Teaching Sight Words

According to Science
Why are we doing this?
Alignment with Ohio’s Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement
According to the 2017 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores, 37% of our nation’s fourth-grade students were proficient readers.
Why are we here?

- Nearly 30 percent of Ohio’s K-3 students are reading below grade level.
- Nearly 40 percent of students in grades 3-8 are not proficient on the OST in ELA.
- More than 50 percent of graduating seniors taking the ACT do not meet the college and career readiness benchmark for reading.
Participants will…

- Apply the theoretical models of the Simple View of Reading and Seidenberg's 4 Part Processing System for word recognition to instructional practices to teach words “by sight”.
- Understand the connection between phonology and orthography when storing words for automatic retrieval.
- Demonstrate instructional strategies to teach sight words according to science.
One District’s Data

Composite Scores:

**BOY**
- 32 (18%)
- 23 (13%)
- 43 (25%)
- 76 (44%)

**MOY**
- 46 (28%)
- 24 (15%)
- 22 (13%)
- 71 (44%)

DORF Accuracy:

**MOY**
- 60 (36%)
- 27 (17%)
- 29 (18%)
- 47 (29%)
One District’s Data - Looking Deeper

NWF Whole Words Read:

**BOY**
- 71 (41%)
- 32 (18%)
- 71 (41%)

**MOY**
- 21 (13%)
- 16 (10%)
- 44 (27%)
- 82 (50%)

NWF Correct Letter Sounds:

**BOY**
- 26 (15%)
- 34 (20%)
- 36 (21%)
- 78 (44%)

**MOY**
- 23 (14%)
- 25 (15%)
- 33 (20%)
- 82 (51%)
Based on the Simple View of Reading by Gough and Tunmer, 1986

The Simple View of Reading

Word Recognition \( \times \) Language Comprehension = Reading Comprehension

Word Recognition:
- Phonological Awareness
- Decoding (Phonics, Advanced Phonics)
- Sight Word Recognition

Language Comprehension:
- Background Knowledge
- Vocabulary
- Language
- Verbal Reasoning
What is a Sight Word?

A sight word is any word that is recognized instantly and effortlessly by sight, whether it is spelled regularly or irregularly.
Sight word vocabulary is NOT based on visual memory / visual skills!

- Dr. David Kilpatrick, Plain Talk About Learning Conference 2018
Past Practices

- Rote memorization using flash cards
- Focus on the print
- Assume that high frequency words are special sets of words that need to be memorized and cannot be learned using sound-symbol relationships
Developmental Relationship Between Phonological Skills and Word Level Reading

- Input and storage are not the same thing.
  - Input is visual. Storage is orthographic, phonological, and semantic.
- Word reading correlates strongly with phonological skills.
  - Phonological awareness and word reading .5 to .7
  - Visual memory and word reading .1 to .2

- Dr. David Kilpatrick, Plain Talk About Learning Conference 2018
Acquisition of new sight words:

- w/ decoding: 4 quality encounters
- w/out decoding: 30 or more encounters

- Using whole-word memorization is inefficient and very difficult.

(McEwen, 2002)
Developmental Relationship Between Phonological Skills and Word Level Reading

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**Phonological Skill Development**

1. Early Phonological Awareness
   - Rhyming, first sounds, syllable segmentation

2. Basic Phoneme Awareness
   - Blending and segmentation

3. Advanced Phonemic Awareness/Proficiency
   - Automatic, unconscious access to phonemes in spoken words

**Word Reading Skill Development**

1. Letter Names and Letter Sounds
   - Phonological storage and retrieval

2. Phonic Decoding and Encoding (Spelling)

3. Orthographic Mapping
   - Efficient memory for printed words; rapid sight vocabulary expansion
Developmental Relationship Between Phonological Skills and Word Level Reading
Readers recall the sequence of letters, not the look of the word.

Teach the sequence of letters through orthographic mapping.

Fluency is the best thermometer for reading skills.

When fluent, readers remember the words they read.

To increase personal lexicons, readers need to read more words.

(Kilpatrick, 2019)
Orthographic Mapping

- Orthographic mapping is the mental process we use to turn an unfamiliar written word into an instantly accessible, and familiar “sight word”

- Orthographic mapping requires:
  - Letter-sound proficiency
  - Phonemic proficiency (this goes well beyond what is tested on our universal screeners)
  - The ability to establish a relationship between sounds and letters unconsciously while reading

Kilpatrick, 2018
Teach Phonemic Awareness!

Want better sight word recognition and fluency???
zesk
How should we teach sight words?

1. Make a connection to the SOUNDS in the words!!
2. Even the “rule breakers” follow some rules.
3. Teach kids word parts that they need to know “by heart.”
Rethinking Instruction

- Students learn high frequency words according to patterns
- We can “rethink” instructional strategies when introducing these words
- High frequency words are decodable words with some “rule breakers” or heart words.
- Students are able to make sense of spelling patterns for these words
How should we teach sight words?

English isn’t that crazy. If you don’t know the rules, learn them!
Four-Part Processing Model of Word Recognition

- Context Processor
  - concepts and information; sentence context; text structure

- Meaning Processor
  - vocabulary

- Phonological Processor
  - speech sound system
  - Language Input
  - Language Output

- Orthographic Processor
  - memory for letters
  - Reading Input
  - Writing Output

- Phonics

Diagram illustrates the interaction between the processors and components involved in word processing.
I could sure use a cup of coffee.
Phoneme Grapheme Mapping

- Should be done following a phonics sequence.
- Reinforces phonics rules, builds spelling and sight word vocabulary.

Focus on articulation!
4 Part Processing Model

● Bottom Up
  ○ Build a foundation in phonology & orthography FIRST
● All 4 processors working together = fluency
● Use this to guide instruction!
Word Sort by Phonics Patterns

- Look at the sight words that have previously been taught in your K and first grade curricula. Sort them by phonics patterns or by sounds (phonology).

- Re-teach the phonics patterns and the words, making a connection to the sounds. Begin with phonemic awareness, then move to phonics.

- Review - often!
Heart Words

- Students need to “know by heart”
- Irregularly spelled high frequency words
- Some parts of the word are decodable
- Other parts of the word have to be memorized by heart
Heart Words

said
Tap It – with non-dominant hand

Map It – with chips, blocks, or manipulatives

Graph It – write the grapheme

From: 50 Nifty Activities for 5 Components and 3 Tiers of Reading Instruction by Judith Dodson
Tap It – with non-dominant hand

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Graph It – write the grapheme

From: 50 Nifty Activities for 5 Components and 3 Tiers of Reading Instruction by Judith Dodson
<p>|     |  r | o | u | n | d   |          |  r | o | u | n | d   |
|-----|----|---|---|---|-----|----------|----|---|---|---|-----|----------|
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|     | n  | o | w |   |     |          | n  | o | w |   |     |
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|     | h  | o | w |   |     |          | h  | o | w |   |     |
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Play Concentration by SOUND!

- Create a set of, with 2 cards (words) for each sound.
- Limit the total sounds to no more than 10 (20 cards).
- Lay the cards out in 2 separate groups.
- Have kids draw one card from each group.
- They can collect the pair when they match a sound.

run
ran
had
has
if
off
Language Links by SOUND!

- Create a set of, with 2 cards (words) for each sound.
- Have the students link up to a partner that has a sound in common. They need to be able to read both words.

- seven sets
- help went
- was were
Skywrite the Sight Words

- Using large muscles and a straight arm, ask readers to write the word in giant letters.
- For challenge or deep review, have readers close their eyes and write the words.
- Use a flashlight to write the words on the wall or ceiling.

Photo: Orton-Gillingham Approach to Sky Writing
Build the Sight Words

- Let readers explore how the word looks by changing it and then returning to correct spelling.
- Use foam letters, letter tiles or magnetic letters. Ask reader to spell the word.
- While they close their eyes, swap the letter order or remove a letter.
- Have the reader identify what is wrong and make the correction.
What Have You Learned Today?

- Reading is not a visual process! It is all about language!
- Students’ automatic word recognition increases when they are able to make a connection to the phonology and orthographic patterns within high frequency words rather than rote memorization.
- Connect to the 4 part processor when teaching “sight words.”
Questions? Call or email

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