



LITERACY INSTRUCTION IS IMPROVING

Reading is an essential skill for success in school and in life. Over the last few years, educators have learned the importance of including more of the science behind learning to read.

The science of reading refers to a large body of high-quality research on learning to read.

The Shifts in Literacy Instruction

Reading Comprehension Begins with Listening Comprehension

While students are learning to read, instruction must build listening comprehension through developing oral language and background knowledge. In school, this will be done through regular interactive read-alouds, opportunities for experiential learning and meaningful conversations that incorporate important vocabulary.

Explicitly Teaching Phonemic Awareness

Examples of Instruction...

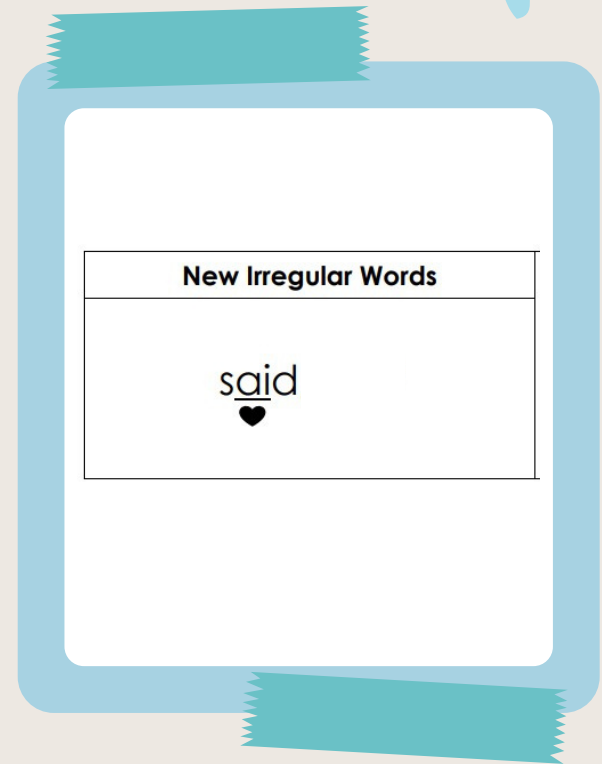
- Discussing and using a sound wall (using pictures) and/or mirrors to notice what the mouth, lips, and tongue are doing when producing/making different sounds.
- Blending separate sounds together into a word.
- Breaking a word apart into individual sounds.
- Deleting one sound from a word and replacing it with a different sound.

Phonemic Awareness:

understanding that spoken language can be broken down into individual sounds

Revisiting High-Frequency Word Instruction (ball words)

We do not memorize words by just looking at them. We 'map' them by matching the sounds we hear to the letters that make those sounds. Instead of memorizing high-frequency words, students will learn to read and spell targeted words using the 'heart word' method. Some words have a tricky part. That part needs to be learned 'by heart.' The rest of the word can be sounded out. An asterisk* next to a word indicates that the word is temporarily irregular. This means the student has not yet learned all the letter-sound connections in the word.



Grade 1	Level 1 Baseball 	Level 2 Soccer Ball 	Level 3 Basketball 	Level 4 Football 	Level 5 Volleyball 
Grade 2	Level 6 Golf Ball 	Level 7 Tennis Ball 	Level 8 Bowling Ball 	Level 9 Ping Pong 	Level 10 Hockey Puck 
	Level 11 Beach Ball 	Level 12 Toy Ball 	Level 13 Badminton 	Level 14 Pool Ball 	Level 15 Disco Ball 
Grade 3	Level 16 Rugby Ball 	Level 17 Cricket 	Level 18 Curling 	Level 19 Racquet Ball 	Level 20 Dodgeball 
	Level 21 Water Polo 	Level 22 Croquet Ball 	Level 23 Wiffle Ball 	Level 24 Lacrosse Ball 	Level 25 Gumball 

Let Assessment Guide Us

Students will be assessed on a ball word level once they have been taught the words and given lots of practice during daily lessons.

Teach Phonics Explicitly and Systematically

We will use a research-informed approach for what to teach and in what order. The phonics skills will progress from simple to complex.

We will use the UFLI Foundations Program for phonics and spelling instruction. Students will learn new sounds and letter patterns to build skills in reading and spelling words.

During whole group and small group instruction, students will apply their new and previously learned skills to reading text.

Phonics instruction may be delivered whole group, small group, or individually.

Let Assessment Guide Us

The weekly spelling test will have a new look. Teachers will send home sounds and patterns already taught in class. Students will practice these sounds and patterns at home. The weekly 'spelling test' will assess some heart words (learned by heart) and the sound patterns students have learned. Once several words have been learned,

students will write a dictated sentence to review previously-learned words, sounds, and patterns. Teachers will use the assessment to determine next steps and who needs additional support.

New Concept and Sample Words	
	sh
	shop
	shin
	dish
	lash
	crush

Teach Decoding Strategies

Newer research about how children learn to read shows that using pictures and guessing can lead to weaker skills.

Our early readers will be working with decodable readers. These are books that include only words that the students can decode (sound out) according to the skills they have been taught so far. Students need practice with the phonics skills they are learning, and these books provide that practice.



We will use whole group and small group instruction to focus on phonemic awareness and phonics. This will build students' decoding skills, rather than having them guess words on a page.

Let Assessment Guide Us

Our previous benchmark approach focused on students' ability to read levelled readers. Teachers and parents did not know how students were progressing on foundational word reading skills.

Instead, teachers will use screeners that easily identify skills students have mastered. These will reveal where intervention needs to be focused. Screeners will assess skills such as alphabet/letter sound skills, as well as skills in reading short vowel words, long vowel words, and multisyllabic words.

A screener is a quick and informal assessment.



We are excited about how these changes will improve students' reading skills.

To learn more about how we learn to read, scan the QR code to view the video, The Reading Brain.

