ISA/RTI Professional Development for Teachers – Sessions 7 & 8

Phonological Awareness

Instructional Goal: The child will have a conceptual grasp of the fact that words are made up of somewhat separable sound segments. Further, the child will be able to say individual sounds in simple words spoken by the teacher and blend separate sounds to form whole words.

Topics covered in this module

- What is Phonological Awareness?
- How does it develop?
- Why is it important?
- What makes it so tricky?
- How much PA instruction do students need?
- How is it assessed?
- What does explicit PA instruction look like?

Phonological Awareness: What is it?

The ability to notice and manipulate the sound components of spoken words.

- Noticing includes:
  - recognizing similar sounds in words
  - recognizing different sounds in words
- Manipulating includes:
  - segmenting spoken words into parts
  - blending together parts of spoken words

The Sounds in My Word Video

As you watch these kindergartners, think about the following questions:

- Are the students segmenting or blending?
- What word components are the focus of this lesson?
- Which of the components is most challenging for students?

Video (2:56) (Kindergarten, whole class, October)
Syllables are Relatively Easy to Notice

\textit{robobin\textit{in}}

\textbf{Note}: Phonological analysis involves the analysis of SPOKEN WORDS. In working with children, we \textbf{WOULD NOT} use print to illustrate.

Onsets and Rimes are more difficult to notice than syllables

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{Onset} – The sounds before the vowel.
\item \textbf{Rime} – The vowel sound and what comes after it.
\end{itemize}

\textbf{Phonemes} are even more difficult to notice than onsets and rimes

\textit{frog}

\textbf{Note}: Phonological analysis involves the analysis of SPOKEN WORDS. In working with children, we would typically use pictures, or simply say the words. We would not use print.
Phonemes are even more difficult to notice than onsets and rimes

Refine your concept of Phonological Awareness

Phonological Awareness is a broader term

Phonemic Awareness is a specific type of Phonological Awareness

Phonemic Awareness is the ability to notice and manipulate the individual phonemes in spoken words.

Because Phonological Awareness is related to but distinct from Phonics Skills

A child can be quite skilled in noticing and manipulating the sounds in spoken words and yet know nothing about the alphabet and how it works.

Why is Phonemic Awareness important?

Becoming phonologically aware helps children learn about letter-sound relationships; specifically,

Phonemic awareness provides a foundation for the learning of phonics skills.

A child with some phonics skills is generally at least somewhat phonemically aware.
Why is Phonemic Awareness important?
Phonemic awareness is related to the ease with which children acquire phonics skills:
• For many letters, information about the letter’s sound is included in the letter’s name.
• If children know a letter’s name, AND are able to analyze the sounds in the letter name, they can use the letter name to help them remember the letter’s sound.
  For example:
  • The name for the letter “B” is comprised of the phonemes /b/ and /ee/.
  • The name for the letter “M” is comprised of the phonemes /e/ and //.

Think sounds not letters! Think sounds not letters!

Why is Phonemic Awareness important?
It allows students to understand the alphabetic principle.

For example:
A student must be able to notice the /t/ sound at the end of *cat* and *hit*, in order to understand the role of the letter t at the end of those words.

Think sounds not letters! Think sounds not letters!

Why is Phonemic Awareness important?
When beginning readers come to an unfamiliar word, they sometimes need to
1. Think of the sound represented by each letter
2. Hold the sounds in memory temporarily
3. Blend the sounds to get to the word

If the child cannot do the blending step, then he may not get to the word.

Think sounds not letters! Think sounds not letters!

Why is Phonemic Awareness important?
When beginning writers want to spell an unfamiliar word, they need to
1. Notice the sounds that are in the word
2. Think of a letter that would represent each sound
3. Write the letters in a sequence that represents the intended word.

If the child cannot do the segmenting step, then he will have difficulty writing an interpretable word.

Think sounds not letters! Think sounds not letters!

How phonemically aware are you?
Let the letters go!

Think sounds not letters! Think sounds not letters!

Say the phonemes contained in the names for each picture.
What makes phonological awareness so tricky?
There is a natural inclination to focus on the meaning of a word rather than its sounds.

As you watch this clip, ask yourself whether the child is attending to the
- Meaning of the word(s) under discussion (thumbs down)?
- Sounds (rhyming parts) of the word(s) under discussion (thumbs up)?

Video (1:37) (Kindergarten, small group, October)

Think sounds not letters! Think sounds not letters!

What makes phonological awareness, and phonemic awareness in particular, so tricky?
Phonemes are influenced by the sounds around them.
- Compare the middle sound you hear when you say “cat” and “can.” Do they sound the same?
- The ending sound in “can” influences the vowel sound.
- This is called co-articulation.

Think sounds not letters! Think sounds not letters!

Match the phoneme on the left with the one on the right that is most similar

- B D
- S G (as in girl)
- T P
- V Z
- K F

Think sounds not letters! Think sounds not letters!

How does PA Develop?
Phonological Awareness and Phonics instruction are mutually supportive.

- Becoming phonemically aware helps a child learn letter sound relationships
- Learning letter-sound relationships helps children to extend their phonemic relationships.

Think sounds not letters! Think sounds not letters!
Phonological Awareness: How much instruction do kids need?

Many children learn to read and write well
• without explicit instruction in phonological analysis;
• instead, engagement with books, songs and poetry that involve rhyme or alliteration is sufficient to promote Phonological Awareness.

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!  31

Implicit Phonological Awareness Instruction

Read or recite stories, songs, and poems that involve rhyme or alliteration.

Encourage children to notice or generate sound similarities and differences.

Alliteration:
Video (1:19) Freddie’s Farm
(Pre K, whole class, Spring)

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!  32

Rhyme in Text

Down by the Bay – learning the song
VIDEO 1:33 (Kindergarten, whole class, December)
Down by the bay
Where the watermelons grow
Back to my home,
I will not go
For if I did,
My mother would say:
Did you ever see a bear,
Combing his hair
Down by the bay?

Down by the Bay – creating new verses
VIDEO 3:59 (Kindergarten, whole class, December)

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!  33

Phonological Awareness: How much instruction do kids need?

If children do not notice rhyme or alliteration that is emphasized in books, songs, and poetry, more of this kind of instruction is unlikely to improve their skills.

In a “typical” early primary classroom, about 30% of the children need more explicit PA instruction.

To determine who these children are, and to identify an appropriate starting point for instruction, a more thorough assessment of phonological analysis skills is important.

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!  34

How is Phonological Awareness Assessed?

Teachers can begin to identify children who may need more explicit instruction in phonological analysis through their daily interactions with the children.

Video (2:33) Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear
(Kindergarten, whole class, October)

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!  35

How is Phonological Awareness Assessed?

Informal

Checklist of skills (Note: These skills do not involve print)
• Sensitivity to sound similarity in words in books, songs, poetry, etc.
• Sorting pictures using sound similarity
• Blending word parts to form real words
• Counting/segmenting phonemes in words

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!  36
How is Phonological Awareness Assessed?

Informal

• Analysis of Children’s Writing
  • Sound spelling
    • In context
    • In isolation

Written Spelling Provides Evidence of Phonemic Awareness

BD   HRH
YAT  bR
SLAD W

Explicit Phonological Awareness Instruction: Sound Sorting

One way to encourage students to attend to the sounds in words is to ask them to sort Pictures or Objects on the basis of Sound Similarity

• Rhyming words (easier because onset-rime sort)
• Same initial sound (easier because onset-rime sort)
• Same ending phoneme (more challenging)
• Same medial phoneme (most challenging)
In this clip, the children practice sorting pictures whose names rhyme.

_Video_ (4:01) Rhyming Sort
(Kindergarten, small group, October)

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!

**General Principles of Phonological Analysis:**
Phonemes at the beginning of words are easier to notice and analyze than phonemes at the end of words.

Phonemes at the end of words are easier to notice and analyze than phonemes in the middle of words.

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!

**General Principles of Phonological Analysis:**
Stretchable (continuant) consonants are easier to analyze than stop consonants.

It is easier to analyze items that are very distinct from one another than those that are more similar. For example,
- The beginning sounds in _kite_ and _goat_ are quite similar.
- The beginning sounds in _pig_ and _nose_ are very different.

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!

**Guidelines for Designing Picture Sorts**
Use pictures or objects with names that are:
- Unambiguous
- One syllable
- In the child’s vocabulary

In early instruction or for kids who are struggling, use names that:
- Have stretchable consonants
- Do not include consonant clusters

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!

**Choosing Items for Beginning Sound Sorts**

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!

**More Challenging Sorting Activities**

_Picture Sort - Ending Sounds_

_Video_ (3:58) (Kindergarten, Small Group, Spring)

_Picture Sort - Medial Sounds_

_Video_ (1:24) (Kindergarten, Small Group center activity, Spring)

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!
General Principle of Phonological Analysis:

Phoneme sorting is easier than phoneme blending.

Sound Blending

The teacher says the component sounds in words.
Children blend the sounds to form the whole word.
This phoneme analysis skill is similar to the last step in the process of sounding out an unfamiliar printed word.

Sound Blending

Onsets and Rimes with Picture Choices

Video 3:05 (Kindergarten, small group, late Fall)

Onsets and Rimes without Picture Choices

Video 2:39 (Kindergarten, small group, late Fall)

Choosing Words for Sound Blending with Picture Choices

Sound Blending – Order of Difficulty

1. Onsets and Rimes with Picture Choices
2. Onsets and Rimes without Picture Choices
3. Single Phonemes with Picture Choices
4. Single Phonemes without Picture Choices

Sound Blending

Adjusting the Level of Challenge

- Group children with similar skills
- Within a group, modify items and challenge to fit the individual children’s needs:
  - Choose different children to blend onset-rime items and single phoneme items
  - Use words with stretchable consonants for children who need more support
  - Increase or decrease the time between word segments to make items more or less challenging
Select sets of items to use for Blending Practice

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!

General Principle of Phonological Analysis:

Phoneme sorting and blending are easier than phoneme segmenting.

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!

Sound Counting/Segmentation

Segmentation: The ability to articulate (say) the component sounds in spoken words.

This is a skill that children depend on heavily when they write.

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!

Progression of Difficulty for Sound Counting/Segmenting Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Challenge</th>
<th>Types of Words to Use</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easiest</td>
<td>Two-phoneme words with onsets and rimes and stretchable consonants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two-phoneme words, stop consonants to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Three-phoneme words, stretchable consonants sur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Three-phoneme words, stop consonants bat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Three- or four-phoneme words that include consonant blends (e.g., fly, stop)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Longer words with consonant blends</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elkonin Boxes are often used to assist children in learning to segment words into phonemes.

Start with teacher modeling

Gradually shift responsibility to the children

Think sounds not letters!  Think sounds not letters!
In this clip, Elkonin boxes are used to support sound segmentation.

Video (1:56) (First Grade, 1-1 intervention, January)

In order to understand emergent readers’ spelling, you need to think like an emergent reader.

Written spelling promotes the development of phonemic awareness.

When children attempt to write words, they practice saying the words slowly, one sound at a time, which is precisely the skill needed to segment words by individual phonemes.

Engaging in sound spelling, therefore, is an important way in which children become more attuned to the individual sounds in words.
Written spelling promotes the development of phonemic awareness.

Research has shown that kindergarten classrooms where more time is spent on sound spelling produce fewer students who demonstrate reading problems in first grade.

When students write using sound spelling…
- They are practicing phonemic analysis in an authentic, personally meaningful context.
- In addition, the teacher can also integrate instruction about print purposes and conventions.

Children Sound Spelling

In this clip, the children are spelling the name of a picture from a book they have just read.

- LEF (leaf)
- LTBG (ladybug)

Video (2:44) (Kindergarten, small group, Spring)

What do their sound spellings tell you about their phonemic awareness?

Sound Spelling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>word</th>
<th>Student A</th>
<th>Student B</th>
<th>Student C</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fan</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>fn</td>
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<tr>
<td>wait</td>
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<td>wat</td>
<td>wat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Integrating Phonemic Awareness into Classroom Routines

Read Aloud/Shared Reading
- Rhyming text
- Alliterative text

Morning Message
- Shared writing – model phoneme segmentation
- Rhymes
- Alliteration

Writing
- Sound spelling

General Instructional Principles Related to Phoneme Awareness

It is important for children to understand the application of what they are learning. For example, we might say:

"We are learning to notice the sounds in words because, when we want to write a word, if we can figure out what sounds are in it, it will be easier to decide what letters to use to write it."

"We are learning to listen to sounds and then to figure out what word they make when we put them together because that’s one of the things people do when they read. They look at the letters, think of the sounds that the letters make, and then put the sounds together to figure out the word."

General Instructional Principles Related to Phoneme Awareness

The ability to notice and manipulate the component sounds in words develops gradually.

- Syllables
- Onsets & rimes
- Individual phonemes
- Beginning sounds
- Ending sounds
- Middle sounds

Stretchable sounds are easier to analyze than stop consonants.

Sorting and blending are easier than segmenting.
End of Phonological Awareness

Thoughts/Questions?

Think sounds not letters! Think sounds not letters!