

Fancher Education

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Literacy Booklet

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Phonemic Awareness

The Theory: Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words.

(Beginning to Read)

Why do we need phonemes? Because “sound it out” doesn’t work if the letter combinations used to make a sound are more sophisticated than a = ă (căt). Why does cake say “kāk” and not “kăk”? If we don’t know how to separate sounds (segment) and apply rules, we don’t know.

How do we work with phonemes? Let’s start with the basics. Use the hand included on the next page to encourage your student to “thump” their words and “tap” their letter sounds. As each hand is made of fingers, so are words made up of sounds. Each finger has multiple parts and so do our sounds.

The practice:

The best learning happens when we engage many senses; sight, sound, and touch work together to create short-term memories that turn into long-term learning.

Activity

The word is CAP

1. Ball your hand into a fist to grab the word.
2. Thump it onto the paper and say out loud “CAP”. “C-Ă-P”
3. Spread your hand out and tap one finger for each sound, always starting on the left.
4. C (pinky finger/green)
5. Ă (ring finger/yellow)
6. P (middle finger/red)
7. For each finger, ask yourself “What letter or combination of letters make this sound?”

The word is CAPE

1. Ball your hand into a fist to grab the word.
2. Thump it onto the paper and say out loud “CAP”. “C-Ă-P”
3. Spread your hand out and tap one finger for each sound, always starting on the left.
4. C (pinky finger/green)
5. Ă (ring finger/yellow)
6. P (middle finger/red)
7. For each finger, ask yourself “What letter or combination of letters make this sound? Why would ‘a’ make the open/long Ă sound instead of the closed/short ă sound here?”

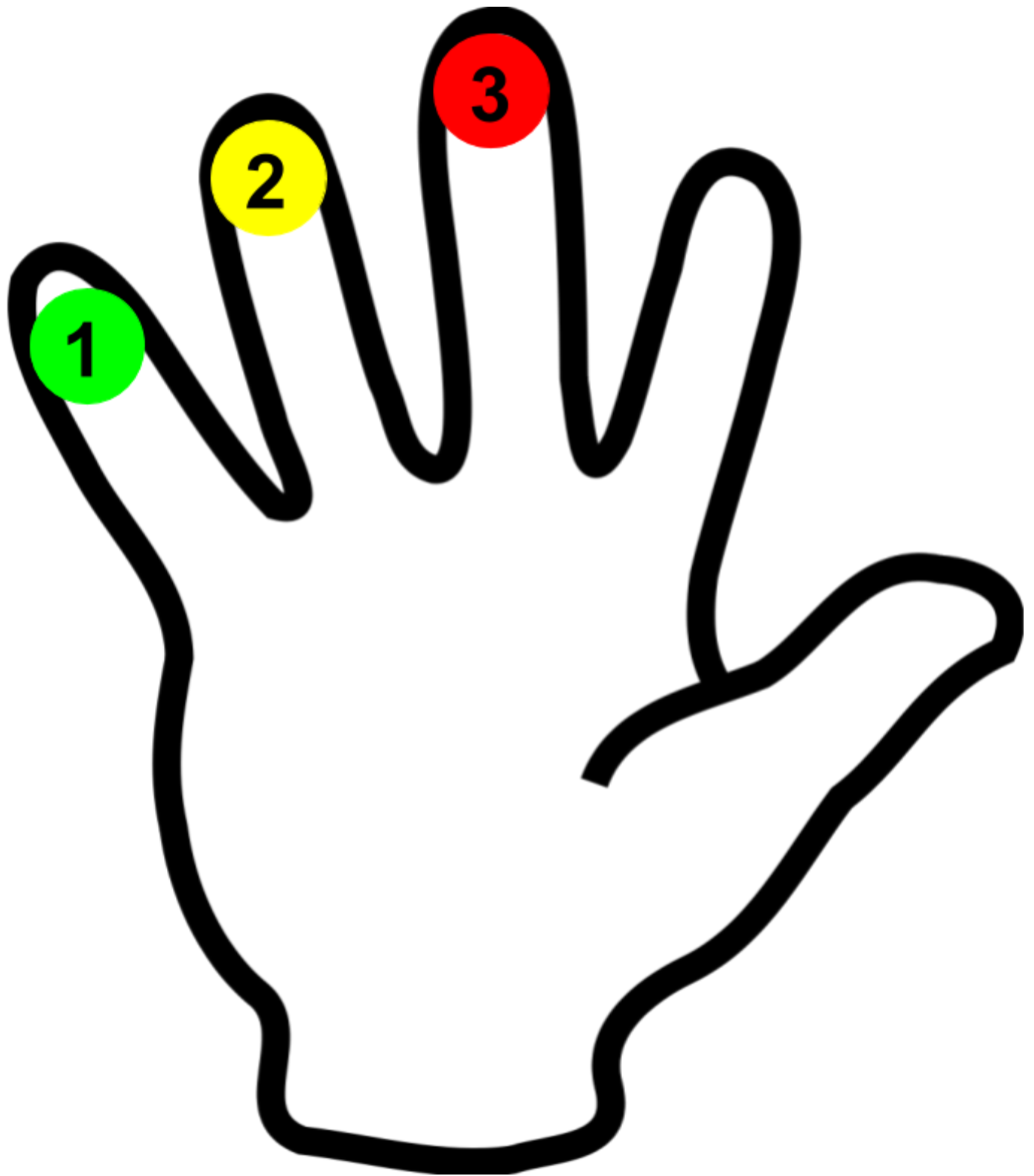


Words to practice thump/tap

w	e	t
h	a	t
c	a	n
t	i	n
p	a	n
h	o	p
c	u	p
c	o	p
p	e	t
t	e	m

sh	i	p
ch	o	p
c	a	ne
t	i	ne
p	ai	n
h	o	pe
c	u	te
g	y	m
p	e	te
th	e	m





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Phonics

The theory: Phonics are the mechanics of reading. It is what sound goes with which letter and what rules make the base sounds change into something new. When you hear the terms “decoding” and “encoding”, this is what they are referring to.

How do we teach phonics? There are lots of ways to teach phonics and what works best for one child may not work at all for another. At heart, however, the best phonics instruction is simple, systematic, and specific. This means that it introduces only one concept at a time, it adds new rules in a logical order, it builds on what has been taught before, and doesn't expect students to know what has not been taught. Words with phonics that break the rules or have very complex rules are called *sight words*.

The practice:

Sample phonics progression

- Individual letter sounds
- [CL] Closed (short) vowel sound
- [O] Open (long) vowel rule
- [ME] Magic “E” (Silent “E”)
- [VT] Vowel Teams
- [DI] Digraphs - two letters that make one sound
- [DT] Diphthongs - a new vowel sound made up of two other vowels
- [GC] Gentle C
- [GG] Gentle G
- [BR] “Bossy R” ar, er, ir, or, ur
- C,d,f,g, etc
- Cap
- Hi
- Cape
- Ai, ay, ea, ee, oa, oe
- Ch, sh, th, wh
- oi, oy, ou
- Ow, ou,
- Ci, cy, ce, gi, gy, ge
- Giant Cyclone named Gem hits Central City Gym.
- Star, fern, bird, or, burn



Activity: Identify the phonics rules at work in each word of this passage.
Use the abbreviations from the progression above to label each word

Wake up! Wake up! There's lots to do!
Good morning, brother. Good morning
sister. Rise and shine, you two! It's time to
run. It's time to race. So comb your tail and
wash your face.

Modified passage from *Good Morning, Thumper*, a preK/Kindergarten level board book

Wake up! Wake up! There's lots to do! Good morning, brother.											
ME	CL	ME	CL	BR (SW)	CL (SW) (SW)	DI	BR	BR; BR			
Good morning sister. Rise and shine, you two! It's time to run.											
DI	BR	BR	ME	CL	DT;ME	(SW)	(SW)	CL	ME	(SW)	CL
It's time to race. So comb your tail and wash your face.											
CL	ME	SW	ME; GC	OP	SW	SW	VT	CL	SW	SW	ME; GC



Vocabulary

The theory: “The size of a person’s vocabulary is strongly related to how well that person understands what he or she reads...[and] the highest rate of vocabulary development occurs during the preschool years....Gains in oral vocabulary development can predict growth in comprehension and later reading performance”

(Neuman and Wright, 2014)

Why teach vocabulary to early readers? We can learn to sound out French words, or Spanish, or even Korean pretty quickly, but if we don’t know what the words mean, do they hold any significance to us? Students become better readers when they know what a word they are working through means and can attach significance to it. A child who lives to be 100 years old has only experienced 6% of his life in his 6th birthday. That’s a pretty small percentage without a lot of overall context. Vocabulary and spelling helps introduce children to and clarify their experiences in the world.

Where do vocabulary words come from? Sight words and vocabulary words can often overlap. Vocabulary words can be from stories read or everyday life encounters.

The practice:

80% of children need to experience 24 repetitions of a word to successfully remember it. Daily practice is essential to vocabulary success. To reach 24 repetitions in a week, students should encounter the word three to four times per day.

Common sight/vocabulary words

Kindergarten	1st grade	2nd grade	3rd grade
have	about	before	absorb
to	people	does	elegant
said	should	wash	examine
look	orange	which	perform
one	please	would	accuse
two	because	fall	gradual



Activity: Learn the word *restaurant*

1. Place your paper over a plastic red grid.
2. Using a red crayon, write the word on the big house line. Say the letters of the word as you write them, then the whole word when finished. “r-e-s-t-a-u-r-a-n-t. *restaurant*”
3. Trace each raised crayon line with your finger, saying each letter and then the word. Do this three times.
4. Chunk the word into a pattern “RES” “TAU” “RAN” “T” “*restaurant*”

restaurant

5. Stand up, look at the word and using the hand you write with, tap each word chunk on your opposite arm. Move to a new place for each chunk, ending with “t” on your hand.
6. Slide your writing hand from opposite shoulder to opposite hand and say the word *restaurant*. Do steps 5 and 6 three times.
7. Write the word on a new line. You can check back with your big paper, but tap it out on your arm or desk as you do so.
8. Turn your big paper over and write the word on a new line without looking at any other time you spelled the word. Tap it out on your arm or desk if you need to.



Fluency

The theory: “Oral reading fluency is the ability to read connected text quickly, accurately, and with expression.”

(Rasplica and Cummings, 2013)

If a reader is busy trying to break the code of reading, they aren’t focusing on the meaning behind the words. They aren’t comprehending the text. Many students who “hate reading” simply aren’t fluent in reading. They are spending more time working the mechanics of it than enjoying the information that the text is attempting to convey.

How do we teach fluency? To teach fluency, readers should first be taught specific spelling rules and phonemes, then presented with materials that contain those rules and few to no others.

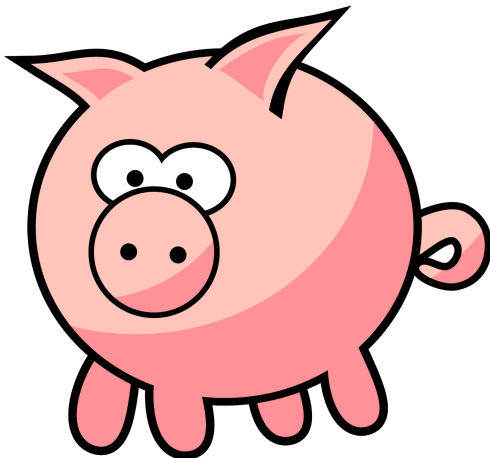
The practice:

“Skill level”/Independent reading - These are materials that are *at the reader’s current skill level*. It is important to realize that not all books contain the same set of skills, even if they are marked at a certain “grade level”. Each publisher uses their own idea of skill level and progression.

“Reach”/ Guided Reading - These are materials with 15% or more of their words containing concepts that the reader does not know. These materials can create a significant struggle within the reader and should be read to or along with the student.



Activity: You are a student who knows open and closed vowels, Magic E, and vowel teams. You also know ch, sh, th, & wh and some sight words. Read the two passages below. Sight words and concepts not learned yet are in red. Read the passages out loud and leave out the red words.

At Level Reading	Reach Reading
<p>I have a big pink pig. His name is Fig. Fig the pig is big. He is a fine pig. He likes to eat the green leaf on the tree. He rubs his nose on my leg.</p> 	<p>I have a large pink pig named Fig. Fig is a very big pig. He is a very smart pig. Fig eats large sticks and leaves. Pig says hi by rubbing his snout on my leg. Good morning, Fig!</p>



Reading for Meaning

The theory: True reading comprehension is the act of understanding the meaning and message of what you are reading. This can only happen when all the previous parts of the puzzle come together. When a reader is struggling to understand how to turn individual letters into sounds, combine those sounds into words, or how to connect words on the page to words they've heard in life, they have little energy left over for giving the actual meaning the words are attempting to convey any thought. This next step in reading is really the most important.

The practice:

The goal of developing good reading and literacy skills is to not only have the ability to understand what an author is telling you, but to be able to think about it and analyze it for intent, accuracy, or bias.

In order to progress in higher order level thinking, students should

- read at least 20 minutes every day at their current skill level,
- be read to via a more advanced fluent reader, or
- Follow along with an audiobook

Activity:

Bookmarks: Use the bookmarks included to not only help you decode and to help you discuss different elements of the text.

Reader's Response Worksheet: Use the worksheet to track and analyze a story or passage. Retell, summarize, or draw the story in your own words.



Book Title: _____

Author: _____

Setting (Where and/or when is the story happening):

Characters (Who is talking or doing something important?):

Plot (What is happening in the story?):

Beginning	Middle	End

Author's Purpose: (Why do you think the author wrote this?):

Reader's Response: (What did you think of the story? What happened in the text to make you think that?):



Writing

The theory: Good readers may not be good writers, but good writers are almost always good readers. When a student learns to use their decoding skills to share their thoughts, they cement their new reading skills, and get to be heard in their own right. Writing is a means of communication to share everything from their learnings to their opinions and what they are passionate about. Students need to practice these skills daily in order to grow in these areas.

The practice:

Imagination and enthusiasm are the pinnacles of childhood. Ask your student about something they love - they may talk your ear off, but struggle with the idea of writing about it. When working with young writers, it is important to get them to talk through their ideas. At this point, they should be writing the way they would speak. That is their author's voice! Prompt them to use all the tools they've learned about to help them create words on the page.

Activity:

Journaling: Have your child practice writing daily and keep it in one solid place - maybe a special notebook for them to log their thoughts in separate from schoolwork. This is a place where they can feel free to have their own ideas and write them down. Read it together and respond to what they are doing. Push them to write sight words and use phonics rules to spell unknown words.



Glossary

Blending	combining letter sounds; each letter sound in a blend is heard; cr, br, bl
Decode	translating a printed word into sound using known spelling rules
Digraph	two consonants next to each other that combine to make a single, new sound; ch, sh, th
Diphthong	“noisy vowels”; letters next to each other that combine to make a single, new vowel sound; ow, ou, igh
Encode	using letter and sound rules to write
Fluency	being able to read quickly, accurately, and with meaning and comprehension
Grapheme	letters or groups of letters
Phoneme	sounds a letter or group of letters make
Phonics	the relationship a language has between letter combinations and sounds
Segment	breaking words into individual sounds



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