STAR

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN READING

ALPHABETICS INSTRUCTION

★ In this module, we'll review some facts about alphabetics and introduce you to evidence-based techniques for **teaching** basic and advanced alphabetics.

★ You'll practice using the four steps of explicit instruction to teach basic and advanced phonics and learn guiding principles for alphabetics instruction.

★ You'll also learn how to monitor your students' progress in alphabetics and will have a chance to practice giving feedback on instructional practices.

Getting STARted

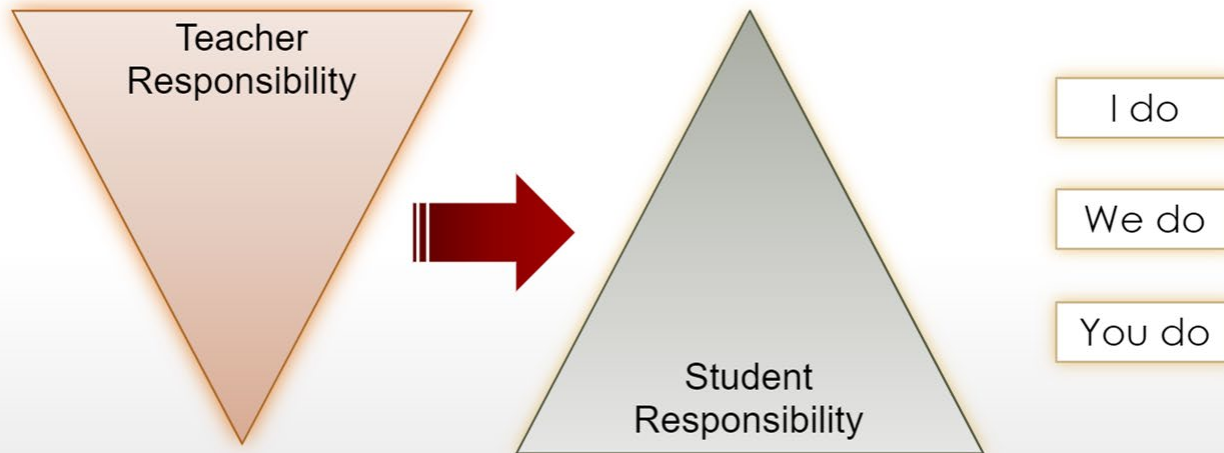Evidence-Based Instructional Techniques
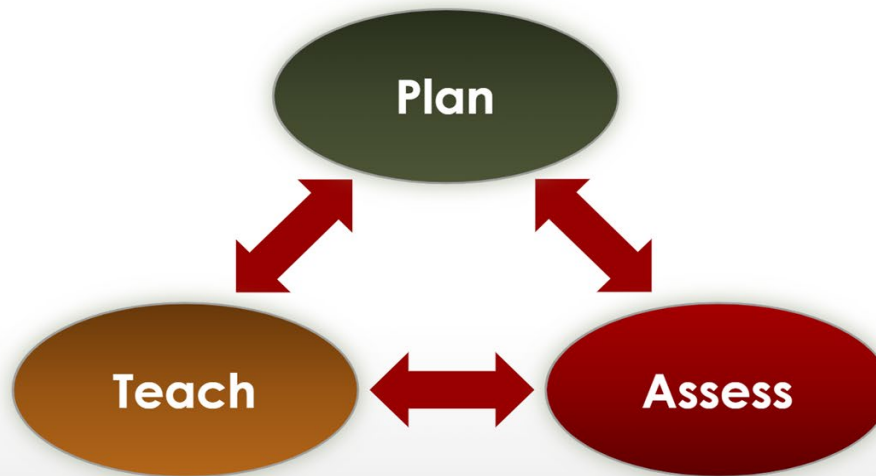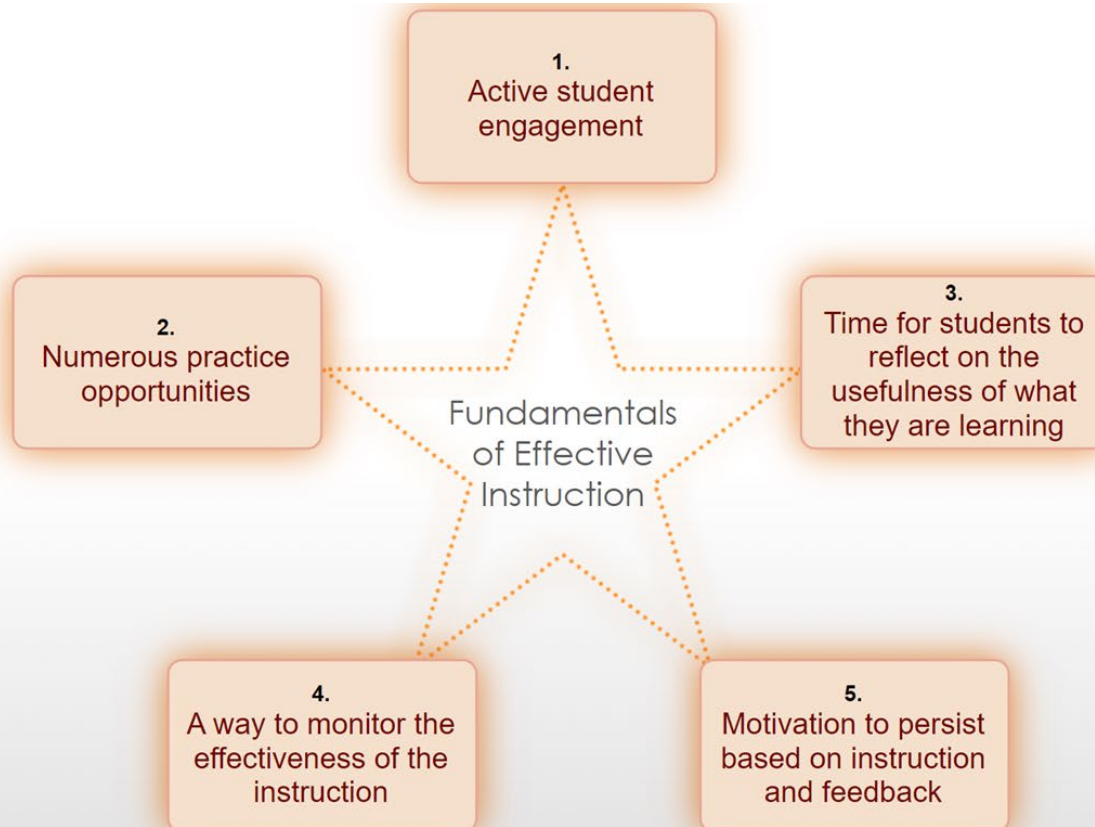
What are the four steps for explicit instruction?

1) Explanation

2) Modeling

3) Guided Practice

4) Application

Put another way…

Transition in Responsibility

The Five Fundamentals

1. Active student engagement

2. Numerous practice opportunities

3. Time for students to reflect on the usefulness of what they are learning

Fundamentals of Effective Instruction

4. A way to monitor the effectiveness of the instruction

5. Motivation to persist based on instruction and feedback

Active Engagement: What is it?

★ The students are interacting with the teacher, other students, or a text in an intensive and focused way.

★ Actively engaged students are attentive and responsive.

★ Some forms of engagement are not as obvious as others, can you think of some? (Listening and reading).

Active Engagement

★ During Explanation and modeling students will be listing and/or watching the teacher. Keep these sections brief to hold attention and reduce disengagement.

★ Watch for student engagement. What are the signs?

★ Include activities with obvious interaction elements.

Active Engagement, Know the Signs

Active Engagement, Know the Signs

★ What are some other examples that you have seen?

★ What about engaged students? How do you know?

Opportunities to Practice

★ Students need chances to practice what they are learning and have opportunity to receive targeted feedback.

★ Over several practice sessions the teacher gradually reduces support.

★ What are some examples you have used. (IE whole group moves to independent work or small groups.)

Reflection on Usefulness

Adult Students want agency, how is this new information or method useful to them? Tell them! Make sure students are given the opportunity to reflect.

Usefulness: relevance or value of what students are learning

Provide opportunities to reflect on and discuss the new knowledge

Reflection on Usefulness

Lets Practice! What are some examples from your classroom?

Usefulness: relevance or value of what students are learning

Provide opportunities to reflect on and discuss the new knowledge

Monitoring Effectiveness

INSTRUCTION - Fluency

Fluency Feedback Sheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Passage: _____

Grade Level Equivalent (GLE): _____

Fluency Skill	Good	Needs Work
Pausing at appropriate points in text		
Making few repetitions		
Making few errors in reading words		
Reading with expression, as when speaking		
Reading at an appropriate rate		

Comments:

- Explanation of the goal
- Plan assessment
- Monitor student progress
- Adjust instruction

Opportunities to practice

★ Research shows (studies included in resources section) that students who are given detailed feedback are more likely to develop self efficacy and resilience skills.

★ Giving students guided strategies, and helping them self monitor, instructors can help students persists when faced with challenges.

★ What challenges? How does this work in the classroom?

Fundamentals to Keep in Mind
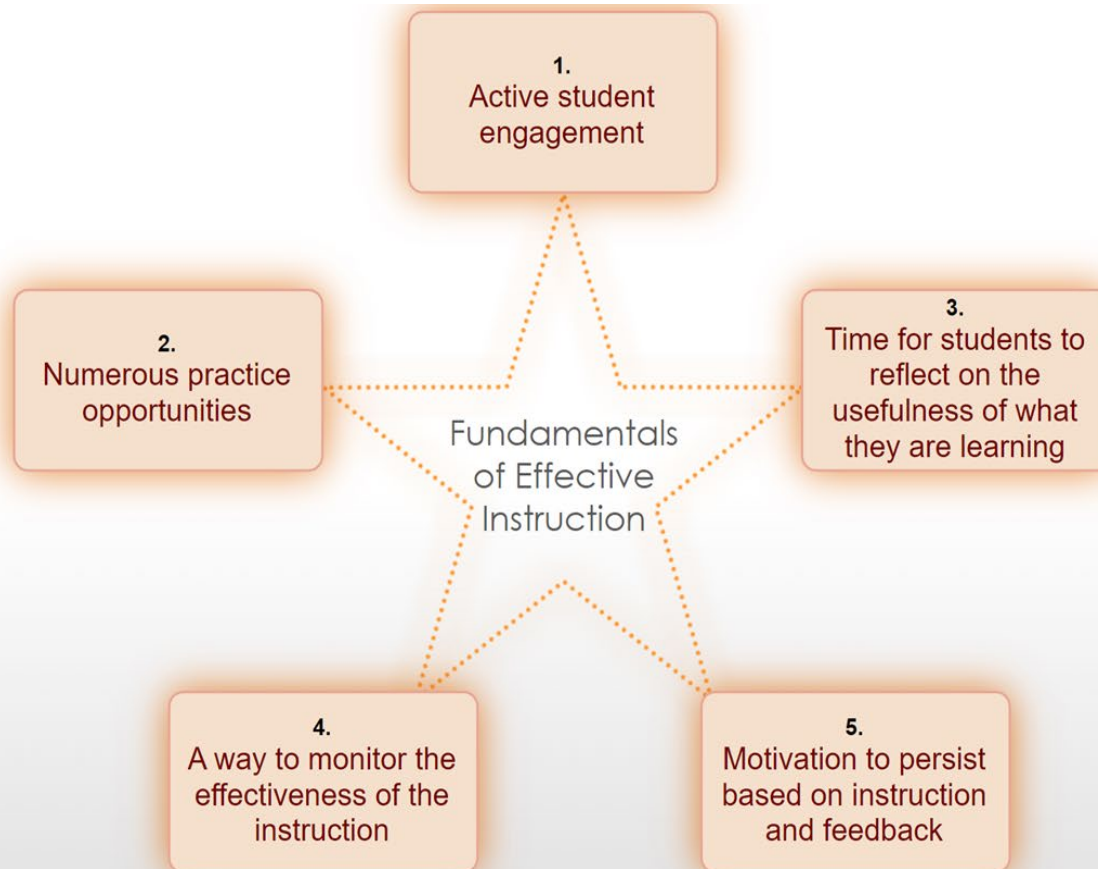
Alphabetics: What Is It?

The process that readers use to decode printed text into meaningful spoken words.

Print

⬇

Meaning

Alphabetics: Don't Take My Word Alone.

Modern research shows that "poor readers" that have weak decoding skills over rely on contexts when trying to identify words in a text.

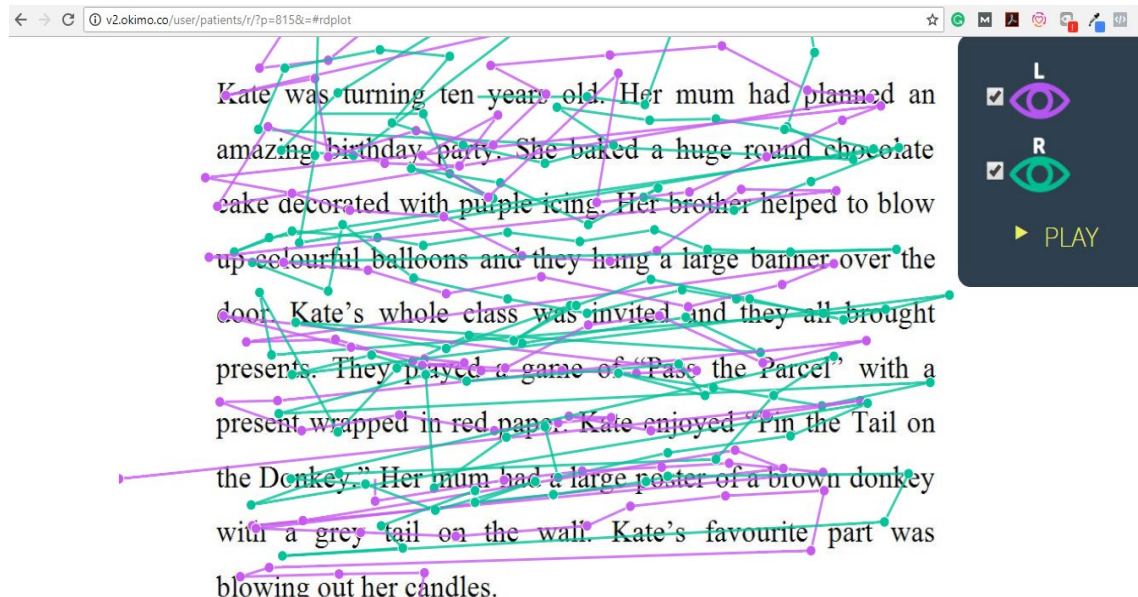What does this look like in your classroom?

Facts about Alphabetics

"…skilled readers identify words quickly with little help from context. It is readers of lower skill who rely on context to support word identification."

From: Rayner, K., Foorman, B. R., Perfetti, C. A., Pesetsky, D., & Seidenberg, M. S. (2001). How Psychological Science Informs the Teaching of Reading. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 2(2), 31–74.

Alphabetics: Eye Movement When Reading

Studies of eye movement of skilled adult readers show that they are attentive to almost every word in a passage.

Skilled readers also process the parts of the words they are reading. They do this automatically, without thinking.

Alphabetics: So What?

What about students who may have a move difficult time?

What do these difficulties look like in your classroom?

Short and frequent lessons on alphabetics with lots of opportunities to practice, will help students grow this ability.

Words for Instruction	Reading for Practice
-ing meeting shouting smiling waiting voting missing	"Up the road, in his shack, the old man was sleeping again. He was still sleeping on his face and the boy was sitting by him watching him. The old man was dreaming about the lions." — Hemingway, E. (1994). *The old man and the sea*. Arrow Books.

Alphabetics is Affected by Other Reading Components

Skill in alphabetics affects and is affected by the other components of reading.

How so? What are some examples?

Words for Instruction	Reading for Practice
-ing meeting shouting smiling waiting voting missing	"Up the road, in his shack, the old man was sleeping again. He was still sleeping on his face and the boy was sitting by him watching him. The old man was dreaming about the lions." — Hemingway, E. (1994). *The old man and the sea*. Arrow Books.

Alphabetics is Affected by Other Reading Components

Alphabetics ➡ **Vocabulary**

How so?

Alphabetics ➡ **Fluency**

What are some examples?

Fluency ➡ **Comprehension**

Vocabulary ➡ **Alphabetics**

Alphabetics: How Does This Help Instruction?

Alphabetics Instruction Goals

Keep two goals in mind:

- Increase familiarity with frequently occurring chunks:
  - -ing, er, –ly, –tion, –con

- Improve the ability to perform the chunking process:
  - "af-ter-noon", "im-por-tant", "in-de-pen-dent"

Alphabetics: Word Chunks?

Alphabetics Assessment

Which chunks should your students work with?

Look back at your assessment results.

Success with Grade 8 list

↓

Alphabetics instruction not needed

Alphabetics: Student Need

Identifying Student Needs

Difficulty with Grade 4 list or below

⬇

Give phonics test

⬇

Difficulty on basic phonics assessment

⬇

Basic phonics instruction needed

Difficulty with Grade 4 list or below

⬇

Phonics test

⬇

Okay on basic phonics assessment

⬇

Advanced phonics instruction needed

Alphabetics: Student Need

Identifying Student Needs

Difficulty with Grades 5-7 lists

↓

Accurate on Grade 8 text

↓

Alphabetics instruction not a priority

↓

Keep an eye on them to make sure

Difficulty with Grades 5-7 lists

↓

Look at results of fluency assessment

↓

Lack of accuracy on texts below Grade 8

↓

Advanced phonics instruction needed

Alphabetics: Student Need - Let's Practice

★ What were your findings for Alphabetics assessment?

★ What did you confirm with your students? What did you learn that was new? What do they need?

★ Work in small groups, then be ready to share with the class.

Alphabetics: So What Do We Teach?

Alphabetics comprises three different skills:

- Phonemic awareness
- Sight word recognition
- Word analysis

Phonemic awareness: the ability to manipulate the basic sounds (or phonemes) of spoken language

/s//k//u//l/

/l//a//f/

strain - /s/ = train

What is Phonemic awareness?

★ What is a phoneme?

★ What are examples?

Handout

Alphabetics: So What Do We Teach?

What to Teach

Blending sounds:

/s//k//u//l/

Isolating sounds:

/l//a//f/

Deleting sounds:

strain - /s/ = train

Most intermediate level readers have mastered phonemic awareness

What to Teach

Sight word recognition: the ability to read high frequency words with ease

done	not pronounced dough-n
have	not pronounced hay-v

Why do this? Do they follow "The rules?"

Alphabetics: More High Frequency Words

Repeated exposure in isolation and in context.

done	have	again	buy	business	carry	could
father	give	heard	knee	learn	listen	
love	measure	once	other	people	rough	
said	sugar	taught	tough	trouble	usually	

Alphabetics: Word Analysis

★ You may also know this as "phonics."

★ Ability to connect letters, and letter combinations with the sounds they represent.

★ For example: Knowing that a short vowel sound often results when a syllable or words ends in a consonant is requires skillful word analysis.

★ What are some other examples?

★ STAR makes a distinction between basic and advanced phonics.

Basic Phonics

Basic Phonics

Consonant sounds: f<u>a</u><u>n</u>

Consonant blends: <u>sn</u>ap

Syllables: word parts with one vowel sound

Short vowel sounds: <u>a</u>n and n<u>o</u>t

Long vowel sounds: m<u>e</u> and s<u>o</u>

Long vowel sounds: m<u>a</u>te and s<u>i</u>de

Long vowel sound: v<u>ai</u>n
Blended vowel sounds: <u>ou</u>t and c<u>oi</u>n
R-controlled vowel sounds: v<u>er</u>b and c<u>ur</u>l

You can get a sense of what basic phonics patterns to teach based on mistakes on your assessment of choice.

Teaching Basic Phonics

Sylvia Greene's Informal Word Analysis

Level I Examples

fan	short a and consonants: f, n
hag	short a and consonants: h, g
Sal	short a and consonants: s, l
ban	short a and consonants: b, n
tad	short a and consonants: t, d
rig	short i and consonants: r, g

Level II Examples

vain	vowel digraphs ai
jay	ay
peek	ee
beam	ea
roam	oa
mow	ow = long o

Handout

Once You Know What to Teach, How Do You Teach It?

★ Let's Practice!

★ Outline for Advanced Alphabetics instruction.

★ Stop at Section "3."

Handout

Once You Know What to Teach, How Do You Teach It?

Common Word Parts

MOST COMMON SYLLABLES IN ENGLISH WORDS

ing	e	en	pro	ma	po	is	ger
er	con	and	ac	na	sion	mer	low
a	y	ty	ad	si	vi	pe	ni
ly	ter	ry	ar	un	el	ra	par
ed	ex	u	ers	at	est	so	son
i	al	ti	ment	dis	la	to	tle
es	de	ri	or	ca	lar	as	day
re	won	be	win	cal	pa	col	ny
bon	o	per	ble	man	two	fi	pen
in	di	to	der	ap	for	ful	pre

Use a common word parts instruction.

"Teaching High Frequency Syllables" practice.

Handout

Advanced Phonics

★ We talked about instruction in basic phonics, what about more advanced learners?

★ Would instruction need to be different for these learners?

★ Why or why not?

★ What are some things this new group may struggle with?

Advanced Phonics

Advanced phonics skills:

- Checking to see if beginnings and endings of words are familiar

- Dividing longer words into known parts

Intermediate and advanced students may need help decoding multisyllabic words. What are these?

Advanced Phonics: So Where Do We Start?

Word Endings

windshield	wholesome	humorous	coordination
masterpiece	proofread	correspondent	energetically
passageway	storeroom	optimistic	discouragement
checkup	eardrum	transparency	familiarize
flashlight	oversight	sophisticated	hibernation
heavyweight	middleman	manipulation	luxurious
homesick	buttermilk	hazardous	
noteworthy	fingerprint	simultaneously	
something	sandpaper	aggressiveness	

Advanced Phonics: So Where Do We Start?

★ Word endings are a great place to start as students often give up on unknown words before the end. (Listen to student example.)

★ What did you notice?

★ As students attempt multisyllabic words they often are able to get the beginnings correct and struggle with the endings of words. Practice in frequent endings is statistically proven to increase success rates.

★ What examples do you have from your classroom?

Advanced Phonics: Breaking a Word Into Parts

Word Beginnings

Students need to pay attention to word beginnings.

organized   disorganized

Find sample lesson plan in "Resources"

STAR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN READING   Evidence-based Reading Instruction

Module 19: Alphabetics Lesson Plan

Word Beginnings

Explanation
"We're going to spend some time looking at some chunks that occur at the beginning of bigger words; if you recognize the chunks at the beginning and end, then you'll be able to spend your time looking at the middle of a bigger word to see if you know it."

Monitoring progress
"For example: d-i-s-c-a-r-d – I'm looking at the word and seeing dis- at the beginning, I know dis says "dis," because I've seen it in a bunch of easy words like dislike and disturb, so now I can look at the second part – c-a-r-d – to see if I know how to say it; and I do, so I can put the two together, and now I can read the word as discard – and discard is a word I know."

Other examples for the teacher to talk through: dismiss, distrust, distract.

Guided Practice
Spend some time working as a group on words like disappear, disbelief, disconnect.

Follow up by working in pairs (or alone) on words like discharge, disobey, disorder, displease, disadvantage, disagreeable, disapprove, dismissal, distraction, disappearance.

Application
Practice with text.

At this point, you could continue with other very common non-word syllables found at the beginning of words like: com-, de-, ex-, per-, con-, pro-, un-, re-.

As with endings, consider: Do your learners still need more practice in checking the beginnings of words to see if they are known? If so, keep teaching beginnings. If not, move onto syllabication.

Handout

Advanced Phonics: Breaking a Word Into Parts?

★ Once students are adepts at words endings and beginnings they may be ready to try more advanced methods of decoding.

★ The goal is not for students to memorize rules. Rules often can't be determined until after the word has been identified, and if the word has been identified than there is no point in applying a rule.

★ Studies show that instead, students should work with words parts until they are close enough to recognize the word.

★ Have you seen this in your classroom?

Advanced Phonics: Breaking a Word Into Parts

Breaking Words Into Parts

mo-no-po-ly
mon-o-pol-y
mon-op-o-ly

Handout

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN READING

Advanced Phonics: Breaking a Word Into Parts

Let's Practice

(Sample lesson plan)

Recall: If a student doesn't know the meaning of a word, **teaching them how to say it will not improve their comprehension.**

List of high-frequency, multi-syllabic words

windshield	humorous	masterpiece
passageway	optimistic	checkup
transparency	flashlight	heavyweight
manipulation	several	remember
population	suddenly	position
animal	beginning	individual
materials	particular	probably
development	political	available
chemical	expected	difference
specific	personal	situation

Phonics: General Principles

We have gone through some examples for both basic and advanced phonics, hopefully you have noticed that there are some underlying principles that are applicable to both.

What are they?

Phonics: General Principles

★ We want students to be able to identify printed words that are familiar to them.

★ If they recognize a word, their **comprehension will not be lost if they mispronounce it**.

★ Correct pronunciation is important, but not the goal of alphabetics instruction.

Guiding Principles

Teach word identification, not word pronunciation

"Teaching Pronunciation to Adult English Language Learners"

Lesson Planning Basic Structure

Breaking Words Into Parts

Word Beginnings

Recognizing Large Words

Flexibility in Word Division

- **Explanation and Modeling**
- **Guided Practice**
- **Application**

Phonics General Principles: Time

★ Adult students (and their teachers) often have little time to struggle with all the rules and exceptions based on what syllables to stressed and how words are spelled.

★ Often these rules (and exceptions) can't be determined until after a word is identified.

Guiding Principles

Focus on the most frequently occurring letter-sound combinations and patterns.

Guiding Principles

★ Help your students when reading word parts and dividing words.

★ If students don't recognize a word when they say a part one way, try another way!

★ Begin with words they can already read, then give them opportunities to apply what they know to new words.

Guiding Principles

Move from known:
windshield, checkup, flashlight, middleman

to new:
transparency, aggressiveness

Use direct and explicit instruction:
- Explanation
- Modeling
- Guided Practice
- Application

Monitor Progress

★ Monitoring your *students'* progress is an important part of effective instruction.

★ How do you do this in your class?

★ The best way to do this for alphabetics is to **listen to them read**.

INSTRUCTIONAL BEST PRACTICES Q&A

The teacher doesn't worry about words the students can't read when the words aren't in the students' listening vocabularies.

Good practice?

○ Yes.   ○ No.

INSTRUCTIONAL BEST PRACTICES Q&A

The teacher uses strategies for breaking words apart to help the students pronounce words correctly.

Good practice?

◯ Yes.   ◯ No.

INSTRUCTIONAL BEST PRACTICES Q&A

While teaching the chunk "pan", the teacher explains that *pan* can mean all, as in *panorama* (a complete view) and *pantomime* (which in Ancient Greece referred to a group who imitated all).

Good practice?

◯ Yes.   ◯ No.

INSTRUCTIONAL BEST PRACTICES Q&A

The teacher teaches chunks of words without regard to whether the chunks on their own have meaning.

Good practice?

◯ Yes.   ◯ No.

INSTRUCTIONAL BEST PRACTICES Q&A

The teacher provides all of her students with alphabetics instruction because, as she tells them, they will all benefit, even if it's a review.

Good practice?

○ Yes.   ○ No.

More Reading…

Professional Articles and Books

★ [The Usefulness of Brief Instruction in Reading Comprehension Strategies](#)

★ [Reading Comprehension Strategies for Adult Literacy Outcomes](#)

★ [Text Dependent Questions](#)

★ [Teaching and Assessing Understanding of Text Structures across Grades](#)

★ [I Read It, but I Don't Get It](#)