



How can I help my child with their reading?

Strategies and tips
for all readers!

Aspen Park Elementary School
2250 Bolt Ave, Comox BC
V9M 4E7
250-890-0944

Phonological Awareness

What is it?

Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds—phonemes—in spoken words. It's a critical skill for children as it directly correlates with their ability to read and spell. Essentially, it's about understanding that words are made up of sounds which can be assembled and reassembled in different ways to make different words.



Activities to Try

Sound Matching: Encourage your child to find objects around the house that start with the same sound. For example, find three things that start with the /b/ sound. This helps them focus on the initial sounds of words.

Sound Segmentation: Use everyday opportunities to practice breaking words down into individual sounds. For instance, while having a meal, you could pick a word like "spoon" and ask your child to break down the sounds: /s/-/p/-/oo/-/n/.

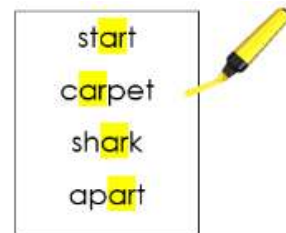
Decoding (Reading)

What is it?

Decoding is the ability to apply your knowledge of letter-sound relationships, including knowledge of letter patterns, to correctly pronounce written words. Understanding these relationships gives children the ability to recognize familiar words quickly and to figure out words they haven't seen before.

Activities to Try

Word Lists: Doing one word at a time, highlight the focus concept, say the focus concept sound, and then blend the sounds to read the whole word.



Decodable Books/Passages: Have your child read the book or passage, practicing decoding words and reading "tricky words." Reread the book again to practice reading more fluently and automatically.

*Option: put the word lists/decodable passages into plastic sleeves and students use dry erase to circle/underline the focus concept.

Encoding (Spelling)

What is it?

Encoding in literacy refers to the process of using letter-sound knowledge to write or spell words. It is an essential skill for children as it allows them to communicate their thoughts in writing. To **spell words**, your child should break the word into sounds and write the letter or letter combination for each sound.

Activities to Try

Word Chains: When children practice building and changing words using word work chains, they are strengthening their reading and spelling skills. You can guide your child's practice by asking them to spell or read a new word by changing one sound. Here is a sample word chain script: →

Word Work Chains
1. shin → ship → shop → shot 2. rash → dash → dish → wish
Sample Word Work Chain Script
shin → ship → shop → shot
1. Make the word shin . [spelling] 2. Change the n to p . What word is this? [reading] 3. Change ship to shop . [spelling] 4. Change the p to f . What word is this? [reading]

Word Building with Letter Tiles: Use paper or magnetic letters to construct words. Have your child create a word you say by selecting the correct letters and arranging them in the right order. They can also do Word Chains (above) using letter tiles.

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i
j	k	l	m	n	o	p	qu	
r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z

My Word

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Phoneme-Grapheme Mapping: Say a word out loud and have your child break the word into its individual sounds by tapping each sound. On the phoneme-grapheme grid, write one sound in each box to "map" the word, then write the whole word at the end.

r	e	d				red
g	a	me				game
sh	ar	k				shark
c	a	m	p	i	ng	camping
k	i	ck	ed			kicked

Hint: sometimes 2 or 3 letters can make one sound, in this case they would all go in the same box (i.e., sh - ar - k), and sometimes a letter makes no sound in which case it doesn't get its own box and is combined with the letter next to it (i.e., kn-i-t, g-a-me).

Tricky Words

What is it?

Tricky Words are also known as irregular words, sight words, or heart words. These are words that have a “tricky” part and cannot be easily sounded out phonetically and do not follow the common phonetic rules. The rest of the word can be sounded out. Some sounds are temporarily irregular. This just means that your child hasn't

Activities to Try

Sight Word Bingo: Create a bingo game with a set of sight words that your child is trying to learn. As you call out the words, your child will have to recognize and mark them on their bingo card. This game makes learning sight words fun and interactive.

Word Hunt: In this activity, parents can encourage their child to find sight words in their environment. Whether it's on a cereal box, a road sign, or in a book, children can “hunt” for certain words, which helps reinforce their recognition.

Flashcard Fun: Write irregular words on flashcards and review them with your child regularly. This can be made into a game where each correct word earns them points. Over time, increase the speed at which you show the cards to help your child recognize words faster.

Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	Set 6	Set 7	Set 8
the	her	all	where	were	mother	goes	world
of	you	one	who	because	Father	word	over
as	your	from	only	want	been	school	people
has	are	have	very	other	every	open	enough
is	use	live	any	their	work	move	carry
his	come	give	put	love	again	eyes	answer
was	some	or	many	would	once	close	above
to	said	what	two	could	great	watch	most
do	there	they	old	should	does	idea	kind

Read-Copy-Cover-Spell-Check: The student will...

1. Read: Read the word aloud to understand how it sounds and to become familiar with its appearance.
2. Copy: Copy the word, writing it down while looking at it and saying the letter names.
3. Cover: After copying, cover the word so it is no longer visible, encouraging recall.
4. Spell: Spell the word, saying each letter aloud and writing it down.
5. Check: Finally, uncover the original word to check if it is spelled correctly, providing immediate feedback.

Reading Fluency

What is it?

Reading fluency is the ability to read text accurately, quickly, and with proper expression. It's a critical skill because it bridges word decoding and comprehension. Fluent readers recognize words automatically, without struggling over decoding, and understand what they read.

Activities to Try

Paired Reading: Sit with your child and read a book together. Take turns reading aloud by sentence, paragraph, or page. Your reading provides a model of fluent reading, which your child can mimic, helping them learn to read smoothly and with expression. Reread familiar books repeatedly.



Echo Reading: Read a short passage aloud, then have your child read the same passage back to you, trying to match your fluency and intonation. This technique helps them practice phrasing and expression in a supportive way. Reread familiar books repeatedly.

Record and Play Back: Encourage your child to record themselves reading a passage. Then, play it back for them to listen to. Discuss what they did well and what they could improve on, such as pausing at commas or increasing smoothness. Reread familiar books repeatedly.

Reading Comprehension

What is it?

Reading comprehension is the ability to process text, understand its meaning, and to integrate it with what the reader already knows. It's vital because it is the ultimate goal of reading: to understand and learn from text.

Activities to Try

Picture Walk: Before reading a new book, flip through it and look at the pictures with your child. Discuss what they see and what they think is happening in the story.



Question and Answer: After your child reads a passage, ask them questions about what they just read. Start with simple factual questions and move on to more complex ones that require inference and prediction.

Story Retelling: Have your child read or listen to a short story and then retell it in their own words, either orally or by drawing a series of pictures.

Literacy Terms to Know

Phoneme: A basic sound in a language that changes the meaning of a word. For example, changing the "c" in "cat" to "b" makes "bat."

Grapheme: The smallest unit in written language that represents a sound. It's like a letter or group of letters that show one sound. For example, "c", "k", and "ck" in "cat", "kite", and "duck" all represent the same sound.

Mapping: How we connect the letters we see in a word (graphemes) to the sounds they make (phonemes). It's like creating a mental map that helps us remember how to read and spell words quickly and automatically. For example, when a child learns that the letters "c", "a", "t" make the word "cat", they are using orthographic *mapping*.

Blending: Putting together the sounds of each letter or group of letters to read a whole word. For example, in the word "cat", you say the sounds of "c", "a", and "t" separately and then blend them together to say "cat". It's like sounding out each part and then smoothly joining them to make the word.

Segmenting: Breaking down a word into its individual sounds to spell it. For example, for the word "dog", you separate it into "d", "o", and "g" sounds, and then write each sound as a letter or group of letters. It's like taking apart a word into its sound pieces to spell it out.

Websites & Apps

Websites

- online word work mat for building/mapping/spelling words:
<https://research.dwi.ufl.edu/op.n/file/cbhd8xmn9i4ctf7i/embed>
- free phonics activities for reading and spelling:
<https://phonicsandstuff.com/>
- Raz Kids: <https://www.raz-kids.com/>
- Reading A to Z: <https://www.readinga-z.com/>
- Epic Books: <https://epicbooks.ca/>

Apps

- app: Hairy Phonics
- app: Sounder and Friends
- app: Word Wizard



Instructional Reading Videos

<https://learn7l.ca/inclusion-resources/reading-supports-2/reading-videos/>