

Enhance Your Personal Phonics Expertise to Enrich Instruction

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With the intense focus on the Science of Reading, there is a renewed call for teaching phonics. While the Science of Reading is not a curriculum, it has influenced how teachers think about reading instruction (Castle, Rastle & Nation, 2018). Having a strong knowledge base about phonics puts every teacher at an advantage for assessing students' ability to apply the "code" when they read and write (Seidenberg, 2017). This knowledge also gives a roadmap to where some students might be struggling in reading and/or writing (Lane, Puller, Hudson, & Konold, 2009), providing opportunity for real-time assessment. Learning and retaining sounds and the graphemes that represent them is called orthographic mapping (Ehri, 2020). Mapping is an important skill because once sound and symbol relationships are retained, students become fluent, automatic readers. Less mental effort is focused on decoding, and more attention can be given to comprehension. Offering ways for students to efficiently apply phonic patterns learned help develop fluency and automaticity, which will improve word knowledge and comprehension.

How predictable is English?

- **50%** - based on sound-letter correspondences
 - ✓ *bit, snap, cold, peek, deck, love, light*
- **34%** - except for one sound
 - ✓ *knit, boat, write, comb* (pronunciations changed over time, but not the spelling); eliminates confusion (*rite/write; not/knot*)
- **10%** - if other information such as word meaning and origin are considered
 - ✓ *sign/signature; chef; chaos; leotard*
- **< 4%** are true oddities

Phoneme - *smallest unit of sound. What we hear (knight...night.../n/ / ī/ /t/)*

- ✓ macron – *diacritical mark over a long vowel* (from Ancient Greek *makrón* meaning long – used to mark metrics in Greco-Roman literature)
- ✓ breve – *diacritical mark over a short vowel* (from the Latin *brevis* meaning short or brief)
- **Grapheme** - *written symbols* (letter or group of letters) that represent phonemes. What we *see*.

Consonant Facts

21 graphemes make 25 distinct phonemes (18 single; 7 digraphs) – many are dependable and consistent in sound.

1. **B**at (✓at beginning; silent after **m** or before **t**)
2. **D**og (✓)
3. **F**ish (✓)
4. **H**at (✓ 99% consistent; never a final phoneme)
5. **J**ump (✓ 100% at beginning; when final phoneme spelled dge, ge)
6. **K**ick (✓ very consistent; silent .5% when followed by **n**)
7. **L**amb (✓at beginning; often silent elsewhere – yolk, milk, could)
8. **M**an (✓)
9. **N**o(✓; changes to digraph followed by g)
10. **P**an (✓ very consistent; written with **h** makes digraph /f/)
11. **R**un (✓)
12. **S**un (✓)
13. **T**each (✓ 98% consistent)
14. **V**oice (✓ very consistent)
15. **W**atch (✓at beginning, silent if followed by **r**; sometimes a vowel phoneme - **snow**)
16. **Y**ellow (✓at beginning, sometimes a vowel phoneme - **cry**)
17. **Z**oo (✓ very consistent)

Hard and soft sounds of c

- ✓ /**k**/ the hard sound when followed by **a, o, u** (76% of the time) – *cat, coat, cups*
- ✓ /**s**/ the soft sound when followed by **i, e, y** or at the end of words – *city, center, cycle; policy, mercy, face, voice*

Hard and soft sounds of g

- ✓ /**g**/ the hard sound when followed by **a, o, u** (70% of the time) – *gate, goat, guppy*
- ✓ /**j**/ the soft sound when followed by **i, e, y** – *giant, gentle, gyroscope* (29% of the time) or at the end of words – *cage, sponge*

Q

- No distinctive sound
- Never alone in English words – always followed by *u* (unless a borrowed word – *Iraq, burqa, qigong*) thanks to the Normans. The *u* does not count as the vowel sound in determining syllables – *quit, quake, quantum*

X

- No distinctive sound
- /ks/ in stressed syllables (*fox, waxy*), /gs/ in unstressed syllables (*exist*), /z/ rarely (*xylophone*)

7 digraphs

th – most frequent

sh – second most occurring – consistent and reliable

ch – 89% as in *chair*, 10% as in *chaos*, 1% as in *chef*

ng/nk – 100% consistent at end of word

wh (hw) – 90% consistent /hw/ beginning of word, 10% /wh/, never phoneme at end of word

ph – consistent /f/ sound

gh – Great Vowel Shift gave us different pronunciations (*rough*, *bought*, *ghost*)

Blog: [Maximize your phonics instruction with application routines](#)

Applying Consonant Knowledge

- Create 3 headings
 - *ch* that sounds like /ch/ as in chain
 - *ch* that sounds like /k/ as in chaos
 - *ch* that sounds like /sh/ chef.
- Write words with the three sounds of *ch* on paper squares:
 - chop, chair, choir, echo, chute, machine
- Place word cards face down on a table. Students take turns choosing and reading a word card, then choosing a yellow card to match the pattern.
- Students read and reread words, solidifying their knowledge of the *ch* sound pattern.

Vowel Facts

5 graphemes in the English alphabet are vowels. These letters (and sometimes y) make **19** distinct phonemes

- **5 short vowel phonemes** (*map*, *bed*, *big*, *lock*, *cub*) – usually taught first
- **5 long vowel phonemes – created in three different ways**
 - single phonemes - *me*, *go*, *my* (no English words end in **i** or **u**)
 - V_C_e – *cake*, *eve*, *vine*, *stone*, *cube*
 - vowel teams– ai/ay; ee/ea; ie/igh; oa/oe/ow; ue/ew
- **3 r-controlled vowel phonemes** – ar [most common], or, er/ir/ur
 - Vowel-r combinations – air, are, eer, ear, our, ore, ure
- **2 diphthongs** – oi/oy; ou/ow
- **3 other vowel teams** – au, aw, oo
- **Schwa** – most common spoken vowel - 20% of all vowel phonemes (“uhh” vowel in the unstressed syllable; most difficult to predict when writing words – *ago*, *item*, *family*, *ribbon*, *upon*). Louisa Moats (2005) calls it “a vowel with the stuffing taken out”

Why 'tock-tick' does not sound right to your ears

Ever wondered why we say tick-tock, not tock-tick, or ding-dong, not dong-ding; King Kong, not Kong King? Turns out it is one of the unwritten rules of English that native speakers know without knowing.

The rule, explains a BBC article, is: "If there are three words then the order has to go I, A, O. If there are two words then the first is I and the second is either A or O. Mish-mash, chit-chat, dilly-dally, shilly-shally, tip top, hip-hop, flip-flop, tic tac, sing song, ding dong, King Kong, ping pong."

There's another unwritten rule at work in the name Little Red Riding Hood, says the article. "Adjectives in English absolutely have to be in this order: opinion-size-age-shape-colour-or-



gin-material-purpose noun. So you can have a lovely little old rectangular green French silver whittling knife. But if you mess with that word order in the slightest you'll sound like a maniac."

That explains why we say "little green men" not "green little men," but "Big Bad Wolf" sounds like a gross violation of the "opinion (bad)-size (big)-noun (wolf)" order. It won't, though, if you recall the first rule about the I-A-O order.

That rule seems inviolable: "All four of a horse's feet make exactly the same sound. But we always, always say clip-clop, never clop-clip."

This rule even has a technical name, if you care to know it—the rule of ablaut reduplication—but then life is simpler knowing that we know the rule without knowing it.

For more: BBC

Applying Vowel Knowledge

Who has a short a word? (Teacher begins)	
I have cat.	
Who has a short o word?	
I have dog.	
Who has a long o word?	
I have boat.	
Who has a short u word?	
I have cup.	
Who has a long e word?	
I have tree.	
Who has a short a word?	

ay

b	d	h
j	l	m
p	r	s
w	cl	gr
pl	st	tr

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37 rime Families (makes 500 primary words)

22 short vowels

-ack, -an, -ank, -ap, -ash, -at, -ell, -est, -ick, -ill, -in, -ing, -ink, -ip, -it, -ock, -op, -ot, -uck, -ug, -ump, -unk

13 long vowels

-ail, -ain, -ake, -ale, -ame, -ate, -ay, -eat, -ice, -ide, -ight, -ine, -oke

1 digraph

-aw

1 r-controlled

-ore

PARTNER POEM
-ack



I Love My Yak

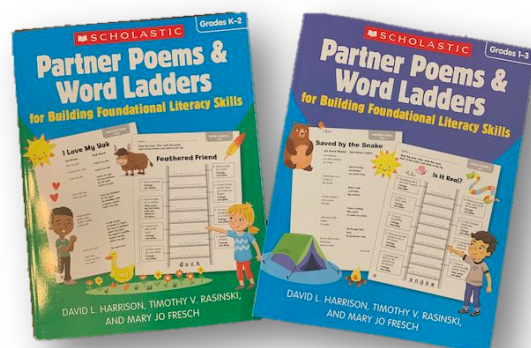
1st Voice
See my yak?
I named him Jack.
I love my yak.
Good old Jack.
I love my yak.

2nd Voice
That's no yak.
Jack's no yak.
Jack's no yak.
He has feathers
on his back.
Jack's no yak.
Jack has feathers
on his back.
He waddles with
a quack, quack.
Jack's no yak.
A yak is gray
or brown or black.
He has no feathers
down his back.
He doesn't waddle,
doesn't quack.
Jack's no yak!
No such luck.

Jack's no yak?
Well, then . . .
I love my Jack,
the duck.



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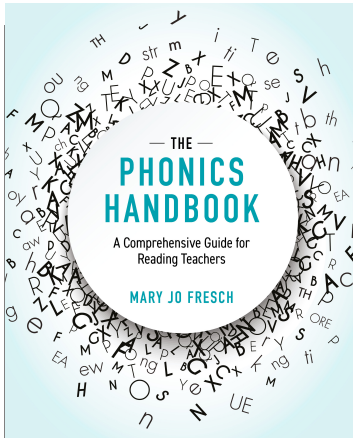
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