



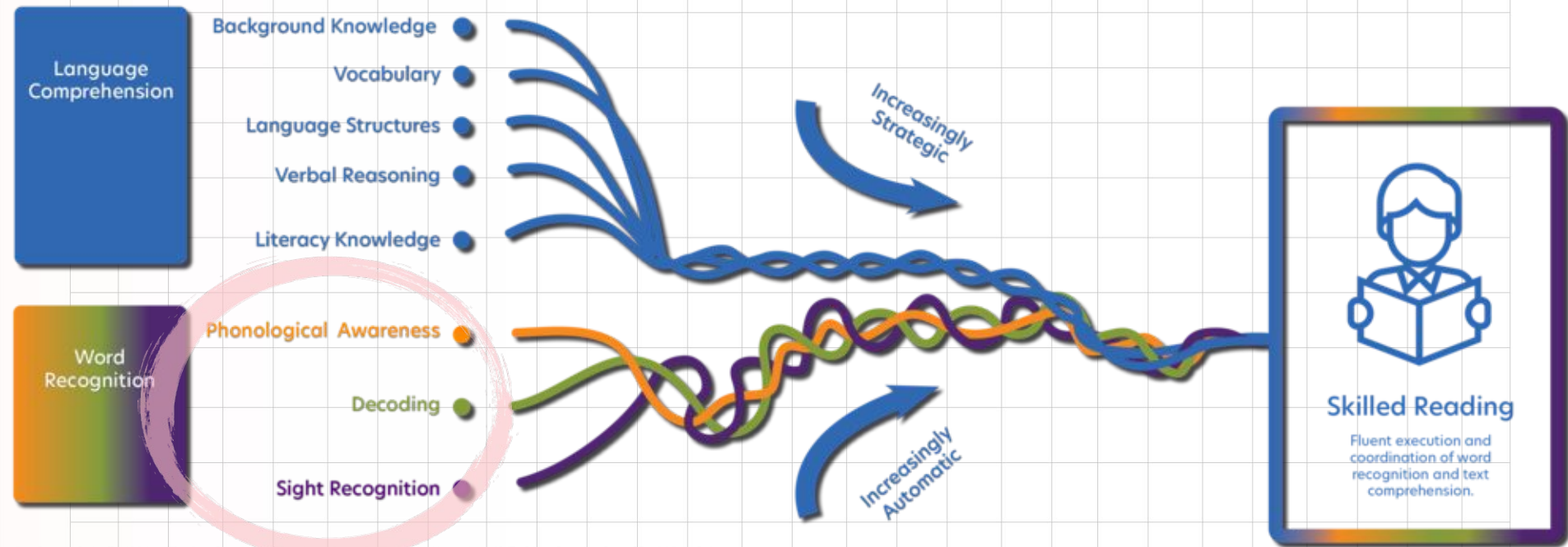
# Making Words Stick:

## High Frequency Words to Sight Words

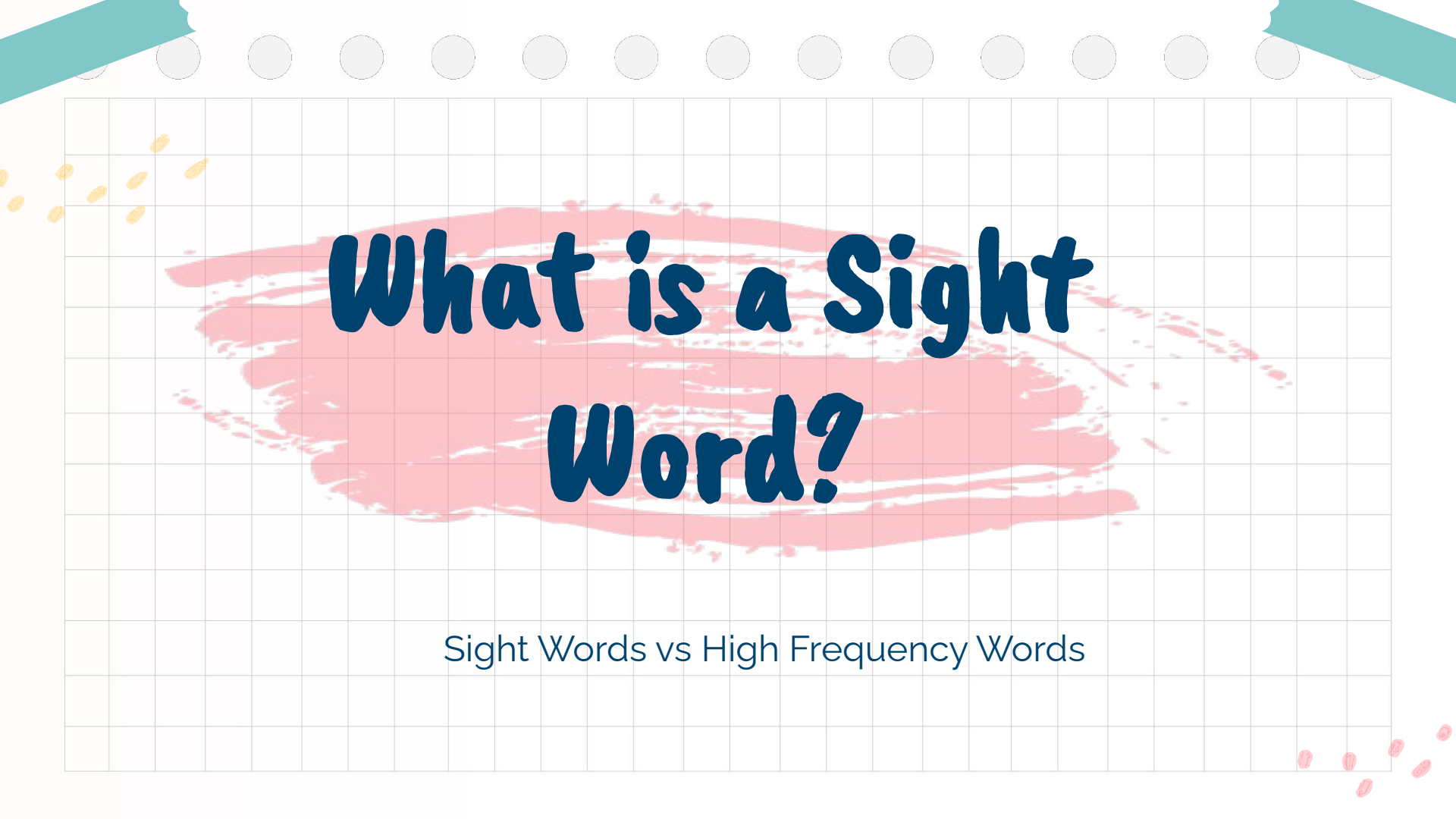
Jennifer Utecht  
Reading Specialist  
Superior Public Schools



# Scarborough's Reading Rope



Scarborough, Hollis (2001). *The Reading Rope: The Many Strands That Are Woven Into Skilled Reading*. Designed by SAReads®.



# What is a Sight Word?

Sight Words vs High Frequency Words

# Can you tell the difference?

Sight Word OR High Frequency Word

of	level	oil	experience
give	was	particular	was
village	statement	dry	you

# Can you tell the difference?

Sight Word

OR

High Frequency Words

of	level
give	was
village	statement
oil	experience
particular	was
you	dry

# Can you tell the difference?

Sight Word

OR

High Frequency Words

of	level
give	was
village	statement
oil	experience
particular	was
you	dry

of	level
give	was
village	statement
oil	experience
particular	was
you	dry

# High Frequency Words

VS.

# Sight Words

What are they?

- Most commonly occurring words
- Can be phonetically regular (can, like) or irregular (was, does)
- Lists created by researchers

What are they?

- Instant & effortless recognition
- Fast, often in 0.20/second to 200 milliseconds
- List belongs to the reader
- Regular or irregular

High Frequency Words **become** Sight Words once they are committed to your orthographic lexicon.

# Two Most Common Authors

## Dolch 220 List

- Edward Dolch, Ph.D. in 1925
- Look & Say (Whole Language)
- Nouns published separate
- Published alphabetically in 1936
- Used Grades K-2 Material
- Published only alphabetically, adapted by frequency

## Fry 300+ List

- Edward Fry, Ph.D. in Ed in 1960
- Look & Say (Whole Language)
- All parts of speech used
- Published "Instant Words" in 1957, revised 1980
- Used Grades 3-9 Material
- Divided by frequency & grade level

Which one?





# What does the research say?

Breakthrough Brain Research

**“A sight word vocabulary is not based on visual memory or visual skills.”**


-David Kilpatrick  
“Plain Talk” Conference

hat

bat




## Let's take a look:

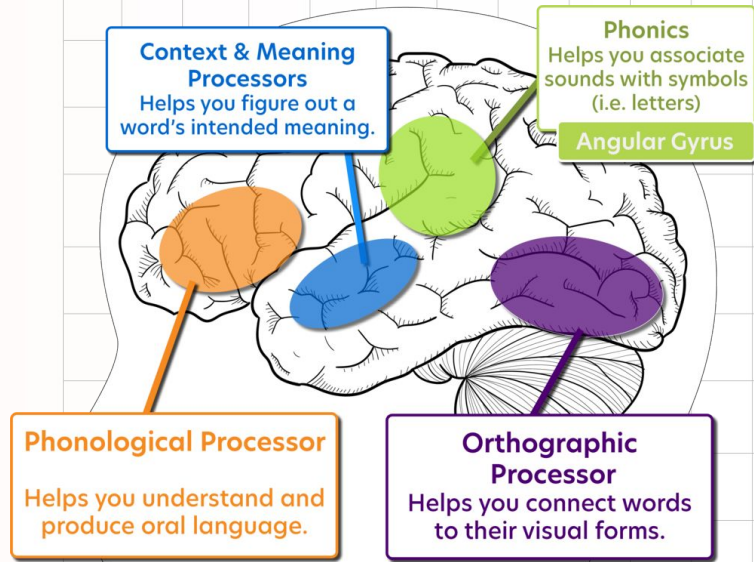


Dad has a farm. On his farm, dad has a big, red barn. The big, red barn sits on a hill at our farm. In the barn, dad has a cow, a pig, and four cats. Three new baby cats were born in the barn. We love when new babies are born in the barn.

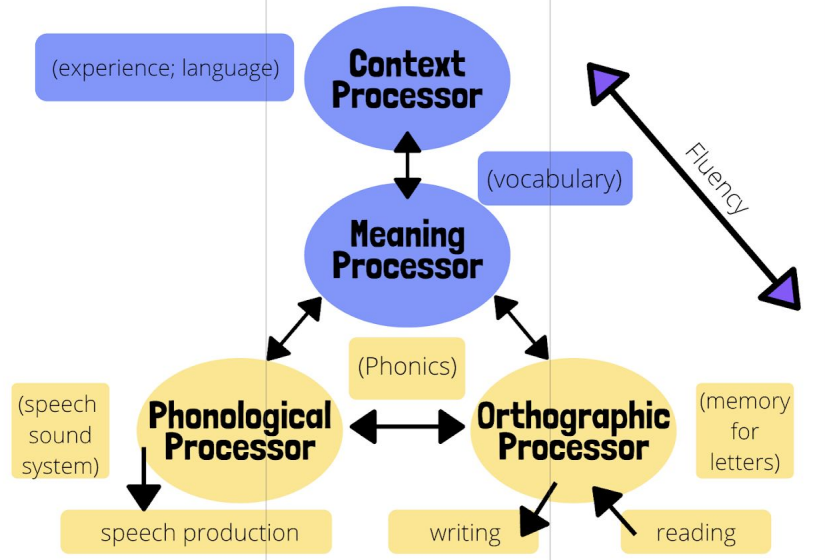
Dad has a farm. On his farm, dad has a big, red barn. The big, red **born** sits on a hill at our farm. In the **burn**, dad has a cow, a pig, and four cats. Three new baby cats were **burn** in the barn. We love when new babies are born in the **burn**.



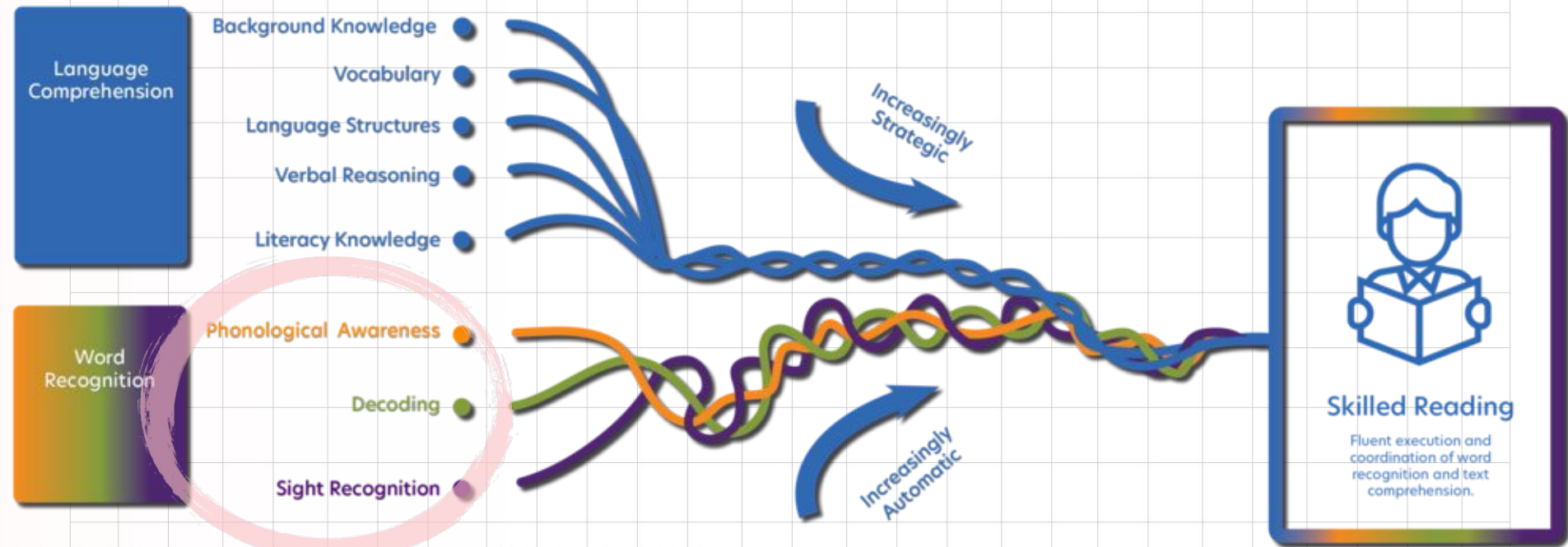
# Breakthrough Brain Research



## The Four Part Processing Model



# Scarborough's Reading Rope



Scarborough, Hollis (2001). *The Reading Rope: The Many Strands That Are Woven Into Skilled Reading*. Designed by SAReads®.



“Orthographic Mapping is now  
considered the most current theory of  
how children form sight word  
representations.”

**—Torgesen**



# Breakthrough Brain Research

## Orthographic Mapping

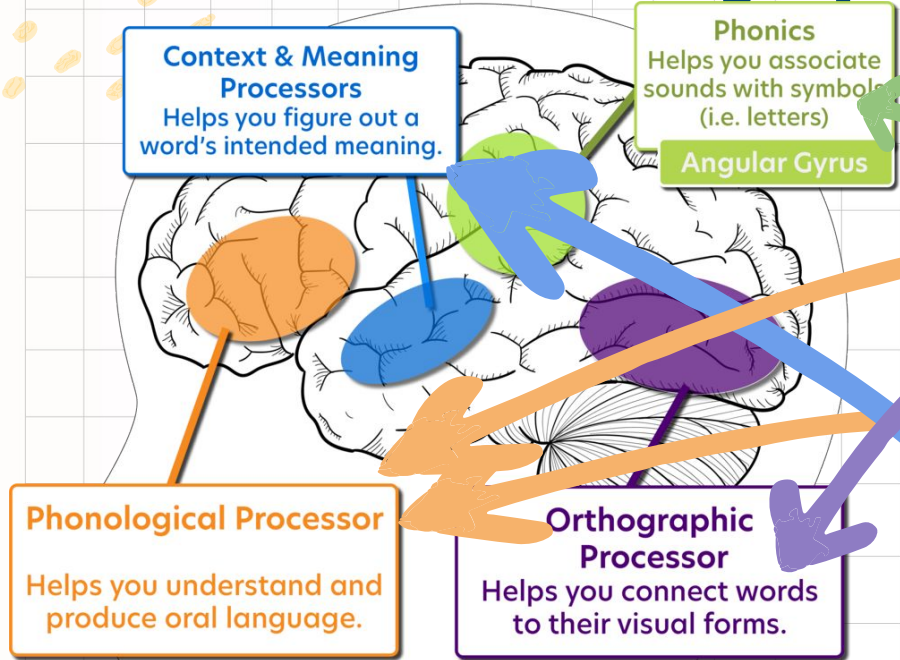
- Greek word “orthos” means straight or correct, “graphos” means writing
- “Graphos” refers to both the recognition of print, and the writing of the words
- Orthographic Mapping is how we turn HFW’s to Sight Words
- Orthographic Lexicon is the pool or bank of words we have
- The way we get words into our Orthographic Lexicon is by using all the parts of the reading brain.

## What do they need?

1. Automatic letter-sound associations
2. Highly proficient phonemic awareness skills.
3. Word study



# Orthographic Mapping



Activate all parts:

1. Automatic letter-sound associations
2. Highly proficient phonemic awareness skills.
3. Word study



# Word Identification vs Word Recognition

Word Identification means a student reads a word correctly, regardless of method, and usually takes effort.

Methods:

- Sounding out
- Guessing
- Picture clues
- Context clues

Word Recognition means the retrieval of familiar words from memory. It is instant and effortless.

Methods:

- Orthographic Mapping



# How do we teach it?

Best Practices

# How do we do that?

**SPEECH** → **PRINT**

## Phonological Awareness

- This is the backbone of our language structure.
- Spoken language, linguistic
- Ability to manipulate sounds. (i.e. syllables, rhyming, alliteration, etc.)
- Can do with your eyes closed!

## Decoding

- Phonemes (sounds) to graphemes (letters).
- Written language, academic skill
- Phonics
- Must have eyes open!

## Meaning

- Simple Vocab
- Context Connections

## Sight Recognition

- Instant and effortless
- Starts with fluency of phonemes & graphemes
- Sound, Spelling, Meaning=Fluent recognition

**Best of the Best!** Heggerty Phonological Awareness Pk-Primary  
Kilpatrick Equipped for Reading Success

## Start Small

# SPEECH → PRINT

## Phonological Awareness

### Phonological Awareness Levels

- Syllable
- Onset-Rime
- Basic Phoneme
- Advanced Phoneme

### When to start?

- Pre-K to K
- No age too old when PA is not mastered

### Who gets it?

- Everyone!
- 60% attain it naturally but what about the other 40%?

### How do we do it?

- Separately & incorporated
- Short bursts (5-10 min.)
- Lots of practice!

# Phonological Awareness Activities

## Early Phonological Awareness Activities (PK-K)

- Read Alouds (Nursery Rhymes, Books with rhyming patterns & alliteration)
- Rhyme Matching (Log...find a match pig, hog, rug)
- Alliteration (tongue twisters-Peter Piper, Silly Sentences-Nancy needs new nuggets.)
- Syllable Blending (ta-ble, what word?)
- Syllable Deletion (Baseball without base is..."ball")
- Syllable Counting (clap it out, tap it out, syllable stomp)
- Onset-Rime (c-ar, sh-ip, d-esk)
- Rhyme Production (The ship was loaded with dogs...pogs...logs, Down by the Bay)

University of Florida  
Literacy Institute (UFLI)

Best of the  
Best!

Heggerty  
Phonological  
Awareness Pk-Primary

Kilpatrick Equipped  
for Reading Success

# Phonological Awareness Activities

## Basic Phonemic Awareness Activities K-1

- Segmentation (use manipulatives to demonstrate sounds--chips, blocks, fabric)
- Final Sound Matching (Say 2 words that end the same, students id end sound)
- Blending (/p/-/eee/-/g/ what word? OR /ch/-/ooo/-/p/ what word?)
- Substitution-initial middle final (Bat, change the /b/ to /rrr/, what word?)
- Chaining (use manipulatives to show changes: day, date, dot, pot, spot, spit, sit)

## Advanced Phonemic Awareness Activities 2+

- Blending (use longer multisyllabic words, /th/-/uuu/-/nnn/-/d/-/rrr/: thunder)
- Syllable Deletion (what is potato without /po/? tato)
- Sound Reversal (Fine, switch the sounds...knife)
- Affix Substitution/Deletion (anytime, change time to where--what word?)
- Pig Latin (remove first consonant add to end, put -ay on)

# Explicit, Systematic, Cumulative

## SPEECH → PRINT Phonics & Decoding

Takes a decoder 4 exposures until automaticity, non-decoders around 30 exposures.  
-McEwen (2002)

### Phoneme/Grapheme Correspondence

- Code Based
- 44 phonemes, 26 graphemes
- Necessary for decoding more rigorous words

### When to start?

- Kindergarten
- Teach letter names first then work on sounds.

### Who gets it?

- Everyone!
- It's what works best for most students

### How do we do it?

- Explicit, systematic, cumulative
- Clear Scope & Sequence
- Connected Text (decodable)
- 50% of time K-1
- Connect to Sound Wall



# Phonics & Decoding Activities



- **Alphabetic Principle** (Alphabet Arc, alphabet puzzles, shapes for letter building, tracing trays with sand, letter matching)
- **Letter Formation** (demonstrate prewriting activities, then letters, spacial/direction, group by shape-HWOT)
- **Sound BEFORE Print** (mirrors, sound wall, then bring in grapheme)
- **Blending** (sound by sound, swooping under words)
- **Word Sorts** (word families, short vowel, sound pattern, digraphs, etc.)
- **Manipulatives** (tiles, blocks, letter cards, felt squares, etc.)
- **Dictation** (sound by sound, then write it; move on to sentences)
- **Trace & Say** (finger spell, trace word on card, etc.)
- **Decodable Text** (connected to sound pattern)

**Explicit, Systematic, Sequential=INTENTIONAL!!**





# Tying it all Together

**SPEECH** → **PRINT**

## Teaching HFW to Sight Words

### How do students learn HFW?

- Activate all of the reading brain
- Sound --> meaning --> Print

### When to start?

- Kindergarten
- Teach essentials at the beginning or prior to phonics
- The rest connect to phonics instruction

### Who gets it?

- Everyone!
- It's what works best for most students

### How do we do it?

- **Sound** (segment, syllables)
- **Meaning** (use in context)
- **Print** (decodable parts & heart words, read, spell, write, dictation)

# Tying it all Together

## Think Smallest to Largest Skills

### Start with Sounds

Do not introduce print word at this time...

- Whole Word
- Clap out syllables
  - (if applicable)
- Tap out the phonemes
- Whole Word

### Routine:

#### Whole Word:

*T: Today we will learn a new word, that word is from, what word? S: From T: Good, say it again. S: From*

#### Syllables:

*T: Watch me clap out the syllables in from: (one clap). Your turn, can you clap out the syllables? S: From (clap) T: Good, do it again. S: From (one clap)*

#### Segment:

*T: I am going to say all the sounds in from.  
/f/-/r/-/u/-/m/, from. (use consistent model for stretching-hold up fingers,, etc.) Listen again. (repeat-do it together-then independent practice)  
If using graph paper identify the number of boxes to use.*

#### Whole Word:

*T: Our new word is from, what word? S: From*

# Think Smallest to Largest Skills

## Next Comes Meaning

Do not introduce print word at this time...

- Define
- Demonstrate
- Discuss

Introduce print...

- Display

## Routine:

### Define:

*T: From means "a starting place" What is our new word that means 'a starting place'? S: From*

### Demonstrate:

*T: I am going to say a sentence with our new word from in it. I went home from school. Can you say that with me? (together-then independently) S: I went home from school.*

### Discuss:

*T: If from means 'a starting pace' think about our sentence. I went home from school. Where did you start? Where did you end up?*

### Display:

*T: (display sentence) I will read our sentence aloud "I went home from school." (touch each word while reading) Read it with me. (together, independent, volunteers)*

# Think Smallest to Largest Skills

## Finally Print...

- **Isolate**
- **Decode**
- **Write**
- **Dictate**

### **Heart Words:**

A way of marking irregular word parts as parts students must know "by heart" while allowing decodable parts to exist.

## Routine:

### **Isolate:**

*T: (display From) We are going to read, spell, read From. S: From-f,r,o,m-From. T: again. S: repeat*

### **Decode:**

*T: When I see the word from I notice that there are parts that make sense are parts that don't. If I sound out From, this is what it sounds like /f/-/r/-/u/-/m/. Listen to me say the word, do you here /o/ or /u/ in the middle? So the middle sound is a sound we must know by heart. The rest of the word we can sound out. (Identify "heart" sound.)*

### **Write:**

*T: Now you will write from. (finger spelling, sky writing, on paper, etc.) Say the letters as you write the word.*

### **Dictate:**

*T: (Cover 'from' and have students write, may also dictate sentence from earlier.)*



# What is a Heart Word?



## Heart Words

Regular: and, it, in, but, can

Irregular: what, give, do, have

Make Tricky Words Sticky!

- Teach the parts that are decodable as such.
- Teach the irregular parts

Word Study is the super glue!!



Heart

Word

Magic

Watch me go  
through the  
parts...

# Seems like a lot for one word right?

## Introduce

1 min

- Say it
- Clap it
- Tap it
- Repeat it

## Connect

1-2 min

- Define it
- Put it in a sentence
- Talk about it
- Show it

## Print & Practice

3 min

- Read-Spell-Read
- Decode & Heart Parts
- Write it
- Dictation

Introduce 2-3 per day this way based on connected sound/spelling patterns & do spiral practice with reading/re-reading, & connected text to make the words stick. Cycle back with multiple exposures!

# Best Practice & Organization

## When & How:

Teach decodable HFW words such as; can, but, had, and, in, at, etc. AS DECODABLE WORDS during regular phonics instruction of those patterns.

Teach irregular HFW such as; was, have, said, the etc. as heart words using the heart word method.

Note: due to the variance in decodable readers, reading series, etc. you may have to introduce a word BEFORE the sound/spelling pattern has been introduced. Keep it brief and orthographically map when you get to that pattern.



How would you group these words for instruction?

and

I

you

with

a

can

the

like

it

he

she

in



Phonetically regular? Irregular?



# High Frequency Word Sort

Short Vowels	Long Vowels	Consonant Digraphs	Initial Consonant Blends	Final Consonant Blends	Long Vowels	Doublets (FLOSS Rule)
VC/CVC: a, e, i, o, u	CVCe: a_e, e_e, i_e, o_e, u_e	sh, ch, th, wh, ck, ph, ng	bl, cl, fl, gl, pl, sl, br, cr, dr, fr, gr, pr, tr, sc, sk, sl, sm, sn, sp, st, sw	-ct, -ft, -ld, -lf, -lk, -lp, -lt, -mp, -nd, -nk, -nt, -pt, -sk, -sp, -st	Single long vowels	-ff, -ll, -ss, -zz
an	come	long	from	and	a	all
as	like	she	place	find	be	call
at	make	that	close	end	do	will
but	one	the	close	hand	he	off
can	some	them	state	help	I	small
did	time	then	stop	just	into	spell
get	use	this	those	kind	no	still
had	came	thee	friends	land	so	tell
has	give	when	plan	most	to	well
him	home	what	step	much	we	add
his	line	which	plane	must	also	miss

# Summary:

## Phonological Awareness

Incredibly important in Pk-1+

Daily exposure starting early

Explicitly taught



## Decoding

How majority of students learn best

Daily Phonics instruction

Explicitly taught



## Word Recognition

Automatic & effortless recognition

Orthographic Mapping: HFW to sight words

Explicitly taught



## Outcomes

Fastest way to become skilled readers

Effortless reading to focus on meaning

Final Product

# Suggestions Moving Forward

## Quality PA & Phonics Materials:

Heggerty Phonemic Awareness for PK-1

Equipped for Reading Success grades 2+

UFLI Activities

Logic of English: Sounding Out Sight Words

\*\*Phonics & Spelling through Phoneme Grapheme Mapping by Katherine Grace

FlyLeaf Decodables

Really Great Reading: Heart Word Magic

01

02



## Notable Authors:

David Kilpatrick, Mark Seidenberg, Denis Eide, Louisa Moats, Carol Tolman, Tim Shanahan, Wylie Blevins, Mary Dahlgren, Emily Hanford, Pam Kastner, Stanislas Dehaene, Douglas Carnine

## Research & Join:

Science of Reading  
Reading Rockets: SOR  
SOR Facebook Groups

## Seek Help:

Model, co-teach, go through materials, etc.

## Regardless of Materials, Program, or Resources:

You must be explicit (I do, we do, you do), teach systematically with lots of practice and intention



**Questions?**  
**Feel free to contact me!**

Jennifer Utech  
Reading Specialist  
Superior Public Schools  
[jutecht@superiorwildcats.org](mailto:jutecht@superiorwildcats.org)