

Components of the Blended Sound-Sight Program of Learning Organizing a Primary Classroom Ingham

Although the Program was developed by Mrs. Ingham and her school children many years ago, it is relevant because it is based on the way children learn. It has been successful for students, educators and parents when fully implemented.

1. Activity Time

Students work in partners, using manipulative activities to reinforce basic skills which have been taught. They develop good character traits such as co-operation, patience and acceptance.

2. Discovery

Students decode previously un-encountered words by independently transferring their knowledge of the rules of the English language. Since these words are not in context, students must achieve a high level of decoding. As they plot their progress on a Discovery chart, they are excited to reach their goals.

3. The individualized Classroom Library

After earning their way into the classroom library by completing the discovery packs, students are exposed to a wide variety of literature. As they follow a daily routine of independently choosing appropriate books from the levels within the library, sharing their book orally with a friend and writing about it, they are encouraged to celebrate the success of others.

4. The Writing Component

- Students write daily (grade ones must first learn to print and copy).
- Emphasis is placed on ideas expressed but also on sentence structure, comprehension and mechanics.
- Since reading and writing are inter-related, students are encouraged to read with expression, stress the main words and be aware of the flow of the language.
- Students learn to improve their writing by following models and then creating their own works
- Narrative stories are written with the use of the Ingham Sequence Chart, which guides students through the parts of a story (setting, plot, problem, solution and clincher).
- Students use reader stories as models and later summarize library stories, finally creating their own.
- Sophisticated vocabulary which children have read in library books is incorporated into their writing.
- Students are encouraged to take risks in spelling when engaged in writing tasks, using their knowledge of the rules of the English language. Errors are corrected. A mistake is an opportunity to learn.
- Teachers guide students in improving their writing by using a variety of sentence structures and adding better vocabulary such as substituting more appropriate words for “said”.
- Most of these guidelines can be applied to various writing tasks such as personal, descriptive and persuasive.

5. Poetry Appreciation and Study

Daily enjoyment and study of a weekly poem exposes students to good literature and a variety of poems. Poetry is used as a vehicle to teach phonics within meaningful context, develop vocabulary and comprehension, integrate subjects and provide a time of fun. Students are challenged to write poetry by memory and to create their own poems.

6. Reading, Word Attack and Spelling

- As children learn basic English rules, they are encouraged to transfer that knowledge to new situations.
- Basic English rules which BSS calls “helpers” or “tools” are built into a Sound City, a place for practice and reference.

- Exceptions to rules are placed in the class “jail”, one of the many ideas invented by the children.
- Words which contain silent consonants are placed on a ghost or suitable poster.
- Special areas in the classroom house student-gathered collections of homonyms, synonyms, antonyms, compounds, adjectives and adverbs, especially useful as a reference for writing tasks.
- Prevention Rather than Cure Jingles are learned and displayed. These jingles consist of troublesome words which are placed in child-related stories as an aid to memory.
- Spelling integration – spelling and reading rules are integrated and taught in every subject.
- Daily spelling – Helpers are underlined. Spelling words are analyzed and studied in a variety of ways.
- Spelling errors – Students keep their spelling hound bone clean by correcting errors and learning correct spelling in a relaxed, non-threatening atmosphere.
- Early in grade one, students learn the sounds and formation of alphabet letters through child-centered stories and songs.

7. Individualized Silent Reading Files

These are non-consumable sheets which require the students to follow directions independently, work through assignments at their own rate, use their writing skills by answering in complete sentences and follow an orderly routine. They reinforce concepts taught and develop comprehension. The file routine helps students develop responsibility and take ownership of their own learning. The files become one item in an Agenda, which the students follow during Agenda Time (work period).

8. Character Development – modeled, discussed and practiced with a positive approach

-co-operation, patience, respect, tolerance, learning to accept and give help, developing a sense of humour, feeling happy when others succeed, independence, responsibility, solving one’s own problems, taking consequences for one’s own actions, following directions, consideration for others and more.

Excitement, goals, high achievement, organization are integral parts of all of the above components.