

PART V: Glossary

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A

affix - a word part that is "fixed to" either the beginning of a word (prefix) or the ending of a word (suffix).

alphabetic principle – the recognition that there are consistent, though not entirely predictable, relationships between the letters of the alphabet and the phonemes of the language so that the letters in a spelling map out the phonemes in the pronunciation of a word.

anecdotal record - an informal assessment of a student made by observing and recording behavior.

auditory discrimination – accurate perception of sounds of all types.

B

blend - to combine individual phonemes in serial order to form words; to combine onsets and rimes to make syllables; to combine syllables to make words.

C

cluster - a cluster, also known as a *blend*, combines individual phonemes in serial order to form words; to combine onsets and rimes to make syllables; to combine syllables to make words.

continuous consonant - a consonant such as *s, m, l, f, r,* and *z* whose sound can be sustained without distortion, making it easier for children to hear the distinct sounds in a word. for example, the word *sat* can be stretched out like this: *sssaaat*.

criterion-referenced assessment - a measurement of achievement of specific criteria or skills in terms of absolute levels of mastery.

cvc pattern - one-syllable words with a consonant-vowel-consonant pattern (e.g., *cat, sun, top*).

D

decodable book - a book that is carefully written to contain the letter-sound relationships taught in the lesson of a systematic phonics program.

decodable text - text that can be decoded or sounded out based on what the student has already been taught.

decoding - the ability to pronounce, or process of pronouncing, letters and words.

diagnostic assessment - an intensive, in-depth evaluation process with a relatively detailed and narrow coverage of a specific area

digraph - two letters that come together and make one sound (e.g., *ck* is a consonant digraph, *ee* is a vowel digraph).

diphthong - two vowel sounds that come together so quickly that they are considered to be only one syllable (e.g., *oi* and *ow*).

E

evaluation - presenting and defending opinions by making judgments about information, the validity of ideas or quality of work based on a set of criteria (the sixth and highest level of bloom's taxonomy).

explicit instruction - in explicit, or direct, instruction, teachers tell readers why and when they should use comprehension strategies, what strategies to use, and how to apply them.

Teaching Phonics Workshops

F

fluency - the ability to read out loud/orally with speed, accuracy, and proper expression.

formal assessment - a traditional method of assessment, which includes objective tests that measure factual knowledge and standardized tests that compare students to standards or norms.

formative assessment - ongoing monitoring of student progress to define the specific focus of instruction.

G

grapheme - the smallest part of written language that represents a phoneme in the spelling of a word. a grapheme may be just one letter, such as b, d, f, p, s; or several letters, such as ch, sh, th, -ck, ea, -igh.

guided practice - an explicit teaching technique in which the teacher guides and assists students as they learn how and when to apply a learning strategy.

H

high-frequency words - the words that appear most often in printed materials.

I

informal assessment - a non-standardized test designed to give an approximate index of an individual's level of ability or learning style; often teacher-constructed.

informal reading inventory (iri) - graded reading passages of increasing difficulty used to determine student's strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for word identification and comprehension.

invented spelling - applying knowledge of speech sound-letter relationships to spell (often incorrectly) an unknown word.

J K L M

manipulating – playing with phonemes by blending, segmenting, adding, deleting, or substituting them in words.

medial consonant - consonant sound positioned in the middle of a word of more than one syllable—for example, the /k/ sound in *lucky*.

morpheme – the smallest unit of meaning. This could be a word (read), affix (preread, reader) or inflectional ending (reads).

N

National Reading Panel - convened in 1997, The National Reading Panel (NRP) was asked by congress to assess the status of research-based knowledge about reading, including the effectiveness of various approaches to teaching children to read.

No Child Left Behind - signed into law in 2001 by president George. W. Bush, it embodies four key principles: stronger accountability for results; greater flexibility for states, school districts and schools in the use of federal funds; more choices for parents of children from disadvantaged backgrounds; and an emphasis on teaching methods that have been demonstrated to work.

norm - performance standards that are established by a reference group and that describe average or typical performance.

norm-referenced assessment - a norm-referenced assessment expresses the students' scores in rank order, based on a distribution of scores.

Teaching Phonics Workshops

O

onset - the initial consonant(s) sound of a syllable (the onset of *bag* is b-; of *swim*, sw-).

open-ended assessment - an assessment in which students must generate a solution to a problem or perform a task when there is no single, right answer.

orthography/orthographic - the writing system of a language, specifically, the correct sequence of letter, characters, or symbols.

P

performance-based assessment - a form of assessment that measures students' understanding of concepts, procedures, or strategies by demonstrating what they have learned in an authentic context.

phoneme - the smallest unit in *spoken* language that makes a difference in the meaning of words. English consists of about 41 phonemes. phonemes combine to form syllables and words. a few words, such as *a* or *oh*, have only one phoneme. most words, however, have more than one phoneme: the word *if* has two phonemes (/i/ /f/); *check* has three phonemes (/ch/ /e/ /k/), and *stop* has four phonemes (/s/ /t/ /o/ /p/). sometimes one phoneme is represented by more than one letter. (a letter between slash marks shows the phoneme, or sound, that the letter represents, and not the name of the letter. for example, the letter *h* represents the sound /h/.)

phonemic awareness - the understanding that the sounds of *spoken* language work together to make words.

phonics – Instruction in strategies needed to decode words.

phonogram - a letter or a set combination of letters that represents one or more single 'voiced' sounds in a given word.

phonological awareness - the ability to identify, blend, segment, rhyme, or in other ways manipulate the sounds of language.

phonological features - distinctive factors that contribute to how a particular phoneme is voiced so that you can distinguish one sound from another (such as /f/ and /g/).

process assessment - a process assessment assesses *how* a student knows or does something and often involves observing students to see how well they use strategies.

product assessment - product assessment is type of a assessment which measures what students know or can do.

Q R

reading readiness - what a child needs to know about the worlds of spoken language and print *before* learning how to read.

rime - the part of a syllable that contains the vowel and all that follows it.

running record - a reading assessment technique in which the teacher selects a text of 100-150 words and the student is asked to read the text. The teacher records and analyzes the student's reading behavior in order to match program instruction with student assessment.

Teaching Phonics Workshops

S

scaffolding - a form of support. In instruction, a way of teaching systematically in which the teacher provides to students, early in the learning process, a significant amount of support in the form of modeling, prompts, direct explanations and targeted questions. Instruction during this phase is primarily teacher-guided. Then, as students begin to acquire mastery of the targeted objectives, direct teacher supports are reduced and the major responsibility for learning is transferred to the student.

sound-by-sound blending - identifying each separate sound in a word and then blending them one at a time before reading the whole word. For example, to blend the word *sat*, you'd say /s/ /a/ /t/, then /sat/.

standardized test - a form of measurement that has been normed against a specific population.

stop consonant - sound produced by obstructing airflow in the vocal tract by the lips or tongue.

summative assessment - assessment of student progress done at the end of major units of instruction and at year's end. It provides data about accomplishments and is useful for planning the next major segment of instruction for individual students.

syllabication - the division of words into syllables.

syllable - a minimal unit of sequential speech; a word part that contains a vowel or, in spoken language, a vowel sound (e-vent, news-pa-per).

synthesis - compiling information in a different way by combining elements into a new pattern or proposing alternative solutions (the fifth level of Bloom's taxonomy).

T

trade book - a book found in retail bookstores and intended for general readership.

U V

vocabulary - the body of words needed to read text with fluency and comprehension. *Listening vocabulary* refers to the words a person knows when hearing them in oral speech. *Speaking vocabulary* refers to the words we use when we speak. *Reading vocabulary* refers to the words a person knows when seeing them in print.

vocabulary acquisition - acquisition of word meanings. Children learn the meanings of most words indirectly, through everyday experiences with oral and written language. *Oral vocabulary* refers to words that we use in speaking or recognize in listening. *Reading vocabulary* refers to words we recognize or use in print.

vowel variant - a vowel combination that has more than one sound—for example, the different sounds the double vowel *oo* has in *wool* and *school*.

vowel-first blending - a blending technique that involves having students first recognize the vowel and its corresponding sound, and then think about the consonant sounds to the left and right of it. Vowel-first blending is appropriate for cvc words such as *fan*, and words with a regular sound-spelling pattern in the middle, such as *soap* or *bait*.

W X Y Z