ it is cold. Write the sentence next to number 5 on the teacher's wipe-off board. Students write the word next to number 5.
9. Tell the students to raise their hands if they think they know the word.
10. Read and spell the word. The students echo reading and spelling the word.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2000).  First grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Compound Word Puzzles

Phonics and Word Study: Compound words that are composed of familiar CVC words

Objective:
Students will make and identify compound words.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students to make and identify compound words using familiar CVC words.

Suggested grouping format:
small group or one-on-one with the teacher

Materials:
• CVC word cards cut into puzzle pieces for making compound words
• Paper

Instructional Procedure:

1. Before the lesson, prepare the word cards.
   • Identify compound words containing previously taught CVC spelling patterns.
   • Write a list of five compound words on paper.
   • Write the five compound words on cards, leaving a small space between each component word.
   • Cut each card distinctively between the two component words, so that it is obvious which cards form the compound word.

2. Explain that compound words are made up of two shorter words. The short words retain their meaning and contribute to the meaning of the larger word.
3. Read the list of compound words with the students and then remove the list from view.
4. Pick three cards, two that combine to form a compound word and one that does not.

\[ \text{cat} \quad \text{nap} \quad \text{sun} \]

   • Ask a student to find the two word cards that attach as puzzle pieces to make a compound word. Encourage the student to use decoding skills to help read the words.
   • Have the students read the newly made compound word and spell it.
   • Have the students discuss the word’s meaning and use it in a sentence.

5. Continue with the rest of the word cards.
6. After the students have made all the compound words, have them record the words in their spelling books.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Mnemonic HINTS

Phonics and Word Study: Separating multisyllabic words into word parts

Objective:
Students will learn a structural analysis strategy to help them decode multisyllabic words into parts.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students how to identify multisyllabic words with prefixes and suffixes.

Suggested grouping format:
whole class

Materials:
• Poster of the HINTS procedure (Appendix I)
• Blank transparency and marker
• Overheard projector
• Word list (see Common Prefixes & Suffixes, Appendix J)
• Materials for a “Bag of Tricks”:
  • Paper bag
  • Cards with multisyllabic words, inside the bag

Instructional Procedure:
1. Explain to students that separating multisyllabic words into word parts can help them identify unknown words. Review the functions and definitions of prefixes and suffixes.
2. Using the poster, introduce the mnemonic HINTS, which helps students identify multisyllabic words with prefixes and suffixes.
   H—Highlight the prefix and/or suffix parts.
   I—Identify the consonant and vowel sounds in the root word.
   N—Name the root word.
   T—Tie the parts together.
   S—Say the word.
   • Say what each letter stands for, and have the students echo.
   • Point to and name each letter in HINTS, and have students chorally read the descriptor.
3. Write a multisyllabic word on the transparency (e.g., unbreakable). Model using the HINTS procedure.
   • Highlight the prefix and the suffix.
   • Identify the consonant and vowel sounds in the root word.
   • Name the root word.
   • Tie the parts together.
   • Say the word.
4. Practice with additional multisyllabic words with prefixes and suffixes.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Fluency Word Cards

Fluency: Speed and accuracy reading common spelling patterns

Objective:
The students will read word cards with speed and accuracy.

Activity Purpose:
This activity helps students build fluency in recognizing words with common spelling patterns.

Suggested grouping format:
small group

Materials:
- One set of word cards per student containing familiar spelling patterns (or blends, rimes, digraphs, etc.)

Instructional Procedure:
1. Tell the students they will be reading cards with familiar spelling patterns.
2. Ask a student to read the first word card. Give the student no more than three seconds to answer.
3. If the student reads the card correctly, place it face down on the table. If the student cannot read the card, tell him or her what the word is, emphasizing the spelling pattern, and place the unread or misread card in front of the student.
4. Show the next word card to the next student, repeating step 3. Repeat until all word cards have been read or given to students.
5. Have the students who have cards in front of them attempt to read those words again. If they are able to read the card quickly and easily, take it back.
6. If a student misreads any words again, have the student keep the card and ask him or her to practice reading it.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). Essential reading strategies for the struggling reader: Activities for an accelerated reading program (Expanded ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Word Pattern Road Race

Fluency: Spelling patterns

Objective:
The students will read words with a particular spelling pattern quickly and accurately.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students to recognize spelling patterns quickly.

Suggested grouping format:
pairs

Materials:

• A Road Race game board for each student (Appendix I)
• A set of game-board word cards for each student
• A game piece for each student

Instructional Procedure:

1. Plan student pairs (same ability) and make game boards and word cards. The difficulty of the word cards should depend on the abilities of the student pairs.
2. Assign student partners and give each student a game board, game piece, and set of word cards corresponding to their game board.
3. Have the students put their game pieces at the bottom of the left-hand column on their game boards.
4. Explain to the students the procedures for playing Road Race.
   • Each student reads his or her word cards aloud until he or she encounters the card containing the first word on the game board (at the bottom of the left-hand column). Students are not allowed to search through the cards without reading them.
   • When the student reads the card with the first word on it, that student moves his or her piece to the rectangle containing that word.
   • The game continues with the students reading the cards until they read the card that will advance their game piece to the next rectangle on the board (moving up the left-hand column and then down the right-hand column).
   • The first student to reach the bottom of the right-hand column wins.
5. This game may also be adapted to practice reading high-frequency words, sight words, and irregular words.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). Essential reading strategies for the struggling reader: Activities for an accelerated reading program (Expanded ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Chunk Reading

Fluency: Reading two- to five-word sentence segments from an instructional- or independent-level reading passage

Objective:
The student will improve rate and accuracy while reading phrases.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students that connected text is composed of meaningful phrases that can be read fluently.

Suggested grouping format:
whole class divided into small groups

Materials:
• Copies of reading passages at the instructional level* of the less fluent reader
• Graph paper and color pencils for each student
• Timer

Instructional Procedure:
1. Select reading passages that are at an instructional level* for the less fluent students and at an independent level** for the more advanced students in each group.
2. Place slash marks between chunks to mark two- to five-word sentence segments and prepositional phrases in each passage.
3. Explain to students that connected text is divided into meaningful phrases and that paying attention to these phrases while reading will enhance fluency and comprehension.
4. Model fluent reading of a passage while students follow along. Emphasize chunking phrases together for meaning. For example, read the sentence, “The big bear chased the bobcat through the woods” like this: “The big bear/ chased the bobcat/ through the woods.” (Slash indicates a pause.)
5. Give each student a copy of his or her reading passage.
6. Instruct students to take turns reading their passages aloud. Tell them to pause briefly between phrases, exactly as the text has been marked. No pauses should be made except at slash marks. As one student reads, the other group members help decode any unfamiliar words.

*Instructional-level text is text in which no more than approximately one in ten words is difficult for the reader.

**Independent-level text is text in which no more than approximately one in twenty words is difficult for the reader.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author
Appendix H

Partner Reading

Fluency: Reading instructional- or independent-level passages

Objective:
Students will improve their reading accuracy and rate.

Activity Purpose:
This activity helps students build reading fluency through repeated, paired reading.

Suggested grouping format:
pairs

Materials:
• Copies of reading passages
• Graph paper and color pencils for each student
• Timer for the teacher

Instructional Procedure:
1. Pair the students using the following procedure:
   • Rank the students according to reading ability.
   • Split the list in half.
   • Pair the top-ranked student in the higher performing half (partner 1) with the top-ranked student in the lower performing half (partner 2), and so forth.
2. Select reading material at the independent reading level* of the more advanced student (partner 1).
3. Give each pair two copies of the passage they will be reading.
4. The teacher will provide the timing. Each partner will read the passage for four minutes, with partner 1 reading first (to model fluent reading) as partner 2 follows along. After partner 1 reads, partner 2 will read. Each partner will help correct the other’s errors as they read.
5. Students will reread the passage for one minute (“best reading”), with partner 1 reading first. While partner 1 reads, partner 2 follows along and marks the last word read at the one-minute mark.
6. Have the students calculate their fluency. Subtract the number of errors from the total number of words read.

   \[
   \text{Total Words Read} - \text{Errors} = \text{Words Correct Per minute}
   \]

7. Have the students graph their fluency using color pencils and graph paper.
Independent-level text is text in which no more than approximately one in twenty words is difficult for the reader.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Listening to Fluency: Rate and Expression

Fluency: Independently reading a text while following a taped recording

Objective:
Students will read independently with speed, accuracy, and expression as they listen to a recording of text being read fluently.

Activity Purpose:
This activity increases students’ ability to read with speed, accuracy, and expression by providing a model of fluent reading.

Suggested grouping format:
whole class or independent

Materials:
- A copy of the same book (whole class grouping) or independent-level reading material (independent grouping) for each student
- A cassette tape recording of an individual reading the book or reading material in a fluent and expressive manner
- A cassette tape player
- Earphones, if appropriate

Instructional Procedure:
1. Pass out a copy of the book to every student. If earphones are appropriate, pass them out also.
2. Explain to students that they will be listening to a taped recording of the text. While they listen to the cassette, they are to track the print and read along.
3. Begin playing the tape. Make sure students are following the text as it is being read. Encourage them to note the speed and expression of the reader on the tape.
4. At the end of the selection, discuss the rate and expression of the reader on the tape. If appropriate, play the tape again, specifically noting the times when the reader’s voice changes pitch or intonation.
5. Ask students to describe if and when the reader’s voice changes.
6. Read the book again, as a group, without the tape, repeating the rate and expression used on the tape.
7. For practice, insert a blank tape and have the students read fluently into the tape recorder to make their own copy of the “book on tape.”
8. Have these tapes available at other times for students to listen to and read along with.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Using Examples and Non-examples

Vocabulary: Using examples and non-examples to build students’ vocabulary

Objective:
Students will learn key vocabulary through examples and non-examples.

Activity Purpose:
The activity teaches students how to distinguish new vocabulary words through examples.

Suggested grouping format:
Whole class or small group

Materials:
- Key vocabulary word(s) from a comprehension reading passage
- Pictures that provide examples and non-examples of the word
- Transparency
- Overhead projector and marker

Instructional Procedure:
1. Explain to the students they will be learning a new vocabulary word today. They will be learning the new word by looking at pictures.
2. Teach students the new vocabulary word.
   - Write the new word on the transparency. Say the word and have the students repeat it.
   - Ask the students what they think the new word means. Call on several students for answers.
   - If the students make a correct response, say “yes.” If the students make an incorrect response, immediately model the correct response.
   - Point to a picture and explain that it is an example of the word. Point to a second picture and explain to the students that this picture is not an example of the vocabulary word.
   - Present the pictures one at a time, and ask the students to tell if the picture is an example or a non-example.
3. Have the students sit in a circle and explain to them that they will be identifying the vocabulary word through pictures.
   - Place the pictures face down in a pile in the middle of the circle within reach of everyone.
   - Have the students turn the pictures over one at a time and state whether the picture is an example or non-example of the vocabulary word.
   - Give appropriate feedback.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2000). First grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

A Word Map

Vocabulary: Understanding key vocabulary words

Objective:

Students will build vocabulary knowledge by creating a word map for a concept in the text.

Activity Purpose:

This activity teaches key vocabulary with the use of a graphic organizer.

Suggested grouping format:

small homogeneous reading group

Materials:

- Independent- or instructional-level reading passages
- Overhead projector, marker, and transparency of a Word Map
- Copies of the Word Map (Appendix I) for each student
- Dictionary (at appropriate difficulty level for students)

Instructional Procedure:

- When planning the activity, read the passage and identify key vocabulary words. The words should be unfamiliar to the students and important for understanding the text.
- Distribute word maps and reading passages to students.
- Model using the word map.
  - Write a word on the word-map transparency and say the word. Have the students repeat the word and write it on their word maps.
  - Have the students identify and read any sentences from the passage that contain the word.
  - Ask the students what they think the word means.
  - Discuss the word and have students come up with a “good definition.” Write the definition on the transparency and read it. Have students repeat the definition and write in on their word maps.
  - Have the students identify examples (or synonyms) and non-examples (or antonyms) of the word and record them on their word maps.
  - Ask students to use the word in several sentences and record them at the bottom of their word maps.
- Repeat the procedures in step 3 with each new word.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Clunk Bug

Vocabulary: Defining words

Objective:
The students will use the “clunk bug” to write word definitions using their own words.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students to define words using their own words. It also strengthens knowledge of how to use context clues to improve comprehension.

Suggested grouping format:
independent or small group

Materials:
• Expository text
• Vocabulary words that are defined in context using the “definition” type of context clue
• “Clunk Bugs” for each student (Appendix I)

Instructional Procedure:
1. Before the activity, select several vocabulary words by identifying words that are defined in context using the “definition” type of context clue.
2. Prepare a list of signal words or punctuation (i.e., words or punctuation that indicate a vocabulary word is going to be defined in context).
   • Signal words include *is, means, i.e., and that is.*
   • Signal punctuation includes dashes and commas.
3. Have the students read the sentence with the vocabulary word and write the word on the back of the clunk bug.
4. Have the students identify key words in the sentence and write one word on each of the clunk bug’s legs.
5. Have the students use the words on the legs to write the definition of the vocabulary word in their own words.
6. Have the students refer to the dictionary or the glossary in the textbook to verify their answers.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2000). *Professional development guide: Enhancing vocabulary instruction for secondary students.* Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Semantic Map

Vocabulary: Concept and vocabulary development

Objective:
Students will learn how to create a semantic map to show relationships between words.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students how to use a graphic display of information before, during, and after reading to promote reading comprehension.

Suggested grouping format:
whole class or small group

Materials:
• Concept and key vocabulary words
• Expository text
• Chalkboard
• Semantic Map handout (Appendix I) for each student

Instructional Procedure:
1. Identify the concept to be taught (e.g., the “big idea”: owl).
2. Draw an oval on the chalkboard. Write the concept in the oval.
3. Ask the students to think of words (e.g., the “little ideas”: beak, rodents, nocturnal, talons) that are related to or associated with the main concept.
4. Write these words on the chalkboard and have students group them into categories.
5. Have students label each category (e.g., body parts, food).
6. Model creating a semantic map on the chalkboard using the words generated by the students and other key vocabulary words.
7. Have the students work in their groups to construct a semantic map on a designated concept for a topic they will be studying.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Prefixes/Suffixes

Vocabulary: Prefixes/suffixes

Objective:
Students will learn prefixes (or suffixes) and practice creating words with prefixes (or suffixes).

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students to make and identify words with prefixes (or suffixes).

Suggested grouping format:
whole class or small group

Materials:
• Pocket chart
• Cards with prefixes or suffixes (see Common Prefixes and Suffixes, Appendix J)
• Cards with root words that can be combined with these prefixes or suffixes
• Plastic bag

Instructional Procedure:
1. Model combining prefixes with root words.
   Alternative: Use suffixes instead of prefixes.
   • Place a prefix card on the pocket chart and model how the prefix is pronounced.
   • Explain to the students what the prefix means.
   • Place a root-word card after the prefix card. Read the root word and ask the students to
     tell you what it means.
   • Point to the prefix and the root-word cards and ask the students to read them as one
     word. Ask the students what the new word means.
2. Repeat procedures from step 1 with other prefixes.
3. Have the students sit in a circle. Place the plastic bag of prefix cards in the middle of the
   circle within reach of everyone.
4. Model playing the “add-a-part” game.
   • Draw one card out of the bag.
   • Say the prefix on the card (e.g., dis-).
   • Create a new word with the prefix (e.g., disagree).
   • Ask the students if they can create other new words with the same prefix.
5. Have the students take turns playing the game.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). Second grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Using Comprehension Cards

Comprehension: Using color-coded comprehension cards to understand a passage

Objective:
Students will learn how to use narrative comprehension cards while reading text. (Activity may be adapted to expository text using expository comprehension cards.)

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students to use self-questioning techniques to improve their text comprehension.

Suggested grouping format:
small group

Materials:
• Narrative texts
• Narrative comprehension cards (Appendix I; for Expository Cards, see Appendix I)
  • Green cards – use before reading
  • Yellow cards – use during reading
  • Red Cards – use after reading
• Pocket chart for the teacher

Instructional Procedure:
1. Pass out texts to students.
2. Set comprehension cards on the left side of the pocket chart in the correct order.
3. Explain to students that each card is color-coded. Tell them that green cards are used before reading, yellow cards are used during reading, and red cards are used after reading.
4. Read the first green card aloud and give an example of an answer.
5. After the green card question has been answered, move the card to the right side of the pocket chart to indicate that the question has been answered.
6. Repeat the same procedure until all green card questions have been answered.
7. Have the students take turns reading.
8. During reading, stop the students periodically and ask several students to answer the yellow card questions.
9. As each yellow card question is answered, move the card to the right side of the pocket chart.
10. Repeat the same procedure until all of the yellow card questions have been answered.
11. After reading, ask the students the first red card question. As each red card question is answered, move the card to the right side of the pocket chart.
12. Repeat the same procedure until all red card questions have been answered.

Adapted from material developed by Neuhaus Education Center. Copyright 1998 by Neuhaus Education Center. All rights reserved.
Appendix H

Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA)

Comprehension: Making and checking predictions

Objective:
The students will learn to make and check predictions to improve text comprehension.

Activity Purpose:
This activity helps students think actively and become engaged in text.

Suggested grouping format:
whole class or small group

Materials:
• Unfamiliar book (narrative or expository), one copy per student
• DRTA Lesson Planning Sheet (Appendix J) for the teacher
• DRTA Prediction Organizer (Appendix I) for each student

Instructional Procedure:
1. Before the lesson, use the DRTA Lesson Planning Sheet to plan places in the text where students will stop to think, predict, and confirm predictions.
2. Give students copies of the DRTA Prediction Organizer and the book.
3. Before the students read, introduce the story by discussing the topic, showing objects or pictures related to the story, and activating students’ prior knowledge.
4. Show the cover of the book and ask students to make predictions about the story. Explain that no one knows the exact outcome, but predictions should be logical and based on what they know. (Possible questions: What do you think a story with a title like this could be about? What do you predict might happen in this story? Does the picture give you any ideas about what might happen?)
6. Have students read only the assigned sections of the story (no reading ahead). Students will mark their place and close their books when finished reading the assigned section.
7. While students are waiting for others to finish, they may:
   • think back about predictions they made and what evidence is presented to either support or disprove predictions
   • revise or make new predictions
8. Ask students to share three or four predictions with the group.
9. Record students’ responses (optional).
10. Ask students to commit to at least one of the predictions made before reading on. (e.g., How many of you think ______ is most likely to happen? How many of you agree with _____ that ____ will happen?)
11. Have students make new predictions for the next section of text. (Possible questions: Based on what we read, how were your predictions? What in the story supports or disproves that idea? What do you think will happen next? What would happen if _____? Why do you think this is a good prediction? What in the story made you think of that prediction?)
12. Repeat steps 5 – 10 until all selected sections have been read.

Appendix H

Getting the Gist

Comprehension: Determining the main idea of one or two paragraphs of a passage

Objective:
Students will learn how to “get the gist” (main idea) of paragraphs of expository reading passages.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students how to find the main idea of one or two paragraphs of a passage.

Suggested grouping format:
pairs

Materials:
• One- to two-paragraph passage for the teacher
• Independent- or instructional-level reading passages
• Overhead projector and marker
• Transparency of a Gist Log
• One Gist Log per student (Appendix I)

Instructional Procedure:
• Tell the students they will be learning how to develop a gist statement. A gist statement represents the main idea (i.e., the most important information) of a paragraph(s).
• Tell the students that there are three steps to “getting the gist”:
  • naming the who or what the paragraph is mostly about
  • telling the most important information about the who or what
  • combining the information from the first two steps into a complete sentence of ten words or less.
• Read aloud a one- to two-paragraph passage. Ask students to listen for who or what the passage is about and the most important information about the who or what.
• Model the three steps of “getting the gist” using the gist log on the transparency.
• Evaluate your gist statement using the following questions:
  • Does the gist statement tell the who or what?
  • Does the gist statement contain only the most important information?
  • Is the gist statement in my own words?
  • Is the gist statement ten words or less?
• Pair students. Give each student a copy of a reading passage and gist log.
• Instruct student pairs to take turns reading aloud the first one or two paragraphs of the passage.
• In pairs, students will complete the three steps to “getting the gist” of the paragraph(s) they have read. Remind them that their gist statements should be should be ten words or less and in their own words.
• Have student pairs evaluate and revise their gist statements using the questions from step 5. Some student pairs may need to develop a new gist statement.
• Select a few students to share their gist statements. Provide feedback as appropriate.
• Continue the same procedure with one or two paragraphs at a time until the entire passage has been read.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

A Story Map

Comprehension: Common components of stories

Objective:
Students will learn how to use a story map to improve their comprehension of narrative text.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students how to use a story map during and after reading to improve reading comprehension.

Suggested grouping format:
small homogeneous groups

Materials:
• Instructional-level narrative passages
• Copies of a Story Map template (Appendix I)

Instructional Procedure:
• Introduce and discuss common story elements:
  • setting (where and when)
  • characters
  • problem or goal
  • plot (series of events in which the characters try to solve a problem or achieve a goal)
  • resolution (solution to a problem or achievement of a goal)
• Introduce the story map, which helps students organize and make connections between common story elements.
• Distribute passages and story maps.
• During and after reading, help students identify and record pertinent information on their story maps.
• Review, compare, and discuss completed story maps with students.
• Have students retell the story using their story maps, and answer questions related to the notes that they have written on their story map.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix H

Making Predictions

Comprehension: Making predictions to improve reading comprehension

Objective:
Students will learn how to make predictions about what they will learn by reading the text.

Activity Purpose:
This activity teaches students how to determine the main topic of a story.

Suggested grouping format:
whole class

Materials:
• Narrative text with previewing cues, one book per student
• Overhead projector
• Overhead marker
• Blank transparency

Instructional Procedure:
1. Pass out the texts to students and introduce the book’s title.
2. Explain to the students that they will be making predictions about what will happen in the book. They will be taking a “book walk” by skimming through the information in the book.
3. Ask the students to skim the information such as the title, subheadings, pictures, graphs, and bolded/italicized words, and to be ready to share at least one thing they predict they will learn by reading the text.
4. Model skimming the book by pointing out the pictures, graphs, and bolded/italicized words.
5. Call on the students to share what they predicted and what led them to the prediction.
6. Ask other students to provide feedback about how accurate they think these predictions will be.
7. Provide appropriate feedback on students’ predictions.
8. Record students’ predictions on the transparency.

Appendix H

Guidelines for Word Walls

- Select words from reading programs, high-frequency word lists, irregular words, and commonly used words that students use in their reading and writing.
  Students can refer to the Word Wall as they learn to read and spell words.
- Limit the words to those that students encounter often in their reading and writing.
  Words should be added gradually, approximately five per week.
  Words can be written in big black letters on different colored paper to help students distinguish between easily confused words, such as *far* and *from*, or *them* and *they*.
- Display words in a highly visible, accessible place in the classroom.
  Being able to easily see the words on the Word Wall helps students when they are reading and writing.
- Categorize words in a variety of ways.
  You may have many different word walls, such as words placed in alphabetical order. Pictures can also be added.
  Smaller versions of different types of word walls, such as word boards or word charts, can reflect current topics of study.
  Content area words from science, social studies, and other informational texts can also be displayed on word boards or charts (e.g., weather, geographical regions).
  Words can also be categorized by similar spelling patterns, such as /at/ or /ig/, to help students make connections between sounds in words.
  Cutting around the shape of the word helps some students distinguish one word from another.
- Incorporate a variety of Word Wall activities.
  Word Walls are not just bulletin boards.
  Saying, spelling, and writing the words several times a week helps students recognize words automatically and increases their lexicon of sight words.
- Encourage students to use the Word Wall when they are independently reading and writing.
  Students who have dyslexia or other reading difficulties need regular instruction and teacher modeling to remind them to use the Word Wall.
  Throughout the year, Word Walls grow and provide a visual representation of the many words that students are learning and using as they read and write.
- Provide many opportunities for Word Wall practice.
  Word Wall practice can be scheduled for short periods several times a week.
  Portable or individual Word Walls can be constructed using file folders.
  Individualized Word Walls provide students with their own dictionary of words that they can use at their desks or take home.
### Sample Word Wall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aa</th>
<th>Bb</th>
<th>Cc</th>
<th>Dd</th>
<th>Ee</th>
<th>Ff</th>
<th>Gg</th>
<th>Hh</th>
<th>Ii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>be</td>
<td>can</td>
<td>did</td>
<td>each</td>
<td>find</td>
<td>get</td>
<td>had</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at</td>
<td>by</td>
<td>call</td>
<td>day</td>
<td>first</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>he</td>
<td>if</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all</td>
<td>but</td>
<td>come</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>for</td>
<td>from</td>
<td>here</td>
<td>into</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an</td>
<td>been</td>
<td>could</td>
<td>does</td>
<td>from</td>
<td>here</td>
<td>into</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td>because</td>
<td>could</td>
<td>does</td>
<td>from</td>
<td>here</td>
<td>into</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are</td>
<td>because</td>
<td>could</td>
<td>does</td>
<td>from</td>
<td>here</td>
<td>into</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>again</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>his</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>about</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>his</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>any</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>his</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>his</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jj</th>
<th>Kk</th>
<th>Ll</th>
<th>Mm</th>
<th>Nn</th>
<th>Oo</th>
<th>Pp</th>
<th>Qq</th>
<th>Rr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>just</td>
<td>like</td>
<td>made</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>of</td>
<td>part</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>look</td>
<td>make</td>
<td>not</td>
<td>oil</td>
<td>people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long</td>
<td>my</td>
<td>now</td>
<td>on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>many</td>
<td>number</td>
<td>one</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>may</td>
<td>only</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>more</td>
<td>or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ss</th>
<th>Tt</th>
<th>Uu</th>
<th>Vv</th>
<th>Ww</th>
<th>Xx</th>
<th>Yy</th>
<th>Zz</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>said</td>
<td>the</td>
<td>up</td>
<td>very</td>
<td>will</td>
<td>you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>see</td>
<td>than</td>
<td>use</td>
<td>what</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she</td>
<td>that</td>
<td>when</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so</td>
<td>them</td>
<td>where</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some</td>
<td>then</td>
<td>which</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there</td>
<td>these</td>
<td>who</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>these</td>
<td>they</td>
<td>with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>through</td>
<td>were</td>
<td>would</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>write</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix | 145
Word Wall Activities

1. (Write the word can on the board.)
   Can someone read this Word Wall word?
   If I cover up the first letter, what is the last part of the word?
   Answer: (an)
   Can is in the /an/ family. Words spelled with the same letter pattern can be grouped in word families.
   Raise your hand if you can think of more words that are in the /an/ family.
   (Call on students to write and spell the words on the board under the word can. Possible answers: an, Dan, man, tan, fan, ban, clan, bran, Stan, and ran.
   Let’s read and spell all the words we wrote in the /an/ family. Repeat after me. (Read and spell each word. Students echo.)

2. (Hold up five fingers)
   I’m thinking of a five-letter Word Wall word that begins with the letter a. (Write the letter on the board.)
   The word makes sense in this sentence: That was fun so let’s do it _______.
   Answer: (again)
   Repeat after me. (Say and spell the word. Students echo.)

3. (Hold up four fingers.)
   I’m thinking of a four-letter Word Wall word that ends with the letter t. (Write the letter on the board.)
   It makes sense in this sentence: (Write the sentence on the board.)
   I ate _ _ _ t of the apple.
   Answer: (part) (Fill in the blank with the word.)
   Repeat after me. (Say and spell the word. Students echo.)

4. Find Word Wall words that end with the /d/ sound. Write them on your paper.
   Answers: (and, could, did, find, had, made, said, would)
   (Call on students to say and spell the words as you write them on the board.)
   Repeat after me. (Say and spell the words. Students echo.)

5. Find two Word Wall words that rhyme with no.
   Answers: (go, so).
   Repeat after me. (Say, spell, and read the words. Students echo, write the words, and read them.)
6. We're going to Write and Rap three words from the Word Wall. On your paper, write the, does and from. (Write words on board and read them. Students echo.)

Now let’s rap!
• I’ll say the, and you say the. (Students echo the.)
  I’ll spell the: T-H-E.
  Now you spell the: (Students echo T-H-E).
• I’ll say does, and you say does. (Students echo does.)
  I’ll spell does: D-O-E-S.
  Now you spell does. (Students echo D-O-E-S).
• I’ll say from, and you say from. (Students echo from.)
  I’ll spell from: F-R-O-M.
  Now you spell from: (Students echo F-R-O-M.)

7. (Write the letters: a, s, and w on the board.)
The Word Wall word I’m thinking of is spelled with these three letters. It makes sense in this sentence: I _ _ _ walking down the street. (Write sentence on board.)
Answer: (was) (Read sentence with answer. Students echo.)
Repeat after me. (Say and spell the word. Students echo, write the word, and read it.)

8. Which word on the Word Wall means “human beings?”
(If no one guesses the word, provide clues one at a time.)
Clue #1: The word that means “human beings” begins with a letter that is in the middle of the alphabet.
Clue #2: The word that means “human beings” makes sense in this sentence: We have lots of ______ who go to our school.
Answer: (people) (Read sentence with answer. Students echo.) Repeat after me. (Say and spell the word. Students echo, write the word, and read it.)

9. Turn to your neighbor.
Choose one of the Word Wall words.
Tell your partner the letter it begins with but NOT the word.
Slowly write each letter with your finger on your partner’s back.
Your partner guesses the word.
Write the word again on your partner’s back, saying each letter out loud together.
End by saying the word. Take turns.

Reprinted with permission from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2000). First grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix I

Say It and Move It Mat (two circle)

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix I

Say It and Move It Mat (three circle)

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix 1

HINTS Procedure Poster

H Highlight the prefix
I Identify the consonant and vowel sounds in the root word
N Name the root word
T Tie the parts together
S Say the word

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2002). *Effective instruction for struggling readers.* Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix I

Road Race Game Board

Directions:
1. Cut a manila file folder in quarters. Two of the quarters will make a pair of game boards.
2. Make two columns on each “board”: each column has an equal number of rectangles, with sight words (or words with a particular rime or vowel pattern) written on them. The same words should be on the two game boards, in the same order.
3. Make two sets of word cards with the identical words as written on the two game boards.
4. The number of words per column, and the difficulty of the words, depends on the reading level of the individual students.

Sample game board of easy sight words (sample words)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>for</th>
<th>the</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>it</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boy</td>
<td>girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cat</td>
<td>little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td>up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start</td>
<td>Finish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Start here and go up and across | End here

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). *Special education reading project (SERP)* elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix I

A Word Map

Definition:

Synonyms:

Antonyms:

Word:

Sentences:

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix I

**Clunk Bug**

**Clunk Word**

**Definition:**

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2000). *Professional development guide: Enhancing vocabulary instruction for secondary students*. Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix I

A Semantic Map

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). *First grade teacher reading academy*. Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix I

Narrative Comprehension Cards
Before reading (cards 1 – 3); During reading (cards 4 – 10); After reading (cards 11 – 15)

What does the title tell me about the story?  What do the pictures tell me?

What do I already know about _____?  Who?

What?  When?

Where?  Why?

Adapted from material developed by Neuhaus Education Center. Copyright 1998 by Neuhaus Education Center. All rights reserved.
Appendix I

Narrative Comprehension Cards

Before reading (cards 1 – 3); During reading (cards 4 – 10); After reading (cards 11 – 15)

How?  What do I think will happen next?

Who were the characters?

What was the setting?

What was the problem?

How was the problem solved?

Why did . . . ?

Adapted from material developed by Neuhaus Education Center. Copyright 1998 by Neuhaus Education Center. All rights reserved.
Appendix I

Expository Comprehension Cards
Before reading (cards 1 – 4); During reading (cards 5 – 7); After reading (cards 8 – 11)

What does the title tell me?  What do I already know about the topic?

What do the pictures tell me?  What do I want to learn about _____?

Does this make sense?  What have I learned so far?

What questions do I still have?

Adapted from material developed by Neuhaus Education Center. Copyright 1998 by Neuhaus Education Center. All rights reserved.
### Expository Comprehension Cards

**Before reading** (cards 1 – 4); **During reading** (cards 5 – 7); **After reading** (cards 8 – 11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Card</th>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Question 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>What new words did I learn?</td>
<td>What was this mainly about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>What did I learn?</td>
<td>What else do I want to know about _____?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from material developed by Neuhaus Education Center. Copyright 1998 by Neuhaus Education Center. All rights reserved.
Appendix I

Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) Prediction Organizer

Title: ___________________________________________
Author: _________________________________________

Predictions based on the title, cover, and pictures:

Predictions after reading the first part of the story: pages _____ – _____

Predictions after reading the next part of the story: pages _____ – _____

Reflections on predictions after finishing the story:

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). Second grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix I

A Gist Log

1. Who or what is the paragraph mostly about?

2. What is the most important information about the who or what?

3. Write a gist statement of 10 words or less in a complete sentence.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix I

A Story Map

Characters

Setting
Where:
When:

Problem or Goal

Plot

Resolution

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2000). First grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author.

162 | Appendix


### Appendix I

**A Comprehension Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story Title:</th>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Feelings / Explanations</th>
<th>Connections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). *Second grade teacher reading academy*. Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix I

Modified K-W-L Chart

- K-W-L charts help students make connections between what they know and what they read.
- This modified version of a K-W-L Chart is completed as students read expository text silently and/or independently.
- Students first list what they know.
- During reading, they write what the author actually says to verify or disprove their initial statements.

**Individual K-W-L Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic:</th>
<th>What I Already Know</th>
<th>What I Read</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). Second grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author.
### Appendix J

#### Grouping for Instruction Planning Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date: ______________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Members:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Focus:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Members:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Focus:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Members:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Focus:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Members:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Focus:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). *Second grade teacher reading academy.* Austin, TX: Author.
### Appendix J

#### Ranking Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank Order (highest to lowest)</th>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Fluent Reader</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Fluent Reader</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Independent level text is text in which no more than approximately one in twenty words is difficult for the reader.*
## Common Prefixes and Suffixes

### Common Prefixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Un</td>
<td>Not, opposite of</td>
<td>Unable, unchangeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re</td>
<td>Again</td>
<td>Reread, redo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In, im, ir, ill</td>
<td>Not</td>
<td>Inactive, immature, irregular, illegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dis</td>
<td>Not, opposite of</td>
<td>Dishonest, disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>En, em</td>
<td>Cause to</td>
<td>Enable, embrace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non</td>
<td>Not</td>
<td>Nonfiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In</td>
<td>In or into</td>
<td>Inside, ingrain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over</td>
<td>Too much</td>
<td>Overdue, oversleep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mis</td>
<td>Wrongly</td>
<td>Misbehave, mispronounce, misspell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub</td>
<td>Under</td>
<td>Submarine, subway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Before</td>
<td>Preheat, preschool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter</td>
<td>Between</td>
<td>International, intersection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fore</td>
<td>Before</td>
<td>Foreground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De</td>
<td>Opposite of</td>
<td>Deactivate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans</td>
<td>Across</td>
<td>Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Super</td>
<td>Above</td>
<td>Supernatural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi</td>
<td>Half</td>
<td>Semicircle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti</td>
<td>Against</td>
<td>Antislavery, antisocial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under</td>
<td>Too little</td>
<td>Underpaid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex</td>
<td>Out, out of</td>
<td>Exchange, excavate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.
### Appendix J

#### Common Prefixes and Suffixes

**Common Suffixes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suffix</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-s, -es</td>
<td>Plurals</td>
<td>Cats, dishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ed</td>
<td>Past-tense verbs</td>
<td>Landed, smelled, wished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ing</td>
<td>Verb form/present participle</td>
<td>Renting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ly</td>
<td>Characteristic of</td>
<td>Gladly, happily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-er, -or</td>
<td>Person connected with</td>
<td>Painter, director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ion, -tion, -ation, -ition, -sion</td>
<td>Act, process</td>
<td>Tension, attention, imagination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ible, -able</td>
<td>Can be done</td>
<td>Comfortable, changeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-al, -ial</td>
<td>Having characteristics of</td>
<td>Natural, remedial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-y</td>
<td>Characterized by</td>
<td>Rainy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ness</td>
<td>State of, condition of</td>
<td>Kindness, happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ity, -ty</td>
<td>State of</td>
<td>Necessity, honesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ment</td>
<td>Action or process</td>
<td>Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ic</td>
<td>Having, of</td>
<td>Poetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ous, -eous, -ious</td>
<td>Having, of</td>
<td>Joyous, gracious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-en</td>
<td>Made of</td>
<td>Wooden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-er</td>
<td>Comparative</td>
<td>Smarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ive, -ative, -itive</td>
<td>Adjective form of a noun</td>
<td>Active, affirmative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ful</td>
<td>Full of</td>
<td>Fearful, beautiful, hopeful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-less</td>
<td>Without</td>
<td>Fearless, tireless, hopeless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-est</td>
<td>Superlative</td>
<td>Lightest, strongest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ance, -ence</td>
<td>State of</td>
<td>Importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ness</td>
<td>Having, of</td>
<td>Illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-y</td>
<td>Characterized by</td>
<td>Tasty, salty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author
## Appendix J

**DRTA Lesson Planning Sheet**

Title: ___________________________________________

Author: _________________________________________

What will I use to introduce this book?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Which questions will I ask?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Stopping points after reading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Which questions will I ask?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How will I wrap up the lesson?

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). *Second grade teacher reading academy*. Austin, TX: Author. 

170 | Appendix
Appendix J

Building Vocabulary with Content Word Walls

Example:

Content Area: Mathematics
Topic: Writing Word Problems
Vocabulary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bar graph</th>
<th>capacity</th>
<th>denominator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fourth</td>
<td>fraction</td>
<td>greater than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>half</td>
<td>horizontal</td>
<td>hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>length</td>
<td>less than</td>
<td>measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minutes</td>
<td>numerator</td>
<td>picture graph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>product</td>
<td>second</td>
<td>subtract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sum</td>
<td>thermometer</td>
<td>third</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vertical</td>
<td>weight</td>
<td>width</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vocabulary-building activities:

- Use objects and pictures to introduce words.
- Create a semantic map, grouping words that need to be included for a particular kind of problem. For example, all the words you use for time measurement.

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). Second grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author.
Appendix J

Adapted from University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). Second grade teacher reading academy. Austin, TX: Author
Endnotes

What is the Three-Tier Reading Model?
1Vaughn & Linan-Thompson. (in press). -
2National Reading Panel (NRP). (2000); Snow, Burns, & Griffin. (1998). -
3Vaughn, Linan-Thompson, & Hickman. (in press).
4Kame‘enui & Carnine. (1998); Pressley, Rankin, & Yokoi. (1996). -
5Fuchs. (1986). -
6Vaughn, Hughes, Moody, & Elbaum. (2001). -
7Maheady. (1997). -

Introduction to Tier I
1Fuchs. (1986); Fuchs & Fuchs. (1986). -
2NRP. (2000); Snow, Burns, & Griffin. (1998). -
3Adams. (1990). -
4Adams. (1990); NRP. (2000); University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts (UTCRLA). (2000). First grade teacher reading academy.
6NRP. (2000).

Phonemic Awareness
1Liberman & Shankweiler. (1985); Stanovich. (1986). -
2Bos & Vaughn. (2001). -
3UTCRLA. (2000). First grade teacher reading academy. -
4UTCRLA. (2000). First grade teacher reading academy. -
5UTCRLA. (2000). First grade teacher reading academy. -
6Lechner, O., & Podhajski, B. (1997). -
7Ehri. (1998); NRP. (2000). -
8Bos & Vaughn. (2001). -
9Ball & Blachman. (1991); O’Connor, Jenkins, Leicester, & Slocum. (1993). -
11Kaminski & Good. (1996). -
Phonics and Word Study

1Chard, Simmons, & Kame’enui. (1998).
2Texas Education Agency (TEA). (2000).
3Ehri. (1994).
4Ehri. (1994).
5TEA. (2000).
6TEA. (2000).
7TEA. (2000).
8TEA. (2000).
11Kaminski & Good. (1996).

Fluency

2Chard, Vaughn, & Tyler. (2002).
3Chard, Vaughn, & Tyler. (2002).
4Stanovich. (1986).
6Chard, Vaughn, & Tyler. (2002).
8Chard, Simmons, & Kame’enui. (1998); NRP (2000); Snow, Burns, & Griffin. (1998). (as cited in Chard, Vaughn, & Tyler, 2002).
16Chard, Vaughn, & Tyler. (2002).
Vocabulary

3 Beck, McKeown, & Kucan. (2002).
5 Beck, McKeown, & Kucan. (2002); Stahl. (1999).
6 Baker, Simmons, & Kame’enui. (2000).
9 Beck, McKeown, & Kucan. (2002).
15 Nagy and Anderson’s study (as cited in Baker, Simmons, & Kame’enui, 2000).
16 Stahl and Erickson’s study (as cited in Baker, Simmons, & Kame’enui, 2000).
22 Biemiller. (2004); Beck, McKeown, & Kucan. (2002).

Comprehension

1 Rosenblatt. (1978).

Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts at the University of Texas at Austin. (2005). Supplemenatal instruction for struggling readers, grade 3: A guide for tutors.

Tier III: Instruction for Intensive Intervention

1 Good, Kame’enui, Simmons, & Chard. (2002).
References


University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2000). *First grade teacher reading academy*. Austin, TX: Author.

University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2001). *Second grade teacher reading academy*. Austin, TX: Author.


University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003). *Special education reading project (SERP) elementary institute—Effective instruction for elementary struggling readers: Research-based practices* (Rev. ed.). Austin, TX: Author.

Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts at The University of Texas at Austin. (2005). *Supplemental instruction for struggling readers, grade 3: A guide for tutors*. Austin, TX: Author.


