This Master’s Research Project has been approved
for the Department of Teacher Education

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Abstract

This research paper discusses the effects of explicit phonics instruction on a student’s oral reading fluency. I wanted to determine if my students’ oral reading rate would increase if they had instruction in phonics. My thinking was that students will be able to apply the rules learned during phonics to the words they read during a fluency test, and this would help them decode the words faster. The participants in this study were nine fourth grade students, all were Caucasian and spoke English as their native language. Two participants were boys and seven were girls. All of the students were from a rural school in Southeast Ohio, where about 80% of the school population receives free or reduced lunch. The study lasted a total of five weeks - one week for pretesting, three weeks of instruction, and one week of post testing. During the instructional time period, the students were split into two groups, a phonics instruction group and an independent reading group. Results showed that direct phonics instruction did not increase a student’s reading rate, but it did increase their accuracy of reading. In conclusion, there are many sub skills that should be taken into account when trying to improve a student’s oral reading fluency, such as decoding, naming speed, language comprehension, working memory, intense and systematic phonics instruction, and opportunities for reading and writing. Teachers must focus on all sub skill areas to create a proficient reader.
The purpose of this study is to determine if administering phonics instruction to students will have a positive effect on their oral reading fluency. I chose to conduct this study because I have noticed this year that a lot of my fourth graders have oral reading fluency scores that are lower than their other fourth grade counterparts. Every week we must administer an oral reading fluency passage, and every week I see my students struggle to read as many words as they can in the given one minute time frame. As soon as the students reach a word they are unfamiliar with, they stumble through it, skip it, or wait for the word to be told to them. Being a reading intervention teacher, I know the students I work with are behind the reading level for their grade, and I want to help them raise their scores as much as possible. After seeing their struggle, I thought that instruction in phonics could be of great use to these students. I believe that formal instruction in phonics is an important skill for students to gain, and research proves that phonics knowledge and phonological skills are strong predictors of future reading success (Christo & Davis, 2008). I also believe that knowledge of phonics will help students in their future reading pursuits, and knowing phonemes, syllable types, prefixes, and suffixes are only some of the important skills that help students read multisyllabic words when they are in the higher grades and in every day life. Knowing specific phonics rules will help students be able to read any unknown word they come across when reading for academics or for leisure. Students will know the phonics rules and sounds that accompany each part of a word and they will be able to piece a word together to read it in its entirety. According to Wang, Porfeli, & Algozzine (2008), “Explicit phonics instruction provides children with a powerful strategy to decode written language and to read or access unfamiliar words confidently as they encounter them in text” (p.
403). If students are able to read the words, they may also have better comprehension over the entire selection that they have read. In this paper, I am not trying to state that phonics instruction is more important than the whole language approach to reading. According to Donat (2006), students need to receive instruction in both whole language and phonics to become successful readers. This study is only to determine if phonics instruction will help struggling readers make positive progress in oral reading abilities.

Definition of Terms

Closed Syllable – a syllable that ends in a consonant, and the vowel sound within the syllable is a short vowel sound. Example: In the word begin, the second syllable, /gin/, is a closed syllable.

Consonant – a letter of the alphabet other than a, e, i, o, or u. The sounds of consonants are articulated with complete or partial closure of the vocal tract.

Digraphs – two written letters that, when spoken, produce only one sound. There are consonant digraphs, such as th, sh, ch, and there are vowel digraphs, such as ea, ai, oa.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP) - A written statement for each individual with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with Title 42 USC Section 1414(d).

Intervention – a time of instruction used to provide effective assistance to students having difficulty learning. In this study, intervention is explicitly for reading skills.

Multisyllabic words – written or spoken words that contain more than one syllable.

Open Syllable – a syllable that ends with a long, vowel sound. Example: In the word begin, the first syllable, /be/, is an open syllable.

Oral Reading Fluency – the rate at which a person reads aloud and the expression in their voice.

For this study, I am specifically focusing on the rate at which a student reads, and the oral
reading fluency was determined as how many words were read aloud after one minute of oral reading.

Phoneme – the smallest unit of sound that distinguishes one word from another. Example: pen and pan

Phonemic awareness – the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate the sounds (phonemes) within words.

Phonics instruction – teaching student’s the relationship between written letters and the spoken sound we hear. The instruction puts a strong emphasis on the symbol-to-sound relationship. In English, the symbol-to-sound relationship is predictable, but not always consistent (Learning Point Associates, 2004).

Prefix – a syllable added to the beginning of a word that changes the meaning or grammatical function of the word to which it is added. Example: The prefix un- can be added to the word *happy* to make a new word *unhappy*.

Suffix – a syllable added to the end of a word that changes the meaning or grammatical function of the word to which it is added. Example: The suffix –*less* can be added to the word *hope* to make a new word, *hopeless*.

Syllable – a sound unit within a word. Each syllable contains one vowel sound and one or more consonant sounds. Example: *Begin* has two syllables, /be/ and /gin/.

Vowel – the letters *a, e, i, o, and u*. Each vowel can make a long sound (it’s own name) or a short sound.

Limitations

One limitation of this study is that not all students come from the same homeroom teacher, so each student could be getting different phonics instruction in their homeroom. Also,
not all of the students had the same teachers previously during their education. Therefore, each student has different background knowledge of phonics. Another limitation of this study is that while I work with one group of students providing phonics instruction, the independent reading group must stay within my classroom. This means that the independent reading group may also hear some of the phonics instruction that is being taught and may be adding it to their phonics knowledge as well. The last limitation is that I am only able to work with my students four days of the week due to their spelling tests being taken during intervention time.

Delimitations

One limitation that I have put on myself is the length of my study. I have decided to dedicate one week to pre testing, 3 weeks to intensive phonics instruction, and 1 week to post testing. This timeline has been selected due to much of the testing that must be given in the spring time at the elementary level. The students will be out of my classroom to complete their tests, along with the fact that it is part of my job to help administer many tests (OAA, DIBELS, and Terra Nova) to other grade levels.

After making these observations and noting limitations and delimitations, I was ready to devise a plan to implement my research within my own classroom.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

“Literacy acquisition is the foundation of all learning. It opens the door of understanding in all content areas, and the ability to read proficiently leads to lifelong learning and pleasure” (Donat, 2006). Many teachers believe this statement, but they have encountered many dysfluent readers in their classroom who do not enjoy literacy at all. These readers experience reduction in vocabulary growth and background knowledge, fewer opportunities to practice and develop reading comprehension strategies, and less reading practice overall (Dudley, 2005). According to Learning Point Associates, (2004) “…children who are not proficient readers by the end of fourth grade are not likely ever to be proficient readers” (p. 2). Twenty-six percent of high school and middle school students have difficulty understanding simple literacy tasks, and about 10% of students leave elementary school as non-readers. This causes them to become secondary students who struggle to meet academic expectations because they never mastered their basic reading skills (Barth, Catts, & Anthony, 2009). The No Child Left Behind Act is having an impact on schools to change this. The act is putting pressure on teachers to make sure students are reading on grade level by the end of third grade. The goal is to close the achievement gaps between different subgroups of students, and schools are held accountable. If a school fails to meet the benchmarks of the No Child Left Behind Act, parents may request supplemental services or choose to attend a different school (Donat, 2006). So, how can we, as teachers, ensure that we are creating successful readers? There are multiple underlying skills that create a “good” reader, and teachers need to make sure they are incorporating all five skill areas into the curriculum to deliver effective reading instruction and create strong readers. These five skill areas include phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (Learning Point
The Effect of Phonics Instruction on Oral Reading Fluency

Associate, 2004; Wang, Porfeli, & Algozzine, 2008). Teaching and emphasizing one area of instruction over another is not effective; teachers need to focus on all skill areas in a systematic and explicit form of instruction to create a “well rounded” reader (Learning Point Associates, 2004). Although teachers need to emphasize all five of these areas, this review will strictly focus on the topics of fluency and phonics instruction.

In recent years, teachers have seen much research on the topic of reading fluency because it was recognized as one of the five essential components of reading instruction (Dudley, 2005). However, there is still debate among researchers as to the proper definition of oral reading fluency (Dudley, 2005). Some researchers define it as rate and accuracy, expressed as words correct per minute (Barth, Catts, & Anthony, 2009; Dudley, 2005), while others add proper expression (prosody) and comprehension to the definition (Hudson, Pullen, Lane, & Torgesen, 2009; Learning Point Associates, 2004; Nichols, Rupley, & Rasinski, 2009; Wang, Porfeli, & Algozzine, 2008). No matter the definition, fluency is often difficult for many readers to achieve because there are so many underlying skills required to achieve fluency (Hudson, Pullen, Lane, & Torgesen, 2009). Many times, readers get hung up on word recognition. If word recognition is too difficult, all the cognitive resources are used to decode the word, which slows down reading fluency and slows the process of forming the words into a sentence to create meaning (comprehension) from the passage that was read (Hudson, Pullen, Lane, & Torgesen, 2009; Learning Point Associates, 2004). In reverse, as decoding becomes more efficient and automatic, fluency will be better able to occur because a person’s working memory is freed up from breaking the word down into sound parts (Hudson, Pullen, Lane, & Torgesen, 2009). It is important for teachers to understand fluency and the sub skills it requires because oral reading fluency tells a teacher a student’s level of decoding skill. This can help a teacher determine
goals and objectives, where to place students for instructional groups, help monitor reading skill growth, determine if their instruction is effective, and make changes to instruction as needed (Dudley, 2005). There are several methods a teacher can implement to improve reading fluency, and repeated readings are the most widely used and accepted form of instruction (Dudley, 2005; Learning Point Associates, 2004; Nichols, Rupley, & Rasinski, 2009). Repeated reading is effective because it builds a mental connection with particular words, so students can recognize them faster in the future, and this helps free up space in a person’s working memory for comprehension to occur (Learning Point Associates, 2004). However, students will not always have the opportunity to practice repeated readings, and they will inevitably come across a passage for the first time and be expected to read it. In these cases, students need to be able to access knowledge they have gained from other instructional programs or other types of reading fluency instruction or else they may have diminished encouragement in reading (Nichols, Rupley, & Rasinski, 2009). Other instructional programs or activities that have been proven to improve fluency are Read Naturally, Great Leaps Reading Program (Dudley, 2005), paired repeated readings, assisted reading, phrase reading, oral recitation lessons, fluency development lessons, fluency-oriented reading instruction, radio reading, fast start (Learning Point Associates, 2004; Nichols, Rupley, & Rasinski, 2009), and Reading Their Way (Donat, 2006). For more information and examples of how to implement these other types of instruction, see the cited source.

Phonics instruction, or decoding instruction as many researchers refer to it, has long been proven to be a factor that affects a student’s oral reading fluency. We can see in Jeanne Chall’s (1996) work that a mastery of phonics knowledge must occur before fluency can begin. Stage 1 of Chall’s reading development includes development of phonemic awareness, phonics, and
other phonemic principles. Children in this stage of reading can “sound out” words because they are realizing that letters and letter combinations represent different sounds in their language. The phonemic skills are often taught through systematic and direct phonics instruction, and these skills must be mastered before fluency development can begin in stage 2 (Chall, 1996). Many researchers also agree that effective phonics instruction helps students use the alphabetic principle to read words accurately and rapidly (Barth, Catts, & Anthony, 2009; Learning Point Associates, 2004). Learning Point Associates (2004), goes on to state that phonics instruction in kindergarten through sixth grade produces substantial improvement, particularly for students who are at risk for failure, and gains in reading can be seen no matter what level of socioeconomic status a child is from. Nichols, Rupley, & Rasinski, (2009) also state that “Successful reading occurs when the reader is able to bring previous knowledge and experience as well as fluent decoding of the text to their reading.” One study even claims that students’ phonological information from their long-term memory storage is the most important factor in examining individual differences in their oral reading fluency (Barth, Catts, & Anthony, 2009). With all of the evidence that phonics instruction supports fluency, it’s no wonder there are many programs that emphasize phonics instruction. One such form of instruction is the Great Leaps Reading Program, which provides students with practice in phonics, sight words and phrases, and oral reading fluency (Dudley, 2005). Although there is plenty of evidence that phonics instruction can help a student read more fluently, simply teaching the rules of phonics is not enough. Students must have the opportunity to apply and practice the knowledge they have gained with a connected text and use writing to help ensure reading success (Donat, 2006; Learning Point Associates, 2004). Taking all of this research into consideration, there is a good
chance that my study will also demonstrate a positive relationship between explicit phonics instruction and oral reading fluency.
Chapter 3

Methods

For my research project, I worked with nine fourth grade students. The group consisted of two boys and seven girls, all of whom are native English speakers. All of the students are Caucasian and from an extremely rural area of Southeast Ohio where about eighty percent of the students at their school receive free or reduced school lunches. Of these nine students, three students come from each of the three homeroom teachers. Of the entire fourth grade class, which is about 60 students, I have the lowest reading leveled students who do not receive reading instruction from the fourth grade special education teacher. Of the nine students involved in my research, none of them have an individualized education plan (IEP). One student has mild dyslexia and has a 504 plan, which gives her accommodations such as reader support and extended time.

For this research project, informed consent with parents was not necessary. I discussed my research topic and procedures at a meeting with the elementary school’s principal, and she gave me consent to continue with the research in my own classroom. The principal decided the students’ parents did not need to give informed consent due to the fact that the topic of my research was a topic that students often learn about and are taught at school as part of the regular classroom curriculum. The principal also thought informed parental consent was unnecessary because once the research groups were completed, all of the skills that had been taught to the instructional group would also be taught to the whole group. This was done to ensure the students all received the same skill instruction in my class, and none of them would be lacking skills the others had gained.
During this study, many steps were taken to assure the students’ confidentiality over their results. I kept a master list of my students, which listed the nine students I worked with in alphabetical order. I assigned each student a number, one through nine. On each student’s assessments, I used these numbers instead of a student’s name or initials at the top of each page, and only I knew which number was assigned to which student. This confidentiality measure kept all students from knowing which assessment belonged to which student, including their own. This prevented students from comparing their results to other students, which can create competition problems and hard feelings. I kept the master list of students’ names and numbers in my desk which was locked any time that I was out of the room or out of the building.

I currently teach small groups of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students for reading intervention at my school. For this research topic, I decided I needed to work with my smallest and most consistent group, which is the fourth grade group. I decided to keep the sample group small because the instructional group would receive more one-on-one phonics instruction, which would hopefully have the most positive effect on each student’s oral reading fluency. As previously stated, these students are the nine lowest readers in the fourth grade, except for the students attending the special education classes. This sample of students was pre-determined, so I only had to pretest the students to determine which students would be in the independent reading group and which would be in the phonics instruction group.

The first part of this study was to administer a fluency pretest. This pretest gives an approximate skill level for each student’s oral reading fluency, and it also will provide a comparison score for the fluency post test. The fluency passage, (Good & Kaminski, 2005) was taken from our school’s DIBELS–Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills assessment (2005). I did not use the DIBELS standards to score these passages. Instead, the raw score of
words read aloud per minute was recorded and kept for a comparison for the post test assessment. After the fluency pretest was complete, a phonics knowledge pretest was also administered to all students. This phonics pretest assessed students’ abilities to name upper and lower case letters, consonant sounds, and long and short vowel sounds. The assessment also tested students’ abilities to read words containing the consonant-vowel-consonant pattern with short vowel sounds; consonant blends with short vowels; vowels, digraphs, and the –tch trigraph; r-controlled vowels; long vowel spellings; variant vowels; low frequency vowel and consonant spellings; and multisyllabic words. This CORE Phonics Survey (Lencher, Milone, & Mahler, 2008), helped me determine each student’s background knowledge and skills in which to be improved.

Once both of the pretests were completed, I determined which students would be in the independent reading group and which students would be in the phonics instruction group. I wanted to split the students into two groups that had about the same average ability and skill level per group for oral reading fluency. To do this, I listed all of the students and their fluency scores from highest to lowest. I placed the highest fluency score into the phonics instruction group and the second highest score into the free reading group. I continued this pattern going down the list and placing every other student into the same group. This procedure placed five students into the phonics instruction group (student #2, 3, 4, 8, and 9) and four students into the independent reading group (student #1, 5, 6, and 7).

Now that the phonics instruction group was determined, I determined their areas of need for instruction by looking at the results of their phonics knowledge pretest. I then planned and implemented three weeks (12 lessons) of intensive phonics instruction that built upon the skills they already knew and built upon the previous lessons as well. For the phonics instruction
group, the skills focused upon in this series of lessons were consonant digraphs, reading and writing consonant-vowel-consonant-e (CVCe or “silent –e”) words, reading and writing vowel combinations, identifying and reading open and closed syllables, dividing and reading vowel-consonant-consonant-vowel (VCCV) words, dividing and reading vowel-consonant-vowel (VCV) words, syllable segmentation, and reading multisyllabic words. The lessons being taught to the phonics instruction group were modified from example lessons found in Honig, Diamond, and Gutlohn’s work (2008). The phonics instruction group worked in my classroom, with me as their instructor, at a small group reading table four days a week for 30 minutes each day. During our instructional time, the independent reading group read individually. The independent reading group chose books from their homeroom classrooms or from my own classroom library.

After providing three weeks of intensive phonics instruction with the instructional group, the post test period began. First, I administered the phonics knowledge post test, which was the same form as the pretest assessment (Lencher, Milone, & Mahler, 2008). Then, I administered the fluency post test passage, which was also taken from Good & Kaminski’s work (2005). The post test fluency passage was a different passage than the pretest fluency passage because I needed to determine if the phonics instruction helped the students decode unknown words from a passage that the students had never read before. After scoring all the phonics knowledge post tests and the fluency post tests, I compared each student’s individual pre and post test scores, respectively. This determined whether there was a positive or negative relation between the phonics instruction and fluency scores. To see the pre tests and post tests for oral reading fluency and phonics knowledge, please see Appendix A.
Chapter 4

Analysis of the Data

The results of my post tests were very surprising to me, especially the oral reading fluency post test. I administered the oral reading fluency post test first, and the results were exactly the opposite from what I would have expected based on the research studies read before conducting this research project. I was expecting to see a positive relationship from the pre test score to the post test score, but instead, there was an overall negative relationship for eight of the nine students. There was one student who did improve her oral reading fluency score, and it improved by two words per minute, which is not as high as I expected.

I analyzed each student’s pre and post test score, and I recorded how many words were gained or lost from the pre test to the post test. Once I added all of the values together and averaged them for the group, the students averaged 13.5 words per minute less on the post test than the pre test. When comparing only the readers from the independent reading group, they read an average of 23.25 words per minute less than the pre test. Upon comparing the students from the phonics instruction group, they read an average of 5.8 words per minute less than the pre test.

I was surprised to find all of the students reading fewer words per minute by the end of the instructional time, but there are factors that could contribute to this. First, this post test was given during the last two weeks of school before summer break. Being fourth graders, the students understand they are almost finished with school, and many of them have already “shut down” and stopped putting forth their best effort. Second, throughout the school year, students’ oral reading fluency was assessed weekly, so they were well practiced. However, as the end of the year approached, teachers stressed oral reading fluency less, and therefore, students are out of
practice for reading as many words as they can in one minute. See Figure 1 for a comparison of each student’s pre and post test scores for oral reading fluency.

**Fluency Pre and Post Test Scores**

![Fluency Pre and Post Test Scores](image)

**Figure 1**: Comparison of fluency pre and post test scores for each individual student.

The results of the phonics post test showed more of the results that I was expecting to see. I was assuming a positive relationship would be seen from the pre test scores to the post test scores, and in most cases, that is exactly what happened. To score the phonics knowledge pre and post test, each section had letters or words to identify, and one point was given for each item identified correctly. There was a total of 212 items on the assessment, and each student received a score out of the possible 212 points. Of the nine students, three received lower scores on the phonics knowledge post test than the pre test, but the difference was less than six points, which is only a slight difference when compared to the total score.
Again, I analyzed each student’s pre and post test score, and I recorded the point
difference from the pre test to the post test, whether it was positive or negative. I added all of the
point values together and averaged them for the entire group. As a whole, the group gained 5.4
more points on the post test than the pre test. When comparing only the readers from the
independent reading group, they had an average of 1.5 fewer items correct on the post test than
the pre test. Upon comparing the students from the phonics instruction group, they averaged 11
more items correct on the post test than the pre test.

These results were closer to what was expected on these assessments. As for the three
students who scored lower on the post test than the pre test, two of them had a lower score of
only one point, and the other student had a lower score of six points. As stated before, this is
only a slight decrease when compared to the total number of points possible, and this small of a
difference in score could be attributed to a student having a bad day, an unusual routine at
school, or a factor from their home life. I believe this difference in pre and post test scores is
nothing to be concerned about. However, looking at the instructional group, one student
improved on 5 items on the test, two students improved on 11 items, and one student improved
on 16 items. I believe the positive relationship from the pre test to the post test scores can be
attributed to the explicit phonics instruction the group received. The skills being taught in the
instructional group were skills that were directly tested on this assessment. Since the students
had time to practice applying these phonics rules within the group, they were better prepared to
be tested on this material again. See Figure 2 for a comparison of each student’s pre and post
test scores for the phonics knowledge assessment.
Figure 2: Comparison of phonics assessment pre and post test scores for each individual student.
Chapter 5
Conclusions and Recommendations

As the results have shown, phonics instruction alone does not necessarily improve a student’s oral reading fluency score, but the explicit phonics instruction did improve the readers’ accuracy scores, which is supported by Hudson, Pullen, Lane, & Torgesen’s (2009) study stating “Systematic instruction on letter-to-sound correspondences led to higher achievement in word recognition.” Also, some researchers claim that naming speed (used for fluency) and phonological processing (used for decoding) may represent two completely separate cognitive processes (Christo & Davis, 2008).

Overall, I think there are many more factors that need to be considered when discussing the topic of reading fluency. There are so many sub-skills playing a part in reading fluency simultaneously that it’s difficult to pinpoint which sub-skills have the strongest positive affect on reading fluency. Research also shows there are many individual factors associated with reading fluency, such as decoding, naming speed, language comprehension, working memory, intense and systematic phonics instruction, and opportunities for reading and writing (Barth, Catts, & Anthony, 2009; Hudson, Pullen, Lane, & Torgesen, 2009). Barth, Catts, & Anthony (2009), specifically state that “Decoding, language comprehension, and naming speed account for a significant portion of the unique variance in reading fluency… greater than 80% of the variance in reading fluency” (p. 584). I believe to improve a student’s oral reading fluency, they need more than just explicit phonics instruction. All skills contributing to fluent reading must be taught and practiced; Figure 3 shows the sub-skills connected to reading fluency (Hudson, Pullen, Lane, & Torgesen, 2009). This figure shows how certain reading skills are related. The
skills at the bottom of the ladder must be mastered before the skills at the top of the ladder can be reached. At the same time, all of these skills contribute to processing speed and metacognition.

Figure 3 Multileveled framework for assessing processes and sub-processes of reading fluency

(Hudson, Pullen, Lane, & Torgesen, 2009).
References


APPENDIX A: Phonics Knowledge Pre and Post Test, Phonics Knowledge Teacher Record Form, and Oral Reading Fluency Pre and Post Test
THE EFFECT OF PHONICS INSTRUCTION ON ORAL READING FLUENCY

PART H

harm  dirt  form  fern  surf
worn  pert  bark  turn  bird
nerm  sirt  gorf  murd  carn

PART I

tape  key  toe  paid feet
leap  boat  tie  ray  blow
loe  hine  beap  faim  soat

PART J

few  down  moon  hawk  coin
cue  loud  cook  haunt  toy
voot  rew  fout  zoy  bawk

PART K

kneel  cent  type  ghost  wrist
giant  sweat  gnat  bomb  sigh
bice  knod  dimb  tigh  wrep

unless  consent  timbut
competes  admire  rompete
depend  radishes  podated
zero  menu  gromu
locate  inhaled  pantate
stable  dimple  morkle
further  bordered  darber
railways  roaring  faunton

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THE EFFECT OF PHONICS INSTRUCTION ON ORAL READING FLUENCY

Alphabet Skills and Letter Sounds

PART A Letter names—uppercase
Say to the student: Can you tell me the names of these letters? If the student cannot name three or more consecutive letters, say: Look at all of the letters and tell me which ones you do know.

D A N S X J L H
T Y E C O M R P W
K U G B F Q V I

PART B Letter names—lowercase
Say to the student: Can you tell me the names of these letters? If the student cannot name three or more consecutive letters, say: Look at all of the letters and tell me which ones you do know.

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

PART C Consonant sounds
Say to the student: Look at these letters. Can you tell me the sound each letter makes? Be sure to ask if he or she knows of another sound for the letters g and j. If the sound given is correct, do not mark the Record Form. If it is incorrect, write the sound the student gives above each letter. If no sound is given, circle the letter. If the student cannot say the sound for three or more consecutive letters, say: Look at all of the letters and tell me which sounds you do know.

d l n s x z j
T y p c h m r
k w g b f q v

Skills to review:

Skills to teach:
PART D Vowel sounds

Ask the student. Can you tell me the sounds of each letter? If the student names the letter, count it as the long vowel sound. Then ask. Can you tell me another sound for the letter? The student should name the short vowel sound.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>e</th>
<th>i</th>
<th>o</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>u</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>f = long sound</td>
<td>s = short sound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Record “1” on the first line for the long sound (letter name) and “1” for the short sound on the second line. If the student makes an error, record the error over the letter.

___/5 Long vowel sounds (count the number of 1’s above)

___/5 Short vowel sounds (count the number of 1’s above)

Reading and Decoding

For Parts E through K students must read both real and pseudowords (made-up words). For the real word lines, tell the student: I want you to read each line of words aloud. If the student cannot read two or more of the real words in each line, do not administer the line of pseudowords. Go to the next set of items. Before asking the student to read the line of pseudowords, say: Now I want you to read some made-up words. Do not try to make them sound like real words. When using this assessment as a specific skills test or screening measure, do not discontinuete it if the student does not do well on one of the items in Parts E through K. Instead, move to the next item and continue testing.

PART E Short vowels in CVC words

___/5 sip mat let bun hog (real)

___/5 rut fit bar hot set (real)

___/5 nep sus dit pem fap (pseudo)

___/15

PART F Consonant blends with short vowels

___/5 stop trap quiet spell plan (real)

___/5 silk foot sink lump held (real)

___/5 mask did quad gang drank (pseudo)

___/15

PART G Short vowels, digraphs, and -tch trigraph

___/5 when chop thin shut wick (real)

___/5 dodge wash ring then march (real)

___/5 chick shoch death phish fitch (pseudo)

___/15

PART H R-controlled vowels

___/5 harm dirt form form surf (real)

___/5 warm pert bark turn bird (real)

___/5 hrem sirt gorf murd cain (pseudo)

___/15

PART I Long vowel spellings

___/5 tape key toe pole feet (real)

___/5 leap boat tie spy blow (real)

___/5 ice hike beep firm soap (pseudo)

___/15

PART J Variant vowels

___/5 few down moon hawk coin (real)

___/5 can loud cook hount toy (real)

___/5 foot rew fort say hawk (pseudo)

___/15

PART K Low frequency vowel and consonant spellings

___/5 kneel cent type ghost wrist (real)

___/5 giant sweat gnat bomb sigh (real)

___/5 blue knock dimn tight weep (pseudo)

___/15
A Train Ride to Gran's House

Mom and I were trying to plan exciting things to do during summer vacation, and she suggested that we take the train to Gran's house. Gran lives far from our town, so we would spend one day and one night on the train just getting there. Her plan sounded awesome to me!

The day of our trip, Mom and I went to the train station. The train arrived and we climbed aboard. It seemed dark and cool inside, compared to the bright, warm day outside. The conductor took our tickets and showed us to the car where we would ride. There were large windows along the sides of the car, so we would have a fine view. We stowed our overnight bags away and settled in for a comfortable ride. Soon the train pulled away from the station, and we went speeding down the tracks.

Out the windows, familiar buildings quickly gave way to countryside. I saw ranchers on horseback and farmers on tractors. From time to time, children who lived near the tracks would run out to wave as we passed. By lunchtime, the train had climbed onto a high plateau, and we could see mountains near the horizon.

Mom and I took our meals in the dining car. Small tables with chairs were arranged so that we could enjoy the passing scenery while we ate. The menu offered a variety of food choices. It was like being in a restaurant on wheels!

At bedtime, we were shown to our sleeping compartment. The beds were bunk style, with mine above Mom's. I climbed into bed and closed the curtain for privacy. The rocking motion of the train made it easy to fall right to sleep.
When morning came, we were near the town where Gran lived. Mom and I quickly dressed and gathered our things. As the train slowed to a stop, we saw Gran waving at us from the platform. Spending the week with Gran would be wonderful, but I was already looking forward to the train ride back home.

Special Olympics

Forty years ago, Eunice Shriver started a sports camp. It was for children with disabilities. She held the day camp at her home. For the next five years, she helped start similar camps all around the country. A few years later, she started Special Olympics, a program of year-round sports training and athletic contests for people with disabilities.

Today, Special Olympics serves about one million people. There are branches in hundreds of countries. The program helps both children and adults improve their physical fitness. It also helps them build self-confidence and it is just plain fun. Once you see the joy of participating on a young athlete's face, you are likely to be hooked.

The Special Olympics offers sports for each season. During fall, athletes practice long-distance running and walking. They also bowl and play volleyball. In winter, they practice skiing and ice skating. Spring sports include soccer, diving, swimming, and cycling. In summer, athletes play tennis, softball, and golf.

Athletes never pay fees to compete in or practice sports. Coaches and helpers give their time freely. Family members and friends of athletes also help out in many ways. Money is raised by community groups. The money is used to sponsor events, buy medals, pay for sports gear, and so forth.

Every two years, Special Olympics holds World Games. Leading athletes from many countries compete in different sports. The next Winter games will be held in Japan. There, athletes will compete in downhill and cross-country skiing. Other competitions will include figure skating and speed skating. China will host the next Summer games. Athletes will
compete in swimming, diving, and gymnastics. Track and field events are also popular at the Summer games.

In communities around the world, Special Olympics makes a difference in people's lives. The purpose behind Special Olympics might best be summed up by its oath: "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."