EXCELLENT STUDY CONTENT, WORKSHEETS, EXERCISES, AND AN INTERACTIVE STUDY MODULE!

Pass the TExES English Language Arts and Reading 4-8

Fourth Edition

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also available from
Ed Publishing:
Pass the TExES ELAR 8-12
Domain I:

Language Arts, Part I: Oral Language, Early Literacy Development, Word Identification Skills, and Reading Fluency

Competencies 1-3

(33% of the test)

English Language Arts and Reading 4-8 Standard I:
Oral Language: Teachers of students in grades 4-8 understand the importance of oral language, know the developmental processes of oral language, and provide a variety of instructional opportunities for students to develop listening and speaking skills.

English Language Arts and Reading 4-8 Standard II:
Foundations of Reading: Teachers of students in grades 4-8 understand the foundations of reading and early literacy development.

English Language Arts and Reading 4-8 Standard III:
Word Analysis Skills and Reading Fluency: Teachers understand the importance of word analysis skills (including decoding, blending, structural analysis, sight word vocabulary) and reading fluency and provide many opportunities for students to practice and improve their word analysis skills and reading fluency.

English Language Arts and Reading 4-8 Standard VIII:
Assessment of Developing Literacy: Teachers understand the basic principles of assessment and use a variety of literacy assessment practices to plan and implement instruction.
1. Oral Language

Key Descriptors:

- Knows basic linguistic concepts, and developmental stages in the acquisition of oral language, and recognizes that individual variations occur.
- Uses of informal and formal oral language assessments and uses multiple, ongoing assessments to monitor and evaluate students' oral language skills.
- Provides language instruction that acknowledges students' oral language skills and that builds on these skills.
- Plans instruction based on informal and formal assessment of students' progress in oral language development including English-language learners (ELLs), in accordance with the English Language Proficiency (ELPS).
- Recognizes when oral language delays or differences warrant in-depth evaluation and additional help.
- Knows how to provide explicit, systematic oral language instruction and selects effective instructional materials.
- Understands the relationship between the development of oral language and the development of reading.
- Teaches students to connect spoken and printed language.
- Teaches students listening skills and provides listening opportunities in a variety of contexts.
- Teaches students how to evaluate their speech.
- Uses technology to promote oral communication skills.

Key Words:

- Phonemes
- Phonology
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Lexicon
- Semantics
- Pragmatics
- Discourse
- Phonemic Awareness
- Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing

NOTE: Refer to the lettered descriptors under each Competency in the ETS/SBEC study material (in the back of this manual). Analyze each descriptor, and synthesize it down to a paraphrase that is meaningful to you, using no more than 5 words. List those phrases in order on the lines above. It will help to letter the lines above. When complete, record them again on Worksheet 4 in Appendix I.
1. Oral Language

Competency 1:
The teacher understands the importance of oral language, knows the developmental processes of oral language, and provides a variety of instructional opportunities for students to develop listening and speaking skills.

A. BASIC LINGUISTIC CONCEPTS
The teacher must understand each developmental concept of oral language. They include:
- **Phonemes** - speech sound, target sound, utterance: smallest unit of speech in a language.
- **Phonology** - producing the basic sound units of language.
- **Morphology** - word formation in a language including inflection, derivation, and compounding. Morphology (root word “morph” = change) is the study of how the meaning of a word is changed when a morpheme (in English, root words, prefixes and suffixes) is added.
- **Syntax** - the way in which words are put together to form phrases, clauses, or sentences.
- **Semantics** - relating to the meaning of words, groups of words, signs, symbols and phrases. Semantics is critical to language acquisition. Semantics studies how meaning is built, understood, deciphered and explained, and includes topics such as:
  - how word meanings change over time
  - how meaning is changed by the addition or deletion of morphemes
  - how words may work together to form a single idea (“drop off”, “turn into”) the connotations, or variation of meanings attached to similar words (tired, sleepy; angry, furious)
  - similes and metaphors (sings like a bird, sharp as a tack)
  - idioms (raining cats and dogs, hungry as a horse)
- **Pragmatics** - the appropriate use of language; rules for communicating effectively and responding to the needs of one's listeners. Pragmatics is the way meaning is implied by context and expressions. **Example:** “She’s a real genius!” may mean “She’s extremely smart”, or “She’s not very smart”, depending on the conversation or writing that surrounds the sentence.
  - Rules of politeness (language registers, speaker must determine which register to use, i.e., speaking to the President of the United States, speaking to an old friend, or speaking to a stranger, hence, different registers of politeness).
  - Conversational skills
  - Extended discourse

Related Concepts:
**Morpheme** – Morphemes are the smallest unit of meaning in a language; a part that changes the meaning.
**Examples:**
- ed happened in the past, such as talk -> talked
- ing is happening now, such as fly -> flying
- re- again, such as visit -> revisit
- pre- before, such as view -> preview
- spect to look (root word)

**Discourse** - Discourse is a conversation or dialogue between two people. It can also relate to the jargon and vocabulary of a specific group of people such as doctors or teachers.

Pass the TExES English Language Arts and Reading 4-8

continued
B. STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT
The teacher recognizes that development in phonemes, semantics, syntax, and pragmatics occur in and across languages; however, there is usually a continuum of progress starting with early acquisition of a language.

C. THE EIGHT PHONEMIC AWARENESS ACTIVITIES
1. **Isolation** - Students hear individual sounds in words.
   Teacher: What's the first sound you hear in “top”?
   Students: The first sound is /t/.
   Teacher: What is the last sound you hear?
   Students: The last sound is /p/.

2. **Identity** - Students hear and identify the same sound in different words.
   Teacher: What sound is the same in teacher, table, and tree?
   Students: The beginning sound, /t/.

3. **Categorization** - Students identify which word is different in a list of words, based on sounds.
   Teacher: Which word doesn’t belong – cat, king or face?
   Students: Face doesn’t belong because it doesn’t start with /k/.

4. **Blending** – Students put sounds together to make a word.
   Teacher: What words is /k/ /a/ /t/?
   Students: /k/ /a/ /t/ is cat!

5. **Segmentation** – Students break words into their individual sounds and/or count the number of sounds in a word. It is the opposite of blending.
   Teacher: How many sounds are in “fan”?
   Students: /f/ /a/ /n/, three sounds.

6. **Deletion** – Students remove a sound from a word and identify what remains.
   Teacher: What word is clap without /k/?
   Students: Clap without /k/ is “lap”.

7. **Addition** – Students create a new word by adding a sound.
   Teacher: What word do you have when you add /s/ to the beginning of “top”?
   Students: Stop!

8. **Substitution** – Students change one sound in a word to a different sound and identify the new word.
   Teacher: I’m thinking of a word that sounds like man but starts with /r/. What’s my word?
   Students: Ran!

D. TYPES OF VOCABULARY AND RELATIONSHIPS
There are four types of interrelated vocabularies that we all use when we communicate. They typically develop in the listed order, and build upon each other.

**Gaps or weaknesses in one area yield gaps and weaknesses in other areas.**

1. **Listening vocabulary** - the words we need to know to understand what we hear
2. **Speaking vocabulary** - the words we use when we speak
3. **Reading vocabulary** - the words we need to know to understand what we read
1. **Oral Language**

4. **Writing vocabulary** - the words we use in writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Vocabulary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gaps in any area affect those that build on it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening vocabulary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Teaching ELA requires use and development of all four areas. Encourage students to BUILD and USE their vocabularies.
- Students may need lesson adaptations (such as bilingual books, reduced writing assignments, etc.) to serve their individual needs.

E. **ASSESSMENT**
The assessment of strengths, needs, and interests of the students are what drive curricular decisions.
- Strengths are what the teacher should focus on with all students in order to build confidence and motivate oral development.
- Needs dictate what and how to teach students; they are diagnosed by both formal and informal means.
- Interests of students should be as closely aligned with teacher objectives as possible in order to promote ownership of learning.

F. **LANGUAGE DELAYS**
Recognition of speech and oral language delays should be made early and the necessary steps taken to provide:

- Warranted in-depth evaluations (i.e. physical, developmental, intellectual, emotional, etc.)
- Additional help inside and outside of school.
- Interventions needed for diagnosed problems, areas of weakness, etc.

G. **PAIR AND GROUP ACTIVITIES**
Meaningful and purposeful conversation, dramatic play, language play, stories, songs, rhymes, games, discussions, questioning, etc., are used by the teacher to promote oral language usage. After lessons have been modeled correctly, students must practice the skills learned which will relate to easier connections of spoken language to print.

H. **CULTURAL DIVERSITY**
Promote language development and cultural diversity for all English Language Learners by responding to student strengths, needs, interest, and cultural diversity.

I. **RICH LANGUAGE ENVIRONMENT**
- The goal of every language program should be to develop language skills across the four ELA strands—listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- A rich language environment includes providing students opportunities within all content areas to speak and listen for a variety of purposes. The silent classrooms of the past are not reflective of today’s best teaching practices. To develop oral language skills, student must be allowed to use their language—for academically appropriate discussions and collaboration.
- Students should have clear language objectives and expectations. Expectations and objectives should:
  - Be based on the TEKS
  - Be clearly communicated to students
## 1. Oral Language

- Build language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- Be measurable
- Be written in a child-friendly, comprehensible fashion
- Be posted in the room

### J. BUILDING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

#### • Fostering Comprehensible Input
Teachers build students’ comprehension of new language by providing opportunities for students to listen and understand. Specific supports include:
- Speaking slowly and clearly
- Using sentence complexity that matches student skill levels
- Explaining complex concepts and vocabulary
- Avoiding or explaining idioms and expressions
- Adding movement, gestures, visuals, props, and non-verbal clues that help students gather meaning
- Activating students’ prior knowledge
- Using hands-on learning activities

#### • Fostering Communication
Teachers build communication of new language by providing opportunities for students to speak and to respond to directives. Specific supports include:
- Clarifying, demonstrating and repeating directions and requests
- Offering students opportunities to use language in a supported setting
- Praising effort and communication attempts
- Providing engaging topics to discuss
- Focusing on communication and meaning as opposed to language correctness and form
- Modeling correct language usage
- Using cooperative grouping for learning activities and discussion

#### • Fostering Critical Thinking
Teachers should build critical thinking skills for all learners, though often second language learners have difficulty engaging with academic concepts at higher levels due to language abilities. For these students, teachers must:
- Assess students’ knowledge and skills despite language needs by allowing students to demonstrate thinking in a variety of ways.
- Focus on content and big ideas.
- Allow students to demonstrate.
- Use graphic organizers and project-based learning.
- Engage parents to support lessons at home.

### K. INTERRELATEDNESS OF LISTENING, SPEAKING, READING, AND WRITING

Language skills include both receptive and expressive natures.

**Expressive language** – language used to express one's ideas, needs, and feelings
- Specifically, speaking and writing
- Language that proceeds from a person

**Receptive language** – language that is used to understand the thoughts, needs, and feelings of others
- Specifically, listening and reading
- Language that flows into a person

- All forms of language allow communication, and are interdependent.
- These skills tend to develop in a predictable order – listening, speaking, reading, and then writing.
- Delays in one area of language development will hinder growth in other domains.
1. Oral Language

L. HOME LANGUAGE
The home language can be used by the teacher to celebrate and respect cultural, linguistic, and home backgrounds for oral language development. By doing so, the teacher becomes more biliterate and bicultural.

M. ORAL AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE
Interrelate oral language and written language by preview-review, discussion, and questioning. Explicitly discuss and preview different types of speech and written dialogues.

Oral language skills are built through:
• Meaningful and purposeful conversations— with each other, and with adults.
• Games, role-plays, discussions, collaboration, sharing, presenting, and reading.
• Explicit instruction into the differences between formal and informal speech, and between speech and writing.
• Listening for a variety of purposes and evaluating the effectiveness of communication—the communication of others and of their own attempts.
• Using technology to build oral language skills: books on tape, listening center, music, computer games, smart board.

N. SPEECH AND PRINT
Connect spoken and printed language by “read-alouds.” Reading aloud builds motivation to learn to read while providing an excellent model of spoken text. Although reading aloud to older children is not as researched as reading aloud to younger children, a few studies have shown that the benefits of reading aloud to upper elementary/middle school students are significant. Among the benefits are increases in students’ accessibility to texts, motivation, engagement in learning, positive attitudes toward reading, background knowledge in content areas, and fluency.

O. VARIOUS AUDIENCES
Oral language should be used for various audiences, purposes, and occasions (i.e., register of language, informing others of a variety of information, persuading others to act, or, critical listening for point of view).

P. LISTENING
Listening should be taught in a variety of active, purposeful listening contexts.
• Listening for a variety of purposes and evaluating the effectiveness of communication—the communication of others and of their own attempts.

Q. SELF EVALUATING
Students evaluate their spoken messages and those of others.
• Focus positive attention on attempts and successes.
• Use private consultation on areas for development.
• Keep language goals attainable.
• Be specific and clear.
• Build background for students using explanations and visuals.
• Keep feedback centered on big ideas and key vocabulary.
• Encourage journaling for students to record their language learning.
• Use teacher-student journals to allow students to ask and receive clarification in a private setting.
• Have students rephrase what they’ve learned to illuminate misconceptions and to assure language clarity.

continued
1. Oral Language

P. TECHNOLOGY
Technology can be used to develop students’ communication skills. Use technology to build oral language skills: books on tape, listening center, music, computer games, smart board, etc. Ten reasons for implementing technology in the classroom:

1) If used correctly, will help prepare students for their future careers, which will inevitably include the use of wireless technology.

2) Integrating technology into the classroom is a great way to reach diversity in learning styles.

3) It gives students the chance to interact with their classmates by encouraging collaboration.

4) Technology helps the teachers prepare students for the real world environment. As our nation becomes increasingly more technology-dependent, it becomes even more necessary that to be successful citizens, students must learn to be tech-savvy.

5) Integrating technology in education every day helps students stay engaged. Today’s students love technology so they are sure to be interested in learning if they can use the tools they love.

6) With technology, the classroom is a happier place. Students are excited about being able to use technology and therefore, are more apt to learn.

7) When mobile technology is readily available in the classroom, students are able to access the most up-to-date information quicker and easier than ever before.

8) The traditional passive learning mold is broken. With technology in the classroom the teacher becomes the encourager, adviser, and coach.

9) Students become more responsible. Technology helps students take more control over their own learning. They learn how to make their own decisions.

10) Students can have access to digital textbooks that are constantly updated and often more vivid, helpful, creative, and less expensive than heavy textbooks.

R. FAMILIES AND PROFESSIONALS
Always collaborate with families and professionals to promote student oral language skills and how to best teach these skills. Document intervals of phonology and phonological awareness evaluations to demonstrate progress.
2. Literacy Development

Key Descriptors:

- Understands the significance of phonological and phonemic awareness for reading.
- Understands the alphabetic principle and typical patterns of students’ alphabetic skills development.
- Understands that comprehension is an integral part of early literacy.
- Understands that not all written languages are alphabetic and that many alphabetic languages are more phonetically regular than English.
- Understands that literacy acquisition generally develops in a predictable pattern from prereading to conventional literacy.
- Understands that literacy development occurs in multiple contexts through reading, writing, speaking and using various media.
- Knows characteristics of informal and formal literacy assessments.
- Knows how to select, administer and use results from informal and formal assessments of literacy acquisition.
- Knows how to use ongoing assessment.
- Analyzes students’ errors in reading and responds to individual students’ needs in achieving literacy.
- Selects and uses appropriate instructional materials.
- Knows how to promote students’ early literacy development skills through the use of technology.

Key Words:
Phonological and Phonemic Awareness
Alphabetic Principle
Decoding
Word Chunks
Alphabetic Skills
Reading Comprehension

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2. Literacy Development

Competency 2:
The teacher understands the foundations of literacy development.

A. PHONOLOGICAL AND PHONEMIC AWARENESS

This is the ability of the student to recognize the sounds in spoken language and how they can be segmented (pulled apart), blended (put back together), and manipulated (added, deleted, and substituted).

- Phonological awareness does not involve print.
- Phonics involves print and sound together like graphemes – written letter(s) that represent a spoken sound. For example, a student writes the letter “B” when they hear the sound /b/.

**If the student lacks the ability to hear the sounds, the student will NOT be able to decode the new word.**

Since phonological awareness is necessary for spelling, students who lack phonological skills will also have challenges with spelling.

If a student has trouble spelling, the teacher must revisit phonological awareness.

Teachers must examine spelling tests to determine not only whether the child knows the specific tested words, but also to assess the child’s phonological skills.

**Phonological Awareness**

Phonological Awareness involves several categories and, in English, develops in a specific order, distinguishing and manipulating sounds from chunks of sound to individual sounds.

Teachers must understand the developmental stages of phonological awareness (what they are) as well as their progression (the order in which they develop).

**Phonological Awareness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Words in a sentence</td>
<td>Dividing words into onsets and rimes</td>
<td>Isolation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllables</td>
<td>Creating rhymes using onsets and rimes</td>
<td>Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Blending and Segmenting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Addition and Deletion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Determine where a child is in their phonological development.
- Plan activities that help them build to the next level.
- When children first learn to hear sounds, they begin by hearing “chunks” of sounds.
- This progresses as they learn to take apart words into beginning sound (onset) and “word family” (rime). (See additional explanation below.)
- Finally, children learn to hear individual sounds (phonemes) and to play with these sounds, or manipulate them.

1. Working with Words and Word “Chunks”

- Segmenting Words in Sentences – breaking sentences into individual words, usually using claps or stomps.
  **Example** – “Clifford” (one clap) “ate” (one clap) “pizza” (one clap)
- Segmenting Words into Syllables – clapping and breaking words into smaller parts that include a vowel.
- Segmenting Compound Words – breaking compound words into the smaller words from which they are built.

continued
2. Literacy Development

**Phonemic Awareness**
The ability to hear and manipulate the sound that is spoken.

2. **Working with Individual Phonemes**
   - These activities should be a planned part of your everyday instruction.
   - They do not take much time, and should be practiced in the form of discussion, collaboration, or games.
   - In the upper grades, phonemic activities fit well into word study, vocabulary lessons, and spelling.
   - Teachers should assess students’ phonemic skills regularly, and plan instruction that meets students’ individual needs.
   - Assessment must be done 1:1 (because in a group, it is difficult to determine each child’s ability and needs)

**B. BUILDING PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS**
Research shows that children do best when they only work on one or two types of phonemic awareness activities. Natural pairings are:
- Isolation (present and master alone)
- Identity and categorization
- Blending and segmentation
- Addition and deletion
- Substitution

1. In each type of phonemic awareness activity, begin having students manipulate the first sound, then move to the last sound, and end with the middle sound (vowel), as this moves from simplest to most complex. Master each sound placement (first, last, middle) before moving to the next.
2. The two that show the most gain are blending and segmenting.
3. Each type should be mastered before moving to the next.
4. Phonemic awareness does not take a long time...two to three minutes each day, and makes a great “sponge” activity (a short activity that can fill up “extra” minutes when a lesson wraps up early, or when a class is in line waiting).
5. Phonological and phonemic awareness activities should resemble games. The children will love playing them and will rapidly build skills. The state lists language games, informal interactions, and direct instruction as preferred teaching methods.
   **Example:** Teaching Phonemic Blending - “I Say It Slowly, You Say It Fast” game: Teacher explains that she will say the sounds in a word slowly. Children take turns saying it fast.
6. Building these skills seems like games, but requires explicit teaching, practice, and individual practice.

**C. ALPHABETIC PRINCIPLE**
According to Leiberman and Leiberman (1990), the **Alphabetic Principle** is:
- The ability to associate sounds with letters and to use these sounds to form words
- The understanding that words in spoken language are represented by letters in print
- Sounds in words have a predictable relationship with the letters that represent these sounds

Mastery of the Alphabetic Principle is crucial to developing literacy skills—the ability to read and write. The lack of alphabetic skills divides poor readers from accomplished readers.

**Graphophonemic Awareness** is the understanding that a sequence of written letters represents a sequence of spoken sounds. Graph = Write, Phone = Sounds, so the word literally means to write (letters) that represent sounds (phonemes). Without these skills, a child will have a difficult time reading.

**Decoding** is using graphophonemic awareness to “figure out”, “sound out” new words. Unless
2. Literacy Development

the reader can convert the “code” (the lines and symbols, or letters written on the page) into sounds, he or she will not be able to make sense of what is read.

**Letter-Sound Knowledge** refers to a student’s ability to apply graphophonemic awareness and decode written words.

This is the understanding that the sequence of letters in written words represents the sequence of sounds (or phonemes) in spoken words.

**English Letter-Sound Associations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phoneme</th>
<th>Spelling(s) and Example Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/A/</td>
<td>a (table), a_e (late), ai (main), ay (way)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/a/</td>
<td>a (cat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>b (bet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/k/</td>
<td>c (cape), k (key), ck (pick)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/d/</td>
<td>d (dog)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/E/</td>
<td>e (me), ee (feet), ea (leap), y (baby)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/e/</td>
<td>e (pet), ea (head)</td>
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<tr>
<td>/f/</td>
<td>f (fix), ph (phone)</td>
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<td>/g/</td>
<td>g (gas)</td>
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<td>/h/</td>
<td>h (hot)</td>
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<tr>
<td>/l/</td>
<td>i (I), i_e (bite), igh (light), y (sky)</td>
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<tr>
<td>/i/</td>
<td>i (sit)</td>
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<tr>
<td>/j/</td>
<td>j (jet), dge (edge), g[e, i, y] (gem)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/l/</td>
<td>l (lamp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/m/</td>
<td>m (my)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/n/</td>
<td>n (no), kn (knock)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/O/</td>
<td>o (okay), o_e (bone), oa (soap), ow (low)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/o/</td>
<td>o (hot)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/p/</td>
<td>p (pie)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/kw/</td>
<td>qu (quick)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/r/</td>
<td>r (road), wr (wrong), er (her), ir (sir), ur (fur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/s/</td>
<td>s (say), c[e, i, y] (cent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/t/</td>
<td>t (time)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Graphophonemic knowledge is the relationship of printed letters to spoken language.
- Student can recognize, name, and produce the letters of the alphabet.
- Students use letter-sound knowledge and syllables to decode written language.
- Teacher uses a variety of syllable strategies to read beginning reading texts.

**Assessing Older Students**

Have students write all of the letters in a set, such as all of the consonants, all of the vowels, or all of the letters/letter combinations that can make a specific sound.

**D. COMPREHENSION IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF FLUENCY**

**Reading Comprehension** is the process of constructing meaning from written texts, based on a complex coordination of a number of interre-
2. Literacy Development

related sources of information. Reading comprehension has many components, all of which work together to build understanding of what is read:

- The ability to understand and demonstrate a concept in a variety of ways: visual, oral, and written.
- The process of assimilating information either visually, auditorially, or kinesthetically, by relating to one’s prior knowledge and schemata.
- Getting meaning from what is said, in print, or visualized, and being able to impart that meaning to others in a manner in which they understand.
- Encompasses the understanding of what has been read aloud, and what has been read by the student. Factors include oral background, prior reading experience, language background, and characteristics of text (i.e. narrative, informational, persuasive, non-standard text, inferential, etc.).

E. ALPHABETIC VS. PHONETIC
Not all written languages are alphabetic and many alphabetic languages are more phonetically regular than English. Hence, the need to understand the difference between decodable words and words that require word analysis skills which will enhance the ability to differentiate instruction for each student.

F. BUILDING ALPHABETIC SKILLS

- Environmental Print – Parents can help children develop alphabetic skills in many ways, including by pointing out words within the child’s environment. Teachers should maintain a “word-rich environment”, or a setting in which words are posted throughout the classroom to allow students greater exposure to words and letters.
- Word Walls – An effective classroom tool that utilizes environmental print, word walls are alphabetized, interactive displays of learned words or words that are about to be learned.

- Systematic, Explicit Instruction – Teaching words and sounds in a regular, planned way, coupled with frequent review will help students build alphabetic skills.
- Multisensory Techniques – Teaching words and sounds using multiple senses and methods help students master skills more rapidly, and retain these skills over time. 
  **Examples:** practicing writing words in different types of environments; listening to audio books, etc.

G. ASSESSING ALPHABETIC SKILLS
Assessing students’ alphabetic knowledge and decoding skills provides important information for language teachers. Identifying weak skills and providing early intervention will help students to progress in all areas of learning.

**Nonsense Word Decoding** - To assess a student’s ability to use letter-sound knowledge to decode words, a nonsense word test is administered. In these tests, the student reads a list of “non-words” and the teacher records decoding strengths and weaknesses. **Example:** touldermnt, greedly, pixed, bunderness. If the teacher is administering a nonsense word test, he/she is evaluating the student’s decoding skills.

**Skills Observation Recording** - It is important to keep a chart that records the observed and assessed skills of each student. Look for patterns and find areas of weakness. Use assessment data to plan individualized instruction that helps each child grow.

H. PREDICTABLE PATTERNS
Literacy development occurs through reading, writing, and oral language. Therefore, read-alouds and daily writing should be incorporated in lesson planning at every level of literacy.
2. Literacy Development

- Phonological Awareness is critical to developing reading and spelling skills.
- It can be taught, even to struggling adult readers.
- It does not take a great amount of time—roughly 20 hours over a school year.
- Blending and segmenting have the greatest impact.
- Independent practice is important, and teachers must engage families to help build skills.
- For learners who are behind, teaching sounds and words simultaneously yields rapid growth.
- Phonological Awareness develops in a predictable pattern. Knowledge of this pattern is critical to success on this test, and in the classroom.

I. INFORMAL AND FORMAL LITERACY ASSESSMENTS

**Purposes and Types of Assessment**

Assessments can be easily divided into two categories: informal and formal.

**Informal assessments** are generally instructor-designed. As the name suggests, these assessments are less systematic and regimented than conventional assessments. Informal tests include:

- teacher observations of student body language during questioning
- the types of questions the students themselves are asking
- work samples such as daily work portfolios.

**Advantages**

- often are visual
- provide immediate feedback on the effectiveness of daily instructional tasks and activities
- allow the instructor to quickly adapt presentation to increase student performance
- easy to adjust without extensive planning and preparation time
- can provide a more clear image of the abilities of certain student populations (disabled, second-language learners, students who don't perform well under the pressures of formal testing)
- provide the instructor with solid information about emotional, social, and motivational factors which affect students’ learning

The greatest advantages of informal tests are their practicality in regard to preparation and grading time, and their adaptability to student and situational need.

**Disadvantages**

- results can be unreliable if not coupled with formal assessment
- lack standardization
- do not reflect accurately for some students (shy, other social factors)
- portfolios and projects can be influenced by student creativity and social factors (availability of materials, parental assistance)

**Formal assessments** are more regimented and structured. Formal assessments are in general less forgiving than informal assessments. However, they provide specific information.