

Strategies to Read Words

Good readers use at least 5 different strategies to identify words in text:

1. Blending together the sounds (i.e., sounds that are represented by the letters in words). This method is usually referred to as phonemic decoding or as the "sounding out" strategy.
2. Noticing and blending together familiar spelling patterns involving more than one letter.
3. Recognizing printed words as whole units and reading them "by sight."
4. Making analogies to other words that are already known.
5. Using clues from the context to guess a word's identity.

-Linnea C. Ehri

Strategy #1 Blending Together the Sounds of Words/ Decoding

Questions to Ask Students: What letter- sound relationships do you know?

Which ones should you study?

What are the letter names of the alphabet?

Goals of Lessons: Student should be able to name the 26 letters in the English alphabet.
Students should be able make the sounds of: short and long vowels, single, double and triple consonants, two consonants that make one sound, two vowels that make one sound, and silent consonants.

Materials: Sound Test Chart; Word Lists; Blocks or Squares for activity

Resources: Wilson Assessment of Decoding and Encoding, Wilson Reading System:
Phone: 508-368-2399 or wilsonlanguage.com
Educators Publishing Services, Cambridge, MA Phone: 800 435-7728
The following items are not on the web site and must be ordered by telephone:

5047—Set of plastic uppercase block letters (magnetic)
5107—Laminated individual alphabet strip (2 1 D2" x 22 1 D2")
409—Advanced Reading Deck (graphemes on cards)

- 413—Initial Reading Deck (pictures and graphemes on cards)
- 408—Missing Letter Deck (uppercase block letters on cards)
- 202—Phonics Drill Cards (no pictures on cards)
- 6202—Phonics Drill Cards (with pictures on cards)
- 1459—Skeleton Dictionary (guide-word practice dictionary)
- 1662—Teacher's Hand Pack for Classroom Use (letters of the alphabet, phonograms, digraphs, and letter combinations)

Books with lists of patterns:

- Megawords: Multisyllabic Words for Reading, Spelling, and Vocabulary, Educators Publishing Service, epsbooks@epsbooks.com
- Wilson Reading System, The Wilson Store, wilsonlanguage.com
- The Reading Teacher's Book of Lists, Edward B. Fry, amazon.com

Activities for Blending Sounds of Words:

1. Instructor chooses words that are phonetically regular. Each sound of a word is spoken one at a time to the student. The student is asked to say the sounds together fluently to make a word. When assessing their skill at this, use a variety of words. When teaching this skills, use lists of words that follow a specific pattern and teach the pattern so the student is familiar with it.
2. Instructor gives the student a deck of flashcards of letters and a picture to help the student isolate the sound. For example, a picture of a room with an arrow pointing to the ceiling. Next to the picture, the card reads: **ei** The student identifies the picture and isolates the sound of the letters on the card. After several letter - sound relationships are learned, the student classifies the letters by sound. For example: long vowel sounds; sounds of /j/; sounds of /k/.

3. The instructor demonstrates that the number of letters in a word and the number of sounds in that same word can differ. For example: eight = 5 letters, 2 sounds. Then the instructor shows the sound-letter relationship on a set of blocks or draws squares on a page around the letter(s) that make one sound.

Strategy #2 Noticing and blending together familiar spelling patterns involving more than one letter.

Questions to Ask Students: Can you see a pattern among words?
Do you know any rules in reading English?

Goals of Lesson: Student should identify the sounds of individual letters.
Student should blend familiar clusters of letters, common affixes, syllables, and spelling patterns.

Materials: Charts to organize patterns; Word Lists; 6 Syllable Types; 5 Syllabication Rules; 36 Most Common Spellings

Resources: same as above resources listed.

Directions: Think of the pattern: Consonant followed by the letter 'l' followed by the letter 'e'.
What are the letter combinations? Think of an example for each -Cle syllable you brainstorm.

-Cle Syllable Type	
-Cle Syllable	Example in English

Activities for noticing and blending together familiar spelling patterns involving more than one letter.

1. Instructor reads a list of closed syllables one at a time while the student classifies it. Then, the student adds the letter -e to change the sound the letters make and reads the new word.

Closed Syllable (VC) (vowel followed by consonant)	Silent -e Syllable (VCe) (vowel followed by consonant followed by a silent e)

2. Instructor gives a section or all of the 36 most common word parts to the student. The student is to use the letters in the alphabet to create words. The words will all rhyme. The instructor shows the student patterns of initial consonants in the English language. Then, the student should read the word parts while the instructor times the student. When the fastest time is achieved, the student should memorize these 36 parts. First, rhyme the word part. Write the rhyme on a piece of paper. Also, scan for them in newspapers, magazines, on the internet, and in stories.

36 Most Common Spellings						
-ack	-all	-ain	-ake	-ale	-ame	-an
-ank	-ap	-ash	-at	-ate	-aw	-ay
-eat	-ell	-est				
-ice	-ick	-ide	-ight	-ill	-in	-ine
-ing	-ink	-ip	-it			
-ock	-oke	-op	-ore	-ot		
-uck	-ug	-ump	-unk			

Consonant patterns in the first position of a word:

b-	bl-	br-					
c-	ch-	cl-	cr-				
d-	dr-						
f-	fl-	fr-					
g-	gh-	gl-	gr-	h-	j-	k-	kn-
l-	m-	n-	p-	pl-	pr-	qu-	r-
s-	sh-	sl-	sr-	st-	str-	sw-	
t-	th-	thr-	tr-				
w-	wh-	wr-	y-	z-			

Student lists 5 rhymes under the word part:

	ack		ail		ain		ake		ale
1		1		1		1		1	
2		2		2		2		2	
3		3		3		3		3	
4		4		4		4		4	
5		5		5		5		5	

Strategy #3: Reading by Sight

Words from Adams' and Huggins' Test of Sight Word Reading				
none	island	busy	bouquet	rhythm
calf	depot	yacht	fiance	heights
break	react	suede	guitar	
prove	sugar	tongue	chauffer	

Question to Ask Students: Can you read these lists of words automatically? (present each sight word list)

Name of Student: _____ Date: March 13, 2009

Level of Sight Word Reading Reached:

_ List 1-25 _ List 26-50 - List 51-75

Goals for Lesson: Student should be able to build a sight vocabulary.

Materials: Sight Word Lists

Activity for Sight Word Reading:

1. Ask student to read each group of sight words in order of level of difficulty. Mark which ones they know automatically and which ones they recognize but not automatically. Also, mark which ones are new to them. Keep a record in order to teach them these high frequency words.

Strategy #4 Making Analogies

Questions to Ask Students: If you know road, then what is this word: **toad**
If you know mountain, then what is this word: **fountain**
If you know brother, then what is this word: **mother**

Goals for Lesson: Student is able to recognize and read a variety of word parts

Materials: Word Families; Most Common Spellings; Common Affixes

Resources: See resources from earlier sections.

Activity for Making Analogies

1. Instructor reads common affixes to student. Then, search for the patterns in reading passages, newspapers, and magazines. Build a list of words you find that follow each pattern.

Common Affixes						
-al	-able	-ate	-ant			
-ed	-en	-er	-ent			
-ize	-ist	-ing	-ive	-ite	-ion	-ic
-ful	-ly	-less	-ment	-ness	-ous	
com-	con-	de-	dis-	ex-	im-	in-
or-	pre-	pro-	re-	un-		

Strategy #5 Using Clues from the Context

Questions to Ask Students: Tell me a story about anything that interests you.
What words do you use when you speak that you could learn to recognize when you read?
What words are common in the workplace? At home? At school? As a parent and family member?

Goals of Lesson: Student should be able to use letters' sounds and the context to guess at a word's meaning accurately.

Materials: Reading passages, Dictionary, Thesaurus, Signal Word Lists

Resources: Specific Skills Series, Using the Context, McGraw Hill, sraonline.com; Equipped for the Future, EFF Fundamentals, Role Maps: eff.cls.utk.edu

Activity for Using Clues from Context:

1. When the student comes to an unfamiliar word, use the surrounding words and topic to define the word. Example: hors d'oeuvres
2. Choose a bank of Signal Words. Tell a story and use as many as those words in the bank as you can. Listen to a story or read one. Write down or find as many as those words as you can.
3. Instruct how to gain meaning from text using pictures, titles, headings, and visual cues.
4. Teach parts of words: roots, suffixes, and prefixes.

Edgar Dale's Four Stages of Knowledge of a Word's Meaning

Stage 1: "I never saw [or heard] it before."

Stage 2: "I've heard it, but I don't know what it means."

Stage 3: "I recognize it in context - it has something to do with...."

Stage 4: "I know it." [I can say what it means.]

Conclusions:

Good readers use different ways to read for different purposes.

Good readers are flexible with their skills and strategies while reading.

As readers attain skills, they become capable of reading words in all five ways.

The mechanism for storing words into long term memory changes with the development of a variety of skills and strategies.

Instruction for helping students analyze and connect all the letters in spellings to all the sounds in pronunciations of words is especially important (Carmine, 1977; Chall, 1967, 1983).

Conclusions:

A number of studies has shown that older readers are sensitive to commonly occurring letter patterns, but beginning readers are not.

Understanding the process of how reading develops will place us in a better position to create and evaluate instruction that teaches students how to read better.